

# *New Castle Tercentenary of Dutch Settlement, 1651-1951*

## **For Commemorating New Castle's Heritage from the Dutch Founders**

Next summer, on Saturday, June 16, New Castle will celebrate the 300th Anniversary of its founding. The founders were Dutch citizens, led by their director-general in America, Peter Stuyvesant.

The Dutch nation claimed all the territory of the Delaware and the Hudson River valleys by right of discovery in 1609. They named this whole region New Netherland in honor of their homeland—the United Netherlands (Holland). In 1626 they founded as their capital, New Amsterdam (New York) on their North River (the Hudson).

The Delaware was their South River. They had a fort on it opposite the site of Philadelphia in 1624 and enjoyed a fine trade with the Indians, in beaver and other skins, and in tobacco—until the Swedes came in 1638. During the next ten years the Swedes captured the best of the trade on the Delaware.

This was too much for the vigorous Peter Stuyvesant (appointed governor, 1647). In the summer of 1651, he came down from New Amsterdam with ships, men and supplies, secured from the Indians the land from Christina Creek to Bombay Hook, and built Fort Casimir on a then high point at the end of New Castle's present Chestnut Street.

With "Old Fort Casimir," the Dutch controlled the river trade. Close by it they began to build the town, and four years later Peter Stuyvesant took the whole river from the Swedes.

Up to the coming of the Dutch, 300 years ago, the land now occupied by New Castle's streets, Green, gardens, houses and buildings was a forest of great trees extending back from the sandy shore. Grassy meadows and large marshes bordered it north and south.

Here the Dutch felt at home. They knew how to build dykes and make sluices for draining the marshes; how to make brick and to build windmills. Within a few years—in spite of serious misfortunes—the local Dutch director, Jacob Arlichs, could write: "This settlement is now pretty well looking and convenient, with 110 houses built."

The New Castle Tercentenary Commission was created by the 1949 General Assembly to help the people of New Castle and the state pay fitting tribute to the Dutch founders.

To these founders New Castle owes its existence, its beautiful location on the river, its first church, first school, and first court of justice.

To these founders the people of the whole state owe the beginnings of self-government on our soil, and the first examples of that independent spirit among Delaware's people that finally led to our becoming The First State.

To Welcome the distinguished invited guests and the thousands of Americans who will come to New Castle for the celebration next June, the commission hopes that this town can be made so clean, fresh, and in such perfect repair that even a Dutch housewife and a Dutch city father would find no fault;

And that all agencies and groups, official and unofficial, and every individual citizen will share in the work—beginning now to plan and to do—toward making the whole Tercentenary program a success.

### **Tercentenary Commission**

*Thomas Holcomb II, Chairman  
Mrs. J. Danforth Bush, Jr., Secretary  
James T. Eliason, Jr., Treasurer  
Col. Daniel Moore Bates  
Anthony Higgins  
Mrs. William S. Hilles  
Charles E. Klingmeyer,  
Mayor of New Castle*

June 1, 1950

# *New Castle Tercentenary of Dutch Settlement, 1651-1951*

## **Commemorating the Founding of New Castle and Delaware's Heritage from the Dutch**

To the early Dutch Delaware owes its existence as a separate colony and state, one of the original thirteen, as well as the beginnings of self-government on its soil at the site of the delightful old town of New Castle on the Delaware River.

At New Castle, Saturday, June 16, 1951, Delaware will celebrate the 300th anniversary of the founding of the town by Peter Stuyvesant, the director general of New Netherland in America, and will pay tribute to the founders and the settlers under Dutch rule on the Delaware River.

The Dutch nation claimed all the territory of the Delaware and the Hudson River valleys by right of discovery in 1609. They named this whole region New Netherland in honor of their homeland—the United Netherlands (Holland). In 1626 they founded as their capital, New Amsterdam (New York) on their North River (the Hudson).

The Delaware was their South River. They had a fort on it opposite the site of Philadelphia in 1624, and in 1631 settled a colony at the site of Lewes on Delaware Bay. There, when the settlers were reaping their first harvest, the Indians fell upon them and killed all but one man who escaped. But it was this settlement and the cultivation of their fields by the Dutch that kept the Delaware territory separate from that of Maryland.

The Dutch made peace with the Indians, continued to control the river, and enjoyed a fine trade in beaver and other skins until the Swedes came to settle in 1638 at the present site of Wilmington. During the next ten years the Swedes captured the best of the trade on the Delaware.

This was too much for the vigorous Peter Stuyvesant, appointed governor of New Netherland, 1647, by the Dutch West India Company, the chartered agency for trade and settlement. In the summer of 1651, he came down from New Amsterdam with ships, men, and supplies, secured from the Indians the land from Christina Creek to Bombay Hook and built Fort Casimir on a then high point at the end of New Castle's present Chestnut Street.

With "Old Fort Casimir," the Dutch again controlled the river trade. Close by it they began to build the town. The Swedes seized this settlement in 1654, but the next year Peter Stuyvesant took it back and established Dutch rule on the whole river. The Swedish governor returned to Sweden, but many of the Swedes accepted Stuyvesant's offer of Dutch citizenship under himself and his deputy governor, Jean Paul Jacquet, at Fort Casimir.

Fort Casimir became New Amstel April 12, 1657, with the signing of a deed of transfer of the colony between the Christina River and Bombay Hook, from the Dutch West India Company to the burgomasters of the city of Amsterdam in Holland. Jacob Alrichs, the new director sent over by the burgomasters, arrived at New Amstel April 25, in the ship *Gilded Beaver* filled with colonists, men, women, and children, and the schoolmaster Everet Petersen. More people came later.

In spite of serious misfortunes: storms, sickness, and the luring away of some of his settlers to Maryland, Governor Alrichs could soon write home to Amsterdam, "This settlement is now pretty fine looking and convenient, with 110 houses built."

Director General Stuyvesant continued to control the rest of the Delaware region including the customs service of the whole river for the Dutch West India Company. Headquarters were at Fort Christina, renamed Altana, at the site of Wilmington.

At Fort Altana, William Beekman, ancestor of many distinguished families in America, represented the Dutch West India Company and its government under Peter Stuyvesant. He had a house there, near the fort, where two of his children were born; and also a house at New Amstel, where he stayed whenever a ship's cargo was to be inspected and duty collected. All ships, under whatever flag, were required to stop at New Amstel.

Under Dutch rule on the Delaware, the first courts of justice, the first public school, and the first elements of self-government were established on Delaware's soil.

When New Amstel became New Castle under the English, the independence of character born and bred in the Dutch people continued to influence life and government, and formed part of the independent spirit among Delaware's people that finally led to our becoming the First State.

Dutch magistrates continued in office in the English period; two of them were attorneys for the Duke of York to convey the territory of Delaware to William Penn, and among the members of the general assemblies under Penn that met at New Castle, the capital of the colony, were the early Dutch and their descendants.

Among natives and other residents of Delaware today are many descendants of the Dutch who were founders and early settlers during the Dutch period on the Delaware and on the Hudson.

The New Castle Tercentenary Commission was created by the 1949 General Assembly to plan a celebration by which the people of New Castle and the whole state may pay fitting tribute to the Dutch founders.

The Dutch embassy at Washington, in the spirit of the long continuing friendship between the Dutch and the American peoples, is co-operating with the commission in its plans. The commission hopes that all agencies and groups within the state, official and unofficial, and individual citizens, will be interested to have a share in making the Dutch Tercentenary celebration of 1951, an outstanding tribute to the Dutch founders.

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*Mrs. J. Danforth Bush, Jr., Secretary*  
*James T. Eliason, Jr., Treasurer*  
*Col. Daniel Moore Bates*  
*Anthony Higgins*  
*Mrs. William S. Hilles*  
*Charles E. Klingmeyer,*  
*Mayor of New Castle*

130 Delaware Street

New Castle, October 31, 1950

**THE PRINCETON FILM CENTER**  
**PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY**

10 June 1951

Mr. Leon Devalinger  
Hall of Records  
State of Delaware  
Dover, Delaware

Dear Mr. Devalinger:

As requested in our telephone conversation of yesterday, I am enclosing herewith a copy of the schedule of events received from Mr. Goff and his accompanying letter of May fourth. Unfortunately, this is June tenth and a great deal of valuable time has elapsed since receipt of this information from Mr. Goff.

My first concern in this matter is the lack of time to prepare. I am sure you agree in our feeling that it is better to forego the assignment than to do it inadequately.

As you will note in the enclosed letter, the events listed all have to do with the Tercentenary celebration and there is no mention of added filming aimed at the production of a documentary on New Castle. In addition, it was my understanding that we would select such events to film as we felt would lend themselves most advantageously to the production of a thirteen-minute film. In any event, it was our plan to prepare an outline and request approval before undertaking any photography.

In the event of inclement weather, we feel it would be inadvisable to attempt to endeavor to take pictures in a tent. This would call for extensive lighting which should, for maximum safety and efficiency, be rigged above the spectators and performers. Therefore, as mentioned to you yesterday, we would obtain weather reports before making the trip to New Castle and, in the event of unfavorable reports, would call off the scheduled trip. If, however, we proceeded to New Castle on the basis of a favorable forecast, and the weather changed, we would be obliged to bill you for our costs, plus overhead and a reasonable mark-up.

We will hope to hear from you immediately in this matter and will want to conclude an agreement prior to undertaking the assignment. If, however, you can send us a letter of authorization to serve as an interim agreement, this will expedite matters considerably.

It is regrettable that so much time has been lost in seemingly unnecessary detours. I wish we had been fortunate enough to contact you at the outset.

Mr. Leon Devalinger

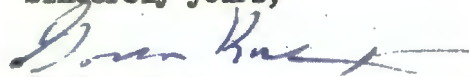
-2-

10 June 1951

Please be assured that we are sincerely desirous of working with you in every possible way consistent with the delivery of a mutually satisfying picture.

My thanks to you for your fine cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely yours,



Gordon Knox

The Princeton Film Center, Inc.

GK:ml

Enclosures: 3

COPY: Telegram sent to Mr. Goff by Mr. Knox May 16, 1951

Mr. Alan Goff  
Goff Associates  
1002 Washington Street  
Wilmington, Delaware

CONFIRMING OUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION OF ELEVENTH WE SUBMIT HEREWITH  
OUR PROPOSAL TO FILM NEW CASTLE TERCENTENARY CELEBRATION ON JUNE SIXTEENTH  
PLUS SUPPLEMENTARY FILMING OF ARRIVAL OF DUTCH AIRCRAFT ON FIFTEEN JUNE  
FOR FEE OF TWENTY FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS SUBJECT TO FOLLOWING. STOP. WORK  
WILL BE DONE ON SIXTEEN MILLIMETER COLOR WITH COMBINATION OF SYNCHRONOUS  
AND NON SYNCHRONOUS SOUND. STOP. LENGTH OF SUBJECT NOT TO EXCEED THIRTEEN  
MINUTES WITH TELEVISION USE ENVISIONED. STOP. WE WILL UNDERTAKE DISTRIBUTION  
AND SALE OF SUBJECT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD ON SIXTY-FORTY SPLIT OF GROSS  
REVENUES LESS PRINT AND DISTRIBUTION AND ADVERTISING COSTS WITH MAJORITY  
PORTION OURS UNTIL SUCH TIME AS YOUR PRODUCTION COSTS HAVE BEEN RECOUPED.  
STOP. THEREAFTER ALL REVENUES SHALL BE ENTIRELY OURS PLUS OWNERSHIP OF  
NEGATIVE AND ALL RIGHTS OF ANY NATURE INHERENT THEREIN EXCEPT USE OF SUBJECT  
IN STATE OF DELAWARE. STOP. PLEASE ADVISE. THANK YOU AND GOOD WISHES.

Gordon Knox, President  
The Princeton Film Center, Inc.

COPY:

GOFF ASSOCIATES

1002 Washington Street

Wilmington, Delaware

May 4, 1951

Miss Margaret Lewis  
Princeton Film Center,  
Princeton, N. J.

Dear Miss Lewis:

This is in answer to your telephoned request for additional information regarding the New Castle Tercentenary celebration. Attached you will find a schedule of the events of the day, June 16th. In addition to this schedule tentative plans call for the landing of a Dutch Air Lines plane at New Castle Airport, carrying either a group of Rotarians or Lions from the Netherlands or a group of Netherlands citizens, all dressed in their native costumes.

I feel that this should be a colorful part of the over-all Tercentenary celebration and should be included in the film. The plane will arrive, according to current plans, on the day before the celebration which would be Friday, June 15th. This then, would require your staff to be on hand a day earlier.

As to the accommodations, I find that the little town of New Castle will be overflowing but I am sure reservations could be made at the Hotel DuPont in Wilmington for the required staff. I think, though, that you should include this cost in your estimate.

With regard to your question concerning the possible rain-date, I am advised that none has been planned and that should there be bad weather the celebration will still go on although it will have to be on a much limited basis. Arrangements have been made for a tent large enough to seat 2,000 people and most of the activities will be from within that tent in the event of rain.

A related part of the celebration might prove interesting and worth some footage. A display of paintings by 17th Century Dutch Masters are being exhibited at the Delaware Art Center in Wilmington, starting on May 6 and continuing through the Tercentenary date of June 16.

Invitations have been extended to the President of the United States, Prince Bernhardt of the Netherlands, the Netherlands Ambassador, and the Governors of the original thirteen states.

Miss Margaret Lewis  
Princeton Film Center.

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5/4/51

I hope this is the information you require for your recommendations.  
If it is not sufficient, please feel free to call me. Thank you for your  
interest.

Sincerely yours,

Alan Goff (signed)

GOFF ASSOCIATES

ALAN GOFF:AP

AT NEW CASTLE ON THE DELAWARE

June 16, 1951

10 to 11 o'clock A.M. ---- Reception of special guests at the Academy and other buildings and in private homes by the Commission and the Town Hospitality Committee.

10 to 11 o'clock A.M. ---- Music by the United States Marine Band on the Battery (the park facing the river in which area a number of the Dutch founders had their homesteads.

11 to 12:30 o'clock ----- Platform Exercises on the Battery.

1. Opening by General Chairman.
2. Words of welcome by the Mayor of New Castle.
3. Greetings and brief statement by the Chairman of the Commission.
4. Welcome from the State by Governor Carvel and remarks introducing President Truman.
5. Address by the President of the United States.
6. Greetings from Holland and address by the Netherlands Ambassador to the United States.
7. Speech by an American descendant of the Dutch Founders of New Castle.
8. Closing by the Chairman with announcement of events for the remainder of the day.

1:15 to 2:30 o'clock ----- Luncheon on the Green for invited guests. Additional service for several hundred Delawareans who will be expected to pay for their luncheon.

Concessions on the Battery for visitors in general who wish to buy luncheons.

Programs of music and Dutch folk dances for the entertainment of general visitors during this luncheon period.



At New Castle on the Delaware. Page 2

2:30 to 3:15 o'clock ----

On the Court House plaza. It is the hope of the Commission that the General Assembly will be interested to hold a brief joint session here which can be made audible by amplifiers to a great part of the Tercentenary attendance.

It is understood that no official action can be taken at such a token session; but appropriate resolutions can be passed honoring Dutch founders. The legislators may wish to pay tribute also to their forerunners of the colonial assembly who met there.

3:45 to 4:00 P.M. -----

Historic pageant on the Battery.

SPECIAL DELIVERY  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

June 11, 1951

Mr. Gordon Knox  
Princeton Film Center  
Princeton, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Knox:

In accordance with our telephone conversations on Saturday, June 9, I wish to say that after talking with you the first time I communicated with Mr. E. Preston Rutter, Director of the State Development Department and was advised by him that his Department has not requested a change in the plan of the motion picture of the New Castle Tercentenary as originally planned to another type of picture dwelling on historic New Castle. Following that conversation with Mr. Rutter, I called Mr. Thomas Holcomb, President of the New Castle Tercentenary Commission, and from him I learned the same thing. Also from Mr. Holcomb I received authority to negotiate for that Commission with your firm for the making of a 16 mm. motion picture with sound in color of the New Castle Tercentenary as set forth in your proposal to Mr. Alan Goff. This is to advise you in writing that I am authorized to negotiate for the Commission in this respect.

In our later conversation on Saturday afternoon you asked for a statement of our intention to employ your firm to undertake the making of this picture for us. Without the benefit of the

Mr. Gordon Knox

-CASE-  
-2-

June 11, 1951

correspondence you had with Mr. Goff and relying upon my memory we wish to accept your proposal of \$2500 to make this 16 mm. color film for us with the understanding that your firm will market the film and that as it is sold we will be reimbursed accordingly. We also understand that we are supplied with one copy of this film for this amount. In making this acceptance we are doing it on the basis that it is exactly as stated in your correspondence and telegrams with Mr. Goff who presented this verbally to the Executive Committee of the Tercentenary Commission.

It will help us considerably and clarify the issue for us if you will give us a statement regarding your responsibility in the event of rain on June 16. We do not know the exact details of your agreement with Mr. Goff but we assume that your coverage of events on June 16 will include not only background information but all the activities on the program; that is episodes of the pageant, the Marine Band, the arrival of the two Dutch destroyers, the token session of the Legislature in front of the Old Court House, the arrival of distinguished guests as well as such background material as the Old Dutch House, the Presbyterian Church and other coverage or interesting scenes along the streets.

Again thanking you for calling me and hoping that this will clarify the whole situation for both of us, I am,

Cordially yours,

Member  
New Castle Tercentenary  
Commission

LdeV:csa

CC: Mr. Thomas Holcomb, II

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Charles E. Klingmeyer,  
Mayor of New Castle*

130 Delaware Street

New Castle, October 31, 1950



## **Old New Castle on the Delaware**

**FOUNDED BY THE DUTCH 1651**

*Will Celebrate the*

## **Tercentenary of Dutch Settlement**

*Saturday, June 16th, 1951*

**Music — Speakers — Pageantry**

Folk Dances in  
Seventeenth Century Costumes

Exhibits; Dutch Art, Crafts, and  
Historic Documents

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**State Commission for The Tercentenary  
Old Dutch House on the Green  
New Castle, Delaware**

HOUSE BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE GENERAL EXPENSES OF THE  
NEW CASTLE TERCENTENARY COMMISSION.**

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF  
THE STATE OF DELAWARE IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY MET:**

WHEREAS, the 115th Session of the General Assembly of the State of Delaware by Act provided for a State Commission to prepare plans for a fitting Celebration on the occasion of the Tercentenary of the first Permanent Dutch Settlement in Delaware (at New Castle); and

WHEREAS, the Commission has prepared such plans with the co-operation of many citizens of this State, of the Library of Congress of the United States and other national associations and agencies, of the Netherlands Embassy at Washington and of other agencies representing the Dutch Government and Dutch people; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable and necessary that a general appropriation should be made for the payment of the expenses of the Commemoration of the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the establishment by the Dutch in Delaware of the first measures of self-government; and the founding of New Castle which was to become the Colonial Capital and the first Capital of the First State, NOW THEREFORE,

Section 1. That the sum of Sixty-five Thousand Dollars (\$65,000.00) be and the same is hereby appropriated out of the General Fund of the State of Delaware for defraying the expenses of the Celebration of the Three Hundredth Anniversary of Dutch settlement at New Castle in the State of Delaware, and the preparations therefor required to be executed by the said Commission.

Section 2. That the said sum of Sixty-five Thousand Dollars (\$65,000.00) so appropriated, shall be paid by the State Treasurer from the General Fund, from time to time to the "New Castle Tercentenary Commission" upon properly executed standard invoice forms signed by the President and the Secretary of the Commission.

Section 3. An additional fund of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) is hereby appropriated to be used as a contingency fund to defray extraordinary expenses in the event that the President of the United States and his entourage and/or a representative of the Royal family of the Netherlands shall accept the invitation of the Commission to attend the Celebration. Any unexpended portion of this contingency fund shall revert to the General Fund in the State Treasury.

Section 3. This Act shall be known as a Supplementary Appropriation Act, and the funds hereby appropriated shall be paid out of the General Fund of the State Treasury not otherwise appropriated. The money appropriated as aforesaid shall become immediately available upon the approval of this Act.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

AUTHORIZING THE GOVERNOR TO APPOINT ADDITIONAL MEMBERS TO THE NEW CASTLE TERCENTENARY COMMISSION TO AID IN COMPLETING AND EXECUTING PLANS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE THREE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF DUTCH SETTLEMENT AT NEW CASTLE, COLONIAL CAPITAL ON THE DELAWARE RIVER AND FIRST CAPITAL OF THE FIRST STATE.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Act of the 115th Session of the General Assembly of the State of Delaware for the purpose of the preparation of plans for the fitting Celebration of the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the founding of New Castle by the Dutch, the Governor appointed seven Residents of this State who he had reason to believe were deeply interested in historical events; and

WHEREAS, the seven members so appointed have prepared such plans and reported them to this General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, by reason of the shortness of the time remaining for executing the plans before June 16, 1951, the assistance of additional members of the Commission is desired and needed; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY MET (two-thirds of all the Members elected to each House of the General Assembly agreeing thereto):

Section 1. That the Governor be and he is hereby authorized and requested to appoint not more than thirty additional members of the New Castle Tercentenary Commission within ten days of the passage of this Resolution. Said additional members shall include the President Pro tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, three members of the Senate to be designated by the President Pro tempore, three members of the House to be designated by the Speaker, the State Archivist, the President of the Lewes Memorial Commission, the President of the Historical Society of Delaware, the President of the New Castle Historical Society, the President of the Swedish Colonial Society, the President of the Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts, the President of the University of Delaware, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Superintendent of the Public



Schools of Wilmington, the Superintendent of the New Castle Special School district, four members to represent at large the City of Wilmington and each of the three counties of the State, and at least five residents of the City of New Castle; the Governor, the Mayor of Wilmington and the Mayor of New Castle shall be members of the Commission ex-officio.

Section 2. That it shall be the duty of the New Castle Tercentenary Commission to perfect and execute the plans for the Celebration on June 16, 1951, of the Dutch Tercentenary in a manner consistent with the dignity of the State and the importance of the Commemoration of the establishing by the Dutch of the beginning of self-government on Delaware soil; of the beginning of the Colonial Capital of the Delaware Counties the first meeting-place of the Colonial Assembly, and the first Capital of the First State.

Section 3. That the said New Castle Tercentenary Commission be and is hereby authorized to make such report or reports to the General Assembly of Delaware during its present session with such recommendations for further legislation by the General Assembly as it deems proper and necessary for the proper fulfillment of its duties.

Section 4. That the said New Castle Tercentenary Commission make its final report and submit it to the General Assembly in the year 1953.

THE WILMINGTON SOCIETY OF THE FINE ARTS  
DELAWARE ART CENTER, PARK DRIVE AT WOODLAWN  
WEEK DAYS 10 TO 5    SUNDAYS 2 TO 6    ADMISSION FREE



*Game of Skittles*  
Pieter de Hoogh

*Courtesy of the  
City Art Museum  
of St. Louis*

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY  
17th CENTURY DUTCH MASTERS  
MAY 6 THROUGH JUNE 17 1951

OTHER EVENTS AT THE ART CENTER

MAY 20 EXHIBIT OF WORK FROM ART CENTER CHILDRENS CLASSES  
OPENING IN THE ART SCHOOL ROOMS AT TWO O'CLOCK  
PROGRAM FOR PARENTS ON "WHAT CREATIVE ART  
MEANS TO YOUR CHILD" WILL BE GIVEN AT THREE O'CLOCK

MAY 20 GALLERY TALK ON DUTCH PAINTINGS  
3.30 P.M. MISS CLOTILDA BROKAW  
PROFESSOR OF ART, VASSAR COLLEGE

FESTIVAL OF ARTS

MAY 14-19 WORK FROM ART CENTER CRAFTS CLASSES  
EXHIBITION IN MILLARD DAVIS WINDOW

MAY 22-23 PREVIEW CLOTHESLINE SALE AT HOTEL DUPONT

MAY 24-25 CLOTHES LINE SALE AT MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
DEMONSTRATION OF POTTERY AND WEAVING BY  
MEMBERS OF THE ART CENTER CRAFT CLASSES

PAINTINGS BY DUTCH MASTERS

The Exhibition of Paintings by 17th Century Dutch Masters will open formally at the Delaware Art Center on Sunday afternoon, May 6, at four o'clock. The exhibit is also sponsored by the New Castle Tercentenary Commission, and will serve as the major event preliminary to the celebration on June 16 of the three hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Dutch at New Castle.

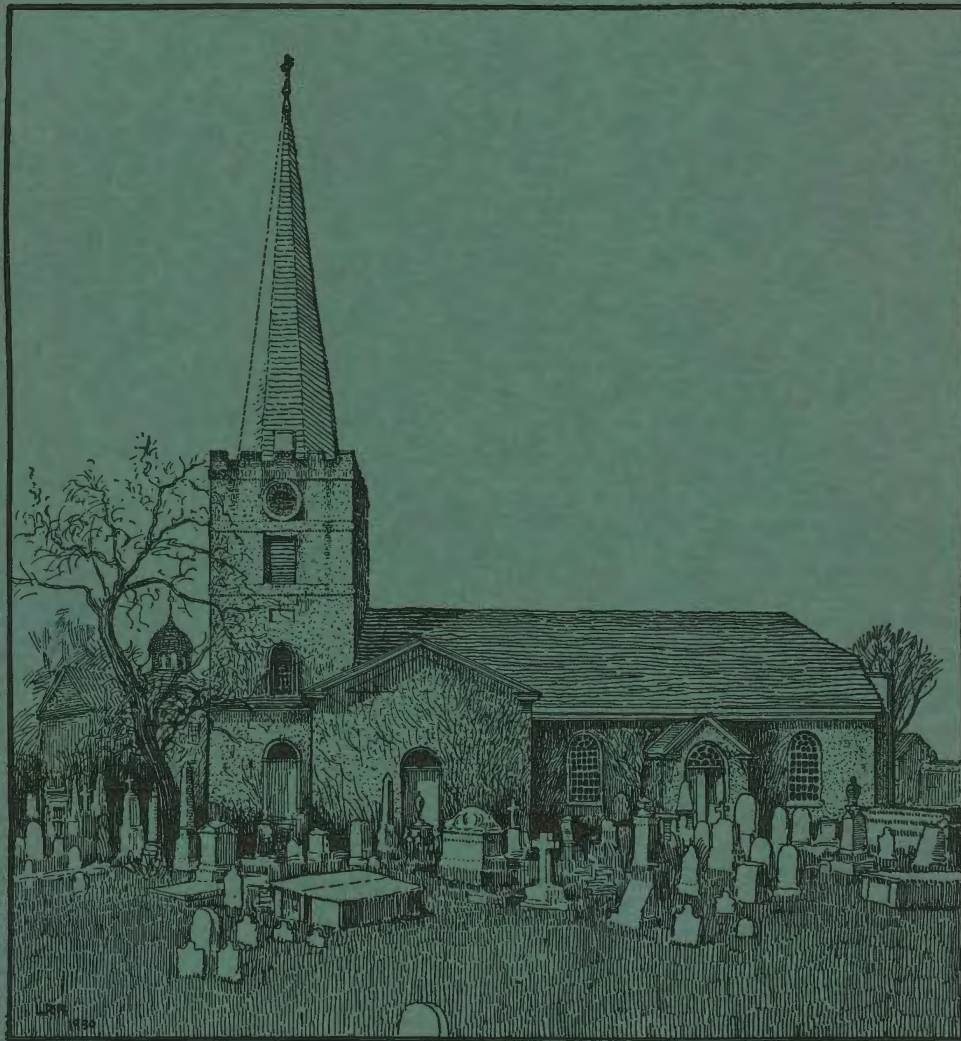
The Netherlands Embassy in Washington is interested in our Exhibition and we are expecting Ambassador J. Herman van Roijen and Dr. N. A. C. Slotemaker de Bruine to be present on the opening afternoon.

The committee is happy to announce that, with the generous assistance of museums and collectors, it was able to assemble a representative exhibition of the work of Dutch artists of this great period, including among others: Rembrandt; Frans Hals; Pieter de Hoogh; Jan Steen; Ruisdael; Fabritius; Cuyp; Wouverman; Capelle; van Goyen; Backhuysen; Hondecoeter; Molenaer. Portraits, landscapes, genre pictures, and still life paintings afford a variety of subject matter.

The committee which has arranged the exhibit includes Miss Gertrude Brinckle and Mrs. Robert Wheelwright, co-chairmen, Mrs. Samuel Homsey, Mr. Peter Meyeringh, and Mrs. Cyrus Pyle, with Mrs. J. Danforth Bush, Jr., and Miss Constance Moore, ex-officio.

*Delaware - New Castle*

A Day in Old  
NEW CASTLE



*Immanuel Church*

*Held Annually the Third Saturday in May  
At New Castle, Delaware*

50 CENTS

# A Day in Old New Castle

Third Saturday in May Annually



*Court House*

## YEARS OF CHANGE

As elsewhere in the New World, the early years of New Castle were times of change. Competition for territory and commerce among Colonial powers brought five changes of sovereignty and four changes of name in only a little over thirty years. Founded in 1651 by Peter Stuyvesant, Fort Casimir, as New Castle was first called, gave the Dutch command of all traffic on the important South or Delaware River. Nearby Swedes considering this an encroachment on prior claims and anxious to protect their own river position, captured the settlement in 1654, christening it Fort Trefaldighet (Trinity) in honor of the day. Only a little more than a year later in 1655, the Dutch re-

gained the fort which then became New Amstel. It was not until 1664, when the English seized all Dutch possessions in North America, that the town was called New Castle. Except for a year of Dutch rule a few years later, New Castle remained under the British flag for the rest of the Colonial period. In 1682 William Penn, newly landed in America, received the proprietorship of the Three Lower Counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex from James, Duke of York. The enactment of the ceremony of "Livery of Seizin" in which Penn received "Turf, Twig, Soyle and Water" in token of his ownership of the property took place on the site of Immanuel Church (No. 1).



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### COLONIAL CAPITOL

Penn soon found The Counties determined to rule themselves, and in 1704 the Proprietors granted them a separate legislature. This Assembly made New Castle the Colonial capitol and later first state capitol of Delaware. Removal of the state government to Dover in 1777 did not diminish the importance of the town. Already an established stopping place, New Castle became even more popular after the 1800 relocation of the federal government in Washington. New Castle's location on the eastern side of the land dividing the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays made it an ideal transfer point for trips to and from the new federal capitol and other destinations along the Atlantic seaboard. Many important people of the later Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries passed through here on

their journeys up and down the coast. Landing at Packet Alley (No. 28) from the Philadelphia packets, they proceeded by stage to Frenchtown on the Elk River for re-embarkation to Baltimore, Annapolis and other destinations. One of the earliest American railroads, the New Castle and Frenchtown was built to facilitate this portage. Its ticket office survives (No. 23); and a number of the roadbed's stone sleepers can be found in the paving of The Strand and at other points. A modern trans-shipment carry-over was the New Castle-Pennsville ferry which conveyed the heavy motor traffic of U. S. Route 40 and U. S. Route 130 across the river until the completion of the Delaware Memorial Bridge in 1951.

\* \* \* \* \*

### ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

One of the oldest Delaware valley settlements, New Castle offers a notable array of homes, churches and public buildings spanning over 150 years of American architecture. Especially unique is the proportion of old houses in continuous use, some still inhabited by descendants of the original owner (Nos. 8 and 9). The site of Fort Casimir is now under water, but an interesting reminder of the founding period is the Old Dutch House (No. 6) built prior to 1700. Other pre-revolutionary examples include: Immanuel Church (No. 1) built in 1703; the Presbyterian Church (No. 19) in 1707; and the main portion of Amstel House in 1730

with service wings earlier. Many early structures have been incorporated, usually as kitchens, at the rear of later, larger dwellings (Nos. 3, 7, 10) and others have been built where old houses once stood. For this reason it is often difficult to ascribe an exact date to a building. Although many buildings reveal a typically Colonial English influence, they retain an unusual degree of local and individual modification and invention. It is this creative touch that "makes New Castle seem architecturally harmonious without being uniform or monotonous."

\* \* \* \* \*

### A PROUD PRESERVATION

The survival of these buildings is due, no doubt, to the later decline in New Castle's importance. Development of modern transportation outmoded its harbor and carried through traffic west of the town by rail and highway. Failing to grow like Wilmington and Philadelphia, New Castle's old buildings providentially were not torn down and replaced by up-to-date structures. Although it is now the seat of several industries, prosperous local businesses, and the center of a growing residential area, New Castle's old civic center and riverside residential area remain intact. In the last generation increasing interest in American antiques

has attracted new residents and encouraged both new and old families to provide for the proper care and restoration of historic buildings. Outstanding examples are found in the interest of the late Phillip D. Laird, Daniel Moore Bates, Louise duPont Crowninshield, and, more recently, in the state-supported restoration of the Court House by the New Castle Historic Buildings Commission. Two of the oldest buildings, the Dutch House and Amstel House, are now the property of the New Castle Historical Society and are maintained as museums.

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NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE

## A DAY IN OLD NEW CASTLE

In 1924 a group of ladies of Immanuel Church arranged to open for a day a number of interesting houses and to exhibit antique furnishings, heirlooms and other objects of historical importance. The purpose was two fold: to arouse interest in early Americana and to raise money for the preservation of historic buildings belonging to the Parish. The success of this tour led to its continuation as an annual Day in Old New Castle, held each year on the third Saturday of

May (except for an interruption during World War II). The scope and complexity of the event have greatly increased. However, all work is still done by volunteers, and expenses of printing and publicity are held to a minimum. After contributions are given to other churches and cooperating non-profit organizations, the proceeds are used to help preserve the historic buildings owned or leased by Immanuel Parish.

\* \* \* \* \*

## TICKETS

Individual tickets, including admission to two museums, are priced at \$3.50 with no charge for children under twelve years old. Group rates when arranged prior to May first are \$3.00 per person on groups over 20, \$2.75 per person on groups over 40. A group of

5 school children over twelve years of age and one teacher is \$10.00. Tickets are sold at the Court House and at the New Castle-Frenchtown Ticket Office (at entrance to the parking lot).

\* \* \* \* \*

## PARKING, EXHIBITS, FOOD

Ample, convenient parking space is provided without charge. Practically all points of interest are located within easy walking distance in an area of approximately two by four city blocks. If exhibits are located outside this area, free transportation is provided.

Arrangements can be made for lunch at the Parish House (No. 34) and the Committee operates a snack bar at the Academy (No. 2). Several restaurants and soda fountains are in or near the tour area.

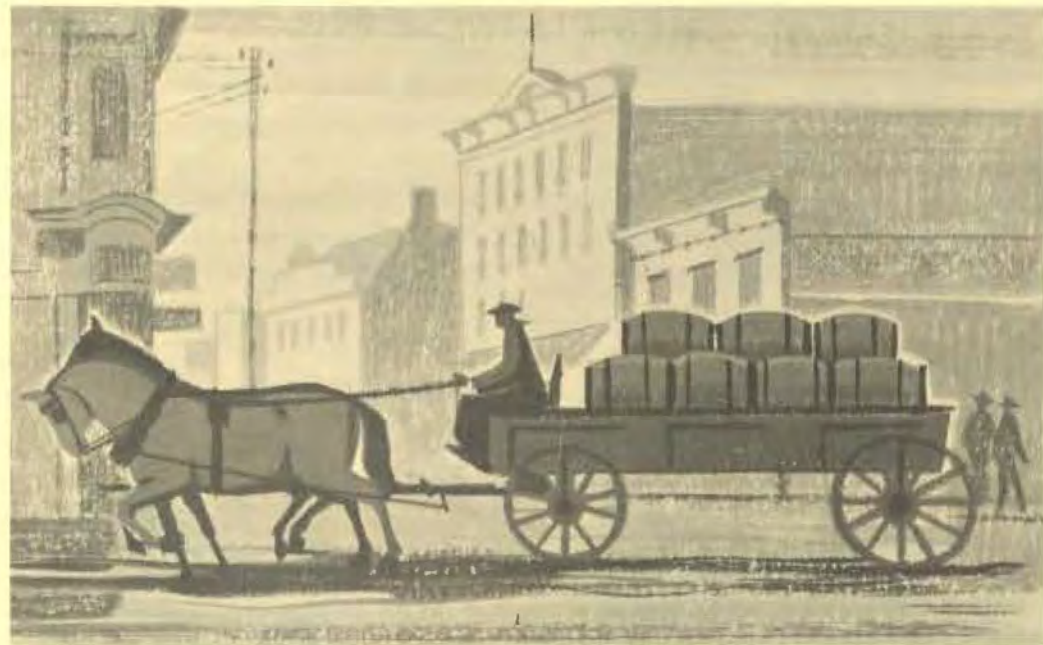
\* \* \* \* \*

## HOMES AND BUILDINGS OPEN

This booklet contains brief descriptions of all houses that *have been or may be opened*. The list of those actually available varies from year to year, and usually comprises fifteen to twenty homes, as well as churches, museums and public buildings. A final list is furnished with this booklet at each ticket office. All open buildings are marked with the blue and yellow New Castle Day signs with numbers keyed to this booklet. Public

buildings are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (DST) and private homes from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. For further information please write:

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*Interior*

**I** **IMMANUEL CHURCH**

*Harmony and Market Streets*

Founded in 1689, this was the first Church of England parish in Delaware. The church building, however, was not started until 1703, the original part being the nave of the present structure. About 1820 the church was lengthened, transepts, tower and steeple were added and the altar moved from the east to the west end. The copper-covered wooden cross on the steeple was added in 1848.

In the churchyard are the gravestones of many of the men and women who led New Castle to its position of prominence in the Delaware community before and after the Revolution, including Governor Gunning Bedford; George Read, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a framer of the Constitution of the

United States; Kensey Johns, Sr.; and the Nicholas Van Dykes, father and son. Here a restoration project goes on from time to time, and many of the old stones, victims of the attrition of wind and weather, have had their inscriptions recut.

Visitors on New Castle Day may see the old Queen Anne silver communion service made by Simeon Soumaine in 1710 and used by the congregation on Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday. Also on display are church records from that date, and Queen Anne-Chippendale transition arm and side chairs in the chancel believed to date about 1750.

The Reverend James O. Reynolds, rector.



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2

**THE ACADEMY**

*Third and Harmony Streets*

Planned for many years but delayed by the Revolution, this building was finally built in 1798 and is

attributed to Peter Crowding, a builder responsible for much of the construction of that period in New Castle.

Here may be seen the Secret Garden behind the Academy, shut off from the streets by a high brick wall, above which rises a gnarled old paulownia tree. Legend has it that the tree was grown from seeds carried in by ships engaged in the China trade, either blowing off the vessels as they proceeded upriver or dropping from cargoes unloaded here, but the tree generally has been planted elsewhere in the eastern United States.

For 130 years the building was a school, first private, then semi-private, finally a public school. Now it is leased by Immanuel Church for church and community use. Several fine pieces of antique furniture are in the building.

\* \* \* \* \*

3

**HARMONY HOUSE**

*Third and Harmony Streets*

This handsome dwelling was built, like many New Castle homes, in sections. The restored back kitchen dates from about 1695, the center section from about 1725, and what is now the front on Third Street, from 1836. Among its antiques are a secretary in the front room, made in Philadelphia about 1780; a Queen Anne armchair attributed to William Savery; a portrait by Sully; and miniatures, including the work of Charles Willson Peale; jewelry, furniture, china and silver owned by the Revolutionary heroine Lydia Darragh.

The dining room is set with Chinese export porcelain, silver, and Waterford glass of the Colonial period.

A document of interest is the original deed from Chief Seckatarius to William Penn for land near Chester, Pennsylvania.



Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Holcomb II

\* \* \* \* \*

4

**THE LIBRARY**

*East Third Street*

This half-octagon brick structure was built in 1890.

Formerly owned by the New Castle Library Company, a private organization established in 1812, it is now supported by the Trustees of the Common as a public library. Some 5,000 volumes and a collection of old books are on display.

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5

## HOLDEN HOUSE

34 East Third Street

The dining room is believed built before 1759, as a deed of that year records a dwelling on the site. The second part was added in 1770, when the lot was enlarged, and the final section between 1820 and 1830. Solid brick walls show clearly the divisions between

the older and the newer of the sections.

The changes in craftsmanship in the three areas are clearly shown in contrasting styles of the woodwork and fireplaces. The house has been restored by the Holdens since 1951 to show the charm and liveability of a small house of the Federal period. Staffordshire and other Nineteenth Century china is on display.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Ellsworth V. Holden

\* \* \* \* \*

6

## OLD DUTCH HOUSE

32 East Third Street

The only survivor in its original form of the New Castle of the 1600s, the house was restored in 1938 by the Society for the Preservation of Antiquities, and is now a museum run by the New Castle Historical Society. The garden around the one and a half story little dwelling has been restored by the Arasapha Garden Club. The exact date of construction is not known.



\* \* \* \* \*

7

## ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER HOUSE

26 and 28 East Third Street

The four-story double house with yellow brick facade was built by Archibald Alexander, one of five men who surveyed and established the town's boundaries in 1797. The house was built some time between 1800, when he bought the land, and 1804 when existence of the building was established by survey.

A low-ceiling single story and loft at the rear of

No. 26 is believed to have been built about 1690. The two and one-half story brick building faced with stucco, forming the central part of both houses, was later built in front of the old part.

Much of the original woodwork is still in the Fiske house. The two houses are similar but not identical. No. 28 is built to the property line and formerly had a covered passage to the garden. No. 26, slightly narrower, has an open path at its side.

Residences of Colonel and Mrs. John F. Fiske and Mr. and Mrs. Edward A. Taylor

\* \* \* \* \*

8

## GEMMIL HOUSE

18 East Third Street

This four-story brick dwelling was built about 1801 and is attributed to Peter Crowding. Its features include the original 24-paned windows, an excellent fan-

light over the front door, and fine interior woodwork. Mrs. Meyers is a direct descendant of Jeremiah Bowman who bought it from John Wiley soon after it was built. Silsbee Alley at the side of the house has served as a public way since the early Eighteenth Century.

Residence of Mrs. William E. Meyers

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9

### RODNEY HOUSE

16 East Third Street

This comfortable town house, built in 1831 near the end of New Castle's great building period for George Brydges Rodney, has remained in the family of the builder for its 132 years.

Exhibits include letters and documents of historical interest from the Colonial and Revolutionary periods, and a collection of Delawareana.

Portraits include George Read, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, by Gilbert Stuart; George Ross, another signer, and of the Reverend George Ross, Sr., first rector of Immanuel Church, by Heselius; and of the elder Ross's daughter, ascribed to Benjamin West. Also on display is a deed bearing the signature of William Penn.

No. 14 next door was also built by G. B. Rodney and served as Judge Richard S. Rodney's law office.



Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Edward W. Cooch, Jr.

\* \* \* \* \*



10

### KENSEY JOHNS, SR., HOUSE

Two East Third Street

This house was built in 1789-90 by Kensey Johns, a lawyer who was to serve as Delaware's chief Supreme Court justice for thirty-two years from 1798 to 1830.

The kitchen wing, however, is considered much older than the rest of the house, and is believed to have been the home of Ambrose Backer, a prosperous Dutchman, who lived on the corner for more than 10 years prior to his death in 1695.

Of interest here is the interior, including wall paneling in white pine, as in the older houses, and the later fashion of fireplaces, faced with marble and surmounted with delicately carved woodwork.

When Mount Vernon was restored in 1910, two brass keyplates from this house were sent there, as they duplicated those put in by Washington.

