

THE DUTCH AT NEW NETHERLANDS

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In 1609, when Englishman Henry Hudson first sailed the river later named for him he triggered a series of events eventually resulting in a colonial province, established on behalf of the recently independent country of the Netherlands. This colony named Nieuw-Nederland would eventually stretch from southern Delaware to eastern New York. The Netherlands had recently thrown off the yoke of its Spanish imperial overlords and was entering a century of power based on global trade, naval power and liberty. Culturally, the Dutch sat on the north-south border of the beer-wine line as well as the Catholic-Protestant divide. They controlled the Baltic shipping trade and were extending their reach from Indonesia to the Caribbean building an empire that will last until the mid-1900s.

Nieuw-Nederland was first settled in 1624 to serve as the North American center of a global Dutch empire. It fell first under the direct control of the national corporation called the West India Company (WIC) and then, after failure, under individual landlords called patroons. Attempts at settlement extended from the Connecticut River down to the Delaware but the core of the colony was on the Hudson. The enterprise had two aspects which were not always in harmony with each other. On the one hand, the WIC had a goal of trading for raw goods such as furs and minerals while the patroons had a greater interest in creating an agricultural colony. In the end, the latter won out as both goals were achieved through the export of the huge volume of wheat the colony came to produce.

The most successful of the settlements in the young colony sat roughly 150 miles north of the mouth of the Hudson River, just south of where it is joined by its

tributary the Mohawk River at what is now Albany, New York. The Mohawk nation formed an alliance with the colonial Dutch which provided peace locally as well as secure access to the hinterland of the continent that rivalled other routes controlled by France and Spain. Fort Orange was built where the rivers met as a small outpost and trading site in 1624. The fort - and all of its 30 inhabitants - fell under the control of the WIC appointed Director-General of the New Netherland Colony. Seven men held that office from 1624 to 1664. Surrounding the fort on all side, for 24 square miles, was the patroonship of Rennselaerwijck, of which all its inhabitants, materials and businesses fell under the authority of one man, Kiliaen van Rennselaer.

By the early 1630s, van Rennselaer made good on his promise and the large groups of Dutch settlers began traveling up the Hudson and with their arrival tension between WIC Director-General and patroon grew due in large part to different goals and uncertain authority. During the Director-generalship of the peglegged Petrus Stuyvesant in the 1640s nearly 100 'illegal' structures had popped up around the fort. Stuyvesant at first threatened to destroy the shanty town. Kiliaen van Rennselaer having since died in 1643 and replaced by his son Johan living in Amsterdam, was no longer a threat to his power. Instead, Stuyvesant decided to establish a permanent village. The center of this new settlement would lie nearly a half mile north of the fort, at the intersection of what Stuyvesant would name Jonkers and Haendlers Street. That village-named Beverwijck-and those two streets, now State and Broadway in downtown Albany, would become a center of the North American brewing world for well over 200 years.

