

Journal of the Association of Philippe du Trieux Descendants

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President's Note

Dear Members,

Already into March! Once again, the Journal is late this quarter due to a lot of circumstances. A bad case of the norovirus and finally getting a new computer and trying to wean from my nine year old computer that is on life support.

*Member Billy Ford sent an interesting article included in this issue. Thank you, Billy, you are always so kind and interested in our Association. The article is from the **New York Times**. 2024 will be the 400th anniversary of the founding of New Amsterdam. I'm personally offended that we all have not received an invitation to the ceremony! Oh, well, out-of-sight out-of-mind! It might be a great idea to research a way we can tap into the celebration. We will see. Suggestions welcome!*

We who keep the Association going are very pleased that our new website is leading to a great many inquiries and new memberships. That was our goal. You can help by checking into it often. Under the "contact us" dropdown, there is a form for you to tell us about your genealogy stories or about anything you think will be of interest. It is also a place that you can ask questions and pay your dues thru PayPal if you have an account. The historian Kim, treasurer Jan, and president Karen, will all receive your posts. We will see that your post is taken care of. I hope this issue finds you well.

Karen

Karen L. Vaina, President & Journal Editor
Association of Philippe du Trieux Descendants



www.philippedutrieux.com
Association of Philippe du trieux Descendants

Women's History Month

Dutch Colonial Women Lose Rights After English Takeover

New York State bears the imprint of both its Dutch and English colonial past. Despite the conquest of New Netherland by the English in 1664, the impact of Dutch culture and religion, as well as the influence of New Netherlands' most powerful families, could still be felt centuries later. Likewise, Dutch legal traditions endured in parts of colonial New York for nearly a century following the English take-over.



Gradually, the English replaced Dutch laws with practices rooted in English common law and English colonial experiences in North America. Women were among those most profoundly affected by changes in the legal system.

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Get Ready! New York Soon to Celebrate Incorporation

Give or take a few decades



Member Billy Ford found this article in the New York Times and thought it would be of interest to the Association. But before we delve into the article itself, hopefully he will forgive me, he wrote an amusing note to us introducing the article:

"New Amsterdam—now New York City—was incorporated in 1653. I had to look that up. A city being incorporated in 1653 when it existed from 1624 thru 1664? What the heck? But it seems that the European custom was to "incorporate" municipal rights to an area, distinguishing it from the countryside. Guess that Stuyvesant and his Dutch West India cronies waited a tad before separating urban from rural.

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BTW old "Pegleg" has a big plaque on a church wall in Manhattan—a place called the Bowery. When I was a kid there were two bars there that served minors. It was sort of a custom to take your last beer outside to the plaque and have a beer with Peter before getting on the subway. So, Pete's remains and I spent some time together toasting his memory.

There is no mention of "incorporated" New Amsterdam being called the "big apple" or any info as to if it "ever slept." No mention of knishes, bagels or a Nathans hot dog. No rent control. Are we sure it is the same place? When I grew up Brooklyn, we considered NYC to be Manhattan only. If anyone asked, we never said that we were from NYC — always the borough — we were from Brook-a-lyn where the guys were good-look-a-lyn, da Bronx, Queens, etc. Manhattan was the city. You went to Manhattan to see tourists, a play, or the Polo Grounds to see a baseball game. We rode the ferry for a nickel (round trip!) -- Billy Ford

Truaxes Unite! Do we own NYC?

The answer to the question is no!



If you bought the 1664 deed — officially, a charter laying claim to a great deal of land — you would still not own Manhattan.

If you could turn the calendar back 359 years, you would have controlled it — and territory as far north as Maine, said Richard Austin, the global head of books and manuscripts at Sotheby's. The auction house planned to sell the charter and two later documents in January. But the owner would have been the Duke of York, later King James II. And you probably would have needed soldiers. Richard Nicolls, whom the duke sent to carry out the takeover from the Dutch, arrived with nearly 2,000 "fighting men," according to "Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898." Nicolls's stated mission was to win the "entyre submission and obedience" of New Amsterdam, whose residents became New Yorkers after Nicolls changed the second word in the town's name to honor— guess which duke.



Deed from Sothebys/
painting from Manhattan Museum

The charter directed "the Inhabitants of the said Lands, Islands & Places" in New Netherland to "Give Obedience" to Nicolls, but ownership remained firmly in royal hands. The duke "saw immediately that the jewel in North America was New York because of the trading the Dutch had been doing," Austin said. "It was already a commercial melting pot. This is why he wanted the English to control Manhattan."

Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, in "Gotham," added an important strategic reason: Controlling New Amsterdam "would also give Britain an invaluable base of operations against the French in Canada and their Indian allies."

Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch governor, tried to resist but lacked the personnel and support. More than 90 Dutch colonists, including his own 17-year-old son, signed a petition endorsing the line of least resistance against the British. And the Duke of York intended Nicolls to be magnanimous, all things considered. Nicolls's orders included preserving the colonists' rights to property and religious freedom. The duke signed the two other documents in the Sotheby's sale in 1674, two years after a Dutch squadron retook New York during an Anglo-Dutch war. But the Dutch handed New York back to the English when the war ended, and the duke appointed Major Edmund Andros as the colonial governor.

Andros "seemed to share James's idea that the trade that would happen out of Manhattan would be an extraordinary part of the English empire," Austin said. It was Andros who made English the official language of the courts, although proceedings in areas where Dutch was dominant were also recorded in that language, and the English system of jury trials became the norm.

