

CORNELIS AERTSEN VAN SCHAICK OF WESTBROEK

Volume I contains historical information about Cornelis Aertsen Van Schaick and his family and life in New Netherland. It was the intention of the Compiler to include in Volume II some additional information he possessed concerning Cornelis Aertsen. However, he received from John Van Schaick of Schenectady, New York a copy of an Essay he had written entitled 'Cornelis Aertsen Van Schaick'. The quality and scope of this work was so impressive that the Compiler requested permission to include it, in its entirety, in Volume II. Mr. Van Schaick who is a direct descendant of Cornelis and a nephew of George Slingerland Van Schaick graciously granted permission for its inclusion in Volume II.

The Essay reflects the performance by Mr. Van Schaick of a great deal of research in the old records and publications pertaining to life in New Netherland during the period 1614 to 1670.



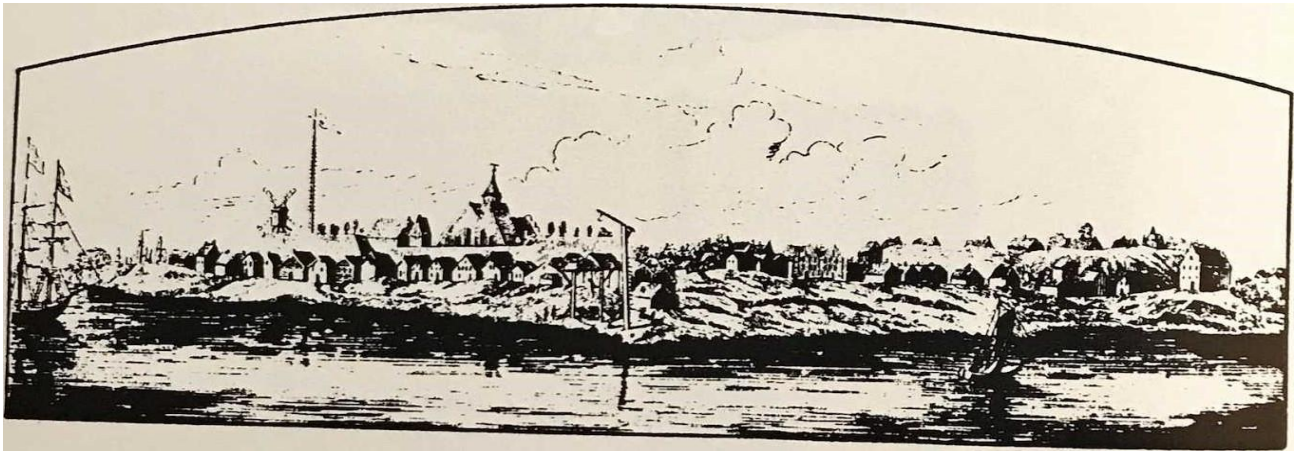
Windmill at Westbroek, Holland

CORNELIS AERTSEN
vanSchaick
van

Utrecht, Pavonia, en Manhate

by

John H. van Schaick



Dit is het Land daar melk en Honig vloeyd;
Dit is 't geweest daar 't Kruyd (als dist 'len) groeyd;
Dit is de Plaats daar Arons—Roede bloeyd;
Dit is het Eden.

