

STEPHEN M. OSTRANDER



**A HISTORY
OF THE CITY OF
BROOKLYN**

Stephen M. Ostrander

A History of the City of Brooklyn

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PREFACE

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At the time of his death, in 1885, Mr. Ostrander had completed considerable MS. for a history of the City of Brooklyn and Kings County; had prepared many chronological notes with a view to fuller writing, and had accumulated a mass of material in the form of transcripts, references, newspaper and other reports. It was his own understanding that a first volume of a proposed two-volume history might be regarded as well in hand, and that the wherewithal for the remaining chapters was advanced toward completion.

At the outset of his undertaking the editor met the embarrassment of not finding any outline which might reveal the precise form in which the author intended to cast his work. Mr. Ostrander worked with a definite idea, but did not formulate this idea in writing, and only the completed expressions of this idea remained for the guidance of the editor. It became apparent that the author intended to rearrange and extend the matter for the earlier chapters. This matter was preserved in the form of a series of articles published in the Brooklyn "Eagle," during 1879-80, covering the period from the discovery by Hudson to the beginning of the Revolution. The degree of attention which these articles attracted induced Mr. Ostrander to extend the series far beyond the range he originally intended to give to them. As a result these articles were not precisely consecutive, nor was the matter so ordered as to adapt itself to book

chapters without material changes. Without knowing the author's design in detail, it was exceedingly difficult to effect these changes save upon lines which the natural symmetry of such a work seemed to suggest, and the editor has had no hesitation in so rearranging the material, and in changing such features of the narrative as had been temporarily essential to serial publication.

For the middle period, extending from the opening of the Revolution to the time of the consolidation of Brooklyn, Williamsburgh, and Bushwick, the author left a full narrative, and considerable collateral material. Beyond this point the chapters were in an unfinished sketch. In putting together the elements of this part of the work, the editor has been actuated by a wish to follow, so far as it might be apparent, the author's aim and plan. Possibly there is no occasion to offer apology for those passages in the body of the work, and particularly in the last chapter on modern Brooklyn, in which the editor has carried the narrative beyond the date of Mr. Ostrander's death. The few instances in which this occurs are obviously justified by the exigencies of the work. Nor should there be need for any defense on the part of the editor for the proportions of different elements of the work as now presented. No two historical writers would agree as to essential proportions in such a matter, and, without consultation with the author, no editor could hope to do more than compromise between such intent as appeared in unfinished work before him, and such ideal as to himself seemed wise.

Both author and editor have incurred obligations to Stiles's histories of Brooklyn and Kings County; to the

"Notes" of Furman; Field's "Historic Scenes"; the Collections of the Long Island Historical Society; the histories of Thompson and Prime, and to other authorities to whom acknowledgment is offered in the notes and in the body of the work. The editor is indebted to the excellent almanacs of the "Eagle" and of the "Citizen"; to the "Brooklyn Compendium," compiled by John Dykeman, Jr., and published by order of the Common Council in 1870; to the recent compilation, "The Eagle and Brooklyn," edited by Henry W. B. Howard and Arthur N. Jervis; and to various local reports and publications which do not call for enumeration here.

A. B.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., *March 5, 1894.*

STEPHEN M. OSTRANDER

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The name of Stephen M. Ostrander has been honored in the city of Brooklyn as that of a man whose career exemplified a stainless citizenship. The honors have been not those of public favor offered in a citizen's lifetime, nor of memorials after he has passed away, but the monuments of a cherished memory, the recognition of a generous and wholesome personality.

Stephen M. Ostrander was born February 3, 1832, in the city of Brooklyn. He was of Dutch stock, his earliest ancestor in this country being Pieter Ostrander, who came to America in 1659. When Pieter Ostrander reached America with his wife and three children—a son, Pieter Pieterszen,¹ and two daughters, Tryutje and Geertje—Peter Stuyvesant was Governor of New Amsterdam, and the settlement on Manhattan Island occupied a small patch of land on the southern point of the land now occupied by the vast metropolis of New York. Settlers had been living on the Brooklyn side of the East River for a little more than twenty years, and the Indians were still a formidable obstacle to the peace of the struggling young communities. Dutch immigration had not yet been checked by that bloodless conquest of the British, which five years later transformed New Amsterdam from a Dutch to an English colony, and changed its name to New York.

