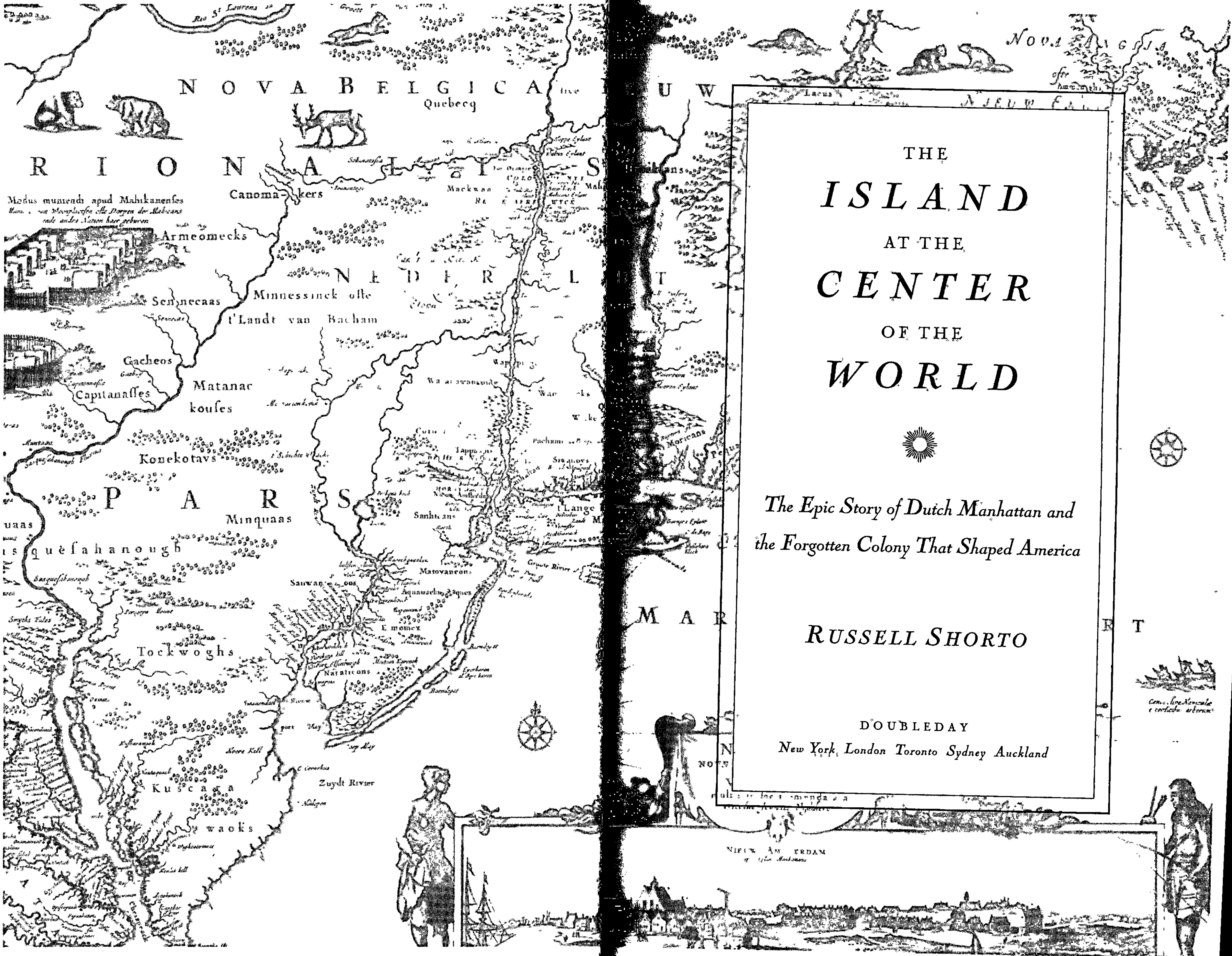
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MAR
NIEUW AMSTERDAM

THE
ISLAND
AT THE
CENTER
OF THE
WORLD

The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America

RUSSELL SHORTO

DOUBLEDAY
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Prologue

THE MISSING FLOOR

If you were to step inside an elevator in the lobby of the New York State Library in Albany, you would discover that, although the building has eleven floors, there is no button marked eight. To get to the eighth floor, which is closed to the public, you ride to seven, walk through a security door, state your business to a librarian at the desk, then go into another elevator and ride up one more flight.

As you pass shelves of quietly moldering books and periodicals—the budgets of the state of Kansas going back to 1923, the Australian census, the complete bound series of *Northern Miner*—you may be greeted by the sound of German opera coming from a small room at the southeast corner. Peering around the doorway, you would probably find a rather bearish-looking man hunched over a desk, perhaps squinting through an antique jeweler's loupe. The hiddenness of the location is an apt metaphor for the work going on here. What Dr. Charles Gehring is studying with such attention may be one of several thousand artifacts in his care—artifacts that, once they give up their secrets through his efforts, breathe life into a moment of history that has been largely ignored for three centuries.

This book tells the story of that moment in time. It is a story of high adventure set during the age of exploration—when Francis Drake, Henry Hudson, and Captain John Smith were expanding the boundaries of the world, and Shakespeare, Rembrandt, Galileo, Descartes, Mercator, Vermeer, Harvey, and Bacon were revolutionizing human thought and expression. It is a distinctly European tale, but also a vital piece of America's beginnings. It is the story of one of the original European colonies on America's shores, a colony that was eventually swallowed up by the others.

At the book's center is an island—a slender wilderness island at the edge of the known world. As the European powers sent off their navies and adventurer-businessmen to roam the seas in history's first truly global era, this island would become a fulcrum in the international power struggle, the key to control of a continent and a new world. This account encompasses the kings and generals who plotted for control of this piece of property, but at the story's heart is a humbler assemblage: a band of explorers, entrepreneurs, pirates, prostitutes, and assorted scalawags from different parts of Europe who sought riches on this wilderness island. Together, this unlikely group formed a new society. They were the first New Yorkers, the original European inhabitants of the island of Manhattan.

We are used to thinking of American beginnings as involving thirteen English colonies—to thinking of American history as an English root onto which, over time, the cultures of many other nations were grafted to create a new species of society that has become a multiethnic model for progressive societies around the world. But that isn't true. To talk of the thirteen original English colonies is to ignore another European colony, the one centered on Manhattan, which predated New York and whose history was all but erased when the English took it over.

The settlement in question occupied the area between the newly forming English territories of Virginia and New England. It extended roughly from present-day Albany, New York, in the north to Delaware Bay in the south, comprising all or parts of what became New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. It was founded by the Dutch, who called it New Netherland, but half of its residents were from elsewhere. Its capital was a tiny collection of rough buildings perched on the edge of a limitless wilderness, but its muddy lanes and waterfront were prowled by a Babel of peoples—Norwegians, Germans, Italians, Jews, Africans (slaves and free), Walloons, Bohemians, Munsees, Montauks, Mohawks, and many others—all living on the rim of empire, struggling to find a way of being together, searching for a balance between chaos and order, liberty and oppression. Pirates, prostitutes, smugglers, and business sharks held sway in it. It was *Manhattan,* in other words, right from the start: a place unlike any other, either in the North American colonies or anywhere else.

Because of its geography, its population, and the fact that it was under the control of the Dutch (even then its parent city, Amsterdam, was the most

liberal in Europe), this island city would become the first multiethnic, upwardly mobile society on America's shores, a prototype of the kind of society that would be duplicated throughout the country and around the world. It was no coincidence that on September 11, 2001, those who wished to make a symbolic attack on the center of American power chose the World Trade Center as their target. If what made America great was its ingenious openness to different cultures, then the small triangle of land at the southern tip of Manhattan Island is the New World birthplace of that idea, the spot where it first took shape. Many people—whether they live in the heartland or on Fifth Avenue—like to think of New York City as so wild and extreme in its cultural fusion that it's an anomaly in the United States, almost a foreign entity. This book offers an alternative view: that beneath the level of myth and politics and high ideals, down where real people live and interact, Manhattan is where America began.

The original European colony centered on Manhattan came to an end when England took it over in 1664, renaming it New York after James, the Duke of York, brother of King Charles II, and folding it into its other American colonies. As far as the earliest American historians were concerned, that date marked the true beginning of the history of the region. The Dutch-led colony was almost immediately considered inconsequential. When the time came to memorialize national origins, the English Pilgrims and Puritans of New England provided a better model. The Pilgrims' story was simpler, less messy, and had fewer pirates and prostitutes to explain away. It was easy enough to overlook the fact that the Puritans' flight to American shores to escape religious persecution led them, once established, to institute a brutally intolerant regime, a grim theocratic monoculture about as far removed as one can imagine from what the country was to become.

The few early books written about the Dutch settlement had a brackish odor—appropriately, since even their authors viewed the colony as a backwater, cut off from the main current of history. Washington Irving's "Knickerbocker" history of New York—a historical burlesque never intended by its author to be taken as fact—muddied any attempt to understand what had actually gone on in the Manhattan-based settlement. The colony was reduced by popular culture to a few random, floating facts: that it was once ruled by an ornery peg-legged governor and, most infamously, that the Dutch bought the island from the Indians for twenty-four-dollars' worth of household goods. Anyone who wondered about it beyond that may have surmised that the colony was too inept to keep records. As one historian put it, "Original sources of information concerning the early Dutch settlers of Manhattan Island are neither many nor rich [for] . . . the Dutch wrote very little, and on the whole their records are meager."

Skip ahead, then, to a day in 1973, when a thirty-five-year-old scholar named Charles Gehring is led into a vault in the New York State Library in Albany and shown something that delights his eye as fully as a chest of emeralds would a pirate's. Gehring, a specialist in the Dutch language of the seventeenth century (an obscure topic in anyone's estimation), had just completed his doctoral dissertation. He was casting about for a relevant job, which he knew wouldn't be easy to find, when fate smiled on him. Some years earlier, Peter Christoph, curator of historical manuscripts at the library, had come across a vast collection of charred, mold-stippled papers stored in the archives. He knew what they were and that they comprised a vast resource for American prehistory. They had survived wars, fire, flooding, and centuries of neglect. Remarkably, he doubted he would be able to bring them into the light of day. There was little interest in what was still considered an odd backroad of history. He couldn't come up with funds to hire a translator. Besides that, few people in the world could decipher the writings.

Christoph eventually came in contact with an influential American of Dutch descent, a retired brigadier general with the excellent name of Cortlandt van Rensselaer Schuyler. Gen. Schuyler had recently overseen the building in Albany of Empire State Plaza, the central state government complex, for his friend, Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Schuyler put in a call to Rockefeller, who was by now out of office and about to be tapped by Gerald Ford as his vice president. Rockefeller made a few telephone calls, and a small amount of money was made available to begin the project. Christoph called Gehring and told him he had a job. So it was that while the nation was recovering from the midlife crisis of Watergate, a window onto the period of its birth began to open.

What Charles Gehring received into his care in 1974 was twelve thousand sheets of rag paper covered with the crabbed, loopy script of seventeenth-century Dutch, which to the untutored eye looks something like a cross between our Roman letters and Arabic or Thai—writing largely indecipherable today even to modern Dutch speakers. On these pages, in words written three hundred and fifty years ago in ink that has now partially faded into the brown of the decaying paper, an improbable gathering of Dutch, French, German, Swedish, Jewish, Polish, Danish, African, American Indian, and English characters comes to life. This repository of letters, deeds, wills, journal entries, council minutes, and court proceedings comprises the official records of the settlement that grew up following Henry Hudson's 1609 voyage up the river that bears his name. Here, in their own words, were the first Manhattanites. Deciphering and translating the documents, making them available to history, Dr. Gehring knew, was the task of a lifetime.

Twenty-six years later, Charles Gehring, now a sixty-one-year-old grandfather with a wry grin and a soothing, carmelly baritone, was still at it when I met him in 2000. He had produced sixteen volumes of translation, and had several more to go. For a long time he had labored in isolation, the "missing floor" of the state library building where he works serving as a nice metaphor for the way history has overlooked the Dutch period. But within the past several years, as the work has achieved a critical mass, Dr. Gehring and his collection of translations have become the center of a modest renaissance of scholarly interest in this colony. As I write, historians are drafting doctoral dissertations on the material and educational organizations are creating teaching guides for bringing the Dutch settlement into accounts of American colonial history.

Dr. Gehring is not the first to have attempted a translation of this archive. In fact, the long, bedraggled history of the records of the colony mirrors history's treatment of the colony itself. From early on, people recognized the importance of these documents. In 1801 a committee headed by none other than Aaron Burr declared that "measures ought to be taken to procure a translation," but none were. In the 1820s a half-blind Dutchman with a shaky command of English came up with a massively flawed longhand translation—which then burned up in a 1911 fire that destroyed the state library. In the early twentieth century a highly skilled translator undertook to translate the whole corpus only to see two years' worth of labor burn up in the same fire. He suffered a nervous breakdown and eventually abandoned the task.

Many of the more significant political documents of the colony were translated in the nineteenth century. These became part of the historical record, but without the rest—the letters and journals and court cases about marital strife, business failures, cutlass fights, traders loading sloops with tobacco and furs, neighbors stealing each others' pigs—in short, without the stuff from which social history is written, this veneer of political documentation only reinforced the image of the colony as wobbly and inconsequential. Dr. Gehring's work corrects that image, and changes the picture of American beginnings. Thanks to his work, historians are now realizing that, by the last two decades of its existence, the Dutch colony centered on Manhattan had become a vibrant, viable society—so much so that when the English took over Manhattan they kept its unusually free-form structures, ensuring that the features of the earlier settlement would live on.

The idea of a Dutch contribution to American history seems novel at first, but that is because early American history was written by Englishmen, who, throughout the seventeenth century, were locked in mortal combat with the Dutch. Looked at another way, however, the connection makes perfectly good sense. It has long been recognized that the Dutch Republic in the 1600s was the most progressive and culturally diverse society in Europe. As Bertrand Russell once wrote, regarding its impact on intellectual history, "It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of Holland in the seventeenth century, as the one country where there was freedom of speculation." The Netherlands of this time was the melting pot of Europe. The Dutch Republic's policy of tolerance made it a haven for everyone from Descartes and John Locke to exiled English royalty to peasants from across Europe. When this society founded a colony based on Manhattan Island, that colony had the same features of tolerance, openness, and free trade that existed in the home country. Those features helped make New York unique, and, in time, influenced America in some elemental ways. How that happened is what this book is about.

*

I CAME TO this subject more or less by walking into it. I was living in the East Village of Manhattan, a neighborhood that has long been known as an artistic and countercultural center, a place famous for its nightlife and ethnic restaurants. But three hundred and fifty years earlier it was an important part of the unkempt Atlantic Rim port of New Amsterdam. I often took my young daughter around the corner from our apartment building to the church of St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery, where she would run around under the sycamores in the churchyard and I would study the faded faces of the tombstones of some of the city's earliest families. The most notable tomb in the yard—actually it is built into the side of the church—is that of Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch colony's most famous resident. In the mid-seventeenth century this area was forest and meadow being cleared and planted as Bouwerie (or farm) Number One: the largest homestead on the island, and the one Stuyvesant claimed for himself. St. Mark's is built near the site of his family chapel, in which he was buried. Throughout the nineteenth century New Yorkers insisted that the church was haunted by the old man's ghost—that at night you could hear the echoed clopping of his wooden leg as he paced its aisles, eternally ill at ease from having to relinquish his settlement to the English. I never heard the clopping, but over time I began to wonder, not so much about Stuyvesant, who seemed too forbidding for such a verb, but about the original settlement. I wanted to know the island that those first Europeans found.

Eventually, I got in touch with Charles Gehring. I learned about the extraordinary documents in his keeping, and about the organization, the New Netherland Project, he had founded to promote interest in this neglected period of history. In the fall of 2000, I attended a seminar he sponsored on the topic and encountered dozens of specialists who were exploring this forgotten world, unearthing pieces of it that hadn't seen the light of day in centuries. They were digging into archives from Boston to Antwerp and turning up hitherto-forgotten journals, voyage diaries, and account books. Our understanding of the age of exploration was expanding under this new examination. In my interviews with Dr. Gehring and others, I realized that historians were fashioning a new perspective on American prehistory, and also that no one was attempting to bring all the disparate elements, characters, and legacies into a single narrative. In short, no one was telling the story of the first Manhattanites.

It turns out to be two stories. There is the small, ironic story that originally attracted me, of men and women hacking out an existence in a remote wilderness that is today one of the most famously urban landscapes in the world, who would shoulder their muskets and go on hunting expeditions into the thick forests of what is now the skyscrapered wilderness of midtown Manhattan. But going deeper into the material, you begin to appreciate the broader story. The origins of New York are not like those of other

American cities. Those first settlers were not isolated pioneers but characters playing parts in a drama of global sweep—a struggle for empire that would range across the seventeenth century and around the globe, and which, for better or worse, would create the structure of the modern world.

Moving back and forth from the individual struggles detailed in the records to the geopolitical events of the day, you can sense the dawning of the idea that would lead to the transformation of Manhattan into the centerpiece of the most powerful city in the world. Of all the newly claimed regions whose exploitation was rapidly changing Europe—from the teeming cod fisheries off Newfoundland to the limitless extent of North America to the sugar fields of Brazil—this one slender island, sitting in the greatest natural harbor on the coast of a vast new wilderness and at the mouth of the river that would become the vital highway into that continent, would prove the most valuable of all. Its location and topography—"like a great natural pier ready to receive the commerce of the world" is how one early writer described it—would make it the gate through which Europeans could reach the unimaginable vastness of the North American land mass. Possess it, and you controlled passage up the Hudson River, then west along the Mohawk River Valley into the Great Lakes, and into the very heart of the continent. Later migration patterns proved this to a T; the Erie Canal, which linked the Hudson and the Great Lakes, resulted in the explosive growth of the Midwest and cemented New York's role as the most powerful city in the nation. In the seventeenth century that was still far in the future, but one by one, in various ways, the major players in this story sensed the island's importance. They smelled its value. Thus Richard Nicolls, the British colonel who led a gunboat flotilla into New York Harbor in August 1664 and wrested control of the island from Peter Stuyvesant, instantly termed it "best of all His Majties Townes in America."

So the story of Manhattan's beginnings is also the story of European exploration and conquest in the 1600s. And at the heart of the material I found a much smaller story: a very personal struggle between two men over the fate of a colony and the meaning and value of individual liberty. Their personal battle helped to ensure that New York City, under the English and then as an American city, would develop into a unique place that would foster an intense stew of cultures and a wildly fertile intellectual, artistic, and business environment.

One of the protagonists in this struggle, Peter Stuyvesant, has been portrayed by history as almost a cartoon character: peg-legged, cantankerous, a figure of comic relief who would do his routine, draw a few laughs, and then exit the stage so that the real substance of American history could begin. But much of what was known about Stuyvesant before came from records of the New England colonies. To New England, the Dutch colony centered on New Amsterdam was the enemy, and so history has accepted the portrait of Stuyvesant drawn by his greatest detractors. In the New Netherland records, by contrast, Stuyvesant comes across as full blooded and complex: a genuine tyrant; a doting father and husband; a statesman who exhibits steel nerves and bold military intuition while holding almost no cards and being surrounded by enemies (English, Indians, Swedes, foes from within his own colony, even, in a sense, the directors of his company in Amsterdam). He is a man who abhors unfairness—who publicly punishes Dutch colonists who cheat the Indians in business deals—but who, with the harshness of a hard-line Calvinist minister's son, tries to block Jews from settling in New Amsterdam. He is a tragic figure, undone by his own best quality, his steadfastness. But Stuyvesant didn't act in isolation. The colony's legacy revolves around another figure of the period, a man named Adriaen van der Donck, who has been forgotten by history but who emerges as the hero of the story and who, I think, deserves to be ranked as an early American prophet, a forerunner of the Revolutionary generation.

But if the colony's end points forward to the American society that was to come, its beginning is dominated by another figure—willful, brooding, tortured—who hearkens back to an earlier era. Henry Hudson was a man of the Renaissance, and Manhattan's birth thus becomes a kind of bridge between these two worlds. So the story begins far from the American wilderness, in the heart of late Renaissance Europe.

All that said, what originally captivated me about the Dutch documents—that they offered a way to reimagine New York City as a wilderness—stayed alive throughout my research. More than anything, then, this book invites you to do the impossible: to strip from your mental image of Manhattan Island all associations of power, concrete, and glass; to put time into full reverse, unfill the massive landfills, and undo the extensive leveling programs that flattened hills and filled gullies; to return streams from the underground sewers they were forced into, back to their original rushing or meandering course. To witness the return of waterfalls, to watch freshwater ponds form in place of asphalt intersections; to let buildings vanish and watch stands of pin oak, sweetgum, basswood, and hawthorne take their place. To imagine the return of salt marshes, mudflats, grasslands, of leopard frogs, grebes, cormorants, and bitterns; to discover newly pure estuaries encrusting themselves with scallops, lamp mussels, oysters, quahogs, and clams. To see maple-ringed meadows become numbered with deer and the higher elevations ruled by wolves.

And then to stop the time machine, let it hover a moment on the southmost tip of an island poised between the Atlantic Ocean and the civilization of Europe on one side and a virgin continent on the other; to let that moment swell, hearing the screech of gulls and the slap of waves and imagining these same sounds, waves and birds, waves and birds, with regular interruptions by wracking storms, unchanged for dozens of centuries.

And then let time start forward once again as something comes into view on the horizon. Sails.

PART I

"A CERTAIN ISLAND NAMED MANATHANS"

Chapter 1

THE MEASURE OF THINGS

On a late summer's day in the year 1608, a gentleman of London made his way across that city. He was a man of ambition, intellect, arrogance, and drive—in short, a man of his age. Like our own, his was an era of expanding horizons and a rapidly shrinking world, in which the pursuit of individual dreams led to new discoveries, which in turn led to newer and bigger dreams. His complicated personality—including periodic fits of brooding passivity that all but incapacitated him—was built around an impressive self-confidence, and at this moment he was almost certainly convinced that the meeting he was headed toward would be of historic importance.

He walked west, in the direction of St. Paul's Cathedral, which then, as now, dominated the skyline. But the structure in the distance was not the St. Paul's of today, the serene, imperial building that signifies order and human reason, with the spirit of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment shining from its proud dome. His St. Paul's had a hunkering tower in place of a dome (the steeple that had originally risen from the tower had been struck by lightning almost half a century before and hadn't been replaced); it was a dark, medieval church, which suited the medieval market town that London still was in the early seventeenth century. The streets through which he walked were narrow, shadowy, claustrophobic, sloping toward central sewer ditches. The houses that lined them were built of timber and walled with wattle and daub—it was a city made chiefly of wood.

Since we know his destination and have some notion of the whereabouts of his house, it is possible to trace a likely route that Henry Hudson, ship's captain, would have taken on that summer day, on his way to meet with the directors of the Muscovy Company, funders of voyages of exploration and discovery. The widest thoroughfare from Tower Street Ward toward Cordwainer Street Ward was Tower Street. He would have passed first through a neighborhood that, despite being within sight of the scaffold and gallows of the Tower itself, was an area of relatively new, "divers fair and large houses," as John Stow, a contemporary chronicler, described, several of them owned by prominent noblemen.

On his left then came the dominating church of St. Dunstan in the East, and a reminder of his heritage. The Muscovy Company had not only funded at least two of Henry Hudson's previous sea voyages; going back through its history of half a century, it contained several Hudsons on its rolls. Among its charter members in 1555 was another Henry Hudson, who rose from a humble "skinner," or tanner, to become a wealthy member of society and an alderman of the City of London, and who may have been the explorer's grandfather. So our Henry Hudson was presumably born to the sea and to the company both, and inside the church he was now passing, his Muscovy Company namesake lay, beneath a gilded alabaster stone inscribed:

> HERE LYETH HENRY HEARDSONS CORPS,
> WITHIN THIS TOMBE OF STONE:
> HIS SOULE (THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST'S DEATH,)
> TO GOD IN HEAVEN IS GONE.
> WHILES THAT HE LIVED AN ALDERMAN,
> AND SKINNER WAS HIS STATE:
> TO VERTUE BARE HEE ALL HIS LOVE,
> TO VICE HE BARE HIS HATE.

If in his walk the seaman chose to detour down the hill past the church, he would have come to the open expanse of the Thames, where the view west downriver was dominated by the span of London Bridge with its twenty stone arches, houses perched precariously along both sides of its course. Directly across the river, beckoning lowly and enticingly, lay Southwark, a wild outland and thus also the entertainment district, with brothels tucked into its alleys and, visible from here, the "bear bayting" arena, which provided one of the most popular distractions for the masses. Beyond it stood the rounded wooden structure of the Globe Theater in its original incarnation. Indeed, somewhere over on the Southwark side at this very moment, amid the tradesmen, whores, "sturdye Beggers," and "Common Players in Enterludes" that populated the borough, Shakespeare himself—at forty-four a near-exact contemporary of Hudson, then at the height of his powers and fame as the leading dramatist of the day—was likely going about his business, sleeping off a night of sack at the Mermaid with his actor friends Richard Burbage and John Heminge, maybe, or brooding over the foolscap sheets of *Coriolanus,* which was written about this time and which, coming on the heels of the great tragedies, may have felt a bit hollow.

Tower Street became Little Eastcheap, which in turn merged into Candlewick and then Budge Row. Hudson's business lay here, in an imposing building called Muscovy House, home of the Muscovy Company. The medieval look of the London of 1608 belied the fact that England's rise to global empire was under way, and one of the forces behind that rise lay through these doors. From the bravado of its formal name—the "Merchants Adventurers of England for the Discovery of Lands, Territories, Iles, Dominions, and Seigniories Unknown"—one might be excused for thinking it had been founded out of sheer, unstoppable exuberance. The original band of merchants and aristocrats who had formed it more than half a century earlier included many of the most distinguished men in London in the middle of the sixteenth century—the Lord High Treasurer, the Steward of the Queen's Household, the Keeper of the Privy Seal, the Lord High Admiral—as well as sundry other knights and gentlemen. But while global exploration, the great intellectual and business opportunity of the day, had brought them all together, no one considered the undertaking a swashbuckling adventure. It was desperation that drove them toward new horizons. The England of the 1540s had been a backwater, economically depressed, inward-looking, deep in the shadows of the great maritime empires of Spain and Portugal. Wool was the country's chief commodity, but English traders had been blocked from access to major European markets for more than a century. Economic stagnation was bound up with intellectual stagnation: while the Renaissance was in full flower on the Continent, English interest in the wider world was slim, and the few long voyages of exploration England had mounted were mostly led by foreigners, such as the Venetian

John Cabot (né Giovanni Cabotto). When it came to sea voyages, the English declined.

History traditionally links the rise of England in the period with the elevation of Queen Elizabeth to the throne in 1558. But one could trace it to 1547, when an intellectually voracious twenty-year-old named John Dee did something countless students since have done: spent his summer abroad and returned flush with new knowledge and insights. After an academic career at Cambridge in which he proved to be something of a mathematical genius, Dee traveled to the University of Louvain in what is today Belgium. The rich summer sun of the Brabant region might have been revelation enough, but Dee soon found himself in a lecture hall gazing at an object that was, to him, transcendent. The teacher was Gemma Frisius, a Flemish mathematician and charter of the heavens, and what Dee saw was a map astonishing in its level of detail, in the new lands it portrayed, even in its lettering. The Low Countries, he discovered, were miles ahead of his island in new learning.

Dee spent long candle-lit nights poring over Frisius's maps with a Flemish scholar named Gerhard Kremer. Kremer, an engraver by training, had, under the academic pen name of Mercator, begun to make a name for himself ten years earlier by creating a map of Palestine that rendered the Holy Land with greater accuracy than had ever been achieved. Mercator was a genuine Renaissance man—a master cartographer, an engineer of telescopes, sextants, surveying equipment, and other highly sensitive measuring devices, the author of a gospel concordance, promoter of the new italic typeface that made map print more legible—and in him Dee found a soul mate. In 1569, Mercator would publish the map that would give him his immortality, which rendered latitude and longitude as straight lines, the meridians of longitude evenly spaced and the distance between the parallels of latitude increasing in size as one approached the poles. It would solve a cumbersome problem of navigating at sea because with it sailors could plot and follow a straight course rather than have to constantly recalculate their position. (The Mercator projection is still a feature of navigational maps, although, even at that time, some mariners were as confused as later generations of schoolchildren would be by the distortions in size it caused.)

In a nice foreshadowing of the complicated intermingling between the Low Countries and the British Isles that would shape the next century, when Dee returned to London he brought with him maps, measuring instruments, and globes, created by Mercator and Frisius, that would help spark England's rise to global prominence. What Dee's English colleagues found most intriguing about the maps and globes was an area most people would ignore: the top, the Arctic Circle. Frisius's map, oriented as if looking down from the north star, showed a distinct open channel cutting across the Arctic, which was self-confidently labeled in Latin *Fretum trium fratrum.* The sight of the boldly indicated Strait of the Three Brothers must have made Dee's English friends gasp. The Holy Grail for all learned and adventuresome minds was the discovery of a short passage to the riches of Asia. Finding it would repay investors many times over; for the English, it would vault their economy out of the Middle Ages and into the European vanguard. The legend of the Strait of the Three Brothers was confused even at that time, but it appears to have been based on the adventures of the Corte Real brothers, Portuguese mariners who explored the area around Newfoundland at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and who, in the minds of some, sighted, or perhaps even sailed, the fabled passage to Asia before two of them vanished into Arctic oblivion. (Ironically, the Spanish also had a theory about this mythical strait, only they called it the Englishmen's Strait.) Now there it was on Frisius's map, thanks apparently to Frisius's contacts with Portuguese mariners. It was on Mercator's globe as well, labeled simply *fretum arcticum,* arctic strait. As with most people in any endeavor, seeing the thing in print, seeing its coasts and coves delicately but decisively rendered, confirmed its reality.

Fate, it seemed, had brought together the men, the means, and the time. The solution to England's twin crises of economy and spirit was *out there.* So the nation's leaders formed a business circle, chipping in twenty-five pounds per share and raising a total of six thousand pounds.

With the principals lined up and funds ready, it only remained to choose the likeliest route—either the one indicated on Frisius's map or one of several others that were now being put forth with equal confidence. The point was to find a northern passage both because such a shortcut would render obsolete the Spanish and Portuguese monopoly on the Southern Hemisphere and because any northern peoples encountered along the way would be more likely buyers for English wool. That an Arctic sea route existed was beyond anyone's doubt. The universal belief among the intelligentsia in something we know to be a physical impossibility in wooden sailing vessels rested on several arguments, such as the one put forth by the Dutch minister and geographer Peter Plancius that "near the pole the sun shines for five months continually; and although his rays are weak, yet on account of the long time they continue, they have sufficient strength to warm the ground, to render it temperate, to accommodate it for the habitation of men, and to produce grass for the nourishment of animals."

The name by which the company became known gives away what happened on the first voyage it financed. A doughty mariner named Richard Chancellor took the northeast route, and while he failed to discover a passage to the Orient, he became the first Englishman of the era to make landfall at Russia. The so-called Muscovy trade that ensued—in which the English found a ready market for their wool, and imported hemp, sperm oil, and furs from the realm of Ivan the Terrible—was so profitable that the search for a northern route to Asia was largely abandoned.

The company expanded, and the nation with it. Elizabeth ascended to the throne; Drake circumnavigated the globe; Shakespeare wrote. When, in 1588, Philip II of Spain launched an invasion fleet toward England, intending to bring the island into his empire and win its people back to Roman Catholicism, the undersized English navy shocked the world by crushing the Armada. The aftermath of the victory was one of those moments when a nation suddenly realizes it has entered a new era. Theirs wasn't a dark and chilly island after all, the English public was informed by their great poet, but a "precious stone set in the silver sea."

By the early 1600s, however, the wheel had taken another turn. The queen was dead, and the Russia trade had fallen off. Faced once again with financial crisis, the company's directors made a decision to return to their original purpose. They would resurrect the Renaissance dream, commit themselves anew to discovering a northern passage to Asia.

The man they now turned to to renew the quest is not the protagonist of this story, but the forerunner, the one who would make it possible. In the ranks of legendary explorers, Henry Hudson has been slighted: not celebrated in his time by the English public as Francis Drake or Martin Frobisher or John Cabot had been, not given nearly the amount of ink that history has devoted to Columbus or Magellan. There is a logic of personality in this: Drake had defined manhood for an era, and the Italian Cabot had a feckless charm (he was in the habit, after his celebrated return from the New World, of promising people he met in taverns that he would name islands for them), but when we come to Henry Hudson it is a dark and moody figure hovering behind the records, one seemingly more comfortable in the shadows of history. A new appreciation for the Dutch colony in North America, however, compels a reappraisal of the man whose fitful decision-making rerouted the flow of history.

Nothing is known of his early career, but the fact that he was a ship's captain indicates that he had had a lengthy one by the time we encounter him in 1608. It's reasonable to assume that he had served in the defeat of the Armada twenty years earlier, though we have no information on this. The Muscovy Company tended to start apprentices as boys and have them work through one or more aspects of the business: bureaucrat, "factor" (i.e., agent), or sailor. Thus, one Christopher Hudson, who rose to the position of governor of the company from 1601 to 1607 and whom some historians have thought was most likely Henry Hudson's uncle, had worked his way up in the sales and marketing line, serving as a company representative in Germany in his youth. Henry Hudson was in his forties when he stepped into the light of history, a seasoned mariner, a man with a strong and resourceful wife and three sons, a man born and raised not only to the sea but to the quest for a northern passage to Asia, who, weaned from infancy on the legends of his predecessors, probably couldn't help but be obsessed by it.

The fire of obsession was fanned, in him as it was in the country, by a compatriot named Richard Hakluyt. Hakluyt was a consultant to the Muscovy Company, but more importantly he was a unique figure in his day: part journalist, part popularizer, part lionizer, above all a zealot for the internationalist cause in England. In the 1580s he began gathering log books, journals, and other records of voyages, and he published the whole lot of them in repeated waves—the main body under the title *The Principle Navigations Voyages Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation,* which came out, with impeccable timing, shortly after the defeat of the Armada—creating a steadily building crescendo of popular enthusiasm for English adventures at sea. The result was to make England aware of itself in an international context, to see the European nations casting outward in a new age, an age of discovery. Hakluyt exhorted his countrymen to be proud that they were living in "an age wherein God hath raised so general a desire in the youth of this realm to discover all parts of the face of the earth."

Thanks to Hakluyt, mariners now saw themselves in historical terms. Because of Hakluyt, Hudson—a determined and self-possessed man to begin with—openly hungered for a place on the list that included Columbus, Magellan, Cabot, Cortés, and Da Gama. And for Hudson there was only one brand of glory. He would be the one to locate at last—after the failures (glorious failures, but failures still) of Columbus, Cabot, Chancellor, Frobisher, Cartier, Verrazzano—the fabled ribbon of icy blue water, sail through it, emerge into the nutmeg-scented air of Cathay, and singlehandedly open the planet wide. He believed he would be the one.

He would be wrong in this. And yet, fate being what it is, his dream of achievement would come true—bounteously, far more strangely than he could have imagined. Fate would make him not just the somewhat ironic patron saint of a grand city that would rise in the future to the presumptuous title of capital of the world, but, along with it, of a society that would become a model for the world of a distant century. A wavering but unbroken chain would stretch from him to a far-off hodgepodge: of skyscrapers and bodegas, dim sum and hip-hop, supers and subways, limos and egg creams and finance and fashion—the messy catalogue of ingredients that, stewed together over time, would comprise a global capital, twenty-first-century style. To the extent any individual could, he would be a fulcrum on which history would turn: from a world of wood and steel to one of silicon and plastic.