Jacob Steendam,

Noch Vaster

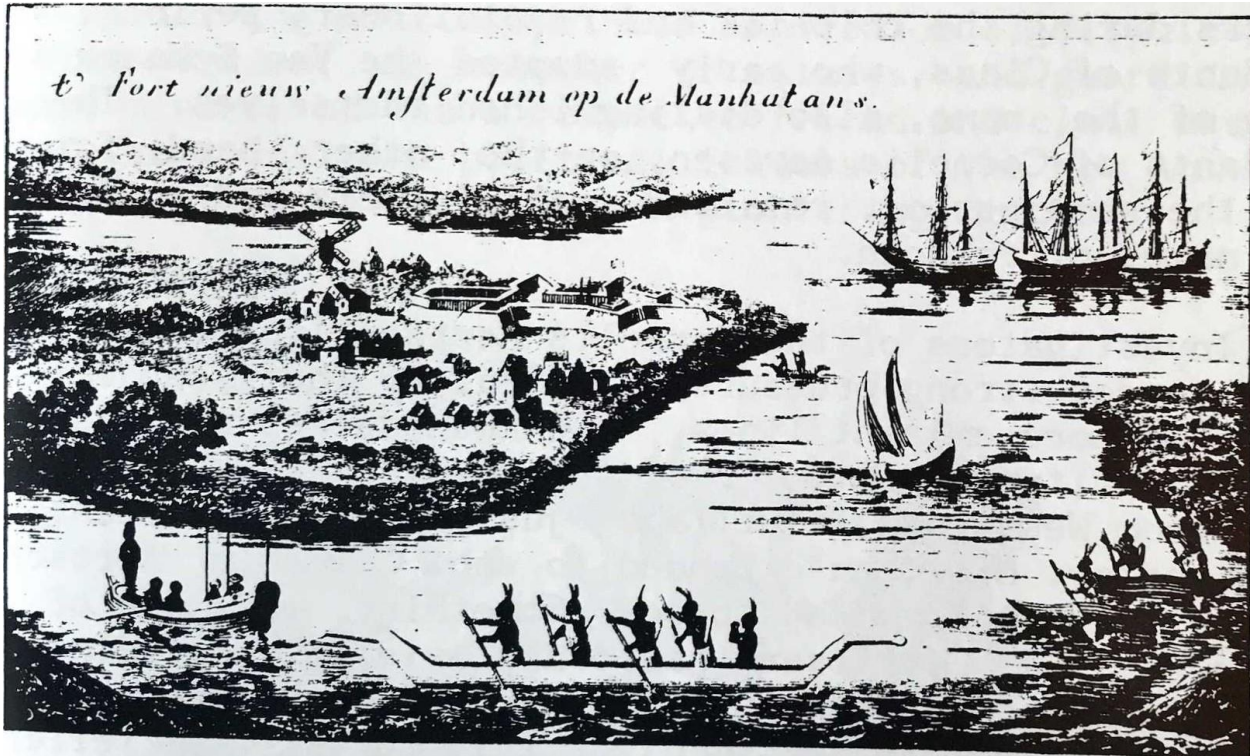
Schenectady, New York

1985

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First View of New Amsterdam



Foreword

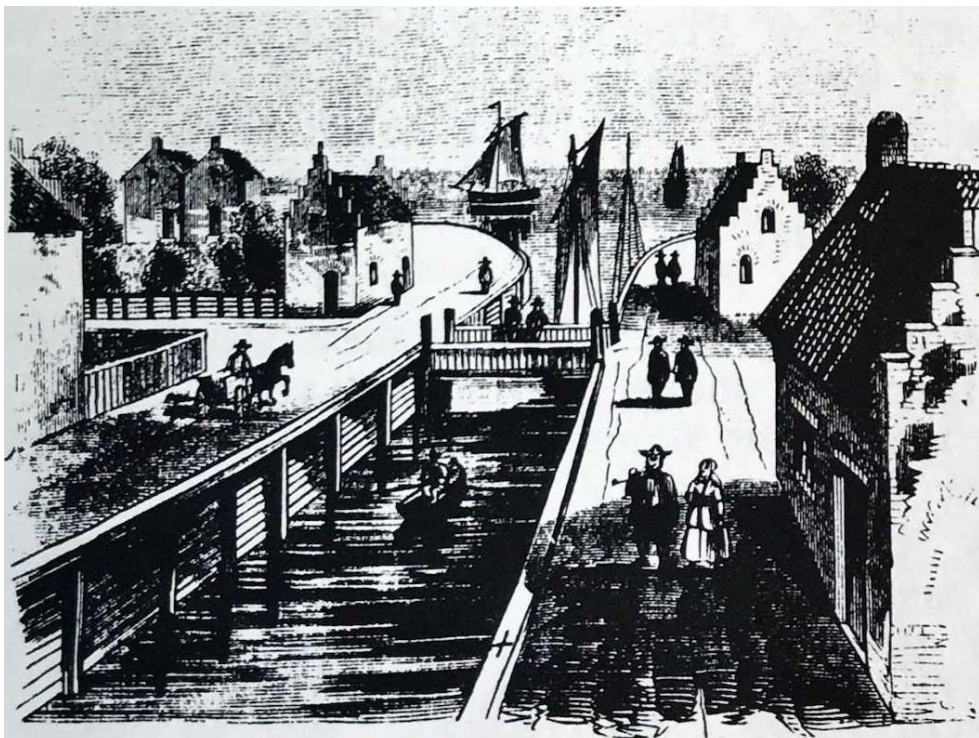
In New Netherland during the Dutch period, three settlers founded families in later years took the name Van Schaick: Cornelis Aertsen, who settled in the region of New Amsterdam (New York City) perhaps as early as 1636; Goose Gerritsen, who served Kiliaen Van Rensselaer for six years starting in 1637 and who after a brief time in the Netherlands returned to Beverwyck (Albany) in 1646; and Claas or Nicholas, who settled in the Kinderhook region in about 1650. Because of the common name later taken by then or their families, these three have been called cousins but the degree of cousinhood has never been defined, despite considerable investigation in the Netherlands by L.P. de Boer, J. R. Delafield and W. J. Hoffman, and in New York by E. R. Purple, Dingman Versteeg and Dirk de Young.

Goose Gerritsen and his descendants distinguished themselves as land holders, political figures, and military officers during the colonial and revolutionary periods. Descendants of Claas, who early adopted the Van Schaack spelling of the name, also distinguished themselves. The descendants of Cornelis Aertsen, on the other hand, for most of the same period, remained small farmers and so produced few names of reknown.

Investigators of the Cornelis Aertsen line seem to have been under strong pressure to identify their subject with the two more eminent lines. The Rensselaer records show Goose Gerritsen, a member of the court in 1648, to have come from Westbrook, a village just north of Utrecht, and some effort has been expended to show Cornelis Aertsen to have also been from Westbrook. Something was made of the discovery that Gerritsen had owned briefly a building lot in New Amsterdam adjacent to lands leased by Aertsen after 1660, but Gerritsen had sold the lot to Williarn Teller of Albany in July of 1648 at a time when Aertsen was living a mile away on Pearl Street under the guns of the Fort and was farming lands across the Hudson in Pavonia, so that connection means little.

Missing, scattered, scanty and unreadable records, plus shortage of time and money, all plague the researcher. With no marriage record at hand in the Dutch Church in New Amsterdam, Dirk de Young speculated that Aertsen must have contracted his first marriage in the Netherlands, while Delafield and Hoffman, unable to find any record of the marriage in Westbrook, speculated that Aertsen must have married in New Netherland. Dingman Versteeg, recognizing the virtues and relative obscurity of Cornelis Aertsen and needing a worthy and early founding father for a line of Bryants (Breyandts) in New Jersey, used the scantiest of evidence to nominate, and elect, Cornelis Aertsen the progenitor of that line.

The origins of Cornelis Aertsen and his early life are obscure, but data for his last thirty years are plentiful enough to secure his place in the history of New Netherland. On the record, Cornelis Aertsen was a worthy father of his line: a pioneering farmer and farm manager, a minor officeholder and court-appointed arbitrator of disputes, a parttime trader, an executor of estates and guardian of orphaned minors, he was a respected friend and close associate of the social and political leaders of the New Amsterdam community of which he was an pioneering member.



VIEW OF THE "GRAFT," OR CANAL, IN BROAD STREET, AND THE FISH BRIDGE. 1659.

Origins

Besides his given name, Cornelis used only the patronymic Aertsen or Arissen (spelled variously Aarensen, Aarsen, Aarssen, Aarszen, Aartsen, Aarzen, Aersen, Aerssen, Aerts, Aertse, Aertszen, Aertszens, Arensen, Arentsen Arentsz, Arisz, and Aryssen). None of the variants in the records include Adriaensen so we must assume that Cornelis' father was not known as Adriaen.


In 1642, following the custom of naming the first son after the paternal grandfather, Cornelis used the name Arie, but since Cornelis, later in life, let himself be known as Aertsen, it may be that his father had been baptized Aert or Arent and was called Arie familiarly. The first use we find of the Latinized form Adriaen appears in 1665 when Arie, at the baptism of Iden, is recorded as Adriaen Cornelisen.

The family name Van Schaick has not been found associated with Cornelis Aertsen in any record made during his lifetime, but a decade or so after his death, his descendants, under the English, began to use the name of this family from which Cornelis presumably descended. The Van Schaick name had been prominent in and about Utrecht for over two hundred years having originated first in a manor of Schadewck, contracted first to Schawyck and further to Schayck or Schaick, near Vianen on the borders of Utrecht and South Holland. Van Schaicks later located at Wyck-by-Duurstede and at Rhenen and at a new manor near Amersfoort. There is a Schaick in the Province of South Holland and two manors, Great and Little Schaick, in the Province of Gelderland.

People bearing this family name were prominent especially about Utrecht, where they associated closely with the Van Wyckersloot and Van Voorst families, which families there were many intermarriages. But not all members of the Van Schaick family used the name. Those who, through misfortune, were landless and unschooled often used patronymics, forbearing the use of the name as a kind of social pretension, inappropriate to their station in life.

Cornelis Aertsen was born about 1609, the year Hendrick Hudson explored the river along which Cornelis later lived for over three decades. His birth was surely in or near Utrecht, the city from which Cornelis claimed to come and he may have spent his childhood, but whether his birth took place in

the city, at Westbroeck a few kilometers north, or at Bunnick, Bilt or Houten a few kilometers south, is open to speculation.

The year 1609 also marked the start of the Twelve Year Truce in the war with Spain and its signal led great mercantile expansion and broad prosperity throughout the United Provinces, but expansion of schooling lagged and Cornelis Aertsen remained unschooled and illiterate. In signing his name he made his mark which was a form of cross not unlike an Indian swastika or good luck sign. 

In making his mark Cornelis was typical of more than half of the male settlers in New Netherland before 1660, and among those who signed their names, some number, perhaps as many as another half, were basically illiterate. Most farmers, boatmen, laborers, soldiers, and most women of the time were unable to read or write; most merchants, traders, ships officers, and company and public officials were literate.

The form of a name suggests education and social position. Nicolaes Verleth clearly outclassed Claes Teunissen. Jan Damen was literate but Johannes de la Montagne was university trained. In Latin school and at university, students Latinized names so Hendrick became Henricus; Jacob, Jacobus. The Latin Adriaen had familiar forms Aert, Arie, and the somewhat more formal Arent. But although the Latin form Cornelis had the familiar forms Cors and Kees, Aertsen (often Arissen or Arentsen) was always Cornelis.

Family names arose from place of origin, from occupation, or from personal or physical characteristic. There might be two or more Jan Jansens: the miller might be Jan Jansen Molenaer; the tall one, Jan Jansen de Groot; or the Scandanavian, Jan Jansen Noorrmn. Confusion arises when a place of origin becomes a family name as in de Vries (the Friesian). Many of the occupational, descriptive, and place names used the family names of descendants.

Pavonia

In 1623 the Dutch West India Company began colonizing lands in North America along the Fresh, North, and South Rivers (the Connecticut, Hudson, and Delaware) where Dutch fur traders had been dealing with the Indians. Earlier contingents were followed in 1625 by an expedition of three ships and sloop delivering farmers, laborers, craftsmen, and company functionaries along with livestock, farm implements, and materials for mills and essential installations.

