

## THE DUTCH SETTLEMENT OF NEW NETHERLAND

### **Discovery**

The discovery of New Netherland occurred as the result of a voyage, in 1609, sponsored by the Dutch East India Company. They were attempting to find a northwesterly passage to the East Indies and China. To make this quest the Company, then only seven years old, selected Henry Hudson, an Englishman, to command the good ship Half Moon (Halve Maen) which was partially manned by Dutch sailors. Hudson had made two previous attempts to discover a northwest passage, but both met with failure.

The Half Moon sailed from Amsterdam on 4 April 1609 approximately eleven years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. Due to severe weather conditions in the northern latitudes the Half Moon turned south along the coast of North America and on 3 September 1609 anchored at what is known today as Sandy Hook. After locating the mouth of a great river, now named the Hudson, the Half Moon proceeded upstream until it reached a point near the present town of Hudson where it encountered navigation difficulties.

After upstream exploration in a small boat, it became evident to Hudson that the river did not provide a shortcut to the Far East. The Half Moon then proceeded downstream. The Dutch first mate during the return downstream made note of the heavily forested landscape, the anchorage possibilities, the friendly Indians and the abundance of beaver and other fur bearing animals.

In November of 1609 the Half Moon returned to Amsterdam and reported its failure, and also its discoveries. Some of the Dutch merchants who had organized the East India Company and became privy to Half Moon discoveries proceeded to send another ship, in 1610, manned by some of the same Half Moon crew. This ship carried a cargo of goods which could be traded to the Indians who were living along the Mauritius River. Mauritius was the name given to the Hudson River by the Dutch.

### **The First Settlement**

During the next several years, the Dutch merchants encouraged by their initial trading success organized a number of voyages. The States-General of the

United Provinces of The Netherlands granted them exclusive right in 1614 "to resort to, or cause to be frequented" the newly discovered countries.

This right covered four voyages within a term of three years. All other ships frequenting these newly discovered countries would suffer the pain of Confiscation of the ships and goods, and also a fine of fifty thousand Netherland Ducats. The discoverers or finders were to benefit from this. The five ships that would make the four voyages and their venturesome skippers were: "Little Fox" - skippered by Jan de Witt, "Tiger" - skippered by Adriaen Block, "Fortune" - skippered by Henry Corstiaenssen, "Nightengale" - skippered by Thys Volckertssen and "Fortuyn" - skippered by Cornelis Jacobsen Mey. In connection with his voyage, Adriaen Block erected several timber and bark huts for winter quarters near the southern tip of Manhattan (Manhattes) Island.

When the Half Moon sailed from Amsterdam, the Dutch Republic had been at War with Spain for approximately 40 years. On 9 April 1609, only five days after the Half Moon sailed, a treaty was signed at Antwerp by representatives of Spain and the United Provinces of The Netherlands providing for a 12-year Truce.

### **The West India Company**

At the expiration of the Truce in 1621, the States-General of the United Provinces of The Netherlands chartered West India Company with a capital of 7,500,000 guilders. However, the organization was not completed and the funds raised until 1623. In that year, the Province of New Netherland was formed and included the colonies which were to be established in the territory discovered in the 1609 voyage of Henry Hudson. The new Province was to be governed by the newly formed West India Company pursuant to the terms set forth in its twenty-four year charter.

The West India Company was responsible to the States-General of the Dutch Republic. New Netherland represented only one of its several responsibilities. Trading interests and colonies in Brazil, Guinea, Angola, the Islands of St. Thomas, Aruba and Curacao were established by the West India Company; and the Company received large subsidies from the States-General to carry on the resumed war with Spain.

The West India Company was managed by nineteen Directors referred to in the various documents as the "Assembly of XIX". The Directors represented five distinct city chambers; however, the City of Amsterdam's Chamber was the dominant force. The principal purpose of the Company, by its investment in New Netherland, was to produce a profit for its investors through trade. Of secondary importance was the development of a colony of nationalistic Dutch people imbued with the same cultural attributes as their forefathers in The Netherlands.

### **Exploitation and Early Development**

The West India Company in the year 1623 commenced the exploitation of New Netherland by sending more than 30 families to America under the command of Captain Cornelis J. Mey. This was the initial step of the colonization project. These families consisted, in large part, of Protestant refugees known as Huguenots who had fled from France to escape persecution. Some were located at the mouth of the Mauritius and on Long Island; others were placed along the Delaware and Connecticut Rivers. Eighteen families were taken up the Mauritius River and settled on land which later became known as the site of Albany where a trading post had been previously established. These settlers were to be engaged in growing food for the posts and trade centers that were to be placed on Manhattes Island, the upper reach of the Mauritius (North River) and on the Connecticut (Fresh) and Delaware (South) Rivers. It soon became apparent that the rugged timbered terrain would be very difficult to bring under cultivation and that additional manpower and animals were required. Other ships followed the Mey voyage bringing more settlers, horses, livestock, seeds, tools and supplies and returning to The Netherlands with furs and timber. Six ships came in the first six months of 1625. A company of soldiers also arrived and began the fortifications known as Fort Orange on the Mauritius and Fort Willhelmus on the Delaware.