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HIS FIRST VOYAGE was pure madness. While geographers debated whether the elusive passage to Asia lay to the northwest, via Canada, or the northeast, around Russia, what Hudson attempted in his first command was something fantastically bolder and far more ridiculous than either of these, something that no human being had ever tried: to go straight up, over the top of the world. He was relying on an "established" theory, first proposed eighty years before by Robert Thorne, a merchant-adventurer who argued that in addition to finding the ice melt away as one neared the pole, that the lucky sailor who ventured across the top of the world would benefit from the "perpetual clearness of the day without any darkness of the night." Daylight may be handy, but to purposely steer a seventy-foot wooden boat, manned by a crew of twelve and powered only by wind, straight north on a direct course for the top of the world, defying the six-million-square-mile Arctic ice shelf, proposing to slice straight across it and come careening down the other side of the planet—the nerve of it beggars the imagination. No wonder that on the morning of April 19, 1607, Hudson and his tiny crew, including his young son John, whom he was probably in the process of training just as he had been trained, stepped out of the weak spring sunlight, shuffled into the dark ancient interior of the Church of St. Ethelburga just inside Bishopsgate (apparently successfully ignoring the tap houses crowding around the door of the church: the Angel, the Four Swans, the Green Dragon, the Black Bull), took their places among the congregation, and beseeched the God of their forefathers to bless their endeavor.

Even more remarkable than Hudson's decision to attempt such a voyage was that he survived it. Slicing through fog and ice, living on bear and seal (at one point the crew fell sick from rotten bear meat), surviving vicious storms and the horror of a whale attempting to surface under the keel of their ship, they made it above eighty degrees latitude, within six hundred miles of the North Pole, before Hudson noted drily, "This morning we saw that we were compassed in with Ice in abundance. . . . And this I can assure at present . . . by this way there is no passage."

By any normal measure the voyage would have been considered a failure, but normalcy was out the window—it was now the seventeenth century, a vast new world was out there. Entrepreneurs and ships' captains knew that crossing one false path off the list was a form of progress. Far from considering his attempt a failure (for one thing, Hudson's report of "many whales" off Spitzbergen Island led to a massive and lucrative whaling enterprise there in the following years, and, predictably, the decimation of the whale population), the company, immediately on his return in September 1607, signed him up to attack the problem again the next season.

Hudson spent the winter at his London home, plunging into his charts and letters from fellow mariners and geographers, warming himself at his own hearth and in the company of his family, laying plans, perhaps meeting with Hakluyt himself—the two had by now become friends—to discuss options. The following season sees him setting off straightaway—April 22, 1608—in the same Muscovy Company ship, the *Hopewell*, this time with a crew of fourteen, sitting in his closetlike captain's cabin, carefully putting pen to the page of his logbook as they pull away from the Thames-side docks, heart thrumming with the high adrenaline of setting-forth, as he records dutifully: "We set sayle at Saint Katherines, and fell downe to Blacke wall."

He had a new course this time: northeast. It had been attempted by others, including his Muscovy Company predecessors, but the directors were still of the belief that to the north of Russia lay the best chance for reaching Asia. Hudson himself may have been doubtful—he had reason to believe the northwest was more likely—but he was willing to follow their wishes. Or so it seemed. The failure of his second voyage is less interesting than what happened on July 6, after he had concluded it was impossible to continue (on entering the strait that he had pinned his hopes on he writes with awe, "it is so full of ice that you will hardly thinke it"). Unable to find a way around the islands of Nova Zembla (today Novaya Zemlya in the Russian Arctic), he was now "out of hope to find passage by the North-east," and so proposed to alter course completely, tear up the mission directive from the company, and have a go at the northwest. After slaving for ten weeks against the raw elements of the Arctic, his crew, with good sense, balked at the idea of taking a detour straight across the Atlantic and into a wholly new wilderness. A near mutiny ensued; Hudson was forced to remove his gaze from the distant horizon of his obsession and focus instead on the human beings in front of him on the deck. He backed down. They returned to London.

No sooner did he arrive than he was busy readying himself for his next foray. He had momentum now: two voyages in two successive seasons; two routes down, and one to go. He was convinced that he was zeroing in on the passage, that the puzzle that had occupied Europe for the length of the Renaissance was about to be solved. The answer, it now seemed certain, lay in the misty, all-but-unknown region that was only recently being labeled on maps as America.

At around this time—possibly before the 1608 voyage—he received letters from his friend and fellow explorer, the considerably larger-than-life John Smith, who had fought in Hungary against the Turks, was captured and sold into slavery in Istanbul, won the heart of his female captor, escaped to Transylvania via Russia, and trekked across North Africa—all before his twenty-fifth birthday. Not content with such a résumé, in 1607, Smith spearheaded

the founding of a colony in Virginia—what would be the first permanent European settlement on the North American coast (Walter Raleigh's Roanoke colony, which broke ground in 1587, had vanished by the time relief forces arrived in 1590), where he and his comrades were now living out a hell on earth (only thirty-eight of the one hundred and fifty original colonists survived the first winter). Smith sent Hudson maps of the North American coast, together with certain theories he had been developing. These were precisely what Hudson wanted to hear; they conformed with his own theories: that a sea or river somewhere to the north of Virginia gave out onto the Sea of Cathay. (Smith's information seems to have come from Indians who talked of a great ocean accessible via the Hudson River—presumably the Great Lakes, reachable via portage through the Mohawk River valley.)

Thus we find Hudson where we met him at the beginning of this chapter, shortly after landfall in late August or early September 1608, about to step into Muscovy House—in starched ruff collar and embroidered jerkin, perhaps, clothing suitable for a formal interview—for his obligatory meeting with the company directors. His mind was apparently in a swirl. On the one hand, Smith's information buttressed his belief that he was homing in on his goal. Then again, Samuel Purchas, a director of the company and like Hakluyt a popularizer of England's sea ventures (it is from him that most of our knowledge of Hudson's voyages comes), on meeting up with Hudson one day immediately after his return, found him "sunk into the lowest depths of the Humour of Melancholy, from which no man could rouse him. It mattered not that his Perseverance and Industry had made England the richer by his maps of the North. I told him he had created Fame that would endure for all time, but he would not listen to me." This was completely within character: Hudson seems to have typified the figure of the man of energy and obsession wracked by periods of despair. As he entered Muscovy House, the reality of recent failure and the possibility of imminent glory must have hammered at his brain from opposite sides. He seems to have thrived on such tensions, such contradictions: seeking to expand human civilization by immersing himself in the void of nature; strolling in the easy center of culture and society while the too-wild tang of rotten bear meat still lay on his tongue.

We can't follow him inside. The building itself, along with all the records of the Muscovy Company, was destroyed in the Great Fire. If there was a corporate record of the meeting, of who voted against funding him again and why, it is lost. We can only imagine his shock, then, when they rejected him, gave up on the great quest, and abandoned one of their own. Maybe they had grown leery of his monomania and propensity for sparking mutiny. Possibly the Muscovy Company was running out of steam (it would soon be subject to the seventeenth-century version of a corporate takeover by the younger and more vigorous East India Company).

But he had barely enough time to sink into the depression to which a psychologist might have diagnosed him as susceptible before a new, unexpected avenue stretched open before him. Shortly after stepping out of the company's mansion into the glare of a summer day, he found himself accosted by a courtly, discreet, seventy-two-year-old gentleman. Emanuel van Meteren had been born in Antwerp, but when he was fifteen his family moved to London, where he had lived ever since, acquiring an English education and an English sense of refinement, but remaining elementally Dutch. For the last thirty years he had served as the Dutch consul in London, and was on intimate terms with many of the prominent businessmen, aristocrats, and explorers in both countries. He had learned that the Muscovy Company was dropping Hudson—with his closeness to the directors of the company, he may have known before Hudson did.

The moment Van Meteren put his dignified presence before Hudson, he revealed the true scope of interest in the mariner's obsession. It wasn't a matter of one ship's captain and the company he worked for. Hudson's quest was tied into the historic current washing over the powers of Europe, the self-conscious need to blast out of the Mediterranean paradigm that had held them through the Middle Ages and to reach around the globe: to discover, exploit, expand, do business. Van Meteren spoke on behalf of certain Dutch merchants, who were desirous, seeing that his own countrymen had lost faith, of abetting Hudson's ambition. In short, they wanted to hire him.

The mariner apparently suffered no pangs of disloyalty, either to the country of his birth or the company that had nurtured him. Delaying only to attend the christening, in mid-September, of a granddaughter (Alice, child of his son Oliver), Hudson boarded a ship to cross the channel, having no idea that his contribution to history would come not from discovering the passage to the Orient but as a result of this very twist of fate, this kink in his chain of bold, brilliant, and majestically misguided voyages.

Chapter 2

THE POLLINATOR

In the seventeenth century, to enter Amsterdam was to be softly assaulted in the senses. There was the squeal of caroming sea birds and the slap of oars; a stew of smells: cabbage, frying pancakes, the miasma of the canals. There was the sensation, on entering the ultramarine opacity of the canal grid, of gliding into an orderly enclosed space. The slender-bricked houses made an elegant but modest statement, their gabled tops framing and taming the sky. The cobbled quaysides were alive with workers wheeling barrows or wobbling under the strain of sacks being loaded into lighters. Women with billowing skirted bottoms scrubbed stoops and sprinkled them with fat handfuls of sand; everywhere there were dogs and horses and children.

As Henry Hudson arrived in Amsterdam in the autumn of 1608, the world around him was turning. The Spanish and Portuguese empires that had had their way with South America and the East Indies for more than a century were in decline, and two new powers were rising in tandem. The Dutch were growing in might right alongside the English, and would peak sooner, giving the world Rembrandt, Vermeer, the microscope, the tulip, the stock exchange, and the modern notion of home as a private, intimate place.

The Dutch, of course, were of the sea; keeping it back was a way of life. Consequently, water was their orientation; they were the continent's shipbuilders, sailors, pilots, and traffickers, and this was their key to empire. When the union of Spain and Portugal in 1580 closed to Dutch traders the port of Lisbon (where they had long received Asian goods for resale throughout Europe), the Dutch merchants took the drastic step of stocking their vessels with gunpowder and cannonballs and going directly to the

Iberian supply source, the islands of the East Indies, more than a year's journey away by the southern route. They arrived with guns blazing at the Portuguese military-trading posts there, and took them, converting Java, Sumatra, and the Malaysian peninsula into outposts of a new empire. When the first successful convoy returned home in 1599, its hulls packed with six hundred thousand pounds of pepper and an equal amount of nutmeg, cloves, and other spices, Amsterdammers were stunned at the plenitude. Churchbells throughout the city rang, and the rise to world power began.

Geography shapes character, and the character of the city Hudson entered was vastly different from the one he had just left. This single point helps to explain why Manhattan, which owes its originating contours to Hudson, would become such a different place from, say, Boston or Philadelphia. One difference between England and the Dutch Republic was contained in the abstract and to our ears wan-sounding noun *tolerance.* England was on the verge of a century of religious wars that would see royal heads roll and crowds of ordinary citizens flee. The Dutch—traders and sailors, whose focus was always *out there:* on other lands, other peoples, and their products—had always had to put up with differences. Just as foreign goods moved in and out of their ports, foreign ideas, and for that matter, foreign people, did as well. To talk about "celebrating diversity" is to be wildly anachronistic, but in the Europe of the time the Dutch stood out for their relative acceptance of foreignness, of religious differences, of odd sorts. One example of this could be found in Hudson's new employers, the men who made up the Amsterdam Chamber of the East India Company: Catholics and Protestants, many of them refugees from persecution in the south or elsewhere. They had come here, wedged themselves into society, and worked their way up. Over the course of the seventeenth century, the Dutch Republic would give intellectual or religious haven to Descartes, John Locke, and the English Pilgrims, the latter of whom lived in Leiden for twelve years before setting out to found a new Jerusalem in New England. The philosopher Baruch Spinoza was a product of Amsterdam's vigorous Jewish community. To this day, Amsterdammers' proud slang term for their city is *Mokum,* the centuries-old Jewish name for it. (For that matter, Amsterdam slang for "see you later" is the Yiddishism *de mazzel.*)

Landscape has a political dimension, too, and the low-lying provinces—the Netherlands is really one vast river delta—were always an easy target for invaders. The French expanded into them in the 1300s, then in 1495, three years after Columbus's voyage, Spain added the low countries to its empire. As Hudson entered Amsterdam, the United Provinces of the Netherlands had been fighting for independence from their Spanish overlords for nearly four decades, and the long war had toughened them, focused them, made them militarily and economically stronger. Before, they had been scattered, each province tending to go its own way. The Catholic tyranny of Spain—complete with bloody Inquisition tactics to force Protestants to return to the fold—united them. It gave them a Father of the Country in the person of Willem I, the Prince of Orange, known to history as William the Silent. The assassination of this heroic military leader gave Groningen farmers, Frisian horse traders, Zeeland shipwrights, and the cosmopolitan artists and merchants of Amsterdam a common focal point. They also had their own Minutemen, called the Sea Beggars, a scrappy, Robin Hood-like band of sailors who against all odds defeated the precision-drilled Spanish regulars who held the coastal town of Briel, taking the town and giving the Dutch their first hope of throwing off the foreign yoke.

Maybe the most striking difference between the Netherlands and England was that the new government the seven united Dutch provinces formed during their struggle was something utterly anomalous in Europe: in the midst of the great age of monarchies, stretching from Elizabeth Tudor to Louis XIV, the Dutch carved out a republic. It wasn't a republic in the full Enlightenment-era sense—it wasn't of the idealistic, self-righteously stubborn, "we hold these truths to be self-evident" model that gave rise to the American republic, but rather had come into being in a piecemeal way, as towns joined together to protect their interests. But it was a bottom-up system: it came from the people. The French had their intricately intertwined systems of fashion and protocol, the Spanish court its tottering "magnificent fountain" of patronage, and the English their class system, with an aristocracy rooted into the nation's soul. The Dutch of the seventeenth century distinguished themselves by being Regular Guys. They had a cultural distaste for monarchy and ostentation—as one writer of the time put it, a "strenuous spirit of opposition to a sovereign concentrated in one head." They believed in hard work, in earning an honest guilder, in personal modesty. They thought the English preoccupation with witches was paranoia.

The Dutch dressed so simply that foreigners complained that on the streets of Amsterdam it was impossible to tell the difference between a city magistrate and a simple shopkeeper. In the early part of the century Amsterdam had few grand houses; the homes that lined the Herengracht and Brouwersgracht were still modest, single-family affairs. Fantastically for the time, the Dutch didn't believe in keeping fleets of servants: a wealthy family might have one or two. A French naval commander, boarding a Dutch frigate, was appalled to find its captain sweeping his own cabin. There were noble families, but they had nothing like the power held by other European aristocrats. Instead, power went to those who made things happen: businessmen and local magistrates. Over time, human nature being what it is, these men would create a kind of merchant nobility, sometimes even buying titles from cash-poor foreigners, but this in itself underscores the point. Upward mobility was part of the Dutch character: if you worked hard and were smart, you rose in stature. Today that is a byword of a healthy society; in the seventeenth century it was weird.

The whole package—the Founding Father, the young and vibrant republic, the war for independence, the hard-nosed, practical populace that disdains monarchies and maintains a frank acceptance of differences—has a ring of familiarity to it, which was not lost on the American founding fathers of the next century. As John Adams, in his capacity as the first American ambassador to the Netherlands, wrote in 1782: "The Originals of the two Republics are so much alike, that the History of one seems but a Transcript from that of the other; so that every Dutchman instructed in the subject, must pronounce the American revolution just and necessary, or pass a Censure upon the greatest Actions of his immortal Ancestors." Some of those similarities are inevitable (don't all rebellions have heroes and martyrs?), but the most elemental one—a cultural sensibility that included a frank acceptance of differences and a belief that individual achievement matters more than birthright—is, as I hope this book will show, at least in part the result of a kind of genetic transfer from the one culture to the other, a planting of Dutch notions in one vital region of the future United States, from which they would be taken up into the American character. And the unlikely and unwitting carrier of this cultural gene was here, this man, in this place.

As with the English, the Dutch had had a long-standing interest in finding a northern route to Asia. Fifteen years earlier, the Dutch explorer Willem Barents had made three attempts at a northeast passage. That he froze to death on his last voyage didn't dull local enthusiasm for the project. The Dutch East India Company had sprung into being from the recent, extravagantly successful voyages to Southeast Asia, and would soon deploy a vast fleet with no fewer than five thousand sailors. It was better organized and had more money at its disposal than the Muscovy Company. If, as the company's intelligence reports had it, Hudson was on the verge of discovering the long-sought northern passage to Asian markets, they wanted Hudson.

But they weren't the only ones who wanted him. Hudson arrived in the Dutch Republic at a decisive moment, when all of Europe was focused on these low-lying provinces. Two years before, in a thicket of masts and gunpowder discharge and carnage, Dutch ships under Jacob van Heemskerck had blasted their way through the Spanish fleet as it lay moored off Gibraltar. This provided a coda to England's defeat of the Armada twenty years earlier, and finally brought the Spanish king, Philip III, to the bargaining table. While Hudson was sitting down to negotiate a contract with the Dutch merchants, representatives from all the nations of Europe were gathered thirty-five miles away at The Hague to hammer out a truce that all had a stake in. If a truce could be worked out, it would be tantamount to recognition of the United Provinces as a nation in its own right.

Hudson was comfortable in Holland; he may even have spent an earlier portion of his life in the country. He had friends here. Joost de Hondt was an engraver and mapmaker who acted as Hudson's interpreter in the contract negotiations; Hudson stayed at his house in The Hague through the winter. Another friend was the geographer Peter Plancius (he of the polar sun-power theory), with whom Hudson spent long evenings that winter, poring over maps and stray bits of information or hearsay. Plancius had the greatest knowledge of the shape of the world of any man in the Dutch provinces. He was one of those who believed that the route to Asia lay to the northeast, but Hudson was adamant that the most likely passage was to the northwest. He got further support for this belief from an item Plancius somehow had gotten his hands on and now furnished Hudson with: the journal of the Englishman George Weymouth, who had made detailed observations of his own attempt at the northwest route seven years earlier.

While Hudson sat at East India House overlooking the still, green water of the Gelderse Kade and negotiated with the Dutch merchants, spies from delegations to the truce negotiations at The Hague were listening in, for the two things were connected. The main issue of the conference was a truce, but the subtext was the rising Dutch power. The Spanish and Portuguese representatives were still fuming at the Dutch inroads in Asia and wanted these rolled back as a condition of peace. England felt the same. James I, the bookish and ungainly Scotsman who had replaced Elizabeth on the throne, had directed his representatives at The Hague negotiations to push for an end to Dutch trading in the East.

The VOC—as the Dutch East India Company would become known worldwide, the initials of its Dutch name, *de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie,* emblazoned on ships in all ports of the world—had a charter that gave it a monopoly on Asian trade carried out via the southern route only. So if someone were to discover a northern back door to Asia, the company's rise to power would be halted. Hence the eagerness to get to Hudson. But before the VOC reached an agreement, others made a play for him. Pierre Jeannin, who headed the French delegation at the negotiations, dashed off a missive to King Henri IV, informing him of a development that had ramifications for the "present negotiations to obtain a truce for the States General." There was word, Jeannin reported, the Dutch were about to close a deal with the English mariner Hudson, who was on the verge of discovering a short route to Asia. (Perpetuating the Plancius myth, Jeannin gossiped that Hudson "has found that the more northwards he went, the less cold it became.") Jeannin put forth the plan of a renegade Dutch merchant named Isaac le Maire, who proposed stealing Hudson away from the VOC and signing him to a pact with a French-led consortium, and added, "there are also many rich merchants who will gladly join in."

By now the English were angry that they had let go of Hudson. The Dutch merchants, meanwhile, got wind of the French activity, and it speeded them to sign a contract with the mariner. This frenzy of activity among the major European players heightens the notion of Hudson as a fulcrum: they all sensed this sailor was going somewhere—the future lay in his direction, and they wanted to follow him.

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TO SEA THEN, launching from near the squat brick tower called the Schreierstoren, where the city walls fronted the water and where generations of Dutch women had stood gazing nervously out, waiting for their men to return. Hudson made it by spring, in time for the sailing season of 1609. He had a new ship, the eighty-five-foot *Halve Maen* ("Half Moon"), and a crew of sixteen, half English and half Dutch. He had orders, too: to find a north*eastern* route. He must have pushed strongly for the northwest, for they pushed back; in the accompanying instructions the Dutch merchants warned him "to think of discovering no other routes or passages" than the northeast. In his best fashion, he disobeyed them utterly. After taking a flier along the coast of Norway in the general direction of Russia, he went along with a gale blowing westward and then kept going. He was about to voyage three thousand miles in the opposite direction from what he had promised: inconceivable in another ship's captain; for him, pretty standard. Thus, his historic journey was truly of his own doing, even if its result was something beyond his intention.

Having convinced his crew to reverse course in mid-ocean, he had two options: to follow George Weymouth's journal, which suggested a true northwest passage, navigating the islands and ice floes of what is today northern Canada; or John Smith's notes, indicating that the passage was in fact not northwest at all, but southwest, straight through the North American continent. He followed Smith. After approaching Newfoundland, he hugged the coast southward for six weeks, until he came within ten miles of the Jamestown settlement of Virginia, and his friend. Then, abruptly, he stopped. He knew perfectly well where he was, for his English first mate recorded in his journal, "This is the entrance into the Kings River in Virginia, where our English-men are." They were at the mouth of the Chesapeake, where the Chesapeake Bay Bridge now crosses. Hudson was aware that he was sailing for a Dutch concern, and likely wouldn't have felt welcome or comfortable sailing into the English settlement. He had probably sailed here to orient himself. After swinging farther south to Cape Hatteras Island, he headed north, and on August 28 came into Delaware Bay, the first European ever to do so. No sooner had he entered the bay than the crew sighted treacherous shoals and sand bars. The captain quickly determined that this river could not be the wide, deep channel that led to Cathay.

And so they continued north: misty mornings, bloody sunsets, a stretch of coast like a long smooth cut; surf eternally pounding the belt of sand;

wild silence beyond. They were aware that they were shouldering a new world, impossibly dark, utterly unknown, of imponderable dimension, and with no clear means of access.

And then they felt something happening. Rounding a hooked point, they were startled at what they perceived to be three rivers; cliffs rose up—the land "very pleasant and high, and bold to fall withal." They were in the outer reaches of New York Harbor, riding along the coast of Staten Island. Fish streamed thickly around them: salmon, mullet, wraith-like rays. They anchored and went ashore, marveling at primordial oaks and "an abundance of blue plums."

Then, just like that, people appeared. They came at them frankly, dressed in skins, peaceable, and with an air of dignity, offering corn bread and green tobacco. In 1801 the Moravian missionary John Heckewelder interviewed a Long Island Indian and published an account of Hudson's arrival from the Indian perspective. The story, supposedly handed down through generations of Delaware Indians, gibes with the account by Hudson's mate Robert Juet of the first encounter: peaceable, wary, curious. The Indian told of sighting "a large house of various colors" floating on the water (Dutch ships were indeed vividly painted with geometric motifs). As in Juet's version, the Indian story has the first meeting taking place on land, with several of the visitors, including their leader, rowing ashore. The Indian story adds that the leader of the newcomers is dressed in a "red coat all glittering with gold lace"—a nice and by no means incongruous addition to the portrait of Hudson.

Out came the products. Hemp, dried currants, oysters, beans. Knives, hatchets, and beads. Over the next three days, as the ship explored an intricate mesh of islands, bays, and rivers, making the rounds of Brooklyn, Staten Island, and coastal New Jersey, there would be two violent encounters with Indians, which Juet claims were initiated by the Indians. People died. It's ironic that immediately upon entering the watery perimeter of what would become New York City, these two things take place: trade and violence.

Hudson then sailed his small, three-masted wooden vessel into the coliseum-like interior of the harbor—"a very good harbor for all windes." From his perch on the high poop-deck, looking down on his crew, he gave the order to proceed upriver. His heart must have quickened as the vista unfolded before him. "The River is a mile broad: there is very high Land on both sides," wrote Juet—as likely a channel into the other side of the world as one could hope for. Upriver, they encountered more natives: "a very loving people . . . and we were well taken care of." Hudson went ashore with them, visiting their circular house made of bark. "The land is the finest for cultivation that I ever in my life set foot upon," he wrote. He and his men noted more offerings from the locals: furs.

Then it ended. The river grew narrow and shallow: no ship could pass through; Asia did not lie over there. They turned south again: more skirmishes with the Indians of the southern reaches of the river. It's not certain if Hudson was aware that the land they "rode quietly" past one rainy night was an island—in the first written record of the name, Juet refers to "the side of the river called *Manna-hata.*" In any case, while Hudson dutifully noted the possibilities for trade—the grandness of the harbor and the river, the toehold they would provide onto the continent—his own gaze never left the horizon of his obsession. He headed for home, empty-handed.

Strangely, Hudson did not sail straight to Amsterdam but put into port at Dartmouth, in England. He may have done so to disembark some of his English crew—once again there had been loud grumbling on the voyage; once again a crew had bickered among themselves while the captain kept his head in the clouds. At any rate, an international skirmish ensued on arrival. His contractual obligation was to submit all charts, logbooks, and notes to his employers in Amsterdam, but the English authorities tried to stop him; they detained Hudson bodily and got a look at at least some of his records. International spies were still following him. "Juan Hudson," a Spanish spy wrote to Philip III less than a month after the *Halve Maen* pulled into Dartmouth, "has . . . arrived here in England and did not give a full report to his employers." Eventually, Hudson managed to pass his log to Van Meteren, who sent it, along with a report, to Amsterdam.

The news of Hudson's river voyage passed through the sieve of Dutch political and business interests. To the sea-minded merchants on the Zandhoek and the Buitekant, Amsterdam's harborfront, monitoring the offloading of lighters packed with Spanish taffeta, German porcelain, Swedish copper, and East Indies spices while looking for the next business opportunity, hopes of a newfound passage to Asia were forgotten as they studied Van Meteren's report (published as an announcement to the world that the discovery was

Dutch). There they learned of the discovery and charting of a water highway into the unexplored continent that was "as fine a river as can be found, wide and deep, with good anchoring ground on both sides." It was a bonus that it was lightly inhabited by a "friendly and polite people." What jumped out at them, however, were other words, sharp, money-laden nouns—*"Vellen . . . Pelterijen . . . Maertens . . . Vossen . . ."*—the report making a frank promise of "many skins and peltries, martins, foxes, and many other commodities."

And so the story comes back to the founding, half a century earlier, of the English fur trade with Russia. It had dwindled in part because the Russian slaughter had outstripped the beavers' sexual abilities. North America held a fresh, seemingly limitless supply. For some time, Dutch traders had tried unsuccessfully to insinuate themselves into the French fur trade farther north in Canada. That would no longer be necessary: they had their own foothold on the continent. The Dutch staked their claim to the territory Hudson had sailed and which the subsequent explorer Adriaen Block would chart—a swath encompassing three river systems, which would eventually become the Delaware, the Hudson, and the Connecticut, occupying a position on the eastern seaboard of North America to the north of the English territory that Walter Raleigh had named in honor of his virgin queen—and promptly forgot about the mariner himself.

Which was fine because, after his prodigal return, the English wanted Hudson back. He kept his eyes on his prize, now tacking away from the epicenter of history. His obsession was unyielding, making him, finally, a man of the past: of the Renaissance dream of a voyage to far Cathay. He conned three fantastically wealthy young aristocrats into believing in the imminence of his discovery. Having ruled out John Smith's route, he now laid everything on Weymouth's indication of a passage to the icy north, through what was known as "the Furious Overfall" (the channel into Hudson Bay, now called Hudson Strait). The three funded him forthwith, he raised a crew and set off, without skipping a beat, the following spring. His calculations and his hunch pointed to it as inevitable: the passage had to be there.* He wouldn't take no for an answer. The world would have to kill him to stop him.

Which is what happened. Hudson hadn't reckoned that his crew might

not share his conviction and would do whatever necessary to save themselves. His arrogance was so supreme that he didn't see his end coming. Even as he was being lowered from the deck of his ship into the shallop, hands bound behind his back, dressed in "a motley gown" as one of the mutineers would later testify (for they took him at daybreak, as he stepped out of his cabin), he remained clueless. "What do you mean by this?" he asked in bewilderment, as they bound him and told him that he would soon find out. He had egged and cajoled and lashed the twenty-two men onward, month upon month, as they fought a losing battle against the pack ice, as the shrouds and sails froze above them, as the food ran out and the sightings of bears and seals out on the white strip of the horizon stopped, as they were reduced to clambering ashore and scavenging moss for sustenance. First their gums bled, then their teeth loosened. Toe by toe, frostbite ate its way into their flesh, so that many could no longer stand, their pallets crowding every available space on board. Finally, they could take it no more.

Besides him, the small party loaded into the shallop comprised the most desperately sick and those that had remained loyal to him, including his son John, still a boy. At some point after they were set adrift—after the ship had moved away from them into open water, her topsails fattening in a fresh wind; after he had watched her hull evaporate into the white hoar of early morning, leaving their small vessel to the elements, without food, water, or source of fire, and three hundred thousand square miles of ice-choked sea around them—his iron will must have finally caved in. And he would have been left, then, before the cold ate its way into his blood and heart, to endure what must be any man's twin nightmares: watching his innocent child suffer and die because of his own folly, and contemplating the utter destruction of his life's ambition. At some point before his mind closed down, he would have acknowledged that his dream of discovery was to die here, as he would die.

The irony of his end came when the surviving mutineers limped back to London, stood trial for mutiny and murder, and then were exonerated based on their outrageous but ingenious claim that, in fact, Hudson *had* found the northwest passage, and that *they* knew where it was. Rather than being hanged, then, the survivors found themselves inaugurated by King James, along with some of the most prominent men in London, as members of a new company, the "Company of the Merchants Discoverers of the North-

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*For the record, Hudson was right. Roald Amundsen finally achieved the northwest passage in 1906, but by then it was a matter of personal adventure, the commercial possibilities of a northern route to Asia having been largely extinguished by the brutal realities of the voyage.

West Passage," with a charter to proceed through their newfound strait to commence trade "to the great kingdoms of Tartaria, China, Japan, Solomons Islands, Chili, the Philippins and other countrys . . . "

The wave of history, which Hudson had ridden so effortlessly for a short while, rapidly engulfed him. He was destined to serve as a pollinator, to bring the spores of a culture not his own to new soil. Even before he froze to death in the southern reaches of what became Hudson Bay, on the Amsterdam waterfront a young man named Arnout Vogels was in a whirl of activity. Vogels, a thirty-year-old of adventure and drive, had been born in Antwerp to the south, and was one of those who fled troubles elsewhere in Europe to the safe haven of Amsterdam, in his case after Spanish forces invaded his hometown in 1585. He threw himself into business with the zest of one who has grown up amid war and knows how short life can be. He apprenticed in the fur business in the service of a trading company, but longed to strike out on his own. When the report of Hudson's discoveries spread through the dockside offices of Amsterdam's traders, Vogels moved fast. On July 26, 1610, as Hudson was making his way through the massive icy bay where he would meet his end, Vogels shook hands with Captain Sijmen Lambertsz Mau on a deal to trade in the new, virgin territory. The destination was vague still to most European minds, and so on the contract it was stated rather broadly: "West Indies, and nearby lands and places." The term "West Indies" was still being applied to all American regions.

Overnight, times had changed. The idea of a shortcut to Asia, once the height of fashion, suddenly seemed antique and retro to men of Vogels's generation. The future was nearer: just across the Atlantic. The Englishman Hudson had scouted it for enterprising Dutchmen to follow. There was no concern at this date of a competing claim from England: the English had established a shaky beachhead at Virginia, but their New England settlements were still years in the future. Hudson's venture on behalf of the Dutch predated the Pilgrims' landing by more than a decade. So the field was clear, and the refrains must have repeated in the minds of the Dutch traders: "skins and peltries, martins, foxes," "a very good harbor for all windes." And they had an image to summon in their minds as a goal, a key, a way into the heart of a virgin continent: "as fine a river as can be found . . . a mile broad"—a glistening highway to pure possibility.

Chapter 3

THE ISLAND

Catalina Trico, a French-speaking teenager. Joris Rapalje, a Flemish textile worker. Bastiaen Krol, a lay minister from the farming province of Friesland. By tens and twenties they came in the years 1624 and 1625, pitching on the inhuman waves in yachts, galiots, ketches, pinks, and pinnaces, well-crafted but still frightfully vulnerable wooden vessels, banging around in the narrow and rheumatic below-decks, with pigs rooting and sheep bleating hollowly at every slamming swell, with the animal reek and their own odors of sickness and sour filth, each clutching his or her satchel of elixirs to ward off the plague, the devil, shipwreck, and "the bloody flux." The very names of their ships—*Fortune, Abraham's Sacrifice*—signaled the two poles of hope and fear that governed them.

Three months it took to follow Hudson, four if the winds failed. From Amsterdam the ships made their way across the wide inland sea called the IJ, with its treacherous shoals, to the windswept island of Texel, and then set off into the white hoar of the North Sea. They gave the Portuguese coast a wide berth and skirted the Canary Islands off North Africa, their captains with skill and luck avoiding predatory privateers and pirates (or not: some ships were taken by both). Then, riding the trades, they beat a long, forbidding arc southwest across the blue-gray wilderness of the Atlantic, swinging upward again north of the Bahamas and along the coast of the new land, the new world, keeping a sharp eye for the hooked peninsula that Hudson noted, and so into the enveloping embrace of the great harbor.

There still lingered, fifteen years after Hudson's trip, and ten years after Shakespeare penned *The Tempest* based on accounts of a voyage to America shipwrecked on a supposedly bewitched isle (Bermuda), the notion that this might be the gateway to the riches of the sultry, pagan, exotically civilized East. It was possible, as far as they knew, that the western shore, which in fifty years' time would be christened New Jersey, was in fact the backdoor of China, that India, with its steamy profusion of gods and curries, lay just beyond those bluffs. But these were not explorers but settlers, and their immediate focus was here: the river, this new home. In the decade and a half since Hudson's find, scouts and traders had made good contacts with the Indians of what the Dutch were now calling the River Mauritius, after Maurits of Nassau, son of the assassinated hero William the Silent and now leader of the rebellion against Spain (though another name had already sprung up: as early as 1614, fur traders were paying homage to their forerunner by referring to "de rivière Hudson"). In their lean and silent canoes the "River Indians" (as the traders called them: they were variously of the Mahican and Lenni Lenape tribes) came to them from the north, the east, the west, from far out in the unknown vastness, bringing excellent furs in remarkable quantities. There was indeed business to be had, the traders reported. And so a consortium of smaller interests was formed to exploit it in a systematic way.

The truce negotiated between Spain and the Dutch Republic during the year of Hudson's voyage was to last for twelve years. It ended promptly in 1621, and immediately the spear-rattling began among Dutch right-wingers. A patriot-businessman named Willem Usselincx, a birdlike man roiling with religious zeal, had for years championed the idea of Dutch provinces in the New World that would be driven by both commerce and Calvinist fire. "It is obvious," Usselincx argued in the series of meetings that led to the establishment of the West India Company, "that if one wants to get money, something has to be proposed to the people which will move them to invest. To this end the glory of God will help with some, harm to Spain with others, with some the welfare of the Fatherland; but the principal and most powerful inducement will be the profit that each can make for himself. . . ." The new lands, he stressed, were inhabited not by wild-eyed savages, but by intelligent natives among whom the Dutch could plant a colony. There were natural products there to be exploited, maybe gold and silver, as well as raw materials "which are the sinews of war."

The renewal of war with Spain fit in with this scheme: Dutch frigates of a privately owned company could be equipped with guns and carry out raids on Spanish ships in Caribbean and South American waters while also conducting trade in New World ports. Privateering—government-authorized piracy on enemy ships—was an accepted wartime activity.

Merchants and politicians were suddenly interested. Wealthy businessmen organized themselves into five regional chambers, each of which contributed startup funds. The States General, the governing body of the country, added a modest amount, and by October 1623 the West India Company was as flush as any new company in history, with more than seven million guilders in its coffers. The East India Company had exploited Asia to fabulous result; now its new colleague would encompass the Atlantic Rim—its monopoly extending to West Africa, the Caribbean islands, and the coast of North America. It was to be a creature of war as well as trade, and its network of merchants, skippers, sailors, accountants, carpenters, armourers, and soldiers infiltrated the new sphere of interest with remarkable speed. By 1626 an inventory of the company's property, addressed to the directors, included:

> 12 ships and yachts destined for the African trade in Guinea, Benin, Angola, Greyn, and Quaqua coasts, with the exported cargoes and expected returns . . .
> 1 ship of Dordrecht to Cape Verd, with cargo . . .
> 1 ship destined for the trade of the Amazon and the Coast of Guiana . . .
> 1 ship of about 130 lasts, 1 yacht well equipped, destined for the trade and colonization of New Netherland . . .
> 33 ships . . . which the Company hath still lying here in port, provided with metal and iron guns, and all sorts of supplies of ammunition of war, powder, muskets, arms, sabres, and whatever may be necessary for the equipment, which can be fitted for sea . . .
> Moneys . . . which being in the Treasury, will be applied to keep the foregoing ships at sea, not only to injure the King of Spain, but also by God's blessing to do your High Mightinesses and the Company much service, and the Partners good profit.