Andros tangled with colonial leaders in Connecticut and Massachusetts and with political opponents in New York, who maintained that he gave Dutch merchants preferred treatment. Andros lost his job, but not the royals' confidence. He went on to spend three years as governor of New England and, after James's death in 1688, six years as governor of Virginia and one as governor of Maryland. "We're New York," Austin said. "It was probably the toughest place to rule." Andros apparently hung on to the three documents, as did his descendants until they sold them in 1977, Austin said. The buyer was David Karpeles, a collector who had amassed a huge collection of historical documents and opened museums around the United States before his death last year at age 85. Austin said Karpeles bought the three documents for about £10,000, the equivalent of \$68,008 in today's dollars.

— from New York Times, January 23, 2023

Under Dutch law women could:

- ▲ retain control over property they possessed prior to marriage
- ▲ buy and sell property
- ▲ make contracts including ante-nuptial agreements,
- ▲ write wills, and appear in court on their own behalf.
- ▲ inherit at least half of the marital estate, when widowed, with the remaining portion being divided equally among children regardless of gender.

Consequently, both single and married women in New Netherland found opportunities for economic independence and prosperity.

Under new English law, women surrendered control over property upon marriage and could not enter into contracts, write wills, or initiate legal action without consent or participation of their husbands. A widow's legal inheritance was limited cases to one-third of the marital estate and most fathers favored sons over daughters in wills involving real property. Gradually, English laws affecting property began to significantly curtail the participation of women in business and trade. In 1710, the colonial assembly equated women with minors and those "not of sound mind" in an act specifying requirements for obtaining legal title to land. It was not until more than seven decades after independence that New York State returned some of the rights that women had enjoyed under Dutch rule.

-From **History of American Women**



Note: Many of us will remember that women could not have a credit card in their name until 1974.

WHAT ARE WE?*

The Truax name is such an unusual one, and its origins so complex, that there have been many answers proposed to this question over the years. Even knowing the birthplace of our progenitor, Philippe du Trieux, has done little to clear up the question of "What are we?" The problem is that there are many answers that could be considered "correct", so I will try to clear up some of the confusion.

We all know that Philippe du Trieux was born in Roubaix, France around 1588. This would seem to indicate that he was French, except for one small problem: in 1588, Roubaix was not part of France - it was part of the Lower Netherlands (Flanders). Since Flanders is part of modern-day Belgium, this would seem to make him Belgian. However, Belgium as a country didn't really exist at the time. It was part of the Netherlands, which would make Philippe Dutch. To further complicate matters, the whole area was under Spanish control at the time, so one could even argue that Philippe was Spanish! Perhaps the most accurate summary of Philippe's cultural and ethnic identity is to say that he was a Walloon. The Walloons were (and are) a French-speaking, largely Protestant group who are said to be descended from the original Celtic tribes of the region, the Belgae. But still, it's hard to tell someone that your family is Walloon. When asked, I usually tell people that we're Belgian, but really you can take your pick and still be right.

We aren't the first Truaxs to experience confusion over our family origins - our ancestors seem to have as well. One of the nice things about Canadian census records is that instead of (or in addition to) asking about 'race', they often ask about 'ethnic origin', and the answers given by the various Truaxs over the years can be quite interesting. In the 1871 census, for example, there were 17 Truax head of households or strays in Ontario. The reported ethnic breakdown was: 6 Dutch, 4 French, 4 English, 4 German, 2 Irish, and 1 Scott. Many of these folks couldn't seem to decide, either - in at least three cases, the first and sometimes second responses were scratched out and replaced by another. In one instance, the person originally said he was Canadian, but this was apparently unacceptable to the census taker.

While some of the confusion can be attributed to adopting the ethnic identity of the mother's line, some of the responses can be downright bizarre.

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Officers of the Association

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In 1901, my own great grandfather, Albert Truax, said he was "Pennsylvania Dutch" which is about the only thing that he wasn't. And over the years, I have heard from folks who were told by their families that the Truaxes were anything from Norwegian to Mohawk Indian (True-Ax?)

So when someone asks you "What are the Truaxes?" don't feel bad if you can't give them a simple one-word answer. We are much more interesting than that!

*****This wonderful article was written by a member awhile ago and unfortunately we cannot recall who sent it. If you are the author, please contact me so that I can give you due credit.**



Island at the Center of the World Review by Jan Hagemester

BOOKS TO CONSIDER

The book "Island at the Center of the World" by Russell Shorto was recently recommended to me by a genealogy friend who had found the name of our ancestor Philippe duTrieux (spelled in the book as "Philip De Truy". Philippe was the "court messenger" or sheriff on a mission to alert members of Peter Stuyvesant's inner circle of a critical meeting.

This book is the story of how Manhattan (and America) were discovered and populated by the Dutch as New Amsterdam. The information contained in the book is a fascinating look at how our country's origins begin with the Dutch instead of England as many surmise. It details how so many of our traditions were born in this Dutch society.

Author Shorto has worked extensively with Charles Gehring, who for many years has been engaged in translating Dutch records regarding the beginnings of this society. The book is based on facts and follows the time that the Dutch colony existed and its interactions with the natives and with efforts from foreign powers to overtake the colony.

This is a fact-filled and very informative and entertaining book. It is well written and well researched. Many facts and photographs are included. If you're interested in the birth of the America that we now know, I'd recommend this book to you.

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DUES!!

Just a friendly reminder that March is the time to pay your \$15 dues. If you joined after June 2022, then you are good thru this year. We strive to keep our dues as low as possible.

We really appreciate it this year as the new website has taken a bite out of the Association's savings. The officers are all volunteers and only receive reimbursement for monthly website fees, program fees, paper mailing and stamp expenses. If as members you have a question about this, please do not hesitate to call me or Jan.