A change of direction and policy occurred in 1625 when the Assembly of XIX decided that the primary purpose of the Colony of New Netherland was business and the promotion of trade. Accordingly, it ordered the outlying farming activities abandoned and all colonists concentrated at the location Of New Amsterdam on the Island of Manhattes. This change was impelled by the cost of maintaining and defending three settlements and the belief that a single settlement could be more easily governed and defended.

### Acquisition of Manhattan Island

The first Director General or Governor of New Netherland was Cornelis J. Mey who took office in 1623. Next was William Verhulst, who arrived in 1625. He was returned to Amsterdam in 1626 to face charges for maladministration. Verhulst was succeeded by Peter Minuit, a former assistant to Verhulst. Minuit arrived in New Amsterdam on the 4th of May 1626.

It was the established policy of the West India Company that all land must be purchased by legal title from the rightful owners. Since Minuit had received instructions to concentrate the settlers on Manhattes Island and to build a Fort there, Minuit deemed it necessary to purchase the Island from the Indians. Instructions were issued to inform the Indian Sachems that The Netherlands were interested in purchasing the Island and he would like to meet with them.

The result of the negotiations conducted by Peter Minuit is well known — the acquisition of Manhattes Island, of approximately 22,000 acres, for trade

goods valued at 60 guilders or about \$24. Set forth below is the report of the purchase given to the States-General by their Deputy Peter Schagen.

“High and Mighty Lords,  
My Lords the States-General  
at The Hague.”

"High and Mighty Lords:

Yesterday, arrived here the Ship the Arms of Amsterdam, which sailed from New Netherland, out of the River Mauritius, on the 23rd September. They report that our people are in good heart and live in peace there; the Women also have borne some children there. They have purchased the Island Manhattes from the Indians for the value of 60 guilders; 'tis 11,000 morgens in size. They had all their grain sowed by the middle of May, and reaped by the middle of August. They send thence samples of summer grain; such as wheat, rye, barley, oats, buckwheat, canary seed, beans and flax.

The cargo of the aforesaid ship is: — 7246 Beaver skins.

178 1/2 Otter skins.

675 Otter skins.

48 Minck skins.

36 Wild cat skins.

33 Mincks.

34 Rat skins.

Considerable Oak timber and Hickory.

Herewith, High and Mighty Lords, be commended to the mercy of the Almighty.

In Amsterdam, the 5th November, Ad Your 1626.High

Mightinesses' obedient

(signed) P. Schagen

Received 7th November, 1626."

### **Settlement Problems**

Initially, the settlers created six farms on Manhattes Island, together with a small fort, a counting house made of stone, and thirty bark huts. The farms were to produce grain, vegetables, meat and dairy products, thus

making New Amsterdam self-sufficient. This would avoid the necessity and high cost of shipping food supplies across the Atlantic Ocean. The voyages between the Netherlands and its offspring New Netherland were not without hazards. Bad Weather was the least of such hazards. Not only was there a risk of encountering a Spanish or English man of war, but the high seas were infested with pirates who confiscated ships and cargos, as prizes, and required payment of ransom to obtain the release of passengers and crew.

Due to the many problems encountered in farming the rocky soil of Manhattes Island, it soon became apparent that raising grain crops for market was impractical. Moreover, many of the Walloon emigrants recruited by the Company became dissatisfied with their life and returned to The Netherlands. By 1628, the farm system had deteriorated to the point where the 200 colonists found it necessary to procure food from the Indians.

### **Establishment of Patroon System**

The Directors of the West India Company, in 1629, authorized the establishment of a Patroon system in New Netherland as they believed it would enhance the Company's profits. This system endowed wealthy private investors with the opportunity to acquire large tracts of land directly from the Indian owners. The Patroon or Lord of the Manor had complete control over the emigrants who were induced to journey to the New Netherland, as employees. Each Patroon was permitted to purchase a tract of land fronting six miles on the seacoast, or on both sides of a navigable river. All areas of the New Netherland were free for Patroon colonies, except Manhattes Island.

The Patroons had their own courts and a complete monopoly of trade for their plantation. The West India Company was to allot to each Patroon twelve black men and women out of the ship "prizes" taken, in which negroes were found. The Patroons were required to furnish the inhabitants of each plantation with the services of a school teacher and a minister.