With this expedition, in charge of laborers, came Cornelis van Voorst, cousin of Cornelis Aertsen and cousin also of two West India Company directors from Utrecht, Cornelis van Wyckersloot and Arnoldus Buchelius. Van Voorst, a middle-aged man, educated in Latin, brought over his wife and two of his sons, Jan and Hendrick, had his hands full in his job. His laborers were reported to be "of not much account, a rough lot who have to be kept at work by force. "

It was three of these men, laboring on Director General Pieter Minuit's bouwery on Manhattan beyond the Fresh Water who waylaid an Indian coming to trade, slew him, and stole his furs before the eyes of his nephew, a child under the age of ten. The Indians were a vengeful lot and for a dozen years the nephew brooded over this wrong which never was compensated by the giving of presents to the family (a form of bloodwite). In 1641, to correct matters, the nephew murdered a presumably innocent old-time settler Claes Cornelissen Swits. This murder, which under the Indian code of laws was proper and not punishable, was a major cause of the Indian War of 1643-45.

In 1630 Van Voorst returned to Utrecht and Amsterdam where he agreed with patroon Michiel Paauw to be Chief Officer of a colony for which Paauw and his partners had filed embracing Staten Island and north to Hoboken. If Van Voorst supervised the land purchases, he was back by July 12, 1630, when an Indian deed was registered for Hoboken Hackingh. Two other deeds followed. Soon after, in about 1632, a house was built for Van Voorst at Ahasimus on the shore between Hoboken and Paulus Hoeck. This house, palisaded and lightly fortified, was occupied by Van Voorst with his family and farm servants, some apparently recruited in the Mannhattans.

Hans Jorissen Hunthurn, agent for the Company at Fort Orange, came there in April 1634 and lost his life in a knife fight with Van Voorst, to no one's great regret. And there on June 25, 1636, Skipper David Pietersen de Vries, Dominie Everardus Bogardus, and Director General Wouter van Twiller engaged in a wine-tasting bout with Van Voorst that ended with a cannon salute setting fire to the rush roof of the house, as described by de Vries.

The house was soon rebuilt but this time with a board roof. Van Voorst's wife died sometime during the 1630's and he remarried to Vrouwtje Ides, who gave Cornelis a daughter Annetje and a son Ide. Cornelis died before March of 1639, leaving Jan and Hendrick, then approaching their majorities, and a relative Gerrit Jansen van Voorst, perhaps a nephew. Gerrit made his mark in 1642 while thatching a house at Achter Col (Newark Bay); a drunken Indian, wronged by the whites, proved his ability with a bow by putting a lethal arrow into poor Gerrit up on the roof.

Whether or when Van Voorst had brought over their cousin Cornelis Aertsen, by then in his early twenties, we don't know, but Cornelis is reported to have come to New Netherland in 1636 with a grant of land in his possession, in itself suggesting that this was a return trip, since grants were seldom made except for prior service with the Company.

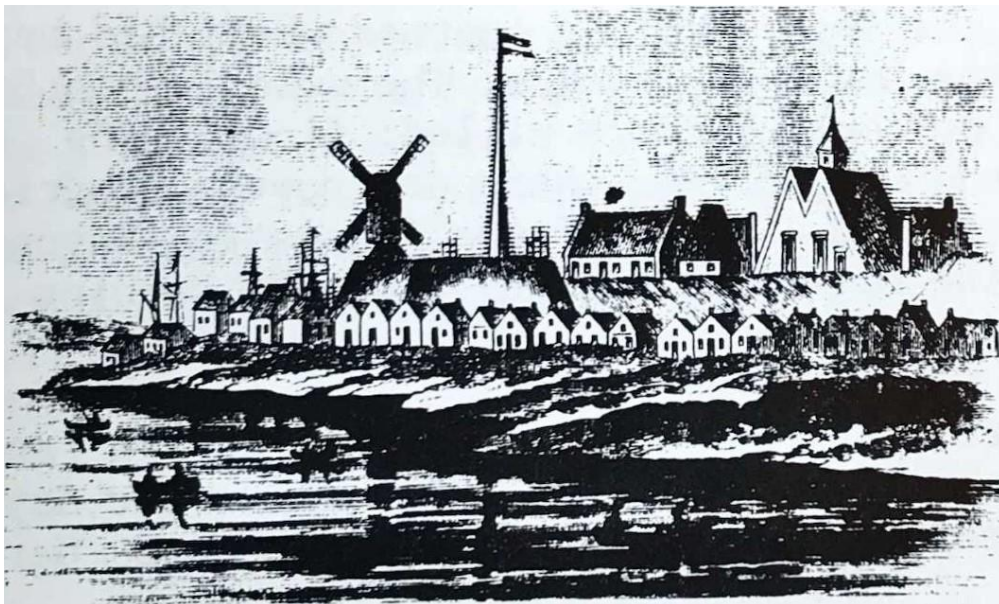
In January 1640 we have written confirmation of Cornelis Aertsen's presence in New Amsterdam (and evidence of his age) in an affidavit made for Huyck Aertsen van Rossun, a prominent colonist with interests in Pavonia. Huyck had been berated and attacked in a tavern by a drunken woman, the wife of Hendrick Harmansen, then the tenant on Bouwery No. 6 near the present Chatham Square. After the sword had been taken from his wife, Hendrick drew his knife and thrust at Huyck, who "tossed his own knife aside so as not to injure anyone." Cornelis Aertsen and three others attested to the events.

Cornelis may have married in New Amsterdam before the end of 1639 when the Dutch Church records of marriages begin, or perhaps he married Belitje Hendricks on a visit home. If the latter she joined him by 1640 because on July 7, 1641 their first girl was baptized Hendrickje in the old church which stood on the north side of Pearl Street, overlooking the waters of the harbor; Water, South, and Front Streets, and most of the south side of Pearl Street are filled land.



Dominie Everardus Bogardus officiated; Tryntje Simons and Jacob Stoffelsen were witnesses (the witness had much the role of godparent). Tryntje was the wife of Jan Evertsen Bout of Pavonia, later one of the Eight Men, and in 1646, with Huyck Aertsen, a magistrate for Breuckelen. Jacob Stoeffelsen was almost a relative: he was the present foreman of laborers for the Company, had married Cornelis van Voorst's widow in 1639, occupied the Van Voorst house in Ahasimus, and was a guardian of Ide and Annetje van Voorst, their mother Vrouwtje Ides having died in April 1641.

A year later the Dominie performed another baptism for the Aertsens when on July 9, 1642, he cleansed their first born son of original sin and entered the name Arie on the records of the Dutch Church. Huyck Aertsen, Marie Hans, and Anneken Loockermans were the witnesses. Anneken, the sister of the merchant Govert Loockermans, had come to New Netherland the year before and on the February 26th had married Oloff Stevensen van Cortland from Wyckte-Duurstede near Utrecht, a Company office holder and a deacon in the church, who was just now starting his accumulation of great landed wealth.



War with the Indians

Trouble with the Indians built for years with provocations on both sides. The murder of Claes Swits led Director General Willem Kieft, on August 29, 1641, to convoke a board of Twelve Men for advice. The majority wanted peace but knowing Kieft wanted war, advised war, but only if Kieft personally led the attack. Since Kieft never slept away from the safety of the Fort, they had said was: "No war."

Jan Jansen Damen, from Bunnick, was one of the Twelve Men, as were his stepson-in-law Abrarn Planck, and Maryn Adriaensen, a business associate. Kieft had forbidden the Twelve Men to meet, but at a Shrovetide party in Jan Damen's house, the three decided to petition him in the name of all the freemen to attack the Indians. The petition was prepared by another Damen stepson-in-law, Secretary Cornelis van Tienhoven and signed by the three. The toasts that Kieft and the four drank were noted but not understood by other guests.

