



# KNOW YOUR ROOTS

Mary Durland, Author/Researcher

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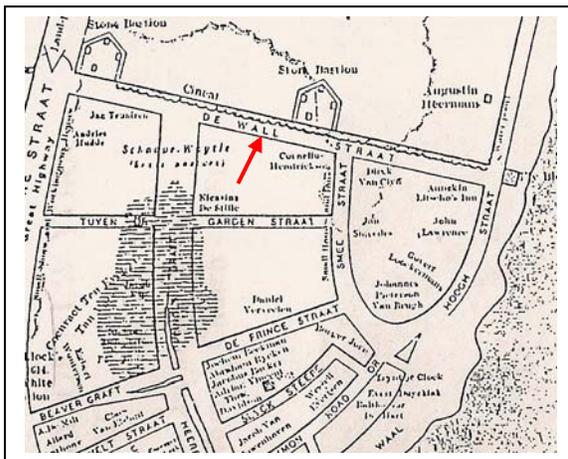
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## WHERE IT ALL BEGAN AND WHERE IT ENDED

### Chapter 2

The Dutch had an entirely different reason for their settlement in the new world called New Netherland. They wanted to increase their trade and for that reason the West Indies Company was started primarily to make money. They traded with the Indians very peaceably, but try as they may, they couldn't get enough settlers from Holland to immigrate to the new world to farm the land. So they began offering incentives.

Farmers and their families would be carried across the Atlantic without charge. They would be given some land with a house, some tools and some animals. Best of all, the farmer would become the owner of his property in five years. So, many people from Holland came and it was during this time that we believe our ancestor **Jan Gerretse Dorlandt** came.



While New Amsterdam was still under the Dutch, there are still some remnants today in the area. For example, they built a wall around the compound to keep the Indians out, and now it is one of the busiest streets and richest streets in New York City, the financial district of **WALL STREET**.

Besides that we have the name Brooklyn today, a borough which is from Breukelen, and Harlem which is from Haarlem, both names from Holland. And the Bowery was formerly bouwerie.

There are probably many others that have remained during the years but were anglicized when New Amsterdam became New York.

Our story is why and when Jan Gerretse Dorlandt arrived in New Amsterdam. The why you now know. The when was decided after Peter Stuyvesant was the governor. The city was thriving producing immense wealth for the Dutch. Because of this, the English coveted the area and when English warships appeared in the harbor demanding surrender, Peter Stuyvesant having no fleet or army was forced to surrender. So without a shot being fired the Dutch flag was pulled down in 1664 and the English flag waved in its place. New Netherland was now called New York after the brother of King Charles, and was an English Colony. That alone is a separate story.

Information that solidifies our ancestor's arrival in New Amsterdam was well documented in 1687 when the Dutch inhabitants were required to take an oath of allegiance to the English crown. In the History of the State of New York one can find that Jan Gerritse Dorlant of Breukelen, an immigrant from Holland, had lived in New Amsterdam for 35 years. That means he arrived in 1652. This is the when of our story.

From some records we find that first he settled near Fulton Street Ferry and later in Bedford. His farm or "bowery" of forty acres was at the eastern site. In 1675 his name appears on the assessment rolls of Brooklyn township and in 1687 he was elected a Commissioner and continued to serve until 1701.

The Dorland book says he came as an unmarried young man and there are no records of his first wife but we know that he belonged to the Dutch Reform Church in Brooklyn and his children Gerret Gerretse, Elias, Samuel, Christina, and Gertrude were all baptized there. Our family comes from Samuel and except for the Dorland book, it is hard to trace his descendants for a couple of generations. But it is accepted that we do come from Samuel. There is no doubt that the differences in the languages had a part to play in our heritage and perhaps left no records.

With his second wife Anna Remsen, he had five children also baptized in the Dutch Reform Church. Jan Gerritse Dorlant's burial place is not known but it is generally recognized that the interments of early Dutch settlers were made in family grounds and were only marked with large stones and he did own property.

So we can assume that our ancestor was one who benefited from the West Indies policy of enticing settlers to New Amsterdam simply to colonize their land in order to



trade with the Indians and make money, but for us it was a way for our ancestor to own a farm. Throughout our family generations, owning land has been important.

When the British took over, New Amsterdam was a vibrant city of several thousand inhabitants. New York today, through the New Amsterdam History Center, is restoring the greatness of its era.

(Webmaster & Technical Advisor: Jerry Larkin)