

KINGSTON RECORDS

Baptismal and Marriage Registers
of the
OLD DUTCH CHURCH
OF KINGSTON,
Ulster County, New York,
1660-1809



Transcribed and Edited by
ROSWELL RANDALL HOES



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Baptismal and Marriage Registers of the
Old Dutch Church of Kingston,
Ulster County, New York (formerly named Wiltwyck,
and often familiarly called Esopus or 'Sopus), for One
Hundred and Fifty Years from their commencement in 1660.

Transcribed and Edited

By

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the Newport Historical Society.

Member of the American Historical Association; the Holland Society of New York;
the American Society of Church History, etc., etc.



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TO

MY ESTEEMED FRIEND,

Samuel Decker Copkendall, Esq.,

(VICE-PRESIDENT FOR KINGSTON OF THE HOLLAND SOCIETY),

WHOSE ANCESTORS APPEAR AT AN EARLY DATE

ON THESE PAGES,

AND TO WHOSE PUBLIC SPIRIT AND ANTIQUARIAN TASTES

THE DESCENDANTS OF OUR EARLY SETTLERS ARE INDEBTED

FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THESE ANCIENT RECORDS,

THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY

Dedicated

BY

THE TRANSCRIBER AND EDITOR.

PREFACE.

EXACTLY two hundred and thirty years ago to-day, on the 3d of October, 1660, Domine Hermannus Blom, the first minister of the old Dutch Church of Kingston, performed a marriage ceremony, an entry of which he duly recorded in a folio volume bound in hogskin, and now brown with age. With this book commences the oldest original set, now extant, of the Baptismal and Marriage Registers in the Dutch Church of this country. Those of the New York Church, previous to the settlement of Domine Henricus Selyns as its regular minister in 1682, are merely copies made by him from the records or memoranda of his predecessors, which, unhappily, are now lost or destroyed, while those of the Albany Church, previous to the pastorate of Domine Godefridus Dellius, which began in 1683, are no longer in existence. The Kingston Church Registers for the century and a half from their commencement in 1660, as reproduced in this work, are comprised in four large folio volumes, which, until the beginning of the late Rev. Dr. Gosman's ministry, in 1808, were written in the Dutch language. In addition to these, there are also nineteen unbound leaves, upon which are recorded some Consistorial minutes and the baptisms and marriages of the "Conferentie" party from 1766 to 1772,¹ as well as the baptisms and marriages performed in 1775 and a portion of 1776, during the first part of Domine Doll's ministry.

The genealogical and historical value of the Kingston Church Registers cannot well be overestimated. They embrace the names of many Dutchmen who came directly from Holland two centuries and a half ago, some of whom made their first homes either in New York or Albany, and it may also be said that a very large portion of the Dutch families who immigrated to this country before the close of the 17th century are represented, to a greater or less extent, on these pages. An unusual importance also attaches itself to these Registers owing to the fact that for a long period subsequent to the formation of the Kingston Church it was the only ecclesiastical organization between New-York and Albany, and that persons desiring to be married, or to have their children baptized, came to Kingston for those purposes from the vast territory extending from the region below Albany as far south as the Highlands, on both sides of the Hudson, and to

¹ *In 1766 arose the memorable contest in the Kingston Church between the two factions known as the "Coetus" and the "Conferentie." The former party, generally speaking, advocated separation from, and the latter connection with and subordination to, the Classis of Amsterdam, in Holland, in all matters relating to ecclesiastical procedure and government. The contest resulted in an open rupture in the Kingston Church, the majority of its membership being in sympathy with the "Conferentie," while the minority, under the leadership of Domine Meyer, advocated the cause of the "Coetus." This was followed by the remarkable trial and suspension of Domine Meyer, his withdrawal with a portion of the congregation, and the maintenance of religious services apart from those held by the "Conferentie" in the old church edifice. Domine Meyer retained possession of the original Registers of the Church, and recorded therein the "Coetus" baptisms and marriages performed by himself, until his withdrawal in 1772, to accept a call from the church of Pompton and Totowa, in New Jersey. The portion of the original records of the "Conferentie" still in existence embrace entries of by far the larger number of the baptisms and marriages performed in Kingston by either of the two factions. They are incorporated in this book, and are placed in chronological order with the "Coetus" entries recorded in the original and older registers by Domine Meyer.*

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the westward as far as the Minisink country and the headwaters of the Delaware. Nor do these records represent only the early family history of the Dutch. The names of the old Huguenot residents of Kingston and other places, many of whom subsequently removed to New Paltz, and of a large number of the Germans who settled at Newburgh and in Ulster, Dutchess, and Albany Counties in the early part of the last century, as well as of numerous English families and a few Scotch and Irish, are here recorded, and information concerning them given that can be obtained from no other source.