We afterward find Pieter Pieterszen living at Kingston. This second Pieter among the American Ostrandere was

born at Amsterdam, Holland, in 1650, and before coming to this country with his father had been enrolled as a cadet in the army of the Dutch king. In 1679 he married Rebecca, daughter of William Janszen Traphagen and Joostje Willems Van Northwyck. Among the children from this marriage was Hendrick Ostrander, born at New Hurley, N. Y., in 1693. Hendrick acquired the ownership of two thousand acres of land at Plattskill, which were evenly divided among his ten children. He was "a staunch adherent of the Reformed Dutch Church,"² and served in the army previous to the Revolution. His marriage to Elizabeth Van Bommel, of Kingston, took place in 1724. His son Christoffer, born and died at Plattskill, was the father of Stephen Ostrander, born at Poughkeepsie in 1769, and afterwards of Pompton Plains and Brunswick, N. J., who was an eloquent minister of the Dutch Church. An illustration of the conditions prevailing at this period is offered by the fact that Stephen Ostrander preached in both English and Dutch.

The clerical Ostrander, who made an interesting reputation as a preacher in the early part of the present century, married Maria Duryea in 1796. His son, Abraham Duryea Ostrander, born at Pompton Plains in the following year, came to New York in his twelfth year, and began an energetic business career. From his earliest years he was of a studious tendency, and his self-acquired learning gave him an excellent mental equipment. He became a ripe scholar and influential citizen. For many years he led the first Sunday school in the Reformed Dutch Church of Brooklyn (corner of William and Fulton streets), walking to the meeting-place from his home at Flatbush. In 1820, he

married Margaret T. Wilson, daughter of Peter Wilson, LL. D., of Columbia College, the tutor of Charles Anthon and other well-known scholars, and distinguished for having drawn up the constitution of the State of New Jersey.

Abraham Duryea Ostrander's three sons were Peter Wilson, George A., and Stephen M. Ostrander. George A. Ostrander, a graduate of Columbia College and of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, was the first house surgeon of the Long Island College Hospital. The other two brothers became lawyers, and it is among the interesting traditions of the Kings County bar that they were frequently in opposition in the same case. Under such circumstances their professional steel clashed brilliantly, but the firm affection between the brothers had no hint of strife or rivalry.

Stephen M. Ostrander, born 1831, was educated in this city and at Columbia College. He was admitted to the bar and began the practice of law while a decidedly young man, but soon made his personality felt in the life of the city. If his tastes led him to a studious life at home, his gifts and ambitions drew him into those features of political activity which demand voice as well as counsel. He championed the Democratic party, and until the close of his life he spoke his loyalty in no uncertain tones. He became one of the "war horses" of the party in campaign times, and was a respected adviser in those political times of peace when parties prepare for war. He would have made an admirable public servant, but party conditions did not bring him to the front as a candidate, though they welcomed his voice on the platform. He wished to be surrogate, but the nomination he

sought was given to Jacob I. Bergen. He was not an insistent candidate within his party, and the rewards which might reasonably be considered to have belonged to him had not been bestowed at the time of his death.

As a lawyer, Mr. Ostrander was conscientious, painstaking, forcible. His genial personality made him popular wherever he appeared. His strong figure fitted his character, which was staunch and equable. By temperament he was inclined to see the whimsical side of things, while quick to exclude any element of this sort from matters commanding his serious thought.

Stories concerning him reveal his quick humor. One day a witty but not especially well-versed Irish lawyer called upon him for assistance in preparing a case. One point of perplexity with the inquirer was as to the motive power on the ferries before the use of steam. Knowing Ostrander's familiarity with early Brooklyn history, the inquiring lawyer demanded information as to this point. "Before the days of steam," said Ostrander, "they used to have horse boats." "Horse boats?" queried the lawyer, with a look of continued perplexity. "Yes." "Did the horses swim ahead of them?" "No," solemnly returned Ostrander, "they had four holes cut in the bottom of the boat; the horse's legs passed through these holes, permitting him to walk on the bottom, and thus propel the boat." "Good!" said the listener, "I'll win the case." And he did.

Mr. Ostrander's interest in American history was perhaps a natural result of his ancestry and his tendencies as a student. He early began the accumulation of historical material, and finally formed a definite plan for writing a

history of the city of Brooklyn and Kings County. He was an active member of the Society of Old Brooklynites, frequently addressing that body, and as a member of the Long Island Historical Society—in whose handsome hall, on Pierrepont Street, he was the first to lecture under the auspices of the society—he found many opportunities to further his hobby of historical investigation. He also entered that fraternity of descendants of Dutch stock, the Holland Society of New York.

During the later years of his life he was a frequent contributor to the newspapers and local magazines, generally upon topics directly related to local history. Debated questions as to historical matters always interested him, and his pen was ever ready with a casual comment. He was a good debater, though not pugnacious, and never an ungenerous opponent. In his profession, in his political associations, in his relations with his fellow-citizens and with fellow-members of the different societies to which he was attracted, he was always well poised, highly respected, uniformly welcomed. His catholic tastes and sympathies gave him many interests, as they gave him many friends. It was as natural that he should be prominent in the Presbyterian Church, which he attended, as that he should be a leading figure in the Masonic fraternity, to which he was proud to own allegiance. His commanding figure, good voice, and easy manner made him a popular speaker on social as well as public occasions.