The North American territory would play an economic role in this scheme. The company would exploit it for furs and timber, and also use it as a transportation hub, with ships cycling from Europe to South America and the Caribbean, and then to the North American harbor and so back home. Of course, settlers were required, and raising them proved to be one of the hardest aspects of the whole complex business of creating an Atlantic empire. Times were good in the homeland; the future looked even better. And Amsterdam was probably the best place in the world to be poor (its almshouses, wrote an English consul with some exaggeration, were "more like princes' palaces than lodgings for poor people"). To get people to sign on for a passage to what was now being called New Netherland, they had to find those who were ignorant or desperate or poor enough to leave the deeply civilized bosom of Amsterdam—with its paved streets, its scrubbed floors, its wheels of cheese and tankards of excellent beer, its fluffy pillows and blue-and-white-tiled hearths and cozy peat fires—and venture to the back of beyond, to an absolute and unforgiving wilderness.

But, as always, the country was loaded with refugees, and, by promising land in exchange for six years of service, the company managed to round up a handful of hale young Walloons—French-speaking exiles from what is today Belgium—made sure, like Noah, that they had a female for every male, and hustled them into the Amsterdam council chamber, where they swore an oath of allegiance to the company and the government.

The councillor who administered the oath, Claes Peterszen, was a renowned physician and surgeon, so renowned that while we know him from Rembrandt's viscerally famous painting *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp* ("Tulp," or "tulip," being a nickname, from the flower painted above his front door), at the time it was the doctor who, in agreeing to the portrait, helped make the artist famous. We have a nice mental image, then, of the black-dressed, dignified, austere physician-magistrate with his sharp black V of facial hair, representative of the Dutch political and scientific establishment, and before him, in their rough country attire, the young men and women, shifting and twitching with nerves and exuberant raw youth, who were about to start a new society in a wilderness called Manhattan.

There was lots of raw youth: four couples were actually married at sea, the ship's captain, Cornelis May (for whom, incidentally, Cape May, New Jersey, is named), doing the honors. Another pair—the ones named at the top of this chapter, Catalina Trico and Joris Rapalje—were smarter. Maybe they knew what conditions would be like on board, and didn't relish the idea of consummating a marriage there. They agreed to take part in the wildly hazardous enterprise on the condition that the company first marry them in a hastier-than-normal ceremony, which took place four days before their ship left Amsterdam on January 25, 1624. "Espousé le 21 de Janvier," the clerk of the Walloon Church of Amsterdam recorded, without wasting too much time getting the names right, "Joris Raporbie de Valencenne, et Caterine triko." Being illiterate, both made their marks on the page. He was nineteen, she was eighteen; neither had parents sign the registry, which suggests that both were either alone in the world or alone in that part of the world, which amounted to the same thing. Like many who were to follow, they had nothing to lose.

Considering the stupendous dangers awaiting them, first at sea and then on arrival, it wasn't a union a betting man would likely lay money on. And yet, sixty years later, when the English colonies of Pennsylvania and Maryland were embroiled in a border dispute and needed evidence of "Christian" occupation of certain lands along the eastern seaboard, the representatives of William Penn found an old woman to testify who was known to have been among the first European settlers. Catalina Trico, now in her eighties, was a widow, but she and Joris had had a long and fruitful marriage. The records of New Netherland show them among the first buyers of land in the wilderness of southern Manhattan, building two houses on Pearl Street steps away from the fort, obtaining a milk cow, borrowing money from the provincial government, moving their homestead to a large tract of farmland across the river in the new village of Breuckelen, and giving birth to and baptizing eleven children. Their first, Sarah, was considered the first European born in what would become New York (in 1656, at the age of thirty, she proclaimed herself "first born christian daughter of New Netherland"). She was born in 1625, and the same records duly show her marriage in 1639, to the overseer of a tobacco plantation in what would become Greenwich Village, and, in turn, the birth of her eight children. Over the course of the brief life of New Netherland and into the history of New York the Rapalje children and their offspring would spread across the region. In the 1770s, John Rapalje would serve as a member of the New York State Assembly (he rejected revolution and became a Loyalist). Their descendants have been estimated at upwards of one million, and in the Hudson Valley town of Fishkill, New York, a lane called Rapalje Road is a quiet suburban testament to the endurance of a long-ago slapdash wedding of two young nobodies on the Amsterdam waterfront, which, as much as any political event, marked the beginning of the immigrant, stake-your-claim civilization not only of Manhattan but of America.

As the sea-battered ships finally entered the harbor, the passengers gazed out onto a wholly new landscape, stranger and more complex than the flat land they had left. In contemporary scientific terms, the region that would be their new home comprised an intersection of three physiographic provinces: sandy coastal plain, rolling upland hills, and craggy metamorphic ridges, much of which was slashed and gouged by the glaciers of the last ice age, leaving a stippling of streambeds, jumbled moraine, and glacial lakes. Sailing silently into the inner harbor, approaching the southern tip of Manhattan Island, the ships glided into a reedy, marshy expanse of tidal wetland (the Mohawk name for Manhattan—*Gänóno*—translates as "reeds" or "place of reeds"), a complicated crossover region of freshwater and marine species, where bay, swamp forest, and serpentine barrens bred skying, cawing shore birds—plovers, sandpipers, dowitchers, yellowlegs—as well as thick populations of homebody mallards, and also drew migrating flocks of oldsquaws, mergansers, and wigeons that blackened the gray November sky. Mussels, conchs, clams, and periwinkles encrusted the estuaries, and most of all oysters, some of which, a settler wrote, are "quite large and occasionally containing a small pearl," while others were tiny and sweet and another variety was "fine for stewing and frying. As each one fills a big spoon they make a good bite." Rising up above the island's reedy shoreline were forested hills: the best guess on the origin of the Indian name that would stick is the Delaware *mannahata,* "hilly island," though some have suggested that simply "the island" or "the small island" is a more accurate translation.

Putting foot to solid ground, the settlers decided they liked what they saw. "We were much gratified on arriving in this country," one wrote home. "Here we found beautiful rivers, bubbling fountains flowing down into the valleys; basins of running waters in the flatlands, agreeable fruits in the woods, such as strawberries, pigeon berries, walnuts, and also . . . wild grapes. The woods abound with acorns for feeding hogs, and with venison. There is considerable fish in the rivers; good tillage land; here is especially free coming and going, without fear of the naked natives of the country. Had we cows, hogs, and other cattle fit for food (which we daily expect in the first ships) we would not wish to return to Holland, for whatever we desire in the paradise of Holland, is here to be found." In Europe, newspapers as such didn't yet exist, but periodical pamphlets were a major source of news, and no sooner did the first settlers of New Netherland begin writing home than an Amsterdam physician named Nicolaes van Wassenaer started to publish a semiannual pamphlet of the doings in the far-off land. "It is very pleasant, all products being in abundance, though wild," he wrote in December 1624. "Grapes are of very good flavor, but will be henceforward better cultivated by our people. Cherries are not found there. There are all sorts of fowls, both in the water and in the air. Swans, geese, ducks, bitterns, abound."

At first the company sprinkled its few settlers over a wide area. In the Dutch understanding, laying claim to a patch of territory required inhabiting it (for the English, as would later become an issue, all that was required was having an official representative set foot on a patch of soil not previously claimed by Christians). Also in the Dutch understanding, water was the key to any piece of land. Thus, the company set about dividing its few colonists among the three principal waterways of their territory. What under the English would become the Delaware River, which Hudson had considered exploring but quickly ruled out as a route to Asia due to its shoaly bay, the Dutch called the South River, for the good reason that it formed the southern limit of their territory. For most of their time in North America they called the Hudson the North River (mariners, famously conservative and resistant to change, call it that to this day). The other main waterway—what would become the Connecticut River, which bisects that state—the Dutch called the Fresh River.

These were the highways of the region, the places to which Indians brought pelts, and the means of exploring the interior. The company sent a few settlers to form a small camp on each—literally a few. Two families and six single men were shipped east to the Fresh River. Two families and eight men sailed down the coast to the South River. Eight men stayed on a small island in the harbor. The rest of the families sailed a further hundred and fifty miles up the North River, through the mud-colored tidal chop, by majestic palisades of rock along the western shore, then passing on both shores the undulating humps of the highlands, to the place the traders reported was the key junction of Indian traffic. Here the east-flowing Mohawk River, after traveling all the way from the Great Lakes region, careened over seventy-foot falls before emptying into the North River. Here the newcomers disembarked and stood defenseless before the towering pines. For shelter initially they dug square pits in the ground, lined them with wood, and covered them with bark roofs (a minister who arrived a few years later, when proper houses were being built, sneered at the "hovels and holes" in which the first arrivals "huddled rather than dwelt").

Catalina and Joris were in the party initially shipped upriver from Manhattan to the falls, where a fort-trading post was to be constructed. The natives of the country appeared soon after the settlers stumbled ashore, exchanged presents, and made other gestures of friendship with the ship's captain. It was disorienting for the newcomers, but the sun had the warmth of spring in it, and the crumbly black earth seemed to cry out to be impregnated with seed. The Rapaljes and the other couples stayed two years at the location, in autumn harvesting grain "as high as a man," the next spring whispering prayers of thanks when three company ships arrived whose names—*The Cow, The Sheep, The Horse*—betrayed their cargo. During the whole time the Indians "were all quiet as lambs," as Catalina remembered in old age, coming regularly and trading freely with the settlers.

The initial plan was for an island on the South River, a hundred-odd miles from Manhattan, to become the capital of the new province. This was based on the decidedly mistaken belief that the climate of what would become southern New Jersey approximated that which the Spanish had found in Florida. The balminess of those reports sounded good to the Dutch, who wouldn't have to deal with the extreme bother of a harbor freezing up in the winter, bringing trade and communication to a halt. The first settlers to arrive there were dismayed to find no palm trees. Worse, the bay did indeed freeze over that first winter and in subsequent ones, too, so that attention shifted to the bay to the north, which, thanks to geographic peculiarities, rarely froze despite its latitude.

The knots of colonists scattered over two hundred and fifty miles got to work—cleared ground, felled trees, constructed palisade defenses, sowed grain. Ships arrived. The colonists made deals with the Indians and established a system for trade: in 1625 they bought 5,295 beaver pelts and 463 otter skins, which they loaded onto the ships to be sent back home. The ships in turn brought news. In England, James I, Elizabeth's successor, had died. He had been an awkward monarch—he tended to drool and was given to crude mannerisms—and was never revered as Elizabeth had been. He had unsuccessfully resisted the Dutch rise to power, attempting to ally with Spain at a time when English hatred of Catholicism was at a fever pitch. (Then again, he had, however, also overseen the creation of the King James Bible, one of the world's great literary works.) The nation breathed a sigh of relief when his son Charles—handsome, chaste, dignified—took the throne, not knowing that in time hopes would be dashed in the most violent way, for him and for the nation, and with great consequences for this far-off Dutch province.

In the United Provinces, too, power had passed, from brother to brother. Maurits, Prince of Orange, the stadtholder or chief nobleman of the country, had led the fight against Spain since the death of his father, William the Silent, in 1584. But he had grown weak in recent years, and he had fatally compromised his legitimacy six years earlier by resolving a power struggle with the great statesman Jan van Oldenbarnevelt by having the man's head cut off. Maurits's brother, Frederik Hendrik, who at age forty-one was seventeen years his junior, was a brilliant diplomat and military tactician; he would continue the revolt and bring the nation to the verge of final recognition of independence. Under these new leaders the Dutch and the English, united in their common Protestantism, had signed a treaty of cooperation against Catholic Spain, their joint enemy. This treaty provided that each nation would have access to the other's ports, including provincial ports.

The New Netherland settlers, chests heaving and faces streaked with sweat, would have had to pause in their labors to digest this information. They knew perfectly well that a group of English religious pilgrims had settled to their north a few years earlier—"Brownists" they were called at the time, after the Separatist preacher Robert Browne—and they hoped for good relations. In fact, they expected good relations. Remarkably, most of the Walloons who made up the majority of the Dutch colony's early population had come from asylum in the university town of Leiden (spelled Leyden at the time), the same place that had harbored the English Pilgrims. In their flight from persecution in England, the Pilgrims had spent twelve years there as guests of the Dutch before leaving to found a virgin theocracy in the New World.

Events soon derailed the initial settlement strategy in the Dutch province. Joris Rapalje, his wife Catalina, and the other settlers at what was now called Fort Orange (which under the English would become Albany) saw their hard work come to a sudden, grisly end in the spring of 1626. Their settlement on the riverbank was on former hunting grounds of the Mahicans, who had welcomed them. To the north and west stretched the territory of the Mohawks. These two tribes—the first, one of the Algonquin-speaking nations, the second, one of the five tribes of the Iroquois League—had very different backgrounds and beliefs. Their languages were as distinct as English and Russian; they had different customs and little respect for one another. For decades they had been fighting an intermittent war, and the appearance of European traders in their midst stirred the conflict to a new level. In addition, after more than a decade of contact with Europeans, these tribes were reorienting their lives around the acquisition of foreign products: fishing hooks, axes, kettles, glassware, needles, pots, knives, and duffel (the rough wool cloth that originated in the Flemish town of Duffel and which gives us the term "duffel bag"). Later, of course, guns and liquor would be added to the list. Mahicans were even relocating their villages to be closer to the Dutch, in an attempt to form a trade and defensive alliance. Call it friendship or self-interest, by 1626 the Mahicans and Dutch had established a closeness.

This closeness was probably what led Daniel van Crieckenbeeck, the commander of the fort, to ignore explicit orders forbidding interference in intertribal affairs, with results that would redound to the present. One spring day in 1626, a Mahican party of more than two dozen men—like the Dutch "in figure, build and share," as one writer described, their hair "jet-black, quite sleek and uncurled, and almost as coarse as a horse's tail," and probably, given the period and the time of year, wearing deer skins loosely about their bodies and tied at the waist—came into the palisade of rough-cut logs and asked Van Crieckenbeeck for Dutch aid in their fight against the Mohawks. The man who asked this favor was most likely a tribal leader named Monemin. Van Crieckenbeeck had his orders; the West India Company had clearly instructed Willem Verhulst, head of the province, that "he shall be very careful not lightly to embroil himself in [the Indians'] quarrels or wars, or to take sides, but to remain neutral . . ." On the other hand, Van Crieckenbeeck surely felt responsible for the well-being of the handful of young couples, including a number of pregnant women and perhaps some infants, in the midst of the forest thousands of miles from home. It stood to reason that helping the Mahicans now would yield a firm ally in the future. So he agreed. The Mahicans led the way, and he and six of his men followed, disappearing into the pines.

Three miles from the fort, they were inundated by a storm of arrows. In one swift, bloody assault, a band of ambushing Mohawks put an end to the Dutch-Mahican alliance and, by the way, altered the history of the world. Van Crieckenbeeck, three of his men, and twenty-four Mahicans, including Monemin, took fatal hits. The Mohawks made a show of their victory, and nicely capped the terror they had caused by roasting and eating one especially unfortunate Dutchman named Tymen Bouwensz.

Meanwhile, the other settlement on the North River was also in turmoil. It had been decided that the settlement in the harbor would be on a tiny, teardrop-shaped island that the colonists called Noten (Nut) Island, after the walnut and chestnut trees they found there. The first settlers who arrived camped here, and their cattle were sent to pasture five hundred yards across the bay, on Manhattan Island. The colony's provisional director, Willem Verhulst, began causing problems from the start. He meted out harsh and inconsistent punishment, infuriating the colonists. He and his wife may also have misappropriated funds or—an even worse offense—cheated Indians. Both because of the colony's Calvinist sense of propriety and out of a practical awareness that it was not a good idea to upset the natives who were surrounding you, the West India Company had sent Verhulst explicit instructions on dealing with the Indians: "He shall also see that no one do the Indians any harm or violence, deceive, mock, or contemn them in any way, but that in addition to good treatment they be shown honesty, faithfulness; and sincerity in all contracts, dealings, and intercourse, without being deceived by shortage of measure, weight or number, and that throughout friendly relations with them be maintained . . ." Whatever the exact offenses, Verhulst and his wife had set the colonists howling; they wanted him gone.

At the moment this crisis was boiling over, a ship arrived from the upriver settlement with news of the Indian attack. The colony was barely a year old and already it was in turmoil, in danger of collapse. It needed a leader, and one stepped forward.

He had grown up speaking German and Dutch was his second language, but his ancestry was French, so his name was pronounced in the French way—"Min-wee." He is one of those figures of history for whom everything we know about him makes us wish we knew more. He had had no military training, but he was an individualistic, take-charge sort who would affect the course of history in more ways than one. His father had taken part in the northward migration of Protestants fleeing Spanish troops and inquisitors, and settled in the small German town of Wesel, near the Dutch border, and it was here that Peter Minuit grew up. He would turn out to be a scrappy businessman with no fixed loyalties and a great drive to get ahead, and, in good upwardly mobile fashion, he made his first smart move in life by marrying the daughter of the mayor of the nearby town of Kleve. He and his wife then moved seventy-five miles west to the larger Dutch city of Utrecht, where Minuit trained to become a diamond-cutter. He found that a dull occupation, though, and heard of the formation of the West India Company. Through French-speaking circles, he learned further that a party of Walloons was signing on as pioneers in a venture to the New World. He appeared at the stately mansion of West India House on Amsterdam's Brouwersgracht (Brewers' Canal) one day in 1624, asking for a posting to New Netherland, apparently not as a settler or company official but as a private "volunteer" businessman scouting trade opportunities. The directors must have been impressed by his energy. Minuit appears to have shipped out with one of the first groups of settlers, for the company's initial instructions to Verhulst say that "He shall have Pierre Minuyt, as volunteer, and others whom he deems competent thereto sail up the river as far as they can in any way do so, in order to inspect the condition of the land . . ."

Minuit might thus have been among the party of Catalina Trico and Joris Rapalje when they sailed upriver, and he seems, during this early period, to have gathered a good deal of information about the new land. He then apparently returned to Amsterdam for a time, perhaps to deliver the "samples of dyes, drugs, gums, herbs, plants, trees and flowers" the instructions asked him to supply, for the records show him leaving the Dutch Republic once again in January of 1626 and returning to New Netherland on May 4. So he had spent time in the colony, enough time to impress the settlers with his abilities, and then returned to Europe; now he was coming back. Not long after his ship, the *Sea-Mew,* passed through the narrows between *Staten Eylandt* (named in honor of the States General of the United Provinces) and *Lange Eylandt* (named for obvious reasons), and dropped anchor in the harbor, he would have been inundated with the bad news.

A newly formed council of settlers met. They put Verhulst on trial and voted to banish him and his wife from the province. Verhulst did not go gently; he was furious and vindictive. He vowed to return someday at the head of a foreign army and make use of his knowledge of the territory and its fortifications—an interesting threat in light of what not he but Minuit would do twelve years later.

The colonists then voted Minuit their new commander. Minuit acted quickly once his role had changed from private scout to officer of the province. The first decision he seems to have made is the one that would have the most profound consequences. The leaders in Amsterdam had tried to supervise the settlement from afar, which was awkward and ineffective, and Verhulst, their man on the scene, hadn't been able to see the obvious problems. Too few settlers were spread out across the hundreds of miles of territory; the news from Fort Orange convinced Minuit that safety was a major concern. Nut Island (today Governor's Island) may have been useful as an initial staging area, but it was too small for a settlement of any size. The South River did not live up to its tropical billing. To anyone with a practical and logistical mind it was clear that the island of Manhattan, separated from Nut Island by a channel "a gunshot wide," answered every need. It was large enough to support a population, small enough that a fort located on its southernmost tip could be defended. Its forests were rich in game; it had flatlands that could be farmed and freshwater streams. It was situated at the mouth of the river to which Indian fur-traders came from hundreds of miles around, and which connected to other waterways that penetrated deep into the interior. It was also at the entrance to the bay, located in a wide and inviting harbor that seemed not to freeze over in winter. It was, in short, a natural fulcrum between the densely civilized continent of Europe and the tantalizingly wild continent of North America. It was the perfect island.

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SO HE BOUGHT it. Everyone knows that. Peter Minuit purchased Manhattan Island from a group of local Indians for sixty guilders worth of goods, or as the nineteenth-century historian Edmund O'Callaghan calculated it, twenty-four dollars. From the seventeenth through the early twentieth century thousands of real estate transactions occurred in which native Americans sold parcels—ranging in size from a town lot to a midwestern state—to English, Dutch, French, Spanish, and other European settlers. But only one sale is legend; only one is known by everyone. Only one has had the durability to be riffed on in Broadway song ("Give It Back to the Indians," from the 1939 Rodgers and Hart musical *Too Many Girls*), and, at the end of the twentieth century, to do service as a punchline in a column by humorist Dave Barry (". . . which the Dutch settler Peter Minuit purchased from the Manhattan Indians for $24, plus $167,000 a month in maintenance fees").

It's pretty clear why this particular sale lodged in the cultural memory, why it became legend: the extreme incongruity, the exquisitely absurd price. It is the most dramatic illustration of the whole long process of stripping the natives of their land. The idea that the center of world commerce, an island packed with trillions of dollars' worth of real estate, was once bought from supposedly hapless Stone Age innocents for twenty-four dollars' worth of household goods is too delicious to let slip. It speaks to our sense of early American history as the history of savvy, ruthless Europeans conniving, tricking, enslaving, and bludgeoning innocent and guileless natives out of their land and their lives. It's a neatly packed symbol of the entire conquest of the continent that was to come.

Beyond that, the purchase snippet is notable because it is virtually the only thing about the Manhattan colony that *has* become a part of history. For this reason, too, it deserves exploring.

So, who were the Indians who agreed to this transaction, and what did they think it meant? The ancestors of the people whom European settlers took to calling Indians (after Columbus, who at first thought he had arrived at the outer reaches of India) traveled the land bridge from Siberia to Alaska that existed during the last ice age, more than twelve thousand years ago, then spread slowly through the Americas. They came from Asia; their genetic makeup is a close match with Siberians and Mongolians. They spread out thinly across the incomprehensible vastness of the American continents to create a linguistic richness unparalleled in human history: it has been estimated that at the moment Columbus arrived in the New World twenty-five percent of all human languages were North American Indian.

There are two rival, hardened stereotypes that get in the way of understanding these people: the one that arose from the long cultural dismissing of American Indians as "primitive," and the modern dogma that sees them as Noble and Defenseless. Both are cartoon images. Recent work in genetics, archaeology, anthropology, and linguistics makes plain what should be obvious: that the Mahican, Mohawk, Lenape, Montauk, Housatonic, and other peoples occupying the lands that for a time were called New Netherland, as well as the Massachusett, Wampanoag, Sokoki, Pennacook, Abenaki, Oneida, Onondaga, Susquehannock, Nanticoke, and others who inhabited other parts of what became the states of New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey, were biologically, genetically, intellectually, all but identical to the Dutch, English, French, Swedish, and others who came into contact with them in the beginning of the seventeenth century. The Indians were as skilled, as duplicitous, as capable of theological rumination and technological cunning, as smart and as pig-headed, and as curious and as cruel as the Europeans who met them. The members of the Manhattan-based colony who knew them—who spent time among them in their villages, hunted and traded with them, learned their languages—knew this perfectly well. It was later, after the two had separated into rival camps, that the stereotypes set. The early seventeenth century was a much more interesting time than the Wild West era, a time when Indians and Europeans were something like equal participants, dealing with one another as allies, competitors, partners.

But if the Indians were so smart and in a strong position, why would they sell their land, the most precious thing they owned? Putting the question that way raises a point familiar to every middle school student: the Indians had a different idea of land ownership from the Europeans. With no concept of permanent property transfer, Indians of the Northeast saw a real estate deal as a combination of a rental agreement and a treaty or alliance between two groups. Indian nations were divided and subdivided into tribes, villages, and other communities. They were often at war or in fear of attack from other groups, and often entered into defensive alliances with one another, which involved sharing certain tribal lands in exchange for the strength of numbers. This colored the way the Indians saw their land deals with the Dutch and English. They would give the newcomers use of some of their land, and in exchange they would get blankets, knives, kettles, and other extremely useful goods, and also a military ally. That this was how they viewed land deals is illustrated neatly by several cases—such as one in South Carolina in the 1750s between the colonial governor and Cherokee leaders—in which the Indians refused any payment at all for the land. As they saw it, the protective alliance was payment enough.

This was probably what the Mahican Monemin had in mind when he approached the unfortunate Daniel van Crieckenbeeck: he was asking the Dutch to fulfill what he understood to be part of the bargain in the land deal at Fort Orange, to help him in a battle with his enemies. Van Crieckenbeeck may have understood this was a part of the Mahican notion of property transfer and tried to do what was expected of him, in defiance of his orders.

Thus the situation of the Indians. As to the Dutch, the neatness and compactness of the legend of Manhattan's purchase has to do with the lack of attention paid to the Dutch colony by historians and with what they perceived to be a shortage of information about the settlement. For those hoping to understand the history of the Manhattan-based colony, the great disaster took place in 1821, when the government of the Netherlands, in a truly unfortunate fit of housekeeping (the Dutch have always been fastidious cleaners), sold for scrap paper what remained of the archives of the Dutch East and West India Companies prior to 1700. Eighteen years later, an American agent named John Romeyn Brodhead, working on behalf of New York State, went to the Netherlands in search of documentary material on the Dutch colony, and found to his "surprise, mortification, and regret" that all of it—eighty thousand pounds of records—had vanished.

Fortunately, we have another great mass of relevant documents: the official records of the province, twelve thousand pages strong. As outlined at the beginning of this book, the bulk of these records are only now, after centuries of neglect, being translated by Dr. Charles Gehring of the New Netherland Project, and it is upon these that much of this book relies. These records miraculously survived wars, fires, mold, and rodents. But they begin in 1638. None of the province's records prior to that year have survived, possibly because when, like Verhulst, the early governors of the province were dismissed from service, they likely took the records of their administration back to Amsterdam with them to aid in their defense. We are left then with a gaping hole at the earliest period of New York's prehistory, which nineteenth-century historians filled in as best they could. They knew the name Peter Minuit, knew that he was an early director of the province, and they had a tantalizing scrap of paper suggesting that the island had been purchased from the *"Wilden"* (Indians) for "the value of 60 guilders."

We know more now and are able to paint a more detailed picture of what went on in the spring of 1626. In Amsterdam in the year 1910, a sheaf of papers showed up at a rare books and manuscripts auction. A curator had labeled item No. 1795 "Documents sur la Nouvelle-Néerlande, 1624–1626." The owner was a man with the formidable name of Alexander Carel Paul George Ridder van Rappard. The antique sheets he put up for sale may have been part of the collection of his grandfather, Frans Alexander Ridder van Rappard, a noted collector. It was years before the papers were bought by another collector (the American railroad tycoon Henry E. Huntington), were translated, published, and made available to scholars.* The documents—which had once been a part of the West India Company archives and had somehow escaped the wholesale destruction—comprised five letters and sets of instructions dating from the colony's beginnings. Much of the information in this chapter comes from these papers, which have provided a new perspective on what the Dutch thought they were doing with their New World colony. One long-held belief, for example, was that the colony from the beginning was an unorganized, ad hoc settlement, not so much mismanaged as allowed to grow in a state of near anarchy, that was generally a mess until the English came in and began to make it function. The so-called Van Rappard documents prove this wrong. They show that a great deal of care was devoted to the colony and to the welfare of the inhabitants. It is from these documents that we know that there was a leader before Minuit, the hapless Willem Verhulst. Before he left the Dutch Republic, Verhulst was given explicit instructions to "carefully note all places where there is any appearance of tillable or pasture land, timber of any kind, minerals, or other things," to do test drillings of the soil, to denote every waterfall, stream, and place for sawmills, to note "inlets, depths, shallows, rocks, and width of the rivers," and indicate the best places for forts, "keeping in mind that the fittest place is where the river is narrow, where it cannot be fired upon from higher ground, where large ships cannot come too close,

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*In 1924, A. J. F. van Laer, Charles Gehring's predecessor as translator of the Dutch archives, produced a limited edition publication of these records, *Documents Relating to New Netherland, 1624–1626, in the Henry E. Huntington Library.*

where there is a distant view unobstructed by trees or hills, where it is possible to have water in the moat, and where there is no sand, but clay or other firm earth." The instructions note elaborate preparations for farming: "... divers trees, vines, and all sorts of seeds are being sent over ... and of each sort of fruit he shall successively send us samples.... And with regard to the aniseed and cuminseed which is sent over to make a trial with, he shall sow the same at different times and places, observing at what time and in which place it grows best and yields most."

Thanks to this cache of documents, we have a revised picture: of a well-organized Dutch effort and of Minuit as a competent leader wrapping his mind around the problem of establishing a colony. Another figure emerges from these documents. In July of 1626, Isaack de Rasière, a thirty-year-old merchant's son with a taste for adventure, stepped off the *Arms of Amsterdam* and onto the Manhattan shore, ready to begin his duties as secretary of the province. The Van Rappard documents include letters that de Rasière wrote to his bosses in Holland. In one, he reported that the island was home to a small group of natives whom he called the Manhatesen: "they are about 200 to 300 strong, women and men, under different chiefs, whom they call *Sackimas.*" It was presumably this small band—probably a northern branch of the Lenni Lenape Indians—with whom Peter Minuit consummated a real estate transaction.

It's true no deed is on file anywhere to prove that the sale took place, but many other important records of the period have failed to survive the centuries. We also have an account from the 1670s that makes reference to the deed to Manhattan, so it existed at that time. Most interestingly, we have an excellent, evocative account of the purchase, by someone who had no interest in deceiving. When the *Arms of Amsterdam,* which had brought Isaack de Rasière to New Netherland, left Manhattan on its return voyage, it carried a neat collection of items and individuals associated with this pivotal moment in history: first, the banished Verhulst himself, along with his wife, returning in disgrace and anger (but mollified somewhat by some of the spoils of their adventure—back in Amsterdam, he had a tabard, or cape, made of sixteen beaver pelts, while his wife had a tailor fashion a fur coat out of thirty-two otter skins); second, a chest containing the personal effects of the unfortunate Daniel van Crieckenbeeck, including an otterskin coat and a ring, which were being sent to his wife; third, a letter from de Rasière to the West India Company directors, in which he detailed the council's decision to oust Verhulst, as well as information about the purchase of Manhattan.

This information may have been the deed itself, which might thus have been among the West India Company records that were sold for scrap in 1821 and so vanished forever. Fortunately, however, Pieter Schaghen, a Dutch official who had just been appointed to represent the government on the company's board, was on the dock when the ship pulled into port. He wrote a letter to his superiors at The Hague giving a detailed description of the ship's contents and news of the province. It is one of the most famous historical documents in the Dutch language and one of the most important records of early American history. It is, in effect, New York City's birth certificate.

> *High and Mighty Lords*
> *My Lords the States General*
> *At The Hague*
>
> *High and Mighty Lords:*
>
> *Yesterday, arrived here the Ship the Arms of Amsterdam, which sailed from New Netherland, out of the River Mauritius, on the 23rd September. They report that our people are in good heart and live in peace there; the Women also have borne some children there. They have purchased the Island Manhattes from the Indians for the value of 60 guilders; it is 11,000 morgens in size. They had all their grain sowed by the middle of May, and reaped by the middle of August. They send thence samples of summer grain; such as wheat, rye, barley, oats, buckwheat, canary seed, beans and flax. The cargo of the aforesaid ship is*
>
> *7246 Beaver skins*
> *178½ Otter skins*
> *675 Otter skins*
> *48 Mink skins*
> *36 Wildcat skins*
> *33 Minks*
> *34 Rat skins*
> *Considerable Oak timber and Hickory.*

Herewith,

High and Mighty Lords, be commended to the mercy of the Almighty.
In Amsterdam, The 5th November Ao. 1626
Your High Mightinesses' obedient,
P. Schaghen

Two days later, in an office within the fortress-like Binnenhof at The Hague, a clerk of the States General picked up his pen and wrote a terse memo: "Received a letter from Mr. Schaghen, written at Amsterdam, the 5th inst., containing advice of the arrival of a ship from New Netherland, which requires no action."

It is this letter, then, that gives us the purchase price. While it may be a useful whip for belated self-flagellation over the white takeover of the continent from the Indians, being fair to those involved in the transaction means looking at it from their perspective. We can, first of all, dismiss the twenty-four-dollar figure because it dates to the mid-nineteenth century and has no relationship to buying power two hundred years earlier. Second, Minuit paid not sixty guilders, which the Indians would have found useless, but "the value of" sixty guilders—meaning goods. What amount of goods was worth sixty guilders in 1626? Calculating relative worth is hopelessly fraught. A steel knife might be of relatively little value in Amsterdam or London, of considerable worth to a Dutch settler living in primitive conditions along the North River in America, and of enormous worth to an Indian living what anthropologists today call a "Late Woodlands" existence.

One way of putting the sale in perspective is to compare the figure with other amounts paid for parcels of wilderness. In 1630, for example, Peter Minuit, on behalf of the West India Company, bought Staten Island from the Tappans for "Duffels, Kittles, Axes, Hoes, Wampum, Drilling Awls, Jews Harps, and diverse other small wares." In 1664 three Englishmen purchased a vast tract of farmland in New Jersey from Indians for two coats, two guns, two kettles, ten bars of lead, twenty handfuls of gunpowder, four hundred fathoms of wampum and twenty fathoms of cloth. We can also look at the Manhattan sale in the context of land transfers between Dutch residents. Three years after the Manhattan transfer, the West India Company granted a Dutchman two hundred acres of what would become Greenwich Village in exchange for one-tenth of whatever he produced from the land, plus the promise to "deliver yearly at Christmas to the director a brace of capons." In 1638, Andries Hudde sold Gerrit Wolphertsen one hundred acres of land on Long Island for fifty-two guilders.

So the Manhattan purchase was roughly in line with other prices paid to Indians, and while it was considerably less, on a per-acre basis, than what the Dutch paid each other for land, it was in the same ballpark. As a reference point, a West India Company soldier earned about one hundred guilders per year—or nearly twice the price paid for Manhattan. The overriding fact was that in its wilderness state New World land was dirt cheap.

On the other side, given their idea of land ownership, the Indians who "sold" Manhattan fully intended to continue to use the land, and they did. Thanks to the comparative recentness of serious study about the Manhattan colony, new information is liable to turn up at any time and from the most unlikely places. As historians in the United States have become interested in the colony, some in the Netherlands have as well. Thus, a court case that ended in 1663, which has been slumbering since that date in the archives of the Dutch town of Arnhem but was unearthed and written about by Dutch historian Janny Venema in 2000, gives focus to the fuzzy notion of how American Indians saw real estate transactions in the seventeenth century. In 1648, Brant van Slichtenhorst was hired by the Van Rensselaers, the largest landowners in the province, to manage their vast estate. Years later, back in the Dutch Republic, he filed suit for expenses owed, and the seven-year case is packed with details about life among the Mohawks and Mahicans. On behalf of his patrons, Van Slichtenhorst bought several estates from the Indians during his time in the Dutch colony, and none of these transactions was remotely straightforward. Beginning days before the sale and continuing for years after, Van Slichtenhorst had to host as many as fifty Indians at a time, feeding them and providing a steady supply of beer and brandy for the sachems. In addition to the sellers and their retinue, in one case there was actually an Indian real estate broker who also demanded, as part of his commission, to stay "8 or 10 times" at Van Slichtenhorst's home, along with several women. There was always "great trouble and quarrels with all the Indian people," Van Slichtenhorst complained, "and great filth and stench, and everything within reach was stolen . . ."