Some original plans of the house, including cost, still exist and are generally on exhibit on New Castle Day.

\* \* \* \* \*

11

### KENSEY JOHNS, JR., HOUSE

Fourth and Delaware Streets

Built in 1823 on part of the grounds of Kensey Johns, Sr., this house has the plain elegance of New Castle's later homes. The doorway is typical of the period with arch and woodwork. Many fine pieces of furniture may be seen.

Kensey Johns, Jr., followed his father in the law and in public life. He served two terms in the House of Representatives and succeeded his father as Chancellor.

Residence of The Honorable and Mrs. Daniel F. Wolcott



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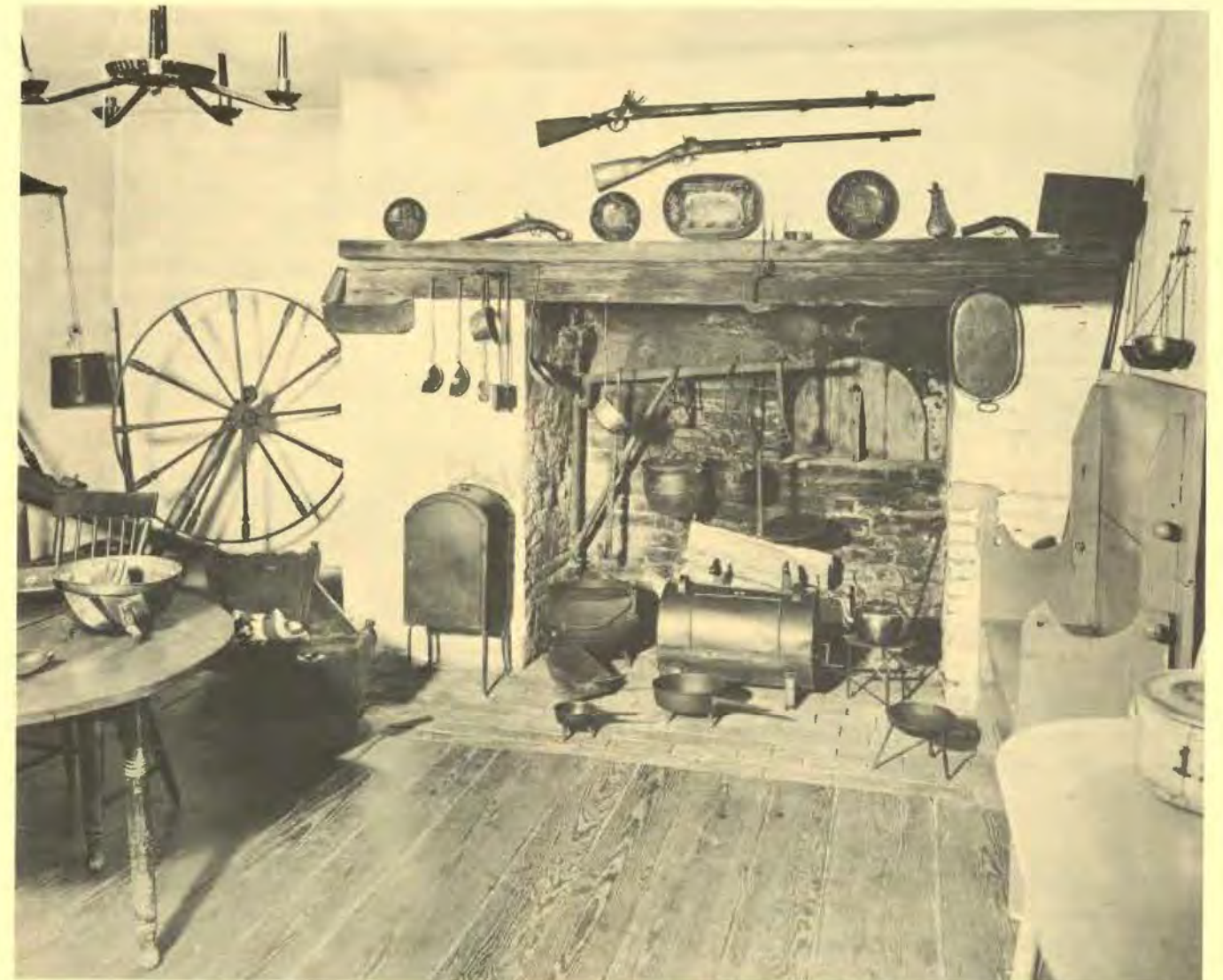
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Kitchen

12

### AMSTEL HOUSE

Delaware and Fourth Streets

Built about 1730 for Dr. John Finney, the main portion probably incorporates parts of an older structure in its service wing. Thus it predates the other large houses of New Castle. Lower ceilings and a narrower door indicate the concern of this early period for conserving heat; the eight foot ceiling of the ground floor is unusually high for its time.

Later in the Eighteenth Century the house was occupied by Nicholas Van Dyke, Sr., an early governor, whose son, Senator Nicholas Van Dyke, built the house opposite at No. 400 Delaware Street. In Amstel House, on April 30, 1784, President Washington attended the wedding of Ann Van Dyke to Kensey Johns, Sr.

Amstel House now belongs to the New Castle Historical Society, which has maintained it as a museum since 1929. It is open throughout the year for a small admission fee (included in Day in Old New Castle ticket). Extensive restoration has been made by the Society. The kitchen is equipped with utensils of the Colonial period; other rooms are appropriately furnished; and there are displays of antique dolls, period clothing and other artifacts. There are portraits of Ann Van Dyke and Kensey Johns, and, in the dining room, a large portrait of Mrs. Jehu Curtis, attributed to John Heselius circa 1750. Additional exhibits are received from time to time as gifts from friends of the New Castle Historical Society.

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**13** SENATOR NICHOLAS VAN DYKE HOUSE

400 Delaware Street

Five stone steps bring you to the doorway of the Senator Van Dyke Mansion built in 1799. Form, proportion and symmetry are pleasantly evident in this first of several residences constructed in the area.

The interior displays rich and delicate taste in ornament. Carved woodwork, marble fireplace facings and French putty figures under the mantels are of interest.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. William B. Bridgewater



**14** KENSEY JOHNS VAN DYKE HOUSE

300 Delaware Street

Built by Senator Nicholas Van Dyke in 1820, the house was given by him to his son, Kensey Johns Van Dyke. The Senator's taste tended toward the severe and restrained in his latter years, and many hold this to be among the finest examples of New Castle's best architectural period.

Interior woodwork includes mantelpieces and Santo Domingo mahogany doors. On October 6, 1824, the Marquis de Lafayette gave Dorcas M. Van Dyke, the Senator's daughter, in marriage to Charles I. duPont.

Residence of Dr. and Mrs. Harry A. Carl

\* \* \* \* \*

**15** BOOTH HOUSE

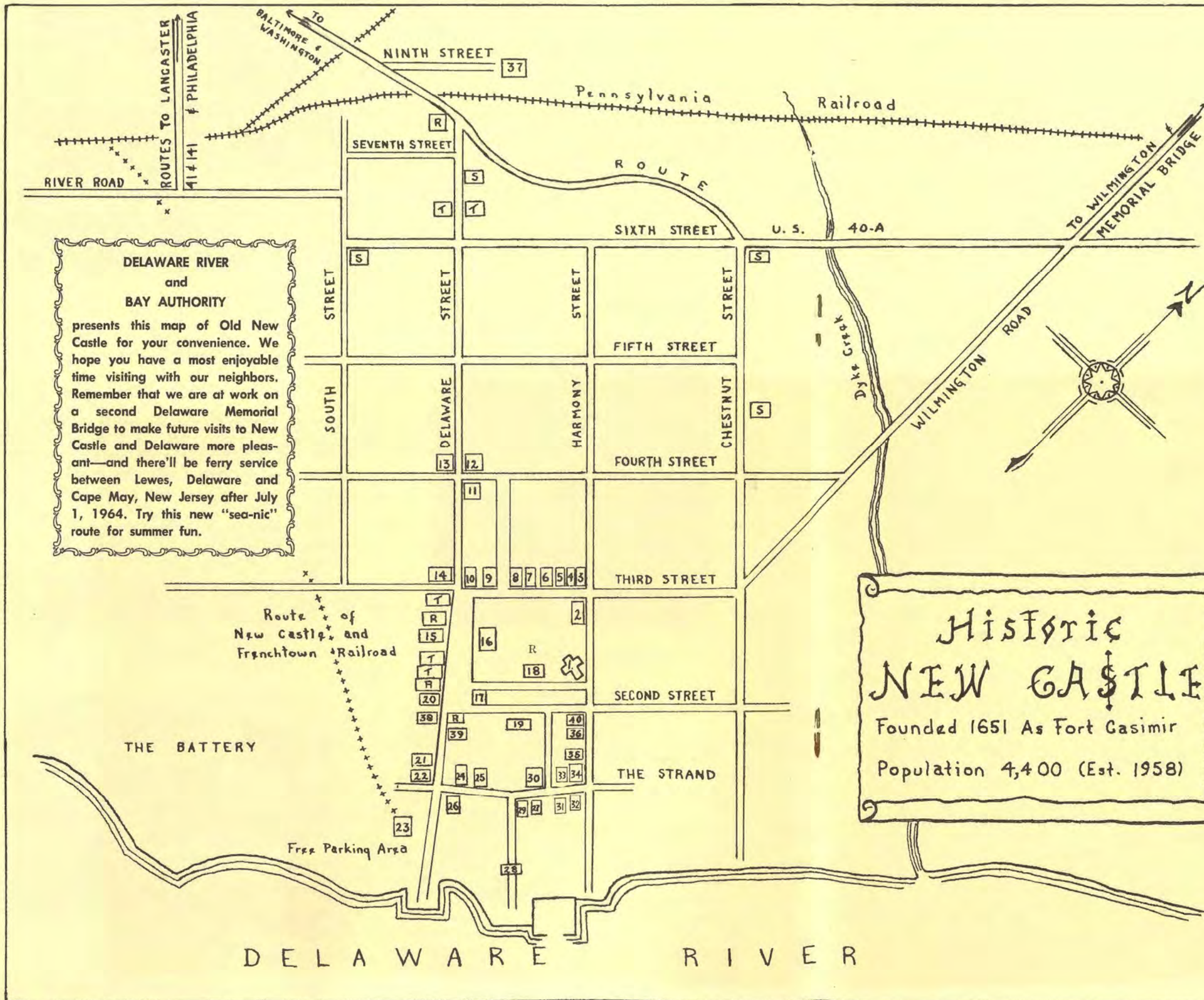
216 Delaware Street

The original part of the main house was built about 1730 with the second part, the section east of the doorway, added later. The clapboard wing at the west end came after that. Particularly interesting is the irregular grouping of the front door and windows, the result of its two building periods, and the unusual front stoop. The house is named for the renowned Judge James Booth, Jr., who was born here in 1789.

An interesting pair of bulls-eyes in the upper door panels which served as peepholes are seen in the classic doorway. The house contains an extremely old stairway, and the mantels are outstanding examples of Colonial craft skills. Robert Montgomery Bird, an early Nineteenth Century author, was born here.



Residence of Dr. and Mrs. Henry T. McGuire



DELAWARE RIVER and BAY AUTHORITY presents this map of Old New Castle for your convenience. We hope you have a most enjoyable time visiting with our neighbors. Remember that we are at work on a second Delaware Memorial Bridge to make future visits to New Castle and Delaware more pleasant—and there'll be ferry service between Lewes, Delaware and Cape May, New Jersey after July 1, 1964. Try this new "sea-nic" route for summer fun.

**Historic NEW CASTLE**  
 Founded 1651 As Fort Casimir  
 Population 4,400 (Est. 1958)

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Immanuel Church           | 20. Terry House                         |
| 2. New Castle Academy        | 21. Rosemont House                      |
| 3. Harmony House             | 22. Van Leuvenigh House                 |
| 4. New Castle Library        | 23. New Castle & Frenchtown Railroad    |
| 5. Holden House              | 24. Gunning Bedford House               |
| 6. Old Dutch House           | 25. M <sup>rs</sup> Intire House        |
| 7. Alexander House           | 26. Lee House                           |
| 8. Gemmill House             | 27. Gallery House                       |
| 9. Rodney House              | 28. Packet Alley                        |
| 10. Kensey Johns, Sr. House  | 29. The Old Stage Tavern                |
| 11. Kensey Johns, Jr. House  | 30. The Read House                      |
| 12. Amstel House             | 31. Aull House                          |
| 13. Van Dyke House           | 32. Galloway Residence - Van Dyke House |
| 14. The Kensey Johns House   | 33. M <sup>rs</sup> Callmont House      |
| 15. Booth House              | 34. Immanuel Parish House               |
| 16. The Court House          | 35. The Rising Sun Tavern Market Place  |
| 17. Town Hall & Market Place | 36. Jordan House                        |
| 18. The Arsenal              | 37. The Hermitage                       |
| 19. The Presbyterian Church  | 38. Dalby House                         |
|                              | 39. Cloud's Row                         |
|                              | 40. Foster House                        |

- INFORMATION**
- HEADQUARTERS "A DAY IN OLD NEW CASTLE" AT 16 - THE OLD COURT HOUSE.
  - TICKETS AVAILABLE AT NUMBERS 16 & 23.
  - PARKING ADJACENT TO NUMBER 23.
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*Court Room*

## 16

*THE COURT HOUSE*

*Delaware Street*

This fine Georgian-style building, also known as the State House, was the meeting place of the Colonial Assembly and Courts of the Three Lower Counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex (now the state of Delaware) for seventy-two years before the Revolution. It was thus briefly the first capitol of Delaware until the state seat was transferred to Dover in 1777. Here in 1776, the Declaration of Independence was approved. Here the first constitution of Delaware was drafted. From 1777 until 1881 when Wilmington became the county seat the building served as the New Castle County Courthouse. Thereafter it was used for various civic and commercial purposes and deteriorated badly through neglect and lack of maintenance funds. In 1957 the New Castle Historic Buildings Commission, an agency of the State, took control of the Court House and other State property surrounding The Green. State funds were provided for restoration of the central part. This work is now complete; and some

renovation has been done in the east wing, with money provided by the Trustees of the Common. Furnishings in the central courtroom are a gift from Mrs. Daniel Moore Bates, in memory of her husband, the late Colonel Bates, who was influential in arousing interest in preservation of New Castle landmarks.

The central part of the Court House was built in 1732 on the site of an earlier court house, dating from the 1680's and destroyed by fire in 1729. Two small wings were added in 1765; and the roof and cupola were modified later in the same century. An addition to the east wing in 1802 gave that end of the building its present appearance. The original west wing, however, was torn down in 1845 and replaced by the present larger structure (as a supposedly fireproof storage place for county records). Overall plans call for gradual restoration of the entire building to its 1802 appearance as funds are made available.

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## 17 TOWN HALL AND MARKET PLACE

*Second and Delaware Streets*

This site was used as a town market as early as 1682, and was solidly established when the city fathers in 1730 passed an ordinance to the effect that on Wednesday and Saturday no food except fish, milk and bread

might be sold anywhere else in the town, a "franchise" which went on for several years.

The Town Hall, the arched building at the end of the Market Place, now houses City Council on its second floor, the Police Department and shops in other parts of the building. It was built in 1823, and is now maintained by the Trustees of the Common.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 18 THE ARSENAL

*The Green facing on Market Street*

Built by the federal government in 1809 in the face of the threat of war with England, the building was at first of one story with a wagon entrance at each end, traces of which may still be seen. In 1831 it housed the garrison of Fort Delaware when buildings there burned. In 1846, it became again an arsenal for the

Mexican War.

About this time, it was decided that New Castle could not legally transfer any part of The Green, and subsequent arrangements forbade the storage of ammunition or the quartering of soldiers.

In 1852 the second story and cupola were added to provide space for a free public school, which it remained until 1931. Once again in 1943 it served briefly as a school and was used by the Presbyterian Church. At the present time the building serves as a restaurant.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 19 THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*Second Street*

Built in 1707, this Colonial brick church continued in use for services until 1854, after which it housed the Sunday school. After World War II the original building was renovated and restored, and the less attractive Nineteenth Century brownstone church which had been erected was pulled down. In 1957 the brick Sunday school was added at the rear of the plot.

The congregation traces its beginnings to the arrival of the Dutch Reformed clergymen with the founders in 1651. Forty-nine years later the Dutch group was absorbed by the Presbyterians.

The grave markers date to the early 1700s, although unmarked Dutch graves going back 50 years earlier are also in the plot.



The Reverend Ralph R. Johnson, Jr., pastor

\* \* \* \* \*

## 20 TERRY HOUSE

*130 Delaware Street*

Built in 1876 by Howell Terry, this is a typical town

house of the period. It features a handsome stairway, fine woodwork and mantels, and an unusual fireplace. A collection of antique furniture is also on display.

Residence of Mrs. George H. Williams



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*west wing of the old court house*

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## 21

### ROSEMONT HOUSE

110 Delaware Street

The back wing of this house was "new built" when Martin Rosemont, an officer under the Dutch and a deacon of the Dutch church, moved in in 1675. The main portion of the house was, it is believed, built prior to 1704.

In the old wing the ceiling rafters are heavy beams of hand-hewn oak covered with flat boards. When the house was restored, there was so much whitewash on the boards it resembled plaster.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Reinhardt Bamberger



\* \* \* \* \*

## 22

### VAN LEUVENIGH HOUSE

Two The Strand

Believed to be more than 200 years old, this building shows few signs of wear. It differs from other New Castle homes in that it was heavily influenced by French design. Interesting woodwork and a fireplace

of unusual design are among a number of notable interior features.

The house took its name from Zachariah Van Leuvenigh, New Castle chief magistrate, who bought the property in 1765. Post riders bearing the news of Lexington and Bunker Hill stopped here on their way south to spread the word.

Residence of Dr. and Mrs. Robert T. Beattie

\* \* \* \* \*

## 23

### NEW CASTLE AND FRENCHTOWN RAILROAD TICKET OFFICE

*The Battery at the foot of Delaware Street*

Built in 1832, this was a ticket office for one of the

first steam railroads in the country. Long used by the Pennsylvania Railroad as a crossing tender's shack in Wilmington, it was presented to the town about 1954 as a memento of the long-vanished New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 24

### GUNNING BEDFORD HOUSE

Six The Strand

This brick house, now stucco covered, was built about 1730 by John van Gezel, the grandson of one of New Castle's Dutch founders. The house was also the home of Gunning Bedford, the eleventh Governor of Delaware, serving in 1796-97. George Read, the younger, lived here with his aunt Mrs. Bedford while building his home a little way to the north. The house then passed to Caleb Bennett in 1803. Bennett, a prominent Quaker, operated it as a hotel to accommodate travelers arriving here by packet boat from Philadelphia to take the stagecoach, and later the railroad to Frenchtown on the Elk river. He, too, was to serve the state as governor from 1833 to 1836. It was a residence again when George Gray, lawyer, statesman and judge was born here on May 4, 1840.

Originally, the house stood on a mound, but was left high above the street when The Strand was levelled for the cobblestone paving in the 1820's. The



change necessitated construction of the stoop, a rarity among the old homes.

Residence of Mr. Elmer Bailey

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25

McINTIRE HOUSE

Eight The Strand

This is one of the most interesting of the old smaller brick houses in New Castle, outstanding for its wood paneling and chimney pieces of simple design executed with consistent harmony in all the rooms. The owners believe with architectural support that it was built about 1690.

The property was included in the purchase by John van Gezel from the heirs of Dr. Samuel Monkton of Philadelphia. In the 1660s the double plot had been owned by Martin Gerritsen, a member of the family which had early grants from Peter Stuyvesant.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas McIntire



\* \* \* \* \*

26

LEE HOUSE

Nine The Strand

This dwelling is typical of the houses built to replace those destroyed in the fire that swept the river side of The Strand on April 23, 1824. Built on a nar-

row front, it is surprisingly roomy and affords an excellent view of the river and its shipping.

It is of interest to note that relief funds after the fire were raised in Boston, in return for similar funds raised in New Castle during the 1774 blockade of Boston harbor.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert R. Lee

\* \* \* \* \*

27

GALLERY HOUSE

17 The Strand

Historically, the site of No. 17 is interesting as part of the stretch along The Strand where Thomas Janvier, who fled from religious persecution in France, his son and two grandsons carried on the crafts, merchant, and transportation activities that contributed largely to the

development of colonial New Castle and the later town. After the fire of 1824, great-grandsons John and Thomas Janvier built this brick house on the exact site of the previously existing frame dwelling. Architects of the 1947-48 survey regarded it a well-designed and dignified representative of the period. Until now No. 17 seems to have been owned chiefly by descendants of the Janvier and related families.

Residence of Dr. and Mrs. William V. Gallery

\* \* \* \* \*

28

PACKET ALLEY

From The Strand to the River

This little alley takes its name from the days of packet stages and boats, when it was traveled by many prominent persons who debarked here to begin their

land journeys to south and west. A tablet at the entrance of the alley lists many of them.

Flaked oyster shells and crushed shells are now the only evidence of the days when the alley rang to the shouts of wagon drivers and accommodated well-painted coaches and fours. Today the once-bustling wharf lies in a state of ruin at the water's edge.

\* \* \* \* \*

29

THE OLD STAGE TAVERN

25 The Strand

This building was erected after the 1824 fire as a store and was used as such until recently. Before the

fire the site was occupied by a tavern known at various times as the "Delaware Hotel", "State Tavern", "Indian King" and "Ship Tavern". Located fortuitously close to the wharf, it can be imagined the tavern did a thriving business.

Residence of Mr. Sverre E. Bergh

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30

### THE READ HOUSE

*The Strand*

This beautiful Georgian mansion was built by George Read II, son of the signer of the Declaration of Independence, and completed in 1801.

The first thing to strike the visitor is the handsome doorway with fanlight, surmounted by an iron balcony, and a Palladian window above. The exterior woodwork carries ornamentation also on the cornice, and the third floor dormers as well.

The entrance hall features a triple arch with intri-

cately worked pilasters, and every room has a fireplace with decorated mantels. All woodwork and hardware are original and are considered perfect examples of the period.

A fine collection of antique furniture including Queen Anne, Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Sheraton and Duncan Phyfe will be seen here, as well as beautiful antique Savonarie and Aubusson rugs.

In 1847 when the property was owned by the Couper family, the formal garden was laid out by Andrew Jackson Downing, the foremost landscape architect of the time.

Residence of Mrs. Philip D. Laird

\* \* \* \* \*

31

### COOPER HOUSE

*49 The Strand*

This clapboard house, built about 1750, managed somehow to survive the fire despite its wooden construction. It may have been damaged, however, as the first story corner and front have been replaced as may be seen from the difference in the height of windows on either side of the doorway.

Originally the house was a double dwelling but the late Philip D. Laird replaced the double entry with a single door salvaged from an old Wilmington home, and later the two units were combined into a single dwelling and restored. The original woodwork and fireplaces are of the oldest types.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. John J. B. Cooper, Jr.



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**32**

*GALLOWAY RESIDENCE*

*53 The Strand*

This double brick house also was built by William Aull, probably in the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century. An interesting item is found in the windows, which are nine-over-nine on the first floor, six-over-nine on the second floor, and six-over-six on the third. The woodwork, mantels and fireplaces are typical of the period, as is the furniture. There is a lovely view of the river from the porch.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh C. Galloway



\* \* \* \* \*

**33**

*McCALLMONT HOUSE*

*56 The Strand*



Dr. James McCallmont, a wealthy physician and Trustee of the Common, fell heir to this property in 1796. By 1804, when the present elevation appears on the Latrobe Survey, he had incorporated an already existing "ancient dwelling" in this small but elegant townhouse.

After a long and checkered existence in various commercial capacities, including service as a saloon and rooming house of doubtful character, the building has been restored by its present owners to its late Eighteenth Century state, preserving at the same time, some of the architectural details of the earlier building. Of particular interest is the massive living room fireplace with its original herring bone brick fire-back, the curved rear wall of the dining room, and the fine woodwork.

On display are selected early volumes from the Maisano collection of Delaware books together with some documents and an interesting assortment of tools and implements used by cabinet makers and joiners in Philadelphia in the Eighteenth Century.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew D. A. Maisano

\* \* \* \* \*

**34**

*IMMANUEL PARISH HOUSE*

*Harmony Street and The Strand*

This large building was built in 1801 by Peter Crowding for Charles Thomas. Designed as a combined hotel and dwelling, it has two principle entrances, one on each street, and it comprises three and a half stories, surmounted by an attic. During most of the Nineteenth Century, however, it served as a private house. And, in 1891, it was given by a descendant of the original owner to Immanuel Church. A two-story addition on Harmony Street was built in 1913 to provide an auditorium and classrooms for the church school. Church offices and a kitchen occupy the ground floor of the old house, and three rental apartments the upper floors. Its high-ceilinged rooms contain hand-



some mantels and woodwork, and from the upper floors afford a river view equalled only by the Read House.

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35

### THE RISING SUN TAVERN

118 Harmony Street

The front portion, built by William Armstrong in 1796, included a small room and a large room on each floor. The kitchen was in the basement with a dumb-waiter located beside the fireplace connecting it to the upstairs. The rear portion was added in 1801 by

Daniel Lafferty and consisted then, as it does today, of one room on each floor.

In its tavern days, the front room was the public room, and the rear room was used for private gatherings. Those not welcome inside were served through the window on the river side. The mantel in the rear is believed built under the direction of Peter Crowding. The garden held a stable, as was required by law.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. C. Stephen Bartha

\* \* \* \* \*

36

### JORDAN HOUSE

124 Harmony Street

Built by William Armstrong about 1800, the house was owned by Michael Nagle, a butcher, in 1804, and used as a dwelling. The interior is in its original form,

including mantels and paneling. The tulip valences were added later.

A collection of early Nineteenth Century pewter and two grandfather's clocks: one signed by Wilmington clockmaker Thomas Crow in 1801; the other, by Christian Bixler of Easton, Pa., are on display.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. William C. Jordan

\* \* \* \* \*

37

### THE HERMITAGE

Ninth Street behind William Penn High School

The house was named by Senator Nicholas van Dyke who added the latest and largest part of the building in 1818. The original portion, where the doorway has a fanlight, probably was built before 1700, while a larger section is believed to have been built by John Finney, one of the original trustees of the Common, about 1750.

The interior includes fine woodwork and mantels, interesting use of color throughout the house, and a curved door built to conform to a curved wall in the entrance hallway. Family portraits, oils and primitives are on display.

The house, now well within the city limits, was originally a country summer residence.



Residence of Mr. and Mrs. B. Scranton Deemer

\* \* \* \* \*

38

### DALBY HOUSE

118 Delaware Street

The records of the Historical Society in Wilmington indicate that the main portion of this comfortable

though simple Colonial home was built prior to the Revolution. The house is being restored with minimum replacement by the present owners. A collection of antique timepieces is on display.

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Milton H. Kern, Jr.

## CLOUD'S ROW

117-123 Delaware Street

This row of tall, narrow brick houses was built by Harlan Cloud of Chester County, Pennsylvania, some

time prior to 1804 as an investment. A survey map of that year shows the three and a half story dwellings with dormers in the roofs just as they appear today. Well designed in a simple, unpretentious manner, some feature original doors, woodwork, mantels and window panes.

\* \* \* \* \*

## FOSTER HOUSE

122 Harmony Street

Built in the late Eighteenth Century, this is a fine example of the builder's ability to create a completely liveable home in a small area. In 1804, William Arm-

strong sold the property to Thomas Turner, a hatter, for \$100. Thomas and his son, George Washington Turner, were prominent business men of New Castle. In 1863, the house was sold to the keeper of Rising Sun Tavern for \$750.

Residence of Miss Elizabeth Foster

\* \* \* \* \*

## OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

*Buena Vista*, the ancestral home of the Honorable and Mrs. C. Douglass Buck, located south of New Castle on the duPont Boulevard, was built in 1842 by Chief Justice John M. Clayton and named for one of the battles of the Mexican War in tribute to President Taylor under whom Clayton served as Secretary of State.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Spread Eagle Hotel*, 114 East Second Street, residence of Clarence E. Twilley. Travellers from packet boats and the railroad paused here en route to Washington or New York.

\* \* \* \* \*

*John M. Foster House*, 159 East Third Street. This Eighteenth Century structure has probably remained in the same family longer than any other house in New Castle.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Cave*, northwest side of The Strand past Harmony Street. Site of Barney Murphy's famous tavern, this was the oldest such gathering place recorded in New Castle. Here crews from the ships would gather from the four corners of the world and swap yarns.

\* \* \* \* \*

*54 The Strand*. Site of New Castle's most unusual building, the Old Tile House, built in 1687 and demolished in 1884. Three stories high, the walls were of brick smaller, thinner and more apricot in color than those used locally.

*The Jefferson House*, Five The Strand. The main part of the building is the old Riddle and Bird dwelling, hotel, office and center of a shipping business that was conducted until 1810. After that date James Riddle operated a lumber yard at the rear. The Great Fire of 1824 started here and swept up The Strand destroying most of the east side and some of the west. The iron initials on the southwest side are those of James Riddle. The building is now converted into apartments.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Broad Dyke*, north from Third and Chestnut Streets. This was New Castle's first caft road built across the marsh, meadows and lowland. It sprouted a branch to Swanwyck, a village up the river and one to Fort Christina (Wilmington).

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Battery*, along the river shore a short distance from The Strand, is now an informal park and recreation ground. It is named for the "fine battery" erected here in 1748 to protect New Castle from pirates.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Glebe House*, half a mile north on the Wilmington Road, residence of the Reverend James O. Reynolds. This handsome dwelling stands on a tract of 60 acres given in 1719 by Richard Halliwell to Immanuel Church for the rector's use. He might use it for a residence, cultivate the farm or rent it to a tenant farmer.

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# Facts About New Castle

## EARLY NAMES OF OLDE NEW CASTLE

- Tamaconck (Indian name for beaver)
- Sand Hook
- Fort Casimir
- New Amstel
- New Castle

Over the years New Castle was known as:

- The Colonial Capital
- The State Capital
- The County Seat
- The Court Town
- The Seaport

It was a sophisticated culture occupied by Merchants, Landowning Lawyers, Judges and Physicians.

1626 - New Castle was discovered by a small group of Dutch fur traders. The Swedes also found it a pleasant place to stop; but the majority of the people were of Dutch origin.

1664 - The English took over the thriving colony when the British fired on Fort Casimir. They killed three (3) Dutch Soldiers and wounded ten, then they took the rest of the Soldiers prisoners and sold them together with negro slaves to the English in Maryland.

1669 - Long Flinn was the first case tried by English rules. It was declared that he be whipped, branded with the letter "R" (for Rebellion) and held until he was sold in Barbados.

1682 - William Penn received the papers for land that was to be a 12 mile circle around New Castle. Still today, the boundaries of Delaware with Pennsylvania reflect parts of the 12 mile circle.

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THE STAFF OF V. VIRTUE,  
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CONT'D

1699 - The ship "Sweepstakes", laden and lying just off the town was attacked one night by 13 pirate ships and was carried off.

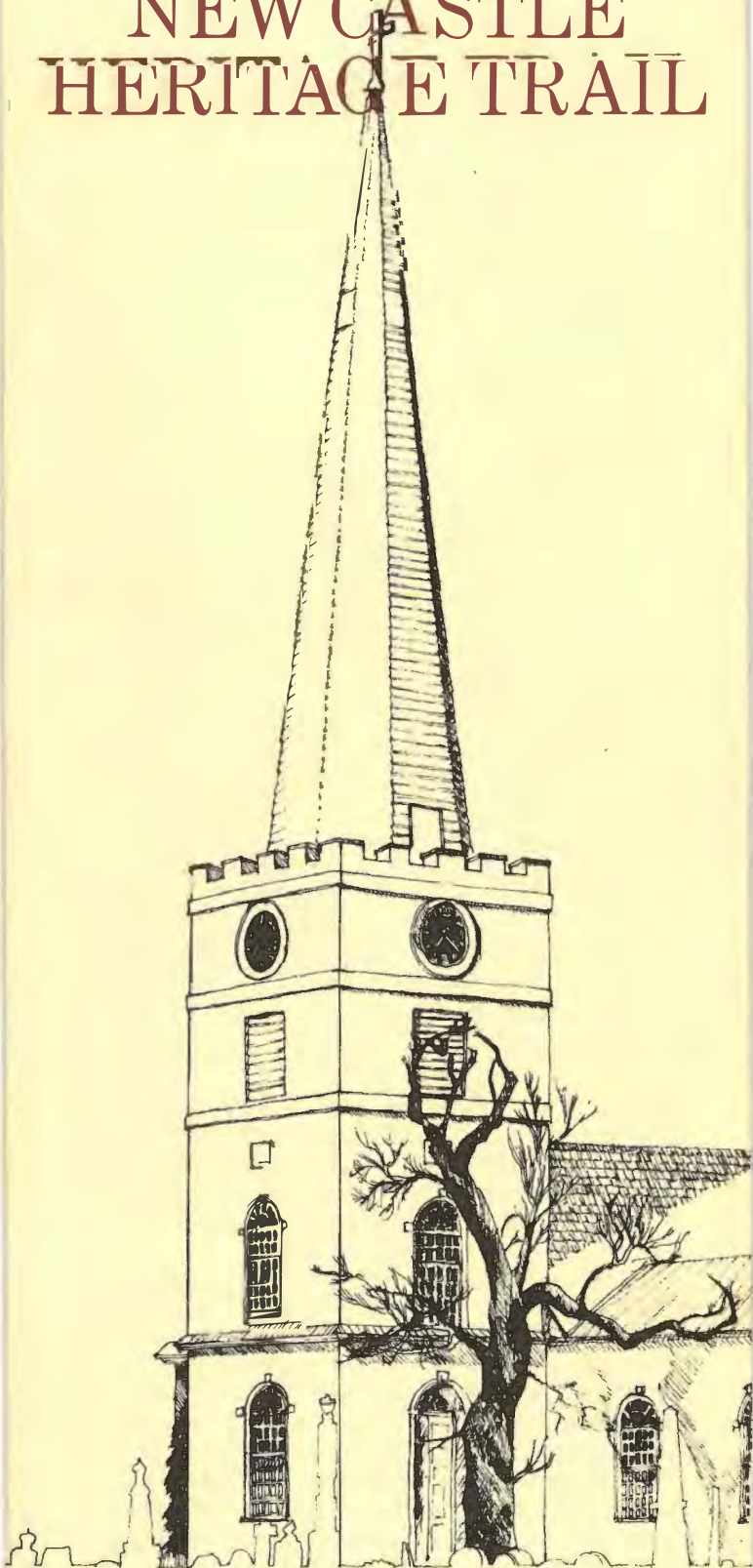
1730 - William Kelsey was hanged for burning the New Castle court house to the ground.

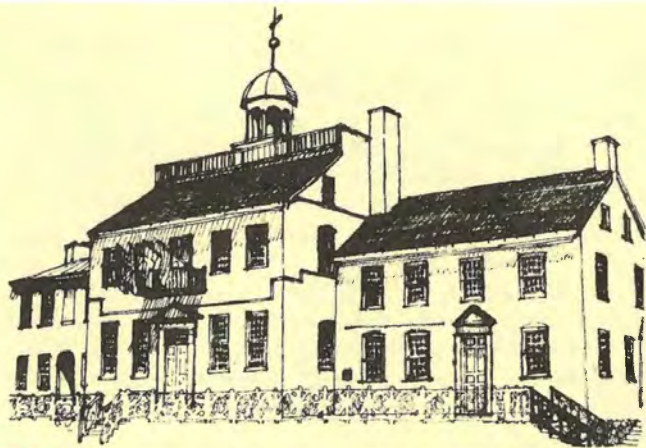
1831 - One of the first railroads ran along a route that connected Philadelphia, Annapolis and Baltimore. An interesting note; the railroad was operated under horse power until an English Locomotive was imported, and it took over the horses task.

BULK RATE  
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# NEW CASTLE HERITAGE TRAIL





The flags of The Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain, and the United States are displayed on the balcony of the Old Court House to honor New Castle's proud and intriguing history. Founded by the Dutch, conquered by the Swedes and English, and prominent as the capital of Delaware in the early Revolutionary War era, New Castle began her story when Old World explorers sailed up the Delaware.

The Dutch nation supported three expeditions beginning with Henry Hudson's in 1609. In 1623 they established a fort, called Nassau, on the east bank of the river in what is now New Jersey. Colonization on the western shore, in present-day Delaware, began and ended in the tragedy of the 1631 Zwaanendael settlement massacred by Indians. For twenty years the Dutch did not return in strength to Delaware, but their claims nevertheless extended to Cape Henlopen at the southern end of Delaware Bay.

To the Dutch it was therefore an intrusion when subjects of Her Majesty, the young Queen Christina of Sweden, established a colony at present-day Wilmington. Landing in 1638 they built a fort and log cabins, tilled the soil, and traded with Indians. A prospering Swedish settlement existing on land claimed by The Netherlands caused alarm and anger in New Amsterdam. Relations between the Dutch and Swedish colonists steadily deteriorated, and intermittent bickering ensued.

This took on a martial air with the accession of Pieter Stuyvesant to the Governorship of New Amsterdam. A legend in his own time, the stubborn and fiery patroon organized and led a military expedition by land and sea against New Sweden. His arrival with an armed levy surprised the Swedes and forced their capitulation. To further establish Dutch dominion, Stuyvesant erected Fort Casimir, the forerunner of modern New Castle. From that date, in 1651, to the present, New Castle has existed on its river bank; its history as engaging as its cobblestone streets.

Fort Casimir was unable to repel the armed forces which appeared at intervals during the late seventeenth century. The Swedes reversed the Dutch triumph in 1654 by capturing the fort and renaming it Fort Trinity. It was recaptured the following year, however, by the indomitable Stuyvesant who took advantage of his trip to Delaware to lay out the town streets, and The Green. He named the town New Amstel. This final strike at New Sweden ended for all time the New World pretensions of the Swedes.

Thriving as a subsidiary of the great Dutch city of Amsterdam, New Amstel was part of the vast New Netherlands colony which stretched from Cape Henlopen in the south, northward to the valleys and mountains of present-day upper New York state. This territory divided the English colonies situated both north and south of it, and caused alarm in Great Britain. To solidify his New World interests the English King Charles II dispatched soldiers to conquer New Netherlands.

In the autumn of 1664, His Majesties Ship GUINEA, 40 guns, and an armed merchant vessel, WILLIAM NICHOLAS, arrived at New Amstel. Laden with 100 men-at-arms, eager for battle, and fresh from the English conquest of Pieter Stuyvesant's New Amsterdam colony, the two vessels anchored in the channel, guns run out, decks cleared for action, with the flag of Saint George snapping in the breeze.

Commanded by Sir Robert Carr and under orders to reduce Dutch garrisons in the New World, the English force launched an attack against the stockade. Thus beleaguered, the small Dutch garrison capitulated, adding yet another victory for the English King over his maritime rivals. With the Dutch surrender the town was re-named New Castle and added to the holdings of Charles' brother, the Duke of York, later King James II.

The Duke of York's government proved capable. Brick kilns fed the colony with stout material to raise homes and reinforce defenses. The town grew, and its lanes and alleys resounded with the hammering of carpenters, the clanging blows of metal-smiths, and the steady drone of mills which ground the harvest from the surrounding fields. This peace was shattered by the Anglo-Dutch war in 1673 when a force of Lowlanders arrived and captured the town for the Dutch Prince, William of Orange.

Dutch resurgence in America was brief. English colonists had flooded the continent, and, in interminable waves, pushed on through the former Dutch territories. The Lowland Burghers, realistic and astute in politics, withdrew claims on New Castle in 1674 in return for British islands in the Pacific. Their control of Delaware ended but

news of the Battle of Lexington. As Congress debated the course of political action, preparations were made for war.

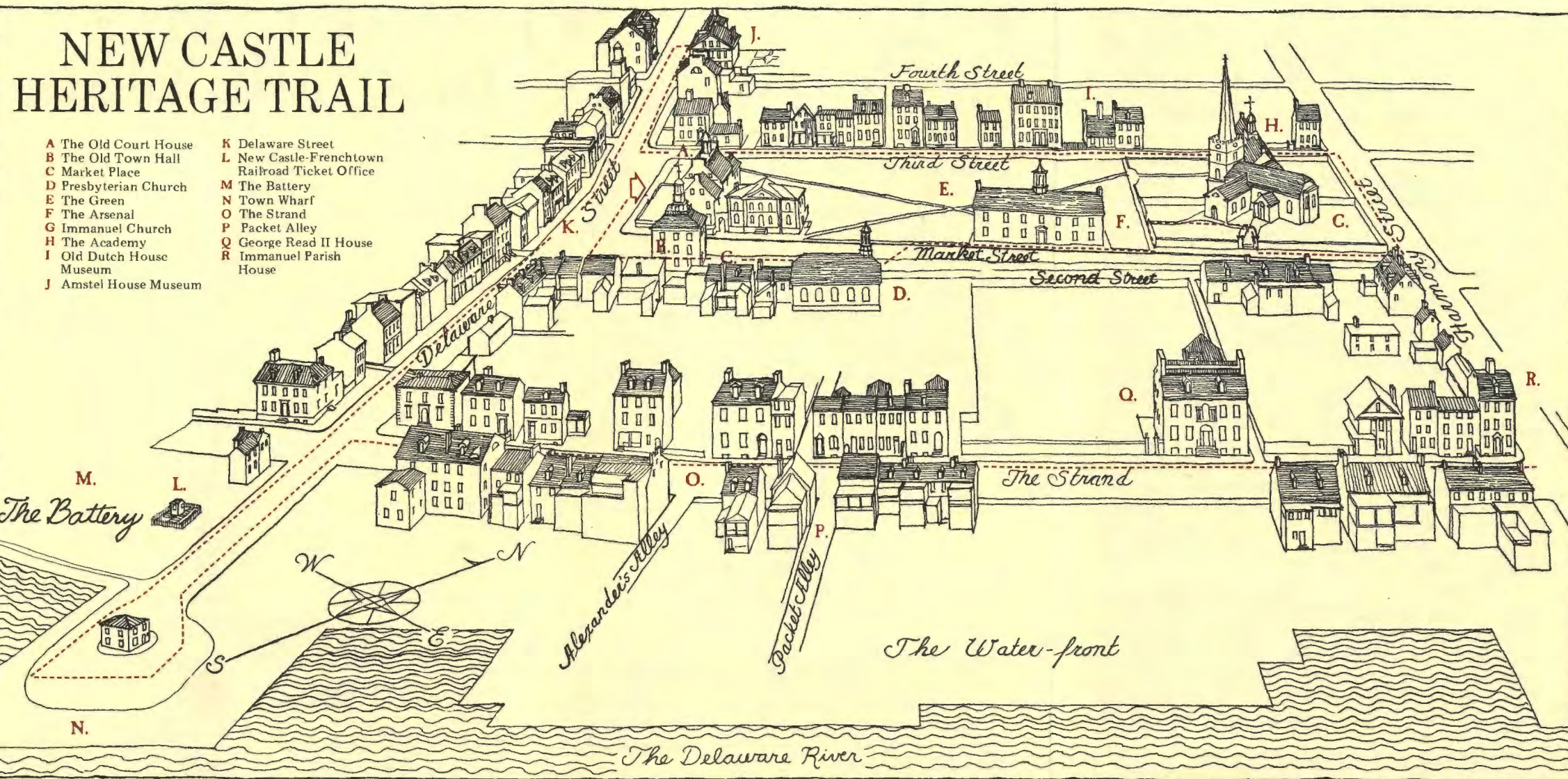
In the following year New Castle joined other American communities with enthusiastic jubilation when the news of the signing of the Declaration of Independence was read from the Court House balcony. Two of the "Signers", George Read, and Thomas McKean, were New Castle residents. A third signer, Ross of Pennsylvania, had been born in New Castle. Another resident, Charles Thomson, was Secretary of Congress. Thus was New Castle embroiled in the tumultuous events of the Revolution.