The advantages of the Patroon system attracted a number of investors from The Netherlands, who were able to secure emigrants to work on their plantations, some in servitude, and others as free men with various skills.

### **The Administration of William Kieft**

William Kieft became Director of New Netherland in 1638, having succeeded Wouter van Twiller, who was recalled because of alleged corruption. van Twiller had served six years as Governor, having succeeded Peter Minuit in 1632. Minuit had returned to Amsterdam under a cloud, because the Assembly of XIX believed that he had favored the Patroons at the expense of the Company.

While Kieft displayed considerable ability in correcting some of the problems that had plagued the colony during the administration of van Twiller, it was not long before he was at odds with some of the inhabitants. It was charged

that he acted hastily and arbitrarily on many occasions, without considering the advice or wishes of the colonists.

The Director permitted the sale of firearms, powder and lead for 400 men to the Mohawk Indian tribe, but refused the demands of the native tribes for similar treatment. This increased the hatred and enmity of the latter tribes toward the settlers. A major source of trouble, that Kieft did not bother to correct, was the destruction and damage of Indian crops caused by the straying of the settlers' cattle. When the Indians complained and sought redress, they were rejected. For revenge, the Indians began to kill the cattle and horses that strayed upon their lands. Because of these occurrences hostilities broke out, and rapidly escalated into the murder of both Indians and settlers.

Eventually, the Director on petition of three men, who represented that they were acting for the entire Board of twelve men selected by the Director, authorized an attack by a party of soldiers and burghers (free citizens) on the Indians, during the night of 27-28 February 1643. Eighty Indians were slain, men, women and children, and 30 prisoners taken. The Colonists (Commonalty) protested vigorously against the Director and the three persons, who petitioned him because of the cruel tyranny and bloodshed that had taken place without their knowledge and consent. Also, they were obliged to take up arms against the eleven Indian Tribes who sought revenge for the bloody massacre that occurred the night of 27-28 February. In the ensuing conflict, about 1000 Indians were killed as well as many Colonists and soldiers. The survivors crowded into the Fort, as the only place of refuge from the Indians. All of the bouweries (farms) were destroyed except three on Manhattes Island and two on Staten Island. The greater part of the cattle were killed. Great destruction and damage was caused to the property of the Company.

Director Kieft sought to place the blame for the disaster upon his advisors and then recommended to the Company that the Indians who had waged war should be totally destroyed and exterminated. However, the Board of twelve men considered that it would be better to secure public tranquility by making a general peace with the Indian Tribes. They said this course would be impossible to follow until the Director was removed. Kieft then dissolved the Board of twelve men, and prohibited any assemblies of the populace without his express approval. He felt such assemblies would be dangerous to the authority of the country.

The consequences of the disaster which was visited upon New Netherland during the administration of William Kieft as described in the "Memorial of Eight men to the States-General of The Netherlands" follows:

"Noble, High and Mighty Lords, the Noble Lords the States General of the United Netherland Provinces.

Noble, High and Mighty Lords.

As no sacrifice is more acceptable to our God than an humble spirit and a contrite heart, so nothing should, in like manner, be more pleasing to all Christian princes and magistrates, than to lend an ear to their complaining, and to extend their hand to their distressed subjects.

It is then so that we poor inhabitants of New Netherland were here in the Spring pursued by these wild Heathens and barbarous Savages with fire and sword; daily in our houses and fields have they cruelly murdered men and women; and with hatchets and tomahawks struck little children dead in their parents' arms or before their doors; or carried them away into bondage; the houses and grain-barracks are burnt with the produce; cattle, of all descriptions, are slain and destroyed, and such as remain must perish this approaching Winter for the want of fodder.

Almost every place is abandoned. We, wretched people, must skulk, with wives and little ones that still survive, in poverty together, in and around the fort at the Manahatas where we are not safe even for an hour; whilst the Indians daily threaten to overwhelm us with it. Very little can be planted this autumn, and much less in the spring; so that it will come to pass that all of us who will yet save our lives, must of necessity perish next year of hunger and sorrow, with our wives and children, unless our God have pity on us.

We are all here, from the smallest to the greatest, devoid of counsel and means, wholly powerless. The enemy meets with scarce any resistance. The garrison consists of but 50 @ 60 soldiers unprovided with ammunition. Fort Amsterdam, utterly defenceless, stands open to the enemy night and day. The Company hath few or no effects here (as the Director hath informed us); were it not for this, there would have been still time to receive assistance from the English at the East (ere all had gone to ruin); and we wretched settlers, whilst we must abandon all our substance, are exceedingly poor.