This continued not for days or weeks but for *years* after the sale. Van Slichtenhorst would be out surveying the property and come across an encamped party of Indians. Rather than be indignant at the "trespassers," he was obliged, in accordance with their custom, to give them further presents and hospitality. "I can honestly say that the first three years we have, not even for half a day, been free from Indians," he wrote. In the long run, of course, the Europeans got their way. But the Indians were far from guileless dupes, and in the short term, which was what mattered at the time, they got considerably more out of a simple land transaction than the amount of the purchase indicates.

We can assume something similar happened with the sale of Manhattan. When Isaack de Rasière wrote to Amsterdam in 1628, two years after the purchase of the island, he used the present tense, reporting that Manhattan *is* inhabited by Manhatesen Indians, indicating that they had not gone anywhere. The Indians are a constant presence in the Dutch records of the colony. The settlers relied on them. And there was plenty of room; the island was, for the life of the colony, mostly wilderness. It is not until 1680 that the Manhattan Indians are referred to in the past tense, by which time they had, by some accounts, moved north into the Bronx.

We can only imagine, then, the scene that must have taken place somewhere on lower Manhattan in early summer 1626: Minuit, his aides, soldiers, and settlers, the Indian sachems and their retainers, the formal ceremony with the making of marks on parchment, and surrounding it, for weeks or months on end, the visits, drinking, eating, and bestowing of presents, in a deal that would satisfy both sides, each of which had its ideas about how it would pan out. And in some sort of follow-up ceremony forgotten by history, accompanied by a document subsequently lost, Minuit would have dedicated his city-in-the-making, and named it, appropriately, after its Dutch parent, some of whose culture and way of being—its openness and its swagger—the grubby little island village would inherit.

That piece of work completed, Minuit would then have boarded a company sloop and sailed upriver to deal with the crisis at Fort Orange. He ordered Catalina Trico, Joris Rapalje, and the other settlers to vacate the area; a message was sent to the South River settlers as well. Minuit was regrouping. Manhattan—New Amsterdam—would be the center of things from now on.

He then sailed back to Manhattan, arriving in port on a Friday evening, the last day of July. The next morning, he met the man who would become his valued assistant, Isaack de Rasière, whose ship had arrived while Minuit was away. De Rasière handed him letters from the directors; the two then fell to discussing who they should send north to replace Van Criekenbeeck, Minuit having decided to retain a contingent of soldiers at the fort. They decided to promote Bastiaen Krol, the Frisian lay minister who had come with Rapalje and Trico. Krol had also been at Fort Orange for two years, and he had become particularly close to the Indians, for de Rasière wrote that they chose him "because he is well acquainted with the language" of the tribe. So the man whose desire on arrival was to serve the church in the new province would instead be given a musket and a military command. No one knows with how much fear he accepted the job; he had seen what became of his predecessor.

The small party of soldiers aside, the settlers, about two hundred of them, were all together now along the flattish southeastern flank of Manhattan, looking across the narrower of the two rivers that wrapped around the island to the bluffed shore five hundred yards across the water. Under Minuit they worked quickly to progress from the state of campers to settlers. Within a year or so they had thirty wooden houses constructed along "The Strand." Minuit and de Rasière roomed together in one of these. The one stone building they erected, with a thatched roof made from river reeds, was the West India Company headquarters, where pelts brought from throughout the territory were stored until they were to be shipped home and where Isaack de Rasière made his office. At the southernmost tip, poised to catch the fullest gusts, a man named François, a millwright by profession, built two windmills: one for grinding grain, the other for sawing lumber.

Minuit also oversaw the construction of a fort. It occupied the southwestern point of the island, well positioned to defend against enemy vessels entering the harbor. The original plan was for a vast structure in which all the colonists would live, safe from the savages of the country. But the savages didn't seem so savage, and anyway it was clearly impossible, given the manpower, to do anything very grand. Minuit ordered a redesign. The man who had been sent over to lay out the town and build the fort was apparently uniquely unskilled for a Dutch engineer: the original structure was comprised mostly of heaped earth; it began to crumble even before it was finished. It would be torn down and rebuilt over the next several years; indeed, the ramshackle state of Fort Amsterdam would be an issue right up until the moment when Peter Stuyvesant, standing on its unsteady ramparts, would agree to surrender it to the English. The fort's general outlines are apparent today in the "footprint" of the old Customs House, which more or less occupies its former position, just opposite Battery Park. In one of history's ironies, this spot, which was originally intended to keep Indians out, is now the home of the Museum of the American Indian, arguably the only place on Manhattan in which signs of Indian civilization are apparent.

As the settlers explored their island, they found it wondrously varied: thick forest studded with great knuckles of protruding rock, grassy meadow, high hills rising in the center and to the north, charging and trickling streams, large reedy ponds. The Indians who traded with them doubled as guides. Wickquasgeck was the name of a tribe that inhabited portions of the mainland just to the north of the island, as well as some of the northern forests of Manhattan. The Manhattan Indians used the Wickquasgeck name for the path they took through the center of the island to these northern reaches. Coming south along it, Indians of various tribes reached the Dutch settlement at the southern end of the island. The Europeans could likewise follow it north—through stands of pin oak, chestnut, poplar, and pine, past open fields strewn with wild strawberries ("the ground in the flat land near the river is covered with strawberries," one of them noted, "which grow so plentifully in the fields, that one can lie down and eat them"), crossing the fast-running brook that flowed southeast from the highlands in the area of Fifty-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, more or less where the Plaza Hotel stands, to empty into a small bay on the East River—to hunt in the thick forest at the island's center and to fish the inlets that penetrated the eastern coast. As it was clearly destined to be the most prominent lane on the island, when the Dutch widened the path they referred to it as the Gentlemen's Street, or the High Street, or simply the Highway. The English, of course, called it Broadway.*

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*Broadway does not follow the precise course of the Indian trail, as some histories would have it. To follow the Wickquasgeck trail today, one would take Broadway north from the Customs House, jog eastward along Park Row, then follow the Bowery to Twenty-third Street. From there, the trail snaked up the east side of the island. It crossed westward through the top of Central Park; the paths of Broadway and the Wickquasgeck trail converge again at the top of the island. The trail continued into the Bronx; Route 9 follows it northward.

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GOING ON IN this way, every muscle and every ounce of guile put into maintaining survival, the water's edge approaching and then inching away from their little community with every tide, the Manhattanites might scarcely have noticed what was happening over the next few years. The sails out in the harbor appeared more frequently, the skiffs ferrying in from anchored ships (there was no dock yet) bringing more faces, and more varied ones. Ebony faces from the central highlands of Angola. Arab faces creased from North African sandstorms. An Italian, a Pole, a Dane.

Something was happening that was quite unlike the unfolding of society at the two English colonies to their north, where the rigid Puritans, who arrived in 1630, and the even more rigid Pilgrims maintained, in their wide-brimmed piety, monocultures in the wild. This was a business settlement, a way station on the rising Atlantic trade circuit. News of its existence spread to places as far afield as the Amazonian thickets of Bahia and Pernambuco in Brazil, the newly founded Portuguese slave trading port of Luanda in Angola, and Stockholm, where an energetic monarch, Gustavus Adolphus, set his sights on making Sweden, long a frozen boondocks of Europe, a military and trading power to rival Spain and the rising nations of England and the Dutch Republic.

A trickle had started. In small clusters, the world began coming to North America via this island nestled in its inviting harbor. And while the West India Company had a firm Calvinist stamp to it, which it tried to impress on its colony, the makeup of the settlement—itself a result of the mix of peoples welcomed to its parent city of Amsterdam—helped to ensure a raggedness, a social looseness. It was also natural that the vanguard of private enterprise on the high seas—smugglers and pirates—would discover the place and make it a hub. All the elements that made it attractive to legitimate trade applied in their case, and in addition was the lure of its distance from civilization, the virtual absence of authority.

Days got livelier; with nightfall, the soft slap of waves along the shore was drowned out by drinking songs and angry curses. New Amsterdam was not a city with its own governance but literally a company town: its inhabitants were considered less citizens than employees, and there was no real legal system. So one was invented ad hoc. Every Thursday, in a room within the crudely walled fort, the "government" conducted business. Minuit's law enforcement officer, an Englishman from Canterbury named Jan Lampe,* oversaw the proceedings, resplendently Rembrandtesque in his official accoutrements of black plumed hat and silver rapier. Minuit, de Rasière, and a council of five heard cases and issued orders, which succeeding councils would reiterate and add to, building a body of frontier law. In 1638, for example, came a series of scolding decrees: "All seafaring persons are commanded to repair before sunset to the ship or sloop to which they are assigned and no one may remain on shore without permission." ". . . All persons [are forbidden] from selling henceforth any wines, on pain of forfeiting twenty-five guilders and the wines which shall be found in their houses." ". . . [E]ach and every one must refrain from fighting; from adulterous intercourse with heathens, blacks, or other persons; from mutiny, theft, false testimony, slanderous language and other irregularities . . . the offenders shall be corrected and punished as an example to others."

Multicultural galavanting was on the rise. Spaniard Francisco de Porte testified before the council that, yes, he was present at the home of Dutch wheelwright Claes Swits the night Englishman Thomas Beech's wife, Nanne, in the midst of a good drink-up, "notwithstanding her husband's presence, fumbled at the front of the breeches of most of all of those who were present," causing her husband to fly into a rage and attack one of the men.

Minuit may have been a capable strategist but he was no governor of men; chaos mounted. De Rasière struggled to maintain order during his tenure as secretary, which lasted until 1628, when he would go back to Amsterdam and eventually leave again to become a West India Company sugar baron in Brazil. He complained to the directors in Amsterdam of the "quite lawless" state of affairs and thought the directors should know that, with regard to the company's settlers, "if they are ordered to speak of your Honors with reverence and without using such profane words as they have heretofore been accustomed to use [they] consider that great injustice is done to them." When de Rasière caught a rough sort named Fongersz engaging in trade with the Indians on the sly, he told the man he would be forced to confiscate property and fine him, to which Fongersz replied, "I do not consider you are a big enough man for that." De Rasière added wearily, in his tattletale report, "The honorable gentlemen can see what regard such a person has for orders and instructions, but I do not consider it to be his fault, since I have seldom seen him sober and doubt whether he has been so during the last three or four weeks."

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*Presumably, he was born something like John Lamp; like many foreign residents of the Dutch colony, he had his name "Batavianized."

The directors could receive such complaints with equanimity. The times were very good for the West India Company. Its principal objective was to make money from battling the Spanish, and in 1628 they struck pay dirt. For the better part of a century the riches that Spain extracted from its South American colonies were sent to the homeland via a regular seagoing pipeline called the treasure fleet, consisting of as many as ninety vessels, traveling twice annually. In May of 1628, Piet Heyn, a small, pug-faced seaman who had once been captured by the Spaniards and been forced to spend four years as a rower in a Spanish galley, surprised and swept down on the slow, heavily laden fleet with his thirty-one privateering gunships while lurking in the waters off Cuba. The haul was staggering: twelve million guilders' worth of silver and gold. It was an amount that instantly repaid the company's investors the capital they had risked, and it stoked the fire of the Dutch economy for years. To the people of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, who had been fighting for independence from the once-mighty Spanish empire for decades, it was a signal, as sharp as a pistol shot, of a historic change. The title of a bestselling pamphlet made it plain: *Tekel or Balance of the great monarchy of Spain; in which is discovered that she cannot do so much as she supposes herself able to do. Written on the occasion of the conquest of the Silver-Fleet by Gen. P. P. Heyn.*

Beyond the sea that stretched in front of the settlers, then, the world was turning. Heyn's deed seemed proof that the body of the Spanish Empire was in decay. Half a world away on the island of Java, Dutchman Jan Pieterszoon Coen was undertaking an oriental version of Minuit's project: the building of a city (Batavia: the modern Jakarta) in an inhospitable wilderness that would be the base for Dutch trade in southeast Asia. In Frankfurt, meanwhile, William Harvey published his *Exercitatio Anatomica De Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus,* spelling out his theories on the circulation of the blood, while in Italy the physician Santorio Santorio developed the trick of measuring body temperature using a thermometer. The methodical Dutch system of communication (missives went in duplicate or triplicate on different ships) was slow but ensured that news got through; thanks to it, the Manhattanites knew of developments in the wider world and felt themselves a part of it.

To the north, the Pilgrim colony was limping along, and Minuit, feeling flush and expansive, decided it was time to establish contact. He sent letters of friendship, along with "a rundlet of sugar, and two Holland cheeses." William Bradford, governor of the struggling English colony, replied with thanks, adding that they were sorry they "must remain your debtors till another time, not having any thing to send you for the present that may be acceptable." Shortly after, Isaack de Rasière sailed to New Plymouth in person as official envoy of New Netherland, appearing in the Pilgrims' midst with "a noise of trumpets" (the Manhattanites feeling a bit of show was called for) and bringing with him "some cloth of three sorts and colours, and a chest of white sugar," as well as something the English had little acquaintance with, but which the New Amsterdam traders had become proficient in: belts of strung beads made of seashell, called *sewant* by the Algonquins, otherwise known as wampum.

At about this time, and perhaps none too soon, a man of God arrived at Manhattan. But if the settlers expected leadership and encouragement from the colony's first minister they were to be disappointed. The Reverend Jonas Michaelius might well have won a contest for the moodiest, bitchiest resident of New Amsterdam. In his bitter letters home he complained about the voyage, the settlers ("rough and unrestrained"), the climate, the natives ("entirely savage and wild, strangers to all decency, yeah, uncivil and stupid as garden poles, proficient in all wickedness and godlessness; devilish men, who serve nobody but the Devil"), and the food ("scanty and poor"). "I cannot say whether or not I shall remain here any longer after the three years [of his contract] shall have expired," he wrote home, adding, "we lead a hard and sober existence like poor people." Michaelius could be excused to some extent for his bitterness: the voyage to the new world had taken his pregnant, sickly wife, leaving him alone to care for their two young daughters.

For the time being, New Amsterdam was a free trade port. The company allowed freelance businessmen to strike deals with the Indians provided the company itself was the middle man that would resell furs in Europe. Business was being conducted in half a dozen languages; Dutch guilders, beaver skins, and Indian wampum were the common currencies. In a culture based on cheese and butter, cows were also a highly valued and tradable commodity.

But while beaver furs by the thousands were arriving at the West India Company's warehouse on the Amsterdam waterfront, the settlement was far from turning a profit. The directors wanted their North America colony to repay their investment the way Caribbean salt colonies were doing, and a split formed in the board over how to make it happen. Some of the directors argued that the colony would never work properly without a massive influx of settlers, and that the best way to get people to go there was by allowing wealthy men to establish plantations there. In return for these estates, each patron (*patroon* in Dutch) would transport a population of farmers, smiths, masons, wheelwrights, bakers, chandlers, and other workers. The directors who favored this scheme proposed themselves as patroons. The other directors thought it was a stupid idea, one that would essentially carve the colony into small fiefs and add to the difficulty of dealing with pirates and renegade traders. Peter Minuit injected himself into this argument, supporting the patroon faction. The Rev. Michaelius took the other side and fired off a raft of letters branding Minuit as a dark force who was in the process of cheating the directors. He managed to convince them that the situation was dire enough that, in 1631, they recalled both Minuit and Michaelius to Holland. They ordered Krol, the lay minister who had been left in charge of Fort Orange, to serve as provisional director of the colony.

Minuit was filled with rage as he climbed on board the ironically named *Unity,* his gall only increased by the knowledge that he would have to spend the two-month journey in close confines with Michaelius. He had gone far since leaving the little German town where he was raised, and he wasn't about to take this interruption in his career lightly. In five years he had established a rough but real outpost of European civilization on the edge of a limitless wilderness. He had made peace with the Mohawks to the north following the unfortunate Van Crieckenbeeck incident, forging an alliance that would last through the whole of the colony's existence. He had bought Manhattan and Staten islands as well as huge tracts along the Hudson River and around the bay of the South (Delaware) River from their native inhabitants while also managing to keep good relations with them. In so doing, he had outlined the perimeters of a New World province that occupied a considerable chunk of the Atlantic coast of North America, extending from the future state of Delaware in the south to the city of Albany in the north, and established a trade that sent more than fifty-two thousand furs to Amsterdam. Most important, he had pinpointed and begun to develop the colony's capital, a place whose natural strategic importance was by now apparent to him and his fellow Manhattanites, but which the West India Company directors would realize only belatedly. Even the vengeful Michaelius, for all his complaints about the place, could see this. "True," he had admitted in one of his bilious letters home, "this island is the key and principal stronghold of the country."

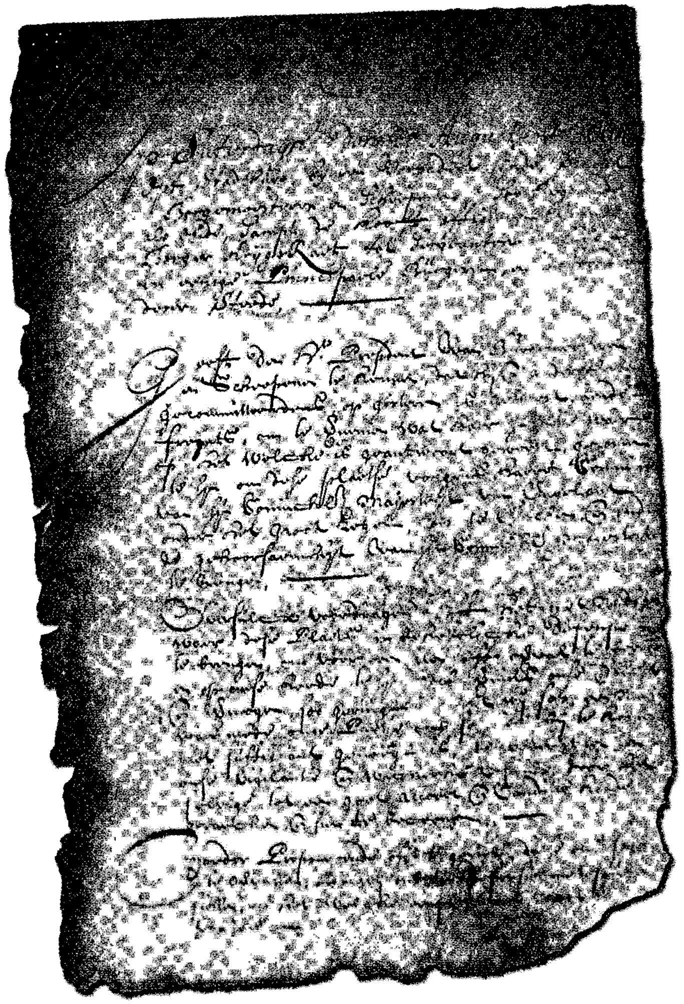
On a cold day in early 1632, then, Minuit stood on the deck of a ship laden with five thousand furs, fruits of the new world bound to warm the old, looking out on a sullen, wintry ocean, and plotting his defense. He had no idea of the rude detour that fate was about to deliver to him, or to the colony he had coaxed into being.

Chapter 4

THE KING, THE SURGEON, THE TURK, AND THE WHORE

Charles I, king of England, regarded horses and Dutchmen with something like equal and opposite intensity. As the famous equestrian portrait of Charles by Anthony Van Dyck and the mounted statue of him in Trafalgar Square in London suggest, he was never more at ease than when in the saddle. His devotion to racing was such that he spent a good portion of every year at Newmarket, site of the country's most important turf event. In the year 1632 he came early, leaving London in mid-February for the arduous sixty-mile journey. ("Essex miles" were said to be longer than standard, since the roads in that corner of England were in particularly bad repair.) It was a major undertaking because when the king went to Newmarket, so did everyone else: the political, military, and economic leadership of the country, as well as the king's household (his personal physician, William Harvey, did his historic work on the circulation of the blood while attending Charles at Newmarket). Charles was almost religiously devoted to splendor, and his Newmarket banquets had already become legendary, even infamous: in a single racing season, 7,000 sheep, 6,800 lambs, and 1,500 oxen would be consumed at the eighty-six tables set daily. When not viewing the heats or entertaining, he spent his days at the retreat hunting, playing tennis, or visiting his favorite horses in their stables.

As to the Dutch, he despised them. For that matter, he couldn't stand French people (never mind that he was married to one) and he considered the Scots, of whom he was one by birth, such irritants that he encouraged as many of them as possible to emigrate to Canada. But the Dutch irked him in several special ways. They were engaged in a vigorous revolt, one that they hoped would, through bloodshed, throw off a monarchy and replace it



One of the 12,000 pages of the manuscript records of the Dutch colony based on Manhattan, which survived centuries of neglect and are now being translated and made available. This document, which has yet to appear in published translation, was written on August 30, 1664, by New Amsterdam's leaders as English frigates sit in the harbor and they debate whether to surrender or fight. *(New York State Library)*

Charles Gehring, who for three decades has translated the records of the Dutch colony centered on Manhattan. *(Dietrich Gehring)*

Chapter 13

BOOMING

On a Thursday morning in the thick of winter, 1653, seven men left their narrow, low-ceilinged homes and the warmth of their Delft-tiled hearths, stamped through the streets of lower Manhattan, and entered the gates of the fort. Assembled in the council room there, they swore an oath of service to the States General, then bowed their heads as a minister intoned a prayer—". . . Thou hast received us in Christ . . . make us fit through Thy grace, that we may do the duties imposed upon us . . ."—that signals, among other things, that we are well before the era of the separation of church and state.

Adriaen van der Donck was still in the Netherlands, struggling against the political fatwa that was preventing him from returning to America, when their honors, the magistrates of the newly incorporated city of New Amsterdam, transacted their first, brief piece of business, putting their signatures to a statement "herewith [to] inform everybody that they shall hold their regular meetings in the house hitherto called the City Tavern, henceforth the City Hall, on Monday mornings from 9 o'clock, to hear there all questions of difference between litigants and decide them as best they can." Two and a half weeks later, in a physical break from the government of Peter Stuyvesant and the West India Company that was visible to all, they convened at the three-story building on the waterfront that had long been the center of the town's activities. In case anyone missed the significance, the bell in the courtyard out front sounded the change of government.

It was very modest. But it meant something to those involved. For years the settlers of Manhattan Island had insisted that their community was more than a military or trading outpost, that they were not serfs forced to toil for a distant master, but citizens of a modern republic entitled to protection under its laws. As of February 2, 1653, with the signing of a municipal charter, New Amsterdam was a city. The magistrates were quite aware of the heritage of the political offices and legal traditions they took on. The government they formed had a structure—there were two co-mayors and a panel of judges, which, when combined, formed the legislative body—copied from Amsterdam and based on Roman-Dutch law, the Roman part of which had come to Holland by way of the Holy Roman Empire, which in turn traced itself all the way back to the caesars and the Code of Justinian. When, in February of 2003, the speaker of New York's city council cut into a birthday cake and gave a champagne toast in honor of the three hundred fiftieth anniversary of the city's charter, it was to these gatherings in the former tavern that he paid homage.* The city dates its political foundation not to the English takeover, when it was named New York, but to this moment.

Then again, so what? Aside from the bit of arcana that New York is perhaps unique in the United States in that its legal roots go back to ancient Rome, does it mean anything? The political founding of a city may be interesting to a narrow clique of historians but of justifiable indifference to the rest of the world. For that matter, it's also worth noting that Stuyvesant blunted the power of the city government by initially refusing to allow popular election: he himself appointed its first officers.

What matters is what the founding of city government on Manhattan led to. The idea posed at the beginning of this book was that New York City is different in its origins from Boston, Hartford, and other early East Coast cities. It was different because a sulky but dogged English explorer named Hudson happened to chart the area for the Dutch. But it would only matter in the long term—its difference would only stick—once it had a real structure. Municipal incorporation provided that structure, one born of long experience containing and maintaining peace among a dozen cultures. The proclamation that Stuyvesant's superiors forced on him as a result of Van der Donck's efforts granted "to this growing town of New Amsterdam" a government "to be framed, as far as possible and as the situation of the country permits, after the laudable customs of the city of Amsterdam, which

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*The festivities were held in the Museum of the American Indian, on the site of the fort. A sort of flattened tribute to the original city hall exists in the form of a brick outline of its location on the sidewalk at the corner of Pearl Street and Coenties Slip.

gave her name to this first commenced town . . ." Thus the achievement of Adriaen van der Donck. This was the foundation that New York City was built on, and, spreading in every direction, it would color and mold the American continent and the American character.

The two matters that occupied the new government in its first weeks form a diptych of the settlement's concerns, which always seemed to veer between the historic and the ridiculous. Into the newly outfitted council chamber, on its first full day in business, burst a raucous knot of locals who were near to blows. Joost Goderis was a harried man; he was married to a woman with a wayward eye; the fact was well known in the town, and he was fed up. He'd recently been out oystering on Oyster (i.e., Ellis) Island, and as he canoed back to Manhattan he encountered his supposed friend Gulyam d'Wys loitering on shore with a gang of young toughs. D'Wys wanted to give the boys something to laugh at, and so he told Goderis (as the court recorded it) "that Joost should give him, deft., a better opportunity to have sexual connection with his, pltf's., wife." When Goderis tried to maintain his dignity by feigning confusion, d'Wys helpfully explained that "Allard Anthony has had your wife down on her back." The boys with him laughed and called the man a cuckold who "ought to wear horns, like the cattle in the woods." Goderis hoped the new municipal board was the sort of body to help a man in emotional distress, and gravely brought the matter before the magistrates.

At the same time, and on a darker front, the magistrates were grappling with daily reports of fallout from the war between England and the Dutch Republic. Stuyvesant—who had fought against the forming of a town government, but who for now seemed to welcome the opportunity to share the burden—regularly stumped over from the fort with three-month-old news from Holland. As in all wars, the reports contained a mix of paranoia, rumor, and inscrutible behavior. "The government in England is at present very odd," one letter informed Stuyvesant; according to informed sources, the English were demanding "that all apprentices shall again wear blue caps." While the Dutch leaders pondered that one, it had also become apparent that the American colonies of both countries were in play in the conflict. The West India Company was to begin gearing up once again for privateering work, as it had against Spain. The company proposed that "5 or 6 ordinary, but well manned, frigates" should use Manhattan as a base for attacking English colonies. At the same time, the States General was afraid of a surprise attack, and reported that it was "certainly informed that New Netherland is in great danger and imminently exposed to invasion," and ordered Stuyvesant and the city magistrates to reinforce defenses.

The magistrates, with Stuyvesant sitting in on their session, took action. The first decision was "to surround the greater part of the City with a high stockade and a small breastwork." To fund it, the magistrates raised money from the town's wealthiest residents, Stuyvesant matching the top figure of one hundred and fifty guilders. Then they plunged into the details: the palisade along the northern perimeter of the town would be comprised of twelve-foot oak logs, each eighteen inches in circumference and "sharpened at the upper end." These would be sunk three feet into the earth and be fortified by a four-foot-high breastwork. Payment to the builder, the government declared, "will be made weekly in good wampum." A crier was sent out, declaring that the town council was asking for bids to carry out the work. Englishman Thomas Baxter signed on to provide the wood, and the thing was built by early July. In the long term, what's notable about this first public works project orchestrated by the town government is not the wall itself but the street that ran along it. It's a safe bet that no matter how wildly they tended to dream, the magistrates could not have imagined that this rough pathway would replace the gleaming, colonnaded bourse of Amsterdam as the epicenter of global finance. It's also worth noting that the wall along Wall Street was built not to keep Indians out, as folklore has it, but to keep the English out.

While the Manhattanites were fearing an attack from New England, the residents of Connecticut, New Haven, Massachusetts, and Plymouth were likewise feeding on a steady diet of rumors that the Dutch were about to move northward against them. One of these rumors—that the Dutch had hired Indians to massacre New England families while they were at church—made it to London, and was packaged by an enterprising printer in the most explosive way. The memory of the killing of ten English traders by Dutch soldiers on the far-off Southeast Asian island of Ambon or Amboyna three decades earlier hadn't died in England, and had been rekindled the year before by republication of the inflammatory pamphlet reporting the event. Now, someone in the English colonies, possibly associated with the government of either Connecticut or New Haven, had the genius to use Amboyna specifically to stir the New Englanders against the multiethnic Dutch-run colony to their south. The new pamphlet that swept through England and was shipped to America was titled "The Second Part of the Tragedy of Amboyna: or a True Relation of a Most Bloody, Treacherous, and Cruel Design of the Dutch in the New Netherlands in America. For the total Ruining and Murthering of the English Colonies in New-England." It was a double-barreled shot of ethnic hatred, decrying the Indians as "bloody people, fit instruments for so horrid a design," and lauding an English colonist who had "in one night cut off fourteen hundred of them," while also seeing the plot as an instance of the genetic wickedness of the Dutch, "Amboyna's treacherous Cruelty extending its self from the East to the West Indies, running in its proper channel of Dutch blood . . ."

The pamphlet was a model of wartime disinformation, forcing the Dutch government to carry out an investigation and deny the accusation while keeping the flame of English public opinion stoked. Months earlier, several New England leaders had disembarked at New Amsterdam to meet with Stuyvesant on the matter. He had assured them that his people had no designs on the English colonies. While on Manhattan, however, the Puritans got an eyeful of the rude, boisterous, growing port city, through which, they well knew, much of their own region's trade passed. If England were to make a play for the Dutch colony and so gain a lock on the interior of the continent and the shipping center of the entire coast, it had better be soon. The trade war was as good a pretext as any, and anyway the story was too good not to use. In addition to supplying the material for the "second Amboyna" pamphlet, the New England governors wrote to Cromwell personally and put the case that his so-called Western Design, by which England would weave the lands of the Atlantic Rim into the beginnings of an empire, would be perfectly served by conquering the island at the mouth of the Hudson River. Cromwell, who had just assumed the title Lord Protector and with it many of the trappings of the king he had helped behead, liked the grandiosity in the plan, agreed it was time to carry it out, and wrote back to say he was sending a four-frigate flotilla and a company of soldiers to Boston, whose "utmost assistance may be given for gaining the Manhattoes."

At this juncture, Adriaen van der Donck finally sailed back to Manhattan. It's frustrating, but not surprising, that we have no record of his homecoming. People viewed him as a hero; residents had followed every action he undertook in The Hague on their behalf. The new magistrates had him to thank for their jobs, and must still have considered him the leader of the reform party. But there was no public display—no one wanted to incur the wrath of Stuyvesant. It's especially frustrating that we are forced to imagine the encounter between Van der Donck and Stuyvesant, which had to have been freighted with emotion. When last they had been together, Stuyvesant had imprisoned Van der Donck for treason. Since that time, the onetime protégé had spent four years in the Dutch Republic hectoring the government for Stuyvesant's removal, and had actually succeeded, only to have the decision reversed. Now, having gambled everything and lost, he was returning and putting himself at Stuyvesant's mercy. The only item we have shows Van der Donck, shortly after his arrival, asking Stuyvesant for access to the records of the colony, so that he can add to the book he had written, which was still awaiting publication in Amsterdam. Stuyvesant turned him down, citing the advice of the company directors, who warned of "new troubles" from "Meester Adriaen van der Donck," and feared he would turn "the Company's own weapons . . . upon itself." Stuyvesant could be a dangerous enemy. Van der Donck had to proceed with extreme caution, and the fact that he drops from the official records at this point suggests that he did.

But that doesn't mean he stayed out of politics. Certainly on his arrival he was busy with domestic matters, reacquainting himself with his property and helping his newly arrived relatives adjust to America. His mother moved into a house on Pearl Street looking out across the East River to the Breuckelen meadows, and his sister-in-law needed help dealing with her teenaged son, who was a bit of a handful (Gysbert van der Donck, along with his friend, the son of Cornelis Melyn, was a member of the gang who had taunted Joost Goderis as a cuckold). But it doesn't fit Adriaen van der Donck's character that he would be content with domesticity.

In fact, he seems to have picked up right where he left off in The Hague, only now working behind the scenes. Within weeks of his return, there was a new political uprising against Stuyvesant. With the colony on the upswing, towns in the vicinity of Manhattan (which would later be incorporated into the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens) were growing, and the leaders of several of these—Gravesende (later Gravesend), Vlissingen (Flushing), Middelburgh (Newtown), Heemsteede (Hempstead), New Amersfoort (Flatlands), Breuckelen (Brooklyn), and Midwout a.k.a. Vlackebos (Flatbush)—began clamoring for their rights. Piracy had sparked the controversy. It was still commonplace in the colony; a recurring problem stemmed from locals who, having failed to make a go of things through legitimate business, turned pirate. The most recent villain was well known to all: Thomas Baxter, who had supplied the oak posts for the "wall," was marauding along Long Island Sound, stealing horses. The residents of outlying towns assembled to declare that if the company couldn't protect them they would stop paying taxes.

Some historians have explained this breach between Stuyvesant and the Long Island towns as a Dutch-English encounter. There were many English residents in these towns and there was a war on between the Dutch and the English, therefore, according to the reasoning, the agitation amounted to an internal revolt, a way of assisting England in the war. The episode has also been used to support the standard notion that any yearning for political rights that existed in the Dutch colony could only have come from its English residents. This is a misreading of events. The confusion seems to stem from the fact that the petition presented to Stuyvesant in December was written in English and then translated into Dutch. But the "Remonstrance and Petition of the Colonies and Villages in this New Netherland Province," in which colonists complained of the "arbitrary government" Stuyvesant exercised, follows Dutch legal forms. John Brodhead, the nineteenth-century historian who gathered the records of Van der Donck's doings in The Hague and who was intimately familiar with Van der Donck's writing, noticed a similarity in tone between Van der Donck's *Remonstrance of New Netherland* and this current remonstrance, with its spirited rejection of Stuyvesant's continued rule by fiat. Another early historian of the period noted the similarity in style of this complaint to the earlier complaints written during Kieft's time—for which, as detailed in Chapters 7 and 9, there is ample evidence of Van der Donck's involvement.

In demanding a voice in their affairs, the residents of the Long Island towns—Dutch and English both—were reacting not to the war but to the founding of the municipality of New Amsterdam. In fact, the magistrates of the New Amsterdam government not only supported their petition to the West India Company; they called on these leaders to travel out of their wooded plains and valleys, cross over on the Breuckelen Ferry, and join with them in the capital to craft a formal complaint. In other words, this minirevolt that Stuyvesant found himself faced with at the end of 1653 was a direct result of Van der Donck's achievement in The Hague, and it was also a direct continuation of that work, an attempt to push Stuyvesant and the company further toward political reform. It took place within weeks of Van der Donck's return. Van der Donck was uniquely suited to act as intermediary between the Dutch and English leaders: his wife was English, and his father-in-law, the firebrand English preacher Francis Doughty, was now minister of Flushing, one of the towns that was party to the complaint. Van der Donck also knew well the Englishman who penned the remonstrance. George Baxter had been around since Kieft's time, like Van der Donck had assisted Stuyvesant as an English translator, and had even served on Stuyvesant's council during Van der Donck's trial—and therefore, like Van der Donck, had split with Stuyvesant after once being close to him.

As a final piece of evidence, Stuyvesant seems to have complained to his superiors about the possibility of Van der Donck being behind this latest insurgency. In response to a letter of his that is now lost, the directors write: "We do not know, whether you have sufficient reason to be so suspicious of Adriaen van der Donck, as all the charges against him are based upon nothing but suspicion and presumptions, however, we shall not take his part, and only say that as we have heretofore recommended him to you on condition of his good behavior, we intend also that he be reprimanded and punished, if contrary to his promise he should misdemean himself."

The picture that emerges, then, is not one in which English interlopers come into the colony, lay in wait for several years, and then, Trojan horse–like, emerge at time of war to add to the Dutch troubles. Indeed, there is no indication in this encounter of the English residents expressing a longing for English government. As they point out in their complaint, they had fled to these parts to escape it, and hoped to put down roots in the area surrounding Manhattan to take advantage of the more liberal justice of the Dutch Republic, the government of which, they noted, was "made up of various nations from divers quarters of the globe." What they wanted was exactly what Van der Donck had strived for all these years: an end to the West India Company's rule, and a spread of rights through the rapidly growing towns of the colony. Such rights, the remonstrance declared, in a phrase out of Grotius that Van der Donck liked, were based on "natural law."

So the movement Van der Donck had launched was still animating the people of the colony, and in fact had spread. It was the continuation of a long, sustained, well-reasoned appeal for political reform that came not from England but from the early-modern heart of the European continent.