Delaware responded quickly to the Congressional appeal for arms. In July, 1776, units of the Kent County militia paused in New Castle on their way from Dover to Washington's army in New York. Joined here by other Delaware troops, they bivouacked in town, and "took out of the Court House all the Insignia of Monarchy . . . all the baubles of Royalty, and made a pile of them before the Court House . . . set fire to them and burnt them to ashes . . . and a merry day made of it."

Naval engagements of the early Revolutionary War centered on the Delaware, the gateway to important Philadelphia. The infant American navy skirmished with the formidable Royal Navy within earshot of New Castle. Notable battles were those of the Continental brigantine LEXINGTON against the British ROEBUCK and LIVERPOOL, and the spirited engagements between Commodore Hazelwood's small American flotilla and the English fleet. John Adams described the American effort as "gallant" but gallantry aside, the American navy was incapable of repelling the huge British force which landed at Head of Elk in 1777, nor the naval squadron which fought its way to Philadelphia, forcing the surrender of the American capital.

At this time the British captured John McKinly, the "President" of the newly formed "Delaware State", along with the State treasury, important documents, and the Great Seal, all aboard a ship as it fled New Castle. With the American Congress re-settled in York, Pennsylvania, the British in Philadelphia, and Washington painfully at bay in Valley Forge, the Delaware Assembly fled south. By October 1777, the seat of government passed for all time from the capitol building in New Castle, to relative safety in Dover.

No longer a capital, New Castle nevertheless remained a county seat and an important center of trade in the burgeoning Federal era. The excite-



ment of the War of 1812 brought new danger of naval assault, but failed to dim the town's prosperity. More damaging was the disastrous fire of 1824 which leveled a portion of the waterfront, The Strand, and evoked sympathy from as far away as Boston.

Energetically rebuilt, New Castle became a celebrated passenger terminus when the New Castle-Frenchtown Railroad began operation in 1832. The train supplanted stage coach traffic on an earlier turnpike between the Delaware and the Chesapeake, the new train was one of the first steam powered passenger lines in America. Travelers on river packets stopped in New Castle to transfer to the overland route on the exciting new mode of travel. Long a center for travelers, New Castle attracted a host of notable visitors.

The slow decline of river traffic and the rising preeminence of nearby Wilmington lessened New Castle's commercial importance. The routing of the main railroad lines through Wilmington instead of New Castle in the middle 19th century was a final blow. By 1881 Wilmington had attained such prominence that the county offices and court were removed from New Castle, and the town settled to a productive yet secluded life. Happily her relative "poverty" during the Victorian era kept architectural alterations to a minimum, and New Castle survives today much as the colonial and Federal generations knew it. A surprise to modern visitors, a walk through town is a journey to an earlier age. Although touched by the winds of progress, New Castle echoes with faint whispers from the past.

**A. THE OLD COURT HOUSE** — Delaware's colonial capitol and meeting place of the State Assembly until 1777. Here in 1776 the Declaration of Independence was read, and the first Constitution of Delaware drafted. Originally built in 1732 on the site of the earlier Court House of the 1680's, it was substantially modified and remodeled throughout its history. The handsome cupola atop this structure served as the center of the twelve mile radial circle surveyed by Mason & Dixon, which formed Delaware's northern boundary with Pennsylvania. Guided tours are available, free of charge, Tuesdays — Saturdays 10 a.m. — 5 p.m. (Winter, 11 a.m. — 4 p.m.), Sundays 1 — 5 p.m. (Winter, 1 — 4 p.m.). Open on legal holidays, except New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

happily Dutch culture survived and was imprinted on the traditions of a new people — the Americans. New Castle was a blend of nationalities — Swedes, Finns, Dutch, French, and English — when William Penn arrived.

**O**n October 27, 1682, the new Proprietor of Pennsylvania first set foot on New World soil at New Castle on the Delaware. His land grant from the Duke of York was a vast territory including present-day Pennsylvania, and the Three Lower Counties On Delaware. New Castle was specifically deeded to Penn, along with surrounding land extending to a twelve mile circular boundary. Penn took possession of his new holdings in a solemn ceremony called the “livery of seizin”. He accepted “turf, twig, soyl, and water” from York’s agents in New Castle.

His claims to the Delaware counties were contested by Lord Baltimore in nearby Maryland, and were the basis for a long and bitter dispute which sometimes erupted into violence. Friction interjected by Baltimore over his claim to Delaware was not enough, however, to hamper the steady growth fostered by Quaker administration, and New Castle prospered under Penn’s rule. Delaware demanded its own home government, however, and in 1704 the reluctant Proprietor granted the Three Lower Counties On Delaware their own Assembly. Easily the foremost community in Delaware, New Castle was chosen as the seat of government, and remained a capital until 1777.

The presence of Assemblymen and other officials gave the town added status, and the pre-Revolutionary War era saw continued growth and prosperity. Life in the “wilderness” soon evolved to life in the “town and country”. There was harmony in Delaware until the clouds of political controversy, gathering in Boston to the north and in England across the seas, rushed like brooding thunderheads over the American continent, and swept peace from the land.

**A**s Delaware’s colonial capital, New Castle provided the stage for political debates over such issues as the Stamp and Navigation acts. The handsome brick building now known as the Old Court House echoed with the voices of Delaware’s early statesmen in a chorus of protest over unfair taxation. During July, 1774, meetings were held at New Castle, Dover, and Lewes, and resolutions passed which condemned British actions and appealed to the King. The Delaware Assembly, meeting at New Castle, appointed delegates to the Continental Congress in 1775. On April 26 of that year, at nine in the evening, a dispatch rider relayed to a stunned New Castle the

#### **B. THE OLD TOWN HALL —**

Built in 1823 with a unique arch connecting Delaware Street with the Market Place, it once served as the fire house, a Federal court building, and now houses town offices.



**C. MARKET PLACE —** Used as a market as early as 1682. In 1730 an ordinance established that on Wednesday and Saturday no food except fish, milk, and bread might be sold anywhere else in town.

**D. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —** Built in 1707 this church was used for services until 1854 after which it housed a Sunday School. Services were then held in a brownstone Victorian Gothic church which was, however, found to be structurally unsound and was therefore demolished after World War II when this building was restored to its original appearance. Dutch Reformed clergymen founded the congregation in 1657 but Presbyterians absorbed the Dutch group forty-nine years later. Unmarked grave markers in the cemetery date to the Dutch era; marked graves date back to the early 1700’s. The church is open daily and visitors are welcome at religious services.



**E. THE GREEN —** According to plausible tradition, Pieter Stuyvesant himself pegged out this common land in 1655. Once a grazing area for barnyard animals, it is now the pleasant center of a pleasant town.

**F. THE ARSENAL —** Built by the Federal government in 1809 it served as an arsenal during the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. Shortly thereafter, a New Castle ordinance forbade the storage of ammunition or quartering of soldiers in town, and the arsenal became a public school. It now houses a restaurant.

**G. IMMANUEL CHURCH —** Founded in 1689, this was the first Church of England parish in Delaware. The nave of the present structure dates to 1703, and additions were made in 1820, and 1848. George Read, the “Signer”, and other prominent Delaware statesmen are buried in the graveyard. The church is open daily and visitors are welcome at religious services.

**H. THE ACADEMY** — Planned for many years but delayed by the Revolution, this building was finally erected in 1789. Peter Crowding was the architect and builder, and the structure housed a school for 130 years. Behind the Academy in the enclosed garden is an old "Paulownia" tree supposedly grown from seeds brought by China clip-pers in the Federal period.

**I. OLD DUTCH HOUSE**

**MUSEUM** — Although several New Castle homes consist in part of sections dating to the Dutch era, this is the only complete survivor in its original form built prior to 1700. Furnished with antiques from the Dutch colonial period, it is reputed to be the oldest brick dwelling in Delaware. Guided tours are available during warm seasons Tuesday — Saturday, 11 a.m. — 4 p.m., Sunday, noon — 4 p.m. (Closed legal holidays). A modest admission fee is charged.



**J. AMSTEL HOUSE MUSEUM** — George Washington was a wedding guest here, April 30, 1784. Originally built around 1730 incorporating an older structure in the service wing, the collection here includes antique furnishings and a complete colonial kitchen. Guided tours are available Tuesday — Saturday, 11 a.m. — 4 p.m. (Closed legal holidays). A modest admission fee is charged.

**K. DELAWARE STREET** — Walking down Delaware Street be sure to notice the fine exterior of the Senator Nicholas Van Dyke House (400 Delaware Street) which features a slightly emphasized central pavillion on its facade. At 300 Delaware Street the Marquis de Lafayette attended the wedding of Dorcas Van Dyke and Charles I. du Pont, October 6, 1824. Further on near the end of the street, William Penn first set foot on New World soil, October 27, 1682.



**L. NEW CASTLE — FRENCHTOWN RAILROAD TICKET OFFICE**

— Constructed in 1832 this office occupied several locations in its history, but was placed on this site in the 1950's. The New Castle-Frenchtown Railroad was pulled by the steam locomotive "Delaware" and its passenger coaches carried many notables in the pre-Civil War period.

**M. THE BATTERY** — Purchased for a park and playground in 1939, this is believed to be the site of early fortifications designed to protect New Castle from naval attacks. Here also cannon were placed by the Governor of Pennsylvania to exact by force the payment of customs duties from passing merchant ships.

**N. TOWN WHARF** — Little remains to remind visitors that New Castle was once an important shipping center. Wharves were located between Delaware Street and Harmony Street. In the Dutch era the waterfront was protected by Fort Casimir, the site of which is now believed submerged in the river.

**O. THE STRAND** — The Strand in New Castle is lined with many fine homes, some of which were once inns at a time when this was a busy waterfront street. At the Van Leuvenigh House (#2) post riders relayed the news of the Battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill. The Great Fire of 1824 started at #5 whence it spread along much of the east side. Steps and porches were added to #6 and #8 when The Strand was "lowered" at the suggestion of Benjamin Latrobe in 1803. Inns along The Strand were known variously as the "Delaware Hotel", the "Old Stage Tavern", the "Indian King", the "Ship Tavern", the "Betson Tavern", and the "Ship and Plow."

**P. PACKET ALLEY** — A wharf servicing packet boats jutted riverward from the end of this tiny thoroughfare, and many of New Castle's prominent guests in early times trod this path. New Castle was a vital link and rest stop for travelers making their way between Boston, New York, and Philadelphia in the north, and Baltimore and Washington in the south.

**Q. GEORGE READ II HOUSE**

— An outstanding Georgian mansion built by the son of a Signer of the Declaration of Independence, and completed in 1801. The exterior is highlighted by the handsome doorway with fanlight, surmounted by an iron balcony and Palladian window. The formal gardens to the side and rear were laid out in 1847 by Andrew Jackson Downing, the foremost landscape architect of his day.



**R. IMMANUEL PARISH HOUSE** — Before turning onto Harmony Street for the short walk back to The Green, note this three and one half story structure built in 1801 by the architect, Peter Crowding. It has been used since 1891 as the parish house and church office of Immanuel Church.

When in NEW CASTLE, visit these nearby attractions:

**BUENA VISTA** — four miles south of New Castle on U.S. 13. Built in 1847, once home of John M. Clayton, President Zachary Taylor's Secretary of State. Open: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, 11 a.m. — 4 p.m. Admission free.

**FORT DELAWARE STATE PARK** — Located on Pea Patch Island in the Delaware River and reached by launch from Delaware City, via U.S. Route 13. Completed in 1859, it served as a prison for Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. Boats from Delaware City operate from Memorial Day through the end of October, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, noon — 6 p.m. Boat ride, \$1. per adult, \$.50 per child 14 and under.



*This brochure was produced by the Mayor & Council of New Castle, the New Castle Historical Society, the New Castle Board of Trade, and the Trustees of the Common, in cooperation with the Delaware Department of Community Affairs & Economic Development.*

*For information on seasonal events and special festivals in old NEW CASTLE, write:*

*Mayor & Council of New Castle  
New Castle, Delaware 19720*

For travel information on DELAWARE, contact:

Bureau of Travel Development  
45 The Green  
Dover, Delaware 19901  
(302) 678-4254

No person or group shall be excluded from participation, denied any benefits, or subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any facility or attraction listed in this publication in full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



hair, piece of wax taper used by General Lee on the night before the Battle of Appomattox, original letter of Benedict Arnold proposing marriage to Peggy Shippen, ancient treaty seal formerly used by the U. S. Government, chair owned by Richard Bassett, first elected Senator of the U. S., portrait by Wertmuller of James A. Bayard, a signer of the Treaty of Ghent, medallion of Benjamin Franklin by Nini, Lowestoft platters.

#### OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

**SITE OF FORT CASIMIR**  
(Erected by Dutch in 1651)

Site under water but indicated by monument erected by Colonial Dames at Second and Chestnut Streets.

**FRENCHTOWN MONUMENT**

On Market Square. Erected of stone sleepers on which wooden and iron rails bore the trains of the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad in 1831.

**SWANWYCK**

A Regency House, on Lander's Lane, near Farnhurst. Built about a century ago. Interesting example of French architecture. It is about two miles north of New Castle.

**PACKETT ALLEY**

Corner Strand and Packet Alley, East side, between Delaware and Harmony Streets. Packet boats from Philadelphia met stage coaches and railroad for Frenchtown, Maryland, chief line of communication from North to Baltimore and South. Andrew Jackson, David Crockett, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Lord Ashburton, Sam Houston, Louis Napoleon, Stonewall Jackson, Indians (led by Osceola and Black Hawk) en route to visit "Great Father" in Washington—all passed this way.

#### SHORT HISTORY

New Castle was founded by the building of Fort Casimir by the Dutch in the summer of 1651. It was captured by the Swedes on Trinity Sunday, 1654, and by them called Fort Trefalldigheet, meaning "Fort Trinity". Retaken by the Dutch under Peter Stuyvesant in person, September 11, 1655, and the name changed to New Amstel. Captured in turn by the English under Sir Robert Carr, October 13, 1664, and named New Castle. New Castle with land within a radius of 12 miles conveyed to William Penn, August 24, 1682, by James, Duke of York.

Center of 12-mile circle forming northern boundary of Delaware.

Colonial Capital until 1776.

County Seat until 1882.

Terminus of New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad, one of the first railroads in the country and principal road to travel between North and South.

Here William Penn first landed in America, October 24, 1682.

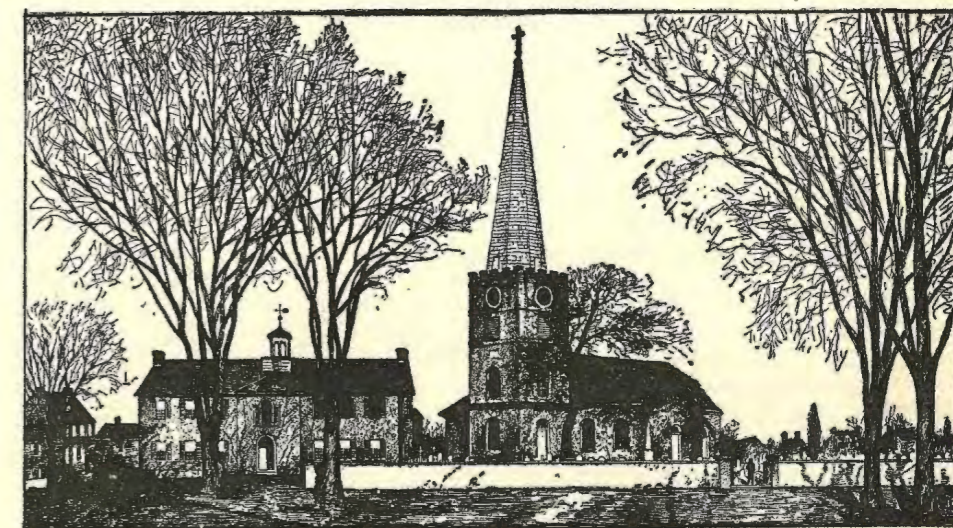
MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF HOUSES



*Legend*  
Nos. - Houses Open  
B - Ticket Booths  
R - Rest Rooms

*Restaurant Locations*  
No. 14  
Nos. 3 and 23 See Folder  
X - Other Restaurants

## A day in Old New Castle, Delaware



Immanuel Church, Founded 1689, Built 1703

### Saturday, May 15, 1948

**ELEVEN TO SIX, ADVANCED TIME, PRIVATE HOUSES**  
**TEN TO SIX, ADVANCED TIME, PUBLIC BUILDINGS**

BUSES leave Fifth and Market Streets, Wilmington, for New Castle every twenty minutes. Concrete roads make New Castle easily accessible from all directions. Ferries between New Castle and Pennsville, New Jersey, leaving every 12 minutes.

Beginning at 11:30 o'clock, cold luncheon may be obtained at the Parish House at a moderate price.

**F**RRIENDS of Immanuel Church, New Castle, Delaware, (built 1703) have arranged an interesting day, to procure funds for its improvement. ~~On May 17th, 1947,~~ the historic homes of New Castle will be open to visitors, revealing many quaint and beautiful bits of Colonial furniture and exhibiting some charming specimens of the builder's art.

*A list of the houses to be open, with some of the treasures to be seen, appears on the following pages . . .*

Tickets will be sold at two dollars and fifty cents each, admitting the holder to all the houses, and can be obtained at ticket booths only. See map. Tickets are not valid unless purchased from an authorized distributor. Tickets will be required for children over 12 years of age.

**No. 1**—Immanuel Church. Founded 1689. Built 1703. Communion Silver by Simeon Saumaine (1710). Church records dating from 1710 on view. In the churchyard are the graves of many celebrated Delawareans.

**No. 2**—The Arsenal. Built by the United States Government in 1809 occasioned by the threat of war with England. In 1831 soldiers garrisoned here under command Major Benjamin K. Pierce brother of President Franklin Pierce. Rest rooms.

**No. 3**—New Castle Academy. Built 1798 by Peter Crowding. Exhibition of old religious books, maps, surveys, and New Castle records. *SANDWICHES AND COLD DRINKS WILL BE SERVED HERE.*

**No. 4**—North West Corner of Third and Harmony Streets. Harmony House. Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Holcomb, II. Table set with Colonial silver, glass, and canton china. Silver, portraits, and mahogany belonging to Lydia Darragh, who saved the American Army in 1780. Original deed from Indian Chief Seckatarius to William Penn. Letter from George Washington to George Read. Silver Tankard by Elias Pelletreau (1740). Colonial kitchen in rear.

**No. 5**—No. 32 East Third Street. Old Dutch House. Built in the latter half of the 17th Century. Undoubtedly, the oldest house in Delaware. Restored in 1938 by the Delaware Society for the Preservation of Antiques.

**No. 6**—No. 18 East Third Street. Residence of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Myers. Built 1798 by Peter Crowding. Interesting handcarved woodwork throughout. Exhibition of old quilts and shawls.

**No. 7**—No. 16 East Third Street. Residence of Judge and Mrs. Richard S. Rodney. Erected 1831 by George Brydges Rodney. Exhibit of interesting manuscripts and letters of Colonial and Revolutionary period. Portraits of George Read, Signer of Declaration of Independence by Gilbert Stuart, George Ross, also a Signer, by Benjamin West, and Rev. George Ross, first Rector of Immanuel Church by Hesselius.

**No. 8**—North corner of Third and Delaware Streets. Residence of Mrs. Lewis Booker. Erected 1789 by Chief Justice Kensey Johns. Fine staircase, mantels and panelling. A kitchen as it was in olden times.

**No. 9**—South East corner of Fourth and Delaware Streets. Residence of Mrs. George A. Hyde. Formerly the home of Mr. and Mrs. John H. Rodney. Built in 1823 by Chancellor Kensey Johns, Jr. Exhibition of early American glass.

**No. 10**—North East corner of Fourth and Delaware Streets. Amstel House. Historical Museum. Built before 1730. Here Washington was a guest at the wedding of Ann Van Dyke, daughter of Governor Nicholas Van Dyke, to Kensey Johns, Sr. Portraits of bride and groom in drawing room. Costumes on third floor. Colonial interior furnished with period furniture. Panelled rooms. Collection of ancient implements. Fine doorway and woodwork. Recently restored kitchen and staircase. Tool house in Colonial garden. Ancient sun dial, pedestal from Old London Bridge.

**No. 11**—North West corner of Fourth and Delaware Streets. Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Newlin T. Booth. Erected 1799 by U. S. Senator Nicholas Van Dyke. Characterized by its substantial proportions and by the symmetry of its facade. Hand-some woodwork and mantels. Chair originally owned by John Bartram, Botanist (1699-1777).

**No. 12**—North West corner of Third and Delaware Streets. Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur G. Logan. Built about 1820 by U. S. Senator Nicholas Van Dyke. The marriage of Dorcas Van Dyke to Charles I. du Pont took place here October 6th, 1824. Marquis de la Fayette was a guest at this wedding. All doors on first floor of Santo Domingo mahogany. Front door and shutters of unusual design. Interior a good example of early Empire architecture. Exhibition of old fans.

**No. 13**—Delaware Street, opposite Court House. Former residence of the younger Chief Justice James Booth. Now the residence of Dr. and Mrs. H. T. McGuire. Built early in the 18th century. Beautiful mantels and stairway. Exhibition of old jewelry.

**No. 14**—Court House. East wing built before 1682. Here was performed the ancient rite of "Livery of Seizin". Penn received "turf, twig, water and soyle" as a sign of ownership. Main building built in 1703. Colonial Capital where annual Assemblies met until 1776 and all Courts convened until 1882. Scene of all Colonial activities and many interesting trials. From it in 1776 were taken the "Baubles of Royalty" and burned in the streets.

**No. 15**—Town Hall. Built by Trustees of New Castle Common about 1823. Market House adjoined it on the northeast.

**No. 16**—Old Presbyterian Church (now Church House). Erected about 1707 and largely in its original condition.

Presbyterian Church. Built 1854. On site of Old Dutch Church, founded in 1657 by Rev. John Polhemus. William Penn in a letter to London in 1683 spoke of the Dutch Church. The Dutch, who were Calvinist, joined the Presbyterians prior to 1700, so the congregation is undoubtedly the oldest Presbyterian congregation in the United States. Silver service presented by Nicholas Van Dyke.

**No. 17**—No. 110 Delaware Street. Residence of Miss Ruth Colby. Home of John VanLeuvenigh (father of Zachariah VanLeuvenigh) who died in 1754. Front of house built in early 1700's. Rear about 1690. Panelling characteristic of the period.

**No. 18**—North West corner of Delaware Street and The Strand. Residence of Mr. and Mrs. J. Danforth Bush. Built 1732. Here Zachariah VanLeuvenigh received the messenger who brought news of the Battle of Bunker Hill. Exhibition of old silver.

**No. 19**—No. 8 The Strand. Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas McIntire. Small town house. Built circa 1690. An interesting survival of the early Colonial period. One of a few not destroyed by the great fire of 1824. Once the residence of Richard McWilliam, who came to New Castle in the 1730's and held many positions of trust from 1748 until he died in 1781. Interesting panelled chimney breast.

**No. 20**—On The Strand. Residence of Mrs. John MacLulich. Front of house built about 1825. Rear much older.

**No. 21**—On The Strand. Residence of Mrs. J. Ralph Baily. Built circa 1840 on the site of an old tavern. Period Queen Anne pieces, in particular fine Queen Anne walnut desk on frame. Early kitchen with primitive utensils. Original portrait of Commodore Thomas MacDonough (1783-1825) by John T. Trumbull (1756-1843).

**No. 22**—Read House on The Strand. Residence of Mrs. Philip D. Laird. Erected in 1801 for George Read, 2nd, son of George Read, Signer. A perfect specimen of Colonial architecture with exquisite woodwork and mantels and charmingly complete with period furniture. The beautiful garden which adjoins the house was laid out in 1847 by Andrew Jackson Downing, the foremost landscape gardner of his day.

**No. 23**—Parish House. Corner of The Strand and Harmony Street. Built about 1801 by Peter Crowding. Recent restoration of ancient carved mantel. Fine doorways. *BEGINNING AT 11:30 O'CLOCK, COLD LUNCHEON MAY BE OBTAINED HERE AT A MODERATE PRICE.* Rest rooms.

**No. 24**—Buena Vista. On du Pont Highway, 5 miles from New Castle and 2½ miles south of Hare's Corner. Home of Hon. C. Douglass Buck, U. S. Senator from Delaware, and Mrs. Buck. Built 1842 by Hon. John M. Clayton, Secretary of State under President Taylor, United States Senator, etc. Portrait of Queen Elizabeth painted about 1580 by Nicholas Hilliard (1547-1619). Portraits by Gilbert Stuart. Portraits of the children by Jessie Willcox Smith. Portraits of Ann Van Dyke, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel du Pont and Jeremiah M. Buck. Portraits of United States Senator and Mrs. Coleman du Pont by Fred Wright. Original grant (1699) from William Penn to John Donaldson for property of which Buena Vista is a part.

**No. 25**—Ommelanden. On the River Road, 3½ miles below New Castle. Residence of Mrs. William S. Hilles. The farm originally given under warrant by the Dutch in 1683 to Peter Alrichs. Here are to be found lock of General Washington's

founded in 1657 by Rev. John Polhemus. William Penn in a letter to London in 1683 spoke of the Dutch Church. The Dutch, who were Calvinists, joined the Presbyterians prior to 1700, so the congregation is undoubtedly the oldest Presbyterian congregation in the United States.

**No. 19**

**Town Hall**

Built by Trustees of New Castle Common about 1823. Market House adjoined it on the northeast.

**No. 20**

**Court House**

East wing built before 1682. Here Penn received turf, twig and water as a sign of his ownership. Main building built 1703. Colonial Capital where annual Assemblies met until 1776 and all Courts convened until 1882. Scene of all Colonial activities and many interesting trials. From it in 1776 were taken the "Baubles of Royalty" and burned in the streets.

**No. 21**

Delaware Street, opposite Court House. Former residence of the younger Chief Justice James Booth. Now occupied by George Winchester, Esq. Built early in the 18th Century. Beautiful mantels and stairway.

**No. 22**

Booth Hurst. Family Estate for over two centuries. On New Castle-Wilmington road, about a mile from New Castle. Home of Laussat R. Rogers, Esq. Original part of house pre-revolutionary. Architect Notman, of Philadelphia. Main part built 1845. Studio. Old-fashioned garden. Primeval oak grove. Furniture and old books.

**No. 23**

Buena Vista. On Du Pont Highway, 5 miles from New Castle and 2½ miles south of Hare's Corner. Home of Hon. C. Douglass Buck, Governor of Delaware. Built 1842 by Hon. John M. Clayton, Secretary of State under President Taylor, United States Senator, etc. Portrait of Queen Elizabeth painted about 1580 by Nicholas Hilliard (1547-1619). Portrait of Ann VanDyke, and portraits by Gilbert Stuart. Portraits of the children by Jessie Willecox Smith.

**No. 24**

"Ommelanden." On River Road, 3½ miles below New Castle. Farm belonging to Mrs. William S. Hilles. Originally given under warrant to Peter Alrichs from the Dutch. Here are to be found lock of General Washington's hair, letter of Benedict Arnold proposing marriage to Peggy Shippen, medallion of Franklin, Dr. Samuel Johnson's walking stick, portrait by Wertmuller of James A. Bayard, signer of the Treaty of Ghent, etc.

**OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST**

**Site of Fort Casimir**

(Erected by Dutch in 1651)

Site under water but indicated by monument erected by Colonial Dames at 2nd and Chestnut Streets.

**Frenchtown Monument**

On Market Square. Erected of stone sleepers on which wooden and iron rails bore the trains of the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad in 1831. At Washington Street and Delaware Railroad is the original ticket office, probably the oldest in the country. Now used by flagman.

Swanwick, a Regency House, on Lander's Lane, near Farnhurst. Built about a century ago. Interesting example of French architecture.

**Short History**

New Castle was founded by the building of Fort Casimir by the Dutch in the summer of 1651. It was captured by the Swedes on Trinity Sunday, 1654, and by them called Fort Trefalldigheet, meaning "Fort Trinity." Retaken by the Dutch under Peter Stuyvesant in person, September 11, 1655, and the name changed to New Amstel. Captured in turn by the English under Sir Robert Carr, October 13, 1664, and named New Castle. New Castle with land within a radius of 12 miles conveyed to William Penn, August 24, 1682, by James, Duke of York.

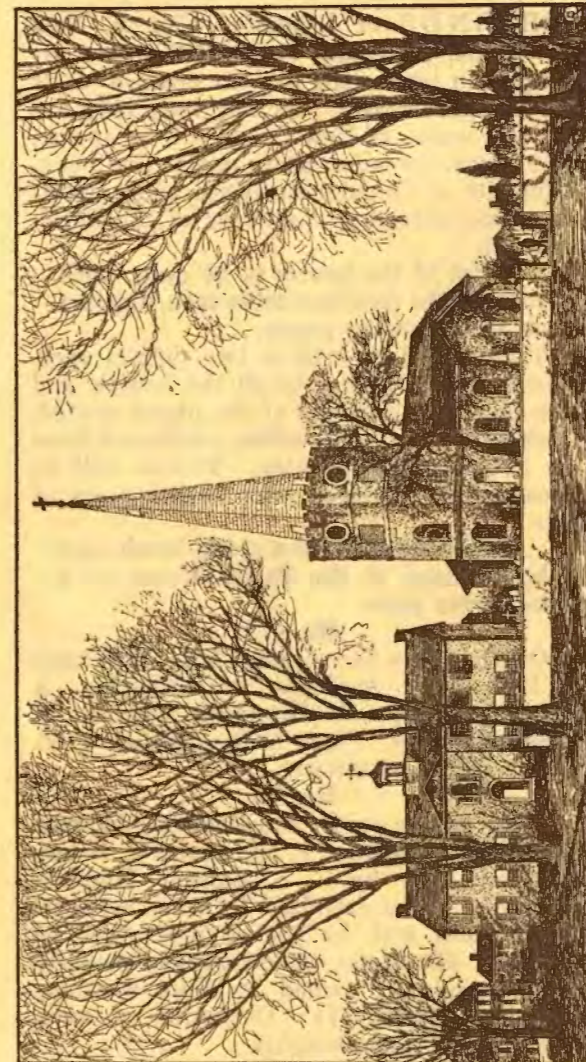
Center of 12-mile circle forming northern boundary of Delaware.

Colonial Capital until 1776.

County Seat until 1882.

Terminus of New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad, one of the first railroads in the country and principal road of travel between North and South.

Here William Penn first landed in America, October 24, 1682.

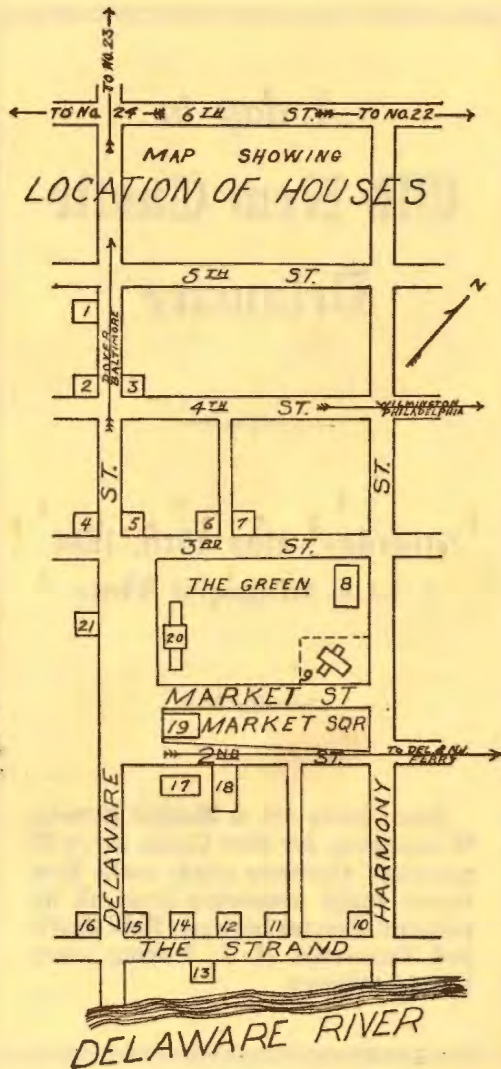


*A day in*  
**Old New Castle**  
**Delaware**

Saturday, May 19th, 1934

1 to 6 Advanced Time

Buses leave 5th & Market Streets, Wilmington, for New Castle every 20 minutes. Concrete roads make New Castle easily accessible from all directions. Ferries between New Castle and Pennsville, N. J., leaving every twenty minutes.



**F**RIENDS of Immanuel Church, New Castle, Delaware, (built 1703) have arranged an interesting day, to procure funds for its improvement. On May 19th, 1934, the historic homes of New Castle will be opened to visitors, revealing many quaint and beautiful bits of Colonial furniture and exhibiting some charming specimens of the builder's art.

**A list of the houses to be open, with some of the treasures to be seen, appears on the following pages....**

Tickets will be sold at two dollars each, admitting the holder to all the houses, and can be obtained at any of the places visited. Tickets are not valid unless purchased from an authorized distributor. Tickets will be required for children over twelve years of age.

**Beginning at 11:30 o'clock, lunch may be obtained at the Parish House at a moderate price.**

**No. 1**

On Delaware Street, near 5th. Residence of Miss Shaw. Andirons from Arlington. A table set as in Colonial times. Portrait of Jane Sharpless. Clock in family since 1788. Other things of interest.

**No. 2**

West corner of 4th and Delaware Streets. Residence of Newlin T. and Isabel J. Booth. Erected 1799 by U. S. Senator Nicholas VanDyke. Characterized by its substantial proportions and by the symmetry of its facade. Handsome woodwork and mantels. Chair originally owned by John Bartram, Botanist (1699-1777). Collection of autographs and paperweights.

**No. 3**

North corner of 4th and Delaware Streets. Amstel House. Historical Museum. Built before 1730. Here Washington was a guest at the wedding of Ann VanDyke, daughter of Governor Nicholas VanDyke, to Kensey Johns, Sr. Portraits of bride and groom in drawing room. Colonial interior furnished with period furniture. Panelled rooms. Collection of ancient implements. Fine doorway and woodwork. Recently restored kitchen. Colonial garden. Costumes on third floor.

**No. 4**

West corner of 3rd and Delaware Streets. Residence of Arthur G. Logan, Esq. Erected about 1820. Also a VanDyke House. Beautiful staircase. Here General Lafayette was present at the wedding of Dorcas VanDyke to Charles I. du Pont in 1824.

**No. 5**

North corner of 3rd and Delaware Streets. Residence of Dr. Lewis Booker. Erected 1789 by Chief Justice Kensey Johns. Fine staircase, mantels and panelling. A kitchen as it was in olden times.

**No. 6**

No. 16 North 3rd Street. Residence of Judge Richard S. Rodney. Erected 1831 by George B. Rodney. Exhibit of interesting manuscripts and letters of Revolutionary period. Portraits of George Read, Signer of Declaration of Independence by Gilbert Stuart and of George Ross, Signer, by Benjamin West.

**No. 7**

No. 18 North 3rd Street. Residence of Mrs. Z. Gemmill. Built 1800. Fine doorway

and woodwork. Exhibit of shawls and quilts.

**No. 8**

New Castle Academy. Built 1798 and recently acquired by Immanuel Church. To be used as a Parish House when restored by contributions and proceeds of Day in Old New Castle. Exhibit of Colonial costumes worn by New Castle dames of long ago. Loan exhibit.

**No. 9**

Immanuel Church. Founded 1689. Built 1703. Colonial silver. Church records dating from 1710 on view. In the churchyard are the graves of many celebrated Delawareans. Organ recital during the afternoon by Mr. George H. Madden, Organist and Choirmaster.

**No. 10**

Parish House. Corner of The Strand and Harmony Street. Built about 1801. Fine mantels and doorways. Beginning at 11:30 o'clock, lunch may be obtained here at a moderate price.

**No. 11**

Read House on The Strand. Residence of Philip D. Laird, Esq. Erected in 1801 by George Read, 2nd, son of George Read, Signer. A perfect specimen of Colonial architecture with exquisite woodwork and mantels and charmingly complete with period furniture. Portrait by Sir Peter Lely. A beautiful garden adjoins the house.

**No. 12**

Presbyterian Manse on The Strand. Built about one hundred years ago. This property was owned by the Janvier family for about two centuries. Now occupied by Rev. William Gibson.

**No. 13**

On The Strand. Residence of Mrs. Louise Rodney Holcomb. Built about 1825. Antique furniture, silver and portraits.

**No. 14**

Small town house. Built circa 1690. Residence of George McIntire, Esq. An interesting survival of the early Colonial period. One of a few not destroyed by the great fire of 1824. Once the residence of Stephen McWilliam, an original member of the Society of Cincinnati. Interesting panelled chimney breast.

**No. 15**

North corner of The Strand and Delaware Street. Residence of Francis deH. Janvier. Old Farmer's Bank Building. Here are silver, portraits and mahogany belonging to Lydia Darragh, who saved the American Army in 1780. Interesting corner cupboard. Original deed from Indian Chief Seckatarius to William Penn. Letter from George Washington to George Read. Portrait by Cosmo Alexander (1768).

**No. 16**

West corner of Delaware Street and The Strand. Residence of Ernest du Pont, Esq. Built 1732. Here Zachariah Vanleuvenigh received the messenger who brought news of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

**No. 17**

Old Presbyterian Church  
(Now Church House)

Erected about 1707 and largely in its original condition.

**No. 18**

Presbyterian Church  
Built 1854. On site of Old Dutch Church,

## Bill Frank

# Restore Fort Casimir

A retired Du Pont Co. engineer has virtually challenged the trustees of the New Castle Commons and the historically minded residents of the colonial capital of Delaware to restore or reconstruct an ancient fort that was the first seat of government in what is today's Delaware.

It was known as Fort Casimir, built in 1651 by the Dutch on the Delaware River shore, down where many years later the old ferry slip was located at the foot of Chestnut Street in New Castle.

Hugh G. Ryan Jr. of New Castle, with 30 years working service with Du Pont, has undertaken considerable research into Fort Casimir. He believes it can be restored (or reconstructed) much as it was during the mid-17th century era of Dutch-Swedish-English control.

He is convinced it could become a major attraction for hordes of tourists from all parts of the United States and also from Sweden and Holland.

What did the old fort look like? Fortunately, in 1654 Peter Lindstrom, a Swedish engineer, made a drawing of the fort and surroundings. The drawing is now supposed to be in the archives of the Historical Society of Delaware.

Ryan issued his challenge to the trustees in a letter in the New Castle Eagle and again the other night at a meeting of what is quaintly known as the Bull Hill Neighborhood Association in the home of Mary Lou McIntyre, 201 Chestnut St., not far from the presumed site of the old fort.

It was very interesting for me to attend this meeting, because Mary Lou McIntyre is the widow of the well-known New Castle historian Nicholas McIntyre, who would have applauded Ryan and helped to launch the project immediately.

In my imagination, I seemed to hear Nick say on the conclusion of Ryan's talk, "Okay! Let's go!"

First, a brief history of the fort:

In 1638, the Swedes and Finns came up the Delaware and turned into the the river they named Christina and laid the foundations of present-day Wilmington.

In 1651, the Dutch under Peter Stuyvesant claimed they controlled the Delaware River. The one-legged, egocentric Stuyvesant ventured into the Delaware and claimed he bought a lot of land from the Indians, just about where today's New Castle is located.

To protect his claims, he built a

fort that he called Casimir after a friend of his in the old country.

According to a Historical Society of Delaware report, the fort was on high fast ground, 200 feet long and almost 100 feet wide, with foundations for 12 guns. Small houses were also built outside the fort walls where 26 families at one time were known to be living.

The Dutch were later displaced by the Swedes and then the Swedes were pushed out by the Dutch and finally, the English took over. Gradually, the fort disappeared.

There are two historic markers near where the fort was supposed to have been.

One was placed there by the Delaware Colonial Dames of America, the text of which authorities say is in error.

The more accurate marker was placed there by the old State Archives Department in 1932 and indicates that Fort Casimir was on land and was not, as some historians have indicated, eventually submerged by the river.

Ryan suggests that the site was under the old ferry slip of more recent years and that archaeological digs could prove this. But even if it develops that the original site of the fort is now under water, it still ought to be reconstructed as an addition to the visible history of old New Castle.

Ryan admits it would take a lot of money to restore or reconstruct Fort Casimir. It would also require many man hours of research, planning and construction but he, for one, as an engineer with considerable experience in designing, project preparation, personnel coordination and field-following for projects in excess of a million dollars, is willing to volunteer his service at once.

"Objectively," Ryan adds, "we should hold cost to a minimum and create interest for outside funds from those who want to help. We should examine existing records in Dover and the Historical Society of Delaware, prepare our own drawings and pursue from that point."

I would also recommend that the trustees of the New Castle Commons and Ryan himself consult C.A. Weslager of Hockessin, a qualified historian who is exceptionally knowledgeable in the Swedish-Dutch-English colonial era of Delaware. As matter of fact I would recommend that they consult Weslager even before they make a decision on the project.

Ponder for a while the basis of Hugh Ryan's plea:

"Let our children see the beginnings of a town. Let our people enjoy the historic atmosphere of Fort Casimir's restoration."

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*350 Years of*  
New Castle,  
Delaware

*Chapters in a Town's History*



*Detail from aerial view of New Castle, ca. early 1960s.  
(Courtesy of the Historical Society of Delaware.)*

*350 Years of*  
**New Castle,  
Delaware**

*Chapters in a Town's History*

CONSTANCE J. COOPER, EDITOR

Published in Honor of the 350th Anniversary  
of the Founding of New Castle, Delaware



New Castle Historical Society  
New Castle, Delaware  
Cedar Tree Books  
Wilmington, Delaware  
2001

Delaware's capital moved to Dover. Threats to move the county seat to Wilmington punctuated the nineteenth century and finally succeeded in 1881.

From the 1830s on, industry shaped New Castle's life. The town pioneered the manufacture of railroad engines, first by the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad and then by the New Castle Manufacturing Company. Other firms came and went through the first half of the twentieth century, producing a variety of goods.

Once it lost its roles as a transportation and political center, New Castle became a quiet town. For the most part people did not remodel their homes to keep up with current styles or tear down and replace older structures. Some newer buildings were erected, of course, but they fit in comfortably with existing ones. Yet this very lack of dramatic change created the built environment that shapes New Castle's current identity as an architectural and historical treasure town.

In honor of New Castle's 350 years, this book presents articles, primary sources, and illustrations that tell many parts of New Castle's story. But even though the contents range from the 1650s to 1950, the book does not claim to be a complete history of the town. Many wonderful stories and pictures had to be left out for lack of space, and many aspects of New Castle's history have yet to be studied. Consider this volume an introduction, and an invitation, to the history of one of Delaware's oldest, most significant, and most beautiful towns.