Kieft's targets were two camps of Indian refugees from the Mohawks, one on Jan Evertsen Bout's bouwery, the other on Manhattan near Corlaer's Hoeck. Subsisting on food supplied by the Dutch, they were hardly a threat. Ignoring the objections of David Pietersen de Vries, head of the Twelve Men, Kieft, on the night of February 24, 1643, sent soldiers to Pavonia and the burghers to Corlaer's Hoeck. De Vries says eighty including infants died at Communipaw and forty on Manhattan.

When the local Indians learned what had happened, they fell upon the unwarned farmers. The colonies on Staten Island were burned and many farmers killed; flourishing bouwerries on Manhattan and Long Island were destroyed; Hendrick Harmansen died on the island. Most of the houses in Pavonia were soon burned in the night by Indians shooting burning arrows into the thatched roofs.

Cornelis Aertsen was living in Pavonia and with his family took refuge near the Fort. There the day after the attack, Aertsen with Jacob Stoffelsen and Gerrit Dircksen Blauw, two of the Twelve Men, accosted Director Kieft across the bastion: "You have done fine work," said Stoffelsen. "Fine work," said Blauw, "causing the murder of Christian blood," referring to his stepson, killed that morning. The Director replied, "It's the fault of the freemen that the Indians were attacked, but your neighbor Abram Planck, who was well aware of it, might have warned you."

The surviving Pavonians, some eight families, took refuge in the town or in the Fort. Among Pavonians killed at the onset, besides the stepson of Blauw, were Dirck Straatmaker and his wife whose house was at Cavin Point. They had come to the scene of slaughter at Communipaw and, unafraid though warned of

danger, were soon struck down by Indians. Their baby Jan was rescued from his dead mother's arms. The mortally wounded Dirck, asked he had not run when he could have, replied: "I could not leave poor wife. "

Abram Planck, owner of Paulus Hoeck in Pavonia, had conspired to start hostilities and was in a financial bind as result. In April of 1643 he mortgaged the Hoeck to his inlaws Jan and Cornelis van Tienhoven and on April 20th he leased the whole of it to Cornelis Aertsen, including his house and garden, for six years at 100 guilders the first year and 160 guilders each of the next five. Planck was to build a barn and Aertsen was to keep it and the house watertight. Improvements made by Aertsen would revert to Planck.

The Hoeck was the point on the Hudson's west bank closest to the south tip of Manhattan. Its early name was Horen Hoeck, a place to meet the Indians for trade and recreation, but that was past. It was good tobacco land, rich sandy loam. In the Hoeck Aertsen had a sizeable tract, relatively high, cut off from the mainland in part by swamps, with a low hill from which watch could be kept. It was so close to Manhattan that the buildings even have survived the war. One house in Pavonia did, and that on Paulus Hoeck was the likeliest.

A House in Town

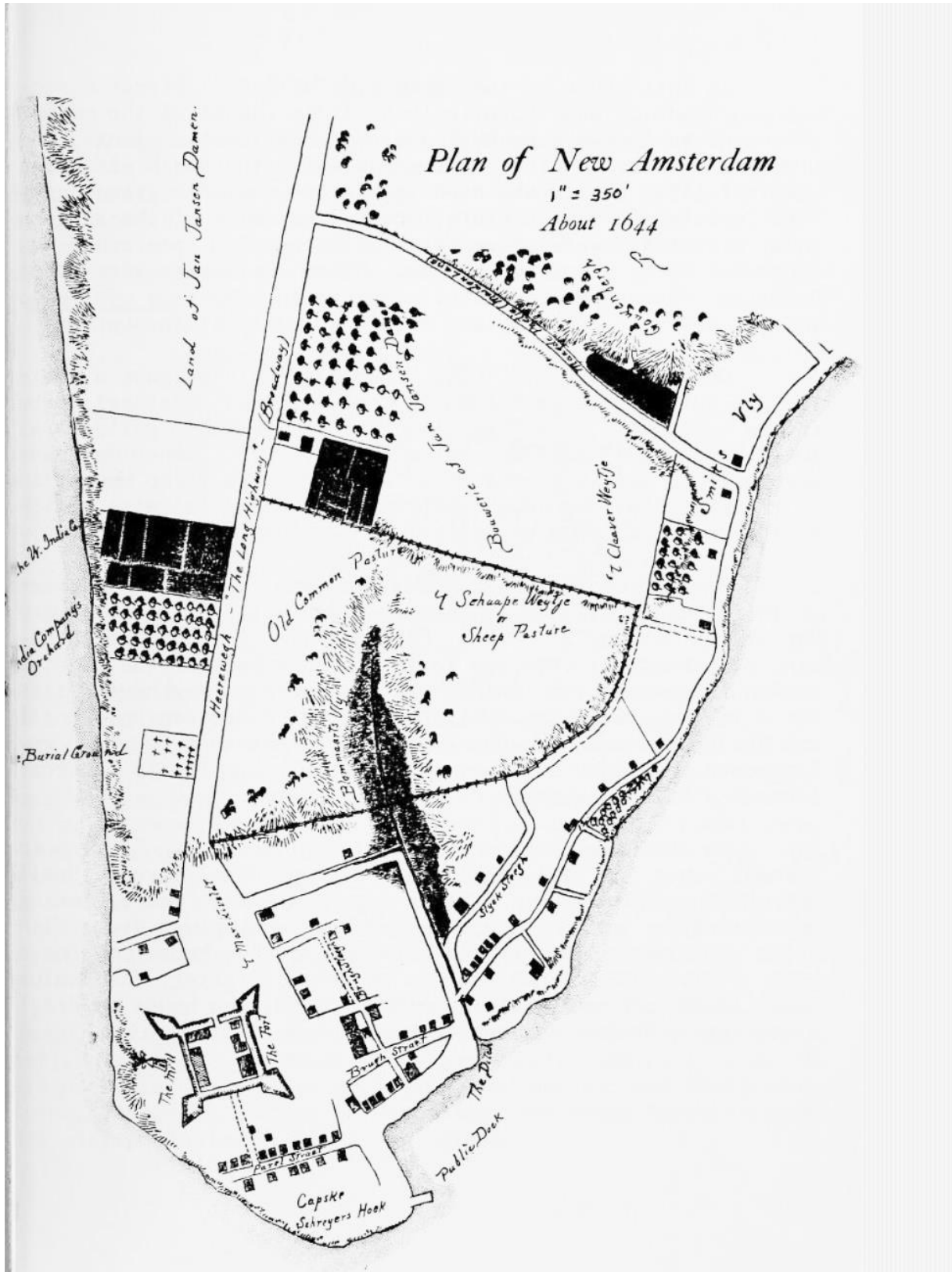
While Paulus Hoeck was relatively safe, it was not entirely secure, which may be why "Cornelis Arissen van Utrecht purchased a lot in town from Jacob Roy, gunner at the Fort The deed bears the date April 14, 1645, but the purchase have been earlier. Aertsen's lot was 33 feet wide by 182 feet deep on the north side of Pearl Street, about where State run past the present west end of Pearl. On this lot Aertsen had house built with a stable behind where dairy and draft animals and fodder for them could be kept. The garden and orchard of fruit trees backed up close to the Fort's southeast bastion.

Proximity to the Fort may have provided safety, but it bothered householders when the guns were fired. Otherwise the location was good. The new church which looms above the walls of the Fort in views of the town made during the last two decades of Dutch rule was but fifty yards from Aertsen's by way of one of the footpaths over the dirt walls. Government centered also in the Fort and the trading activities of the Company were directed from there.