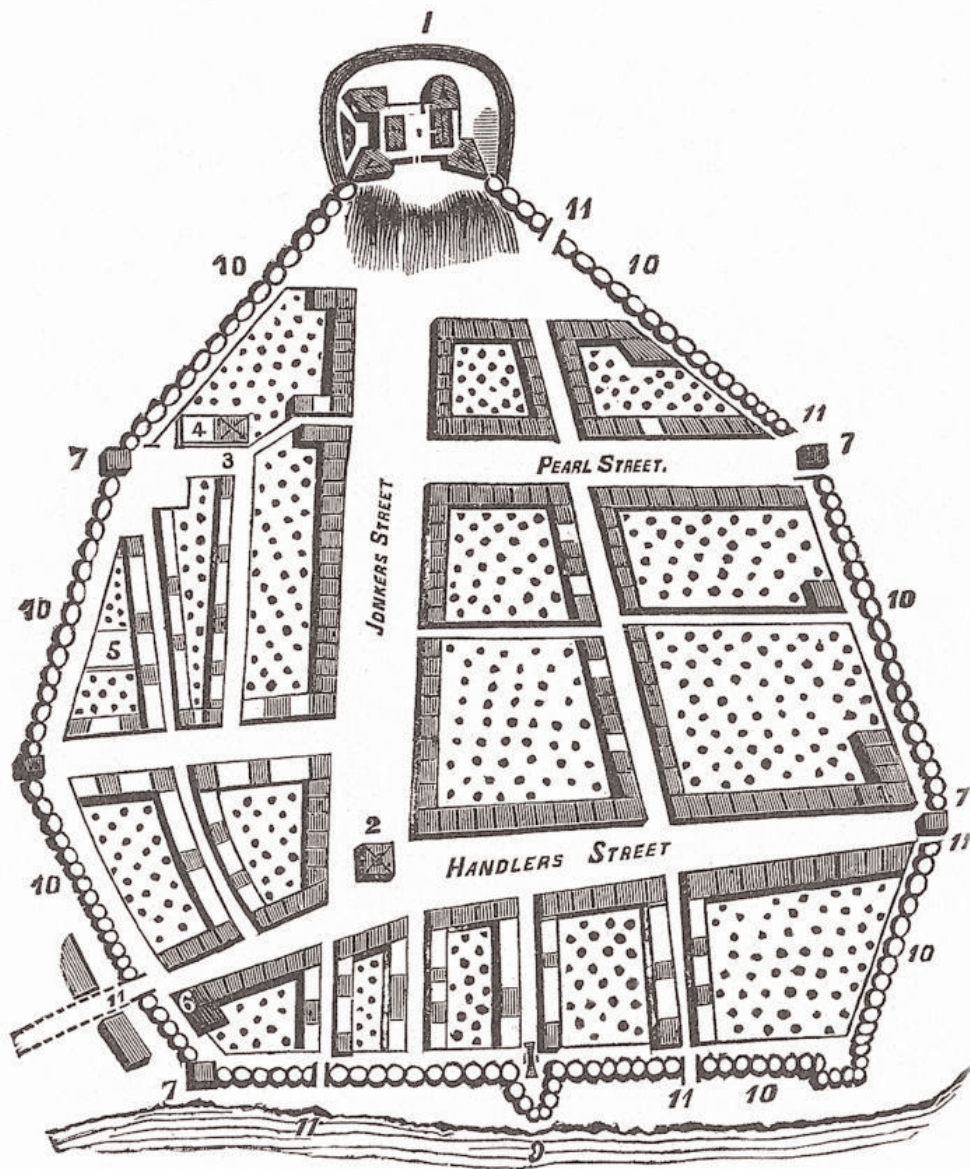


Figure 1. Albany from the 1690s. The map is a recreation of John Millers original from 1695, reprinted in Albany's Bi-Centennial by John Papp in 1886.

The key for the map is as follows:

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| 1. Fort of Albany (aka Fort Frederick) | 7. Block houses |
| 2. Old Dutch Church | 8. [Apparently not used] |
| 3. Dutch Lutheran Church | 9. Great gun to clear a galley |
| 4. Burial ground | 10. The Stockade |
| 5. Dutch burial ground | 11. Gates of the city (six total) |
| 6. Stadt Huys (City Hall) | |

The pleasures and freedoms of Dutch life in the Hudson Valley in the mid-1600s were described in the journal of Englishman Daniel Denton who included observations on the role of beer in Dutch culture:

Here those which Fortune hath frowned upon in England, to deny them an inheritance amongst their brethren, or such as by their utmost labors can scarcely procure a living-I say such may procure here inheritances of lands and possessions, stock themselves with all sorts of cattle, enjoy the benefit of them whilst they live, and leave them to the benefit of their children when they die. Here you need not trouble the shambles for meat, nor bakers and brewers for beer and bread, nor run to a linen-draper for a supply, everyone making their own linen and a great part of their woolen cloth for their ordinary wearing.

The distinction between commercial brewing and household production was clear. Brewing capacity was subject to local regulation over the retail sale of beer but 'private individuals were allowed the privilege to brew whatever quantity of beer they might require for consumption in their own families'. The reason was perhaps due to the abundance of local ingredients. Grain crops - and wheat in particular - were so plentiful there were usually surpluses for home malting. Hops grew wild in the woods.