These heathens are strong in might; they have formed an alliance with seven Other nations; are well provided with guns, powder and lead, which they purchased for beaver from the private traders who have had, for a long time, free range here; the rest they take from our fellow countrymen whom they murder.

In fine, we experience here the greatest misery, which must astonish a Christian heart to see or to hear.

We turn then, in a body, to you, High and Mighty Lords, acknowledging you as our Sovereigns and the Fathers of Fatherland. We supplicate, for God 's sake, and for the love your High Mightinesses bear your poor and desolate subjects here in New Netherland, that your High

Mightinesses would take pity on us, your poor People, and encourage the Company thereunto, and command them (to whom we also hereby make known our necessity) to forward us, by the earliest opportunity, such assistance as your High Mightinesses will deem most proper, in order that we, poor forlorn people, may not be left all at once a prey, with wives and children, to these cruel heathens. And should suitable assistance not speedily arrive (contrary to our expectations), we shall, through necessity, in order to save the lives of those who remain, be obliged to betake ourselves to the English at the East, who would like nothing better than to possess this place. And that an account of the superior convenience of sea coasts, bays, and large rivers, besides the great fertility Of this place; yea, which alone could of itself provision and supply yearly, 20, 25 @ 30 ships from Brazil or the West Indies with all necessaries.

Remaining, as we are, your High Mightinesses' faithful servants and subjects, lawfully chosen and authorized by the Honorable Director and Council and the entire Commonalty of New Netherland.

Signed Cornelis Melyn,	Jan Evertse Boudt,
Tomas Hal,	Gerrit Wolphertse,
Isak Allerton,	Barent Dirckse,
Abraham Pieterse,	Jochem Pieterse Kuyter.

Dated Manahatan, in New Netherland, this 3d November, 1643, Stil: Rom 0.”

The States-General on 5 April 1644 requested a prompt report from the West India Company on the Memorial of the Eight Men and removal of the inconveniences. The Amsterdam Chamber of the West India Company responded, pleading inability to correct the situation without considerable aid from the State and suggesting a grant of about a million florins. The States General Deputies to the Assembly of XIX recommended that an investigation be made by its Board of Accounts. This recommendation was accepted and the Board of Accounts, in December of 1644, made its report, which reviewed the happenings during the Indian uprising.

The Board recommended that every effort be made to establish peace in the country. The advice of the Director, that the Indians be exterminated by force, was rejected as impossible and unchristianlike. Also recommended was the recall of the Director. His replacement was to be by a person endowed with sufficient qualities to promote, on the one side, the interests of the Company, and the welfare of the commonalty. On the other side he was to maintain good correspondence with the neighboring people, and especially with the Indians. Other recommendations were made in regard to the repair of Fort Amsterdam, and the establishment of a Council consisting of the Director, Vice Director and Fiscal.

The Assembly of XIX accepted the recommendation, and specific instructions were issued to the Director and Council of New Netherland. William Kieft was recalled by the Assembly of XIX. Appointed in his place was Petrus Stuyvesant. He was also appointed Director of the Islands of Curacao, Aruba and Bon Aire. Dr. Lubbertus van Dinclagen was appointed Vice-Governor. Petrus did not arrive in New Netherland until May of 1647.

During the month of August 1645, efforts had been made by Director Kieft and his staff to obtain a firm and durable peace with the Indians. In so doing, the Director sought the advice of the burghers. These efforts bore fruit, as Articles of Peace were concluded in the presence of the Mohawk Indians, between the Dutch community and nine tribes of River Indians. A proclamation was then issued by the Director, making the sixth of September a day of general thanksgiving, which would be celebrated in all the Dutch and English churches within the limits of New Netherland.

### **Administration of Petrus Stuyvesant**

At this point a brief description of Petrus (Pieter) Stuyvesant, and how he viewed his role as Director General, would be appropriate. Petrus was born in 1592 in the village of Scherpenzeel which is in the Province of Friesland, The Netherlands. His father was a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. Petrus studied philosophy and letters at the University of Franeker.

In 1635 he set sail for the Island of Curacao, in the West Indies, as a supercargo or clerk in the service of the West India Company. Eight years later he was chosen Governor of Curacao. During his tour of duty in Curacao, he lost a leg in an attack upon a Portuguese island. This missing leg was replaced by one of wood which he decorated with silver studs. This gave him the name of "old silverleg".

Petrus was a man of great decisiveness, and with a martinet's appetite for discipline and obedience to commands by his superior, military or civilian. He was extremely jealous of his authority, and did not hesitate to exhibit his iron will and autocratic feelings by stomping about on his wooden leg, and by berating those who disagreed with his position. On the other hand, he did not lack in judgment and tact. He was thoroughly devoted to the welfare of the community, as well as the West India Company.