It did little good, however. Stuyvesant reacted to the remonstrance in trademark fashion. The directors of the West India Company, he declared, were "absolute and general lords and masters of this province." The petition was denied. Stuyvesant was nothing if not consistent.

Then again, Stuyvesant himself was in danger of being trumped: violent change was bearing down on the colony while this debate still echoed. Unknown to everyone, Cromwell's squadron left England in February of 1654. New Amsterdam would have been quickly subdued—the West India Company's soldiers were spread thinly around the colony, and hundreds of New Englanders, alarmed by the threats of a Dutch invasion, had declared themselves ready to follow an English military leader in a preemptive strike.

But fate—i.e., the weather—intervened. The storm-tossed squadron didn't arrive in Boston Harbor until June. As Major Robert Sedgwicke, commander of the fleet, wrote to Cromwell, the very day he was about to embark from Boston with "nyne hundred foote" and "one troope of horse" for the assault on Manhattan, "there arrived a shipp from London, bringing with her diverse printed proclamations of peace between the English and the Dutch." Jan de Witt had hammered out a treaty with Cromwell, yielding England control of the Channel while retaining trading supremacy in the Mediterranean and in Asia. The First Anglo-Dutch War ended with the North American sphere unchanged. The invasion squadron was called back home.

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ONE MIGHT SAY that this is the point in history when Manhattan became Manhattan. With a rudimentary representative government in place, the island rapidly came into its own. Stuyvesant and the West India Company still officially ran the place, but, whether they were Dutch, English, or any of the other nationalities represented in the colony, the businessmen—the fur traders, the tobacco farmers, the shippers of French wines, Delft tiles, salt, horses, dyewood, and a hundred other products—increasingly got their way. As the business leaders won positions in the city government and became political leaders, others—bakers, tavernkeepers, school teachers, ministers—came to them for support. These alliances strengthened New Amsterdam's municipal government, which, in its turn, set a flurry of development in motion. Roads were paved with cobbles. Brick houses replaced wooden ones; tile roofs came in (mostly red and black, giving the town a crisp finish), and the old thatch ones were banned as a fire hazard. A proper wharf was built off Pearl Street. A street survey of New Amsterdam was commissioned. As the town picked itself up, it took on that defining Dutch characteristic: tidiness. Its streets and stoops were swept clean. Trees were aesthetically pruned; gardens took neat diamond, oval, and square shapes. An order went out forcing farmers to tear down pigsties and chicken coops that occupied prominent roadside positions. Owners of vacant lots on the main streets were slapped with an extra tax to encourage them to develop their property. The ditch that had been chopped through the center of the town was widened into a proper canal, its banks reinforced with pilings and crossed by pretty stone bridges, which, together with the gabled buildings, gave the town a strong echo of its namesake. Taverns were even more numerous than before, but staggering, puking drunkenness had abated somewhat. The taverns now functioned as clubs for traders and businessmen to meet, places where news was exchanged, and maybe dens for sampling that wanton new elixir, coffee.

It was still a port town, with tentacles that stretched across the globe, so piracy and whoring, syphilic scabs and cutlass scars, remained fixtures. But you get glimpses, too, of the well of ordinary life that any society draws from and that, in its quiet, pious normalcy, falls outside the margins of official records. A family gathers in the evening around the hearth, the father reading the Bible and carefully recording special events inside its front cover. A minister, writing home to Europe, recounts his weekly circuit on the Breuckelen Ferry between the churches of Long Island, New Amsterdam, and "Stuyvesant's Bouwerie." An "orphanmaster" describes the progress of his charges.

The place was maturing, thanks largely to the municipal leadership on Manhattan. It gave people a sense that this island on the edge of the wilderness, which had always veered sharply between lawlessness and tyranny, had become a place where families could let their dreams take root.

In what might have been seen as a good omen, one of the colony's dodgiest residents, Kieft's and Stuyvesant's longtime henchman, Cornelis van Tienhoven, disappeared at this time, with appropriate flamboyance. Fleeing from The Hague, where he was opposing Van der Donck, and later turning up on Manhattan with a young mistress, had made him a laughingstock; we can only guess how his wife greeted him. Stuyvesant had kept him on for a time, but he soon became too much of a liability. He had bullied colonists for years, and there was a growing sense that he was involved in cooking the company's books. As troubles reached a climax, he vanished one day in 1656, with his hat and cane found floating near the shore. Stuyvesant wanted badly to cover the matter up, have his association with the man forgotten, and quickly declare a death by drowning. But people felt they knew better—for one thing, Van Tienhoven's brother, who had also become entangled in financial irregularities, vanished at about the same time, and later turned up on Barbados. Whatever happened to Cornelis van Tienhoven is one of the unsolved mysteries of New Netherland.

But Manhattan wasn't the only eventful part of the colony; it wasn't just the island capital that took off after 1653. Only a year before the municipal government came into being, in an effort to resolve his dispute with the upriver duchy of Rensselaerswyck, Stuyvesant had created by decree the town of Beverwyck on territory staked out around Fort Orange. The beaver trade for which it was named was still flourishing, and the community came into being seemingly overnight. Mills, brickyards, and tile yards were laid out and produced the materials for creating a town whose citizens were self-consciously urban enough to construct a poorhouse as one of their first community projects. By 1660 it was the colony's second city, with a thousand residents. Compared with New Amsterdam, it kept its remote, Wild West feel. Through the records we get fleeting views of Indians as ordinary participants in town life. They are boarders in residents' homes, sitting by the fireside of an evening with pewter mugs of beer. One shows up, purse in hand, at the baker's house to buy cakes. Once, in 1659, two Mohawk chiefs ask for—and receive—an extraordinary session of court in which to present grievances against Dutchmen who have been abusing their people. For the twelve years in which it existed, before morphing into the town of Albany, Beverwyck was a hardscrabble place, poised between the looming mountains and the vast river, the thunk of beaver skins on countertops the sound of commerce. But it was also a well-ordered community, with a court of justice that functioned identically to the one in New Amsterdam and those in

Holland. In makeup it was more Dutch than New Amsterdam, but still a quarter of its residents came from outside the United Provinces, and with Germans, Swedes, French, English, Irish, Norwegians, and Africans, it had a far more mixed population than New England towns.

In Amsterdam, meanwhile, men like Seth Verbrugge and Dirck de Wolff—the coiffed and groomed merchant princes who ran Europe's trade from their red leather chairs and ornately carved desks, their walls hung with framed maps showing their global sway, their wives collared in lace and studded with diamonds—took advantage of the newfound stability on Manhattan. They gave their agents there greater sway and purchasing power, and the agents used their contacts with English and Dutch merchants from Canada to Virginia to Jamaica and Brazil to make their island port the hub of Atlantic trade. The new products appearing in New Amsterdam's shops speak of a more refined life for its inhabitants—medicine, measuring equipment, damask, fine writing paper, oranges and lemons, parakeets and parrots, saffron, sassafras, and sarsaparilla.

With municipal government on Manhattan came an innovation whose affect would long outlive the colony itself, and help to impress the island's legacy into the American character. Going back into the Middle Ages, cities throughout Europe had offered a form of local citizenship to inhabitants: English cities had their freemen; Dutch towns their burghers. Amsterdam had recently installed a new, two-tiered system, and the local government on Manhattan promptly copied it. The so-called great burgher was a powerful trader who contributed sizable sums for civic improvements and, in exchange, got the right to trade and had a voice in setting policy. What was different was the offering of small burgher status. Nearly every resident of New Amsterdam applied for it, and it gave even the humblest—shoemakers, chimney sweeps, tailors, blacksmiths, hatters, coopers, millers, masons—a stake in the community, a kind of minority shareholder status. The system encouraged inhabitants to support one another and largely did away with the itinerant traders who used to sweep in, make a quick profit, and then leave. It also made for a more egalitarian place than New England, where the number of freemen, or town citizens, never exceeded twenty percent of the population. In New Amsterdam, nearly everyone—rich and poor, the coiffed and the scabby—was part of the same club. When shipping increased in the port, all benefited.

Added to this, workers in the colony never organized themselves into the guilds that had held sway in Europe since the Middle Ages. This was probably because the West India Company did its best to bar the guilds, fearing their power. But this form of union-busting turned out to have an advantage. Artisans branched out: a baker might own land, invest in a shipment of tobacco, and earn extra income as a soldier. Young men who entered the colony's rolls as humble artisans rose to heights, and a muscular strain of American upward mobility was born. Frederick Flipsen (a.k.a. Philipse) traveled to Manhattan from Friesland and signed himself a lowly carpenter when he became a small burgher in 1657; at the time of his death in 1702, after a long career of multifaceted wheeling and dealing, he was one of the wealthiest men in America, his upriver estate, the famous Philipsburg Manor, encompassing ninety-two thousand acres of what would become Westchester County (including, incidentally, all of Adriaen van der Donck's former holdings).

There is a linguistic inheritance that would come along with this new relationship to work. Frederick Flipsen's workers, and the assistants to the colony's smiths, wheelwrights, bakers, and gunstock makers; had a looser relationship to their superiors than did workers in traditional guilds; a wheelwright's apprentice might also serve beer in the tavern or help bake bread. In time the typical Dutch word for master—*baas*—would take on a different connotation in the New World, and an Americanism came into being. And no Americanism is more American, and at the same time more New York, than boss. From Tweed to Corleone to Springsteen, the ur-bosses are all-American and utterly New York.* As New Amsterdam gave way to New York, the word would have a natural attraction for English colonists, too, because in its adapted usage it frankly distinguished itself from the power system that held sway in Old England; it spelled out a different kind of power relationship. "No," it says, "we have no class system in place here, but there is someone in charge. I'm not your master, lord, or sovereign, but I am your boss. Now get to work."

In this period of growth and activity, we see the emergence of other customs and usages that would influence American culture—little things, meaningless in themselves, but indications that the Dutch colony never really died out, but became part of something larger. In October of 1661, there was a grain shortage in the city, and the municipal government issued an order to the bakers of the town to restrict themselves to baking bread and not "to bake any more *koeckjes,* jumbles or sweet cake." It's the tiniest of things, but note the Dutch word. It is pronounced "cook-yehs." Literally, little cakes. More than a century later, with the publication of *American Cookery,* the first American cookbook, in 1796, Amelia Simmons would lock in print what had by then become a standard usage. It's because the first Manhattanites called them that that Americans would never eat biscuits, but cookies.

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*Yes, Springsteen is a New Jersey icon, but New Jersey was after all part of the Dutch colony, and from that time to now at the center of Manhattan's sphere of influence. And, while we're at it, Springsteens were among the original Dutch settlers of New Netherland.

While they were waiting (or not) for the bakers to produce their sweets, the women of New Amsterdam were inclined to pick up a head of cabbage, chop it finely, slather it with vinegar and melted butter, and serve it alongside, maybe, a platter of pike with smoked bacon, or veal meatballs. *Koolsla*—"cabbage salad"—was their straightforward name for the dish. Again, jump forward a century. In 1751 a Swedish traveler in the Hudson Valley, in describing a meal his Dutch landlady had served him, fused into the written language a term that was still given the original Dutch pronunciation but now had a phonetic American spelling: cole slaw.

As the town expanded and developed its seasonal routines and rituals, those of the dominant culture tended to prevail. We can imagine how the colony's most iconic legacy got established: every year in early December children of non-Dutch families in New Amsterdam had to have pouted at being left out of something good. As in the home country, the Dutch children would break out in song:

Saint Nicholas, good holy man,
Put on your best coat,
Then gallop to Amsterdam . . .

And on the sixth of the month, the saint's feast day, they would wake to find that he had left treats for them. This, surely, was unbearable; among the English, the French, the German, the Swedish families of Manhattan, pressure was brought to bear on parents, and the Dutch tradition was adopted, and, later, pushed forward a couple of weeks to align with the more generally observed festival of Christmas. So *Sinterklaas* began his American odyssey.

All of this activity—children clamoring, bakers baking, tradesmen muscling their way to the top—intensified as Manhattan matured in its last decade under the Dutch. How New Amsterdam flourished in the years following the establishment of the municipal government is an area that has only recently been studied in depth, thanks largely to Charles Gehring's translation work. Ironically, however, the very intensity of activity in this period of the colony's life has slowed the translating of its records. "In the late 1650s I'm dealing with much more complicated legalese," Dr. Gehring told me one day in 2002 as I sat observing him at work in his office in the New York State Library. His desk was stacked with volumes of an eighteenth-century guide to Dutch, Latin, and French legal terms; the shelves behind him were lined with the forty massive volumes of *Het Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal,* the definitive historical dictionary of the Dutch language from the year 1500, and the ten-volume *Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek,* which focuses on the sixteenth century. "There's more legal activity now because there are more people," he said. "And there are more arguments. In the early days the land grants were vague because there was plenty of land. By now people are more packed in, and they are fighting about where property lines are. So you find Stuyvesant having to employ surveyors. And then you see the municipal government order a street plan with all the building lots indicated."

All of this paints a picture of Manhattan in its Dutch phase very different from the haggard, inept settlement we get in traditional tellings. But while trade and shipping details suggest that the region was thriving, they aren't what most mattered about the place. Who was there, how they got along, how they mixed—that is the colony's unheralded legacy. From the French Atlantic coast, the pine forests of Denmark, the streets of London, they made their way to this island, and, thanks to a farsighted program started by the city leaders, found someone waiting to offer them "burgher" status as they came off the ship. If they couldn't afford citizenship dues ("twenty guilders in beavers"), they could pay it on installment. Eventually, maybe, they found a way to make enough guilders, beavers, or hands of wampum to convince them that it was worth staying.

The village of Harlem (Nieuw Haarlem, after the city in Holland), founded at this time at the northern end of Manhattan, was a kind of microcosm of this microcosm of the future American society. The initial bloc of thirty-two families who staked out lots along its two lanes came from six different parts of Europe—Denmark, Sweden, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and what is now southern Belgium—and spoke five different languages. Perched alongside one another on the edge of a wilderness continent, families that would have broken up into ghettos in Europe instead had to come together, and learned a common language.

Nothing better shows the kind of mixing that took place in this setting than a phenomenon that was unprecedented elsewhere in the colonies: intermarriage. Scan the marriage records of the Dutch Reformed Church of New Amsterdam and you find a degree of culture-mixing in such a small place that is remarkable for the time. A German man marries a Danish woman. A man from Venice marries a woman from Amsterdam. Isaac Bethloo from "Calis in Vranckryck" (i.e., Calais in France) weds Lysbeth Potters from "Batavia in the East Indies." Samuel Edsall, reared in the English countryside around Reading, finds himself on Manhattan, where he somehow manages to woo a girl named Jannetje Wessels who spent her early years in the wild heath country of Gelderland near the German border. A Norwegian marries a German. Swedish-English. Danish-Swedish. Prussian-German. German-Danish. French-Dutch. In all, a quarter of the marriages performed in the New Amsterdam church were mixed. Intermarriage also appears among the Africans of the population, as when a man from the island of St. Thomas marries a woman from West Africa, and there are instances of marriage between whites and blacks.

It's easy to imagine Van der Donck, newly returned from Europe and strolling through New Amsterdam, comparing the rush of cultures in its streets to the mix he found on the Dam square in Amsterdam. He had come back to witness something that he himself had helped bring about: the forging of America's first melting pot. It so happened that in this melting pot the common language to which everyone defaulted was Dutch. And it was a seventeenth-century Dutch sensibility—a mix of frankness, piety, a keen business sense, an eye on the wider world, and a willingness to put up with people's differences—that formed the social glue. Already, a type was forming, which visitors were beginning to remark on: worldly, brash, confident, hustling.

Of course, equality was not part of the fabric of this pluralistic society. It wasn't even an ideal. Tolerance—call it grudging acceptance—was the major leap forward in human civilization that had recently occurred, which helped form the societies both of the Dutch Republic and the Manhattan colony. But in the seventeenth century no one believed that blacks and whites, men and women, Catholics and Protestants, were equals, or should be treated as such. Last among the unequals were the Africans. The slaves in the colony were the human workhorses. In trying to get a sense of what life was for the African Manhattanites, however, it's necessary to erase from your mind the idea of the fully formed institution of slavery as it existed in, say, the American South in the early 1800s. The institution was in its early days, and there was a strong belief in the Netherlands that it was morally wrong to buy and sell human beings, so that in the records of the colony you see a queer range of perspectives on Africans and their condition. There is the pious Reverend Jonas Michaelius referring to the black women who have worked in his house as "thievish, lazy, and useless trash," and there is Stuyvesant, sounding the classic slaver, accusing a woman slave of theft, denouncing a man for his "laziness and unwillingness," and decreeing that both be sold "for the maximum profit of the Company." But there are also more than a few cases of owners freeing slaves after a number of years, on the belief that they had done their time, and there are even a few occasions when Europeans are recorded as working for freed Africans. A number of Africans owned property, and Stuyvesant himself declared, in an as-yet unpublished document, that their ownership was to be looked on as "true and free ownership with such privileges as all tracts of land are bestowed on the inhabitants [of this] province." Slaves also had some legal rights: repeatedly, slaves appear in court, filing lawsuits against Europeans.

It's also necessary to keep in mind the scale of slavery in the colony. Manhattan was far removed from the sugar fields of Brazil and the Caribbean, where slave labor mattered. In its first decades there were no more than a few dozen slaves scattered across the colony at any one time; by the time of the English takeover there were about three hundred. What's notable in the records is less the presence of slaves on Manhattan than the development of the West India Company's slave trade. At first the company had refused to sully itself with the slave trade, but after failing in its other business ventures and seeing the money to be made from the transshipping of humans, it reversed course and became a significant player in one of history's ugliest episodes.

The island of Curaçao was transformed into a processing station for tens of thousands of chained, disease-riddled, and seasickened West Africans, and the records show Stuyvesant—whose title was after all Director-General of New Netherland, Curaçao, Bonaire, and Aruba—in the midst of running the North American colony, managing from afar his vice-director on Curaçao, Matthais Beck. What jangles in reading their correspondence are the humdrum, helter-skelter inventories of goods being moved around the Atlantic, as in a ship that arrived in Curaçao in August 1660 carrying "724 pine planks . . . 1245 pounds of English hardbread . . . 2 barrels of bacon . . . 75 skipples of peas . . ." and "10 Negroes" valued at "130 pieces of eight."

Africans weren't the only group to receive less-than-equal status. Cultural diversity management was about the last item on Peter Stuyvesant's list of job skills, and it's safe to say he was less than thrilled to see Manhattan's streets becoming an ethnic kaleidoscope. Religion was at the root of it: Stuyvesant despised Jews, loathed Catholics, recoiled at Quakers, and reserved a special hatred for Lutherans. Which is to say, he was the very model of a well-bred mid-seventeenth-century European. Religious bigotry was a mainstay of society. The four New England colonies to the north were founded on it. Across Europe it was universally held that diversity weakened a nation. Of course, the United Provinces of the Netherlands were supposed to be the exception to this rule, but the blanket of tolerance got a bit tattered on the transatlantic voyage. It's strange that the one nod that history has given to the Manhattan-based colony—as a cradle of religious liberty in the early America—is off base. Not that it is wrong exactly; but it needs to be combed out.

Dutch tolerance was indeed renowned throughout Europe, but it continued to be debated in the country, and every decade or so brought a shift in the prevailing cultural winds. One such shift had occurred in 1651. When the stadtholder, Willem II, died following his attempted coup d'état, leaders of all the Dutch provinces bent toward The Hague for a Great Assembly, the first such gathering since 1579, when the separate provinces met to hash out a common nation. The main topic was supposed to be what to do about the lack of a stadtholder, but the assembly turned into a debate on tolerance. The orthodox Calvinist faction chose the assembly as the occasion to push the line that the whole tolerance business had gotten out of hand—that, in effect, before you knew it the streets of Amsterdam would be filled with drug dens and legalized prostitution. A wave of hardline sentiment rippled outward, and it became fashionable for a time to crack down, in particular, on Catholics, Lutherans, and Jews.

It was in this atmosphere that Stuyvesant, whose feelings were strongly antidiversity anyway, moved against the religious groups that had proliferated as the colony had grown. When the Dutch Reformed ministers asked him to block Lutherans from worshipping on the grounds that it "would pave the way for other sects," so that eventually the place "would become a receptacle for all sorts of heretics and fanatics," he did so with gusto. In 1654 twenty-three Jews, some of whom had fled the fall of Dutch Brazil, showed up seeking asylum. You can almost see Stuyvesant shaking his head at being told that, on top of the usual heap of issues he had to deal with, he now had a Jewish population. His reaction was matter-of-fact, and perfectly in character: the Jews were "a deceitful race" that would "infect" the colony if he didn't stop them. He barred one from buying land, "for important reasons." He even refused to allow them to take turns standing guard with the citizens' militia, citing "the aversion and disaffection of this militia to be fellow soldiers of the aforesaid [Jewish] nation." If they didn't like it, he told Jacob Barsimon and Asser Levy in a terse decree, "consent is hereby given to them to depart whenever and wherever it may please them." But Abraham de Lucena and Salvador Dandrada, leaders of the Jews, knew their rights in the Dutch system, and appealed to the Dutch Republic. The Jewish community of Amsterdam applied pressure in the time-honored tradition of politics, and won. Stuyvesant's superiors reminded him loftily of the "each person shall remain free in his religion" law (and added that certain influential Jews had invested a "large amount of capital" in the West India Company), and ordered him to back off.

But it was English Quakers who pushed tolerance to the limit. They had followed other sects that had fled from Old England to New, and then southward into Dutch territory. There they began proselytizing in the largely English towns of Long Island. With their sermonizing and taunting and the jiggling fits of spiritual frenzy for which they were named, they all but invited Stuyvesant's disdain. They were, in his estimation, a threat to the peace and stability of the colony, and probably out of their minds as well. He thought he was being magnanimous when, instead of banishing them, he sent them an English preacher—none other than Adriaen van der Donck's father-in-law, Francis Doughty—but they rejected him, and continued holding their own avant-garde services. When Stuyvesant forbade the town of Vlissingen from abetting them, thirty-one of the villagers, all English, followed the Dutch form of complaint by signing a remonstrance to Stuyvesant. The law of "love peace and libertie . . . which is the glory of the Outward State of Holland," they reminded him, extends even "to Jewes Turkes and Egiptians." Therefore, they respectfully refused to obey. The so-called Flushing Remonstrance is considered one of the foundational documents of American liberty, ancestor to the first amendment in the Bill of Rights, which guarantees that the government "shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." But here, too, history has spun it as a Dutch-English story, with the English in the role of lovers of liberty and Stuyvesant, standing in for his non-English colony, as the reactionary boob. In fact, the currents running through the colony were more complex, the Netherlands being the source both of a legal code of tolerance and, at times, of the failure to adhere to it. If the first amendment hearkens back to the Flushing Remonstrance, the Flushing Remonstrance clearly bases itself on the religious freedom guarantee in the Dutch constitutional document.

True to form, Stuyvesant responded to the English remonstrance with a series of arrests and imprisonments. His orthodox roots were showing in all of this: he was pushing hard, and against the inexorable forces of history, for his colony and the island he considered home to become, somehow, eventually, pure. If he had had his way, he would probably have picked off foreign religious elements one by one, scaring each away, until, like the New Englanders he seemed to admire, he had a religious monoculture, a Calvinist oasis in the New World.

But the place had its own character, and it was evolving rapidly. Thirty years later, one of Stuyvesant's successors, Governor Thomas Dongan, casually referenced the varieties of religious experience that had proliferated by then in the New York colony. Besides a Church of England presence, a Dutch Calvinist population, French Calvinists, Dutch Lutherans, and Roman Catholics, there were "Singing Quakers; Ranting Quakers; Sabbatarians; Antisabbatarians; Some Anabaptists some Independants; some Jews."

"In short," he added to sharpen the point, "of all sorts of opinions there are some, and the most part, of none at all." Stuyvesant must have lurched in his grave.

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IF THE GROWTH of the colony brought Stuyvesant headaches, it also brought opportunity—bursts of happiness, even—into his otherwise stormy life. One day in late summer 1655, he found himself with a good sun overhead, the feel of a swaying deck beneath him, and enough wind to fatten the sails and flutter the long thin strands of his hair. Once again, as in his salad days in the Caribbean, he was at sea, heading a flotilla of seven gunboats and three hundred soldiers, bearing down on the enemy. Then, he had been thirty-four, and his assault on the Spanish at St. Martin was squelched by the "rough ball" that had shot off his leg. Now forty-five and in command of a thriving province, he was determined to win the day.

Off the starboard stretched a long ribbon of forest-backed beach that looked every bit as wild as when Henry Hudson had sailed along it in the other direction five decades earlier. Rounding Cape May and advancing into the shoaly bay and then up the river that formed the most neglected area of his domain, he anchored between the two Swedish forts on the western shore. Here he deployed with precision, dividing his men into five companies, sending a contingent of fifty marching off to occupy the only road in the region, thus cutting off communication between the two forts of his enemy, and setting the rest to building a six-foot-high breastworks a stone's throw from the nearer fort. He sent into the fort an ensign named Dirck Smith, accompanied by a drummer escort. The message he carried was a straight-up demand: unconditional surrender.

The Anglo-Dutch War was over. A wave of prosperity was washing through the colony. And with the recent fall of Brazil to the Portuguese, the West India Company had finally—belatedly—committed itself to the Manhattan-based colony, sending troops and ships. So Stuyvesant was at last able to devote his formidable attention to his southern region. The Swedes had maintained their presence here for seventeen years now, settling the region sparsely, in part by bringing in "forest Finns." Decades before, Sweden had encouraged this particular group of Finns who lived near the Russian border to settle in a remote area of central Sweden, which the Swedish government had wanted cleared. The Finns had a way of life that revolved around "burn-beating" to clear forest and then cultivate the land, making them the perfect subgroup to tame dense, virgin woodland. But they turned out to be too good at their task; when they refused to curtail their way of life and stop decimating forests, the Swedes began shipping them to America. Together with the forest Finns, the Swedes had developed settlements on the South River and cultivated a steady fur trade with the Indians of the region, which had rankled both Kieft and Stuyvesant. They had also taken control of one of the Dutch forts on the river. Now Stuyvesant had come to demand, as he put it, "restitution of our property."

After a brief wait, the Swedish commander stepped out to survey the force arrayed against him, then asked to be allowed to communicate with his superior in the other fort. "His request was firmly denied," Stuyvesant later wrote with satisfaction, "and he left discontented." Finally the Swedish factor, a man named Von Elswick, arrived on the scene to parlay. He and Stuyvesant met on the edge of a marsh just below the fort. The insects of high summer roared around them, the sun glinted off Stuyvesant's armor; his self-assured body language reflected the presence of the hundreds of soldiers behind him. The men apparently spoke in a mixture of languages, falling to diplomats' Latin for precision. Both knew that Stuyvesant had gathered an overwhelming force. The matter was simple: would the Swedes fight and die needlessly, or surrender the Delaware River region to the Dutch?

Von Elswick had no choice but to give in, but as he surrendered he aimed a verbal kick at Stuyvesant. *"Hodie mihi, cras tibi,"* he said in prophetic Latin. *Today it's me, tomorrow it will be you.* He meant it as a vow—that the Swedes would one day return. In fact, it was prophetic in a different way, as in nine years' time another power, in the role of the bigger fish, would give Stuyvesant the same ultimatum he was now offering the Swede.

Stuyvesant parried the jibe and took possession of the forts. New Sweden vanished into history. He took immediate steps to settle the region, which he knew was the only hope for keeping control of it. He started with the Finns whom the Swedes had brought in as laborers. He decided to invite them to stay, and in fact he gave them incentives to continue settling the wilderness. Like so many other aspects of the Manhattan-based colony, this decision would rattle down the centuries, affecting American history in oddly resonant ways. The Finns did indeed put down roots, and over the final decade of Dutch rule more would join them, as word spread in the old country. From the early 1700s into the early 1800s their descendants would migrate down the Appalachian Valley, through the South, and out into the heartland of the new country. They brought with them their forest-clearing skills, which literally opened the American frontier, and something more as well. Throughout northern Europe, this group was renowned for its way with wood, and as the Finns spread they brought their technology with them, and it caught on. There is a long trail of evidence—V-notching, roof construction, and a kind of modular floor plan—to support the idea that the American log cabin, which rooted Appalachia and shaped Abraham Lincoln's Indiana boyhood, thus originated with the Finns of central Sweden and spread following the Latin-Dutch-Swedish parlay between Stuyvesant and Von Elswick in a bee-loud glade along the Delaware River.*

Stuyvesant felt full of himself as he prepared to head back to Manhattan. His colony was thriving. (That it was due in large part to the semirepresentative government that he had bitterly fought was another matter.) The border agreement he had hashed out with the New Englanders was holding. And at long last he had regained control of the southern region, and without firing a shot. As he prepared to board his flagship, the ache in his stump must have dulled somewhat.

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IF HE WAS experiencing a rare problem-free moment, however, it was about to end. One hundred and fifty miles to the north, canoes were in the river, moving fast through the predawn, paddles knifing the water. On September 15, 1655, six hundred Indians made landfall at the southernmost point of Manhattan Island, below the fort, then flowed through the streets of the town, firing arrows, swinging axes, setting off screams, shrieks, alarms. Similar raids took place to the north on the mainland and on Staten Island, where Indians burned down homes, killed several dozen Europeans, and took more hostages.

Historians have thought it an odd coincidence that this brief "war" should take place while Stuyvesant happened to be away to the south subduing the Swedes. Trying to make sense of it, some grabbed at an incident in which a Dutchman killed an Indian woman for stealing peaches, decided that this had launched the mayhem, and named it the Peach War. But the evidence for what actually sparked the raids is there, lying in the records. The European residents of New Amsterdam could distinguish between the various tribes of the region, and in reporting the events of September 1655 they noted that the attackers seemed to be from everywhere: "Maquas, Mahikanders, the Indians of the North River from above to below," they wrote to Stuyvesant. And, strangely, they noted the presence of a chief of the Minquas or Susquehannocks—the tribe from the South River region, precisely where Stuyvesant had sailed. Such a multicultural Indian gathering makes no sense—unless you flip your view of events around, as some recent historians have done, and see it from the Indians' point of view.

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*A bit of anecdotal support: when I told my Swedish-Norwegian father-in-law—who owns a log cabin in the traditionally Scandinavian country of northern Minnesota—about the Finns as the originators of the American log cabin, his response was: "Around here everyone knows that if you want a log cabin built, you call a Finn."

We are so used to looking at encounters between whites and Indians through the prism of later centuries that it's hard to fathom that in the 1600s the Indians saw themselves as the dominant players. As far as the Minquas of the South River were concerned, they had devoted seventeen years to cultivating a trading relationship with the Swedes, only to see Stuyvesant and his soldiers destroy it. So the Indians retaliated. In doing so, they were in effect protecting the Swedes, who brought them valuable supplies and who, being weaker than the Indians, deserved their protection. It has also become clear in recent years that East Coast Indians regularly formed alliances with distant tribes. If we grant them that much sophistication, then the reports of the Manhattanites make sense: a Minquas chief orchestrated the attack, and it was a direct result of Stuyvesant's dismantling of New Sweden.

The misnamed Peach War was a blip in the life of the Manhattan-based colony: it was over in a matter of weeks. But it plays a bigger part in this story. Here again, as in so many other places, we have to fill in gaps with guesses. We have to imagine a party of Indians who had come from afar to attack Europeans. Just north of Manhattan, in a long valley, they come across a patch of civilization: a farmhouse, a saw mill, fields under cultivation. They raid the house; a man inside rises up to defend his family. He has always maintained good relations with the Indians of the area, but these are from elsewhere and make no distinctions between whites who are friends or enemies. The man is murdered. His wife escapes, or perhaps is taken prisoner for a time. It is over quickly, the roaring, defiant cries that signal the end of a life swallowed by the wooded hillsides.

The man was Adriaen van der Donck. For some periods of his life his presence and personality are so vivid that he seems to step three-dimensionally out of the pages of historical records. But the image of him in his last years, since his return from Europe, is flat and dim, and the circumstances of his death are sketchy. The death itself isn't even recorded. We know only that Van der Donck was alive in the summer of 1655, that he was dead before January of 1656, and that his house was ransacked by Indians during the multitribal attack in September. So we have to stitch the remnants together with surmise. Interestingly, it's from Stuyvesant that we first hear of Van der Donck being dead, in an indirect reference. As the Manhattanites try to make sense of the Indian attacks, Stuyvesant tells the members of his council of a Wickquasgeck Indian, from the area around Van der Donck's home, coming to discuss what he knows. This Indian, Stuyvesant mentions, "had been a good friend of Van der Donck, and had taken care of his cows for some time." Thus the verb tense serves as the man's death notice, and the mention of him in conjunction with the attack adds another piece of evidence as to how he died. Since Stuyvesant himself never understood the likely connection between his military actions in the South River and the attacks around Manhattan, it probably never occurred to him that he had been indirectly responsible for the death of his onetime nemesis.

Van der Donck's wife, Mary, survived him. Her father, the Reverend Francis Doughty, had recently accepted a position at a church in Virginia and, following her husband's death, she joined him there. She found regular work as a medical practitioner, purging, sweating, setting bones, and delivering babies. Eventually she married an Englishman named Hugh O'Neale, but, oddly, continued to appear in the records as "Mrs. Van der Donck (alias) O'Neale." Having given up on the vast estate for which her husband had had such plans, Mary signed it over to her brother, who sold it. And so very quickly after his death at the age of thirty-seven, Adriaen van der Donck—with no progeny or property to recall him to the living—was a forgotten man.

But no—that's not quite true. In a strange twist, his book, *A Description of New Netherland*—into which he had poured his knowledge of the colony, its people, its natives, its plants, winds, insects, mountains, snows, dangers, and promises—his book, which had been admitted for publication and then withheld due to the war, came out in the Netherlands right around the time of his death. It became a best-seller, and went into a second edition the following year. Once again, this time posthumously, Van der Donck sparked a wave of interest in a faraway place called Manhattan, an island where ordinary Europeans could throw off the ancient shackles of their castes and guilds and sects. A place to which, now, yet more mixes of peoples—Croats and Prussians, Flemings and Limburgers, Copenhageners and Dieppois—would pin their dreams.

To the front of the second edition of the book, the publisher attached a poem that sung both the author and his subject:

So, reader, if you desire, travel there freely and full of joy.
Although named for the Netherlands, it exceeds it far.
Does such a journey not appeal? Then lend your eyes
To the book by Van der Donck, which like a bright star
Shows the land and people, and will teach you further
That the Netherlands, through her care, can govern New Netherland.

It wasn't very good verse. But it was as close as anyone would come to memorializing the man who first saw the promise of Manhattan Island, dreamed its future, and devoted his life to making the dream real.

The passion for the New World colony that had fueled Van der Donck outlived him. Less than a year after his death and on the heels of the publication of his book, the municipal government of Amsterdam put together an elaborate plan for a colony of its own. Three hundred settlers signed on to emigrate, and the city drew up long lists of start-up supplies—400 pairs of shoes, "50 pairs Prussian blue stockings," "100 red Rouen caps," "8 firkins vinegar," 250 pounds of cheese, 15 hams, 30 smoked tongues—with which it furnished them. Impressed by Stuyvesant's vanquishing of the Swedes, they decided to plant the new settlement on the South River, around one of Stuyvesant's forts. And so it began all over again: a new crop of arrivals, new hopes. "I have been full 5 or 6 hours in the interior in the woods," wrote one of the settlers, a schoolmaster, shortly after landfall, "and found fine oak and hickory trees, also excellent land for tillage. . . . I already begin to keep school, and have 25 children." They called the settlement New Amstel.

Today it is the city of New Castle, Delaware, and on its central square a tiny, late-seventeenth-century Dutch house of sturdy brick and red-shuttered windows bears testimony to the belated effort to heed Van der Donck. The desires, now, were to exploit the colony's potential and to catch up with English expansion in North America. One would be realized, the other would not.

Chapter 14

NEW YORK

Unless you are a member of the Dead Sea Scrolls sect or a follower of the philosopher Hegel, it would probably be a mistake to think that the English takeover of Manhattan was inevitable. The fall of Rome, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the American colonists winning their war for independence, the Allies defeating Hitler—we have a tendency to imagine that past events, especially the big ones, had to happen the way they did. But really to believe that is to subscribe to a doctrine that holds that our acts aren't our own, that we are only cogs in a machine carrying out preprogrammed instructions.