Aertsen's house, at that time, was the sixth house west of the main intersection of the 70-house village, the corner of Pearl Street and t 'Marcktveldt (Whitehall). It was the same distance from that corner to the Capske or landing place. On the strand at the corner, a Saturday market was developing; it would soon become the official place and day for farmers to sell their produce. From Aertsen's house around the corner to the White Horse Tavern run by his friend Philip Geraerdy was a little over 300 yards; to the City Tavern, which later became the City Hall, on the East River shore was a bit farther.

The Aertsen house stood with its gable end facing the street, two stories and a loft high. From the front stoop past the facing houses, one saw to the left

the green slopes of Breuckelen, ahead to the left Nutten (Governor's) Island, then the harbor with Staten Island ahead and to the right, and off the far right Pavonia and Paulus Hoeck.



In this house on the north side of Pearl Street a second son Hendrick was born in 1646. It is doubtful the mother of the noted Anneke Jans Bogardus, midwife Tryntje Jonas, who lived next door to the west, assisted at the birth since she was in failing health and died soon after, but her granddaughters Tryntje and Sara Roelofs, the latter, wife of the surgeon Hans Kierstede, were witnesses at the baptism performed on September 23 by Dominie Bogardus. Other witnesses were Evert Cornelis Van de Wel, owner of the trading yacht De Juffrou, and Jan de Vries, the captain of 150 soldiers at the Fort.

On September 12, 1648, "Cornelis Arissen" gave a note for 322 guilders in sewant to Isbrant Dircksen Goethart to be repaid on June 1, 1649. The loan was probably 300 guilders at 10%, the extra 22 guilders being interest. This money may have been used to put into production a 22-acre tract on Manhattan on the East River southwest of Corlaer's Hoeck in anticipation of the end of the Paulus Hoeck lease in the spring of 1650.

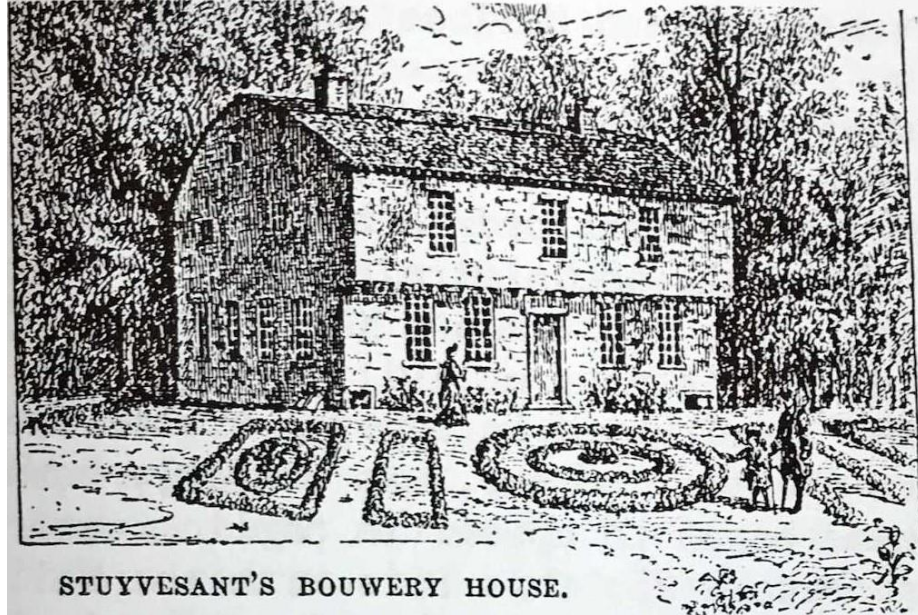
Stokes says this 22-acre tract was granted to Aertsen in 1645, but he also notes that the land was granted to Edward Marrill on October 22, 1645. Perhaps Marrill sold it to Aertsen, or perhaps it reverted to the Company because the grantee failed to develop it; if the latter, Aertsen may have gotten it a year or two later. This parcel, which Aertsen held until his death, has been thought to be the "Aertsen's Bowery" referred to in 1658, but that term probably applies to a parcel located a half mile away.

In the note, Aertsen identified himself as "living in Pavonia", yet he still held the house on Pearl Street. Until the birth of Hendrick, Belitje may have lived there, taking boarders from among the unhoused as so many wives did. With safer conditions in Pavonia after 1647, the house may have been rented though no lease is on record. After the Paulus Hoeck lease ran out in the spring of 1650, the house on Pearl Street again became Aertsen's primary home.

The Bouweries

A wagon road from the tip of Manhattan followed an old Indian trail past orchards and bouweries to the common pasture which covered the area of the

present City Hall Park. Turning east, the road rounded Catiemat's Hill, since leveled, then turned north to cross the Fresh Water brook, entered the present Chatham Square and proceeded north to the Great Bouwery. Beyond the present 24th Street, a footpath ran north through Harlaem and the Bronx.



STUYVESANT'S BOUWERY HOUSE.

This Bouwery Road was built by Van Voorst's laborers shortly after Minuit purchased Manhattan. North of the Fresh Water (a drainage system with a seventy-foot-deep lake called the Kolck or Collect), they built eight numbered bouweries, each with access to the Road. The Great Bouwery, No. 1, farthest north, was for use of the Director General. In addition, Pieter Stuyvesant had assigned himself Bouwery No.2, to the south, and adjacent lands. He then engaged Jan Jansen Damen, on a trip to the Netherlands in 1650, to buy these lands for him. Damen got him a deed for 6400 guilders and returned home to die immediately on June 18, 1651, aged 44.

A year and a half before, on December 12, 1649, Jan Damen, “lying sick abed”, had made a will naming Cornelis Aertsen, Egbert Woutersen, and Thomas Hall administrators of his estate and guardians of his nephew. Aertsen and Woutersen, former Pavonians farming on Manhattan, had known Damen through his stepson-on-law Planck for a decade.

Hall and Damen had known each other longer. Hall and a partner George Holmes were the earliest recorded English settlers in the colony, having been captured in 1635 by the Dutch in a party of English from Virginia trying to establish tobacco plantations on the South River. Brought to New Amsterdam they introduced tobacco growing to the Dutch and prospered. In 1643, Hall, as one of a council of Eight Men convoked by Kieft for advice on the Indian war, voted to eject the eighth, Jan Damen, for his role in starting it, but under Stuyvesant, Hall and Damen sat together on a board of Nine Men, Damen as a burgher representative and Hall as a farmer.

Three days after Damen's death his widow, named administrators for her interest in the estate, "to divide and arrange it to her and her children's best advantage". One of the first acts of the joint administrators was to appoint Jan Vigne, step-son, to "command the servants of Jan Damen, deceased, and direct farming activities until the 1651 crop is brought into the barrick and barn". Jan Vigne, the first European child born in the colony, was probably born in 1624; in 1649 Vigne's name began to appear in public records, indicating he had just become 25; this fits with the Walloons' arrival in 1624 and with his apparent tender age in 1632 Jan Damen married his widowed mother.

The inventory of the Darnen estate accounted for some 1200 items ranging from livestock, scythes and a quantity of hops to clothing and bedding, gold and silver specie, and gunlocks. It took two days to complete and the administrators took turns. Cornelis Aertsen and Jacobus Van Corlaer signed the second day's inventory sheets having listed items in the rear part of the house, barn, loft and brewery.

The Great Bouwery had been leased by the Directors over the years and the lease expired in about 1653, Cornelis Aertsen undertook the operation, probably moving into the fine house which Van Twiller had had built for the Director's use. This house stood just northeast of what is now the corner of First Avenue and 15th Street. Besides the house, the Van Twiller buildings were "a very good barn, a boat house, and a brew house covered with tiles."

The lands were extensive, requiring a score of farm laborers. Some two dozen Negroes freed by Kieft had been granted small plots along the Bouwery

Road, most on the west side opposite the Great Bouwery, but also on both sides of the Road south to Chatham Square. These freedmen made up much of the farm labor force and constituted a nucleus for the Bouwery Village. At least one slave owned by the Company worked on the Bouwery at this time and Stuyvesant personally owned Negroes. Probably Aertsen also Negro slaves.