## CHAPTER ONE

This article, adapted from a longer piece, tells of New Castle during some of its earliest years, when it was owned by the City of Amsterdam and called New Amstel. The article originally appeared as the introduction to "The City of Amsterdam's Colony on the Delaware, 1656-1664; with Unpublished Dutch Notarial Abstracts" in *Delaware History* 20 (1982-83): 1-26, 73-97 and is reprinted with permission.

### THE CITY OF AMSTERDAM'S COLONY ON THE DELAWARE, 1656-1664

*C. A. Weslager*

An agreement became official on August 16, 1656, whereby the City of Amsterdam consented to plant a colony in the New Netherland on lands formerly under the control of the Dutch West India Company.<sup>1</sup> After subsequent discussion, the burgomasters of the City decided on November 4, 1656, to assume jurisdiction over Fort Casimir and the houses clustered around it (present New Castle, Delaware).<sup>2</sup> Seven years later, December 22, 1663, the Company transferred to the City the entire Delaware (or South) River region, "from the sea upwards to as far as the river reaches, on the east-side inland three leagues from the bank of the river, on the west-side as far as the territory reaches to the English colony [Maryland]...."<sup>3</sup>

All the land comprising the present state of Delaware was included in the latter transaction. This is the only instance the writer



has found—a situation which has no parallel in American colonial history—whereby a European city took over the ownership and governance of a colony. To bring this transaction into proper perspective, it is necessary to review briefly certain events which are fully discussed in the historical literature.<sup>4</sup>

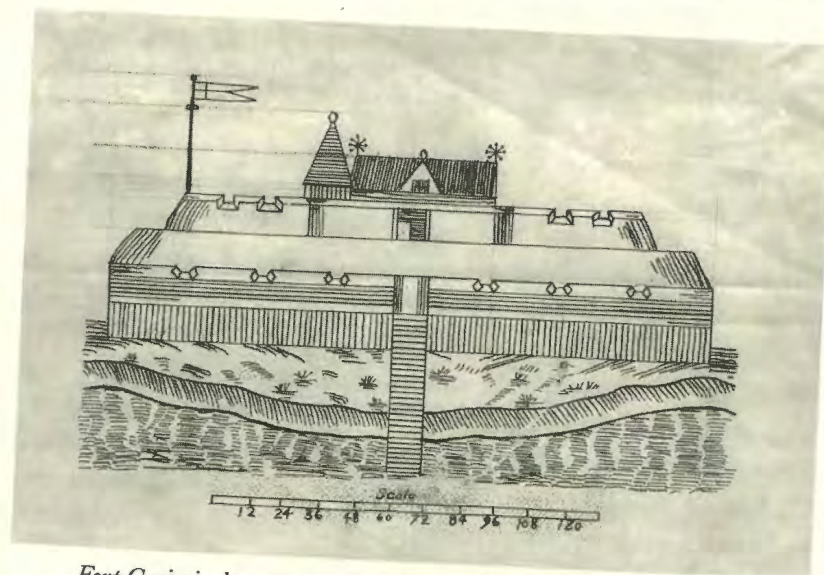
The City's acquisition had been preceded by three decades of international rivalry and dispute over the control of the Delaware River valley. One of the principal contenders was the Dutch West India Company, chartered in the Netherlands on June 3, 1621, with exclusive rights to trade in specified foreign waters, including the full sweep of the North and South American coasts. The government also gave the Company power to negotiate treaties with the Indians, establish and govern colonies, administer justice, fly its own flag, and appoint governors and other civil and military officials.<sup>5</sup> Thus, Dutch exploration and settlement of the New Netherland was not undertaken by the government but was sponsored by a commercial organization with the express purpose of earning dividends for its investors. It is customary to think of New York State as constituting the New Netherland, but Delaware, New Jersey, and parts of Pennsylvania and Connecticut were also included.

The first Dutch settlement within the bounds of present Delaware was made at Swanendael (present Lewes) in 1631 by patroons who were associated with the Dutch West India Company. The original colony consisted of twenty-eight men, later increased to thirty-two.<sup>6</sup> The men were expected to fish for whales and obtain whale oil and also to raise tobacco and grains, all of which were in demand in Holland. If the venture succeeded, the patroons intended to send women and children and expand the colony, but within a year the Indians destroyed the buildings and killed all the men.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the failure of the patroons' colony at Swanendael, the West India Company conducted a lucrative fur-trading business with the Indians. Initially the company had a virtual monopoly on the Delaware River and its tributaries in this profitable enterprise, but

the English and Swedes soon provided competition. In 1638, the Swedes built a fort at what is now Wilmington, naming both it and the river on which it stood after Christina, the child queen of Sweden. The English attempted to make a settlement on the Schuylkill River and another on the Salem River in New Jersey as they tried to establish trading relations with the Indians.<sup>8</sup> Lord Baltimore also settled a proprietary colony in Maryland south of the New Netherland, and he claimed ownership of what is now Delaware according to the terms of his charter from the king of England.<sup>9</sup>

Petrus Stuyvesant was commissioned director-general of the New Netherland by the directors of the West India Company in 1647, with his headquarters at New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island (present New York City). Animal pelts obtained from the Indians by Dutch traders on the Delaware and elsewhere were accumulated here and shipped to Holland, where men's hats were made from beaver



Fort Casimir, late 1800s–early 1900s, redrawn from sketch in Peter Lindstrom's *Geographia Americae* (1655).  
(Courtesy of the Historical Society of Delaware.)

skins and coats, robes, gloves, and other apparel were fashioned from animal skins. As the Swedish colony on the Delaware grew, competition for the fur trade became more heated, and the Swedes undersold the Dutch and took business away from them. Stuyvesant felt compelled to take military action to protect the Company's interests.

In 1651, Stuyvesant marched overland from Manhattan with a force of about 125 soldiers, rendezvousing with a fleet of Dutch vessels that had sailed down the coast into Delaware Bay and up the river to join him. The Swedes were not strong enough to repel this invasion, and the Swedish governor, Johan Printz, offered no resistance. Stuyvesant paid off the Indians to extinguish their rights to the land, and built Fort Casimir on a site that dominated the river. Leaving a small garrison at the new fort to secure Dutch sovereignty, he returned to Manhattan with his forces.<sup>10</sup>

As time passed, Fort Casimir began to deteriorate as a result of inattention, and Stuyvesant lacked sufficient funds to repair it and reinforce the garrison. In 1654, a new Swedish governor, Johan Rising, arrived with supplies and additional settlers. He seized the fort, rebuilt it, and renamed it Fort Trinity.

For the second time, Stuyvesant was forced to retaliate, and the Company made men, ships, and materiel available to him. In August of 1655, he again invaded New Sweden with a strong fleet and a military force greatly outnumbering the Swedish defenders. Among the vessels in his flotilla was *de Wagh*, a man-of-war belonging to the City of Amsterdam, which the Company had chartered for the expedition. The Dutch soldiers killed cattle, goats, swine, and poultry, and plundered the Swedish and Finnish farms. They recaptured Fort Trinity, and Stuyvesant restored the name that he had given it, Fort Casimir. Fort Christina was seized and renamed Fort Altena. Governor Rising was captured and by the terms of surrender deported to Europe with thirty-six of his followers. The remaining Swedes took an oath of allegiance to the Dutch.<sup>11</sup> Once more the Dutch West India Company was in control of the Delaware River valley.

Having incurred large expenses to protect its holdings on the Delaware River, why did the Company turn Fort Casimir over to the City of Amsterdam the year following the conquest and later cede the entire Delaware valley to the City? A number of factors contributed to the decision. The cost of building and maintaining ships and fortresses, paying salaries to the employees in the Company's service in Holland, and salaries plus living expenses to those who came to the New Netherland, were a drain on the Company's treasury. The debt load had been increased by unsuccessful attempts to establish commercial settlements in Brazil and on the Guinea coast of Africa, and by Stuyvesant's two invasions of New Sweden. In short, the Company had overextended itself and did not have sufficient funds to pay its debts to the City.

Throughout the Company's existence the directors were so beset with commercial interests and so eager for financial gain that colonization as an extension of Dutch life and culture was never their aim. They could not conceive of the New Netherland in any way other than for its business potential, and the employees they paid to settle or to farm in the New Netherland were there only to pursue and protect the Company's commerce. Among the employees or "servants" of the Company were skippers of the Company's ships, crew members, Indian traders, commissaries, clerks, cashiers, bookkeepers, artisans, "hired farmers," and many others. All entered into some form of contract to serve the Company for suitable compensation.

During the early years of its existence the Company encouraged *coloniërs* (free colonists) to emigrate to New Netherland and set themselves up on their own account in farming or other permitted occupations. Very little came of this effort because with prosperity in the homeland and religious tolerance there was no strong motivation for Dutchmen to leave their comfortable homes and settle in the American wilderness. A few Walloon families (French-speaking Belgians) came to the New Netherland as *coloniërs* under the auspices

of the Company, but this did not result in a flow of Dutch colonists to America.

The growth of a permanent English population in the colonies north and south of the New Netherland provides a sharp contrast with the Company's failure to motivate Dutchmen to come to America. The influx of English colonists, chiefly impelled by religious persecution or poor economic conditions in England, posed a serious threat to the Company. The directors wrote Stuyvesant explaining that one of the reasons why the Delaware colony should be conveyed to the City was "to preserve and guard, without expense to the Company, the Southriver against the invasion and intrusion by the English neighbors on the south [Maryland], of whom for that matter nothing better can be expected, than those on the North..."<sup>12</sup>

Simon Hart wrote about the Company's investments at Fort Casimir and elsewhere on the Delaware: "Plainly the colony had to expand or fail."<sup>13</sup> But the Company had already gotten into financial trouble and could not incur additional expenses. The directors, particularly members of the Amsterdam Chamber, were unwilling to withdraw and allow the English to take over. Of the Company's five chambers, or subsidiary offices, "that place [the Delaware valley] hath been many years under the particular disposition of the Amsterdam Chamber..."<sup>14</sup> The directors of the Amsterdam Chamber had increased the Company's debt when they induced the City to "lease" the vessel *de Wagb* with its 200 men in Stuyvesant's conquest of New Sweden.

Among the twenty directors of the Amsterdam Chamber, a number were active in the City's affairs and could exert influence on the burgomasters. They also pressed the States General to approve the transfer of Company lands to the City.<sup>15</sup> There were other interpersonal relations between City, Company, and States General that time has obscured. If the City could succeed in the Delaware valley where the Company had failed, perhaps the politico-merchants in the Amsterdam Chamber felt that they would eventually benefit,

especially since several were also burgomasters of the City. A clause in the agreement with the City stated that if the Company wanted the colony back it could have it within a ten-year period by reimbursing the City for whatever expenses it had incurred with simple interest of 5 percent yearly.<sup>16</sup>

Why did the burgomasters of Amsterdam take over the Delaware colony? How could they justify expending city funds in a venture that had been a serious loss to the Company? One of the reasons is clearly stated in the contemporary records: the government of Amsterdam "hath no intention to extend any authority or power abroad, but merely designs to promote commerce which is the soul of this city..."<sup>17</sup> Clearly the reason given was economic, not political or social.<sup>18</sup> The burgomasters would later learn, however, that the colony's economic success was directly related to political and social factors.

In 1656, Amsterdam, with its population of about 200,000, was the center of Dutch culture and commerce. Sugar, tobacco, and furs were imported from America; silks, porcelain, spices, and other products came from the East Indies on vessels owned by the East India Company. Amsterdam was also dependent on European countries for many commodities. Rye and wheat were largely imported from the Baltic. Oak used in shipbuilding was floated down the Rhine from Western Germany and also loaded on Dutch ships at Bremen and Hamburg, Lübeck and Stettin, Königsberg, and Riga. Fir planks used for ships' decks came from both Norway and the Baltic, and masts were shipped from Norway, Riga, and even Archangel. Pine, which occasionally replaced oak in ship construction, was obtained in Norway and the Baltic. Ship's stores, largely from pines, and other timber extracts, came from Scandinavia and the Baltic lands.<sup>19</sup>

Holland was not an important grain-growing country, nor did she have forests to supply lumber and the straight, tall trees needed for masts and bowsprits in her shipbuilding industry. Amsterdam's reclaimed polders were mostly used as pastureland and to raise veg-

etables. Since the economy of the City depended upon imports, it made good sense to the burgomasters to control as much as possible the source of needed products. A City-owned New World colony supplying grain and lumber had financial advantages that would relieve the City's entrepreneurs from depending on the Baltic and other European countries. Disruptions in relations with Poland had become a matter of grave importance to the burgomasters, who saw their vital Baltic trade menaced. The development of American sources would protect Amsterdam's economic position.



The Tile House in New Castle, Robert Montgomery Bird, watercolor, ca. 1826. Nineteenth-century author Robert Montgomery Bird, who grew up in New Castle, created some wonderful views of the town. The Tile House, built on the Strand in the late 1600s and razed in 1884, reflects the Dutch culture of New Castle's earliest citizens.

(Courtesy of Robert Montgomery Bird and  
The Winterthur Library: Decorative Arts Photographic Collection.)

The burgomasters were satisfied that the climate in the Delaware valley was mild and healthy, and they had been assured that its soil was the richest in the New Netherland, suitable for growing all sorts of crops. The Company had already constructed Fort Casimir, which could serve the City's colony for defense and security, and colonists sent by the City could trade profitably with the neighboring English in Maryland and Virginia as well as with the Indians.<sup>20</sup> The City seemed convinced that ownership rights to the land had been guaranteed since valid deeds in the Company's files had been signed by the Indians.<sup>21</sup> There seemed little doubt "that in case people enough were sent from this country thither, all the products that come at present from the Baltic, masts inclusive, can be raised in New Netherland."<sup>22</sup>

The arrangement for the City to take over the Company's settlement at Fort Casimir (and later a more extensive area) seemed to be mutually advantageous. The proposition was examined and accepted by committees representing the Company and the City, and the City's committee willingly accepted advice from the Company regarding the best way to proceed and make the venture attractive to colonists. The interlocking interests between the City and the Amsterdam Chamber left no doubt that the City would have the Company's full cooperation, and in no sense of the word was any rivalry then anticipated. It was agreed that Petrus Stuyvesant and other Company employees in New Netherland would give their full cooperation to personnel sent by the City, and the City understood that its officials would be beholden to the Company in many ways.

The burgomasters decided that Fort Casimir would be renamed Fort Amstel and the colony called *Nieuwer Amstel* (New Amstel), no doubt named after the village and country district then adjoining Amsterdam. The thirty-six burgomasters selected six of their members to serve as commissioners to handle the affairs of New Amstel, draw up the necessary rules and regulations for its colonization, and act as a sort of board of directors for the infant

colony.<sup>23</sup> The “conditions” offered by the City to attract colonists were jointly written by Company and City representatives and publicized in printed leaflets that were widely distributed, not only in Amsterdam but elsewhere in the Netherlands.<sup>24</sup>

The officials of the colony were to be on the City's payroll; these included Jacob Alrichs, a former Company employee with experience in Brazil, as director and commissary general; Martin Krijger (or Crieger), captain of fifty soldiers sent to protect the colonists; and Alexander d'Hinoyossa as his lieutenant. The latter two men had also been in the Company's employ in the New World.<sup>25</sup>

Colonists who agreed to go to New Amstel were not generally employed by the City but were considered individual entrepreneurs. No limit was placed on their potential earnings. The City could buy from them all the grain they raised, the lumber they felled and sawed, the animal pelts they obtained from the Indians, the fish they salted or dried, or any other products marketable in the Netherlands.

The colonists, their families, and their household furniture would be transported at the City's expense, and the colonists would repay the City as their income permitted. Tools and farming implements were to be transported free of charge. The City also agreed to furnish clothing and seed grain for a year and to supply suitable land free of taxes for ten years. The colonists could cut timber without charge to build houses and ships or to sell to the City. Hunting and fishing were also free. If a colonist discovered minerals, crystals, or precious stones he could possess his findings during a term of ten years. After ten years he was obliged to pay the West India Company 10 percent of the proceeds. Thus, the Company, which had heard rumors about gold, silver, and copper mines located in the New Netherland, still had an opportunity for economic profit from the City's colony.

The City would arrange for ships to bring grain, seed, timber, and all other marketable products back to Amsterdam at no cost to the colonists. The City would maintain a warehouse in Amsterdam

for the imports from New Amstel. The City would sell that merchandise on behalf of the owner, deducting a commission of 2 percent from all sales and applying 10 percent of the net proceeds to the cost of the colonist's passage to America until such expense was liquidated. The remaining proceeds would be credited to the colonist's account. The City agreed to lay out streets and lots for a town and to divide the land beyond the town into farm fields and pastures. The City would maintain a storehouse at New Amstel stocked with a variety of merchandise that the colonists could purchase on credit at the same prices prevailing in Amsterdam, with one exception. Since the City was obliged to pay customs duties to the Company on both exports and imports into the City's colony, that duty would be added to the price of the merchandise. This is another example of how the Company received benefits from the colony—although it was agreed that customs duties would be used to build and maintain public works in New Netherland as approved jointly by the Company and the City. Finally, a smithy, a wheelwright, a carpenter, a minister, and a schoolmaster would be provided at the City's expense for the convenience and service of the colonists.

The economic incentives were very liberal, and the colonists were also assured of the same administration of justice and the same political rights they enjoyed in the Netherlands. A schout (chief law enforcement officer, in some ways comparable to a sheriff) was to be named by the six commissioners, and three burgomasters for New Amstel were supposed to be appointed by the burghers, or citizens of the town itself. Five or seven schepens (magistrates) were to be selected by the director (Jacob Alrichs) from a list of nominees submitted to him by the burghers. When the town's population reached 200 families, the burghers would elect a council of twenty-one men who would meet the burgomasters and resolve matters relating to the town government.

The schepens were empowered to pronounce sentences in criminal cases and civil suits involving judgments of less than 100

guilders (later increased to 600 guilders).<sup>26</sup> However, a litigant could appeal their decision to a higher court consisting of the director-general (Stuyvesant) and his council sitting in New Amsterdam. This was a curious situation—members of the court of appeals from the City's municipal court were executives in the employ of the West India Company.<sup>27</sup> Since the City paid customs duties to the Company, it would have been an interesting situation if the City found it necessary to appeal to the upper court on a judgment involving such duties!

None of the provisions for setting up a political and judicial organization in the City's colony were ever followed strictly to the letter. In actual practice, the director (first Alrichs and later d'Hinoyossa) set up a council of from three to six members selected from prominent residents who supported their policies. This council functioned as an executive, legislative, and judicial body, although the director held the reins of authority subject to veto by the commissioners in Amsterdam. The distance separating them meant that the director made many decisions without consultation and approval. Stuyvesant and his council did their utmost to keep abreast of what was going on in the City's colony, and because of the close ties between Company and City were able to exercise restraints on Alrichs. As time went on this led to abrasive situations unfair to Alrichs, who had the responsibility for the success of the City's colony but lacked sufficient authority to discharge this responsibility.

It was agreed that the West India Company would continue to retain ownership of Fort Altena (formerly Fort Christina) and maintain a garrison there of Company soldiers. This fort was intended to "awe the natives" and protect the Swedes and Finns living on the Delaware in the Company's territory, who were now Dutch subjects. The garrison usually consisted of from twelve to twenty Dutch soldiers.<sup>28</sup> This too was not desirable, because the City's fort at New Amstel was only six miles distant yet had a different command.

Jacob Alrichs left the Netherlands on December 25, 1656, with the first colonists in four vessels. The *Prins Maurits* (Prince Maurice), the largest, manned by a crew of 16, carried 112 persons, including Alrichs, his wife, 50 soldiers and their officers, Captain Crieger, and Lieutenant d'Hinoyossa. The *Beer* (Bear) conveyed 33 colonists, the *Bever* (Beaver) carried 11, and the *Gelderse Blom* (Flower of Guilderland) also brought 11—a total of 167. The three smaller vessels arrived safely at New Amsterdam enroute to New Amstel, but on March 9, 1657, the *Prins Maurits*, under command of a skipper unfamiliar with American waters, ran aground on Long Island.<sup>29</sup> Eventually, and with considerable difficulty and inconvenience, the director, the colonists, and the soldiers (who marched overland from New Amsterdam) finally converged on New Amstel in the spring of 1657.

Before leaving New Amsterdam, Alrichs received a deed dated April 12, 1657, from Stuyvesant on behalf of the Company that formally conveyed the land at New Amstel to the City. The deed encompassed the land "beginning on the Westside of Minquas or Christina Kil, called in the Indian language Suppeckongh, to the mouth of the bay or river called Boomptjes Hoeck, in the Indian language Canaresse, and as far landward as the boundaries of the Minquas' country...."<sup>30</sup> In terms of modern geography, this included land beginning on the west side of the Christina River at Wilmington (Fort Altena was on the east side of the stream) and extending to Bombay Hook, where the Dutch believed the river ended and Delaware Bay began. Because of imprecise geography the western bounds were vaguely stated. The Minquas, or Susquhannock Indians, controlled land west of the local Lenape's territory, particularly the Susquehanna River and its tributaries, where beavers were numerous.

Alrichs found the fort at New Amstel much decayed and in need of repairs. Twenty families lived in houses they had built near the fort. There were only five or six Dutch families, the remainder being Swedes.<sup>31</sup> After the *Prins Maurits* foundered, only a portion of

# The Edge of New Netherland

L. F. TANTILLO



W&L

*With a Historical Overview of the Delaware River by Charles T. Gehring  
and  
Commentary by Peter A. Douglas*

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Area map of the Delaware River with 17th century site locations

*"The Edge of New Netherland" is my attempt to explain and illustrate what was built in New Castle, Delaware in 1651, specifically Fort Casimir. In order to achieve a better understanding of the subject, I have depicted aspects of life in New Netherland, an explanation of 17th century fort construction, the details of Fort Casimir as well as renditions of the community it protected. Before delving into this material reading "De Suyt Rivier," by Charles T. Gehring will give the reader greater insight into the early history of Delaware and enhance the experience of discovery that follows. - Len Tantillo*

## De Suyt Rivier New Netherland's Delaware Frontier

by Charles T. Gehring

The four hundred pound governor of New Sweden welcomed the crew of the Dutch ship and asked the skipper if he sailed often in this river. When the skipper answered no, the governor expressed surprise that he was able to come up this far in waters so full of sand bars. The Dutch skipper pointed to the man at his side and said that it was he who told him how to navigate the river. Whereupon one of the governor's officers stepped forward and said that he knew the man, as he himself had often been to Manhattan. He added that the man had been a patroon of Swanendael at the entrance of the bay that it had been destroyed by the Indians in 1630 when no Swedes even knew of this river.

The year was 1643. The Swedish governor was Johan Printz—veteran of the Thirty Years' War. The Dutch pilot was none other than David Pietersz de Vries—not only a former patroon of Swanendael near Cape Henlopen (Delaware) but also one of the most skillful sailors ever to come out of the Netherlands. It had been 34 years since Hudson had sailed into Delaware Bay and the waterway was still surrounded by mystery and danger.

The ship was a herring *buis* (buss) out of Rotterdam carrying one hundred pipes of Madeira wine. The skipper, Jacob Blenck, didn't have the slightest idea where he was. According to De Vries' journal, Blenck had been looking for Virginia to dispose of his cargo. Sailing by way of the West Indies Blenck had been unable to find the Chesapeake and had ended up in Boston. Unable to sell his cargo there because of the "sober lifestyle" of the English, he sailed on to Manhattan. Unfortunately the Dutch had just captured a ship full of wine, so Blenck was also unable to market his cargo there. However, an

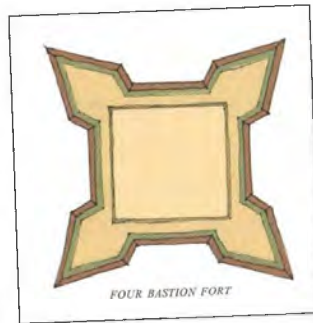


## Fortification Design

### *Star Fort on the Delaware*

by Peter A. Douglas

Clearly the most outstanding feature of the forts of New Netherland are the bastions, those pointed parts of the fortifications that project like spear tips from the ramparts. The first time I saw the plan of one of these 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch forts, a curious image jumped into my mind. The image was from feudal Japan, of all places, a culture so disconnected from New Netherland by time and distance that it made me smile. What flashed into my head was the picture of a *shuriken*, a ninja throwing star. The similarity is superficial, I grant, but among the many designs of this weapon there is such a star with four pointed blades that resembles the triangular corner bastions of many forts all over the world, including those erected by the Dutch in America. On an early spring afternoon, Len and I spent three hours talking about the construction of such fortifications, and that of Fort Casimir in particular.



In 1986, Edward and Louise Heite conducted an archaeological and historical investigation of Fort Casimir. In their report the Heites wrote: "There is no reason to suppose that the fort differed radically from the Dutch forts at Albany, Manhattan, or Recife, Brazil." By the time that Fort Casimir was built, the architecture of such forts was well established, and Casimir's close neighbor, Fort Christina, was of the same design. In fact, even a century later in the 1750s numerous military installations (such as Fort Stanwix and Fort Ticonderoga in New York) were, with geographic and other necessary deviations, built from the same basic blueprint, though of more enduring materials. Of similar "star" design, though on a much vaster scale, is Fort George, near Inverness, completed in 1769 to pacify the Scottish highlands following the Jacobite rising of 1745.

Len has not been to Brazil, but he has thoroughly researched Fort Orange (Albany) and Fort Amsterdam (Manhattan), and painted both forts many times, so he is very familiar with these structures. He was thus able to approach an investigation of Fort Casimir with a running start, augmenting his knowledge with extensive reading of current books and contemporary accounts, the latter never failing to fascinate.

Searching for confirmation of the Heites' reasonable supposition concerning the fort's configuration, Len examined again the only extant depiction of it, Lindström's

questionable sketch. Bearing in mind what is known of Dutch fort design and of the unique situation of this fort, Len applied this to Lindström's view of Casimir. Given the marshy area in which the fort was built, the need for some sort of solid base was called for. Len theorized that what is behind the "riverfront wall" in the Swede's drawing is not part of the fort itself; what is depicted, he believes, is actually the front elevation of the foundation, or "platform," on which the fort itself was erected. This platform covered an area larger than the fort, and probably consisted of a massive accumulation of earth, sod, wood, and rubble, sufficient to contain the unstable ground and raise the surface out of the swamp to create a firm foundation. In itself, this is an impressive civil engineering achievement.

As for the actual fort on top of this, if we look again more carefully at Lindström's flat elevation we can see that he has attempted to provide some depth to the drawing by shading two sections of the curtain wall that lies beneath the interior buildings. Knowing what to look for from an understanding of other contemporary forts, it's easy to agree with Len when he posits that these hatch marks represents the flanks and shoulders of the fort's two bastions that faced the river.

A bastion, then, is the part of a fort's defensive system that projects outward from the ramparts, often located where the curtain walls meet. They provide for active defense against assaulting troops. One bastion enables defenders to cover adjacent bastions and walls with defensive fire. Fort Casimir's other two bastions cannot be seen in Lindström's one-dimensional depiction, but the standard symmetry of contemporary fortifications means that we can confidently infer their existence.

To show this, Len created a computer model of Casimir that can be nimbly tilted and viewed from any angle. One minute we view the fort as an attacker would, approaching at ground level, creeping carefully up the imaginary glacis, and then we soar over the plan of it like birds. This overhead view shows the now familiar square star-shaped construction with sharp pointed bastions in each corner, the walls containing a reconstruction of the living quarters, stores, and other buildings. From such electronic models and sketches Len has produced the likeness



of the fort found in this book. This basic “star” format has been used in numerous countries, and in some instances forts had multiple bastions and developed into extremely elaborate and beautiful almost organic flower-like structures. They can be explored on maps and sometimes on foot even today.

The principle of the bastion comes from the medieval castle. Advances in military technology led to the increasing vulnerability and the decline of these towering fortresses of the Middle Ages whose great height was their main advantage. Vulnerability to powder and shot, and particularly to large maneuverable siege cannon, led to the development of fortified positions with lower walls that were embedded in ditches fronted by earthen slopes that could absorb shot. However, low walls meant that they could be more easily stormed, so military architecture had to change again. Especially unhelpful were the previously dominant rounded turrets; these created “dead zones” that sheltered attackers from the defenders’ fire. To counter this, round or square turrets were extended outwards to form diamond-shaped points that eliminated these indefensible areas. To increase the effectiveness of the lower walls, the shape was designed to make maximum use of enfilade, or flanking fire, at any enemy who reached the walls. Bastion-mounted cannon had a clear line of fire directly down the curtain wall to the neighboring bastion, preventing a close assault.

The need to defend a fort with a lower profile was offset by creating, where feasible, larger impregnable areas that provided defense in depth, where attackers had to overcome several layers of defenses. In the case of Fort Casimir, the tidal water and the swamp limited its extent and possibilities for growth, but this natural defensive barrier doubtless made up for the difficulties that must have been encountered in its construction in such a place.

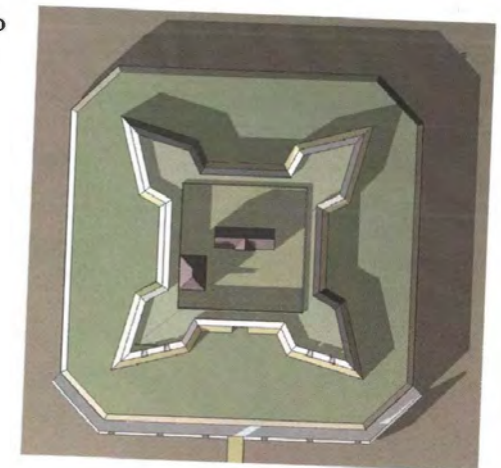
These four-bastioned Dutch forts were pretty much the minimalist design for bastion forts. Simplicity of construction stemmed, certainly in the case of Casimir, from the necessary use of accessible local materials, principally earth and timber. There were no convenient quarries for stone, and no knowledgeable masons at hand, and there seems to have been no interest in establishing such ambitious structures, especially in view of how the Swedes and the Dutch were playing constant leapfrog with their forts in the Delaware estuary to assert their national interests.

In the world of military architecture we must think of Fort Casimir as something

basic, even primitive. It was the product of much sweat and labor but while it was hardly a serious defensible redoubt, it nevertheless fulfilled the role of establishing a national presence. It was a frontier outpost, more easily compared with the 19<sup>th</sup> century “Fort Apaches” of the western plains. Casimir was not intended to be as imposing, elegant, or enduring as some of the North American English forts of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. There are clear design similarities, for the basic principles still largely applied, but so many of these latter forts survive because they were built of stone. Casimir was constructed of wood and dirt, and to remain in an efficient working condition such a structure required perpetual upkeep and repair, neither of which was lavished on Casimir. It had fared poorly by the time the Swedes took it over, only three years after it had been built. In addition to neglect, the rigors of the Mid-Atlantic environment and the fundamental method of construction conspired to reduce the fort to a run-down condition that was never rectified while it was in Dutch hands.

Winter’s freezing and thawing heaved and warped the posts and planks of the bastions, while rain rusted the nails and made the earthen fill sodden and heavy. Water and liquefied earth would have been squeezed out between the retaining planks causing serious instability. Insects were constantly at work, while the humid summers encouraged the growth of seeds, and raised weeds and saplings that would have quickly taken root. One can just imagine how, after a couple of seasons, the fort would have taken on an overgrown and ruined appearance that the inadequate and unhappy garrison could hardly have prevented. There could be little resistance to the attack by English warships in 1664, which hastened the fort’s total destruction. Before long its shattered remains rotted into the Delaware mud and Casimir became a memory, of interest not to tourists but to historians and archaeologists—and to artists.

P. A. Douglas, 2011



# Dutch Forts in North America

## *Building Basic Defenses*

The Dutch built massive stone forts in the Netherlands, Asia, the Caribbean, and numerous other locations. The construction of these durable structures reflected the economic and strategic value of those locations and the threat levels they faced from their enemies. These forts were expensive to build and maintain, requiring large work forces from the onset. North America was a very different case. The fur trade was nowhere near the monetary importance of the spice or sugar trade. Labor in New Netherland was limited and amounted to the men that could be supplied by the Dutch West India Company itself. Forts needed to provide basic security at low cost and with a minimal amount of construction time. Wood and dirt were the plentiful materials. The sites for these forts were usually on or near soggy river banks. The engineering of these facilities was basic, but the conceptual design bore the unmistakable mark of experienced technicians.

The forts on the Hudson, Delaware, and Connecticut Rivers were simple. Initially, the idea of building a five-bastion stone fort in Manhattan was considered, but in the end it, too, was built as a four-bastion fort. In some locations, like the Fort of Good Hope, on the Connecticut River, the entire fortification was no more than a house with a wall around it.

In this section we will explore one possible approach to the construction of a corner bastion of a simple wooden fort. The planked design seems to have been common in forts the Dutch built in Albany and in Manhattan. There are a few period drawings and some correspondence that indicate a procedure of this nature could have been employed. This is a speculative scenario which may bring up as many questions as it answers, but it does attempt to deal with issues that have, for too long, been left unaddressed. Since neither Fort Casimir nor Fort Amsterdam in Manhattan were built with surrounding ditches, that feature will not be presented in this hypothetical example.



Fort Orange, Rensselaerswijck, circa 1650

Fort Orange was originally built in 1624. It was modified several times over its life span of approximately 80 years. English alterations in the 1670's substantially altered the bastion surface appearance, but the overall shape of the fort was retained. Unlike Fort Casimir and Fort Amsterdam, Fort Orange was surrounded by a defensive ditch.

Fort Amsterdam was built in 1626. Like Fort Orange it was modified many times. In 1633, Wouter van Twiller ordered that the bastions be rebuilt in stone. In the end only the northwest bastion was upgraded. In 1664, after the English takeover of New Netherland, the fort was renamed Fort George. It was substantially improved and survived for a total of 164 years. The footprint of the original Dutch fort was still visible on New York City maps in 1790.



The Northwest Bastion of Fort Amsterdam



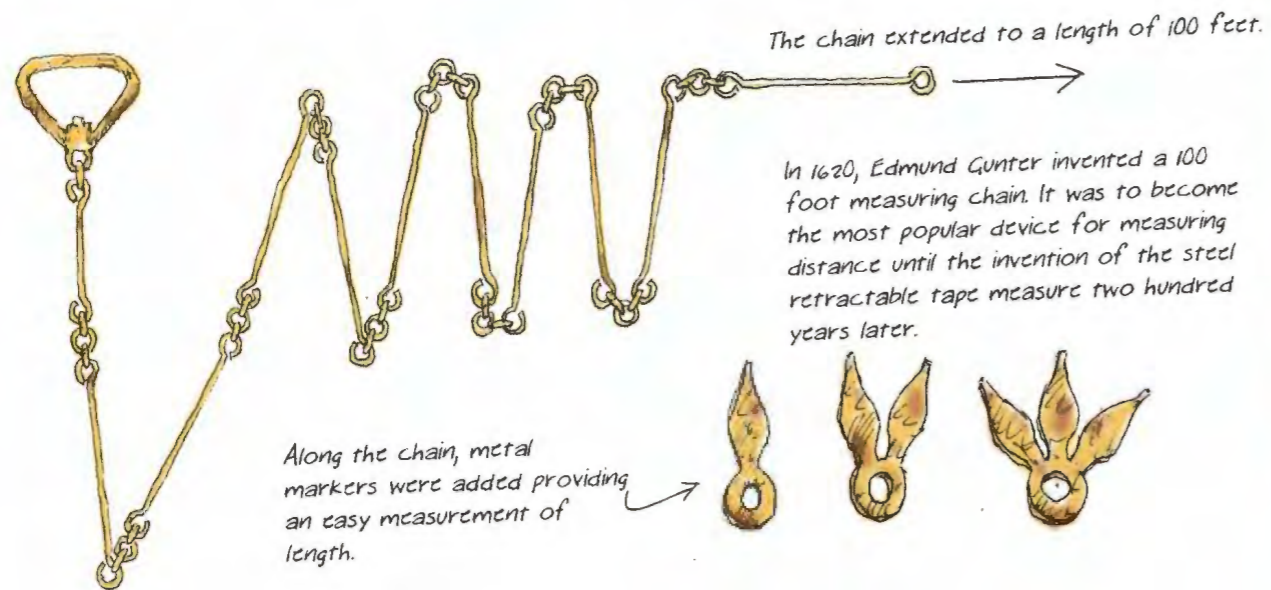
Fort Amsterdam, Manhattan, circa 1655  
Note that the northwest bastion (far left) is built of stone unlike the others.

# Bastion Construction

## Stage 1. Site Preparation

Once the plans for the fort were finalized construction could begin. The first step was to advantageously locate the fort on the site, assuming that this had not already been established during the planning stage. Numerous critical factors were considered. Strategic sight lines, terrain elevation, proximity to potable water, and access to supply routes would have been at the top of the hierarchical list. The later element, access to supply routes, for the Dutch meant a location that could be serviced from a navigable waterway with sufficient depth to accommodate large cargo and military vessels.

Site preparation began with the removal of large rocks, trees, stumps, and brush. If necessary, the terrain was cut or filled to achieve a somewhat level plain on which to build. Surveyors would then locate the key perimeter points of the fort. Each point would be marked by driving wooden stakes into the ground. Ropes were then tied to the stakes clearly defining the outline of the fort on the ground. In addition to marking points of intersection, the stakes also demarked the center points of foundation excavations for major structural elements. The land was now ready for excavation.



DELAWARE PUBLIC ARCHIVES

## BASTION CONSTRUCTION STAGE 1 - LAYING OUT THE PERIMETER

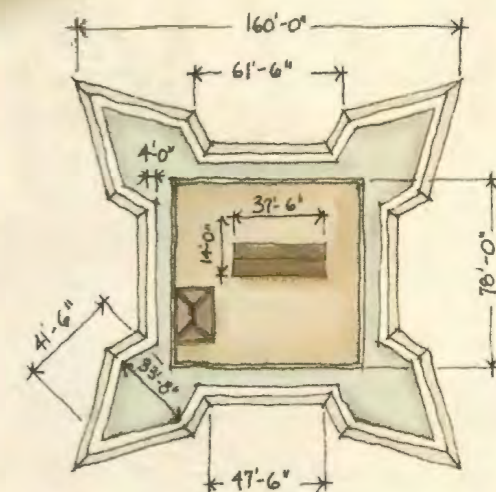
Using what were the sophisticated surveying instruments of the time, key perimeter points of a bastion could be established and marked with stakes and ropes.



Fort Casimir was probably designed as a simple four-bastion fort like this.



This is an idealized version of a basic four-bastioned fort using the conventional geometrical design rules of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. By 1670, Vauban was emerging as the pre-eminent engineer in the field of military fortification planning. Many of the principles that he would later refine were already in use by the Dutch.

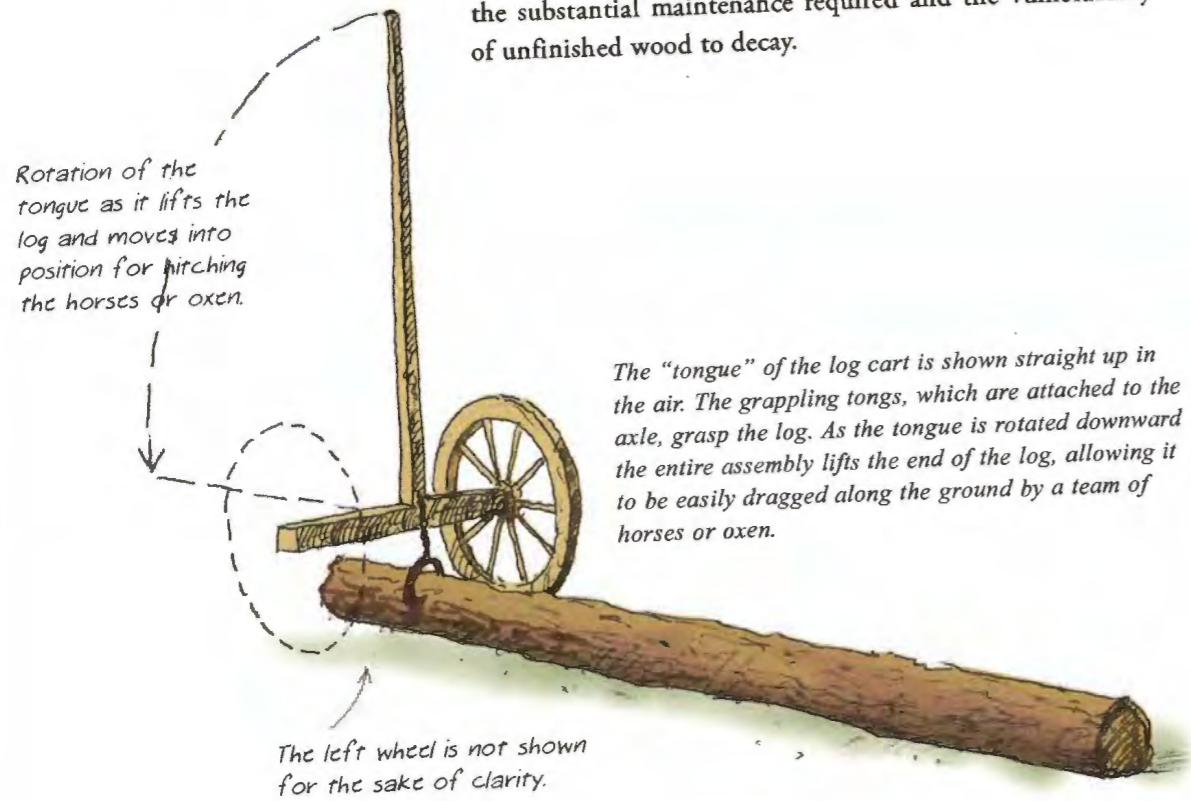


Approximating the size of Fort Casimir, and incorporating established geometrical rules, the dimensions of all facets of the fort's layout can be determined, including the general scale of the structures within the fort.

# Bastion Construction

## Stage 2. Excavation

Once the post hole locations had been established, workers set about the arduous task of excavation. Using simple tools they broke ground, chopped through roots, and removed stones and other impediments as required for each bastion. Holes needed to be dug to a depth of approximately one quarter the length of the upright post in order to provide sufficient support. Softer or sandier soils meant deeper holes. Under average conditions a twenty foot bastion post would necessitate a foundation hole of approximately five feet in depth. Although the foundations of planked wooden forts took some time to prepare, it was a minimal effort when compared to the labor needed in the construction of stone forts of that period. It took fewer men and vastly less time to build with wood and soil. The great disadvantages were in the substantial maintenance required and the vulnerability of unfinished wood to decay.



## BASTION CONSTRUCTION STAGE 2 - EXCAVATION AND SITE PREPARATION

Holes were dug to a depth of 1/4 the length of the bastion posts



Massive structural timber would most likely have been harvested near the construction site.

A long hardwood log, especially oak, is an extremely heavy object. Moving it long distances over rough terrain by hand would be nearly impossible. 17th century builders used a simple lever mechanism to lift objects of this type (see sketch on the left). Horse teams were popular with the Dutch, but records indicate that oxen were used as well.



# Bastion Construction

## Stage 3. The Posts

Delaware had an abundance of mature trees in the 17<sup>th</sup> century suitable for structural lumber. An experienced carpenter from Europe would already know the advantages and disadvantages of some of the native species. The common varieties for construction would have been loblolly pine (southern yellow pine), red oak, and white oak. Ash and hickory were in good supply and possessed many of the characteristics of sturdy hardwoods, but they did not have the durability of oak and yellow pine. Given the frequency of period comments regarding the decay of fort walls, it's possible that these woods may have been tried and failed to meet expectations for resisting the ravages of moisture and insects. In actuality, oak and pine fared only slightly better.