In hindsight, however, the takeover does have a certain obviousness. Partly that's because history books have portrayed the event that way, giving us the image of the English population of New England as an inexorable force of nature swelling until, like a glass overflowing, it poured southward almost unconsciously, flooding the Dutch colony. But looked at another way, you might say that the colony cast off its Dutch parent. The seed that Henry Hudson transported to a distant island rooted and grew, and, really, outgrew the mother plant. It was the luckiest thing in the world for Manhattan—for America—that the English wanted it so badly, because, though no one could see it at the time, the Dutch empire was already on the wane, and the English one was only beginning its rise. Van der Donck's mission had been all about the forces of history; his appeal was for the leaders of the Dutch government to take note of them. But the system that fueled the Dutch Golden Age wasn't built to last. The English, meanwhile, especially those in America, would begin experimenting ornately and obsessively with ideas of liberty, unfettered reason, the rights of man. Put elements of the two

together—seventeenth-century Dutch tolerance and free-trade principles and eighteenth-century English ideas about self-government—and you have a recipe for a new kind of society. You can almost see the baton passing from the one seventeenth-century power to the other, and at the very center of that changeover is Manhattan.

But no one in the Dutch colony—or for that matter in New England—saw the end that finally came. It wasn't a result of hordes of New Englanders sweeping south. What happened was more calculated, and involved a global set of players, and, like any good final act, some sudden reversals.

The figure at the center of it all, of course, was Peter Stuyvesant. Stuyvesant's main adversary was a man he would never meet—a man whose first, brief, appearance in the history books came years earlier. In 1642, Stuyvesant was still barking orders under the tropical sun of Curaçao, Kieft was in charge on Manhattan, and Van der Donck was the lawman up north, roaming the vast estate of the Amsterdam diamond merchant Kiliaen Van Rensselaer. Meanwhile, outside the village of Boston, nine young men stepped from a simple clapboard building onto a long sward of grass. It was endless wilderness just beyond the surrounding cow pastures and apple trees, but they and the cluster of people gathered around them saw the event through the lens of civilization, embued it with centuries of English tradition. The nine young men were the first class of graduates of the college founded with money granted by a Puritan minister named John Harvard.

Overseeing the ceremony was John Winthrop, governor of the Massachusetts colony, with whom Peter Stuyvesant would forge a close relationship. But the man who, more than any other individual, would engineer the takeover of Manhattan was one of those nine young scholars stepping into a New England morning in early fall. His name was George Downing. He was a grim, athletic nineteen-year-old possessed of an ambition bordering on aggression, and he happened to be Governor Winthrop's nephew.

As with most of those first generations of Harvard graduates, Downing yearned for London. Shortly after the ceremony, he sailed there, saw the civil war taking shape, pronounced himself a Puritan revolutionary, and fought with the Parliamentarians. As the new government came into being, Oliver Cromwell saw the intellect and bulldog ferocity in the young man and made him his ambassador to The Hague. There, Downing proved himself English to the core, which meant, among other things, fostering a loyal hatred of the Dutch. Really, he was an ungainly choice for a diplomat, unless you are more interested in sticking it to the country in question than in smoothing things. In place of the suave manners usually considered necessary in diplomacy, Downing was brusque and obstinate. Jan de Witt and the other leaders of the Dutch government found him repellent, and his colleagues in the English government didn't much care for him either. The diarist Samuel Pepys worked under him and frankly pronounced him (to his diary, anyway) a "perfidious rogue."

But Downing had the diplomat's knack of getting what he wanted, and nothing shows it better than his management of his own fate following Cromwell's death in 1658 and the restoration of the Stuarts, in the person of Charles II, to the throne. Downing had been among the most vicious of the anti-Royals, hunting down friends of the Stuart family, and now the same royal family had returned to power. Turning on a dime, he boldly asked the new monarch to excuse his waywardness in supporting Cromwell, and blamed his faulty judgment on his having come of age in the unstable climate of the New World. He then demonstrated his loyalty to the king by trapping and arresting three of his own friends, men who had sentenced Charles's father to death. Downing's shamelessness was rewarded not only by Charles reappointing him to his position as Dutch ambassador, and later knighting him, but, eventually, by the naming of Downing Street in London after him. (Downing College at the University of Cambridge has his name on it, too, as a result of a bequest he made.)

So Downing resettled himself at The Hague, and recommenced loathing the Dutch and their trade hegemony and searching, as duty compelled him to do, for cracks in it. Back in New England, meanwhile, the leaders—men who were theologically even more strident than the home country Puritans—were at least as disoriented by the restoration of the Stuarts as Downing, and most were not nearly as adept at switching gears. One result of their quandary, notable for American history in a number of ways, was the struggle for power and territory among the leaders of the English colonies in the early '60s. Massachusetts, with its long-standing royal charter, was on firmest ground. But the two southern colonies, Connecticut and New Haven, had formed in an ad hoc way, settlers spilling southward into territory the Dutch had claimed; as yet they had no official sanction in England. It was now necessary to petition the royals they had long despised. For New Haven, where Puritanism was purest, this was galling, and the leaders balked.

One man in Connecticut, however, had more flexibility. John Winthrop, the governor of that colony, was the son of the other John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts and the patriarch of all the New England Puritans, and thus the cousin of George Downing. The elder Winthrop had long since died, much to the chagrin of Peter Stuyvesant, who had relied on his pro-Dutch leanings in his dealings with the New England leaders. Stuyvesant now—with disastrous misjudgment—looked to the son for level-headed leadership among the Puritan firebrands. The younger Winthrop has been portrayed by history as a quiet, modest achiever, forever in the shadow of his father. This small, dark knife of a man has not been given credit either for his accomplishments or his political cunning.

In 1661, having overcome his anti-Royalist impulses, Winthrop proposed to travel to London to petition Charles for a charter for his colony. His guile shows itself first in his eagerness to go, second in the manner of his leave-taking. After promising William Leete, his counterpart in New Haven, that he would also deliver the petition for a charter that the colony had belatedly cobbled together, he sailed off, literally leaving the man standing on shore still holding his document. Next, he chose not to leave from Boston but instead made arrangements with his friend Peter Stuyvesant to sail from Manhattan. Of course, the island was a major travel hub, but sailing on a Dutch ship meant arriving in Holland first and then having to cross to England. Stuyvesant doesn't seem to have found it odd.

Sailing into the Dutch harbor on July 8, Winthrop was shocked by the sound of cannon fire coming from the fort. But the shock turned to delight: his friend Stuyvesant was giving him the honored greeting of a head of state. (The Dutch records inform us that no less than twenty-seven pounds of gun powder were consumed "to salute Governor Winthorp [sic]".) Stuyvesant liked Winthrop. He seemed to like all Englishmen. Hartford was fast-growing but unkempt, and Stuyvesant proudly showed the visitor around his trim little capital: here the fort, here the new brick home of the director himself (Stuyvesant having decided he ought to have a house outside the fort as well as his distant farm), here the newly reinforced wall along the northern perimeter, complete now with guard towers and a central gate at the Highway. Winthrop apparently kept up his stream of convivial chatter, asking lots of questions, complimenting the director on how far he had come with his town. He spent thirteen days in New Amsterdam, and by the end of it he had detailed notes on the place, its fortifications, and troop numbers.

Trying to imagine Stuyvesant's plight at this time gives some sympathy for him. He knew there were English machinations over his colony, and must have been livid over the company's failure to send soldiers for its defense. And yet, when his own people expressed similar anger at being left without protection, he had to defend the directors' decisions.

And while he was wary of the English, Stuyvesant couldn't resist comparing notes with Winthrop on their respective colonies, and expressing frank envy of the monocultures of New England while complaining how his own population was comprised of the "scrapings" of all countries. As pressures grew, he seems to have become more and more a solitary figure, and an oddly evocative image of him at this time comes into view. One of his apparent sources of pleasure was tropical birds, with which he had presumably become fascinated in his years in the Caribbean. Over the years he had instructed company officials on Curaçao to send him birds (one packing slip indicates "To the honorable lord director-general P. Stuyvesant," "Four parrots in two cages" and "Twenty-four parakeets"), so that he must have built up quite an aviary by this time. On his farm, alone with the bright squawking of his pets, he must have tried endlessly to parse the problem of how to deal with the English, weighing trust versus suspicion.

Stuyvesant's bonhomie toward Winthrop extended right up to the latter's departure: fifty-five soldiers lined the harbor as Winthrop's ship headed for open water, and unleashed a full military salute. At the other end of his journey, Winthrop arranged a meeting with the directors of the West India Company. Here he played up the fellow-Protestant connection, and the normally reserved men of business were convinced. "He has always shown himself a friend of our nation," they wrote to Stuyvesant, encouraging him in his trust.

If anyone found it suspicious that Winthrop proposed next to travel from Amsterdam to The Hague, it could have been explained away as a family matter. George Downing, English diplomat in residence there, was after all his cousin. They had last seen each other in New England, and were on familiar enough terms that later Winthrop wrote several times to Downing, who was famously stingy with money, to chide him for keeping his mother living near poverty. Secret consultations being what they are, we don't know the details of the meeting between the two cousins in September of 1661, but a map that Winthrop had drawn up of New Amsterdam's fortifications was soon circulating in government channels; this, logically, was the moment in which information about the current military status of the Dutch colony was transferred to English authorities.

Then—this historically momentous journey proceeding to the next phase—it was on to London for Winthrop. Charles II's coronation had taken place just five months earlier, and the city, having thrown off the heavy drape of Puritan rule, was in the midst of its libertine Restoration hoedown, with thundering alehouses, saucy maids, and theaters packing in crowds to see productions of *Hamlet, 'Tis a Pity She's a Whore,* and puppet shows satirizing Puritanism. From all of these Winthrop carefully averted his eyes as he applied himself to the task of winning royal favor.

In drab contrast to the satiny surroundings of the king's council chamber, Winthrop—a gray little man with a hooked nose and arched, sardonic-looking eyebrows—bowed low and bowed often that autumn and winter, he smiled through the small indignities (being routinely confused with Josiah Winslow of the Plymouth colony, realizing midway through the discussions that the king thought "Massachusetts" and "New England" were one and the same) and emerged with a document that embodied all of his desires, desires he had kept secret from everyone, most of all his New England colleagues. When the charter was finally presented to them, they were staggered. Charles had given Connecticut a grant that extended from the Massachusetts border south, including the Dutch territories, and west as far as "the Pacific." Winthrop's quiet, modest, understated ambition was now revealed. He wanted all the territory between Massachusetts and Virginia. He wanted his land to stretch to the Pacific Ocean—never mind that no one had any notion how far it was. He wanted everything. And he got it.

New Haven officials were apoplectic at the idea that Winthrop proposed to engulf their colony, but it was a fait accompli—he had the royal signature—and, truly, he was so nice about it, so patient in explaining why it was for the good of all, that his opposite, Governor Leete, gave in quickly, thus ensuring that the future United States would contain no state of New

Haven. The bitterest Puritans of the colony talked about picking up stakes and heading for the Dutch territory, where they knew they would be welcomed, but their leaders also knew that Winthrop had that next in his sights.

Stuyvesant, meanwhile, had gotten wind of Winthrop's charter. He wrote to his friend, asking him to confirm that he would respect the Hartford Treaty boundary lines they had drawn up more than a decade earlier. Winthrop's reply was a deft little evasion. The West India Company suggested to Stuyvesant that because of "your anxiety over the patent lately obtained by Governor Winthrop," he should shore up his defenses. But they didn't give him the troops or ships to do so, despite his appeals.

Stuyvesant had troubles quite aside from Winthrop. The boom that had come to New Amsterdam in the eight years since the granting of its city charter was accompanied by a draining away of confidence in Stuyvesant and the West India Company. There had been that chance, in the months following Van der Donck's return, for Stuyvesant to support the reform that people had demanded, and give the entire colony a semblance of popular representation. Then again, the company would probably not have allowed it. At any rate, that was his last hope to win the hearts of the people. Soon after, English colonists on Long Island and on the mainland, who had sworn allegiance to New Netherland, began flipping that allegiance, declaring themselves residents of Connecticut. Winthrop encouraged this and in part engineered it. Stuyvesant complained to the directors that Long Island and "West Chester" were turning English; there had been encroachments on Jonas Bronck's and Adriaen van der Donck's former estates. While the city was thriving, the colony, he wrote, was in "a sad and perilous condition."

Now Winthrop prepared to make his big move, to bring the entire Dutch colony within his jurisdiction. One by one, towns on the mainland were ordered to "yield obedience" to Connecticut, and begin paying taxes to Hartford. Winthrop was no longer Stuyvesant's friend; now he and his colleagues in Connecticut were "unrighteous, stubborn, impudent and pertinacious." New Netherland was disintegrating, and Stuyvesant didn't have the means to stop it.

But no—the end didn't come that way, with an invasion from the north. Winthrop was just about the wiliest creature of all those involved in this end game—the wiliest, that is, but one. His cousin, George Downing, had the better of him there. Downing took the information about Manhattan that Winthrop had given him and put it to other uses. From his diplomat's offices in The Hague, Downing had the wider view of things. He saw the globe scored with the crisscrossing lines of Dutch trade routes. Dutch outposts stippled the coast of India like a beard; they were scattered across the Indonesian archipelago; the Dutch were the only nation on earth with whom the closed islands of Japan would trade. They had control of the spice trade, of cotton, indigo, silk, sugar, cotton, copper, coffee, and dozens of other products. And now, as they moved into West Africa, Downing saw them about to secure an advantage in the one commodity that would tip the balance in the decades ahead: human beings.

In June of 1661, Downing appeared before the States General, and made an expansive appeal on behalf of his nation. England and the Dutch Republic, he intoned, must "be instruments of good and not of hurt to each other." The matter of trade was thorny, but, he advised sagely, "the world is large, there is trade enough for both." This was hogwash. After negotiating a trade treaty with Jan de Witt, he went to London, where he promptly directed his indominable energy to convincing the king that now was the time to hit the Dutch hard, with soldiers, ships, and cannon fire. Living as he did in the bosom of Holland's Golden Age, he had seen the changes brought by the waves of wealth—dour Calvinist clothes swapped for satins and swaggering French fashions, country estates tricked out with faux-Roman pillars, the children of rich merchants (as evidenced by many portraits) growing fat and pink as young sows—and he believed the Dutch had gone soft. Their Atlantic Rim possessions were ripe for picking, starting with the slaving posts in West Africa. "Go on in Guinea," he thundered to the king's council. "If you bang them there, they will be very tame."

Downing was playing to the choir; overwhelmingly, according to Samuel Pepys, the court was "mad for a Dutch war." The only man who really mattered, however, wasn't so sure. The second Charles Stuart to sit on the English throne was a man of wide interests. He was obsessed with clocks, enjoyed redesigning the royal gardens, and spent late nights at "the Royal Tube" (his telescope). He loved dogs, horses, singing Italian songs, tennis (he played daily), and sex (possibly daily—the notorious Nell Gwynn was among his many mistresses and "royal bastards" was a category of palace expenditure). His court was the epitome of licentiousness, a mirror image of the years that had preceded it. He had been a teenager when anti-royal forces put a price on his head, and after years hiding in barns, forests, and foreign palaces, he was now where he was meant to be, and ready to live it to the full. He cared about foreign policy, but didn't seem to have an overriding philosophy of where to steer the country. He wasn't especially fond of the Dutch, but admired them, and had some gratitude toward them for putting him up in The Hague. He wasn't sure about launching military raids.

His brother, however, was. James Stuart, at twenty-eight, was bigger and bluffer than the king, a full-out athlete and lifelong soldier, aggressive and full of tally-ho, altogether more of a man's man. He wasn't well liked by the people and some historians have branded him a stooge, but he had something his brother lacked: constancy. When he later converted to Catholicism it was after long deliberation, and he stayed with it despite the fact that it got him deposed only three years into his reign. It was James who saw the magic in Cromwell's idea of an English empire. His brother had made him head of the Admiralty, and from that position he was determined to make good on Cromwell's dream.

The plan began to take shape in 1661. As a first step, the men at the center of power in London—politicians, royals, merchants—agreed that the American colonies, which had been left to themselves while the nation's attention was diverted by civil war, needed reorganizing. Charles and James didn't trust the Puritan leaders there, and soon after the king had sent Winthrop away with his charter it was agreed that it had been a mistake to give the New Englanders leave to take control of Manhattan and the Hudson River corridor, which meant access to the interior of the continent.

Downing then took the lead in arguing for a master plan involving the whole Atlantic Rim. Reading the letters, minutes, and military instructions surrounding this evolving plan, it's remarkable to comprehend that so much history—the changeover of Manhattan Island, the consolidation of the American colonies, the ramping up of the slave trade into an epoch-changing institution, the transformation of West Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and North America—was quite calculated and stemmed from a series of meetings among a rather small group of men in London in the years 1661 and 1662.

James backed the plan, and pushed for the king's endorsement. Warfare was a language that the prince knew and felt comfortable with. In his years of exile he had volunteered and fought valiantly under the French in their war against Spain, leading men in musket-and-horse charges on the snowy plains of northern France and achieving the rank of general, then, when the vicissitudes of the age dictated that the English royals-in-exile should back the Spanish, promptly switching sides and fighting with equal bravery for Spain. Having risked his life a dozen times for lesser ends, he was more than ready to commit himself now to something as big and vital as this. The first objective was to wrest control of the slave ports of West Africa from the Dutch. The prince organized a company to fund the operation, which got the flourishing title of The Company of Royal Adventurers Trading into Africa. (The Royal Mint commemorated James's desire to exploit the "Guinea Coast" by striking a new coin, which, popularly known as the guinea, would long outlast the trade.) Reorganized as the Royal African Company, this enterprise would become the single greatest shipper of slaves from Africa to America. (The prosaic-sounding 1667 announcement of its public offering of stock stands in stark relief to the impact the words would have down the centuries: "the Royal Company being very sensible how necessary it is that the *English* Plantations in *America* should have a competent and a constant supply of *Negro-servants* for their own use of Planting, and that at a moderate Rate, have already sent abroad, and shall within eight days dispatch so many Ships for the Coast of *Africa* as shall by God's permission furnish the said Plantations with at least 3000 Negroes, and will proceed from time to time to provide them a constant and sufficient succession of them . . .")

In the company's first mission, James picked a roguish Irishman named Robert Holmes and sent him in command of two ships to go raiding in the Cape Verde islands and down the Guinea Coast. Holmes did all that was asked of him: the initial result of James's first corporate adventure was a rout of the Dutch slaving posts. The Dutch ambassador expressed his government's outrage to King Charles (the two countries were after all at peace), and the king tried to brush the matter aside: "And pray, what is Cape Verde? a stinking place; is this of such importance to make so much ado about?" Meanwhile, the ringing success encouraged both the prince and the diplomat to move to the next stage. Downing was sure he could talk his way out of anything. "What ever injuries the Dutch doe them," he wrote of James's warships, "let them be sure to doe the Dutch still greater and lett me alone to mediate between them . . ."

Charles now had some confidence in the geopolitical gambit, and he gave Downing and his brother their next card to play. Settlement of North America had become a primary long-term objective; the slave business was intertwined with it. In March of 1664 the king signed his name to an extraordinary document. In making a gift "unto our Dearest Brother James Duke of York, his Heirs and Assigns" of a vast stretch of the North American continent (". . . Together with all the Lands, Islands, Soils, Rivers, Harbors, Mines, Minerals, Quarries, Woods, Marshes, Waters, Lakes, Fishings, Hawking, Hunting and Fowling and all other Royalties, Profits, Commodities and Hereditaments to the said several Islands, Lands and Premises . . ."), he was being more than generous. Much of the land indicated—from Maine to Delaware—he had only recently granted to Winthrop for his Connecticut colony. The gift to his brother was meant to erase that mistake. The "Duke's Charter" took care to single out the "River called Hudsons River," and it was in this that men in Whitehall who were attuned to global economic events were particularly interested.

Like an elephant in the dawn, the full girth of the continent to the edge of which the European colonies had clung for four decades was gradually becoming apparent. It was also apparent by now that the New England colonies were on a kind of shelf, landlocked, unable to access future potential. The beavers of the northeast were on their way to extinction; the future lay to the west, which meant, first, up the Hudson River. And the key to it was Manhattan. This was borne out by the fact that much of their own trade went through Manhattan, which, English leaders now calculated, cost them ten thousand pounds per year in tobacco shipments alone. Having identified the island as the linchpin of the American colonies, a committee at Whitehall determined in January 1664 that it was necessary to take it, and soon. Further, they wanted it in the hands of one of their own men rather than the New Englanders.

Having made their decision, the committee moved quickly. The charter was signed in March; the next month, James summoned a man named Richard Nicolls. Nicolls was forty years old, a lifelong royalist who had stayed at the prince's side all during his Commonwealth exile and fought with him in France. He was smart and capable, which was just as well. James told him he was being entrusted with North America. He would command four gunships and four hundred and fifty men; they would leave within the month. Shortly after, James himself took to sea, cruising the Channel in a naval exercise, smelling the future on the sea air, fully aware that his attack on Manhattan would have to be followed up by further assaults on the Dutch.

Nicolls, meanwhile, sailed west. The squadron had good conditions to start. Then on day sixteen they were hit by crosswinds and foul weather, and in "very great Fogge," Nicolls, on his flagship, the thirty-six gun *Guinea,* lost sight of two of his ships. Ten weeks after leaving Portsmouth, the vessels made landfall, two on Cape Cod, the other two away to the south at Piscataway.

When he came ashore at Boston, Nicolls dispatched riders with letters from King Charles to the New England governors, informing them that steps were about to be taken for "the welfare and advancement of those our plantations in America." Arguably the man in the colonies most shocked by Nicolls's arrival was not Stuyvesant but John Winthrop. Nicolls had been ordered by James to "putt Mr Winthropp . . . in mind of the differences which were on foot here"—i.e., that the king had reneged on his promise. Winthrop's dream of a continent-wide colony of Connecticut vanished in a stroke. Smart politician that he was, however, he swiftly adjusted his expectations. While the Massachusetts leaders stalled and grumbled, unhappy with the idea of relinquishing power to the crown, Winthrop offered his services in negotiations with Stuyvesant, which Nicolls accepted.

Stuyvesant, meanwhile, was, of all places, one hundred and fifty miles north of Manhattan, at Fort Orange, where there were problems with the Mohawks. He hadn't been caught off guard, but he had been misled. Through one of his English friends he had learned of the English squadron even before it landed, and had his capital dig in—setting watches, preparing defenses, sending men out along Long Island Sound for news of the ships' arrival. Then a remarkable letter arrived from Amsterdam. Before the squadron had left, Downing had taken the unusual step of informing the Dutch government of its existence—in order, he said, to assure the Dutch that their colony had nothing to fear; England was merely sending a commander to overhaul the administration of the New England colonies.

The Dutch leaders were completely duped; the directors insisted Stuyvesant needn't be alarmed. Nicolls's mission would not affect him, and as to the English residents of the Dutch colony, they would "not give us henceforth so much trouble" because they "prefer to live free under us at peace with their consciences" than risk being persecuted by "a government from which they had formerly fled." So Stuyvesant relaxed his guard, went up the Hudson as planned, and as soon as he arrived at his northern outpost news of impending disaster reached him. He sailed back to Manhattan to find the island in turmoil. The English gunboats were perched at the entrance to the lower harbor, cutting off the river and Manhattan Island. People stepping off the ferry from Breuckelen talked of inhabitants of the English towns forming themselves into companies of foot soldiers. Sailors from a Dutch boat anchored in Gravesend Bay reported the English ships had fired on them.

Stumping into the fort, Stuyvesant dictated a letter to the colony's secretary, which was delivered to Nicolls's ship, asking his business and declaring hopefully that Stuyvesant was not "apt to entertaine any thing of prejudice intended against us." Nicolls's reply came the next morning, a messenger delivering a letter informing Stuyvesant that "in his Majesties Name, I do demand the Towne, Scituate upon the Island commonly knowne by the Name of Manhatoes with all the Forts there unto belonging, to be rendered unto his Majesties obedience, and Protection into my hands." The king did not relish "the effusion of Christian blood," but if the Dutch did not surrender they would invite "the miseryes of a War."

Stuyvesant's reaction to this thunderbolt was stylishly in period: he returned the letter because it was unsigned. Whereupon Nicolls fired off another:

> *These to the Honorable the Governor of the Manhatoes.*
>
> *Honoured Sir.*
>
> *The neglect of Signing this inclosed Letter, when it was first brought to your hands, by Colonell Geo: Cartwright, was an omission which is now amended, and I must attribute the neglect of it at first, to the over hasty zeale I had dispatching my Answer to the Letter I received from you dated 19/26th instant, I have nothing more to add, either in matter of Forme, then is therein expressed, only that your speedy Answer is necessary to prevent future inconveniences, and will very much obliege.*
>
> *Your affectionat humble Servant*
> *RI: NICOLLS.*

Townspeople were rushing through the streets with news and gossip: Stuyvesant tended to be calm in such situations. By now he had the pertinent details. There were maybe five hundred men in New Amsterdam able to bear arms. Nicolls had nearly twice that, plus forces totaling a thousand or more amassing on Long Island, plus the firepower of his ships. The fort had its cannons, but it was so low on gunpowder they were inconsequential. It was probably hopeless, but Stuyvesant doesn't seem to have had second thoughts: they would fight to the death. Anything else, he informed the leaders of the city government, "would be disapproved of" at home.

At this juncture, a rowboat, with a white flag aloft, approached the shore. In it, of all people, was Winthrop, along with several other New Englanders. They asked for a meeting, and Stuyvesant led them to a tavern. Winthrop urged his "friend" to surrender, and handed him a letter containing Nicolls's terms. They were generous terms—extravagant almost—and yet Stuyvesant was unmoved. Later, at the City Hall, the city officials demanded to see the letter and show it to the citizens. Stuyvesant knew his people: resistance would cave once they heard of the favorable terms. So he tore the letter to pieces.

At this, the room went wild. Long-stoppered feelings came flooding out. The company, Stuyvesant himself, the colony's government—it was all a sham; it had never been anything else. For years they had lodged requests and petitions, asking for a voice in government, and he had sneeringly rejected them, declared them childish fools who didn't understand the complexities of government, and all along he had been nothing but a good soldier blindly carrying out the orders of a bankrupt bureaucracy. Now he expected them to fight and die on his orders. Why should they? Why spill their blood, and try to hold the attackers off, when they all knew the West India Company had sent no reinforcements, despite his appeals. It would have been one thing had the company denied their petitions for reform on the grounds that its way was better, but it never had a way.

Finally, the town leaders demanded once again to see the letter. In an odd bit of comedy, Stuyvesant offered them the pieces, which Nicasius de Sille took and carefully pasted back together.

Meanwhile, with no answer from Stuyvesant, Nicolls had moved his ships forward, within shot of the city. The English Long Islanders, with muskets and pikes, were gathered along the Breuckelen shore. Some French privateers who were in the area had gotten news of the events, and rushed to the scene as well.

There is then an almost Shakespearean scene, in which Stuyvesant climbs heavily onto the battlements of his fort and stands there, gazing at the guns trained on his town, his long wisps of hair flailed by the wind. He seems, in this moment in which he will be forever frozen in history, almost to have achieved the status of a tragic hero, his leadership, his particular stew of character strengths and flaws, having built this impressive place but also having caused his own people to turn against him. (To add a family dimension to the betrayal, his seventeen-year-old son, Balthasar, had come out on the side of the city leaders.) There was a lone gunner at his side, awaiting his command to touch light to powder. It must have been tempting. A single cannon blast at the ships riding at anchor just beyond the walls would be enough. It would unleash a rain of violence, a storm that would swallow the place, ending the torment, ending things the way they ought to end, in good, quenching blood and fire.

Then, in his direst moment, the church came to give comfort. Two ministers of the town, father and son, both with the ponderous, sonorous name of Megapolensis, appeared at his side. It's hard not to think of Stuyvesant's father here, to imagine the lifelong battle inside him between stalwart devotion to the church, personified in his father's ministry, and that streak of stiff rebelliousness. Maybe it was the church that swayed him. Then, too, the warships, the guns, the French privateers, and the glinting line of weaponry on the opposite shore had to have added up to something in his military calculations. He knew what the pikes and the expectant leers of the foreigners meant. It was a long-standing rule of war that if a besieged fort so much as fired a shot, the forces against it were at liberty to sack and loot; the place would be laid waste. Was he really willing to subject the people he had lived among these seventeen years to such a thing?

The ministers talked lowly to him for a while, and then the three men went down.

But he still wouldn't yield. He crafted another letter to Nicolls, referencing the history of the Dutch claim to the territory, asserting that "we are oblieged to defend Our place," informing him that he had had news from Holland about a treaty between the two countries, and suggesting that Nicolls check with the home office before taking this fateful step. It may

have been a bluff, but Stuyvesant was right in thinking this move by England was rash. Contrary to Ambassador Downing's assurances to King Charles, the Dutch would fight to defend their interests. At this moment, the great Dutch admiral Michiel de Ruyter was preparing to launch an expedition for West Africa. When his sweep was over, all but one of the Dutch outposts taken in James's raids would be back in Dutch hands. Outright war would then begin, and, all told, the Dutch would win the Second Anglo-Dutch War, creating a pothole in England's road to empire.

But, pulling back to the broad view, the English were riding to the top of the historical wave. With these events of late summer 1664, the island of Manhattan would be a pivot around which the age would turn, and when it was done the floppy hats, Vermeer interiors, "merry company" portraits, and blue-and-white Delft tiles would be thrust into the past, and ahead would be the Raj and the redcoats, Britannia ruling the waves.

In the end, Stuyvesant truly did stand alone. All of his people deserted him. The leading citizens of New Amsterdam—ninety-three of them, including his son—signed a petition asking him to avert "misery, sorrow, conflagration, the dishonor of women, murder of children in their cradles, and, in a word, the absolute ruin and destruction of about fifteen hundred innocent souls." Perhaps it struck him, on reading it, that it showed he had been right all along: this rapid willingness to give up, this spinelessness, this absence of patriotism, was what came of a mongrel society. Mixing religions and races weakened a populace, and here was proof. It would be wrong to think that the citizens of the town had no sense of loyalty, but they were practical people, and at any rate they had little choice. They made clear in their final petition to Stuyvesant that they were willing to support their neighbors and their colony, but they had no qualms about abandoning the company that had left them defenseless.

And so they did. The fifteen hundred residents of New Amsterdam, the ten thousand inhabitants of the colony of New Netherland, turned their backs on the company that had long ignored them. Griet Reyniers, onetime Amsterdam barmaid who became Manhattan's first prostitute, abandoned it. So did her husband, Anthony "the Turk" van Salee, the half-Moroccan former pirate. They were now wealthy landowners on Long Island, and their four daughters were married to some of New Amsterdam's up-and-coming businessmen. Joris Rapalje, who with his bride Catalina Trico comprised the Adam and Eve of the colony, had recently died, but Catalina was still very much alive, as were her grown children and their families, and they, too, preferred to acquiesce rather than die. The same went for Asser Levy, the Polish Jew who had battled Stuyvesant over the rights of Jews, and now owned Manhattan's first kosher butcher shop, and for Manuel "the Giant" Gerrit, the African who had escaped hanging in 1641 and who for the past five years had been living as a free landowner on a small farm near Stuyvesant's bouwerie. For all of these people, living peaceably under an English prince who promised to continue the way of life they had fashioned was patently better than fighting and dying.

And so he relented. "I would much rather be carried out dead," he said, and surely everyone believed him, but instead he named six men to meet with their English counterparts and negotiate terms. They met at Stuyvesant's farm. And the next Monday, at eight in the morning, Stuyvesant, fifty-four-years-old, thick of build, with his cuirass and his limp and his small, bold eyes, led a military procession out of the fort, with drummers drumming and flags waving.

Then, as all attention shifted to the waterfront, where Nicolls and his main body of troops was coming ashore, a small party of English soldiers entered the deserted fort. Outside, the harbor winds were swirling around the interested throng of mixed nationalities who watched as an English flag went up the flagpole and listened as Nicolls declared the place renamed for his patron, the Duke of York and Albany. Inside the fort, meanwhile, a few soldiers climbed to the office of the colonial secretary, above the gate. In any change of government, gaining possession of the records is among the first steps, for to control a society's vital documents is to control its past and future. The soldiers found what they were looking for: rows of bulky leather-bound volumes, forty-eight in all, numbered consecutively on their spines, A to Z and then AA through PP. Wills, deeds, minutes, correspondence, complaints, petitions, confrontations, agreements—it was all here, meticulously maintained, year by year, day by day, the story of America's first mixed society.

Chapter 15

INHERITED FEATURES

As Stuyvesant surrendered the Manhattan colony, America's myth of origin was already coming into being. Starting in the 1660s, a handful of New England clergymen began singing the praises of their parents' and grandparents' generations, which had braved an ocean and a wilderness to start a new life. The story they wove was biblical from first to last. In their modest telling, their forebears were none other than the chosen people of God, and America (i.e., New England) was the promised land. By the time of the revolutionary generation a century later, the story had become myth. John Adams, himself a descendant of the first Puritans, revered the Pilgrims as the launchers of the American saga.

Certainly the Puritans passed down many features to the nation. They were practical, plain-spoken, businesslike, pious—all traits that Americans from Adams on have admired and tried to emulate. But, as many people have noted in recent decades, in which the Puritans have fallen out of favor, they were also self-important zealots. Their form of government was a theocracy. It was rooted in intolerance: freedom of worship, in the words of one prominent New England minister (who became president of Harvard College), was the "first born of all abominations." " 'Tis Satan's policy to plead for an indefinite and boundless toleration," declared another. The Puritans' systematic crackdown on alternative views was cruel, unusual, and lethal. People whose crime was being members of the Baptist denomination, or Quakers, or belonging to some other Protestant sect, were beaten with a knotted whip ("to cut their flesh and to put them to suffering"), put in a "horse lock" of irons, had ears lopped off. They were whipped and then tied to a cart and driven through deep snow, "the white snow and crimson blood" making a vivid tapestry. They were hanged in public spectacles. Some were hanged and then had their naked bodies dragged through the streets. These were not mass "lynchings" but sentences pronounced by judicial authorities, in regimes based on an official policy of intolerance. Later, in the 1680s, came the witchcraft mania, which has gone down in history as a particularly vivid example of the dangers of fusing government and religion.

Out of the Puritans' exceptionalism—their belief that the Old World had succumbed to wickedness and they had been charged by God to save humanity by founding a new society in a new world—grew the American belief that American society was similarly divinely anointed. In 1845, journalist John O'Sullivan coined the phrase that would carry this doctrine forward across the continent when he declared "the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole continent which providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self government." In the early twentieth century, President Woodrow Wilson extended the manifest destiny concept to cover the globe. In the aftermath of the Great War, Wilson determined that the United States, because of "the sheer genius of this people and the growth of our power" and because it had "seen visions that other nations have not seen," had become not only "a determining factor in the history of mankind" but "the light of the world."

This conviction lives on today, and is directly traceable to the first Puritans. When the sons of those first leaders—Cotton Mather, Thomas Hutchinson, Jeremy Belknap, Thomas Prince—put their beliefs into print, their story found ready listeners. Of course, in this version of American beginnings, the tellers were English and the hearers were English. Subsequent generations were raised on the belief that America's origins were English, and that other traditions wove themselves into the fabric later. And history shows this, does it not? The thirteen original colonies were English colonies. The supporting evidence is overwhelming: the language we speak, our political traditions, many of our customs. This is all so obvious that we don't question it.

But it ought to be questioned. The original colonies were *not* all English, and the multiethnic makeup of the Manhattan colony is precisely the point. The fact that the Dutch once established a foothold in North America has been known all along, of course, but after noting it, the national myth of origin promptly dismisses it as irrelevant. It was small, it was short-lived, it was inconsequential. That wasn't *us,* the subtext runs, but someone else, an alien mix of peoples—with strange customs and a different language—who appeared briefly and then vanished, leaving only traces.