Mr. Ostrander married Annie A. Hammond on August 7, 1866. His domestic relations were in keeping with the fine symmetry of his character. No marriage could have been

happier. In the preparation of the historical work which was incomplete when his short illness closed his life, he had the loyal appreciation and assistance of his wife.

He died on November 19, 1885. The extent of his practice and income might have indicated the probability of a considerable fortune, but he was too open-handed to have become a rich man. He died worth a good name.

CHAPTER I

THE REGION OF BROOKLYN AT THE TIME OF THE DISCOVERY

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Geology and Conformation of Long Island. Evidences of the Glacial Period. Theory of the Glacial Action. "Back-Bone" of the Island. Earliest Historical Description. Trees. Animal Life. Indian Tribes: Their Subjugation by the Iroquois; Habits and Habitations.

The geology of Long Island has always been regarded as a particularly interesting theme for those concerned in the study of such matters, since the examination of its phases brings into view so many and such various points of speculative interest. Prime in his "History of Long Island"³ remarks that "when we consider the retired situation of Long Island, and how little it has excited the notice of travelers, it is not surprising that its geological character as well as other peculiarities should have remained so long unexplored. Until quite recently very few scientific men have even deigned to give it a passing notice, though the assertion may be safely hazarded that scarcely any other tract of land of equal extent on the American Continent furnishes more abundant room for the *imagination* of geologists to play upon, or that imposes a stronger necessity for *conjecturing* the operation of some tremendous agency, which in its freaks had invaded the domains of both the land and the ocean, and after

completing its sport had silently retired without leaving a track to determine its origin or identify its form."

The geologist of the present day does not seem to regard the field as one calling in the same degree for the exercise of the imagination, though the more definite knowledge acquired and made familiar since the time of the publication just quoted has in one sense vastly extended the opportunity for speculation. Certainly it no longer can be said that scientific men have neglected the investigation of the subject.

Commenting on the investigations of Dr. Dwight, Prime says:—

"From all these considerations, the inference has been regarded as legitimate that Long Island was once through its whole extent attached to the main; and some powerful agency, the form of which is now left entirely to conjecture, forced the separation which is now marked by the intervening Sound. One of the most plausible suppositions is that the separation has been effected by some resistless torrent of water, which, under peculiar circumstances that it is impossible now to determine, has swept out the intervening land, and left its channel to be occupied by the waters of the ocean."

Thus vaguely were the early speculations set forth. With a well developed glacial theory to aid him the modern geologist is able to present a fairly circumstantial picture of probable conditions in the past. We now know with

reasonable certainty that Brooklyn rests on soil that is a monument to a vast force quite different from any that were included in the hesitating speculations of the early writers.

In an admirable review of the subject written by Charles M. Skinner we are presented with a picturesque outline of the glacial theory. We are reminded that Brooklyn stands on rubble that was rolled down from the New England mountains to the northward by a glacier larger than the combined areas of all the glaciers now existing on the earth. How many thousands of years ago this great glacier began its work we may only guess within somewhat liberal margins. This continent of ice covered the whole of the northern part of North America, burying mountains beneath its bulk and hollowing the beds of the great fresh-water seas that Chicago and its sister cities front upon to-day, burying, too, for aught we know, the remains of civilizations, though nothing at present has been taken out of the glacial drift, except rude stone implements, to show what the probable condition of man was at that time.

This ice lay so deep that not even Mount Washington barred its advance, and to-day geologists find the summit of this mountain heaped with blocks of stone that were dragged from other points and left there when the ice melted; for glaciers are not stationary, like ice on ponds and marshes, but have an onward movement toward their point of melting that varies, with the slope of their beds, from six to thirty-six inches a day. In Greenland the whole interior is covered with ice thousands of feet thick, the movement of which is hindered by a wall of mountains that nearly surrounds that island, but wherever a valley opens a way for

it the ice sends down a tongue to the sea, and from these tongues the ocean currents break off the icebergs that float down the Atlantic. In their descent these glaciers act as plows, wearing off so much earth and rock from the hills that the icebergs are freighted with them, and where they melt their stony burdens sink to the bottom of the sea, forming the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.