Upon the arrival of Director General Stuyvesant in New Amsterdam, William Kieft learned of the Memorial of the Eight Men to the States-General, and a Petition sent to the Assembly of XIX; also the submission of a letter dated 28 October 1644 to the West India Company excoriating the actions of Director Kieft in initiating and waging war on the Indians, levying additional taxes, and failing to arrange for a permanent peace with the Indian Tribes. Kieft was

outraged by this attack on him, and wrote a letter to Director Stuyvesant on 15 June 1647 charging Jochem Pietersen Kuyter and Cornelis Melyn, two of the eight men, with libel, falsehoods and with dispatching letters to The Netherlands in an irregular and clandestine manner. Kieft proclaimed his innocence, and urged that the two men be sent to The Netherlands and punished for their crimes.

Director General Stuyvesant, on 19 June 1647, demanded a response from the two men to the charges made by former Director Kieft. The response made by the two men denied the assertions of Kieft, and reiterated their views on many of the matters listed in their Memorial to the States-General. They asked that they be sent to Holland, accompanied by four of the eight men who signed the Memorial.

On 16 July 1647, a trial was held before the Director General, the Vice Director, and three other Council members, sitting as a military court.

Written opinions were submitted, on 18 July, by Council members Dinclagen, Nuton, Leendersz and Bol, all of whom recommended that both men be banished from New Netherland and fined. The Director General, in his opinion, found that some of the charges were dubious, and not sufficiently proved. However, he found Cornelis Melyn guilty of several serious crimes against the government, including stirring up sedition and mutiny, and concocting a false and slanderous letter against former Director Kieft, his lawful superior. He held Melyn should be punished with death, and that all of his property be confiscated. With respect to the charges against Jochem Pietersen Kuyter, the Director General found that most of the charges were unproven; but that he had insulted the Director in the presence of the eight men and "threatened him with his finger, being an offense against his person and dignity and in his person against the supreme sovereign authorities." He concluded by saying that the offense ought to be punished by a fine of 300 guilders, and an acknowledgment before God and the court that he spoke evil.

However, the Director General was not finished with the matter of the 28 October 1644 letter. On 22 July, he gave his opinion that both Melyn and Pietersen were equally guilty of drafting such letter, which was in most respects false and untrue. Moreover, that the defendants failed to prove and make good the "caluminous aspersions and defamations written behind the back of their lawful Commander.

Sentence was pronounced on Cornelis Melyn, on 25 July 1644. It consisted Of banishment from New Netherland for seven years, and payment of a fine of 300 guilders. On the same day, Jochem Pietersen Kuyter was sentenced to be banished for three consecutive years, and to pay a fine of 150 guilders. The sentencing of Melyn and Pietersen did not end the controversy

concerning the regime Of Director Kieft and Director General Stuyvesant's actions in the matter. It was to continue for several years.

Cornelis Melyn and Jochem Pietersen Kuyter petitioned the States-General concerning the sentences, which had been handed down by the Director General. After considering a report of their Deputies, the States-General granted the Petitioners provisional appeal, and suspended the sentences, with the further provision that the Petitioners were allowed and granted liberty to return to New Netherland, and to use and enjoy their property freely and unmolested.

The States-General issued instructions, in April 1650, to the Director of New Netherland stating they deemed it expedient that an increase in population be favored and encouraged in every way. They also instructed that care be taken that the country not be divested of horses and cattle, and that the supplies and provisions be reserved for arriving colonists. The colonists also were to be furnished arms for their defense.

The Committee of the States-General on the Affairs of New Netherland issued a "Provisional Order Respecting the Government, Preservation and Peopling of New Netherland", in April 1650. The Provisional Order called for reform of the Government of New Netherland in several respects, and provided for redress of many of the complaints made against the administration of New Netherland.

Information is not available in the New York Colonial History indicating the final outcome of the litigation recited above. It is evident that the resolution of matters involving New Netherland moved very slowly, in the bureaucracy of the States-General. If this matter was not resolved prior to the English occupation of New Netherland in 1664, it probably became moot.

An English fleet, consisting of four frigates under command of Colonel Richard Nicolls, appeared, on 28 August 1664, in the Bay of Najack off New Amsterdam with 400 soldiers. By written letter of Colonel Nicolls dated 31 August, the City and Fort Manhattan were summoned to surrender. Nicolls promised that the inhabitants would not experience loss or damage, upon voluntary submission. On the contrary, if the surrender was not voluntary, they could expect miseries and misfortunes.