This is false. In the first place, while in population the colony was quickly outpaced by New England, it was hardly small. It covered the whole middle stretch of the East Coast and encompassed parts of five of what would be the original thirteen states. In terms of historical evidence—of written records—we have a steadily growing mountain of it, thanks to the translation and publication work now going on. But surely the most obvious reason to see the Dutch colony as significant is that we are not talking about a settlement planted in some obscure corner, in a hidden valley or on an inaccessible slope. We are talking about Manhattan. The strange thing would be if the settlers of the most geographically vital island on the continent, which would serve as the gateway between it and Europe, had *not* made an imprint on the nation that was to come.

Moving the story beyond the English takeover requires, first, realizing that "the Dutch" didn't go anywhere. The people from all over Europe who had built homes and raised families on Manhattan, on Long Island, away to the south along the Delaware River, and across the river from Manhattan in what the English first named "Albania" (*sic!*) but on second thought called New Jersey, had no reason to leave after Stuyvesant surrendered his colony. In fact, ships from the Dutch Republic, with their mixed loads of European settlers, kept arriving in New York Harbor. (Notaries in Amsterdam, blithely ignoring the political changeover, continued writing "New Netherland"—and sometimes "New York in New Netherland"—on immigration papers well into the 1680s.) And Richard Nicolls—who became the first governor of New York after accepting Stuyvesant's surrender—and his successors actually encouraged the traffic with their longtime foe. They even made a point of naming prominent Dutch merchants to their economic councils to keep the ties strong. That was because these first English governors quickly discovered they were in the awkward but titillating position of being even more keyed into world trade than London itself. With the English takeover, New York instantly became a unique spot on the globe: the only port city plugged directly into both of the world's two major trading empires. To sever connections to the great trading firms of Amsterdam would have been to strangle their long-sought possession just as it was burgeoning. The traders, bakers, brewers, barkeeps, smugglers, and scam-artists of the town soon realized the same thing the governors did, and felt the power of it: their island was no longer a Dutch settlement, and it wasn't really English either. It had its own trajectory.

The notion of an English takeover brings with it an image of starting afresh, of a house emptied of the possessions of the previous tenant and then filled with the completely different belongings of a new occupant. What happened instead was more in the nature of a cohabitation. Continuity between the Dutch and English eras was established at eight o'clock on Saturday morning, the sixth of September 1664. We can imagine a percussion of hooves on dry earth as twelve riders, having traveled north up the Highway and then east along the Bouwerie Road, came to a halt and dismounted before the façade of Peter Stuyvesant's farmhouse. Maybe they paused for a moment to breathe the country air: here were fields under cultivation and, just beyond, stands of forest alternating with salt marshes. (Today the same view takes in an Arab newsstand, a Yemenite Israeli restaurant, a pizza shop, a Japanese restaurant, and a Jewish deli.) Following precedent for such occasions, neither Stuyvesant nor Nicolls was present for the meeting that then took place, but each had chosen a slate of commissioners to negotiate the transfer of the colony. Stuyvesant's included four Dutchmen, one Englishman, and one Frenchman; Nicolls's representatives were two of his aides and four New Englanders, including John Winthrop.

We don't know details of the negotiations, which is a pity because there is the suggestion of a move on the part of Peter Stuyvesant that, if true, would amount to a kind of reversal in his long struggle with the colonists, and in particular with Adriaen van der Donck. Nicolls's private instructions from the king authorized him to inform the Dutch colonists only that "they shall continue to enjoy all their possessions (Forts only excepted) and the same freedome in trade with our other good subjects in those parts." But Stuyvesant seems to have instructed his men to push for specific guarantees, and that is what they got. The end result of the negotiations, the so-called Articles of Capitulation, is a remarkable document. Packaged into it—and extended later by the New York City Charter—was a guarantee of rights unparalleled in any English colony. "The Dutch here shall enjoy the liberty of their Consciences," it read. People would be free to come and go as they liked. Trade would be unrestricted: by all means, "Dutch vessels may freely come hither." Most remarkable, the political leaders of the colony would "continue as now they are," provided they swore an oath of allegiance to the king, and in future "the Towne of Manhatans, shall choose Deputyes, and those Deputyes, shall have free Voyces in all Publique affaires." Prefiguring the Bill of Rights, it even stipulated that "the Townesmen of the Manhatons shall not have any Souldier quartered upon them."

It's possible that this unusual slate of freedoms was authorized by the Duke of York himself, who had declared he wanted the Manhattanites to have "immunities and privileges beyond what other parts of my territory doe enjoy." If James was indeed the force behind these articles then he deserves to have his title attached to the name of the place. The thinking was that the inhabitants of the island should be allowed to maintain their way of life for the very good reason that the place worked. One has to keep in mind what an oddity the new city of New York was to people of the seventeenth century, with its variety of skin tones and languages and prayer styles coexisting side by side. The English leaders in Whitehall Palace were surely aware of this unusual characteristic of the island across the water, and they may have been confused by it, but at the same time they understood that it was part of what made the place function.

Then again, there is no record that the English offered the particular catalogue of guarantees that made their way into the Articles of Capitulation. It's logical to assume that the Dutch representatives, on Stuyvesant's orders, pushed for some of these. If so, there is an ironic twist here. Such a slate of individual rights and liberties, preserving the unique society that had come into being in the colony, was just what Van der Donck had fought for, and precisely what Stuyvesant had opposed during his seventeen years in office. Now, faced with the end of the West India Company's rule, which he had stoutly, mulishly, upheld, he seems to have made a turnaround. If his own brand of leadership couldn't save the place, then Van der Donck's vision—government commitments to support free trade, religious liberty, and a form of local political representation—afforded the best protection for its inhabitants in the uncertain future. If this is what Stuyvesant came to think in those final hours, the question is: why? Part of the answer may be that, despite the unending turmoil of his years as director of the colony, he cared about it and its people. Some of his colonists may have argued the proposition, but he apparently had a heart. The second part of the answer is that Stuyvesant understood power. If he had to give up the colony, better to divide it into channels and see that some of it flowed to the people of the colony than to have the English decide what courses it would follow. The result surely wasn't a reversal of character, not a complete break, but a bending that makes for an ironic end to Stuyvesant's long tussle with his colonists.

Maybe then Stuyvesant came away from the negotiations with some degree of satisfaction. But if so it was slim. He had lost his colony, and the directors of the West India Company rubbed salt in the wound by demanding that he return to Amsterdam to face charges of "criminal neglect" in surrendering. After a grim voyage on a ship the ironic appropriateness of whose name—*The Crossed Heart*—must have raised in him a low chuckle, Stuyvesant found himself in more or less the same position that Van der Donck had been in more than a decade earlier: making his case before the States General while the West India Company threw argument and invective at him ("neglect or treachery . . . scandalous surrender"), blocked his effort to return to America, and kept him exiled in Holland and separated from his family. As further indication that Stuyvesant had undergone something of a transformation with the loss of the colony, he included in his defense testimonials from some of the very Manhattanites who had once denounced his autocratic rule, who now declared that he had done everything in his power to keep the colony together.

The fact that Stuyvesant petitioned to be allowed to return can't be overlooked. Like Van der Donck, and yet by a very different route, he, too, had become an American. He may have packed his son off to seek his fortune in the Caribbean in the weeks after the English takeover (upon arrival in Curaçao, Balthasar Stuyvesant wrote home, inquiring about events and asking his cousin to "take care of the girls on the Manhatans" and "greet them all for me with a kiss"). But America was Stuyvesant's home, and eventually the States General granted him permission to return. He finished out his days as a resident of the rapidly growing settlement, a gentleman farmer, a grandfather, a man of renown always greeted by locals as "the General," a historical curiosity to the incoming population. The capping irony of his life was that in surrendering the colony he had finally won himself the welcome of his fellow colonists. He had joined them at long last, but not as an inhabitant of New Netherland. He died—in 1672, at the age of sixty-two—a New Yorker.

Nicolls, meanwhile, was delighted with the deal he had struck. Without firing a shot, he had gotten a thing that he knew full well was of great immediate value and of inestimable future value. All of the English leaders seemed aware of the scope of the achievement. "I saw ye towne upon the Manatos Iland reduced to the obedience of our Soveraigne Lord the Kinge," John Winthrop intoned after the articles were signed, "Wherby there is way made for the inlargment of his Maties Dominions, by filling yt vacant wildernesse, in tyme, with plantatios of his Maties subiects . . ." Nicolls fired off a letter to the Duke, practically crowing at his accomplishment, declaring New York "the best of all His Majties Townes in America," and predicting that within five years it would be the main portal for the flow of trade between England and North America.

When the news of the takeover reached King Charles, he whisked a letter to France. His sister Henrietta—the Duchess of Orleans, sister-in-law (and sometime lover) of Louis XIV—was his closest confidante. "You will have heard of our taking of New Amsterdam, which lies just by New England," he wrote to her chirpily. " 'Tis a place of great importance to trade, and a very good town." The Dutch had done marvels with the wilderness island, the king noted, "but we have got the better of it, and 'tis now called New York."

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BUT THE 1664 surrender would not be the end of the struggle between the two empires over the colony. The takeover of Manhattan helped ignite the Second Anglo-Dutch War, which would see Dutch warships retaliate by taking the English outpost of Surinam to the north of Brazil, valuable for its sugar plantations, and the spice island of Run in the East Indies, while others sailed up the Thames tributary known as the Medway, surprising the English fleet, torching some of its finest ships, and forcing Whitehall to treat for peace. With a shortsightedness that would have made Van der Donck shake his head in sad recognition, the Dutch government allowed England, in the treaty negotiations, to have its way regarding captured territories: rather than swap them back, each nation would keep its war spoils.

Some Dutch leaders, however, apparently thought that was a bad deal. Only five years after the peace treaty was signed, the Third Anglo-Dutch War broke out, and a Dutch fleet crossed the Atlantic and set about strafing

English possessions. It attacked Caribbean ports under English control, swept into the Chesapeake and burned the tobacco fleet about to embark for England, then, in a little-known episode, sailed into New York Harbor in August 1673, precisely nine years after Stuyvesant's surrender, and retook Manhattan. Everything then happened in reverse: a Dutch commander at the head of a flotilla of gunships threatened to reduce the town; inside the fort, an Englishman was in charge, anguishing over what to do. He was outgunned and outmanned. The English surrendered; a new, Dutch-led administration was installed. The English troops paraded out of the fort just as the Dutch under Stuyvesant had done, and the town that had been New Amsterdam and then New York was given a third name: New Orange. The whole colony changed hands: the upriver trading town that the Dutch had named Beverwyck, and which Nicolls had renamed Albany after his patron, was now called Willemstad. The paperwork was barely complete, however, before it all reverted again. Fifteen months after retaking the colony, with the signing of yet another peace treaty, the Dutch gave it back.

But even this was not the end of the tug of war over the island and its trading city. Its namesake, the Duke of York, having labored for a quarter century in his brother's shadow, got the chance truly to impose his vision of empire in 1685, when Charles died and he ascended to the throne. But the rule of James II began to fall apart almost at once. Thanks to his conversion to Roman Catholicism years before, English leaders and much of the population suspected him of being a Popish puppet; real resistance mounted when he installed Catholics in important offices. When it got out that the queen was pregnant—meaning that a Catholic line was in the making—James's rule teetered.

English history has characterized the Glorious Revolution—in which James was ousted and replaced by Willem of Orange, Stadtholder of the Netherlands, and his wife, Mary—as an "invitation." There is an element of spin doctoring in this. In fact, the Dutch leader—the son of the previous Willem, who had attempted a coup d'état while Van der Donck was in The Hague—capped the century of Dutch-English rivalry by launching a full-scale invasion of the British Isles. More than twenty thousand troops hit the beach at Torbay on the Devon coast, and a month later Willem rode triumphantly into London. The Dutch army took control of Whitehall Palace and all the other power centers, and the Dutch stadtholder was crowned king of England. The so-called invitation was considered by many Englishmen of the time a thorough disgrace, but for others the facts that Mary (who was James's daughter) was the presumptive heir to the English throne and that in Willem they once again had a Protestant monarch made things all right.

This cross-pollinization of the royal leadership of two longtime rival nations would have an echo in Manhattan when a German-born New Yorker named Jacob Leisler (who, thirty years before, had served as a West India Company soldier under Stuyvesant), apparently under the impression that the Dutch-born king of England would approve, led a handful of radicals in a Calvinist-fueled takeover of the city. But Willem wasn't interested, and Leisler's Rebellion, as history has known it, ended quietly, with Leisler and an associate being hanged for treason and, for good measure, beheaded.

Maybe the main result of this remarkable span—in which the island and surrounding colony changed hands five times in three decades—was that it forced the inhabitants to solidify their identity. Which European power held ultimate control became less important to the Manhattanites than the relationships between their own ethnic communities and their ties to traders, shippers, and family in other parts of the world. What mattered was that cache of rights, which they noisily insisted be honored by whoever had just won control of the place, and which enabled the separate minority communities to flourish.

So Adriaen van der Donck's dream became real in a way he never imagined. The structure he helped win for the place grounded it in Dutch tolerance and diversity, just as he hoped it would, which in turn touched off the island's rapid growth and increased the influx of settlers from around Europe, just as he predicted. What he didn't predict was that the English would appreciate this fact, and maintain the structure, and that it would support a future culture of unprecedented energy and vitality and creativity.

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AND SO OFF it went, spiraling upward along its path through history—the colony and city of New York, the jewel in the crown of England's North American possessions. More English settlers came, naturally enough, and also—word having continued to spread about its mixed population and the opportunities for getting ahead—French, German, Scottish, and Irish immigrants, so that by 1692 a newly arrived British military officer would complain to his uncle in England, "Our chiefest unhappyness here is too great a mixture of nations, and English ye least part."

Newcomers were fully aware of the island's Dutch roots, and noted the continued influence in everything from the gabled houses with their front stoops to the predominance of the language. But a funny thing happened. Over time the outward trappings of Dutchness became synonymous with the region's roots. And as those features faded with time, so, in this thinking, did the colony's significance.

There is an error in this, which would be perpetuated over the centuries. Some in the past have identified the continuance of the colony by examining the Dutch subculture in the Hudson Valley. They noted that Dutch was still being spoken well into the nineteenth century, and the Reformed Dutch Church continued strong. To this day the area around Albany is crammed with towns whose names—Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Watervliet, Rensselaer (after the colony of Rensselaerswyck where Van der Donck first worked), Colonie (also named for Rensselaerswyck, and retaining the Dutch spelling)—reinforce the connection. As late as the 1750s, English officials in that area needed to find Dutch speakers to help them treat with Indians because Dutch was still the only European language the tribes spoke. And of course there are the great families of colonial America—the Van Burens, Roosevelts, Vanderbilts—who are traceable by their Dutch ancestry to New Netherland.

But all of that is missing the point. What matters about the Dutch colony is that it set Manhattan on course as a place of openness and free trade. A new kind of spirit hovered over the island, something utterly alien to New England and Virginia, which is directly traceable to the tolerance debates in Holland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and to the intellectual world of Descartes, Grotius, and Spinoza. Yes, there were people in Hudson Valley towns who preserved Dutch traditions, but that was mostly a reaction to the English takeover: in the way of minorities everywhere, they entrenched, became self-conscious, and guarded and burnished their traditions, to the point where the "Low Dutch" spoken in the nineteenth century was incomprehensible to visitors from the Netherlands, a relic of the tongue spoken in the Golden Age of two centuries earlier. In fact, the irony in the case of the descendants of the original Dutch settlers is that it would be in finally blending into American culture—which they eventually did—that they paid the truest homage to their heritage.

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THE IDEA THAT the Dutch colony made important contributions to America is not new. Two nineteenth-century historians of New York who were intimately familiar with the Dutch sources—E. B. O'Callaghan and John Brodhead—saw its overlooked significance, but they were ignored, in part because America was then in the throes of a nostalgia for its Puritan beginnings. After spending four years in Europe on behalf of the state of New York, in which he gathered thousands of documents in archives in Holland and England that pertained to New York's origins (it was from these that the story of Adriaen van der Donck's mission to The Hague would emerge), Brodhead delivered a series of talks to fashionable New York society in the 1840s and 1850s, in which he laid out a case for the unheralded legacy of the Dutch colony. He was excoriated in the press—ridiculed for suggesting that the nation could have had progenitors other than the Puritans of New England. In reacting to Brodhead's claim, one newspaper correspondent showed that the anti-Dutch bias America had inherited from England in the seventeenth century was still alive in the nineteenth; he found it particularly ludicrous that so great and powerful a country as the United States could have gotten where it had by "following the example of the policy of the petty cheese-paring of the Batavian provinces, with their windmills, and barren soil, fit only for fuel . . ." Brodhead wrote a valiant response, which does not seem to have been published, which began:

> Yielding to no one in a sincere respect for Puritanism, "wherein it was worthy," and in a due estimate of its influence upon the destinies of the United States, I must still venture candidly to express my dissent from the opinions of those who self complacently insist, on all occasions, and "usque ad nauseam," upon tracing back all the admirable features in our Social and political Organization to the "Pilgrim Fathers" and their descendants. Unmeasured eulogy of the excellent pioneers of New England colonization has become so much the fashion, that it is almost a relief to turn to the history of other American settlements and find that there are other men whose actions and influence deserve notice in the annals of our Country. To say

> nothing of the "Old Dominion" of Virginia, which was permanently settled twelve years before New Plymouth, it seems to me that it is due to historical truth that the influence and the character of the Dutch who first explored and settled the coasts of New York and New Jersey should be fairly set forth.

Brodhead's voice went unheard. Part of the difficulty of making such a case came from the fact that the mass of documents that constituted the records of the colony still lay untranslated. In the 1970s two things changed. One was that the discipline of history came down off its pedestal. People were suddenly interested in social history and "multiculturalism." The other was that the translation of the records of the Dutch colony got under way. Historians began to call for a reappraisal of this piece of American beginnings. The titles of some of the scholarly papers that emerged—"Writing/Righting Dutch Colonial History," "Early American History with the Dutch Put In"—suggest the change. The names of many of the historians involved in this reappraisal, on whose work I have relied, are found in the endnotes, bibliography, and acknowledgments of this book. When Scribner's published its important three-volume *Encyclopedia of the North American Colonies* in 1993 and gave prominent attention not only to New Netherland but to New Sweden as well, it signaled that the academic view of the colony and of American beginnings had changed. In August of 2001, in the midst of my work on this book, the *New York Times* ran an editorial on the project to translate the Dutch archives, declaring that after a long time in which scholars of the Dutch colony had been "clamoring for scholarly affirmative action," the tide had turned and now "a vanquished New Netherland's influence looms larger than ever."

The idea of the colony as a birthplace of the American melting pot has been simmering for some time. In the last few decades, historians have focused on the vast chunk between New England and Virginia and dubbed the region the Middle Colonies. With the focus has come an appreciation of what this region gave the country. The Middle Colonies, as Patricia Bonomi, one of the premier American historians of recent decades, has written, were both "the birthplace of American religious pluralism" and "a stage for the western world's most complex experience with religious pluralism." Religious pluralism was the seventeenth century conduit for cultural pluralism, and the coming-together of people from different backgrounds resulted in something new, which began to be remarked on a century after New Netherland's demise. In 1782, when the French-born J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur wrote *Letters from an American Farmer,* one of the earliest descriptions of American society and culture, it was this region he had in mind as he asked:

> What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. *He* is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater.* Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world.

What we find beneath the "Middle Colonies" label, the force that gave rise to Crèvecoeur's observation, is the Dutch colony. There were other forces at work, too: the Pennsylvania and Rhode Island colonies both became known for religious toleration. But the influence of the Dutch colony would be wide ranging. Such influence can't be proved deductively, but evidence to support it comes in many forms. There is, first, the simple fact that the very part of America in which multiethnic society first formed was also the region where the Dutch colony had been.

We can support the connection by looking at other legacies from the colony that also took root first in this region. An example: after Richard Nicolls took charge of New York and had become familiar with the Dutch customs he had allowed the inhabitants to maintain, he found one political office particularly useful. The colony had a law officer whose job was to prosecute cases on behalf of the government. The English system had no such officer; at the time, the victim of a crime, or his or her relative, was responsible for seeking justice. The Dutch official—called a *schout*—allowed the justice system to move more efficiently. Nicolls adopted it—the English records at first took to calling this law man the "scout"—and it spread through the other colonies. The job eventually became known as district attorney, and remains a fixture of local government in America. (It happens that one of the first "district attorneys" in America was Adriaen van der Donck, whose original posting was as *schout* of the colony of Rensselaerswyck.) In 1975, Yale law professor A. J. Reiss noted, in an article on the history of the office, "The first appearance of public prosecutors in the United States occurred when the Dutch founded the colony of New Netherland," that "[h]istorical evidence makes it abundantly clear that when this area was taken by the Duke of York in surrender in 1664 . . . the Dutch system of public prosecution was maintained where it had been firmly established by then," and that "[h]istorical records demonstrate that the 'Schout' was established within five of the 13 original colonies that became the states of the United States of America."

There are many other telltale legacies—customs and traditions and usages that spread, along with the phenomenon of American pluralism, from what was once Dutch territory. It was in the Dutch colony that an American worker first complained about "the boss." It was here that American children first longed for the arrival of "St. a Claus" (as *Rivington's New York Gazetteer* spelled it in the early 1770s, noting that the saint's feast day would be celebrated "by the descendants of the ancient Dutch families, with their usual festivities"). It was here that Americans first ate "cookies" and "cole slaw." Of course, nothing is more meaningless than cookies; the reason for mentioning such items is their ubiquity. The blob of slaw on every blue plate special served from the Depression to the Eisenhower era, riding alongside the baked beans at numberless barbecues, packed into a little plastic tub to offset the grease in a fast-food burgers-and-fries meal, ignored or absently consumed, is a modest clue to the pervasive presence of the Manhattan colony. It is a tip-off that in considering its contribution we should be looking not in obscure corners but at what is right in front of us. We won't find it in the form of Dutch pipestems buried in backyards, but in any town's telephone book, where Singh, Singer, Singleton, and Sinkiewicz fall on the same page.

Many inheritances are hard to spot because in the mix and rumble of the centuries they have become layered, altered, embedded in other, larger systems. This stands to reason: we couldn't expect much to last three centuries in pristine form. Rather, we would expect that, if a thing was useful or desirable, it would become part of the blend. Santa Claus may be the perfect example of this. It was a slim fellow in a bishop's hat whose arrival the children of Dutch Manhattan looked forward to on Saint Nicholas Eve; typically, he left treats in their shoes, but occasionally (as in a late-century drawing, "The St. Nicholas Celebration," by Cornelis Dusart), in stockings hung from the mantel. As the non-Dutch families adopted him and he gained momentum, bits of other cultural traditions stuck to the ritual; the media (Thomas Nast's cartoons in *Harper's Weekly* plumped the saint and whitened his beard) and corporate advertising (the white-trimmed red suit came compliments of Coca-Cola's iconic ad campaign in the 1930s) refined the image, and the result is a complicated collage, thoroughly American, and rooted in the Manhattan of Stuyvesant and Van der Donck.

The influence of the colony can also be spotted rippling through the layers of political history. After Van der Donck's political crusade helped cement the unique features of the Dutch colony's society, Nicolls's Articles of Capitulation guaranteed that the English would preserve the rights and privileges the residents had come to expect. When in 1686 the New York City Charter, considered by some to be the launch point of the modern city, was signed, it not only made plain those rights and privileges but was clear about their origins, acknowledging that the citizens of the "ancient City . . . Enjoyed . . . sundry Rights Libertyes priviledges [and] ffranchises" that derived not only from its English rulers but from the "Governours Directors Generalls, and Commanders in Chiefe of the Nether Dutch Nation."

You can move forward from this charter, and from the rowdy, argumentative, still mostly Dutch-speaking society that stood behind it, straight into the revolutionary period and beyond. In Philadelphia in 1787, New York's delegation to the Constitutional Convention was among those least enamored of a document that would give so much power to the federal government. Meeting later in Albany, the state's leaders decided that they could only ratify the Constitution if, among other things, a bill of specific individual rights were attached to it. The names of the twenty-six men who insisted on this were about half English and half Dutch; the new state was already famously contentious, and its pluralistic delegation had a long history of struggling for individual rights to account for its stubbornness.

Of course, when the Bill of Rights was adopted in 1791, no one looked to the Dutch-led colony that had held sway a century before as having a hand in it. There had been no written history of the Dutch period—it would be decades before the documents detailing Van der Donck's mission on behalf of the rights of Manhattanites would be unearthed.

The pathways along which the colony's influence spread are also part of the evidence for its lasting importance. Starting from their settlements on the Delaware River, the "forest Finns" literally cleared a path down the Appalachian valleys, along which Finnish, Swedish, Dutch, and other pioneers traveled, and by the way added the log cabin to America's cultural legacy. But the main route of expansion was to the north. The island of Manhattan became the gateway to America for generations of immigrants, and it was because of this that the legacy of the Dutch colony got amplified. Stepping off the boat, the individuals in those huddled masses, arriving from Naples or Hamburg or Le Havre or Liverpool, breathed in an atmosphere utterly different from what they had left. The smell in the air was one they had hoped to find, a complicated, heady perfume. It had in it the big, muscular, fresh odors that came sweeping off the continent, full of green promise. It was sharpened by the oily tang of industry and good sweat, accented with kielbasa and pasta sauce, horse dung and sawdust and slaughterhouse. The newcomers soaked it in, this odor of promise and of a reblending of peoples into something new, and they called it American. Then they fanned out, and brought it with them. Up the Hudson they went, which was to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries what the Mississippi would be to later eras: the lifeline, the broad highway of commerce and travel.

At Albany, once the site of the fur-trading post of Fort Orange, they cut westward, into the Mohawk River valley. There, in the early nineteenth century, industrial-age politicians discovered what Dutch pioneers had known two centuries earlier: that promise and expansion lay westward along this valley. In 1825, after eight years of stupendous manual labor, a three-hundred-and-sixty-mile trench was carved through the wilderness that Harmen Myndersz van den Bogaert had explored on his perilous foray into Iroquois country during the harsh winter of 1634. How the Erie Canal changed the nation is a basic piece of American history. It opened the interior of the continent, swelled the population, shifted the balance from rural to urban, helped make America an industrial power. America was transformed, and the promise that the first Manhattanites saw in their island came roaring into reality. The stream of people and goods into Manhattan became a flood. From across Europe and around the world they funneled into the island, then up the river, and so westward along the canal. And with the pipeline of commerce extending into the very heart of the continent, crossroads settlements transformed into cities, lights winking on in the dusk of the endless landscape, each with its cluster of founding ethnic groups: Toledo, Cleveland, Detroit, Buffalo, Milwaukee, Chicago, Green Bay.

That's why the story of the original Manhattan colony matters. Its impact is so diffuse that it would be perilous to declare and define it too concretely, so here is a modest attempt: it helped set the whole thing in motion. Certainly this isn't evident on the surface: the little village that Stuyvesant lorded over bore no resemblance to the metropolis, let alone the vast nation that exploded into existence to its left, any more than an acorn does to an oak. But the original settlement contributed, and is still there, mixed into the being of the island and the nation.

The legacy of the people who settled Manhattan Island rides below the level of myth and politics. They reshuffled the categories by which people had long lived, created a society with more open spaces, in which the rungs of the ladder were reachable by nearly everyone. They didn't exactly mean to do these things. There was a state policy of tolerance, which helped shape the colony, but there was also ignorance of it and refusal to adhere to it. It was a society that was both haphazard and planned. It didn't have a neat outline of the sort that spawned the Puritan myth. Then again, myths have a downside: the shining "city on a hill" became Manifest Destiny, and morphs easily into a cheap battle cry. The first Manhattanites didn't arrive with lofty ideals. They came—whether as farmer, tanner, prostitute, wheelwright, barmaid, brewer, or trader—because there was a hope for a better life. There was a distinct messiness to the place they created. But it was very real, and in a way, very modern.

It wasn't until 1908 that a Jewish immigrant, intoxicated by the possibilities, the strength, the progressiveness, the hope for breaking down old hatreds that he found in America's mixed society, wrote a play, which ran for

136 weeks (on Broadway, naturally) that he called *The Melting Pot.* The phrase entered the lexicon as recently as that, but Israel Zangwill was describing something that had been stewing for a long time. Of course, terms like "melting pot" and "pluralism" have long since become weighted and contentious. Should immigrants leave their old ethnicities behind or preserve them and remain in some way apart from the main culture? Instantly, the question becomes "What is an American?" Or, for that matter, "Who is English?" "Who is a German?" Or an Italian, an Israeli, or a Turk. In a world of pluralistic societies, the debate is universal.

But the strength in the mixing-of-cultures idea was undeniable for a long time. And the essence of it, the idea of tolerance, may matter more now than ever. The terrorist attack that destroyed the World Trade Center and shook the world in September of 2001 struck not only the center of American financial might but also the few square acres of lower Manhattan that was once called New Amsterdam. The fact that the one grew out of the other ought to be proof that the idea of tolerance remains a thing of power. With any luck, it will also remain the mortar of progressive society. Developing it, showing that it could work, was the messy genius of the first Manhattanites.

Epilogue

THE PAPER TRAIL

Through all the events of this story, in a council room in Fort Amsterdam and in an administrative office above the gate, the successive secretaries of the Manhattan-based colony of New Netherland did what all secretaries do: took notes and filed records. Lots were sold, houses were built, pigs were stolen, knives were drawn, liquor was taxed, property was damaged. The quill scratched its way softly across the sheets of imported rag paper. The directors issued their decrees and the leaders of the colonists their complaints. Letters streamed out—to Curaçao, Virginia, Boston, Amsterdam. The quill dipped into the ink pot, then addressed the paper again, filling row after row with the oddly curling Dutch script of the period.

What happened to these records after Richard Nicolls's troops took possession of them can be summed up in a truism: history is written by the winners. There was probably an element of spite involved in the failure of the English to incorporate the records of the Dutch colony into the first American histories. The bad blood between the two rival nations only intensified with the three wars they fought during the course of the century. The title of one of the many screeds published in England is enough to remind one of the ludicrous level of animosity: *The Dutch-mens Pedigree, Or, A Relation Shewing How They Were First Bred and Descended from a Horse-Turd Which Was Enclosed in a Butter-Box.* Another indication of English antipathy toward the Dutch, which America took in with its mother's milk, so to speak, is the tally of "Dutch" phrases in the language—"Dutch treat," "Dutch courage," "double Dutch," "a Dutch bargain," "going Dutch," "Dutch comfort"—all of them derogatory and all coming right out of the seventeenth century.

NOTES

For further details about the sources listed in these notes, please refer to the bibliography, which begins on page 352.

PROLOGUE

4 "Original sources of information": Bayard Tuckerman, *Peter Stuyvesant, Director-General for the West India Company in New Netherland,* preface.

5 "measures ought to be taken": A. J. F. van Laer, "The Translation and Publication of the Manuscript Dutch Records of New Netherland, with an Account of Previous Attempts at Translation," 9.

5 destroyed the state library: See Epilogue notes for sources on previous translation attempts.

6 "It is impossible": Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy,* 581.

8 "like a great natural pier": Mariana G. van Rensselaer, *History of the City of New York in the Seventeenth Century,* 1:49.

8 "best of all His Majties": E. B. O'Callaghan and Berthold Fernow, trans. *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York,* 3:106. Hereafter cited as Docs. Rel.

CHAPTER 1

13 His complicated personality: I have used all of the standard sources in constructing my portrait of Hudson: Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation,* vol. 3; Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes,* vol. 13; G. M. Asher, ed., *Henry Hudson the Navigator: The Original Documents in Which His Career Is Recorded;* Henry Cruse Murphy, *Henry Hudson in Holland;* John Meredith Read, Jr., *A Historical Inquiry Concerning Henry Hudson, His Friends, Relatives, and Early Life, His Connection with the Muscovy Company, and Discovery of Delaware Bay;* Llewelyn Powys, *Henry Hudson;* and Edgar Mayhew Bacon, *Henry Hudson: His Times and His Voyages.* I've also consulted Philip Edwards, ed., *Last Voyages: Cavendish, Hudson, Ralegh, The Original Narratives;* Donald S. Johnson, *Charting the Sea of Darkness: The Four Voyages of Henry Hudson;* and Douglas McNaughton, "The Ghost of Henry Hudson."

13 Since we know his destination: The journal of Abacuk Pricket, printed in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes,* vol. 13, confirms that Hudson had a house in London; Powys, *Henry Hudson,* 1, says that it was "somewhere near the Tower of London." Muscovy House was originally located in Seething Lane, but, according to Armand J. Gerson et al., *Studies in History of English Commerce During the Tudor Period,* 33 (quoting Husting Roll 341, 29), the company moved prior to 1570 to a location "in the parish of St. Antholin London in or neare a certayne streete since the . . . late dreadfull fire in London called and knowne by the name of Dukes Street." St. Antholin's was on Budge Row, in Cordwainer Street Ward. In reconstructing Hudson's walk, I have used the "Agas map," reprinted in Adrian Prockter and Robert Taylor, *The A to Z of Elizabethan London;* Claes Jansz Visscher's view of London circa 1616, reprinted in John Wellsman, ed., *London Before the Fire;* and John Stow's *A Survey of London Written in the Year 1598.*

14 Among its charter members: The main argument for a line of interrelated Hudsons in the Muscovy Company is made by Read, *A Historical Inquiry Concerning Henry Hudson.*

14 "Here lyeth": Ibid., 41.

15 "sturdye Beggers": Jessica A. Browner, "Wrong Side of the River: London's disreputable South Bank in the sixteenth and seventeenth century"; and A. L. Beier, "Vagrants and the Social Order in Elizabethan England," 10–11.

15 From the bravado of its formal name: My sources on the Muscovy Company and the mid-Tudor period are David Loades, *The Mid-Tudor Crisis, 1545–1565;* Richard Hakluyt, *The Discovery of Muscovy;* Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus;* Charlotte Fell-Smith, *John Dee;* Raymond H. Fisher, *The Russian Fur Trade, 1550–1700;* Peter J. French, *John Dee: The World of an Elizabethan Magus;* Armand Gerson, Earnest Vaughn, and Neva Ruth Deardorff, *Studies in the History of English Commerce During the Tudor Period;* Henry Harrisse, *John Cabot, the Discoverer of North-America, and Sebastian His Son;* Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada;* Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America,* vol. 1, *The Northern Voyages;* Geraldine M. Phipps, *Sir John Merrick: English Merchant-Diplomat in Seventeenth Century Russia;* David B. Quinn and A. N. Ryan, *England's Sea Empire, 1550–1642;* E. G. R. Taylor, *Tudor Geography;* T. S. Willan, *The Muscovy Merchants of 1555;* and James A. Williamson, *The Age of Drake.*

15 English traders had been blocked: Loades, *The Mid-Tudor Crisis, 1545–1565,* 73.

16 Giovanni Cabotto: Samuel Eliot Morison (*The Great Explorers,* 40–41) says it was probably either Cabotto or Gabote.

16 some mariners were confused: E. G. R. Taylor, *Tudor Geography,* 86.

17 the Englishmen's Strait: Ibid., 34.

17 *fretum arcticum* . . . As with most people: Ibid., 81–85.

17 twenty-five pounds . . . six thousand pounds: Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Walsingham,* 3:371.

18 "near the pole the sun shines": Powys, *Henry Hudson,* 26.

20 "an age wherein": Albert Gray, "An Address on the Occasion of the Tercentenary of the Death of Richard Hakluyt."

20 the "perpetual clearness": Donald Johnson, *Charting the Sea of Darkness,* 20.

21 six-million-square-mile Arctic ice shelf: "In the arctic late winter, sea ice covers about 10 million square miles on top of the globe, while in summer the ice pack shrinks to about 6 million square miles, according to Martin Jeffries, an associate research professor of geophysics at the Geophysical Institute." Ned Rozell, "Sea Ice Reduction May Be Another Climate Change Clue." *Alaska Science Forum* Article 1255 (October 5, 1995).

21 Church of St. Ethelburga: Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations Voyages,* 3:567.

21 "This morning we saw": Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus,* 13:306–07.

22 "We set sayle": Ibid., 313.

22 "it is so full of ice": Ibid., 329.
22 "out of hope": Ibid., 328.
23 "sunk into the lowest depths": Ibid., 300.