By the late 1640s, brewing in Beverwijck was a significant industry. In 1648 an ordinance was passed to regulate the sale of beer, wine and brandy within the whole of the colony. Measures were taken to prevent fights and an establish operating hours for tap houses on the sabbath. Among these regulations was also a rule enforcing the separation of the innkeeper - or 'tapper' - from the brewer. Brewers were forbidden to tap their own beer, and the tappers were not allowed to brew. The law was applied against Swedish-born, Pieter Bronck - the younger brother of Jonas Bronck, for whom the New York City borough of The Bronx is named - who was forbidden to tap beer in 1655. A brewer by trade, Bronck, and his wife, also ran a tavern in Beverwijck. This prohibition caused Bronck significant monetary loss. A number of attempts to sell his brewery failed, and the Swede remained in debt until he finally sold it and its lot to Jacob Hevick in 1661.

Due to distance and local control, such regulations were not established by the ruling parties back in the

Netherlands but rather were passed within the local settlement. As masters of an industrial process, brewers became and needed to be wealthy. And with wealth came power. Like many elements of Beverwijck culture, customs from the Dutch Republic were brought to New Netherlands. One of these customs was the establishment of a vroedschap, a city council made up of richest men in the city. From its ranks the colony's magistrates were chosen. Goosen Gerritsz van Schaick was one of these early brewers who serves on council and also as a magistrate. The capacity to secure the commercial interests of established brewers were assured.

In August of 1664 the growing might of the English Royal Navy made itself known to Dutch residents off the island of Manhattan when four frigates sailed into the harbor and demanded the surrender of the entire colony. With that, Director-General of New Netherlands Pieter Stuyvesant acquiesced, and Dutch New Amsterdam became British New York. The colony would fall back into Dutch hands briefly in 1673 but by 1674 it was back under British control where it would stay for a century.

Beverwijck was re-named Albany in honor of Prince James the Duke of Albany, later James II of England, and its street names were anglicized-Jonkers Street became State Street, Handlers Street became Market Street (and later Broadway.) With the English rule came English law and in the Duke of York's Laws of 1665 special provisions for brewing were set out:

That no person whatsoever shall henceforth undertake the Calling or work of Brewing Beere for Sale, but only such as are known to have Sufficient Skill and knowledge in the art or Mystery of a Brewer, That if any undertake for victualling of Ships or other Vessels or Master or owner of any such Vessels or any other person shall make it appear that any Beer bought of any person within this Government do prove unfit, unwholesome and useless for their supply, either through the insufficiency of the Mault or Brewing or unwholesome Cask, the Person wronged thereby, shall be and is hereby enabled to recover equal & Sufficient damage by Action against that Person that put the Beer to Sale.

Cultural conflict arose with the British takeover. The Dutch became the butt English jokes implying that New Netherlanders were cheap and lazy. Some New Netherlanders were actually sold into slavery and sent to



Figure 2. Although painted in the Netherlands and completed in 1680, Tavern Interior, by Adrian van Ostade, is also representative of the boisterous atmosphere in the 17th-century taverns of New Netherlands and Beverwijck, as well.

the southern British colonies in Virginia and the Carolinas. However, one last negotiation by Stuyvesant made a huge difference to those Dutch living in the Hudson valley. Article VII of the Articles of Transfer protected their religious freedom. While the British almost everywhere else in the colony ignored those freedoms granted, in Albany at the northern most end of the Hudson River, it secured their cultural autonomy. This was further enhanced when, in 1686, the British

granted Albany its own municipal charter that provided local control over a wide range of matters including specifically the sale of beer and the operation of taverns. Leading citizens associated with brewing families like the Van Schiacks or the Gansevoorts were granted positions under the new local government.

These cornerstones of religious freedom and autonomy allowed the Dutch Reform Church to continue to oper-

ate in the colony and the leading brewing families to continue to participate in both government and commercial success - all conducted mainly in Dutch. Language affects culture - had the British quelled the Dutch church, New York may have adopted British culture sooner, but since they did not, Dutch culture thrived well into the second half of the 18th century. As will be discussed in future articles in this series, this unique culture included forms of brewing with local products and techniques that guided Albany's brewing history into the 1700s and for at least the next 200 years.

This is the first in a series of articles by Craig Gravina and Alan McLeod on factors that influenced the development of brewing in Albany, New York in the 1600s. They are the authors of a forthcoming book to be published by The History Press in the summer of 2014 as well as the founders of The Albany Ale Project. More information on the history of brewing in Albany can also be found at www.albanyaleproject.com. In this article the cultural and political conditions underlying the beginnings of brewing in Albany are described.

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