Petrus Stuyvesant and his Delegates, on 2 September, attempted to persuade Colonel Nicolls to delay the takeover for a period of twelve months, in which time the High Mightinesses (the title of the members of the StatesGeneral) and the King of England would determine what was to be done, thus avoiding the shedding of innocent Christian blood. Colonel Nicolls refused to consider the proposal and gave notice that in forty-eight hours he would bring his force nearer. He was willing only to consider the terms for surrender.

Stuyvesant received a Remonstrance, on 5 September, signed by ninety-three burghers urging him to conclude an honorable capitulation, inasmuch as the

Fort was in no condition to withstand an assault against such a powerful enemy. Capitulation would save the city and the property from total destruction without considerable bloodshed, but what was dearer to them, their wives and children. The next day it was resolved by the Director General and Council to surrender, and drafting of the Articles of Capitulation commenced. These Articles were quite generous and enabled the Dutch residents to preserve their freedoms and way of life. The Articles were ratified on 8 September, and the surrender to the English took place. The garrison retired with all its arms, flying colors and beating drums, but without a single shot being fired.

Petrus Stuyvesent took a ship to The Netherlands and arrived there about 16 October 1665. The West India Company asked him to go to The Hague and make a written report to their High Mightinesses giving an account of his administration. In his report, Stuyvesant pointed out that he had protested from time to time of the lack of a suitable garrison, the continued troubles he had with the English encroachments and their government of Hartford Colony. Moreover, powder and provisions for a lengthy resistance were lacking. Stuyvesant also pointed to the assurances he had received from the Assembly of XIX one month before the frigates arrived. In these assurances the Directors had expressed hope that the English would not henceforth give so much trouble. At the time, the total population of New Amsterdam was approximately 1600. Stuyvesant also said that there was no hope of reinforcements and relief for six months.

The West India Company did not take kindly to the report of Petrus Stuyvesant concerning the loss of New Netherland and reported to the StatesGeneral that it found that the colony had not been defended, as required. It said the reasons given by Stuyvesant for lack of provisions and powder were without foundation, as it was within his power to have had the grain harvested, and to have obtained an additional 5000 pounds of powder in July 1664. The Company maintained that with 180 soldiers in the Fort, it should not have been surrendered without making some defense. The other reasons given by Stuyvesant were also discounted, such as despair of relief, for it was impossible for him to know that they would not be relieved at an early date. In any event, it was his duty, until the time had arrived for surrender, and a good capitulation could be arranged, to resist. The interest of the State and the Company would thus be saved.

A detailed, eloquent rebuttal was made to the States-General by Peter Stuyvesant concerning the report of the West India Company. He placed the blame for the loss of New Netherland squarely on the Directors of the West India Company who, time after time, failed to heed his requests for ships and troops and other assistance necessary to protect the colony from perceived threats of the English, as well as the Indians and the Swedes.

The West India Company submitted a lengthy rejoinder to Stuyvesant's rebuttal concluding that Stuyvesant was guilty of neglect, and was to blame for the loss of New Netherland. The Company charged that the authorities and the

chief officer were more interested in their lands, bouweries and buildings, and were unwilling to offer any opposition, in order to avoid giving the English a pretext for burning and destroying their properties. The Director, they said, surrendered to the English, what he could have defended with reputation, because he had allowed himself to be influenced by clergymen, women and cowards for the sake of saving their private properties.

The last word in the surrender to the English of New Netherland was the dismissal of Petrus Stuyvesant as Director and employee of the West India Company. Stuyvesant returned to New York where he had left his wife and where his son, Balthazar, resided. Despite the blame placed on him by the West India Company for the loss of the Colony to the English, he held his head high. Although living under English rule, he operated his bouwerie for another five years. He died in 1672 and is buried on the site of St. Marks Church in New York City.

*Documents relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York procured in Holland, England and France by John Romeyn Brodhead, Esq. by virtue of an Act of the Legislature passed 2 May 1839 (Vols. I and 11).*

### **The English Usurpation of New Netherland**

The English and Dutch were rival maritime powers in the 17th century, although for a part of the century they were allies against the French under King Louis, and the Spanish. Both powers developed powerful navies and large merchant fleets. Both powers were rivals in developing trade and in that endeavor established trading posts, forts and colonies in Africa, South America, North America and the East and West Indies. The Spanish and the French were similarly involved. At times their activities led to the taking of prizes and to wars, some of which were prolonged affairs.

The English had long desired the Dutch Province of New Netherland. It was located between their colonies in Massachusetts on the north, and Maryland and Virginia to the south. In English thinking, the Dutch colony was a veritable thorn in its side. The English had made known their claim to the Dutch occupied area over a long period of years under the "right of discovery," claiming that John Cabot in his voyages in 1497 had discovered this part of the coast of North America. In 1654, while the United Provinces were at war with England, the English under Cromwell sent a fleet on 27 February 1654 to attack and capture New Netherland. However, soon after the fleet reached Boston, word was received that peace had been concluded on 15 April 1654, and no hostilities ensued.