CHAPTER 2

27 "magnificent fountain": Harry Sieber, "The Magnificent Fountain: Literary Patronage in the Court of Philip III."
27 "strenuous spirit": Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches,* 53.
28 sometimes even buying: H. F. K. van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland,* 212.
28 "The Originals of the two": John Adams, *A collection of state papers . . . ,* 399.
29 he may even have spent: Adriaen van der Donck, in his telling of Hudson's story, says that Hudson had lived in Holland. Although historians have dismissed this account as self-serving to the Dutch claim to New Netherland, a familiarity with the country would help to explain Hudson's quick decision to sail for the Dutch, as well as his friendships with Plancius and De Hondt.
30 "present negotiations": G. M. Asher, ed., *Henry Hudson the Navigator: The Original Documents in Which His Career Is Recorded,* 245.
30 "has found that the more northwards": Ibid., 246.
30 "there are also many rich": Ibid., 253.
31 "to think of discovering": Llewelyn Powys, *Henry Hudson,* 81.
31 "This is the entrance": Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes,* 13:356.
32 "an abundance of blue plums": J. F. Jameson, *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609–1664,* 37.
32 the Moravian missionary: John Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations,* 71–75
32 "a very good harbor": Quotes in this and the following paragraph are from Juet's journal as reprinted in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus,* vol. 13.
33 "Juan Hudson": I. N. P. Stokes, ed., *Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909,* 2:44.
34 "as fine a river": Van Meteren, in Asher, *Henry Hudson,* 150.
34 *"Vellen . . . Pelterijen . . .":* The English and Dutch versions are in ibid.
35 Even as he was being lowered: All details in this scene come from Abacuk Prickett's account of the mutiny, as printed in vol. 13 of Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus.* Prickett's account is skewed and untrustworthy—he makes himself and his fellow survivors blameless bystanders in the mutiny, conveniently fingering those who had died on the return voyage as the ringleaders—but there is no reason to mistrust the details regarding weather, dress, and so on.
36 "to the great kingdoms": Asher, *Henry Hudson,* 255. The charter of the new company was made in 1612. The actual trial didn't take place until 1618, after several unsuccessful attempts to navigate the passage the mutineers claimed to have discovered.
36 Arnout Vogels: Information about Vogels comes from Van Cleaf Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations: The Economic Policies of the Dutch West India Company in New Netherland, 1623–1639,* 3–6.

CHAPTER 3

37 From Amsterdam the ships made their way: Van Cleaf Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations: The Economic Policies of the Dutch West India Company in New Netherland, 1623–1639,* 16.
38 "de rivière Hudson": I. N. P. Stokes, ed., *Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909,* 4:41.

38 "It is obvious": Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations,* 31.
38 "sinews of war": E. B. O'Callaghan, *The History of New Netherland,* 1:31.
39 "12 ships and yachts": Docs. Rel., 1:35–36.
40 "more like princes' palaces": K. H. D. Haley, *The Dutch in the Seventeenth Century,* 158.
40 The councillor who administered: A. J. F. van Laer, trans., *Documents Relating to New Netherland, 1624–1626, in the Henry E. Huntington Library,* "Provisional Regulations for the Colonists," and also Van Laer's note, p. 256: "Dr. Claes Petersz was the well-known physician Dr. Nicolaes Pietersen Tulp, the central figure in Rembrandt's famous painting called *The Lesson in Anatomy,* which hangs in the Mauritshuis at the Hague. Dr. Tulp was from 1622 to his death, in 1674, a member of the council and at different times schepen and burgomaster of the city of Amsterdam. Hans Bontemantel says that he never called himself otherwise than 'Claes Pieterss,' and that 'Tulp' was a nickname, derived from *tulp,* or tulip, which was placed over his front door."
40 Catalina Trico and Joris Rapalje: George Olin Zabriskie and Alice P. Kennedy, "The Founding Families of New Netherland, No. 4—The Rapalje-Rapelje Family."
41 Catalina Trico, now in her eighties: Joel Munsell, *A Documentary History of the State of New York,* 3:32.
41 The records of New Netherland show: References to Rapalje and Trico are scattered throughout the colonial records; the passage of their lives can be traced through the index to E. B. O'Callaghan, *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State.*
41 In the 1770s: Patricia Bonomi, *A Factious People,* 277.
41 Their descendants: Interview with Harry Macy, editor of *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* and a Rapalje descendant, April 2, 2003.
42 In contemporary scientific terms: United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Southern New England–New York Bight Coastal Ecosystems Program. "Significant Habitats and Habitat Complexes of the New York Bight Watershed."
42 "reeds": Robert Grumet, *Native American Place Names in New York City,* 24.
42 oysters: Adriaen van der Donck, *A Description of New Netherland,* trans. Diederik Goedhuys, 74.
42 "hilly island": Grumet, *Native American Place Names,* 23–24.
42 "Here we found beautiful rivers": Stokes *Iconography,* 4:60.
43 "It is very pleasant": J. F. Jameson, *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609–1664,* 77.
44 "hovels and holes": Van Laer, "Annals of New Netherland: The Essays of A. J. F. van Laer," ed. and annot. Charles Gehring, 12.
44 "as high as a man": Jameson, *Narratives,* 76.
46 after more than a decade: Shirley Dunn, *The Mohicans and Their Land 1609–1730,* 76.
46 "in figure, build . . . jet-black, quite sleek": Van der Donck, *Description,* 90–91.
46 "he shall be very careful": Van Laer, *Documents Relating,* 55.
47 "He shall also see": Ibid., 39.
48 He had grown up speaking: Information about Minuit's family and early life comes from C. A. Weslager, *A Man and His Ship: Peter Minuit and the Kalmar Nyckel,* 14–20.
48 "He shall have": Van Laer, *Documents Relating,* 44.
49 So he bought it: The order of events is far from clear, and historians debate whether Verhulst or Minuit was the one who purchased Manhattan Island. My account is based on my own reading of all relevant primary source material, as well as the arguments made by various historians. I side against those who in recent decades removed Minuit from his legendary position as purchaser of the island, and with those who reassign him to that position. Reasons: the substance of the "further instructions" to Verhulst and the

dates of Minuit's trip to the Netherlands and of his return suggest the directors were fed up with Verhulst and also realized, perhaps thanks to Minuit's information, that a new central base for the province was needed. Some historians have noted evidence of settlers on Manhattan prior to May 1626, but that doesn't mean the company had already bought the island. More to the point, the whole weight of the events gives a picture of Minuit taking charge and reorganizing the province, something Verhulst, given his weak leadership and position, couldn't have done.

50 humorist Dave Barry: Dave Barry, "A Certified Wacko Rewrites History's Greatest Hits," *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel,* 26 December 1999.

50 their genetic makeup: Bryan Sykes, *The Seven Daughters of Eve: The Science That Reveals Our Genetic Ancestry,* 279–280.

50 it has been estimated: J. C. H. King, *First People, First Contacts: Native Peoples of North America,* 8.

52 such as one in South Carolina: Stuart Banner, "Manhattan for $24: American Indian Land Sales, 1607–1763."

52 sold for scrap paper: Docs. Rel., 1:xxv.

52 "surprise, mortification": John Romeyn Brodhead, *An Address Delivered Before the New York Historical Society.*

53 quotations from Van Rappard documents: Van Laer, *Documents Relating,* 45–59.

54 tabard . . . fur coat: Ibid., 180.

55 Schaghen letter: Translation from Van Laer, "Annals of New Netherland," 14.

56 "Received a letter": Docs. Rel., 1:38.

56 "Duffels, Kittles": Cornelis Melyn, "The Melyn Papers, 1640–1699," 124.

57 "deliver yearly": Charles Gehring, trans. and ed., *Land Papers 1630–1664,* 8.

57 Andries Hudde sold: A. J. F. van Laer, *New York Historical Manuscripts* 1:45. Hereafter cited as *NYHM.*

57 West India Company soldier earned: The Bontemantel Papers include a record of the salaries of New Netherland officials, from the director-general on down. These documents show that a soldier was paid eight to nine guilders per month.

57 In 1648: Janny Venema, "The Court Case of Brant Aertsz van Slichtenhorst Against Jan van Rensselaer," paper read during the 2000 Rensselaerswijck Seminar in Albany, New York.

59 "because he is well acquainted": Van Laer, *Documents Relating,* 176.

62 "All seafaring persons": *NYHM* 4:8.

62 "[E]ach and every one": Ibid., 4.

62 "notwithstanding her husband's presence": Ibid., 1:55. In vol. 4:5, of the same series, Thomas Beeche (here called Tomas Bescher) is referred to as an Englishman.

63 De Rasière added: Van Laer, *Documents Relating,* 188, 198–99.

63 *Tekel or Balance . . . :* G. M. Asher, *Dutch Books and Pamphlets Relating to New-Netherland,* 122–123.

64 "a rundlet of sugar": *Governour Bradford's Letter Book,* 3:53–54, reprinted in Stokes, *Iconography,* 4:70.

64 "a noise of trumpets": Ibid., 3:54–55, reprinted in Stokes, *Iconography,* 4:71.

66 "True . . . this island": Jameson, *Narratives,* 122.

CHAPTER 4

67 Charles I: The main sources I have used in constructing my portrait of Charles are Charles Carlton, *Charles I: The Personal Monarch;* Pauline Gregg, *King Charles I;* Lucy Aikin, *Memoirs of the Court of King Charles the First;* and J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuarts: A Study in English Kingship.*

67 "Essex miles": J. P. Hore, *The History of Newmarket and the Annals of the Turf,* 1:155.

67 William Harvey: Ibid., 2:18.

67 in a single racing season: R. C. Lyle, *Royal Newmarket,* 11.

67 couldn't stand French people: C. V. Wedgwood, *The Political Career of Peter Paul Rubens,* 45.

67 emigrate to Canada: Carlton, *Charles I,* 184.

68 "but I must tell you": Kenyon, *The Stuarts,* 98–99. Emphasis added.

69 "the enemy": Docs. Rel., 1:55.

70 Rubens also introduced: Carlton, *Charles I,* 125, 144–145.

70 "We cannot perceive": Docs. Rel., 1:49.

71 "this intrigue was set": Docs. Rel., 1:45.

72 "brought againe to the torture": East India Company, *A True Relation Of The Uniust, Cruell, And Barbarous Proceedings against the English at Amboyna In the East-Indies . . . , E3.*

73 "the most assured and civill": East India Company, *A Remonstrance Of The Directors Of The Netherlands East India Company, presented to the Lords States Generall of the united Provinces, in defence of the said Companie, touching the bloudy proceedings against the English Merchants, executed at Amboyna, C2.*

73 "Bring more candles": John Dryden, *Amboyna: A Tragedy. As it is Acted By Their Majesties Servants.*

75 "barber-surgeon": Paul Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland,* 155–57.

76 By sheer luck, the journal: My account of Van den Bogaert's journey comes from his journal and the commentary on it published in Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert, *A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1634–1635,* translated and edited by Charles T. Gehring, William A. Starna, and Gunther Michelson, and on interviews with Charles Gehring and Iroquois scholar Gunther Michelson.

78 "shoot!": This is how Van den Bogaert gives it; Michelson says it actually means "shoot again."

78 "As soon as they arrived": Van den Bogaert, *A Journey into Mohawk,* 10.

80 "This white man": The chant, as recorded by Van den Bogaert: *"ha assironi atsimachkoo kent oyakaying wee onneyatte onaondage koyockwe hoo senoto wanyagweganne hoo schenehalaton kasten kanosoni yndicko."* The words *kaying wee, onneyatte, onaondage, koyockwe, hoo senotowany* refer, respectively, to the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca nations. In an interview (February 7, 2002), Gunther Michelson, who translated the Mohawk for the 1988 publication of Van den Bogaert's journal, gave me his rendering of the chant.

80 man, woman, prostitute: Van den Bogaert, *Journey into Mohawk Country,* 52–63.

81 an English trader sailed: This incident comes from David de Vries's journal, published in J. F. Jameson, *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609–1664,* 186–234.

82 A letter written: Jaap Jacobs, "A Troubled Man: Director Wouter van Twiller and the Affairs of New Netherland in 1635."

83 Ramparts . . . boathouse: *NYHM,* 1:108–109.

83 Willem Blauvelt: Ibid., 2:162, 267, 323, 373.

83 "commit adultery": Ibid., 4:89.

83 "what he was doing": Charles Gehring, trans. and ed. *Council Minutes, 1655–1656,* 68–69.

84 Simon Root: *NYHM,* 4:360–61.

84 Jan Premero: Ibid., 97–100.

250 word had gone out: Docs. Rel., 1:476.
251 "going fast to ruin": Ibid., 477.
251 At the end of the book: Van der Donck, *Description*, trans. Goedhuys, 156–62.
253 "The undersigned": Gehring, *Correspondence, 1647–1653,* 203.
253 Notarial records: Rockefeller Archives, Amsterdam Notarial Records Related to New Netherland, No. 2280, pages 18–65. Notary Jacob de Winter.

CHAPTER 13

257 "Thou hast received": Berthold Fernow, trans. and ed., *The Records of New Amsterdam 1653–1674*. Hereafter cited as *RNA*.
257 "herewith [to] inform": Ibid., 49.
258 Roman-Dutch law: J. W. Wessels, *History of the Roman-Dutch Law,* 22–25, 124–29.
258 "to this growing": Jerrold Seymann, *Colonial Charters, Patents and Grants to the Communities Comprising the City of New York,* 14–19.
259 cuckold case: *RNA,* 1:51, 53, 58, 59–61.
259 "blue caps": Charles Gehring, *Correspondence, 1647–1653,* 232.
259 to begin gearing up: Ibid., 226.
259 "5 or 6 ordinary": Docs. Rel., 1:484.
260 "certainly informed that": Ibid., 487.
260 the wall and Wall Street: *RNA,* 1:65–67, 69, 72–74, 90.
260 bourse: Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age,* 348.
261 second Amboyna: "The Second Part of the Tragedy of Amboyna, or a True Relation . . ."
261 who had just assumed: Antonia Fraser, *Cromwell: The Lord Protector,* 450–58.
261 "utmost assistance": John Thurloe, *A Collection of the State Papers . . . ,* 1:721–22.
262 "Meester Adriaen": Gehring, *Correspondence, 1647–1653,* 220–21.
262 His mother moved: William Hoffman, "Van der Donck-Van Bergen," 233.
262 a member of the gang: *RNA,* 1:51, 61, 65.
263 The most recent: Charles Gehring, *Council Minutes, 1652–1654,* 91–93.
263 The episode has: As an example of this standard dismissing of the Dutch colony, the distinguished historian Dixon Ryan Fox, writing in 1940, recycled the accepted wisdom that "In New Netherland we do not see Dutch groups insisting on communal privileges, as in New England . . ." and that ". . . local self-government came and developed in New Netherland by reason of New England Puritan invasion." That historians could ignore the long series of petitions crafted by the Dutch colonists, climaxing with Van der Donck's elaborate and impassioned mission to the Hague on behalf of self-government, can only be explained as Anglocentric blindness. (Dixon Ryan Fox, *Yankees and Yorkers,* 71–75.)
263 John Brodhead: John Romeyn Brodhead, *The History of the State of New York, 1609–1691,* 2:571.
263 Another early: Mariana van Rensselaer, *History of the City of New York in the Seventeenth Century,* 1:349.
264 was a direct result: My thanks to Dr. Willem Frijhoff for helping me to formulate my argument that Van der Donck played a role in the December 1653 remonstrance.
264 Doughty in Flushing: Brodhead, *History of the State of New York,* 1:411, 555, 615.
264 "We do not know": Gehring, *Correspondence, 1654–1658,* 11.
264 "made up of various": Ibid., 92.

264 "natural law": The way it is stated in the supporting petition of the New Amsterdam magistrates is: ". . . because the laws of nature give to all men the right to assemble for the welfare and protection of their freedom and property . . ." (Ibid., 100); Stuyvesant, in his reply, rejects " 'that natural law gives to all men' such rights." (Ibid., 102.)
265 The invasion squadron: Thurloe, *State Papers,* 2:418–19.
265 Manhattan became Manhattan: I am particularly indebted to Dennis Maika, whose 1995 doctoral dissertation, "Commerce and Community: Manhattan Merchants in the Seventeenth Century," helped change the way historians look at Manhattan under the Dutch. By shifting attention from the West India Company to the new breed of merchant-entrepreneurs that came into being on Manhattan, Maika showed that the crucial date for its rise was not 1664, the year of the takeover, but 1653, the year of the municipal charter.
266 These alliances: I owe this insight to Simon Middleton of the University of East Anglia, who outlined it in his talk, "Artisans and Trade Privileges in New Amsterdam," at the 2001 Rensselaerswijck Seminar in New York City.
266 red and black: Van Rensselaer, *History of the City of New York,* 2:138; I. N. P. Stokes, ed., *Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909,* 4:129.
266 old thatch ones: Gehring, *Council Minutes, 1655–56,* 186.
266 An order went out: Stokes, *Iconography,* 4:129, quoting Van Rensselaer.
267 Mills, brickyards: Janny Venema, "Beverwijck: A Dutch Village on the American Frontier, 1652–1664," 75–81.
267 a thousand: Martha Shattuck, "A Civil Society: Court and Community in Beverwijck, New Netherland, 1652–1664," 9–11.
267 They are boarders: Charles Gehring, ed. and trans., *Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652–1660,* 354.
267 One shows up: Ibid., 355.
267 Once, in 1659: Ibid., 463–64.
268 their walls hung: Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches,* 313, 320–21.
268 The new products: Maika, "Commerce and Community," 128–29; Gehring, *Council Minutes, 1652–1654,* 162.
268 a new, two-tiered: *RNA,* 7:150.
268 Nearly every resident: Ibid., 150–53.
268 burgher system: Ibid., 149–54. Also, my brief overview of the "burgherright" system of New Amsterdam relies on Maika, "Commerce and Community," especially chapter 3.
269 a looser relationship: Venema, "Beverwijck," 304.
270 "to bake any": *RNA,* 3:391.
270 *koeckjes:* Peter Rose, *The Sensible Cook: Dutch Foodways in the Old and New World,* 34–35.
270 *Koolsla:* Ibid., Pehr Kalm, *The America of 1750: Peter Kalm's Travels in North America; the English Version of 1770,* 28. The sample New Amsterdam dishes (pike, meatballs) come from *The Sensible Cook.*
270 "Saint Nicholas": Paul Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland,* 185.
271 "There's more legal": Personal interview, Albany, New York, June 18, 2002.
271 If they couldn't: *RNA,* 7:200; Maika, "Commerce and Community," 224.
272 The initial bloc: James Riker, *Revised History of Harlem: Its Origin and Early Annals,* 183.
272 In all, a quarter: Joyce Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City, 1664–1730,* 17.
272 intermarriage in New Amsterdam: Samuel Purple, ed., *Collections of the New-York*

Genealogical and Biographical Society, vol. 1, *Marriages from 1639–1801 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York.*

273 "thievish, lazy": Stokes, *Iconography,* 4:74.

273 "laziness and unwillingness": Gehring, *Council Minutes, 1655–1656,* 267–68.

273 But there are also: Peter Christoph, "The Freedmen of New Amsterdam," *de Halve Maen,* 161.

273 "true and free": Charles Gehring, unpublished translation of New Netherland document no. 10(3).332.

273 In its first decades: Robert Swan, "The Black Presence in Seventeenth-Century Brooklyn," *de Halve Maen,* 1. Some historians have claimed that Stuyvesant himself owned forty slaves, but I think this figure is too high. It is based on a 1660 account from a minister who reports that "there are forty negroes" at the "the Bouwery." But by that time "the Bouwery" had become a village, and we know that several families of freed blacks owned property there, along what is now Fourth Avenue. So the figure of "forty negroes" surely included both slaves and free blacks.

273 by the time: Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot,* 13.

274 "724 pine planks": Charles Gehring and J. A. Schiltkamp, eds., *Curaçao Papers, 1640–1665,* 175.

274 One such: On these events of 1651 I am relying on Jonathan Israel, "The Intellectual Debate"; Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* 706–709; and James Williams, " 'Abominable Religion' and Dutch (In) tolerance: The Jews and Petrus Stuyvesant."

275 "would pave the way": Stokes, *Iconography,* 142.

275 twenty-three Jews: Leo Hershkowitz, "New Amsterdam's Twenty-Three Jews—Myth or Reality?"

275 "for important reasons": Gehring, *Council Minutes, 1655–1656,* 166.

275 "the aversion and": Ibid., 81.

275 "consent is hereby": Ibid., 128.

275 The Jewish community: Ibid., 261–62; Gehring, *Correspondence, 1654–1658,* 83.

276 "love peace and libertie": Docs. Rel., 14:402–403.

276 But here, too: On the historical importance of the Flushing Remonstrance, I am relying on Haynes Trebor, "The Flushing Remonstrance" and David Voorhees, "The 1657 Flushing Remonstrance . . ."

276 "Singing Quakers": Docs. Rel., 3:415.

277 Here he deployed: Details from this scene come from Charles Gehring, *Delaware Papers,* 1: 37–47, and from Charles Gehring, *"Hodie Mihi, Cras Tibi:* Swedish-Dutch Relations in the Delaware Valley."

277 "forest Finns": My sources on the forest Finns are Terry Jordan and Matti Kaups, *The American Backwoods Frontier: An Ethnic and Ecological Interpretation;* Terry Jordan, "The Material Cultural Legacy of New Sweden on the American Frontier"; Per Martin Tvengsberg, "Finns in Seventeenth-Century Sweden and Their Contributions to the New Sweden Colony"; and Juha Pentikainen, "The Forest Finns as Transmitters of Finnish Culture from Savo Via Central Scandinavia to Delaware."

278 "restitution of our": Charles Gehring, *Delaware Papers, 1648–1664,* 39.

278 *"Hodi mihi":* Ibid., 39.

278 He decided to invite them: Ibid., 46, 54.

279 "Maquas, Mahikanders": Ibid., 35.

279 Such a multicultural: I am indebted to Cynthia J. van Zandt of the University of New Hampshire for this insight, which she outlined in a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association in 1998 entitled " '. . . our river savages . . . betook themselves (unknown to us) and went to Manhattan City, in New Holland, to exact revenge on our behalf': Cross-Cultural and Multi-Ethnic Alliances in the 17th-Century Mid-Atlantic."

281 "had been a good friend": Gehring, *Council Minutes, 1655–1656,* 204.

281 Van der Donck's wife: William Hoffman, "Van der Donck-Van Bergen," 340–41.

282 Croats and Prussians: These nationalities come from marriage records of the colony post 1656.

282 "So, reader": My thanks to Elisabeth Paling Funk for translating this poem.

282 Three hundred settlers: Docs. Rel., 2: 4; list of supplies Docs. Rel., 1: 643–44.

282 "I have been full": Docs. Rel., 2: 17.

CHAPTER 14

285 Meanwhile, outside: Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Founding of Harvard College,* 257–58; F. O. Vaille and H. A. Clarke, eds., *The Harvard Book . . .,* 25–32.

286 a "perfidious rogue": John Beresford, *Godfather of Downing Street,* 150.

286 and blamed his faulty: Ibid., 29.

287 literally leaving the man: John Romeyn Brodhead, *The History of the State of New York,* 1: 695; Robert Black, *Younger John Winthrop,* 209–10.

287 twenty-seven pounds: Docs. Rel., 2: 460.

288 He spent thirteen days: Black, *Younger John Winthrop,* 210; Brodhead, *History of the State of New York,* 1: 695. Detailed notes: Doris Quinn, "Theft of the Manhattans."

288 comparing notes: E. B. O'Callaghan, *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State,* 296.

288 parrots and parakeets: Charles Gehring and J. A. Schiltkamp, *Curaçao Papers, 1640–1665,* 115.

288 "He has always": Docs. Rel., 14: 525.

289 later Winthrop wrote: John Beresford, *Godfather of Downing Street: Sir George Downing,* 128.

289 a map that Winthrop: Doris C. Quinn, "Theft of the Manhattans," 29.

289 *Hamlet, 'Tis a Pity:* Samuel Pepys's diary for July through October 1661; Robert C. Black III, *The Younger John Winthrop,* 212.

289 confused with Josiah Winslow: Black, *Younger John Winthrop,* 244.

289 Charles had given: Ibid., 225.

290 Winthrop's reply: Ibid., 264.

290 "your anxiety over": Docs. Rel., 14: 551.

290 Stuyvesant complained: Ibid., 2: 230, 484–88; O'Callaghan, *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts,* 307.

290 "a sad and perilous": Docs. Rel., 2: 484.

290 "yield obedience": Black, *Younger John Winthrop,* 268.

290 "unrighteous, stubborn": Docs. Rel., 2: 484.

291 Japan would trade: Jonathan I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585–1740,* 172; other products: Israel, chapters 5 and 6.

291 "be instruments of good": Beresford, *Godfather of Downing Street,* 155; Downing's attitude and convictions: Pieter Geyl, *Orange and Stuart,* 191.

291 "Go on in Guinea": Keith Feiling, *British Foreign Policy 1660–1672,* 130–31.

291 The second Charles Stuart: My characterization of Charles is based on Antonia Fraser, *Royal Charles: Charles II and the Restoration;* John Macleod, *Dynasty: The Stuarts,*

1560–1807, chapters 8 and 9; and Arthur Bryant, ed., *The Letters, Speeches, and Declarations of King Charles II.*

292 James Stuart: My characterization of James is based in part on Maurice Ashley, *James II;* Jock Haswell, *James II, Soldier and Sailor;* and J. S. Clarke, *The Life of James the Second* . . . .

292 Reading the letters, minutes: Feiling, *British Foreign Policy,* 97–131; Docs. Rel., 3:51–66; Royal African Company, "The several declarations of the Company of Royal Adventurers of England Trading into Africa . . ."

293 In his years of exile: Haswell, *James II,* 104–20.

293 Royal Mint commemorated: K. G. Davies, *The Royal African Company,* 181.

293 Reorganized as: Ibid., 346.

293 "the Royal Company being": Royal African Company, "The several declarations of the Company of Royal Adventurers of England Trading into Africa . . ."

293 "And pray": Feiling, *British Foreign Policy,* 125.

293 "What ever injuries": Beresford, *Godfather of Downing Street,* 170.

294 "Together with all": Peter Christoph and Florence Christoph, eds., *Books of General Entries of the Colony of New York, 1664–1673,* 1–4.

294 a committee at Whitehall: Feiling, *British Foreign Policy,* 124.

294 the next month: Brodhead, *History of the State of New York,* 1: 736.

295 within the month: Black, *Younger John Winthrop,* 272.

295 James himself took to sea: Ashley, *James II,* 80.

295 "the welfare and": Docs. Rel., 3: 61.

295 "putt Mr. Winthropp": Ibid., 55.

296 "apt to entertaine": Christoph, *General Entries,* 25.

296 "the effusion of": Ibid., 26.

297 "These to the": Ibid., 27.

297 "would be disapproved": Brodhead, *History of the State of New York,* I, 739.

297 pasted back together: Docs. Rel., 2: 445–47.

298 There is then: E. B. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland,* 2: 525–26.

298 The ministers talked: Docs. Rel., 2: 509; O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland,* 2: 525–26; Brodhead, *History of the State of New York,* 1: 740.

298 "we are oblieged": Christoph, *General Entries,* 29.

299 "misery, sorrow": Docs. Rel., 2: 248.

299 They were now wealthy: Leo Hershkowitz, "The Troublesome Turk: An Illustration of Judicial Process in New Amsterdam."

300 Asser Levy, Polish Jew: Leo Hershkowitz, "New Amsterdam's Twenty-Three Jews—Myth or Reality?"

300 for the past five years: Charles Gehring, unpublished translation of New Netherland documents no. 10(3):329 and 10(3):330.

300 "I would much rather": Brodhead, *History of the State of New York,* 1: 741–42.

CHAPTER 15

301 Starting in the 1660s: Harry M. Ward, "The Search for American Identity: Early Histories of New England."

301 John Adams: David McCullough, *John Adams,* 245, 254.

301 "first born of all": The quote is from Urian Oakes, in Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, *The Puritan Oligarchy: The Founding of American Civilization,* 33.

301 " 'Tis Satan's policy": Ibid., 32.

301 The Puritans' systematic: The examples in this paragraph are from ibid., 224–40.

301 "the right of our manifest": Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right,* 42.

302 In the early twentieth: On Wilson's expansion of the term, and for the Wilson quotes, I am relying on ibid., chapter 4.

303 In fact, ships: Christian Koot, "In Pursuit of Profit: The Netherlands' Trade in Colonial New York, 1664–1688," talk given at Conference on New York City History, CUNY Graduate Center, October 2001.

303 Notaries in Amsterdam: Rockefeller notarial archives, Jacob de Winter, notary, nos. 2309, 2313, 2326.

304 "they shall continue": Docs. Rel., 3: 57.

304 "The Dutch here": Peter Christoph and Florence Christoph, eds., *Books of General Entries of the Colony of New York, 1664–1673,* 36–37.

305 "continue as now they are": Ibid., 35–37.

305 "immunities and privileges": Leo Hershkowitz, "The New York City Charter, 1686."

306 "neglect or treachery": Docs. Rel., 2: 420, 491.

306 Balthasar Stuyvesant: Charles Gehring and J. A. Schiltkamp, trans. and eds., *Curaçao Papers, 1640–1665,* 220.

306 He died: Docs. Rel., 3: 363–379, 419–510; John Romeyn Brodhead, *The History of the State of New York, 1609–1691,* 2: 131–32.

307 "Wherby there is": John Winthrop to the Earl of Clarendon, "The Clarendon Papers," *Collections,* New-York Historical Society (1869), 58.

307 "the best of all": Docs. Rel., 3: 106.

307 "You will have heard": Arthur Bryant, ed., *The Letters, Speeches, and Declarations of King Charles II,* 168.

307 the Dutch government allowed: Docs. Rel., 2: 516–17.

308 as an "invitation": Jonathan Israel, *The Anglo-Dutch Moment,* Chapter 3, "The Dutch Role in the Glorious Revolution," especially 124–29.

309 Jacob Leisler: David Voorhees, "The 'fervent Zeale' of Jacob Leisler"; Firth Haring Fabend, "The Pro-Leislerian Dutch Farmers in New York: A 'Mad Rabble,' or 'Gentlemen Standing Up for Their Rights'?"

309 the relationships between: Joyce D. Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City,* chapters 4 and 5.

309 What mattered was: Milton Klein, "Origins of the Bill of Rights in Colonial New York," 391.

309 French, German, Scottish, and Irish: Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot,* 16, 56–60.

310 "Our chiefest unhappyness": Charles Lodwick, "New York in 1692 . . . ," 244. 371.

310 As late as the 1750s: James Tanis, "The Dutch-American Connection . . . ," 24.

310 In fact, the irony: Firth Haring Fabend, *Zion on the Hudson: Dutch New York and New Jersey in the Age of Revivals,* especially chapter 10.

311 "following the example": Newark *Daily Advertiser,* December 6, 1850.

311 "Yielding to no one": John Romeyn Brodhead, unpublished manuscript, the Brodhead Collection, Rutgers University.

312 "clamoring for scholarly": Editorial, *New York Times,* 7 August 2001.

313 "What then is": J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer,* 46–47.

314 district attorney derived from *schout:* W. Scott van Alstyne, Jr., "The District Attorney—An Historical Puzzle"; A. J. Reiss, "Public Prosecutors and Criminal Prosecution in the United States of America." As with nearly everything in history, the origins of the office of district attorney are open to debate, but the arguments that Reiss and van Alstyne make show a straightforward chain of influence. The most forceful argument against the district attorney office originating in the office of *schout* is interesting in that it has the classic features of American Anglocentrism. Jack Kress ("Progress and Prosecution"), notes that England had no such office, that the Dutch did, that the first district attorneys in English America appeared in precisely the area where the Dutch colony had been, and that those first district attorneys were called "scout" by the English, seemingly a clear indicator of their Dutch origin. But he then dismisses the argument on the grounds that the Dutch couldn't have made a lasting impact because the Dutch colony was small and the period of Dutch control was "quite brief, lasting only from 1653 until 1664 and that it is questionable if this was sufficient time for the institution of the *schout* to take root . . ." Besides getting the date of the colony's founding wrong by thirty years, Kress adopts the classic pattern of reasoning that American history has applied to the Dutch colony: assume the colony had no real presence, then, on the basis of your assumption, dismiss evidence to the contrary.

315 Santa Claus: Elisabeth Paling Funk, "Washington Irving and the Dutch Heritage," manuscript in progress, chapter 3: "The Popular Culture of New Netherland." My thanks to the author for sending me this portion of her work.

315 "ancient City": The charter is printed in Stephen Schechter, *Roots of the Republic: American Founding Documents Interpreted,* 91. My reading of the colony's political legacy comes in part from Leo Hershkowitz, "The New York City Charter, 1686"; Robert C. Ritchie, *The Duke's Province: A Study of New York Politics and Society, 1664–1691,* chapter 1; Paul Finkelman, "The Soul and the State: Religious Freedom in New York and the Origin of the First Amendment"; Milton M. Klein, "Origins of the Bill of Rights in Colonial New York"; Betsy Rosenblatt, "New York State's Role in the Creation and Adoption of the Bill of Rights."

315 The names of the twenty-six: Rosenblatt, "New York State's Role in the Creation and Adoption of the Bill of Rights"; "Albany Committee," *New York Journal and Weekly Register,* April 26, 1788.

EPILOGUE

320 While the records: My sources on the history, condition, and preservation of the colony's records are: The A. J. F. van Laer Papers, New York State Library; the John Romeyn Brodhead Papers, Rutgers University; the Andrew Elliot Papers, New York State Library; A. J. F. van Laer, "The Translation and Publication of the Manuscript Dutch Records of New Netherland, with an Account of Previous Attempts at Translation," New York State Library Education Department Bulletin, January 1, 1910; Vivian C. Hopkins, "The Dutch Records of New York: Francis Adrian van der Kemp and De Witt Clinton," *New York History,* October 1962; New York Secretary of State, "Inventory of Dutch and English Colonial Papers"; Hugh Hastings, ed., *Public Papers of George Clinton,* 1: 7–10; Charles Gehring, "New Netherland Manuscripts in United States Repositories," *de Halve Maen* 57 (August 1983); Charles Gehring, "New Netherland Translating New York's Dutch Past," *Humanities* (November/December 1993); Ronald Howard, "John Romeyn Brodhead," *de Halve Maen* 59 (July 1985); Peter Christoph, "Story of the New Netherland Project," *de Halve Maen* 61 (September 1988); Charles K. Winne, Jr., "Arnold J. F. van Laer (1869–1955), An Appreciation," in A. J. F. van Laer, trans., *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch,* vol. 1; Application Form, U. S. Department of the Interior, "Save America's Treasures" Program, Project: Dutch Colonial Manuscripts, 1638–1670; and interviews with Charles Gehring, Peter Christoph, Christina Holden, Janny Venema.

320 Threats were made: Information about Tryon comes from Paul David Nelson, *William Tryon and the Course of Empire,* and from original documents in the Andrew Elliot Papers at the New York State Library.

320 "Sir—As I am": J. V. N. Yates, "Report of the Secretary of State, relative to the records &c. in his office," 44.

321 mold set in: Interview (August 27, 2002) with Maria Holden, conservator, New York State Archives.

321 according to a letter: It has been assumed the records spent the entire war aboard the *Duchess of Gordon* and another ship, the *Warwick,* but a letter from Crèvecoeur to Franklin, written in 1783, provides evidence that they were moved to the Tower late in the conflict. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer,* 341.

321 "much mill-dewed": Yates, "Report of the Secretary of State" 46.

321 "immediate measures ought": Van Laer, "Translation and Publication of the Manuscript Dutch Records of New Netherland."

322 a fiasco of small errors: Historians had long suspected Van der Kemp's translations were flawed. Charles Gehring was able to assess just how bad they were after he discovered two volumes that had escaped destruction in the fire.

325 having a drinking problem: In fact, it is Stuyvesant, writing to the company directors, who refers to the man as the "drunkard Johannes Dijckmans."

325 "Then, one day in 1655": The change in handwriting—the moment at which Dijckman's career ends—occurs on Tuesday, May 9, 1655, and appears on page 193 of Charles Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652–1660.*