Oak and yellow pine were enormous straight grained trees reaching heights, at that time, of 80 to 100 feet. Felling lumber of this size was a task for only the most skilled woodsmen. Native people are said to have "girdled" large pine trees, that is to cut away the life sustaining bark around the trunk, thereby killing the tree. They then allowed the timber to "dry on the stump." After a sufficient time passed the tree was taken down. With the wood partially seasoned the logs were lighter and easier to move. There is no record of Europeans using this technique. Their approach was most likely to strategically drop large trees using axes and then divide them into manageable lengths to be dragged away by horses or oxen.

Lumber was squared off with hand tools like the axe and the adze. Unlike sawn timber, hand squared logs were shaped by eye and varied with the skill of the woodsmen. For the sake of our hypothetical bastion, the length of the average finished post will be 20 feet. This would allow a post buried in the ground 5 feet to project 15 feet above the surface. The exact finished lengths would vary slightly with placement, due to the varying angles needed to achieve the sloping walls of the finished structure. In order to hold the post in place while the hole was being backfilled with dirt, bracing timber called "shoring" may have been used.

Bastion walls were sloped inward as they rise above the ground to reduce the pressure of the earth fill at the top of the structure. A straight wall has a tendency to tip outward from the force of soil especially when it is wet.

### BASTION CONSTRUCTION STAGE 3 - SETTING THE SUPPORT POSTS

Posts were tipped into holes and then hoisted into position by horses and men.



A common and indispensable tool on construction sites for over 2,000 years was the wheelbarrow, which originated in China. This 17<sup>th</sup> century wooden version varies little from a modern wheelbarrow.



The Colonial Wheelbarrow

Squaring a log with an axe was achieved by first chopping vertical kerfs along a line followed by parallel strokes down the side, creating a flat

surface. The process may or may not have been repeated on all four faces depending on the usage and preference of the builder.



# Bastion Construction

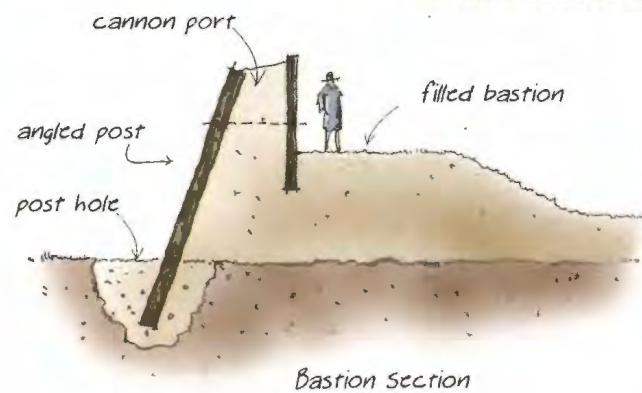
## Stage 4. Planking and Filling

After all the posts were set, milled planks were cut and nailed on the back face of the uprights. This method is clearly visible in the depiction of several forts in the Caribbean during this time period. The obvious advantage to proceeding in this manner was that as the bastion was filled, the pressure of the soil would provide additional support for the planks.

Using our hypothetical bastion design as an example, the volume of earth required to fill and finish it would be 14,000 cubic feet of dirt. That is the equivalent of 350 cart loads of soil, or 3,500 wheelbarrow loads. Soil can weigh from 75 to 120 pounds per cubic foot depending on composition and moisture. Considering the marshy land along the Delaware River, this volume of earth could weigh 1,680,000 pounds, or 840 tons. Keep in mind that Fort Casimir, as well as nearly all the other forts of that time had four bastions. That's four times the soil in our calculations. The man hours needed to accomplish this work were substantial. The fill material would have most likely come from an area of the site pre-designated as a defensive trench or a building foundation. Fill may have even been cut from the immediate fort area itself if significant grading were required to level the land. Although this seems like a massive effort it would have been little more than part of normal fortification work. Earthmoving at fort sites took place in all countries on every continent in every century.

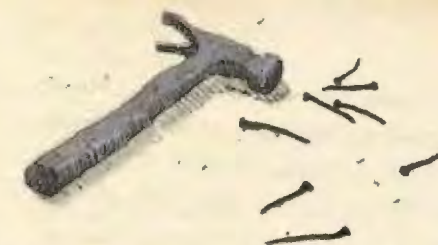
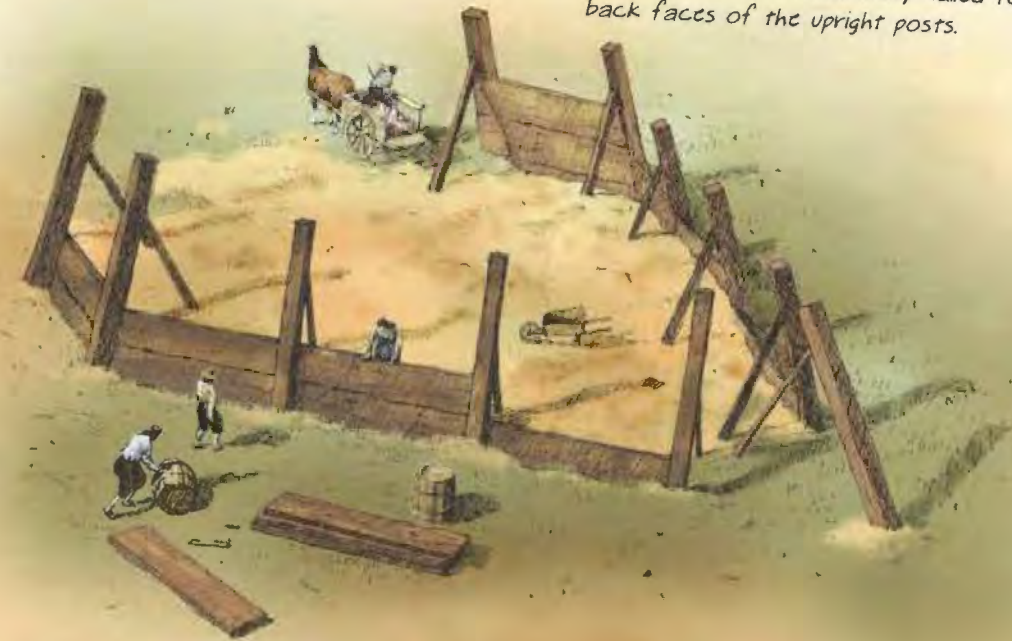
It is also interesting to note that hand forged square nails were in common use on construction sites in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Records indicate the delivery of thousands of nails to New Netherland. Iron nails are commonly found by archeologists in Dutch excavations. There were hundreds of other ways for carpenters at that time to join wood. Variations of mortise and tenon and the use of wooden

pegs would have made up most of them, and were definitely among the array of techniques used in erecting forts.



### BASTION CONSTRUCTION STAGE 4 - PLANKING AND FILLING

Milled planks were most likely nailed to the back faces of the upright posts.



The two-man saw on trestle sawhorses could be used to make planks from logs. Although slow and tedious, this method would have to suffice if work was to continue while awaiting a delivery of milled lumber.

The Dutch, along with all colonial Europeans, kept African slaves. Accounts of the Delaware settlements indicate that they made up a small part of the population, working on farms and plantations and also as non-military personnel in Fort Casimir.

Trestles were repositioned as sawing progressed.

Sawing planks in this manner was hard work. The sawyer, on top, directed the blade. The pitman, on the bottom, did the hard part.



# Bastion Construction

## Stage 5. Completed Planking

It's possible that the Dutch forts, Fort Casimir included, may have been considered complete when the planked walls were high enough to protect a soldier standing on the earth fill of the bastion. Although the wall would stop an arrow it would provide little defense against cannons and muskets. At the time, hostile natives were considered to be the only threat. As the years passed more formidable foes presented themselves. In 1654, when the Swedes took Fort Casimir from the Dutch, Governor Johan Risingh's journal and the records of military engineer Per Lindeström mention the fort's poor condition and its design shortcomings. They go on to describe alterations they are making to generally improve the bastions and outer defenses. Although the parapets (top of bastion walls) are not specifically mentioned they are clearly depicted in Lindeström's drawing as massively wide structures with cannon ports (embrasures) cut in at intervals.

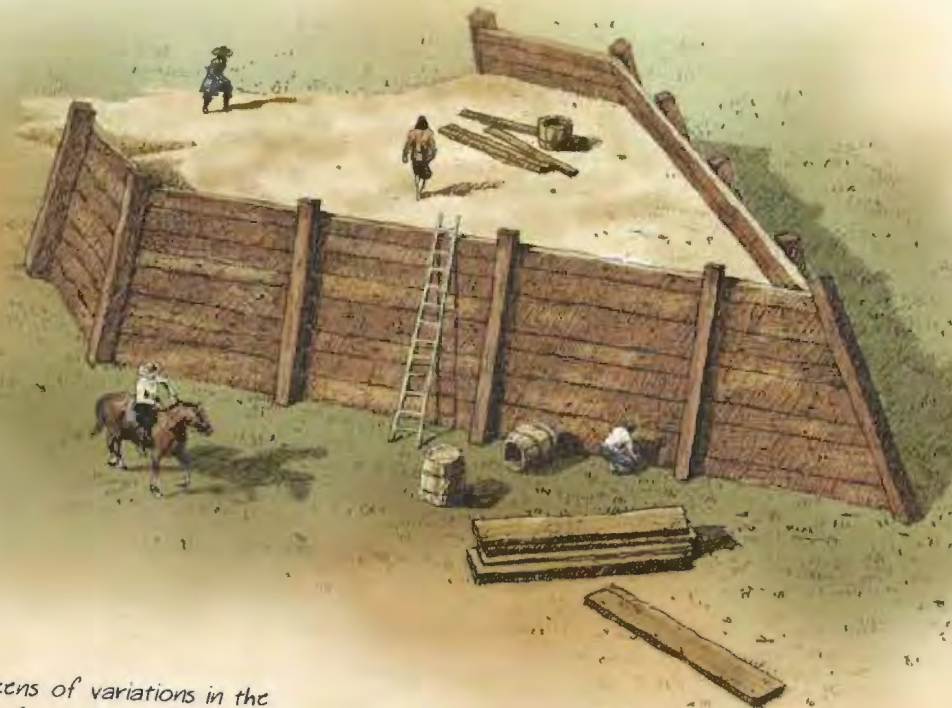
Access to the bastions from the courtyard of the forts would have been via earthen ramps. Stairs may also have been included. Not all bastions were filled solid with earth. Some bastions were fitted with inner rooms built underneath. These spaces served special needs, most likely as powder magazines.

It is not known exactly what specie or species of wood was used to construct these forts. The assumption is that oak was the preferred material. However, availability and experimentation may have led to the use of other hardwoods and conifers. Whatever the variety, no finishes were applied to the completed structures. The ravages of weather and insects quickly began the process of decay. Cracks and spaces between boards allowed vegetation to take root. Maintaining these walls would have been required continuously. This is borne out by the frequency of requests in fort records for the funding of repairs. Even a short lapse in upkeep would rapidly lead to catastrophic damage and completely undermine the effectiveness of the fort.

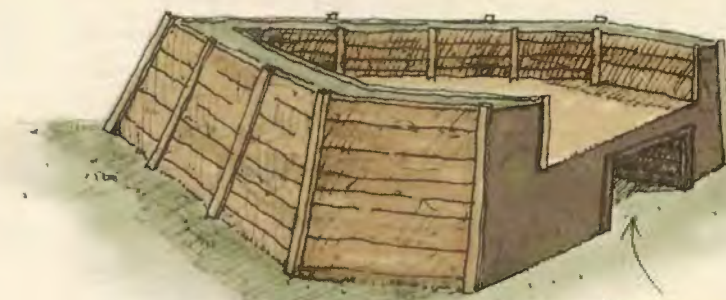
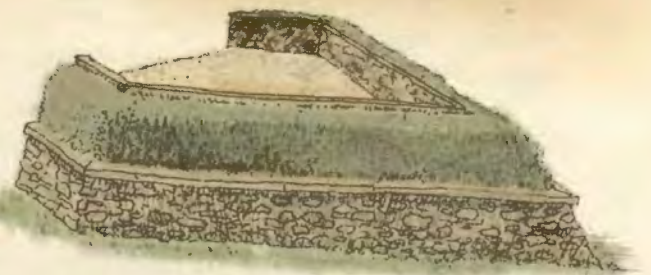


Carpenter ants, termites, and other wood devouring insects caused more devastation to the wooden forts of North America than any military siege.

### BASTION CONSTRUCTION STAGE 5 - COMPLETED PLANKING



There are dozens of variations in the construction of 17th-century fort bastions. This one, with a partial stone base, is finished with a formed sod top and parapet, backed by a stone retaining wall. The Dutch forts of New Netherland were almost always made of wood with earthen fill.



Not all bastions were completely filled with earth. Brick or stone-lined rooms were sometimes built underneath and used as storage areas. A space of this type was most often used as a powder magazine.

Rooms were sometimes built under bastions.



## Bastion Construction

### Stage 6. Completed Bastion

The final features to complete the bastion would be the construction of the parapet and the fitting of embrasures. Embrasures were flared ports cut into the parapet to facilitate a protected opening from which to fire a cannon. Fort Casimir apparently included many of them. Lindeström's drawing shows embrasures not only along the bastion parapet, but also on top of a defensive outer wall that possibly surrounded the fort. Parapets in the more substantial stone forts of Europe and Asia were massive. The hypothetical bastion represented here is based on the scale of Fort Casimir. The depth of this parapet is 4 feet. The overall bastion itself is too small to accommodate anything much wider. The military standard of the day, in the ideally designed fort, was a parapet 18 feet thick. According to Christopher Duffy, in his book "Fire and Stone," this quantity of earth was sufficient to stand up to the most powerful weapons of that time. A shot from a 24 pound siege cannon would penetrate 15 feet of light soil and 12 feet of more resistant soil. A musket ball's greatest penetration was about 30 inches. It's clear from this data that the Dutch forts of North America would have stood little chance against a full scale military attack from a well-equipped enemy.

Fort Casimir, along with all the other northeastern American forts of the early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, were lightly armed. The cannons they possessed were often an odd mix of weapons from a variety of sources. The Jesuit priest, Father Isaac Jogues, when describing the armaments at Fort Orange in Rensselaerswijck in 1643, states that the "wretched little fort" contains four or five pieces of Breteuil cannons and as many swivel guns. Cannon caliber is not mentioned, although it is assumed that these were small guns. A "three pounder" cannon, said to have been from Fort Orange, is on display at the New York State Museum in Albany. In June of 1654, in describing the improvements made to Fort Casimir (Trinity), Governor Risingh mentions the acquisition of two pairs of "twelve pounder" cannons from the ship "Eagle." These weapons and the small complement of soldiers assigned to that fort would have been capable of only meager resistance against any well armed attack.

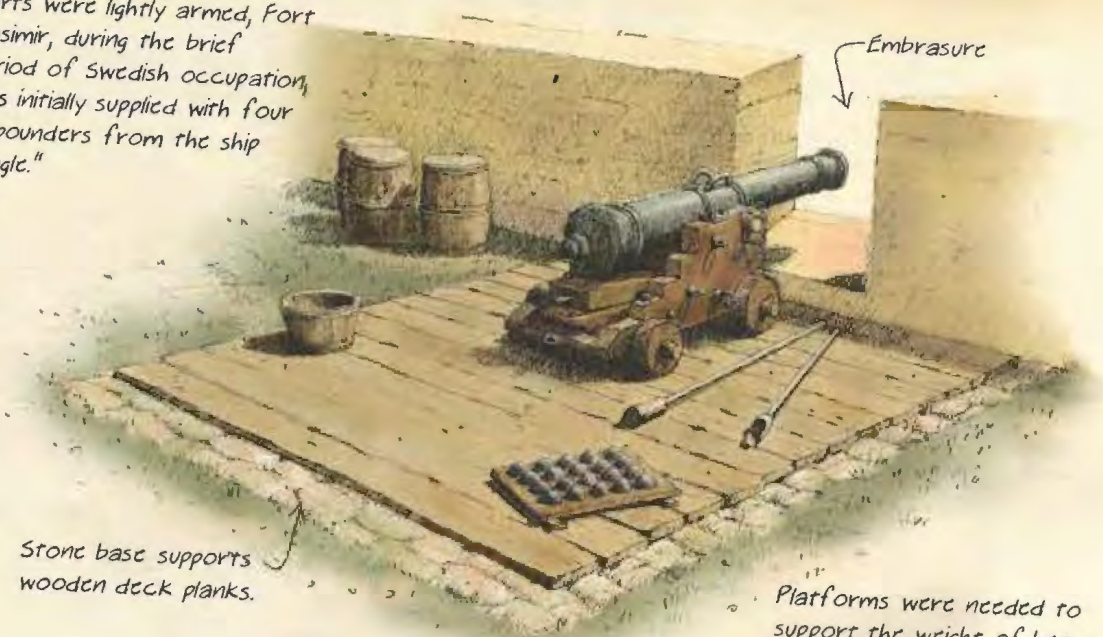
### BASTION CONSTRUCTION STAGE 6 - CONSTRUCTION COMPLETE



Parapets with sod fill and  
embrasures for cannon

Please note that for the purpose of this hypothetical study, the curtain walls that would join four bastions like this have been omitted. Bastions such as this would not stand alone.

Although many of the Dutch forts were lightly armed, Fort Casimir, during the brief period of Swedish occupation, was initially supplied with four 12 pounders from the ship "Eagle."



Embrasure

Stone base supports  
wooden deck planks.

Platforms were needed to  
support the weight of heavy  
cannons.



*"Whereas the honorable lord Jacquet has examined the condition of the fort, Casemior.... inspected the same and found the fort to be completely decayed in its walls and batteries."*

*Minutes of Jean Paul Jacquet*

*Christmas Day, 1655*

*Excerpts from the Minutes of the Administration of Jean Paul Jacquet, Vice-Director of the South River, reporting on the conditions of Fort Casimir following its capture from Sweden. He notes in detail the faults of the failing fort, however there is little evidence that any substantive renovations were ever carried out.*

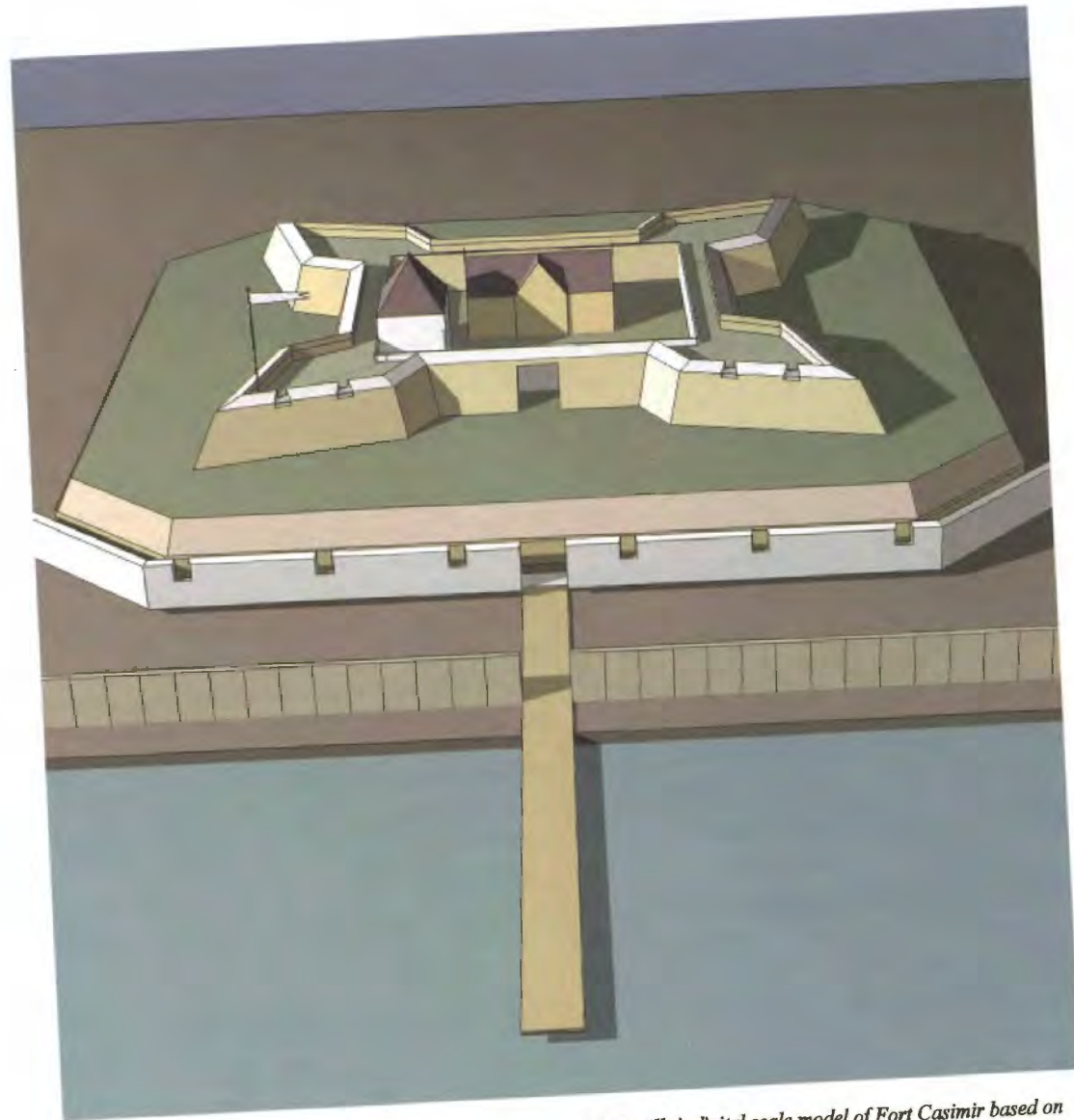


# 3.

## Fort Casimir

*Fort Casimir was built by the Dutch in 1651, under the direction of Petrus Stuyvesant. In 1654, it was captured by the Swedes and re-named Fort Trinity. After only four hundred and sixty-six days the fort was re-taken by the Dutch and reverted back to its original name of Fort Casimir. The swamp that adjoined the fort and settlement of Sandhook, later named New Amstel and finally New Castle, was a breeding ground for disease. This added to the boredom and misery of living on the edge of the frontier with little support from the homeland. In this section we will examine the fort, its alterations and ultimate fate.*





*Len Tantillo's digital scale model of Fort Casimir based on Lindeström's elevation drawing, various historical site plans, and the terrain analysis of several topographical studies. Features have been simplified for clarity.*

*When I began this project I knew very little about Fort Casimir and the colonial history of Delaware. I thought that readers would be interested to know what my earliest preconceptions were in order to appreciate the evolution of the ideas that later emerged. To achieve this I asked my friend Peter Douglas to record our first meeting on Fort Casimir. Since Peter knew as little as I did about the fort he was perfect for the job. What follows is an account of the first step taken in unraveling an interesting historical mystery. - Len Tantillo*

## The Process of Discovery

### *A Commentary on the Visualization of Fort Casimir*

by Peter A. Douglas

I suppose when Len conceived this project, he and I were at about the same level of unawareness concerning Fort Casimir, though by the time we first spoke of it his research had allowed him to pull ahead by a substantial margin. Nevertheless, for all his prior investigation he said that this would be a "process of discovery" for both of us, and he would like me to be part of this process, observing how he went about it, how research becomes theory, and how theory is transformed into artistic and architectural visualization.

Len already knew, and I was soon to learn, that Fort Casimir had been one of a group of forts constructed on the banks of the Delaware River by the Dutch and the Swedes, who, in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, planted their respective flags in the New World. I knew something about the Dutch presence in America, though most of my knowledge, like that of many of us at this end of the colony, I suppose, was of the northern history of New Netherland, around Fort Orange and New Amsterdam. Simple geography had fogged my view somewhat, and this parochial limitation could do with expanding. I knew full well that New Netherland covered a vast area, all the way from present day Delaware to New York and western Connecticut, and I needed to bring the south to the foreground.

Where Fort Casimir was built in 1651 was known to the Dutch settlers as the "Zuyd Rivier," or South River, the southernmost part of New Netherland. Originally it was to be the center of the Dutch North American province, with the capital at High Island in the Delaware, but Director Minuit decided that the North (Hudson)

River would be a better base, and so New Amsterdam became the natural focus. After 1626 the Dutch had built Fort Nassau on the eastern bank of the South River at the site of present-day Gloucester, New Jersey, as a trading and military base. During the brief tussle with the Swedes along the Delaware, a number of forts were constructed, the first Swedish post being Fort Christina, built in 1638, and downriver from the Dutch. And then in 1643, the Swedes under Johan Printz, built their Fort Nya Elfsborg even farther downriver. Thus Dutch ships coming upriver from the bay had to pass these Swedish forts.

When Petrus Stuyvesant, the seventh and last Director of New Netherland, took office in 1647 he wanted to re-assert Dutch control of this region and its lucrative trade. In retaliation for the Swedish encroachment, and recognizing the need for a more propitious site for a fort, Stuyvesant abandoned Fort Nassau in 1651 and, countering the Swedish move in this vast chess game, erected Fort Casimir, named for Ernst Casimir I, Count of Nassau-Dietz and Stadtholder of Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe, 1573-1632. Being only a few miles south of Fort Christina, it enabled the Dutch to menace the Swedes and interrupt their trade.

Fort Casimir had a short life, and an even shorter one under this name. Relations with the Swedes deteriorated from friction to open hostility, and in 1654 Johan Risingh, the new and last governor of New Sweden, easily captured the fort for the Dutch had not maintained it as a serious strongpoint. Subsequent Swedish reports state that the fort "had fallen into almost total decay," and Risingh wrote that the cannon he found there were "mostly useless." Risingh re-named it *Fort Trefaldighet* (Fort Trinity), and it allowed the Swedes to reassume control of the Delaware. Fort Trinity had a short career too, for in 1655 Stuyvesant returned to New Sweden with a force of several ships and 350 soldiers and retook it. Clearly these forts presented no serious obstacle to capture. Stuyvesant ultimately took Fort Christina, bringing to an end the Swedish presence in America. In 1657 the retaken Fort Casimir (now New Castle) was re-christened New Amstel. Such is the brief career of the subject of this study, which, for much of the time was known as something other than Fort Casimir.

Len first spoke to me of Fort Casimir just after midnight on New Year's Day 2011, after a delightful surfeit of chat, movies, and homemade Chinese food. It was probably not the most propitious time to broach the matter of his project, and wine and

exhaustion made me confused and a bit skeptical. Still, I was intrigued, so when Len later proposed an afternoon meeting I was keen to discover more. As anyone who knows Len will tell you, his enthusiasm can be infectious, and so it was for me.

It was some comfort to know that Len regarded my lack of knowledge of the forts of the Delaware (which I readily admitted to) as no impediment to our alliance; it was, he said curiously, a bonus. *Tabula rasa*, I suppose, the strange presumed positive aspect of ignorance, a theory that I've never fully understood. With the zero-degree wind at the windows we sat in his comfortable studio surrounded by books, framed sketches and paintings, ship models, and the cozy aggregation of his diverse artistic treasures. Certainly not the least impressive object in the room was the computer beneath Len's desk, its huge tower the size of a chest of drawers, making a curious technical counterpoint to all the artwork. From its electronic depths a few deft mouse-clicks brought to one of the monitors the only known contemporary image of Fort Casimir, though by then it had become the Swedish Fort Trinity.

Very early in our collaboration, or actually before we could call it that, Len had shown me this drawing of Fort Trinity. The artist was a Swedish engineer called Per Lindström, called in to oversee repairs, and his view of the fort dates from 1655, not long after the Swedes had seized it from the Dutch. At the time of its capture, Fort Casimir was in an appalling state of decay, with a tiny garrison, few cannon, and no powder; it could offer no effective resistance so its taking was a pushover for the Swedes.

Unknown to me at the time, Lindström's drawing is quite an exaggeration, even a work of the imagination. This, even taking into account any repairs and changes that the Swedes undertook. At best it's a stylized version of reality, or an image of the engineer's deepest desire in military architecture, and was doubtless created to impress. Lindström's fort is something like a child's dream of a fort, a solid and impenetrable edifice with what seems to be crenellated stonework bastions housing steep-roofed buildings topped with a fluttering guidon. Stone crenellations also surmount the riverfront wall in front of which stands a sort of wooden palisade and a pier extending into the river.

This is, Len later suggested, a fantasy fort transported from Europe to the American wilderness, and not an accurate depiction of the type of structure of the place or the period. When Len first had me look at Lindström's drawing, it was with no comment,

for he wanted to get my own fresh thoughts on it. He was conducting a sort of exercise, an experiment. He said: "Without using any reference, describe what you see in about one or two paragraphs. That drawing is the only image of Fort Casimir ever made during its existence. How does it strike you?" Well I fell for it. I took the drawing at face value, faithfully describing and fleshing out each detail of Lindström's stout and impressive fort in misguided words, not even grasping at the time what should have been so obvious, that the stone battlements, the so imposing and ambitious circumvallation that Lindström depicted, deviated so markedly from the simple Dutch forts of the period that I was familiar with.

Having read my accurate but misconstrued description of the fort, Len responded: "Congratulations. You now have the same preconceived notion of Fort Casimir / Fort Trinity that everybody else has when they begin their study by looking at the only visual evidence of the fort's design. This is our starting point. From here we will look deeper into the mystery of the actual appearance of New Castle, Delaware's first buildings." Error and darkness are the origin of discovery.

Len assured me that the real forts in New Netherland and New Sweden were much less impressive and ambitious. They were very crude, he said, built fast and economically, and consisted largely of raised earthen breastworks and berms reinforced with timber, made, in other words, from the materials at hand. Len has found contemporary documentation that refers to the repair of these forts, and all that was required for that was dirt and wood, available in abundance. The resources of the region did not include quarries for stone for the construction of forts such as Lindström depicted. Len likened this fort to Fort Orange, and Fort Amsterdam in Manhattan, both of which he has studied and painted many times. He quoted a letter from Peter Stuyvesant where he complained that Fort Amsterdam was crumbling away and was even being laid waste by livestock. Clearly these forts were prey to the harsh elements and quickly deteriorated if not diligently maintained. They did not so much represent military power as statements of possession, somewhere to fly the flag and flaunt a bit of in-your-face national pride, and the rate of construction along the Delaware in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century shows how quickly they could be erected. They were sometimes successful as redoubts in the event of an Indian attack, but they presented no serious obstacle to the overwhelming firepower of armies and navies of the time.

The disturbing fact was, then, that there was only one picture of Fort Casimir and that wasn't much like it really was! This, of course, was the challenge.

Naturally I asked Len, "Why Fort Casimir?" From what little I knew of the forts of the South River, there was at least one other that I'd actually heard of, Fort Christina, so I naturally wondered what was special about Fort Casimir. Len said that Casimir was typical. Not much is known of it, so here was an opportunity to find out more about it. While archaeologists and historians have devoted some attention to it, no credible picture of the fort exists, least of all Lindström's unreliable drawing, along with later derivative, warmed-over depictions that are far too reliant on the Swede's exaggerated elements that were seized upon slavishly and literally.

So, in part, the mystery is the lure. Len told me that he welcomes the opportunity to research and create a more faithful representation of Fort Casimir, to show how these forts were designed and constructed, to bring out a sense of what life was like on the South River then, and to illustrate the inevitable struggle that it was, under the unremitting ravages of the environment and the enemy's harrying, to inhabit and maintain a military installation in that place.

First it was necessary to do two things: work out the design of the fort, and figure out its location. The Heites determined that the site of the fort lay on a sandy hook of land that encroached into a marshy area to the northeast of what would become New Castle, Delaware. Here there was a small sandy hill called Bull Hill, and Fort Casimir was built on the river (east) side of this, then virtually an island in the marsh, at an elevation of about eight feet. The tidal stream and the marsh formed a natural moat on three sides of the fort, which had land access via a ridge that ran southwest. Here, then, was the approximate location of Fort Casimir.

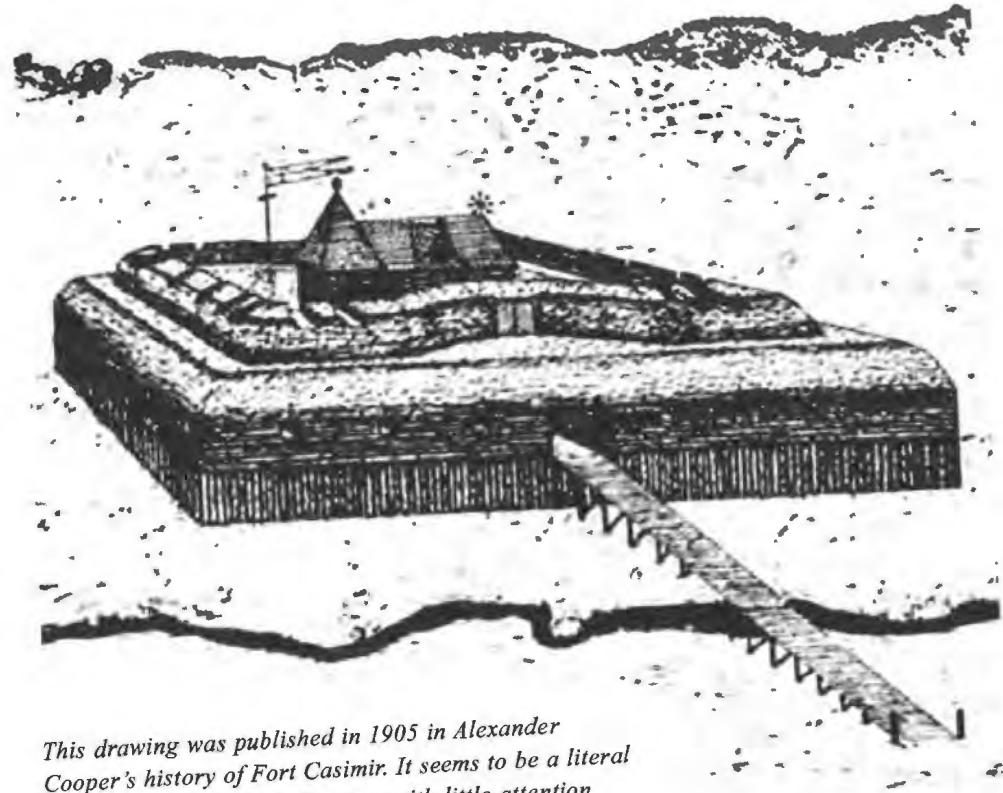
As for what it looked like, Per Lindström wrote that Fort Casimir had been constructed "with four bastions," two of which can be seen in his extravagant front elevation sketch. Despite his overdrawn and idealistic view, there's no reason to disbelieve his statement about the four bastions, which was the usual design for such military earthworks of the time. Len, using his knowledge of other Dutch forts, computer-designed a to-scale four-bastion fort of the appropriate dimensions (the Swedish engineer had thoughtfully provided measurements). Matching the scale image of the star-shaped fort with the contoured survey of the sandy hook of land provided by the Heites, Len was able to place it in position on the hook; it fit perfectly.

*That is Peter's account of how the project started. What follows represents months of work and what I came to believe was the actual story of Lindstrom's drawing, Fort Casimir, and New Amstel. History will be the judge of its accuracy - Len Tantillo*

## The Mysterious Drawing of Per Lindeström

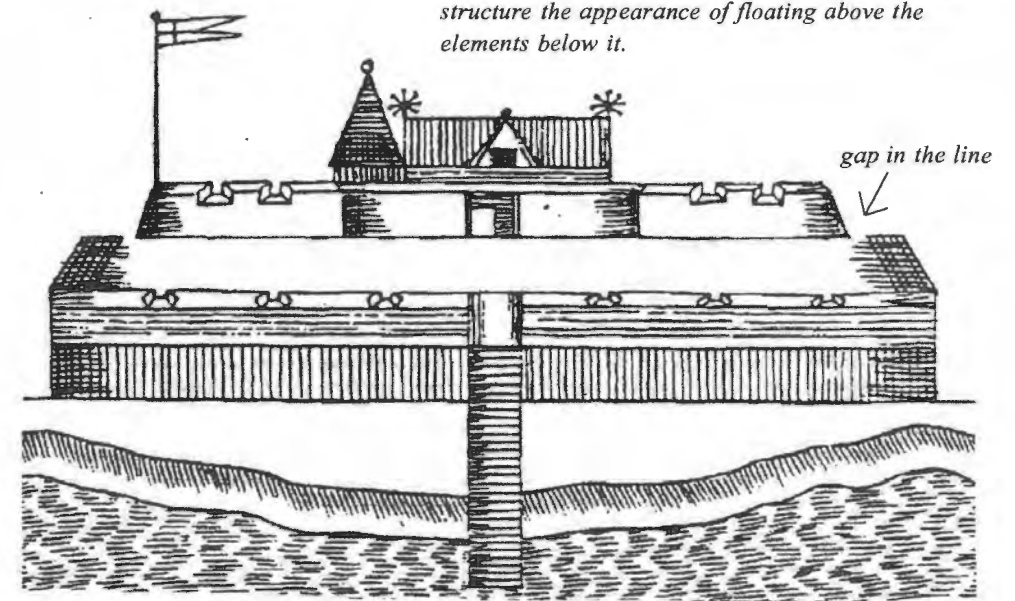
In 1655, Per Lindeström created a mysterious drawing. His talent for engineering was a great asset for the repair and re-fortification of the captured Dutch fort at what is now New Castle, Delaware. New Sweden had control of the South River (Delaware River) and all efforts were made to secure its principle settlements. Fort Christina, which is now Wilmington, Delaware, had been carefully sited to defend the small community that lay slightly inland of the fort. Lindeström's drawings of Fort Christina are clear, definitive, and simple. Fort Casimir, renamed Fort Trinity by the Swedes, was a different matter.

The drawing Lindeström made of Fort Casimir's front elevation has lead to many misconceptions as to its actual appearance. In 1905, Alexander B. Cooper, Esq., wrote a paper for the Delaware Historical Society entitled "Fort Casimir, the Starting Point



*This drawing was published in 1905 in Alexander Cooper's history of Fort Casimir. It seems to be a literal translation of the 1655 drawing, with little attention given to established rules of fortification design.*

*Note how the gaps at the edges of the fort give the structure the appearance of floating above the elements below it.*



*This is a detail from the most commonly referred to reproduction of Per Lindeström's 1655 drawing of Fort Trinity (Casimir).*

in the History of New Castle, in the State of Delaware, its Location and History, 1651-1671." Mr. Cooper's book contained a rather awkward pen and ink aerial view that attempted to interpret the original Swedish rendition. In my opinion the artist made some serious errors in judgment. He literally translated the original elevation made by Lindeström into a peculiar, solid, almost square block form without attempting to suggest conventional principles of fort design in general usage in North America at that time. He also ignored other evidence regarding Fort Casimir's appearance clearly visible in the numerous maps that Lindeström made of New Sweden. Many of those drawings show, a plan view of a conventional four-bastion fort at Sandhook.

More recently some researchers have become confused by what appears to be a floating fort above an earthwork, leading them to believe that Fort Casimir/Trinity are two separate forts. This misconception arises from the separation between the upper fort and the lower part of Lindeström's drawing, in the most commonly referenced reproductions of that work. Their conclusion is based on two short ink lines that are missing, a flaw in the reproduction of the drawing that occurred after the original was published.

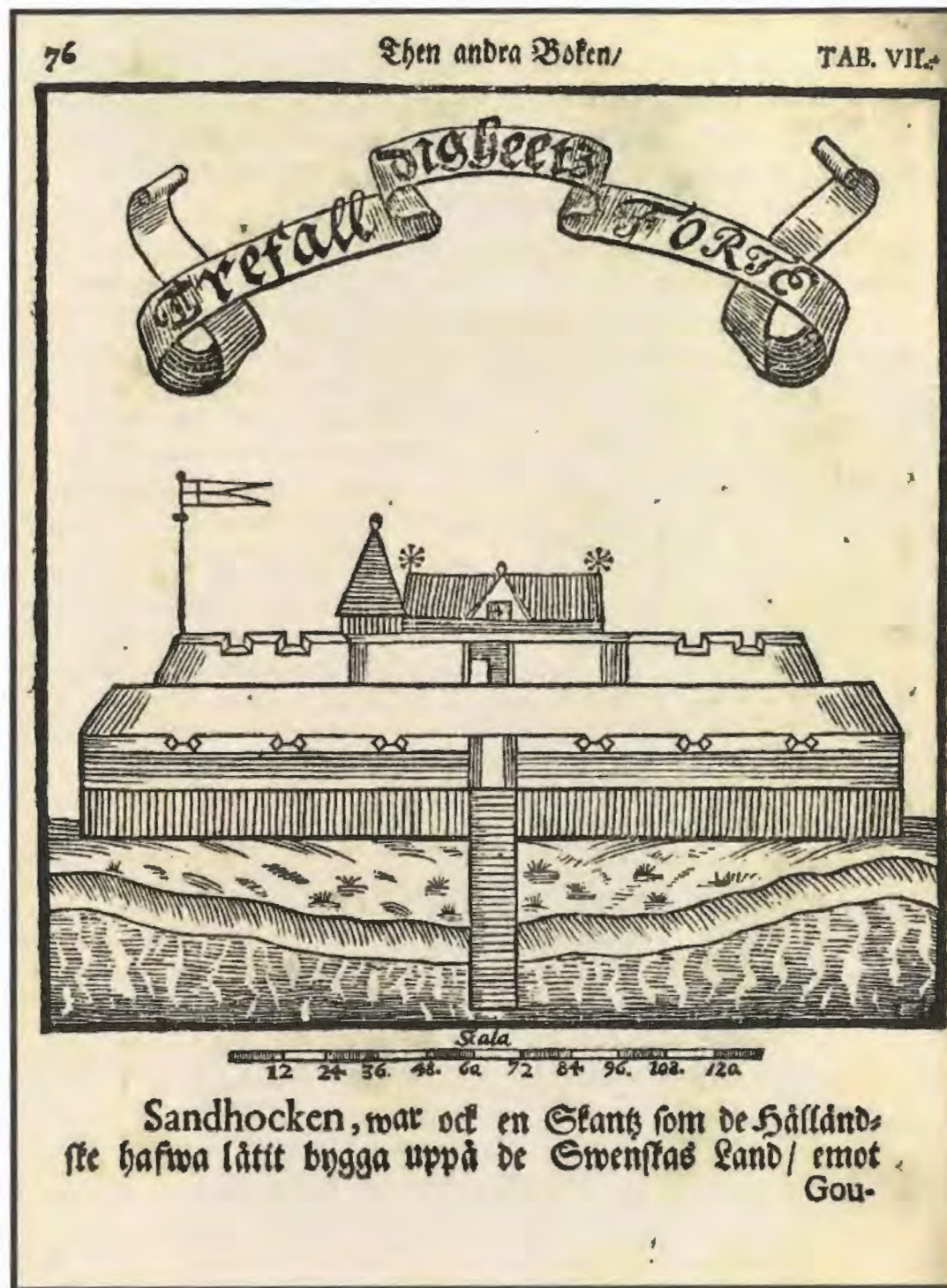
To make the case that Lindeström's drawing depicts one site with a Dutch four-bastion fort and Swedish improvements to the earth works surrounding it, I submit that in a 1655 sketch for a New Sweden map made by Lindeström, his indication of

the fort site is expressed by the four-bastion fort alone, as if the earthworks around it were inconsequential. Also, a book by Thomas Companius Holm, entitled "Kort beskrifning om provincien Nya Sverige uti America: som nu fortjden af the Engelske kallas," Pensylvania Stockholm: J. H. Werner, published in 1702, clearly indicates one single fortification. In other words, there is no gap in the line under the Dutch fort. One last point is that when the poorly reproduced versions of Lindeström's complete drawing are studied, there are numerous gaps in other areas such as lettering and borders, and the omission of many small details. This leads me to believe that the broken lines were not intentional.