The Dutch considered their territory to extend from Cape Cod on the northeast, to Cape Henlopen on the southwest. The West India Company took

possession of this territory by virtue of their charter from the government of The Netherlands. Forts were built in the north on the Hudson River, and in the south on the Delaware River. To the east a fort was built on the Connecticut River.

The population of the Massachusetts colony grew much more rapidly than did the Dutch population of New Netherland. In the search for more fertile land, some of the English settlers moved south and west onto land that was in the territory of New Netherland, but which had not been occupied by Dutch colonists. Some of the English settled within the recognized territory of the Dutch west of the Connecticut River and became citizens of New Netherland.

By the year 1650, the English had established the towns of Hartford and New Haven on Dutch territory and were moving to the Hudson north of New Amsterdam. The English had occupied the eastern portion of Long Island. These incursions continued despite protests and the exchange of letters between the respective Governors. The need for a definite boundary became more apparent as the years passed. While instructions were given by the West India Company to the Director to oppose further encroachment on the lands of the Company, it was an impossible task, absent the determination of definite boundaries and the troops necessary for enforcement. In 1650, after much negotiation, a provisional boundary line was agreed upon at Hartford, subject to approval of the supreme governments. The Dutch ratified the boundary, 22 February 1656, but the English took no action.

The Dutch settlements on the Delaware were few and far between. The Swedes made two attempts to plant colonies on the river, but were forced off by the Dutch, although a number of Swedes remained and subjected themselves to Dutch jurisdiction. In September of 1659, the English began to exert pressure from the south on the New Netherland community of New Amstel. Colonel Nathaniel Utie, an agent of Lord Baltimore of Maryland, came to the Dutch town and Fort New Amstel, on the west bank of the Delaware River, commanding that the place and country be delivered up to the Province of Maryland. This action was protested by Governor Stuyvesant and Council. The Governor and Council of the Province of Maryland responded on 7 October 1659, saying they expected the Dutch to leave in compliance with the request of Colonel Utie.

The next event occurred when a Captain James Neale, attorney for Cecilius Calvert, Baron of Baltimore, appeared at a meeting of the Assembly of the West India Company on 1 September 1660, and asked if they acknowledged the establishment of the colony at New Amstel at Delaware Bay and, if so, demanded the surrender of the plantation and the payment of homage to his Lordship as proprietor of the country. The Directors of the West India Company replied that they had possessed the place for a long series of years under the government Of the High and Mighty Lord States-General of the United

Netherlands without the Baron or anyone else laying claim thereto, and that they expected to hold and defend same against whomsoever it may be.

The Assembly of XIX promptly sent a Remonstrance to the States-General expressing its concern about the English who, for many years, had endeavored, by unseemly practices and means, to invade the north side of the New Netherland lands and to form a colony on the Hudson River. In addition, the English, situated between Virginia and the Delaware River, threatened to possess the entire Delaware River by virtue of a patent given by Charles the First, King of England, on fraudulent representation; namely, that the lands were not, at the time, in possession of anyone.

The Assembly of XIX implored the States-General to commission the Ambassador to complain of such hostile proceedings, and to also urge his Majesty to allow the matter to remain in status until Commissioners on both sides made and agreed upon boundaries between Maryland and New Netherland. Also to be settled were the lands on both sides of the Connecticut River, together with a part of Long Island. The Dutch believed it should be restored to New Netherland and firm boundaries fixed between the lands of the Company and the English.

The States-General instructed Ambassador Van Gogh at London to make known to the King the grievances which had occurred against Dutch shipping and landed properties, and to seek redress. The response given in his Majesty's name to the States-General was a reiteration of the complaints, previously submitted to the Dutch, that they had imposed injuries on English shipping, despite their offer to give satisfaction for any such injuries.

The States-General soon learned that a Captain Schot, by orders and commission from the Duke of York, had taken by force a portion of Long Island and had expelled the Dutch from their possessions. They also learned that a fleet was on the way to attack the City of New Amsterdam. The West India Company, on 24 October 1664, advised the States-General that ships and forces sent from England by the Duke of York, assisted by the power of New England, had on 27 August captured and subjected to English authority the City of New Amsterdam and, in addition, the entire New Netherland.

The States-General transmitted the message from the West India Company to all of the Provinces and to Ambassador Van Gogh in order that he strongly expostulate against these attacks, and request due and prompt reparation from the King of England. The States of Holland adopted a Resolution which was sent to the King of France, also to the Kings of Sweden and Denmark.