The capital required to operate the Stuyvesant lands may not have been the only reason Aertsen, at about this time, sold a six-acre plot of land in Flatbush on Long Island to Dominie Johannes Polhemus. He also sold his house in town to the early poet Jacob Steendam, who lived there for seven years composing verse protesting the terrible maladministration of the colony by the Company and presaging its loss to the English.

Perhaps Aertsen needed cash to buy land on the east side of the Bouwery Road just north of DeLancey Street. This parcel, described as eight acres by Stokes but measuring sixteen acres on his charts, had been first granted in 1644 to Bastiaen, a Negro. The grant lapsing, it was regranted in 1653 and sold to one Ryck Hendricks, who sold it to Aertsen.

Aertsen definitely occupied this property before April 10, 1658, when Claes Teunissen, a "farm servant living on Cornelis Aertsen's bouwery", spoke of having some barrels of tobacco delivered to his master there; Aertsen's occupancy have been as early as 1656. The plot of Bastiaen contained a house, barn and barrick; Aertsen's 22-acre plot on the East River less than a half mile away seems to have had no buildings during the 1650's functioning as a plantation. Together the two plots up a good-sized farm, which Aertsen held until his death.

Aertsen's occupancy of the Great Bouwery have ended as early as 1656, but perhaps he continued to farm some Stuyvesant lands. In August 1660, he leased Pannebacker's Bouwery (NO. 4), from Thomas Hall, who had gotten it trading farms in 1653. This 50-acre bouwery adjoined the Bastiaen plot to the south and east. The house may have been destroyed in 1655, but Aertsen only needed the land. Arie was eighteen and Hendrick fourteen, each old enough to do a man's work.



Court Actions

In September of 1655 the shooting of an Indian girl stealing peaches in an orchard just outside of town provoked the Indians in the area to run amok, killing numerous men on the bouweries and carrying off scores of women and children for ransom. Among those killed near Harlem were Cornelis Classen Swits, eldest son of the victim of the 1641 murder, and Tobias Teunissen; the heads of the two men had been found by parties rounding up cattle which had run off into the woods. Among those held for ransom were their widows and children. The Orphanmasters, meeting in the belfried City Hall on the bank of the East River, on November 10th named Egbert Woutersen, Thomas Hall, and Cornelis Aertsen to dispose of the cattle as they judged best for the benefit of the heirs.

These events occurred while Director Stuyvesant was away with most of the able-bodied men on an expedition to oust the Swedes from the Dutch lands on the South River. At the height of the madness, getting approval from Cornelis van Tienhoven, had been left in charge, Aertsen succeeded in preserving the General's property from devastation by hiring guards from among the sailors on a French ship which was in the harbor, plus at least one local laborer.

Aertsen paid off the sailors at 25 florins apiece, but on May 1, 1656, he was sued by Cornelis Jansen, woodsawyer, for the same pay according to agreement. Aertsen suggested Cornelis van Tienhoven should pay since he had been in

charge and had authorized the hiring but said she was pay if he could take the money out of his rent for the bouwery.

The woodsawyer in turn was being sued by Aertsen's brother-in-law Andries Willemsen Hoppe from whom Jansen had rented a gun to use on guard. Jansen argued that since he hadn't been paid, he didn't yet owe the agreed-upon gun rental of half his guard's pay. The Court ordered Jansen to pay Hoppe ten guilders; it then ordered Cornelis Aertsen to pay Jansen what he owed and to collect from whom he could. The problem may have resulted from disagreement as to how much Stuyvesant's property had benefitted from guards versus Aertsen's own benefit in protection of crops, animals and family. On June 19th Jansen was back in court asking for execution of the judgement against Aertsen.

In 1655 Cornelis Aertsen's name began to appear in the court records along with Thomas Hall's as an Overseer of Common Fences on Manhattan, enforcing the obligation that those who used the common pasture had to keep the fences in good repair. On June 7th fines were sought from four men, one of whom was excused on account of age. In the spring of 1656 "the common fence was so much out of order" that the Overseers contracted for its repair, levying a quota for the cost. The Overseers didn't collect enough to pay for the work, so Hall and Aertsen found themselves sued for a balance of 24 florins in wages. The Overseers were ordered to pay within three days and thus were given good incentive to make collections.

On July 3, 1656, Aertsen's name was associated with three cases in court. In the first, he and Dirck Claesen Braeck were tapped as arbitrators in a dispute over damage caused by cattle getting onto tilled land and "daily causing great damage". The arbitrators were to inspect and value the damage.

Later that same day Dirck Claesen Braeck was charged with tapping and "giving drink to three or four different persons during the sermon the previous Sunday afternoon." Braeck denied the charge saying he had "only treated Nicholaes Verleth, Cornelis Aertsen, Ide van Voorst and their wives to a drink of beer through friendship and good neighborhood, without taking a penny . . . as they did him many favors when after his cattle." Braeck, a Pavonian, tapped while waiting for conditions across the River to settle down so he could again occupy his farm, as he (and Ide van Voorst) later did. He was released with a warning as a first offender. Verleth, at the time, was a widower and if he was accompanied by a female companion, it was probably Anna Stuyvesant,

widowed sister of the Director, Verleth married on October 14th. Perhaps the celebration was the couple's decision to wed.

In the next case, Cornelis Aertsen and Ide van Voorst were charged "because their servantmen raced on last Sunday evening after the sermon, within the City, with horses and wagons, amid much noise and singing, from which much damage and disaster might have arisen. " The defendants admitted the racing, but they, "had no knowledge of any damage caused, or that the same was forbidden. " The Court condemned them, as masters of their servants, to fines of three guilders each.

On May 20, 1658, Belitje Hendricks sued Pieter Jansen and Gerrit Pietersen, his partner, who had "one meal of victuals in her house and had been out two days riding with the wagon. " She asked for the balance of 40 florins. Noting that Evert Duyckinck, the glazier, owed the defendants money and that she owed Evert, she asked that 40 florins be allowed as an offset and "that each be paid with a closed purse." The court so ordered.

On September 17, 1658, Cornelis Aertsen was in court demanding 100 florins in beavers from Christiaen Barentsen's widow for sale of a horse. The widow said she didn't have any beavers and offered to pay in seawant (wampurn) at beavers price. The Court ordered her to pay in beavers in 14 days.

A year later on September 2, 1659, the shoe was on the other foot. Aertsen was being sued by Raghel van Tienhovem the former secretary's widow, for a 401 florin debt, on which 99 florins in seawant, two skepels of winter wheat, and one skepel each of white and grey peas had been paid. Aertsen had offered an ox, but the widow said she wouldn't know to do with it. The matter was referred to referees, but on March 6, 1660, the two were back. Nothing more had been paid and the Court ordered Aertsen to pay the balance owed.

Reconstructing Aertsen's business activities on the basis of available information would be plain guesswork; there seems to be no way to learn why he was so short of cash at this stage of his life. It is interesting that it occurs in the year after the deaths of Andries Hoppe and Jacob Coppe.

Estate Cases

Geertje Hendricks, Belitje's sister, was in New Netherland no later than mid-1651 with her husband Andries Willemsen in about 1655. Both Hoppes had sharp tempers; he once struck the wife of a potmaker who berated him, and Geertje's tongue got her in trouble. They owned a house on the east side of the Heere Wegh (Broadway) opposite the cemetery. Their five children were all born in New Amsterdam between 1651 and 1659: Catrina, Willem, Hendrick, Matthys, and Adolf. But Andries Hoppe died shortly before December 18, 1658, on date his widow told the Orphanmasters that her husband had wanted Cornelis Aertsen and Lambert Huybertsen Mol to be the children's guardians. The guardians were told to inventory the estate and report.