Elevations of this type were often created to serve as navigational aids.

The reproduction of Lindeström's drawing most often referred to appears on the left. The reproduction on the right is taken from Holm's book on the history of New Sweden, published in 1702. The drawing on the left was most likely traced from the 1702 book plate. Note that the title banner at the top of the plate has been omitted in the later version. Also noteworthy is the number of broken lines, the additional text, and the repositioning of the scale bar in the traced piece.

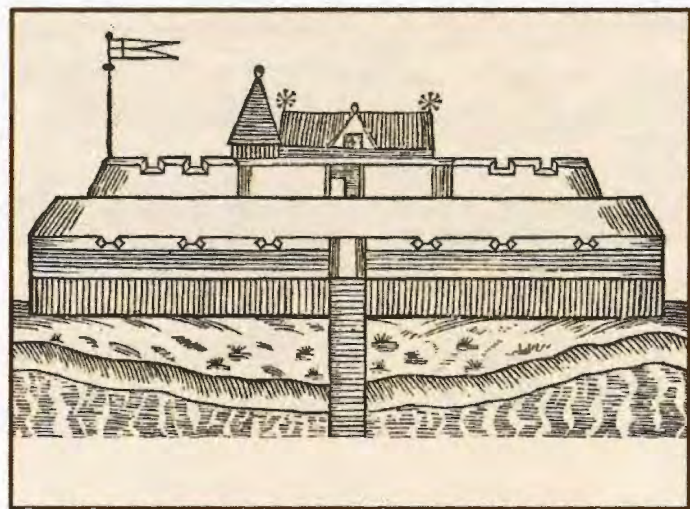


## An Interpretation of the Lindeström Drawing

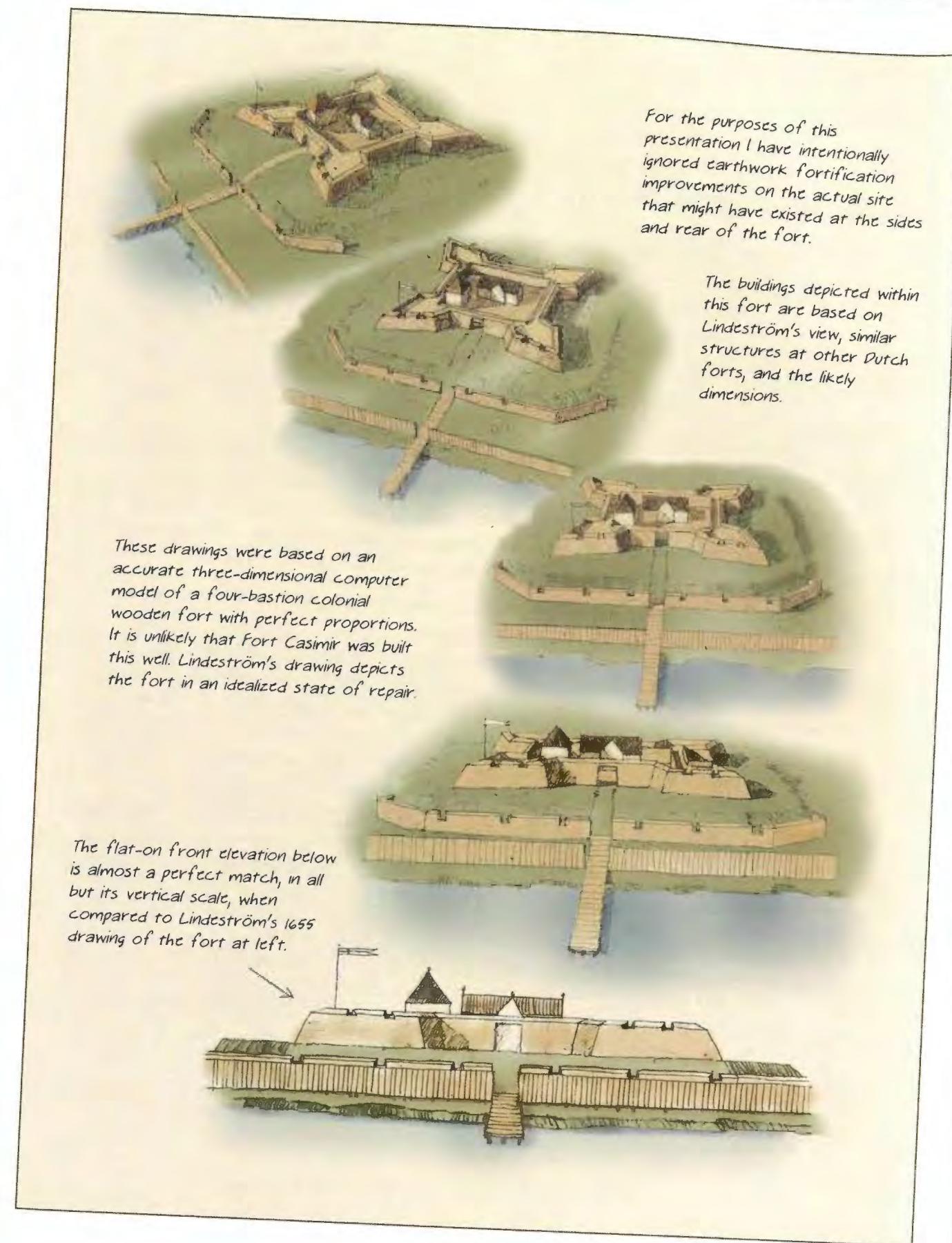
The interpretation of the Lindeström elevation drawing of Fort Casimir, which the Swedes had renamed Fort Trinity, is the key to truly understanding its design configuration. Several artists and historians have attempted to explain the two-dimensional head-on view made in 1655, with little or no agreement as to its salient features. So here is, yet again, another possibility.

I began my theory with a careful consideration of the established fortification design principles of the 17<sup>th</sup> century as you have already seen in previous chapters. Lindeström himself, in his book "Geographia Americae" tells us that the Dutch fort had four bastions and that his redesigned fort also had four bastions. The horizontal scale of the fort is clearly indicated on his elevation drawing. I took all my data and built an accurate digital model of a perfectly proportioned fort, on which the drawings to the right were based. I used the notion of a perfect fort because Lindeström's drawing seems extremely idealized. The view was then rotated from an aerial position downward and to the left, until I had created a realistically scaled front elevation.

The accurate frontal view I arrived at almost exactly matches the forms in the Lindeström drawing. The primary differences being that I am convinced that Lindeström intentionally exaggerated the heights of his fort rendition for presentation purposes. This is evident if the bar scale below the drawing is applied to the drawing vertically. Doing so would make the overall fort the impossibly absurd height of over 70 feet.



*Detail from Lindeström's 1655 elevation.*



*For the purposes of this presentation I have intentionally ignored earthwork fortification improvements on the actual site that might have existed at the sides and rear of the fort.*

*The buildings depicted within this fort are based on Lindeström's view, similar structures at other Dutch forts, and the likely dimensions.*

*These drawings were based on an accurate three-dimensional computer model of a four-bastion colonial wooden fort with perfect proportions. It is unlikely that Fort Casimir was built this well. Lindeström's drawing depicts the fort in an idealized state of repair.*

*The flat-on front elevation below is almost a perfect match, in all but its vertical scale, when compared to Lindeström's 1655 drawing of the fort at left.*



## Topography of the Fort Casimir Site Assumptions from Historical Terrain Analysis

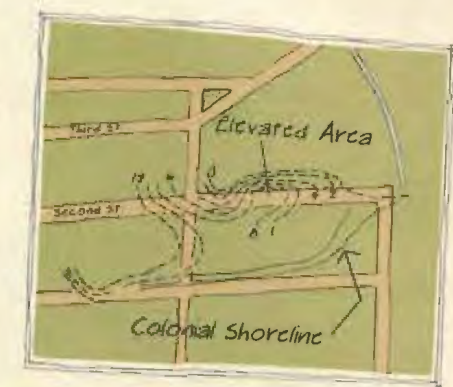
In 1986, Edward and Louise Heite were commissioned by the Trustees of the New Castle Commons to undertake an archeological investigation of the presumed site of Fort Casimir to determine what, if anything, remained underground. Their comprehensive findings are recorded in "Report of Phase I Archeological and Historical Investigations at the Site of Fort Casimir, New Castle, Delaware." In the excavation narrative, numerous examples of artifacts and soil stratification conditions are presented. Evidence of the fort's existence was clear; however it is not the kind of hard structural evidence to positively define the fort's construction and pinpoint its location. The Heite report is thorough and their desire to pursue further study is made clear.

For my purposes, the Heites provide an interesting compilation of topographical data pertaining to the site of the fort. Benjamin Henry Latrobe, famous for his landscape plan for the Capitol in Washington, DC, made a survey of New Castle in 1805. He accurately rendered profiles of the terrain. The Heites reinterpreted the Latrobe data into a contour map focusing on the immediate area they assumed to be the location of the fort. The Heites report also included a topographical map made in 1927 by Remington and Vosbury for the city of New Castle. This map reflects the general contours seen in the Latrobe profiles. It also clearly locates a large marsh area on the west side of Second Street. When the two maps are closely compared there is an unusual elevated area on the Latrobe/Heite map on Market Street and something quite similar in the same location on the Remington and Vosbury map, which refers to Market Street as Second Street. A structure approximately 200 feet square could have fit neatly on that raised plot of land.

In my conjectural site plan of Fort Casimir (bottom drawing opposite page) I have combined the data from both maps and plotted the likely location and scale of the fort. This is not conclusive evidence for the site of the fort. Only further study and professional archeological discoveries can achieve that, but it does provide a plausible possibility that can satisfy a number of critical criteria.

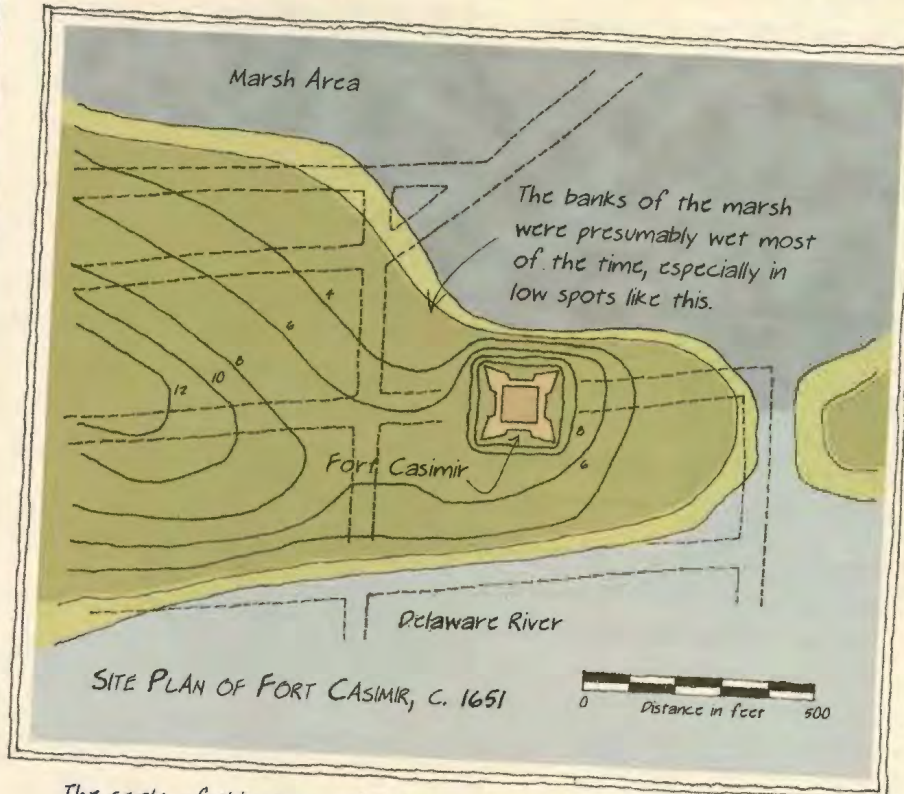


Areas A and B were at very low elevations and as a result were probably quite marshy.



This re-drawn contour map is based on Remington and Vosbury's "City of New Castle, Delaware, Sanitary System Index Map, 1927," as published in the Heites phase one archeological report.

This re-drawn partial contour map is based on a drawing by Edward and Louise Heite. Their original map was developed from Benjamin Latrobe's 1804 survey. The "Elevated Area" is particularly interesting.



The banks of the marsh were presumably wet most of the time, especially in low spots like this.

The contour map to the left is a conjectural composite of both the maps above. Fort Casimir and the original shoreline were located using the topographical data from the above source material.

See pages 84-85 for comparative analysis.



The scale of this drawing is slightly larger than the drawings above.

## Fort Casimir 1651 - 1654

### *A Basic Dutch Fort in Marshland*

Fort Casimir was built in 1651, under the direction of the Director General of New Netherland, Petrus Stuyvesant. It was named after Ernst Casimir I, a respected Dutch count. The original Dutch fort, Fort Nassau, built on the west side of the Delaware River, near present-day Philadelphia, had been rendered useless by the more southern Swedish construction of Fort Christina. Dutch ships entering Delaware Bay had to pass Fort Christina to get to Fort Nassau. The new fort thereby reversed the roles of military river dominance back in favor of the Dutch.

Stuyvesant, already burdened with the security of Manhattan, had neither the money nor the manpower to properly build, maintain, or defend Fort Casimir. Perhaps it was doomed from the start simply because the site of its construction was so wet. The fort was built next to a swamp on a relatively low lying peninsula in an area called the Sandhook. The only thing it seemed to have going for it was relatively deep water access on the riverfront. Regardless of the location's obvious shortcomings, the wood and sod four-bastioned fort was erected and armed and, most importantly for Stuyvesant, flew the Dutch colors.

In 1654, a Swedish force under the command of the governor of New Sweden, Johan Risingh, took Fort Casimir. Both Risingh and Per Lindeström give detailed accounts of the capture. Lindeström states that the fort was taken on May 21, 1654. To honor that day, Trinity Sunday, the fort was renamed Fort Trinity. The fort contained twelve iron cannons and one brass three-pounder, all without gunpowder or ammunition. The defender's muskets were mostly broken. Risingh's journal states that the entire garrison was occupied by only nine soldiers and a Sergeant Gerrit Bicker who was the commandant. They did not resist.

The Swedes now once again controlled the Delaware River and had taken over a fort so badly decayed that it required rebuilding practically from the ground up. From the moment the fort's overhaul began, Stuyvesant's counter attack strategy was forming.

Fort Casimir, circa 1654,  
looking toward the marsh

Fort Casimir was built by the Dutch in 1651 on a point of land bordered on the north and west sides by a marsh and on the east by the Delaware River.

Note the "makelaar" roof ornaments.

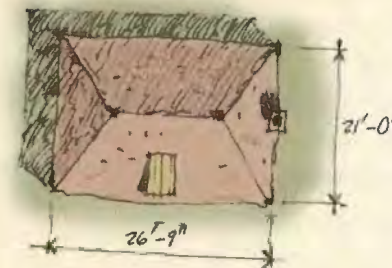


Makelaar



Fort Casimir, like all the other wooden forts in 17th century North America, was in constant need of maintenance. Records tell us that the fort was undermanned during the early years of Dutch control. This may explain the description given by Per Lindeström in 1654, in which he states "...when we arrived in New Sweden, it [Fort Casimir] had fallen into almost total decay."

The curious ornamental features that can clearly be seen on the Lindeström elevation are most likely traditional Dutch gable ornaments called "makelaar."



Roof plan of the courthouse building that stood in Fort Orange (Albany, NY).

Perhaps the hip-roofed courthouse building at Fort Orange was similar to the pyramid-roofed structure depicted by Lindeström in Fort Casimir. This drawing of the Fort Orange courthouse was based on the research of Jaap Schipper, B.N.A., Amsterdam, 1985.

## Fort Trinity (Trefaldighet in Swedish)

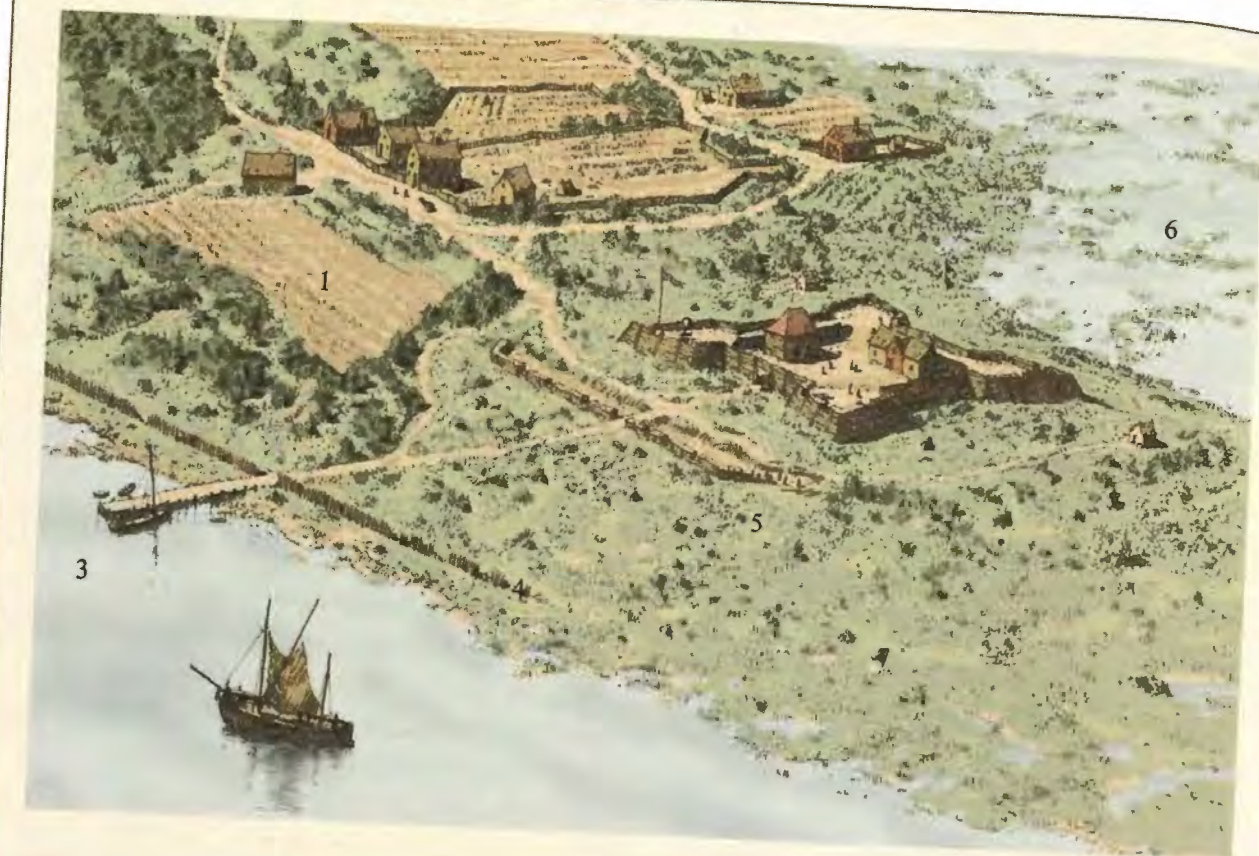
*May 21, 1654 - August 30, 1655*

Four hundred sixty-six days—Fort Trinity's lifespan was very short. On Trinity Sunday, May 21, 1654 (Julian calendar), Governor Johan Risingh enraged Petrus Stuyvesant when he captured the under-manned and poorly maintained Fort Casimir. It was Risingh's decision and his alone. He could have left the decaying fort since, in its dilapidated condition, it presented little threat to New Sweden. The Governor's reasoning was that Stuyvesant would eventually restore Fort Casimir and completely undermine New Sweden's investments in the Delaware region by cutting off their access to the Atlantic.

Risingh committed men and resources to upgrade the fort. Lindeström did the engineering and Captain Sven Skute was placed in charge of the work to see that it was carried out. Skute also served as Fort Trinity's commander. The fort was initially armed with four cannons, twelve-pounders taken from the ship, "Eagle," which had transported Risingh and Lindeström to New Sweden.

Lindeström's plans called for the repair and upgrading of the bastions, the construction of fortified trenches, and the erection of a palisade along the river bank. Skute and twenty men worked all through the summer of 1654, building the palisade only to have it badly damaged on October 24, 1654, by a terrible storm. It is unlikely that much of the Lindeström plan, depicted in his elevation, was ever completed. There simply wasn't enough time, money, or men. This seems to be borne out in Dutch records after they regained the fort.

Stuyvesant commanded over three hundred men and a fleet of seven ships, which included the leased 36-gun warship *de Waegh*. On August 30, 1655, Captain Skute allowed the Dutch force to sail slightly past Fort Trinity and anchor on its weakest side. This was a tactical blunder. The Dutch negotiated with Skute and at the same time began digging siege trenches from which they could easily bombard the Swedes. Skute surrendered. A few days later Stuyvesant sailed five miles north and attacked Fort Christina. Risingh was defeated and forced to give up not only the fort, but all of New Sweden.



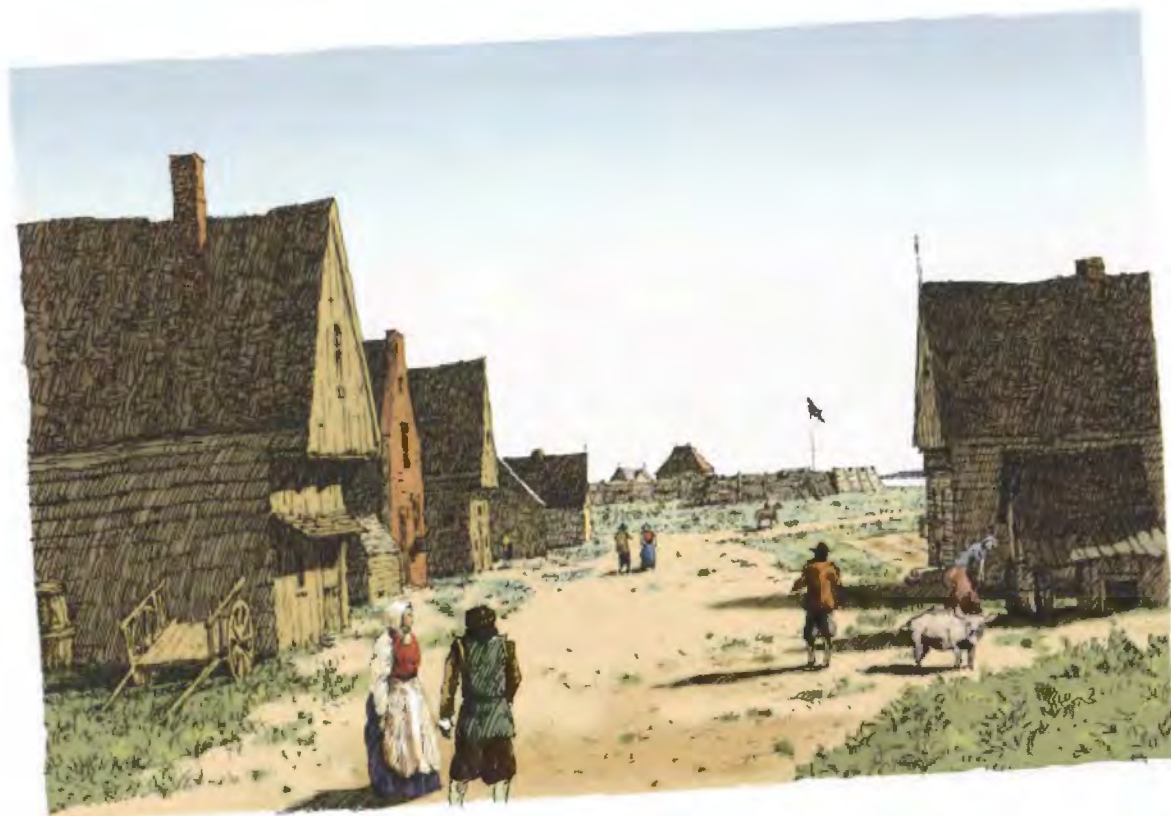
1. At the time of the Swedish capture in May of 1654, Lindeström states that there are twenty-one houses at Sandhook. Tobacco was grown with varying degrees of success. Other crops included barley, corn, hops, beans, squash, and other fruits and vegetables.
2. The fort that was the primary focus of repairs. Lindeström's elevation suggests that parapets with embrasures may have been added to the bastions.
3. The exact length of the main dock is not known. It would have been extended far enough into the Delaware River to accommodate large ships. Probably a bit farther than I have depicted here.
4. The badly damaged palisade was probably incomplete in August of 1655, when the Dutch capture took place.
5. The Lindeström elevation indicates the construction of earthwork fortifications. They were probably wood and sod walls similar to the parapets of the bastions, standing in front of a 4 or 5 foot trench. Embrasures for cannon are clearly visible on the Lindeström drawing.
6. The marsh.
7. The land north of the fort was low and wet. The Swedes may have assumed that if attacking ships could be stopped before they passed the fort this land would provide some protection.

## New Amstel 1657 - 1664

### *The Fort and the Community*

Petrus Stuyvesant was indebted to the city of Amsterdam for leasing their 36-gun ship *de Waegh*. As payment, the Dutch West India Company negotiated a deal in which Amsterdam, in exchange for their services, accepted ownership of a portion of the land on the west side of the Delaware River. Thus began the colony of New Amstel – a colony within a colony.

Life in the colony was a struggle. Sickness was common in New Amstel/Sandhook. The swamps that adjoined the settlement were a breeding ground for mosquitoes, flies, rats, and all manner of disease bearing creatures. That, combined with the limited access to even the remotest form of effective medicine, brought about a constant state of disease and death. In June of 1658, Jacob Alrichs wrote a letter to Petrus Stuyvesant describing a terrible fever that was raging in New Amstel. The labor force of freemen and slaves was reduced to such an extent that very few were still able to work. Under



*A view of Fort Casimir, circa 1656, from the main throughfare. In present-day New Castle this would be Second Street.*



such a burden the survival of the colony at times seemed doomed to failure. Throughout the early colonial period both the Swedes and the Dutch recorded accounts such as this.

Both skilled and unskilled slaves supplemented New Amstel's workforce. The white population of Delaware was approximately five hundred persons by 1664. It is estimated that in addition to that number there were less than fifty African slaves in all of Delaware. The number of slaves at Sandhook would have been considerably less.

For the mostly Protestant residents of New Amstel, religion was part of everyday life. The written records consistently reflect the general devoutness of the community. Prayers are constantly offered seeking divine intervention in the resolution of daily hardships. It is therefore interesting to note that, unlike Rensselaerswijck and Manhattan, no church was ever built in the Dutch colony of New Amstel. Services were conducted in the court building inside Fort Casimir.

Farms were located both northeast and southwest of Fort Casimir. Wheat, barley, rye, and corn were staples in New Amstel and in other parts of New Netherland. In addition to grain, fruits and vegetables were also grown. Of all the foods that made up the diet of the settlement in New Amstel there was one treat that everyone enjoyed: watermelon. Per Lindeström writes "...this has an exceedingly delicious and beautiful taste and immediately melts in the mouth. These watermelons are used to eat and drink during the hot summer, as they refresh and cool off a person strongly."

Meat was provided by domestic livestock and wild game. Transporting livestock was done by sea and land. In both the Swedish and Dutch periods there is frequent mention of a particular vessel that is used to carry livestock and goods to and from the colony. It is not clear if it is the same ship, but it is definitely the same type of ship, a galliot. This versatile eight to fifteen ton, fore and aft rigged ship was capable of carrying a wide variety of cargoes. The drawing on page 45 shows how the galliot could be used to carry lumber and bricks from Fort Orange. Galliot trips to and from Manhattan and Virginia were also quite commonly noted.



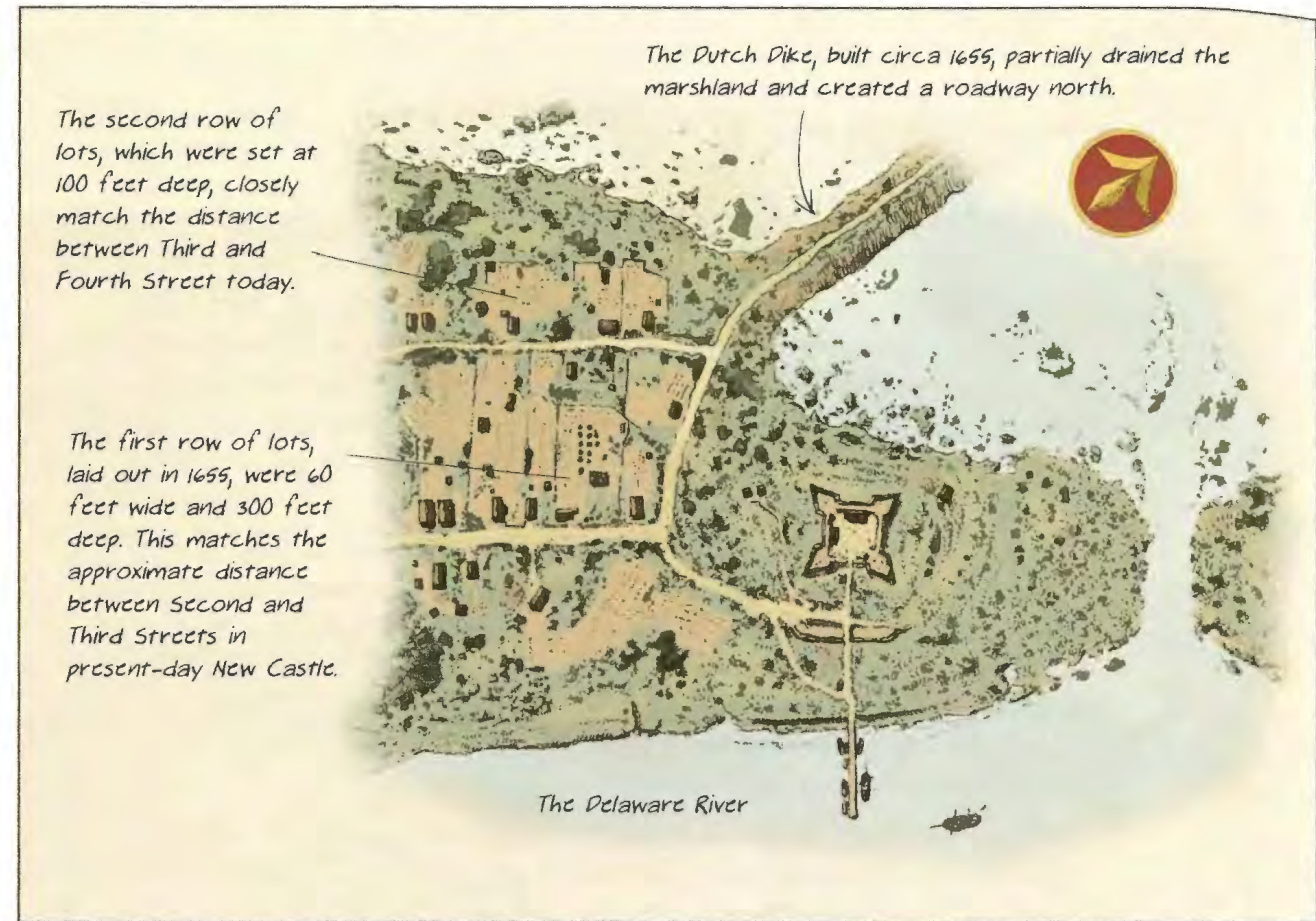
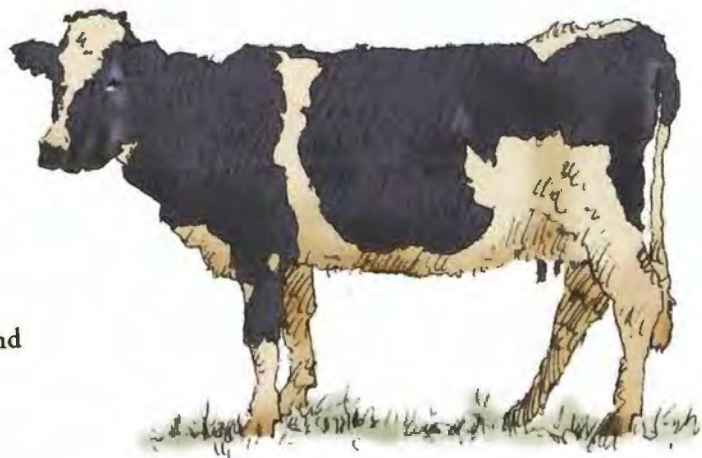


Although some livestock was transported by sea, most were driven overland in much the same manner depicted in countless western movies. One cattle drive, which originated in Heemstede, near Manhattan, contained over forty head of cattle which included twenty cows, ten calves, one bull, and approximately sixteen oxen. One can only imagine the hardships faced along the way considering the animals' condition upon arrival in New Amstel. In another of the many letters from Alrichs to Stuyvesant the cattle are described as in poor condition and mostly lame. He goes on to state that many were slaughtered since they were not expected to survive.

Colonial life was difficult and fraught with danger. Survival was in no way assured. Keeping the population healthy and supplying food and shelter were essential if Stuyvesant's plan to strengthen and develop New Amstel were ever to succeed. In 1655, he appointed Jean Paul Jacquet as Vice-Director and placed him in charge of its organization, governance, and planning.

In actuality the planning of the community had begun before Jacquet's time. In 1652, Peter Lourensen had received a lot approximately sixty feet wide and three hundred feet deep. The depth of this lot is interesting to note when compared with a present day map of New Castle. Three hundred feet is nearly the same measurement as the distance between Second and Third Streets.

The security of Fort Casimir was of paramount importance to Vice-Director Jacquet. He therefore decreed that no building be erected in the immediate areas north, east, and west of the fort. Jacquet wanted a concentrated community to develop to the south. In 1655 he ordered that lots forty to fifty feet wide and one hundred feet deep be set along a new street, located behind



The second row of lots, which were set at 100 feet deep, closely match the distance between Third and Fourth Street today.

The first row of lots, laid out in 1655, were 60 feet wide and 300 feet deep. This matches the approximate distance between Second and Third Streets in present-day New Castle.

The Dutch Dike, built circa 1655, partially drained the marshland and created a roadway north.

The Delaware River

the houses which already existed on Lourensen's block. One hundred feet matches almost exactly the distance between Third and Fourth Streets today. Comparing the lot arrangements of 1652 and 1655 with the same area of today's New Castle, it is quite clear that the original Dutch footprint is still very apparent.

From the very beginning Jacquet had declared Fort Casimir a ruin that would need to be rebuilt from the ground up. Among all the improvements that Jacquet initiated and implemented in the community, he failed completely in renovating the fort. In the end the Dutch had achieved little more than the Swedes in putting the fort into combat-ready condition. Fort Casimir, like Fort Orange in Albany and Fort New Amsterdam in Manhattan, were ill prepared for the eventual doomsday that was coming.

The map above indicates the improvements made by the Dutch in the later years of their control. Most of these features are apparent today in this area of New Castle.

DELAWARE PUBLIC ARCHIVES

## The English Attack

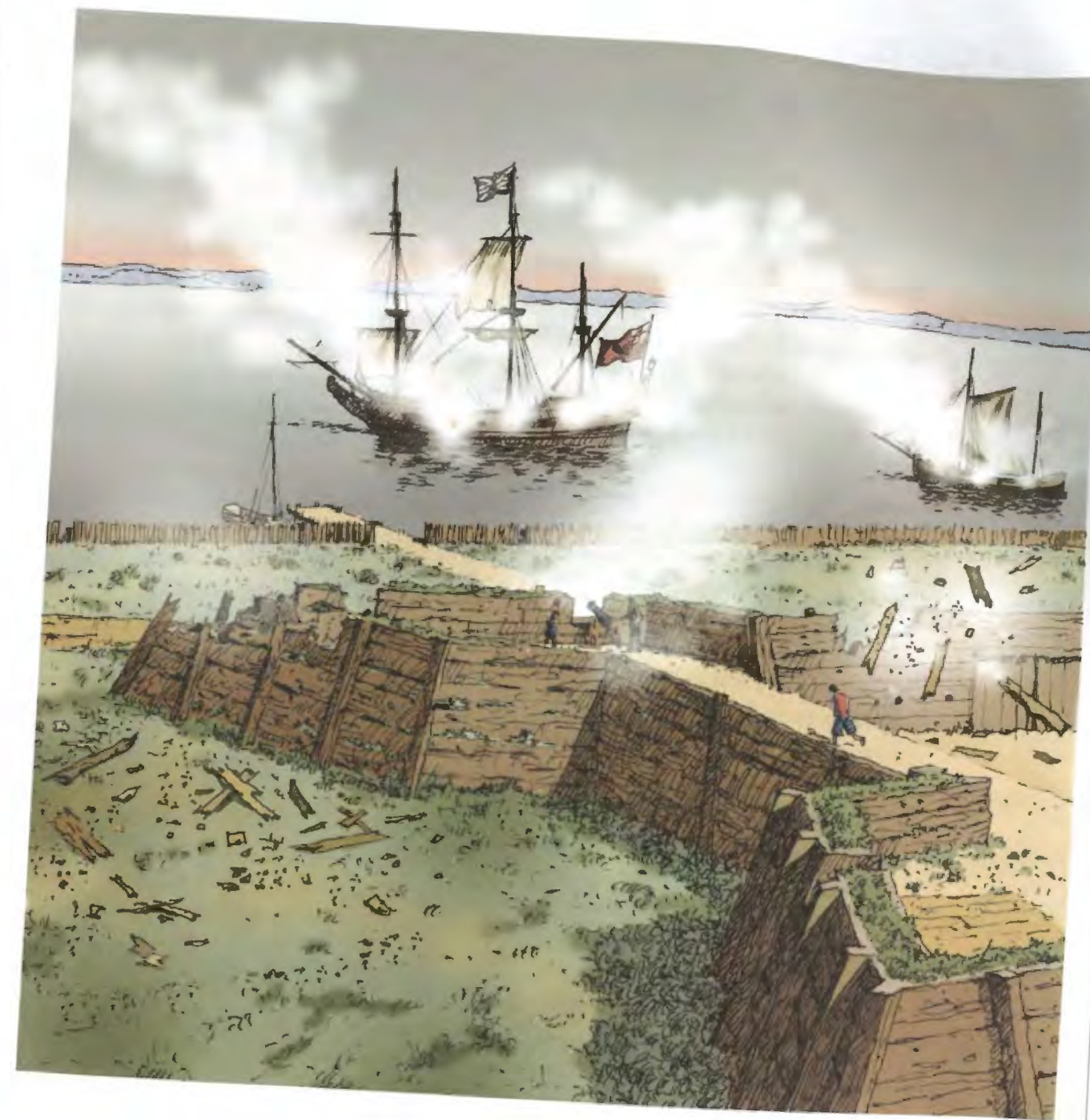
*September 30, 1664*

The director who presided over the colony of New Amstel was Alexander D'Hinoyossa, a veteran of the Dutch West India Company's wars to conquer Brazil. Considered by some to be a harsh ruler, D'Hinoyossa had been successfully carrying on business with the English in Maryland with much of the profits winding up in his pocket. He was comfortable and New Amstel's future seemed bright. All this was about to change.

In 1664, England took New Netherland. Naval and land forces under the command of Colonel Richard Nicholls, were dispatched by the Duke of York who claimed the land by the authority of the king. In Manhattan, Petrus Stuyvesant, facing overwhelming odds, accepted the English terms of surrender. Fort Orange fell a few days later. Nicholls sent Sir Robert Carr with two ships the 36-gun *Guinea* and the 10-gun *William and Nicholas*, along with more than one hundred thirty soldiers, to take Fort Casimir (renamed at that time Fort New Amstel).

On September 30, 1664, Carr's flotilla sailed within range of Fort Casimir. D'Hinoyossa, believing that he had the support of the local population and his English friends in Maryland, had rejected Carr's terms of surrender. The orders were given and devastating salvos from the two warships splintered the riverfront walls of the fort. Returning fire from the fort's cannons had little effect. At the time of the attack, Fort Casimir's garrison consisted of thirty men. With their attention fixed on manning the guns against the ships' broadsides, they were unable to prevent one hundred thirty English troops from attacking the fort from the rear. With shrapnel flying, and under relentless musket fire, one third of the Dutch defenders were killed and wounded. Under hopeless conditions Fort Casimir capitulated. After the battle, English soldiers plundered the fort and the entire Delaware Valley. Carr took the best for himself, seizing D'Hinoyossa's land and property.

The fall of the Dutch fortifications along the Delaware River brought to an end the glory days of New Netherland. For a brief period of one year and two months in 1673, Dutch forces under the command of Admiral Cornelius Evertsen re-took New Netherland. Although Dutch rule was reinstated, government support for the restored colony was weak at best. In the end New Netherland was returned to the English as part of a treaty agreement.



## After Fort Casimir

### *Influences of the Past*

Fort Casimir is long gone. The cannonballs that shattered its bastions have settled deep in the dust of history. Looking back what can be learned from its existence?

As a fort, Casimir failed every time it was challenged. In 1654, the Dutch surrendered to the Swedes. In 1655, the Swedes surrendered to the Dutch. In 1664, the Dutch surrendered to the English. In 1673, the English surrendered to the Dutch, and in 1674, the English took it back again. Actually, Fort Orange in Albany, Fort Good Hope near Hartford, and Fort Amsterdam in Manhattan all fell well short of their defensive intent. This curious commonality can be explained by making a simple analogy. Forts are like the locks placed on boxes. The greater the perceived value of the contents the better the lock. The Dutch stone forts of Asia are still standing, as are many of the massive fortifications of 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe, while the North American installations have long since rotted away. In the final analysis, it all came down to the fact that guarding a box full of corn, beans, tobacco, and a few beaver pelts could not compare with the riches of the Orient or securing one's own country. Military priorities were placed where they provided the greatest advantage. In the case of the North American forts, the structures themselves seemed to state dominion not power, providing protection from Indian warfare, but little resistance against a full scale European-style assault.

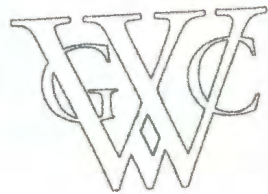
For the colonists, it seemed to matter little who was in charge as long as their lives could continue with as little hardship as possible. Fort Casimir failed, but the little settlement of Sandhook that evolved into a Swedish town and then into the larger community of New Amstel and finally New Castle, survived and flourished. This recurrent pattern of social stability over political domination seems to be a constant in human behavior and one that can be seen in all corners of the globe.