The orthography of the proper names in these Registers is quite in keeping with a practice of the early times in which they were written. It never seems to have occurred to these university-bred Dutch Domines of the Kingston Church to inquire how various persons presenting themselves for marriage, or their children for baptism, spelled their own names, but these names having been pronounced in their hearing, they recorded them phonetically, according to the prompting of their ears, or arbitrarily, according to the dictates of their fancy. This practice, however, involved no unusual inconsistency, for the orthography of the Dutch language, even in Holland, as respects both common and proper names, was not wholly settled until late in the eighteenth century. Some of our most familiar family names of to-day are recorded on these pages in half a dozen or more different ways, and in many instances variations in spelling occur even in the same baptismal or marriage entry. It is therefore impossible in any case whatever to state, at least by the aid of these Registers, the exact original orthography, even if any existed, of particular family names among our old Dutch settlers. This remark applies, moreover, to all of the early civil and ecclesiastical records of the Dutch, whether in this country or in Holland, and to a large extent also to those written in English, as it was not before the commencement of the present century that any marked degree of uniformity was observed in the orthography of a very large number of proper names.

The variations in spelling in the Kingston Church Registers are even more involved and confusing than usual, owing to the fact that Domines Mancius, Meyer, and Doll, and also Domine Cock, of East Camp, an advisory friend of the Kingston Church, who during the "Coetus" and "Conferentie" difficulties, repeatedly officiated there at baptismal and marriage ceremonies, were not Dutchmen, but Germans, and naturally displayed German tendencies in their orthography. This circumstance will be better appreciated when it is stated that, upon the invitation of Domine Mancius, in 1732, to become the colleague of Domine Vas, at Kingston, doubt was expressed in his call as to his ability to "acquire the pronunciation of the Low Dutch language, so as to be understood in it. Therefore," continues the call, "in order to preserve unity and harmony in the congregation, we make this stipulation in advance, that if you do not learn the Low Dutch pronunciation in the space of two years, and our people complain that they cannot understand you, then, in accordance with the Church constitution, the Reverend Consistory of the Church of Kingston shall assemble ecclesiastically in regard to this matter, assisted by two ministers of the Low Dutch Reformed Church of this Province, and if it is the sentiment of the majority that after the space of two years you cannot be understood by the congregation in the Low Dutch language, we shall be released from our obligation in regard to the promised salary, and otherwise not."

In view of these and other facts, no attempt has been made to correct or modify the text as written by the Dutch Domines, and the proper names in this work may therefore be regarded as exact orthographical reproductions of those contained in the original Regis-

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ters. In very rare instances the letter "i" has been substituted for "j," and "v" for "u," but only where a contrary course would be misleading. "I" and "J," and "U" and "V," however, were used interchangeably, in early Dutch and English orthography, and may be respectively regarded simply as modifications of the same letter. Capitals have been used in the initial letters of all proper names, whether thus written in the original or not. All conventional signs, indicating separate syllables, have been expressed by their full syllabic equivalent, excepting the horizontal line placed over certain letters, which indicates the omission of a part of the name. The early form of writing the prefixes "van," "van der," "van den," "de," "de la," etc., with small initial letters has been retained, except in cases where the Dominies employed capital letters in their place. It was in the first instance the design of the transcriber and editor to arrange the names alphabetically in family groups, but in deference to the judgment of certain proficient genealogists, whose views were entitled to the highest consideration, the attempt was abandoned, and the chronological method, which is now believed to be the true one, was adopted. The great size of this volume has forbade the introduction of many historical notes and references, and but few of any kind have been inserted, except where their presence was deemed necessary to elucidate some features of the text which might otherwise be misleading. It has been thought important, however, to admit quite a number of notes in the Marriage Register, illustrative of the places where the contracting parties were born or resided.

In a work of this character the public may justly demand rigid accuracy, and it is therefore deemed proper to state that the old Registers of the Kingston Church, as here reproduced, represent four careful revisions and comparisons with the original records, made by the transcriber and editor — not merely name by name, but also letter by letter. The same degree of accuracy has been studied in the preparation of the several indexes, which contain references to 44,388 names, by the aid of which the public may reap any advantages that might have been derived from an alphabetical arrangement of the families in the body of the work.

The public would not be interested in a narrative of the labors performed and the discouragements overcome in the preparation of this work for the press. It represents the leisure hours of several years, and its publication is the accomplishment of a desire formed by the editor long ago, when he possessed neither the opportunity nor the ability to effect it. His fondness for genealogical and historical research has from childhood been largely fostered, if indeed it was not created, by the study of these grand old Registers when they were in the custody of his revered father, who, as minister of the church which they represent, administered so largely, and for so many years, to its spiritual and material prosperity. It is with no slight emotions of pride and gratification, therefore, that he now presents the reproduction of these ancient Registers to the world as the first completed work of its kind published in this country, and as one of the most important contributions to the cause of genealogical research that has ever appeared in this or in any other land. If it shall tend in any degree to incite or foster an increased interest in genealogical and historical studies, or afford assistance to those who are patiently seeking to throw light upon unknown spots in the pathways of the past, its editor will regard himself as abundantly rewarded for the incessant labor expended in placing it before the public.

R. R. H.

Washington, D. C., 3d October, 1890.

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