When the Orphanmasters met next on January 8th, Ryck Hendricksen, the woodsawyer from whom Aertsen had bought Bastiaen's plot, reported his wife Judith Cornelis had died leaving him with two children, Hendrick and Gosewyn, 10 and 9. As guardians, he had named Cornelis Aertsen and Pieter Stoutenburgh. Ryck seems to have worked hard and accumulated little; the maternal estate was small. On March 5th the guardians reported that Ryck would pay each child 50 florins on coming of age. The Hoppe guardians' work was not so easy.

On February 12, 1659, Geertje Hendricks appeared without an inventory of the estate. Threatened with a fine, she came again without the inventory; so long as she didn't remarry, she said she saw no need to report the estate. Told it was her duty, she said she wouldn't; the Orphanmasters might do as they pleased. They pleased to order Aertsen and Mol to produce the inventory which they did, but when asked if she had agreed on a settlement with the guardians, Geertje refused unless she remarried. Told she must, she replied tartly: "Must is force." Words followed and the guardians took her away. On the 19th Of March an agreement was filed: she would pay each child 200 florins on coming of age, payment to be secured by mortgaging her house, but then came a year's delay.

Andries Hoppe had had joint ventures with Jacobsen Coppe, witness at Lysbet Cornelis' baptism, which dealings Geertje continued. But Coppe died the spring of 1659, probably from an infected finger injured on a trading trip "up above" to Beverwyck. He left a will naming Lysbet Cornelis, daughter of Cornelis Aertsen, and Merritje Jans, daughter of Jan Aertsen van de Bilt, as

heiresses. The girls had been toddlers when the will was signed on December 14, 1653.

First, the will was challenged because Coppe had told people he had destroyed his last will and that it was of no value. One man called to testify about this said: "It doesn't matter whether he said that or not, the will exists." Cornelis Aertsen noted dryly that the reports might be made "by certain people because they would like it to be so". Nobody said, for the record, that maybe Coppe made two wills and then tore one. The will was upheld, but it was April of 1660 before hard work began on sorting out the two estates. Geertje planned to marry Dirck Gerritsen van Tricht, son of a prosperous burgher, and settling the Hoppe children's inheritances had high priority. The agreement of March 1659 went into effect.

On June 18, 1660, Geertje was asked how things stood between her and Jacob Coppe, she "replied confusedly". Detailed and unorganized, her statement was a stream-of-consciousness discussion of a trip to Beverwyck, of debtors spoken to, of grindstones almost all sold, of bearskins divided with sister Belitje, of 500 florins received on a Hoppe-Coppe owned yacht, of a horse bought her by her husband, and of beavers owed to and by Coppe. She promised a written statement of what she owed the Coppe estate and claimed from it in a week.

When they received the written statement, the Orphanmasters found it "not intelligible". Lengthy examination of Geertje didn't help. The Orphanmasters had difficulty making her information correspond with the accounts and they directed Geertje, Cornelis Aertsen and his wife Belitje Hendricks, and the administrators to appear at their next meeting.

They came three days later and Jan Aertsen van der Bilt came too. Geertje satisfied some questions and others at a later session, but the horse she claimed as wholly hers was claimed by Aertsen and Van der Bilt as half Coppe's and there was no record of money she claimed to have given Coppe to buy beavers. Asked if they would believe Geertje's statement without confirmation by oath, Aertsen, Van der Bilt, and the administrators said the Orphanmasters should decide that.

On September 6th Geertje refused to swear that she had given Coppe 100 florins for her personal account and that the horse was hers alone. "I do not intend to do it and shall not do it, not now nor ever," she declared flatly. Her declarations discredited, she was forbidden to draw the 100 florins she claimed and was ordered to pay 150 florins on the horse and 12 beavers to close the account with Coppe.

Geertje's refusal to take the oath need not necessarily persuade us that she lied, but that the swearing of a oath was so solemn an act, placing the immortal soul in jeopardy, that she must be absolutely positive her information was correct, and Geertje seems to have been the sort who was overtly sure but seldom positive.

Odds and ends show on the Minutes thereafter. On November 17, 1660, Francois de Bruyn asked for five beavers for an anker (20 gallons) of French wine for the Coppe funeral; Pieter Lauwerensen claimed 110 florins and was referred to the administrators; and Cornelis Aertsen was asked what should be done to collect from his wife's sister the money due the Coppe estate. Aertsen asked for delay to talk with Jan van der Bilt. On December 10, 1660, Geertje still hadn't settled with the estate and execution of judgement was being considered.

On October 4, 1661, Francois de Bruyn finally sued Cornelis Aertsen for the five beavers owed for the half anker of French wine drawn in Aertsen's name for the funeral of Jacob Coppe. Aertsen said he'd ordered the wine but couldn't get any proceeds from the estate to pay for it. Since it was ordered in his name, the Court ordered him to pay. As late as January 3, 1662, Cornelis Aertsen, "curator of the residuary estate of Jacob Coppe", was in court to obtain an order for payment of 24 guilders in beavers owed the estate.

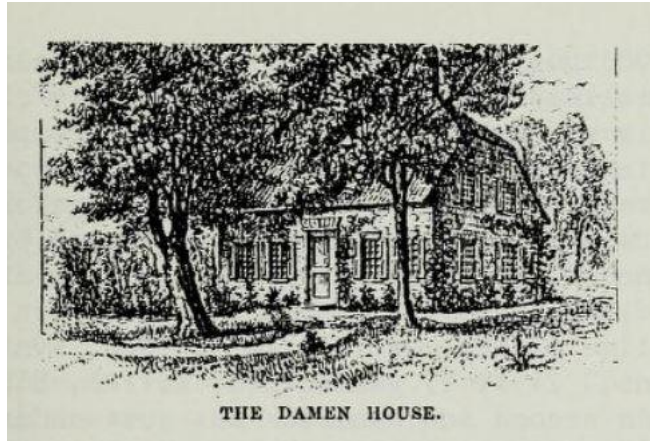
The Last Decade

Belitje Hendricks appeared in the Orphanmasters' Court on August 9, 1660, at the peak of her sister Geertje's problems. That is our last record of her in life. She'd been a witness in a dozen baptisms during the 1650's but the last such record dates from October 19, 1659. One suspects that Belitje was ailing for at least the last year of her life.

When or how she died we don't know. On March 2, 1662, Wyntje Elberts, widow of Aert Willems, told the Orphanmasters she intended to marry Cornelis Aertsen, widower of Belitje Hendricks. Belitje may have lived to see Hendrickje marry Larnbert Huybertsen Mol, in a June-November match; the bride was near 18 and the groom over 50. The marriage was probably contracted in the chapel on Stuyvesant's Bowery (where St. Marks now is) before September 1660. Dominie Henricus Selyns began keeping the records with those of the church in Breuckelen; he served the Bowery chapel on Sunday evenings. Hendrickje produced a son Cornelis, baptized 4, 1661, in the church in New Amsterdam; Mol lived in town. That there were no witnesses may relate to Belitje's last illness.

Belitje may have attended the baptism on January 10, 1661, of Geertje's son, named after his eminent grandfather Gerrit van Tright. But Belitje must have been some months dead, when Arie married Rebecca Idens on February 27, 1662, probably in the Bowery Chapel; the record is among those of the church in Breuckelen. Rebecca was the daughter of Ide Thonise of Nordigan, Holland, present with Cornelis Aertsen at the ceremony.

Soon after the wedding, Arie and Rebecca began house-keeping at the Aertsen Bowery. On March 23rd, Arie appeared before the Orphanmasters to report that after his mother's death his father had turned the farm over to him; he asked that Willem Samels, who had lived for some time with his parents, be left in his service. Belitje may have been dead for months and Arie implies his father had moved recently. It may be Aertsen worked the Damen land for some time before moving there.