The impact of history is in the influence it has on daily life. The 17<sup>th</sup> century presence of the Dutch in New Netherland and the Swedish/Dutch mix in the Delaware region can still be felt to this day. It runs much deeper than place names and facts in

history books. It is embedded in the lifestyle of all who live and work in the region. It is an unconscious and hidden response to the past. It may manifest itself in the phrasing of a question, general business practices, or a certain lack of formality in social situations, barely perceptible at first perhaps, but it is there, a subtle reminder of the culture that once defined New Netherland.



*Arnoldus de la Grange built a windmill, circa 1681,  
on the inland side of the ruins of Fort Casimir.*



*A Mountain of Gold*

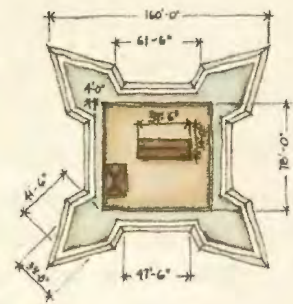
Of all the stories connected with the colony and Fort Casimir the most bizarre and interesting was recorded by Per Lindeström in his "Geographia Americae, pages 162-163." The story is about an encounter between the Swedish governor, Johan Printz, and a Rennapi Indian. Printz had shown this Indian a gold bracelet and asked if the Indian had any knowledge of such a substance. The Indian said he knew of a mountain where this same material could be taken from the ground. Printz wanted proof. After some time the Indian returned with a chunk of gold-bearing rock, the size of two fists. The gold was examined and found to be of good quality. The gold extracted from the rock was made into rings and bracelets. The Indian placed little value on the gold and Printz had been able to trade a few pieces of cloth for it. The greedy governor wanted more. When the Indian returned to his people and boasted of how he had obtained the cloth the chief was furious. Fearing that disclosure of the "mountain of gold" would bring ruin to his people, he ordered the Indian killed. The existence of the mountain has remained a mystery ever since.



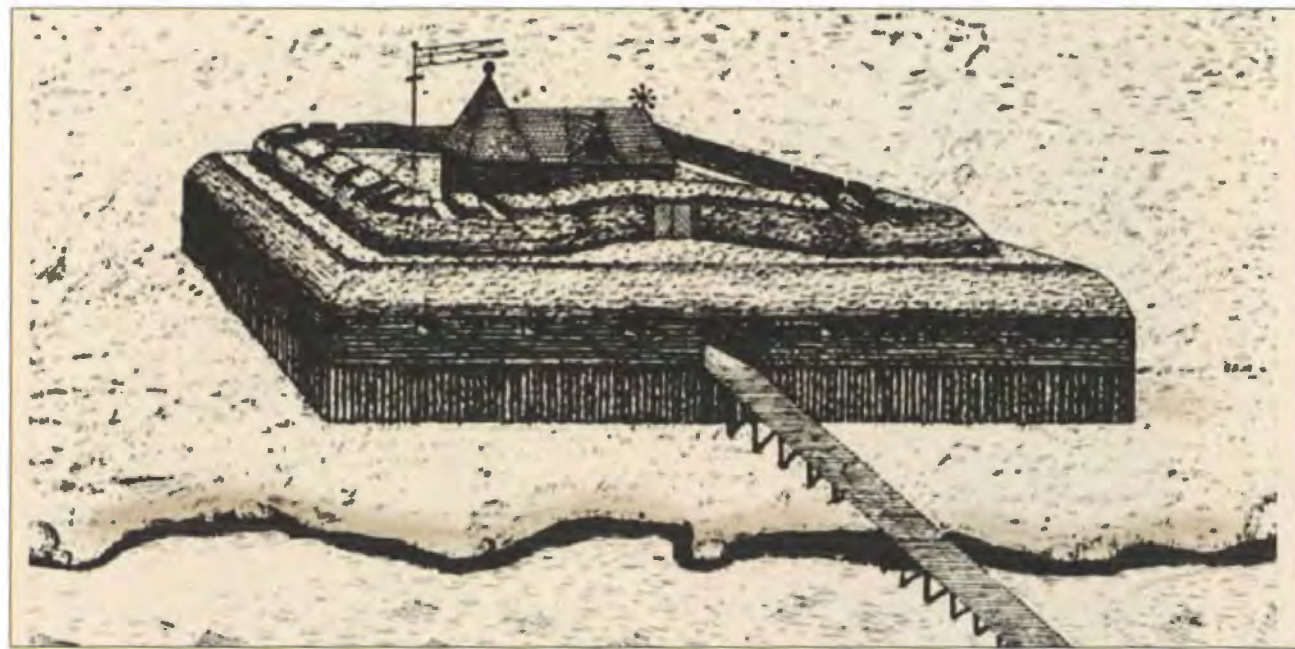
# 4.

## Comparisons

*New discoveries are what make the study of historical places and events so exciting and it is from that data that future historians and artists will build more convincing theories.*





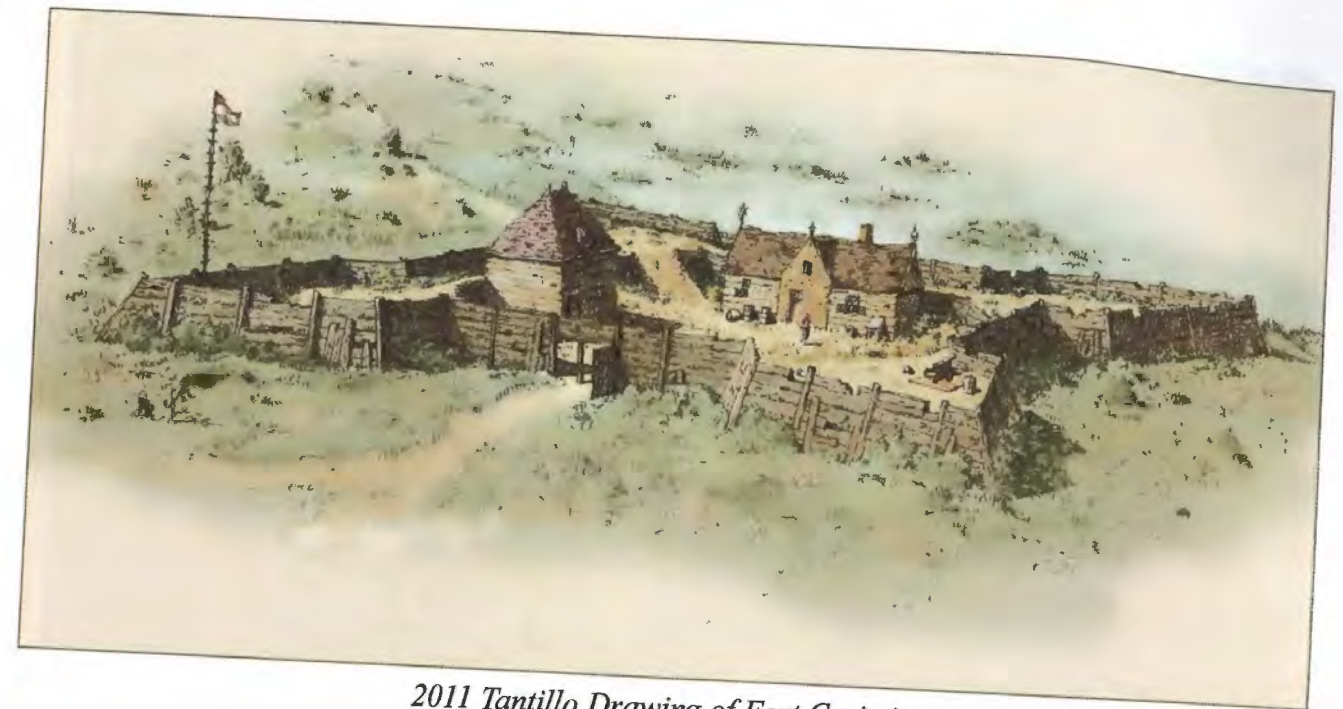


1905 Cooper Drawing of Fort Casimir

## Comparing Documentary Drawings

Historical information can, and often, accumulates over time. Comparing the illustration made in 1905 for Alexander Cooper's book on Fort Casimir with my 2011 drawing of the same fort, reflects the vastly different conclusions that can arise from an improved research base. It is doubtful that Cooper considered the European tradition from which any North American fort in the early colonial period would have evolved. I have spent 20 years studying the wooden forts built by the Dutch in New York State. I am an architect and historical artist deeply interested in how buildings fit together. The motivation driving my approach to Fort Casimir is entirely different than that of Mr. Cooper.

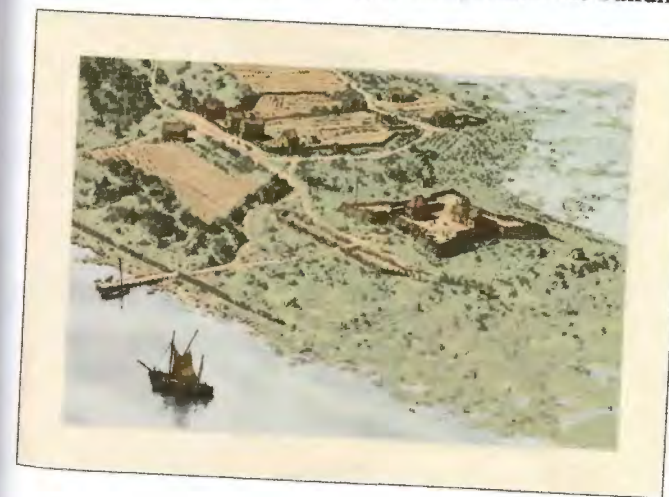
Among the many divergent points between the two drawings is the interpretation of the stockade. The Cooper drawing depicts the fort atop a raised, geometrically perfect platform tightly surrounded by an enclosed fence of vertical boards. Historical records indicate that the stockade was linear in design and built along the riverbank. Cooper places the fort very near the river's edge. The Heite study locates the high ground of the site centered about three hundred and thirty feet from the shoreline. The site

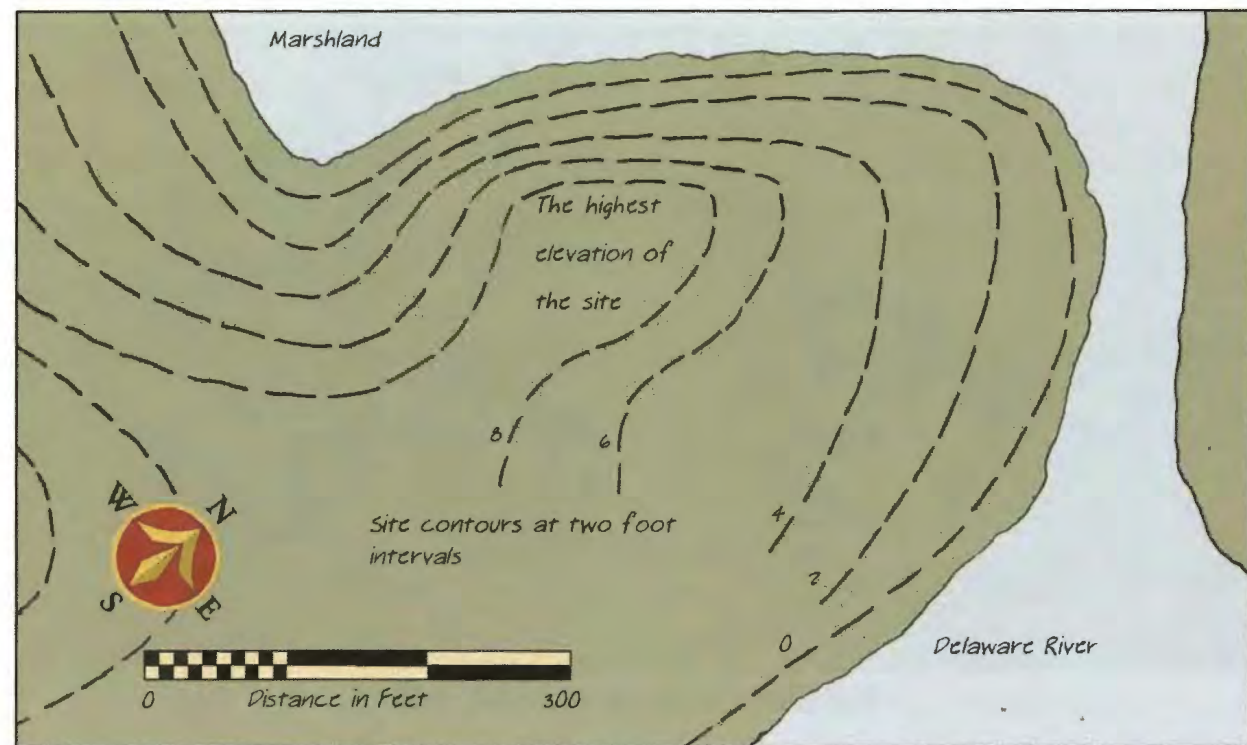


2011 Tantilillo Drawing of Fort Casimir

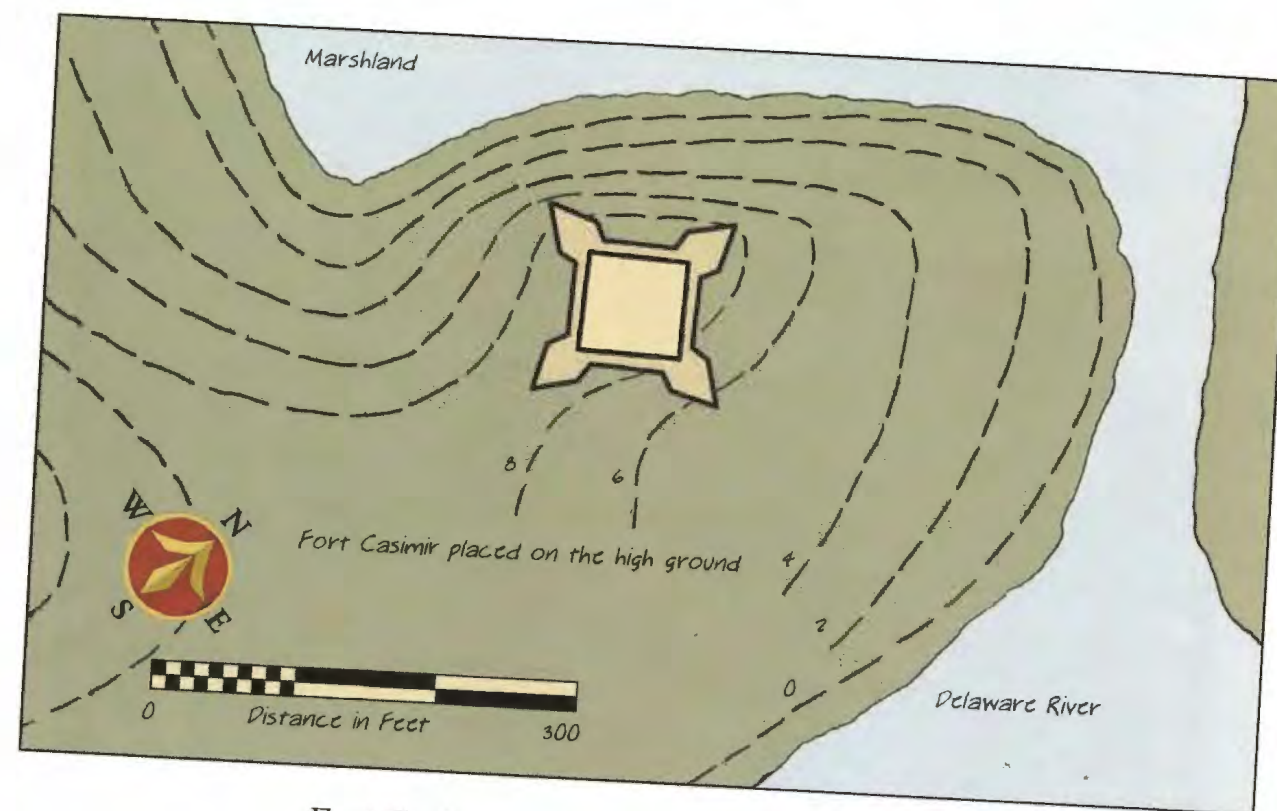
topography alone makes a compelling argument for the fort's actual location away from the river and much closer to the marsh.

The Cooper drawing is a very literal translation of the Lindeström elevation. In rigidly sticking to that premise the buildings within the fort reflect little in the way of colonial architectural features. The wharf is completely without precedent. The dock is ramped downward into the river (page 60), a disastrous situation considering the loading of barrels onto ships. The two drawings presented here are separated by one hundred and six years of accumulating historical data. Side by side they could hardly be more dissimilar.





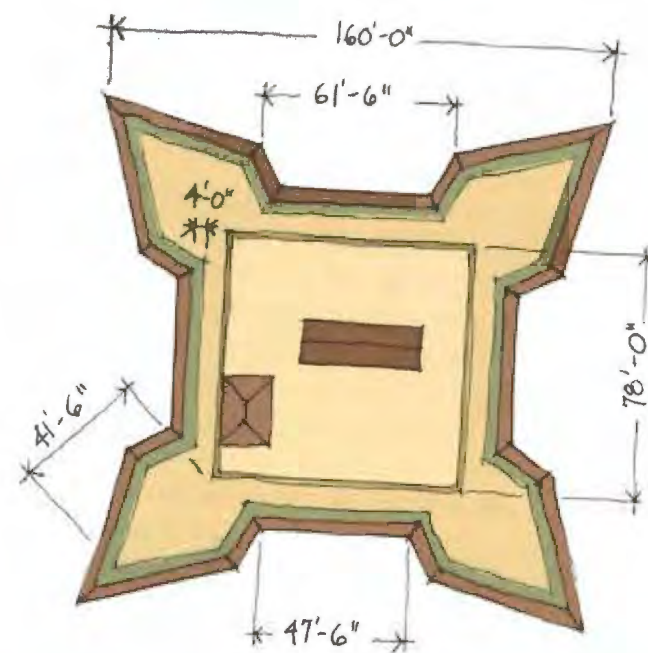
*Heite Contours from Latrobe Elevations*



*Fort Casimir on High Ground Site Feature*

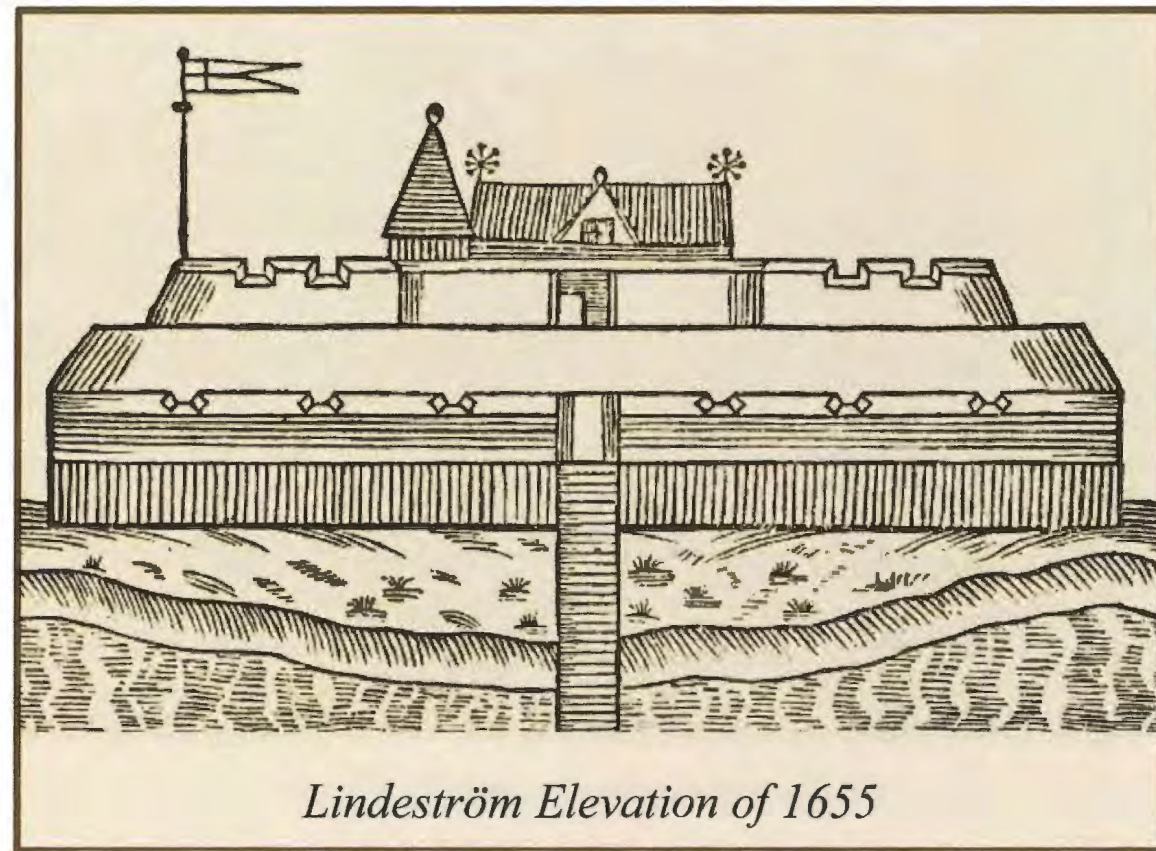
## Relationship of Fort Casimir to the Site

There is evidence that strongly suggests the specific location of Fort Casimir. It can be derived from an interpretation of the stepped terrain feature depicted in Edward and Louise Heites' archeological study of 1986, as seen on page 67. When I studied the configuration of contour lines on the drawing, the squared "high ground feature" struck me as man-made and intentional. What's more, when a four-bastioned fort scaled from Per Lindeström's 1655 drawing is positioned on the Heites' site feature, it fits almost perfectly. Coincidence perhaps, but intriguing none the less. In and of itself this is not definitive proof but it is certainly hard to ignore.



*A four-bastion fort of approximately this size fits well on the "high ground" site feature depicted on the Heites' 1986 topographical contour map.*

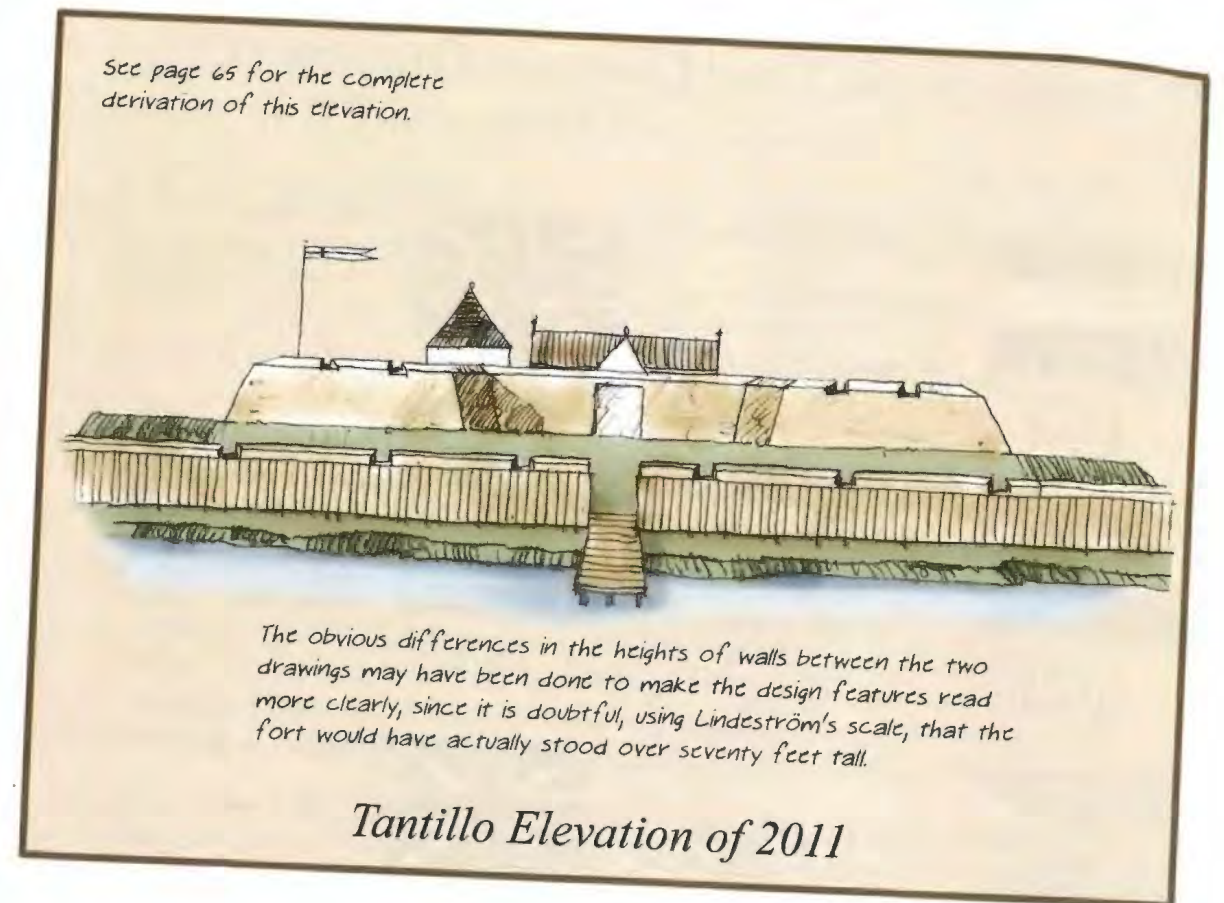
*The dimensions of this fort design are based on the 1655 drawing of Fort Casimir/Trinity by Per Lindeström.*



*Lindeström Elevation of 1655*

## Comparing the Elevations

Initially I thought that the 1655 Lindeström's drawing was pure fiction. That it represented what he wished the fort was, not what it was in reality. The fort as drawn seemed rooted in an idealized notion of medieval fortifications and castles. That was my first impression anyway. Then I began to wonder why he would make something like that up. So if it wasn't whimsical what did it mean? The answer came after building an accurate digital model of a four-bastion fort in my computer. The dimensions I used were based on Lindeström's scale. I placed my fort on an elevated plane as suggested by the Heite survey and included an outer fortified earthwork. When the model was complete and I rotated it to a full-on front elevation, I was astonished to see the remarkable resemblance it had to Lindeström's drawing. It matched well enough to solve the mystery for me.



*The obvious differences in the heights of walls between the two drawings may have been done to make the design features read more clearly, since it is doubtful, using Lindeström's scale, that the fort would have actually stood over seventy feet tall.*

*Tantillo Elevation of 2011*

In time others may find new information that will completely void this and the other conclusions expressed in this book. I accept that possibility with the knowledge that my work is just as susceptible to error as my talented predecessors. New discoveries are what make the study of historical places and events so exciting and it is from that data that future historians and artists will build more convincing theories.



IMAGES  
*of America*

NEW CASTLE

Jim Travers



**EAST SECOND STREET, 1937.** The ferry entrance and the Bull Hill section of town occupy the area near Fort Casimir. Two boats on the New Jersey side, at the top, are on their way to Delaware. At the lower left, a small gas station occupies the area that is now offices of the Municipal Services Commission on Chestnut Street. (Courtesy of Hagley Museum and Library.)

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# NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE: A WALK THROUGH TIME

BARBARA E. BENSON  
&  
CAROL E. HOFFECKER

Oak Knoll Press  
2011

continuing a now 350-year-old tradition of building, preserving, adapting, even removing and altering their world. The future, of course, remains unknown, but if the past is any guide, New Castle will continue to change, which is what will always make the town a beautiful, living entity that seeks to balance celebrating the past with moving forward with the times.



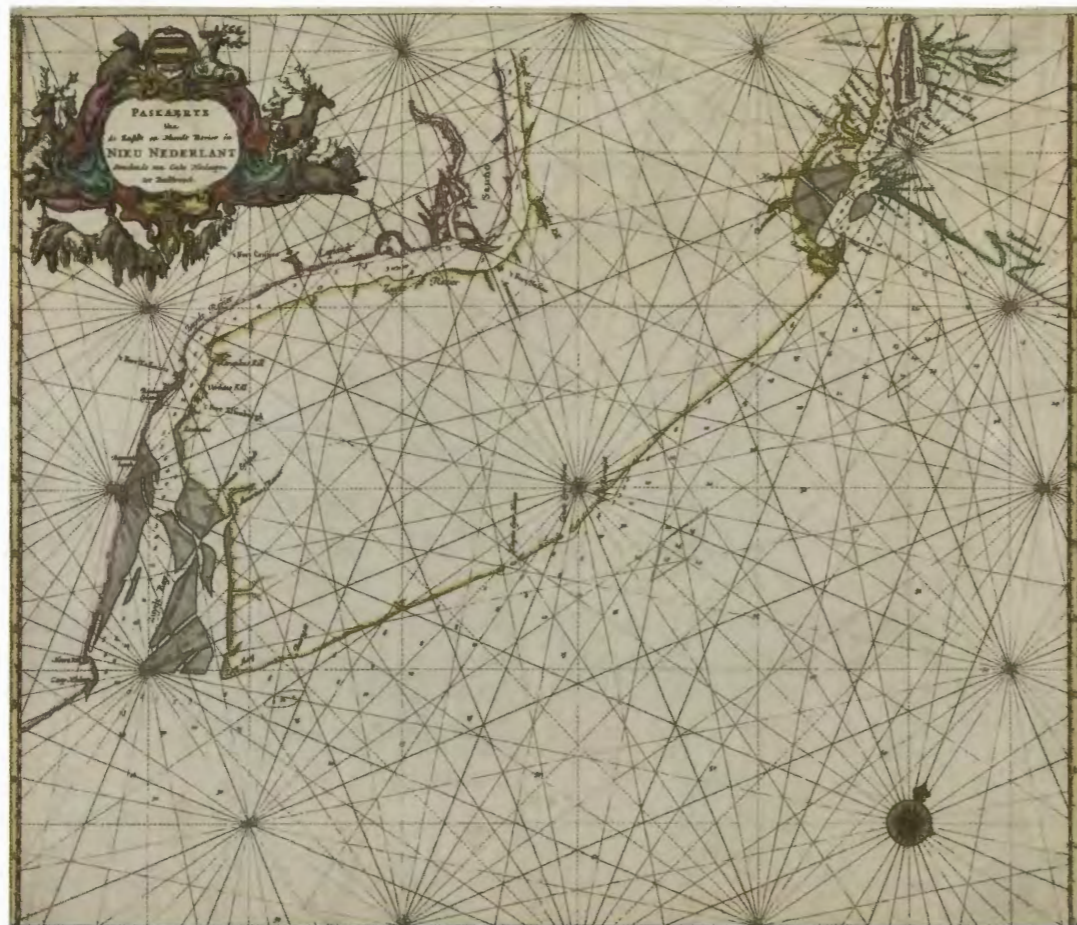
Modern aerial view of New Castle on the Delaware River. (Courtesy of New Castle Historical Society)

## A BRIEF HISTORY of NEW CASTLE

### *Colonial Rivalries*

New Castle's origins lie in the competition among European nations for trade and settlement along the Delaware River. In 1609 Henry Hudson, an Englishman employed by the Dutch, discovered the Delaware Bay. In the years that followed, other Dutch sailors explored the bay and then journeyed further north up the Delaware River. They sailed among treacherous shoals and past a landscape of low-lying wetlands that melded into shallow waters close to shore, a habitat for muskrats, water fowl, and spawning fish. Then, rather suddenly, there came a bend in the river that on the western side revealed higher ground above a sandy shoreline. Dry land stood close to the river's natural channel and thus offered easy access to the shore. The Dutchmen called this sandy point Sandhoek. It was the future site of New Castle.

The Dutch claimed the Delaware Bay and River, or, as they called it, the South River, by right of discovery. They built a trading post called Fort Nassau on the eastern bank, at the place that is now Gloucester, New Jersey. Their principal focus, however, was on the North River, now known as the Hudson. It was at the mouth of that river that in 1624 the Dutch West India Company established its American headquarters in the town of New Amsterdam. In the next decade the Dutch concentrated their efforts on New



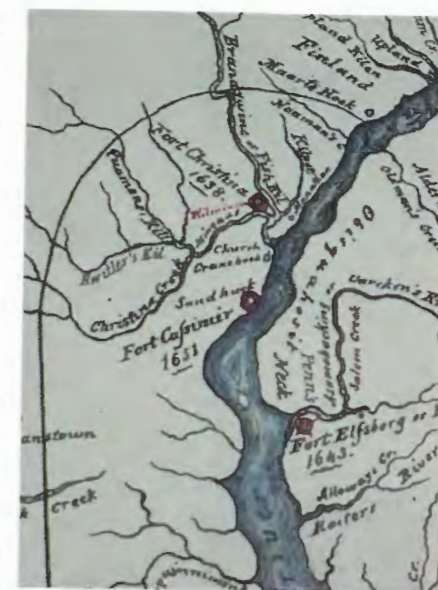
Early map of Dutch area of trade and settlement from the South, or Delaware, River to the North, or Hudson, River. New Castle took root at the location identified on the map as Fort Kalimiris. (Courtesy of University of Delaware Library, Newark, Del.)

Amsterdam and the North River. Sweden took advantage of the infrequent presence of Dutchmen on the South River, especially on its west side, to establish a colony of their own not far above the Sandhoek. In 1638, the Swedes purchased land from the Lenni Lenape Indians. The purchase included the point where two tributary rivers, the Christina and the Brandywine, join to flow into what we now call by the name later given by the English, the Delaware River. There the Swedes built a modest fort, called Fort Christina for their queen, and sent colonists from Sweden and Finland to establish farms along the river.

The main attraction of the Delaware River region to both colonial nations was not colonizing for its own sake, but rather the lucrative fur trade with

the native people. The contest between the Dutch and Swedes to monopolize that trade provoked conflict. In 1647 the Dutch West India Company sent a new director-general named Peter Stuyvesant to New Amsterdam. An aggressive military man, he was determined to reclaim Dutch primacy on the Delaware River. On a reconnaissance sail up the river in 1651, Stuyvesant recognized the strategic importance of the Sandhoek, located as it was between the principal Swedish settlements and the sea, and decided to build a fort at the Sandhoek.

Stuyvesant negotiated the purchase of the land that now encompasses New Castle from local Lenni Lenape chiefs and commanded the soldiers who had come with him to the Sandhoek to build a modest fort there. The Dutch fort consisted of a blockhouse built of logs, probably surrounded by a palisade and a trench, and equipped with cannons. Stuyvesant named it Fort Casimir to honor a Dutch nobleman and military hero. During the fort's construction Stuyvesant was called back to New Amsterdam to



Detail of Benjamin Ferris's *Map of the Original Settlements on the Delaware ...* with locations of Dutch and Swedish forts identified in red. (Courtesy of Delaware Historical Society)

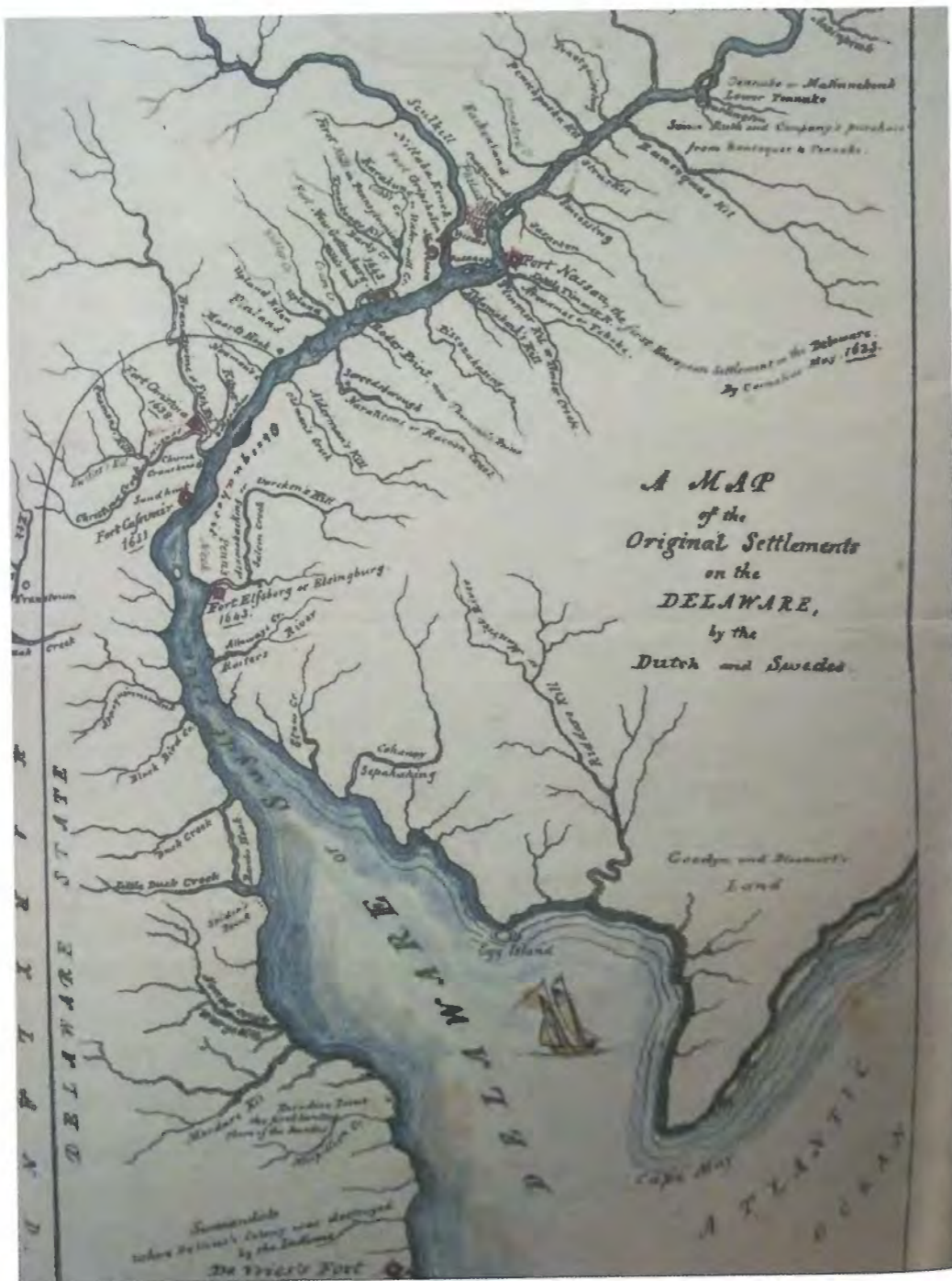


Over the years artists have attempted to interpret dimensionally the flat drawing made by Swedish engineer Peter Lindstrom of Fort Casimir after his restoration work in 1654-55. This attempt dates from 1905. (Courtesy of Delaware Historical Society)

handle a serious Indian uprising. Thus, the fort was built quickly and rather shoddily.

Nothing of Fort Casimir can be seen above ground today, but late-twentieth-century archaeologists' discoveries suggest that the fort was located in the vicinity of Second and Chestnut streets. Modern visitors may think that location to be rather far from the river bank, but silt





Full view of Ferris map, made for his book *Original Settlements on the Delaware*, published in 1845. (Courtesy of Delaware Historical Society)

has added about an extra block of dry land to the town since the seventeenth century.

Fort Casimir provided the impetus for the first European settlement of the immediate surrounding area. Next to the fort the Dutch built a village of small houses and shops. Like the fort, those buildings were constructed of wood, and all have vanished, but the footprint of the street they laid out (The Strand) remains in the present town. The first settlers came from Fort Nassau, New Amsterdam, and other parts of New Netherland. Over time small numbers of other Europeans seeking new opportunities



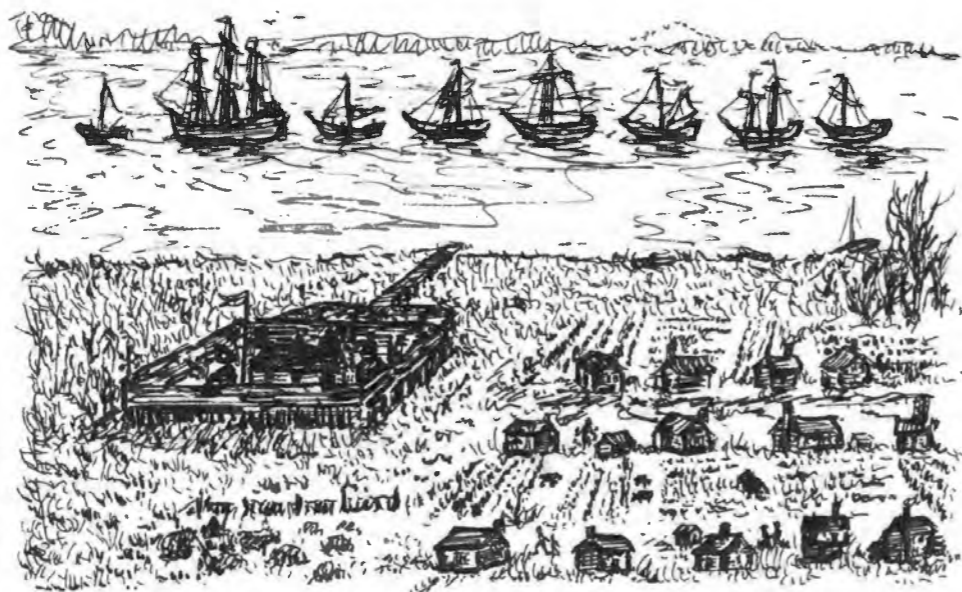
The earliest known view of the settlement that became New Castle is a detail of a map made by Swedish engineer Peter Lindstrom in 1654-55, and later copied by J.J. Alexander, showing the location of the fort and the sixteen houses built south of the fort. Reprinted in C.A. Weslager, *The Swedes and Dutch at New Castle* (Wilmington: Middle Atlantic Press, 1987)

or religious freedom came to the Dutch settlement on the Delaware. Though they were immigrants of different nationalities, the inhabitants got along together and generally experienced no serious problems with the Indians, who often came to town to trade skins for manufactured goods.

The leaders of the colonial governments of the competing European nations were less prone to peaceful relations than were the multi-national residents at Fort Casimir. On Trinity Sunday in 1654 the Swedes successfully attacked and captured the unmanned Fort Casimir, and renamed it Fort Trinity. A year later, Peter Stuyvesant returned with a flotilla of ships and retook the fort. New Sweden was his next objective, and that small, poorly defended colony fell to the Dutch in 1655. The Hollanders now controlled the entire South River and its trade with the native people. With peace secured under the aegis of one nation, the town at Sandhoeck saw a growth in trade with ships coming from Holland, from New Amsterdam, and from other Dutch colonies, yet it remained a minor outpost of the Dutch empire.