After Ambassador Van Gogh had presented a written Memoir to King Charles II on 26 October 1664, he obtained an audience with the King on 6 November, at which he presented again the whole subject of grievances. As to

the New Netherland situation, the King said "the country was a dependency under his authority, being situated there among his other lands, and therefore had been settled and occupied before this by the English, who had only permitted the Dutch nation at the outset to settle there, without any authority having been conferred on the Dutch West India Company or any other person."

Later, English Ambassador Downing submitted to the States-General a written justification of the capture of New Netherland, and of many other injuries inflicted on Dutch shipping and properties. As to New Netherland, it consisted, in the main, of the assertion that this tract of country is situated within the New England patent. The Dutch resided there precariously, and only by connivance. Such permission had been signified to them by the English from year to year, upon certain conditions. Furthermore, the Dutch brought about the visitation on themselves by their aggressions and provocations, since the last Treaty. Of course, all this was untrue, but the King could do no wrong.

Because of the intractable position taken by King Charles, and of the continuing build up of the English naval and military forces, the States-General began preparations for war with England. In December 1664, they advised the King of France of their views on the situation and demanded the aid as promised by the Treaty which the States of Holland had with France. However, the High Mightinesses were still content to settle the difficulties which had occurred between both nations. Whatever was taken by the Dutch from the English would be returned, on condition that the King of England would agree to restore all the Properties taken from the Dutch, including New Netherland.

The King of France through his Ambassadors agreed to mediate the difference between the United Provinces and the English; however, they found King Charles resolute in his determination to maintain his conquest of the Dutch possessions. These Ambassadors then informed the Dutch Ambassadors of the necessity of the Dutch to abandon, then or give up, their claim and to New Netherland and several other possessions if they wanted peace and not war. But King Charles did not even favor their proposal.

Another effort toward peace was made by the King of France, in August 1665. when he made a final proposal directly to King Charles. This proposal involved the retention of the territory of New Netherland by the English. King Charles was also informed that unless he accepted the proposal, the King of France would execute the guaranty under the Treaty of Alliance to the High Mightinesses which would cause a rupture with the English. The King of England, on 19 August 1665, flatly rejected the proposal of the French King, The war continued with the French allied with the Dutch.

Negotiations between the Dutch, French and English commenced at Breda in 1667, and success was achieved during that year, and a Treaty signed.

However, the Treaty did not halt the fighting for long. In October 1673, the States-General were notified, by the Amsterdam Board of Admiralty, that Captain Jacob Benckes and Captain Cornelis Evertsens, with their Dutch naval squadrons, had captured the fortress at New Amsterdam, on 9 August 1673.

The capture of the Fort entailed only a demand for surrender to the Dutch fleet, as the defenses of the Fort were in no condition to repel an attack. Within four hours, Captain Manning, in command of the Fort, hauled down the English flag, and turned the city and country of New York over to Dutch Captain Anthony Colve. The City of New York and the Dutch towns on Long Island promptly submitted to Dutch rule. Some of the towns on the eastern portion of Long Island, that were originally English towns, refused at first, to give allegiance to the Dutch government.

Captain Colve, who was commissioned as Governor, set up the government by forming a Council of War. The Council called for an election of Delegates, Burgomasters and Shepens (sheriffs) from the City of New Orange (the new name of New York), and other municipalities. All English citizens were required to take an oath to be true and lawful subjects to the Dutch, but were excused from bearing arms against England.

The States-General in December 1673 advised Charles II, in response to his letter, that they were willing to renew with him the Treaty concluded at Breda, in the year 1667. Also, to manifest the special esteem which they entertained for the friendship of Charles II, they were willing to offer the restitution of New Netherland and all other places and colonies which had been won by their arms during the present war. The States-General also advised they were firmly convinced that His Majesty would be unwilling to refuse a reciprocal engagement to restore to The Netherlands such land and forts as his subjects may have taken.

Peace negotiations between the English and Dutch representatives continued at Cologne, and were successfully concluded. A Treaty was signed on 19 February 1674. The States-General advised the Board of Admiralty of Zeeland and Amsterdam, in July, that Captain Henrick van Tholl would sail to New Netherland, and would carry orders to Governor Anthony Colve for the surrender of New Netherland to Major Andros, the English Governor, pursuant to Article 6

of the Treaty of Peace. Under this Treaty, the United Provinces of The Netherlands exchanged New Netherland with England for the territory on the northeast coast of South America known as Surinam. This was a great bargain for England which enjoyed the territory of New Netherland for the next hundred years. Governor Andros arrived in New York on 1 November 1674, and the Province of New Netherland ceased to exist.

This material is from Descendants of Cornelis Aertsen Van Schaick, Vol. I, pp. 21-33.