THE DAMEN HOUSE.

The Great House, built of stone by Jan Damen two decades before was located on the hill a few hundred feet outside the wall at the edge of town. It was on the east side of the present Broadway diagonally across the present Cedar Street. In front of the house was the well and behind the house and barn was a hay barrick in the Visscher views of New Amsterdam, has been seen by some as a church steeple.

Nearby to the east was the Damen small house, then occupied by Pieter Stoutenburgh with whom Aertsen served from time to time as an arbitrator or guardian. In August 1663, as guardian, Stoutenburgh brought Willem Sarnuels, the orphaned son of Samuel Tonnsen and a nephew of Claes Martensen (Cleyn Claesje) Van Rosenvelt, to live with him. Willem had lived with Arie and Rebecca for the past year and a half; he cornplained that Rebecca kicked and beat him. The other guardian, Thorns Hall notified the Orphanmasters he'd take Willem into his own home if he wasn't treated well by Pieter.

Rebecca shouldn't be judged too harshly for her treatment of Willem. She was young and in the eighth month of pregnancy in midsummer before the days of air-conditioning. On October 1, 1663, her first born was baptized Belitje in the church in New Amsterdam with Cornelis Aertsen as a witness. Two years later on November 8th a son Iden was baptized and on November 6, 1667, a daughter Grietje.

Aertsen lived the rest of his life in the Great House of Jan but he did not live alone. On July 10, 1662, he married Wyntje Elberts, the widow of Aert Willems, both old friends. Willems had occupied the Great Bouwery in about 1640 and had prospered as a brewer and businessman, leaving an estate of 4400 guilders. His last year had been Strained by a slander suit that Willem Beeckman pressed to clear the name of his lovely wife who was rumored to have coupled with Cornelis van Steenwyck. Aert and Wyntje had gossiped and were finally cleared with the arrest of the instigator. Wyntje remained a widow several years, a luxury allowed by her circumstances, although she did take in boarders for extra income.

At the time of her marriage to Aertsen, Wyntje had three unmarried sons, 21 to 17 years old: Willem, Elbert, and Evert. Aertsen's second son Hendrick was just under sixteen and Lysbeth was ten. Consequently, the Damen place housed house several young people. For Wymtje the move to the Damen house was not far as her house on the Heere Wegh (Broadway) was but three blocks away, inside the wall on the same side of the road.

As operator of the Damen lands, according to Valentine, Aertsen continued his long practice of supplying the families of the city with country produce. Besides such staples as beans, peas, butter and cheese, products of the farm would have included turnips, carrots, and parsnips, squash and pumpkins, cabbage and other kales, salad greens, and some quantity of pork, beef, and fowl.

On February 24, 1664, threatened by the English, the City needed money to strengthen the fortifications and ninety burghers were asked to make loans for the purpose. "Cornelis Aarsen" was listed as lending 100 florins, the amount loaned by the majority. In April of 1665 "Cornelis Aarsen", living outside the land gate, was one of the 250 burghers assessed for support of the English soldiers, who had become a source of friction in what was otherwise a smooth transition to English rule. Soldiers had been causing disturbances and the authorities proposed that the Dutch volunteer to accept soldiers for quartering in their homes, thereby obtaining guards to protect them against other soldiers. No one volunteered so assessments were levied against the wealthier inhabitants to obtain money to induce the quartering of soldiers.

Aertsen's name appears twice in published records between the above dates, on March 25 and 6 of 1664, but it is missing when it should have appeared at least twice. On September 5, 1664, when Pieter Stuyvesant was preparing to resist the English invasion, 93 men signed a remonstrance urging him to make peace. Vigne, Stoutenburgh, Loockermans, Mol, Planck, Verleth, Romeyn and even Stuyvesant's son Balthazer signed, but Cornelis Aertsen's name and mark are missing. Again on four days during the latter part of October 1664, over 250 male inhabitants of New York swore allegiance to the English king, but again Aertsen's name and mark are missing. Either a protracted illness or a journey home to Utrecht would account for these deficiencies in the record.

Arie Cornelis was prospering. Before Cornelis' death, Arie had taken over as an overseer of fences and was helping arbitrate disputes. He had leased lands assembled in a large holding as an investment by Cornelis Van Steenwyck and Oloff Stevensen Van Cortlandt and he thus followed in his father's footsteps as the manager of large leasehold lands. It is not clear whether the start of the Farmer's Tavern in about 1665 was at Aertsen's Bouwery, near the two mile stone, or on the Thomas Hall grant on Chatham Square, the owned by Van Cortland and Steenwyck. Arie and Rebecca certainly were settled at Chatham Square by the time of Aertsen's death.

Whether Cornelis Aertsen lived to see Hendrick, 22, marry Neeltje, daughter of Cornelis Jacobsen Stille, his neighbor on Bouwery No. 6, we don't know. On March 10, 1669, Hendrick Cornelissen received a tapsters license in Bergen and on June 9, 1669, Hendrick Cornelissen and Neeltje Cornelis, both with certificates, were married at Bergen but never were members of the Bergen church. Hendrick ran a tavern there for some time, returning to farm on Manhattan. (A marriage of a Hendrick Cornelissen and a Neeltje Hendricks, both living across the Fresh Water, in the Church in New York, on May 19, 1669, probably does not pertain to Aertsen's family.)

In 1668 Aertsen was an arbitrator with Thomas Hall, Egbert Woutesen, and Jan Langestraat; the arbitrators made their report on April 7th at which time Aertsen was still living. But on September 16, 1669 his survivors Arie, Hendrick and Lysbet received a confirmation of title for Aertsen's Manhattan lands from the English Governor Lovelace, these tracts being the 22-acre parcel

on the East River and the Bastiaen grant on the Bouwery Road. The three heirs sold the properties the following January. Confirmation of title was likely sought soon after Cornelis Aertsen's death to permit sale of the properties to settle the estate.

Appendix Pieter Cornelissen

In preparing a history of the Bryant family of New Jersey in 1912, Dingman Versteeg could find no positive origins for the Bryant progenitor Pieter Cornelissen Breijandt van Steenwyck or for his wife Hendrickje Aerts whom Pieter married in Bergen, July 31, 1670. Understandably, Versteeg rejected the thesis that Pieter was a son of Cornelis van Steenwyck, possibly by an improper liaison.

Rather he argued that since Bryants and Hoppes in New Jersey acted as witnesses for each other at baptisms during the late 1600's, family ties had existed and: "Pieter was doubtless an oldest son of Cornelis Aertsen who settled in New Jersey while his younger brothers and sisters were growing up and assisting their father on the farm... He doubtless had received advances from his father which fully covered... his inheritance... and at the time of Pieter's marriage his father had just died."

Hoppe-Bryant kinship may have existed but not necessarily through Cornelis Aertsen. Hendrickje Aerts is the more likely link, either to Aertsen (sister, niece, cousin), or to Jan Aertsen van der Bilt whose sister she may have been; baptismal connections between his family and the Hoppes are found. Her name matches with names in both Aertsen families (Jan Aertsen's wife was Anneken Hendricks). Conversely, the name Pieter was seldom used in Utrecht by Van Schaicks and L.P. de Boer gives no instance in his paper.

Despite dealings between Ryck Hendricks (whose first wife was Judith Cornelis) and Cornelis Aertsen, there is no record to suggest family ties, nor are records found linking Judith Cornelis with Pieter or any other Cornelissen.

In calling Cornelis Aertsen "Bryant", Dingman Versteeg may have gone badly astray, but he is accurate in his appraisal of the man: "Cornelis Aertsen Breyandt was worthy in every respect, enterprising and public-spirited, a pioneer entitled to recognition among the founders of this... nation. He was in New Netherland before 1650...." That last was true of Cornelis but not necessarily of Pieter.