During its early years the village adjacent to Fort Casimir grew to include a school, a horse-powered gristmill, and a small brick kiln capable of supplying bricks for fireplaces and chimneys. Property near the fort was designated to be the "Market Plaine" where farmers, shippers, and townspeople could

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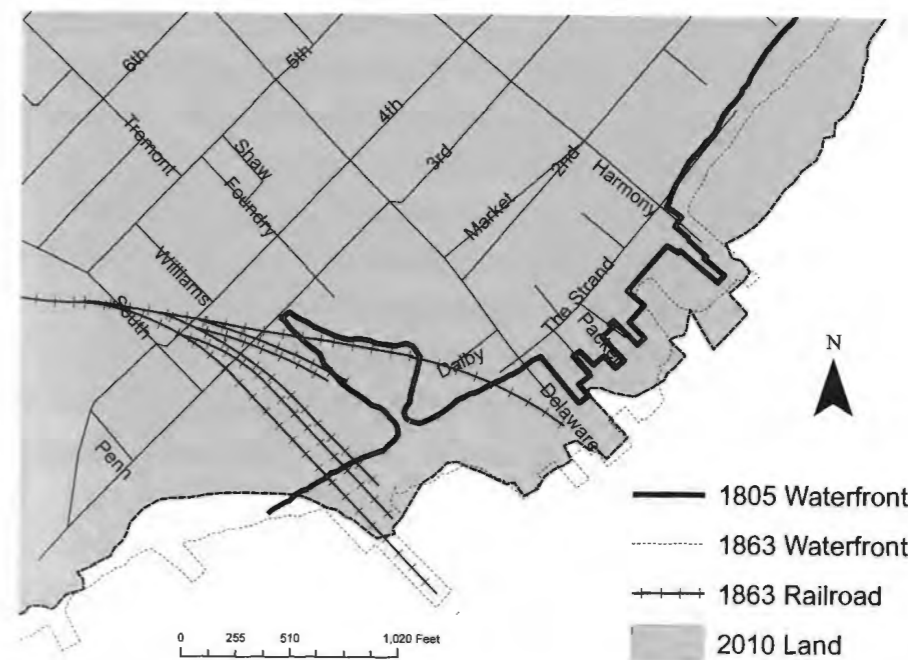


Delaware artist Nancy Sawin created this sketch of the town and Fort Casimir for C.A. Weslager's *New Sweden on the Delaware*. (Wilmington: Middle Atlantic Press, 1988)

negotiate the sale of their goods. The Dutch government at New Amsterdam established a court at their outpost on the South River. A *schout*, or as the English would say, sheriff, was appointed to enforce the laws, and the court met in the fort to resolve civil and criminal cases. Thus the town began its long history as a center of law and government.

The marshy landscape along the lower Delaware River was a terrain familiar to the Dutch, not unlike their low-lying, flood-prone lands at home, so it was natural for them to build earthen dikes near Fort Casimir to hold back the water of the river and to drain marshland. They established a land connection to the Swedish settlement on the Christina River by building a dike over marshland north of the fort to form the platform of a roadway. Farms were established nearby that provided grain, vegetables, and animals to feed the residents, as well as some tobacco for local consumption and for trade. Farm produce was sold in the village. In the years of Dutch rule, the fort served as the storehouse for imported goods and for goods awaiting export shipment.

In 1656 the City of Amsterdam took control of the settlement on the South River and renamed it New Amstel to honor the river that flows through the



Map of changes to New Castle's shoreline over time created by James L. Meek for the website of the New Castle Center for Historic Architecture Project. (Courtesy of James L. Meek)

Dutch capital of Amsterdam. This arrangement is unique in the colonial history of the United States. Never before or since did a city own an American colony. The city took its ownership seriously and sent over several shiploads of settlers. Some of the new arrivals settled in the town, while others took up farming nearby. By then the fur trade was nearly exhausted, and tobacco had become the major cash producer, especially in the English colonies along the Chesapeake Bay of Virginia and nearby Maryland. A road was laid out to link New Amstel to Maryland, and the Dutch seized upon the opportunity to import enslaved Africans to New Amstel: some to be sold to the English in Maryland; a few to serve in the Dutch colony. Slaves, tobacco, and beer-making helped to make the small colony less dependent.

Meanwhile, across the ocean England was looking to expand its empire in North America by connecting its Chesapeake and New England colonies at the expense of their rivals in trade and colonization, the Dutch. Toward that end, King Charles II granted to his brother, James, Duke of York and Albany, lands that became the states of New York and New Jersey. James, in his capac-

ity as Lord High Admiral of the English Navy, had but to send his navy to America to take them. In 1664 the duke's fleet, consisting of four warships led by Colonel Richard Nicholls, seized New Amsterdam from an angry but powerless Peter Stuyvesant and renamed it New York.

Although the Dutch colony on the west bank of the Delaware River had not been included in the duke's grant, Nicholls did not hesitate to send two of his ships under the command of Sir Robert Carr to capture New Amstel. When the Dutch offered resistance, the English landed troops just downstream from the fort. The soldiers marched to Fort Casimir's lightly defended land side and stormed the barricade. Three Dutch soldiers were killed and ten were wounded in the assault.

The Delaware River Valley, indeed the entire east coast of North America from the future state of Maine to that of Georgia, was now controlled by the English. One age of colonization had ended; another was coming into being. A simple, but not incorrect, way to imagine what had happened along the west bank of the Delaware River is to envision the well-known image of the small fish being eaten by the medium-sized fish, who is then consumed by the big fish. Now substitute New Sweden, New Netherland, and finally Britain's American colonies.

The absence of a title from the king to the west bank of the Delaware River did not inconvenience the duke or his representatives in America. It may, however, help account for the decision in 1665 to adopt the name of New Castle for the village. In that same year King Charles promoted William Cavendish, Earl of Newcastle, to become Duke of Newcastle. The name "New Castle" would most certainly have won the king's approval and may have eased Charles's acceptance of his brother's extension of his proprietorship to include the Delaware property.

The Duke of York's proprietorship lasted from 1664 until 1682, except for a brief interruption in 1673-74 when the Dutch retook the town during yet another conflict with the English. Under the duke's control, New Castle was the largest of the few small settlements on the Delaware River. The duke's government inherited a village of several hundred people, who were, regard-

less of nationality, encouraged to retain their homes and lands. Their magistrates and basic form of government were also carried forward, subject to oversight from the duke's government in New York and the introduction of English law. In 1672 New Castle became a *balywick* to be governed by a *bayley*, or bailiff, appointed from New York, along with six assistants to be elected by the townsmen. Thus began the first glimmer of democracy in what had hitherto been a series of autocratic colonial administrations.

Under the duke's government, New Castle's residents were largely left to manage their own affairs, subject to infrequent oversight from New York, but they lost the right to engage in direct trade to and from across the seas. Trade now focused on New York, where all cross-Atlantic ships were required to dock. New Castle was reduced to being the larger colony's subsidiary. Imported goods had to come via New York, and all crops, skins, and tobacco had to be sent to New York for export. Street names of that period such as Beaver, Otter, and Hay bear witness to New Castle's economic base.

The town's settlers and visitors included people of various religions and ethnicities, particularly Dutch Calvin-

#### WHAT'S IN A NAME

In the year 1080, fourteen years after William the Conqueror had sailed from Normandy to seize control of England, his son, known as Robert Cuthose, built a wooden fort on the River Tyne in northeastern England. His fort, like the Roman Wall, which had its eastern terminus nearby, was intended to protect against the Scots. A century later the crumbling fort was replaced by a new castle constructed of stone. The town that grew up around the fortification was thus called Newcastle-on-Tyne. As the principal harbor in an area that later came to be dominated by collieries, the English language gained the expression "to bring coals to Newcastle," which means to bring a commodity to a place that already has it in abundance.

William Cavendish, the first Duke of Newcastle (1593-1676) was a courtier who served as tutor to Prince Charles, later King Charles II. Cavendish taught the prince to be a gentleman, gracious to the ladies, a good horseman, and a capable politician and warrior. Learning from books was not emphasized. The prince took to this approach and learned his lessons well.

The English spell the town and the noble title as one word: *Newcastle*. In America it became two words: *New Castle*.

ists, Swedish and Finnish Lutherans, and English Anglicans, as well as a few Roman Catholics and at least one Jew. Despite or perhaps because of its diversity, the merchants and tradesmen who made up the town got along well together and experienced little crime or disharmony.

During the Duke of York years the town's population continued to vary depending upon economic conditions. The loss of cross-oceanic trade ensured that the town never reached the significance it had achieved by the end of the Dutch period. Although New Castle's appearance changed little, there were some signs of development. A church, now lost, was built, and the market square became more defined. In the 1670s the decaying Fort Casimir was replaced by a new wooden blockhouse that was constructed near the market on land that is now occupied by Immanuel Church to serve as both a military and administrative headquarters. The blockhouse held a few small cannon, a jail, and offices. It was the place where the court met to decide cases not only involving New Castle residents, but also disputes and crimes coming out of the surrounding countryside. In other words, this period saw



Map of New Amstel townsite, drawn by Louise Heite for her thesis, "New Castle under the Duke of York ...," University of Delaware, 1978. (Courtesy of New Castle Historical Society)

the beginnings of New Castle County and made the town a county seat. In the Duke of York years, New Castle lost some of its commercial significance, but it was becoming a government center. That development set the stage for the town's future.

### The Penn Period

No event in New Castle's history is more famous than the ceremony that took place on October 27, 1682, when the Duke of York's magistrates transferred the colony to William Penn. The event marked a major turning point, not only for the town, but also for the creation of the State of Delaware.

William Penn was an aristocrat by birth, the son of an English admiral. At twenty-three he rejected his family's Anglican faith and warrior heritage to embrace the Quaker religion, which emphasized peaceful relations and social equality. When the admiral died, Penn inherited a substantial debt that King Charles II owed to his deceased father. Rather than demand money, in 1680 William Penn asked for a grant of land in America to establish a refuge for the persecuted Quakers. That grant is now the State of Pennsylvania.

At first, seeing Pennsylvania's proximity to his New Castle colony down river, the duke and his representatives were apprehensive about the Delaware colony's future. To assuage those fears, it was decided in London to draw a twelve-mile circle from New Castle to protect the duke's colony from encroachment by Penn's colony. The survey was made from the top of the broad dike adjacent to the town, which is now commemorated by a marker at the intersection of Third and Chestnut streets. Subsequently, in 1752, the twelve-mile circle was resurveyed from the courthouse in New Castle, but in 1681 that building had not as yet been built.

The king's large gift of real estate to William Penn offered everything a proprietor could wish for, with one exception: the Province of Pennsylvania lacked direct access to the sea. To get that, Penn needed the Duke of York's colony on the Delaware River and Bay. Fortunately for Penn, the duke was his friend and was amenable to the Quaker proprietor's request. Thus, the king's brother transferred his three counties along the west bank of the river and bay to Penn. The new Quaker owner called the three counties, each with



Audrey Rooney's drawing of five front doors and fanlights illustrates the variety of Georgian and Federal era styles that can still be seen in New Castle. Starting with the door of the Amstel House in the center bottom, you can trace the evolution of door surrounds from the heavier Georgian emphasis on classical pilasters and pediments to the lighter Federal look that used larger fanlights and sidelights. (Courtesy of New Castle Historical Society)

tural types and styles over time. Grand high-style houses of the affluent stand side by side with the medium-sized houses of the middle class and the smaller-sized less embellished but solid houses of the working class. Architect-designed structures intermingle with pattern-book and vernacular styles from eighteenth-century Georgian to the bungalows and Colonial Revivals of the twentieth century.

#### ***Frontier New Castle: Edge of Empire***

Before we consider New Castle as it is today, we should pause for re-

membrance—for the memory of what no longer stands. The older the place, the longer is the opportunity for loss. Sometimes buildings are intentionally destroyed, as old makes way for new because of changing tastes or economic circumstances. Sometimes buildings are lost through natural disasters such as fires or floods, and sometimes buildings are not created to last forever.

New Castle's trail of loss begins with the buildings of its first fifty years or so, its frontier period—whether private houses, government structures, or churches—all but one have vanished from our view. What doomed the structures from that turbulent period was not the many transfers of politi-

cal power, usually accompanied by religious or linguistic change, but rather what they were made of: wood. From Fort Casimir to William Penn's first courthouse, early New Castle was a world of wood, usually unseasoned or "green" wood that lacked strength and durability. As in all frontier communities, the first buildings were erected hurriedly with inadequate materials that were not designed to stand the test of time.

In the seventeenth century, trees, indeed forests of hardwoods, stood close by, but New Castle, situated in a flat area of slow-moving streams, lacked a source of strong running water to power a sawmill. For early New Castilians, transforming that forest resource, first into logs and then into squared timbers, boards, or roof shingles, required great manual labor. The earliest tools settlers would have used were the ax and adze. The first mention of a sawmill comes in 1664, but that term would have meant a saw set within a frame powered at each end by a man. One man stood in a pit while the other stood atop the log or squared timber. Up and down the saw would go, cutting only on the downward motion. This slow, labor-intensive process limited local production. Timber could be brought in by boat, but few, if any, water-powered sawmills existed in the Delaware Valley until late in the seventeenth century. Kilns, or ovens, for drying lumber also came later. Indeed, the kiln-dried, standardized sizes of lumber we know today date only from the second half of the nineteenth century.

In comparison to other materials, though, timber and lumber supply seemed positively abundant. The old assertion that bricks arrived in New Castle, as in other early trading centers, as ballast in European ships has largely been discredited. Fort Casimir had a brick kiln, the records tell us, by the late 1650s, but it was a small, rudimentary affair, producing only enough bricks to build chimneys. Then the brickmaker died, and the kiln remained cold for a time, forcing settlers to beg that bricks and other supplies be sent to them. Bricks could be obtained from a greater distance, most particularly from New Amsterdam/New York or further up the Hudson River, but the Dutch settlement on the Delaware was initially expected to be as self-sufficient as possible; it was to be a net exporter, not importer. A large commercial

# NEW NETHERLAND IN A NUTSHELL

A Concise History of the  
Dutch Colony in North America

Firth Haring Fabend



New Netherland Institute, Albany, NY  
2017

there [the Delaware], they would also attempt to occupy from behind this River [the Hudson] between the Colony [of Rensselaerswijck] and this place [Manhattan]. And thus divert the entire trade and separate the Colony of Rensselaerswijck from this place [Manhattan].”<sup>8</sup> In other words, he feared that the English, particularly the aggressive and determined New Haven people, would learn what the Dutch already knew: that one of the several origins of the Delaware River was the east branch, which originated some sixty miles southwest of Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck (somewhere east of today’s Oneonta, New York, and west of Kingston), and that whoever controlled the upper Delaware Valley would also have access to the Mohawk Indians and the fur trade operating out of Fort Orange, today’s Albany, New York. It was a daunting thought.

In 1650, at Hartford, Stuyvesant was able to defuse this threat by persuading the colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Connecticut to agree that any future incursion of the New Haven people into the Delaware would be unacceptable and that no English settlement there would be defended in the case of Indian attack. With his mind at rest about this matter, he now invaded the South River, literally dismantled Fort Nassau, bought land from the Indians on the auspicious west shore of the Delaware, south of Fort Christina, and moved what he salvaged from Fort Nassau to this site, today’s New Castle, Delaware. He thus deftly turned a geographical disadvantage to a commanding advantage. He called it Fort Casimir.

Two years later, in 1652, the first of several Anglo-Dutch wars broke out in Europe, and Stuyvesant’s concerns reverted to the Hudson and the defense of New Amsterdam against possible attack from England or New England. Just as this war ended in 1654, and while Stuyvesant’s back was still turned from the South River, the Swedes under a new governor overwhelmed Fort Casimir on May 30, 1654, Trinity Sunday. They renamed it Fort Trefaldighet, the Swedish word for trinity. Again not a shot was fired.

The directors in Amsterdam were furious and ordered Stuyvesant to do his utmost to drive the Swedes out of the Delaware once and for all—which he did sixteen months later with the help of 200 soldiers and the warship *De Waegh*, chartered by the WIC from Amsterdam city. To repay this debt, the WIC granted Amsterdam all the land on the west side of the Delaware, and eventually the whole of the river, and here Amsterdam formed its own colony within the colony of New Netherland, called New Amstel, in the state of Delaware, today.

NEW YORK  
HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS:  
DUTCH

Volumes XX-XXI

*DELAWARE PAPERS*  
(English Period)

*A Collection of Documents Pertaining  
to the Regulation of Affairs  
on the Delaware, 1664-1682*

Edited by  
CHARLES T. GEHRING

Published under the Direction of  
The Holland Society of New York



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BALTIMORE 1977



8. i.e., aye.
9. The Swedish patronymic for: Christina the daughter of Carl.
10. Written in the hand of Matthias Nicolls.

21:50 [TESTIMONY OF JOHN ANDERSON IN THE SUIT  
BETWEEN JACOB VAN DER VEER AND THOMAS  
HARWOOD]<sup>1</sup>

All the Dealings that wy have haede, have y Declared For the Corret att the Sandhoeck<sup>2</sup>, that Mr. Harwordt have sold me Fiyff Ells penneston For one bever and tree Ells dyffels For one beaver, that this is the truth testeffey y whitt my one<sup>3</sup> hand heer under ritten.

Datum Christina the 16 Agusty Anno 1679

[Signed:] John Anderson

Further Doe y testiffey that y have boegt For twenty Schepell Wheat one peas off Linnen.

- 
1. A few lines have been lost at the top of this document due to trimming.
  2. Zand Hoek was the Dutch name for the neck of land upon which Fort Casimir stood. The reference here is to the court at New Castle.
  3. i.e., own.

21:51 [PETITION OF ARNOLDUS DE LA GRANGE CONCERNING  
TINICUM ISLAND]<sup>1</sup>

To His Excellence Sir Edmund Andros Knight Lieut. and Governor Generall under his Royall Highnesse of all his Territories in America

The humble Petition of Arnoldus De La Grange Sheweth That Your Petitioners father Joost De La Grange heretofore of Delaware did agree with and buy of Juffro Armgart Prince Attorney

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CLEARFIELD

18:13 [LETTER FROM THE COUNCIL TO PETRUS STUYVESANT AT THE SOUTH RIVER ADVISING HIM ON FURTHER ACTIONS AGAINST THE SWEDES]

May God be praised and thanked. With [ ] we have heard of your fortunate [ ] of Fort Casamier without [ ] or bloodshed by an accord [ ] and useful for the encouragement of the [ ] easier to bring into submission. We hope that you have before the arrival of this, through God's assistance, brought it to pass that the Swedish people have submitted and surrendered Fort Cris[tina].

Since we see by your letter [that you intend] to proceed slowly, partly to spare the men and partly to ask our advice [in regard to the point] mentioned in your letter, this shall then serve as a reply to it with advice on the [ ] point, as follows:

If Almighty God should deliver Fort Cr[istina] into your hands, then level it; strengthen and [ ] Casamier; and [ ] all the Swedes from the South River, especially all those who are in [ ] or from whom one might [ ] trouble in the future [if they were allowed to remain]; because a conquered or [vanquished] people are not to be trusted when the opportunity arises, as has been demonstrated in Brazil [and] [ ], but [ ] not to take [ ] the innocent inhabitants [ ] to divide [ ] them there in future [ ] [our] advice would be: if Fort Cristina should fall into your hands without bloodshed, then level it, as previously stated; and expel the Swedes from there.

However, since Almighty God has remarkably delivered us here from a general massacre by the Indians, and for our manifold sins has nevertheless allowed the Indians to destroy many farms and murder many people, it would in our opinion be advisable, for the preservation of what is most important and for the consolation of the inhabitants, that you condescend to arrange, as soon as possible, some provisional contract with the governor, concerning the fort and the lands of Cristina, with the most favorable conditions possible for this country and which honor allows; and to return here at the first opportunity with the ships and men in order to preserve what is still left. Otherwise, all the farms and places in the country shall be abandoned, the grain and fodder ruined, the livestock destroyed; and it is to be feared that many other [inconveniences] might arise so that [there will be great trouble and suffering] in the community. If we are not able to [ ] some supplies for [ ] militia, about which we have already made some agreement with Messers. Goudjer<sup>1</sup> and [W ], [ ] shall be able to receive little.

As to the requested advice, we can[not] say [more] for the present, but think ourselves unfit [ ] shall make sufficient judgments which best serve the commonality.

My Lord, we would continue this but are hindered by constant business, alarms, and by being day and night under arms; officers and citizens both. We shall close and most respectfully and earnestly request you to return here as quickly as possible with your accompanying troops (leaving at Casamier a garrison of no more men than is necessary), for we and the citizens all must stand [ ] and are day and night [ ] with patrols, watches, rounds, and helping to save livestock and grain. All of this we hope you have taken seriously into consideration. I shall resolve together with the remaining councillors [ ] the best...  
[ the remaining 14 lines are too damaged to translate ]

18:14 [LETTER FROM PETRUS STUYVESANT ON THE SOUTH RIVER  
TO THE COUNCIL REPORTING ON THE PROGRESS OF THE  
EXPEDITION AGAINST NEW SWEDEN]

Honorable, Prudent and Very [ ] Lords.

No. 2 We departed on Sunday, a week ago today, after attending church. The following day about three hours after noon we sailed into the bay of the South River. A calm and an unfavorable tide kept us from sailing upriver until Thursday. We anchored before the abandoned Swedish Fort Elsburch, where we mustered and divided our small force into five companies. On Friday morning, wind and tide being favorable, we weighed anchor. We passed Fort Casimier about eight or nine o'clock without any display of hostility on either side, and anchored the distance of a salute gun's shot above the said fortress. We landed our men immediately and sent Capt. Lt. Smith with a drummer into the fortress to demand restitution of our property. The commander requested a delay until he had communicated with Governor Rysingh; his request was denied. Meanwhile, with 50 men drawn from our companies, we occupied the roads to Christina. The commander, Schuts, was warned by a second message that in order to prevent bloodshed and other grief he should not await the attack of our troops which will be covered by our cannons. In reply, the commander requested permission to speak with us; which was granted. He met us in the marshland about halfway between the fortress and our not yet completed battery. He immediately requested that he be allowed to dispatch an open letter to the governor which would be shown to us. His request was firmly denied and he left discontented. After this the troops advanced to the marshland in sight of the fort. In the meantime, our works were raised about a man's height above the thicket, and the fortress was summoned for the last time. He humbly requested a delay until morning; this was granted because we could not be ready with our battery that evening or the following night, in order to advance closer under its cover. The following morning the commander came out and surrendered to us under the conditions sent herewith. About midday our force marched in; and today we offered insufficient thanks at our first church service. God's hand has visibly been with us: in weather, good success, and the weakening

of our opponents. Therefore, it is requested and ordered that God may be thanked and praised for it not only on the usual day of service but on a special day to be specified by you, and that further prayers be offered so that His Majesty may be pleased to accompany us with his further support and blessing.

Yesterday about midday, during the deliverance of the fortress, the factor, Elswyck, came down from Fort Christina. He amicably requested, in the name of the director, the reasons for our coming and the orders of our superiors. "To take and hold what belongs to us," was our answer. He asked us to be content with what has been accomplished without advancing further upon the other Swedish fortress; and employed first persuasive arguments and fraternal discourses that were later mingled with threats: [blank] "hodie mihi cras tibi,"<sup>1</sup> which were countered according [to circumstances.] Meanwhile, our small force will be off tomorrow or the day after. My intention is to proceed slowly with our approach, partly to spare our men and partly to receive your honors' advice and opinions on the first and last orders and instructions from the directors concerning that point; which will then be expected by post with the bearer of this. For your honor's information, a copy of their letter to me is sent herewith which you may please compare with the last general letter on that point and impart to us their advice thereon.<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime, I shall, together with Mr. Sille and Capt. Coningh, carry on to the best of our ability. In closing I shall commend you to God's protection and shelter, and remain

At Fort Casimier

the 12th Sept. 1655

Your Honor's affectionate friend

P. Stuyvesant

[P.S. in Stuyvesant's hand]

About 30 Swedes have placed themselves under our authority and requested permission to go to Manhattan; you are to expect them shortly.

Use them kindly; I hope that more shall follow.

18:15 CAPITULATION OR [CONDITIONS] UNDER WHICH FORT CASIMIER  
HAS BEEN SURRENDERED BY THE COMMANDER SVEN SCHOUTE INTO  
THE HANDS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL PETRUS STUYVESANT

No. 3 First, the commander shall, whenever it may please him and he has the opportunity by arrival of private vessels or vessels belonging to the Crown, be permitted to carry away out of Fort Casimier, the Crown's cannons both large and small; consisting, according to the declaration of the commander, of four iron-pounders and five shot-pieces, i.e., four small and one large

All persons are further expressly forbidden to sell any strong drink to the Indians whereby they may be reduced to a state of drunkenness, on the penalty thereto prescribed at Manhattan.<sup>2</sup> Also, that no one shall attempt to sell or trade any goods which are distributed to the soldiers on penalty that the same goods shall be taken back for the use of the honorable Company and the value thereof in addition.

25 December

Whereas the honorable lord, Jaquet, has examined the condition of this fort, Casemier, and not found the same as expected; therefore, we the undersigned at the aforesaid lord's request have inspected the same and found the fort to be completely decayed in its walls and batteries and that the aforesaid fort, if a good work is to be made of it, must be rebuilt from the ground up since the outer work has for the most part already fallen down and that which still stands must necessarily fall since it has been torn open and dislocated as a result. The signatories promise at any time to confirm by oath that the above-written is truthful. Done at Fort Casemiris on the date as above. For which reason we have signed this with our usual signatures.

Was signed: Elmerhuysen Cleyn, Dirck Smit, Gysbert Braey, Hans Hopman, A. Hudde. Below was written: acknowledged by me A. Hudde, secretary.

22 December<sup>3</sup>

We the undersigned declare to have inspected the crops which Dirck Smit ordered sown and cultivated. They are far less than the aforesaid Smit has reported to have sown, and Andries Hudde declares, moreover, that not four morgens of land have been sown, including several private lots of which he has taken hold without orders and for which no claim can be made. Thus done, attested and signed by us in good faith; being prepared to confirm this by oath. It was signed: Gysbart Braey, Hans Hopman and Andries Hudde.

28 December 1655

Several sachems of this river came into Casamier and requested an audience to make some proposals. It was granted them in the presence of the honorable vice-director, Andries Hudde, Gysbert Bray, Elmerhuysen Cleyn, Sander Boyer and several others. Their first proposal, after they had been welcomed by the vice-director, was:

First, that some promises had been made to them by the former commandant, Dirick Smit, concerning the expansion of trade at higher prices.

They were answered: that the honorable vice-director had just arrived and could not know what had been done by his predecessors concerning this, but that there was concensus to live with them in friendship and fraternal love just as in the past and to prevent

as far as it concerned him, causes for unrest and discord; and if anything might have been done there through ignorance, it should be regarded as not having been done. This they accepted.

Secondly, they requested, with great circumstance and agreeable utterances, changes in the trade; desiring one piece of cloth, for two deer, and so forth with other goods in proportion.

They were answered: that his honor had not come to establish regulations for this but that they were left free to do as they pleased, and that they may go wherever their purse enabled them and where the goods were to their liking. This they also accepted. Moreover, they requested that since it had been customary to present the chiefs with some gifts, it would be most appropriate now for the confirmation of this treaty. They were answered, and the honorable lord informed them of the scarcity of goods; but that he was very much inclined, as mentioned previously, to live with them in friendship; that he would do whatever present circumstances allowed; and that they should deliver two or three in three days.

29 December

After communicating the foregoing articles and proposals of the Indians to the people living at Fort Casemier, they accepted them with satisfaction, and willingly assented to the honorable vice-director's request; each in accordance with their signature to the following subsidy, except for Isack Israel and Isack Cardose who object to doing the same, and prefer to leave the river and cease trading rather than help maintain the peace of this river along with the other good inhabitants. Following is a list of those who have promised contributions, to wit:

To the honorable Company for  
four shares.....f58 \_\_, \_\_,  
To the Lord Jaquet.....f14 \_\_ 10 \_\_,  
To Andries Hudde.....f10 \_\_ 10 \_\_,  
To Dr. Jacop<sup>4</sup>.....f13 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Elmerhuysen Cleyn.....f14 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Thomas Bruyn.....f 9 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Willem Maurits.....f 9 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Jan Eeckhoff.....f 9 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Cornelis Maurits.....f13 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Harman Jansen.....f 9 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Sander Boyer.....f 9 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Jan Flamman.....f13 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,  
To Oloff Steurs.....f 6 \_\_, \_\_, \_\_,

The community was also requested to cut some palisades for the fort since it is necessary for the common defense that the fort be covered on the outside with palisades. To this they unanimously assented.

#### Proclamation

Whereas heretofore many and frequent complaints have been made about the damage done on the farms located near Fort Casemier which has been caused mainly through the lack of good fences, with which the plantations and lots have not been well provided; also, that some plantations and lots are unenclosed, the owners whereof, being absent, have not been able to enclose them, likewise, others who have taken on more land than they can manage, and since it is apparent that it shall become worse in the future if nothing is done about it; therefore, Vice-Director Jaquet, wishing to prevent any further complaints, has ordered, as he hereby does order, that each and everyone who has plantations or lots shall be informed to protect the same within the period of the next three months, being until the end of February, with a good, solid fence, and whosoever shall be found negligent after the expiration of the aforesaid time, shall be fined the sum of f10 the first time, and if still in default seven days after the date he shall be fined the sum of twenty guilders, and if still remaining in default after the expiration of another seven days following, he, being considered to have an obstinate disposition, shall be deprived forever of his lands which shall be at the disposal of the honorable Company to parcel out to others. This order shall be strictly obeyed and executed so that complaints may cease and everyone may make use of his efforts unimpeded and undiminished, for which reason the inspectors of the community, who have been appointed thereto, are expressly ordered to direct their complete attention to this on penalty of a double fine if they are negligent, because this is found to be for the good of the community. Thus done and confirmed in Fort Casemier on the South River of New Netherland this 27th of November in the year 1656.

29 November

Jan Picolet appears before the council contra Tomas Broeyn and requests payment for a camp bed. Tomas Broeyn appears and contends that he borrowed the camp bed but did not buy it.

The parties have been ordered to come to an agreement or the defendant shall bring in further proof that he borrowed it.

Willem Mourits appears contra Jan Picolet and requests payment for some goods amounting to 14 guilders, 8 stivers.

The defendant appears and acknowledges the debt, and also promises to pay it.

Jacob Crabbe appears contra Jan Jurienssen and requests payment of 9 guilders, 16 stivers. The defendant is absent, having been sent out in the service of the Company.

#### Proclamation

Whereas it is apparent that this river stands to acquire a good reputation from its tobacco, and people would be motivated to settle here, if care were taken that the same [tobacco] be packed in as good condition as possible, and all deception, which could be used therein, prevented as much as possible; and whereas the same cannot come about unless attention be paid thereto, and it therefore, the honorable Vice-Director Jaquet upon the previous nomination of the community, has authorized and sworn the persons of Moens Andriesz and Willem Mourits, who shall be obligated to inspect all tobacco before the same may be delivered or exported, and to certify for whom it was inspected and by whom it was delivered; and if it should happen that some are not willing to submit to the aforesaid inspectors because they consider themselves sufficiently competent for that purpose, and the same cannot have any other effect than to infringe greatly upon good order; therefore, the honorable Vice-Director Jaquet, desiring to prevent all disorder and following therein the admirable ordinance established at Manhattan,<sup>14</sup> does hereby ordain, order and command all inhabitants residing here on the river that they, from this time forth, not attempt to deliver or receive, much less export, any tobacco unless they previously obtain a certificate from the authorized inspectors; ten stivers to be paid for each hundred pounds of inspected tobacco: 6 stivers by the receiver and four stivers by the deliverer; and all this on the penalty of fifty guilders for the first offense and in proportion for the second and third; and persons informing of the same shall receive twenty guilders and their names shall be concealed. Everyone must conduct himself accordingly. Thus done and confirmed in Fort Casemier on the South River of New Netherland this 12th of December.

18 December

Moens Andriesz and Willem Mourits appeared before the council and took the following oath:

We the undersigned promise and swear that we shall act to the best of our knowledge in inspecting tobacco, not allowing ourselves to be misled by cunning or craft or gifts, but to conduct ourselves equally and justly to each and everyone, the buyer as well as the seller. So help us God Almighty.

20 December

Isack Allerton appears contra Lourens Pieters and requests eleven deerskins in payment for linen since he sold it on three days' time and now one month has already passed.

The defendant replies that he gave an Indian one double handful of powder and a bar of lead for which he promised to give him deerskins, and since the same Indian did not return, he failed thereby in his promise; but he will pay him as soon as the Indian returns.

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The governor also asked what was meant by "Dutch Swedes" whom we so named in our declaration. We replied that the greatest number of them were employees of the Dutch under the Company's jurisdiction, and they were tolerated until they became so insolent as to attempt a seizure of Fort New Amstel, formerly Casimier, in a most treacherous manner. As a result the general and council were compelled to relieve the river of such double-dealing and hypocritical friends once and for all.

October 19/9, Sunday morning. After breakfast, we received their reply which had been completely written out by the secretary. We were given such a friendly farewell that we could only think that if it were in their power, they would be inclined towards a friendly accomodation, but that they first must have authorization for it from Lord Balthamoer or otherwise wait for such orders which he may send over this summer. I learned in a private conversation with the secretary, Philip Calvert, who is Lord Balthamoer's half-brother, that they expected something to that effect, although they knew not what, because last year Lord Balthamoer had ordered them to inform him about what had been done concerning the people of Delaware Bay, to which they had replied that they could not yet write concerning this, but that they intended to do this and that.

We also had some private conversations concerning the establishment of trade and commerce overland between Maryland and Delaware Bay, which I assured him could be easily established as soon as the dispute over the boundaries has been settled. I suggested that he notify his brother of it, so that he might engage himself in it if all equity. Because not only his province in general, but himself personally would be able to benefit by such trade, so that an effort might be made to establish a convenient passage overland for mutual exchange. He said that he would take it into consideration.

He also asked in particular about the hill which we had proposed in our declaration for a neutral meeting ground, where the Sassafrax River in Virginia and the creek which flows into the South River behind Reedy Island appear to have their source. We are to inform them in more detail about the hill or passageway at the first opportunity.

Finally we returned toether from the Patuxen River to St. Marrys to our quarters at Mr. Symon Ooverzee's.

October 20/10, Monday. Nothing particular happened except preparing to dispatch things with Resolved Waldron to the South River and Manhattan.

October 21/11, Tuesday. Sent off the aforesaid Resolved Waldron on his return overland with the relations, papers and documents concerning our negotiations. I set out on my trip to Virginia to ascertain the feelings of the governor and others there concerning this matter, in order thus to make a diversion between them both; also, at the same time, to exonerate us of the aspersion which some people are trying to attach to us that we had incited the Indians to kill the English at Accomacq.

God grant that everything redound to the glory of His name and our common welfare and salvation, and that we may be guided by His Divine Majesty. Amen.

In haste,  
Augustine Herrman

[Addressed:]

To the honorable, esteemed, wise and very prudent Lord Cornelis van Ruyven, to be delivered to the honorable director-general council of New Netherland.20

18:97 [PETITION OF ENGELTIE VAN DIEMAN]

The Honorable Lord [ ] Esteemed, Wise, Prudent and very Discreet Lord, My Lord Director-General and the High Council of New Netherland

Are humbly informed by the wife of Willem van Dieman, with all due humility, many God help us in our innocence how we must live in great misery and sorrow because of Mr. Inyoese who defrauds us in every way imaginable so that we are incapable of making use of our own property. We can neither cultivate nor plant a seed of grain in the ground because he withholds our plow which he had made for us by Jan Tonnese, the carpenter. I uses my plow and has let [ ] land be cultivated with it. He is taking away our ox which my farmhand bought from Mr. Andrickx on the day after New Year's. We even requested he sell us the ox since the City owed us [ ] more than twice [ ] was worth. He was not willing to do it [ ] promised my husband when he was at Manhattan during the winter...

[ Remaining eight lines defective. ]  
...he even withholds our canoe which we had bought from Peter Cook. He beat the soldiers whom my husband had paid to help him get the canoe out of the creek, according to the declaration sent to Mattheyes Voos. He imperiously informed us that he would not let us have the canoe until we had proved that the canoe belonged to us. We had to have the Swedes come down from above and prove that it was the same canoe, and both of them offered that they would swear under oath that it was the same canoe which van Dieman had bought from him. Now that we have gone to all trouble and expense and have proved everything, he still withholds the canoe from us. If we wish to haul our goods to the Swedes, i.e., winter provisions required for the household, we have to pay one guilder per day. Thus it is with everything; it cannot be written with the pen what mortifications and expenses he inflicts on us. He has not yet forgotten Mr. van Rueve, I see when the woman gave him that petition; and because I had signed it, he then threatened...

[ Remaining eight lines defective. ]  
...we cannot get out of his hands [ ] our documents or evidence with which we can defend ourselves. I wish from the bottom of my heart that you, my Lord Director, could see my evidence and documents. Among them you would see what testimony all the soldiers have given my husband: how he had treated the soldiers in times of emergency and how fairly he had dealt with them. For this reason, he, Inyoese, says that they are altogether scoundrels for praising my husband; that he himself has done by them; and reproaches my husband because the soldiers have never so honored and praised him as they have my husband. He is very angry about it...

[ Remaining ten lines defective. ]



1638



1938

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# THE *Swedish Settlement*



Royal Seal of H.M. Christina, Queen of Sweden

**T**HE FIRST settlement in the territory that is now Wilmington was begun in March 1638. The precise date is unknown, but probably about the middle of the month a ship, "Kalmar Nyckel," and a yacht, "Fogel Grip," made their landfall on the north bank of the Christina River, so called by them in honor of their queen, Christina, the exact spot of landing being a shelf of rocks a mile or two above the river's mouth.

These ships constituted an expedition sent out from Sweden by the New Sweden Company, which had been organized for trading and colonization in the Delaware valley. There were 23 Swedish soldiers on board under Captain Mans Nilsson Kling, Peter Minuit from Amsterdam, was in general command of the expedition.

On March 29th Minuit bought from the Indians, for "a kettle and other trifles," all the land from the Christina down to Bombay Hook and the men began building a stockade enclosing two log houses for the garrison and their supplies. Minuit left with the two vessels in June, but the 23 soldiers and their officers remained. Land was cleared, barley and wheat were sown, corn was planted, a supply of fish, venison and other game was salted and smoked and the little colony settled itself for a long stay.

Two full years passed before these lonely settlers had any news from home. It was not until April 1640, that "Kalmar Nyckel" again appeared in the Delaware. She brought a few new colonists, domestic animals, supplies and a governor, a Dutchman, Peter Hollandaer, for the colony which they had named New Sweden; also a clergyman, Rev. Reorus Torkillus. In October 1641, the old "Kalmar Nyckel" and the ship "Charitas" brought the third expedition, 35 more colonists, more supplies, animals and farming tools. The colony was now doing well.

In February 1643, two new ships came over. The most important new arrival then was a new governor, Lieut. Col. Johan Printz. In this man's hands for the next ten

years rested the entire government of the province of New Sweden, whose boundaries now included the whole west shore of the Delaware River and Bay from Sankikan (Trenton) to Cape Henlopen and the east shore from Raccoon Creek to Cape May.

Printz was a huge man. He is said to have weighed 400 pounds. He was also a vigorous, headstrong, masterful person, endowed with intelligence, shrewdness, administrative ability and personal bravery. He began at once to establish his authority over his territory, building a fort on the Jersey shore near Salem, and blockhouses at the mouth of the Schuylkill and Upland (Chester). On Tinicum Island he built a fort and an official residence for himself. Fort Christina was rebuilt and made the principal storehouse. It was also the only port of entry to which all ships came during the whole existence of New Sweden as a province of old Sweden.

The Dutch had been first on the River, as traders with the Indians rather than as settlers. They now saw their claims to ownership of its shores flouted. Time and again they sought to intrude, only to be affronted and driven off by this domineering Swede. The English, also claiming the territory by virtue of John Cabot's discovery of the mainland in America in 1497, came down more than once from New England and attempted settlement, but met with the same relentless and effective opposition. During his whole reign as practically absolute monarch of New Sweden, Printz was in conflict with these two other nations, much stronger in their American colonies than was he.

By the year 1645, by new arrivals, the population of the colony had grown to 98 men and a few women and children, but three years later there were but 79 men, the decrease resulting from death, the return home of a number and but few new arrivals. An expedition sent out from Sweden in 1649 met with shipwreck in the West Indies and none of its company reached the colony.

With this handful of men Printz could not expect to cope successfully with the equally vigorous and headstrong governor of the Dutch colony in New Amsterdam, Pieter Stuyvesant, if the Dutchman made a determined effort to establish himself on the Delaware, which he did.

In 1653 Stuyvesant came down from the north with an expedition of 11 ships and 120 soldiers and built himself a fort, called Casimir, where New Castle now stands, garrisoned it and went back home. Printz could do nothing but bite his nails in chagrin. He was tired of his new job by now. Two or three times he had tried to resign only to have Queen Christina tell him she needed him where he was. It was a hard task she set him, and she gave him no valid support. Between the years 1648 and 1653 no new expedition arrived, no news came from home. True, one had been dispatched in 1649; but, as has been stated, it never arrived at Fort Christina, nor had Printz any news of it. So for five years he could feel only that he was abandoned by the home government. No one could blame

# ON THE DELAWARE . . .

him for his decision in 1653 to give up his job. In October of that year he took ship at New Amsterdam for a homeward journey. The irony of the situation lies in the fact that at that very time the greatest expedition, in number of new colonists and bulk of supplies, was preparing to set out from Gothenburg for New Sweden.

Johan Rising was in command, with orders to act as assistant to Printz, if he was still there, or, if he had left, to take over the governorship. With him in two ships, the "Gyllene Haj" and the "Orn," were over 300 new settlers and soldiers. They sailed from Sweden in February 1655, and it was May 1655, 107 days out from their home-port, when they entered the Delaware. The voyage had been really dreadful. Beseet by storms, driven from their course and all through the last two months ravaged by a plague that killed over a hundred of their number, their condition was pitiful beyond measure. Yet Rising had sufficient resolution to stop opposite Fort Casimir on his way up the River and, backed only by a company of plague-ridden scarecrows, to demand the fort's surrender. Fortunately the garrison of Casimir comprised only 12 soldiers and, most potent fact of all, though they had cannon and muskets, they entirely lacked powder. The fort was surrendered on demand, the Swedish flag hoisted above it and it was re-named Fort Trefaldighet (Trinity).

Landing his woe-begone ship's company at Christina, where good food and fresh water soon recruited their strengths, Rising found himself governor over a colony of 368 souls. New living quarters were needed and now the first real town came into being, close behind the fort. Regular streets, crossing at right angles, were surveyed and laid out and houses built. It was called Christinahamn. This may be considered the infant City of Wilmington, though, of course, the settlement 15 years earlier was its earliest beginning.

With this considerable addition to its population, backed by the extensive clearings already made, the farms already established and fostered by new clearings and new farms soon under way, it seemed that New Sweden was a lusty child, rid of its swad-

dling clothes and destined for a vigorous manhood. But the Dutch had not said their last word in the matter.

In 1655, Governor Stuyvesant, of New Amsterdam, under orders from his home government in old Amsterdam, undertook to recover his lost ground on the River and to do even more. The Swedish government there was to be broken and the Dutch flag to fly over all.

In September of that year a truly formidable armament appeared opposite old Fort Casimir. Seven ships of war, varying in size from the great flagship "Waegh" to the little flyboat "Liefde," with about 350 fighting men, confronted the commander of the fort, Lieut. Sven Skute and his garrison of 25 or 30. Resistance was hopeless and useless. The fort was given up.

At Christina Governor Rising declined immediate surrender. But, when Stuyvesant had established batteries on land and warships in the river, completely surrounding the fort, and had maintained a ten-day siege, meanwhile burning Christinahamn and ravaging the farms round about, Rising realized his helplessness and he, too, capitulated. For the next nine years the Dutch ruled all that had been New Sweden. But the Swedes remained. Tilling their farms, clearing more ground for more extended agriculture, raising large families and all working early and late, the Swedes persisted. Under Swedish, Dutch or English government, the Swedes were there to stay and no one ever did dislodge them.



*Holy Trinity Church, popularly known as "Old Swedes." Services in it have been held continuously since its erection in 1698.*