The ice that buried upper North America acted in the same manner as the Greenland ice to-day: it eroded the mountains, it sent off bergs, and the rocks and gravel that it tore from the hills by a pressure of a thousand tons to the square yard were dropped at its foot, where they formed a moraine, as it is called. These moraines, which may be seen at the feet of the glaciers in Switzerland and British Columbia, and that sometimes make heaps and hills of rock, like rude forts, forty and fifty feet high, are trifling affairs to the shoals left by the great glacier of the ice age, for that can be traced from the Atlantic coast nearly to the Mississippi River. Long Island, measuring approximately 120 miles in length, is a small part of the dump of this glacier, and it is sometimes possible to tell where the stones came from that are found on the surface. For example, there are in Brooklyn anthophyllite from Westchester county, feldspar and green mica from Fort George, basalt from the Palisades of the Hudson, and a block of labradorite was found on Myrtle Avenue that had been carried down from the Adirondacks, three hundred miles.

The members of the United States geological survey, supported by the New York and other state surveys, have studied into the course and volume of the glacier and

mapped its moraine from Montauk Point westward nearly half across the continent. By this survey we learn that the gneiss that crosses under the East River and approaches the surface at Astoria, is the only bed rock to be found on Long Island, Brooklyn resting on a cushion of glacial drift that in some places is three hundred feet deep. Originally there were cliffs of gneiss edging the Atlantic, but the great glacier shaved these down to mere ledges. Central Park, New York, preserves a number of these ledges, rounded off into "sheep backs" and scratched by the pieces of stone that formed a grinding surface to the under side of the ice, while every now and then a boulder comes to the top of the ground in Brooklyn that is scored and almost polished by rubbing against those ledges. Pieces from that very outcrop in Hell Gate are found in Brooklyn streets.

We are also reminded in Mr. Skinner's review that manufacturers of brick, tile, terra cotta, pottery, and porcelain in other states have to rely in part on the clay beds that environ Brooklyn for their material, and, in fact, that clay and sand are the only economic mineral products of Long Island. The explanation of this is that Brooklyn clays are rich in silica, which is apt to be deficient in the clays of New Jersey. Without silica the clays are weak, and bricks and utensils made from them readily crack and crumble; but by mixing properly the best results are obtained. Excellent sand for glass-making is also found in and near Brooklyn.

There are many evidences in support of the theory that since the completion of the great glacier's work the surface of Long Island has subsided considerably. A recent writer⁴ on the geology of Long Island says:

"The shore at the west end of the island has also undergone decided changes—even within the memory of persons now living. Personal witnesses have testified that about the first of this century Coney Island was composed of high and extensive sand hills, which have since been flattened down to a low beach, sometimes covered by the tides. About the same time salt meadow-grass was annually cut on a part of the beach now far out into the ocean. We are also informed that cedar-trees were cut for fence-posts, and other timber for firewood, about 150 years ago, on land which is now submerged by the ocean a mile and a half or two miles from the shore. There was also a house standing upon what was known as Pine Island, the site of which is now beneath the breakers, at a considerable distance from the present shore."

Within the range of Kings County a stratum of salt meadow has been found at a depth of one hundred and twenty feet, and at other points within the county shells have been found fifty and sixty feet below the surface. What is generally called the "back-bone of Long Island" is a ridge of low hills beginning at the western end within the limits of Kings County and running almost the whole length of the Island. Of the boulders or erratic blocks found on the Island in this central range of hills and between them and the north shore, Mr. Bayles writes:—

"The boulders or erratic blocks found upon the Island are mostly met with on the central range of

hills and between them and the north shore. They are often contained in a stratum which is interstratified with deposits of sand, clay, and gravel, and is often exposed along the coast. Some of the blocks, when first disinterred, exhibit scratches upon one or more of their sides. Rocks of the same constituent formation are found in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and along the Hudson River. And those of the Island, in their variations, correspond so accurately with the rocks of the localities mentioned that it seems probable that they came from those localities. For example, the boulders on the east end are like the granite, gneiss, mica slate, green-stone, and sienite of Rhode Island and the east part of Connecticut; opposite New London and the mouth of the Connecticut River are boulders like the granites, gneiss, and hornblende rock of those localities; opposite New Haven, are found the red sandstone and conglomerate, fissile and micaceous red sandstone, trap conglomerate, compact trap, amygdaloid and verd antique; opposite Black Rock are the granites, gneiss, hornblende, quartz, and white lime-stone, like those in Fairfield County; and from Huntington to Brooklyn, hornblende, crystalline lime-stone, trap, red sandstone, gneiss, and granite, are the same in appearance as those found in the vicinity of the Hudson River."

The earliest historical description of Long Island, in Daniel Denton's "A Brief Description of New York, formerly called

New Amsterdam," published in London in 1670, remarks that "the greatest part of the Island is very full of timber, as Oaks, white and red, Walnut-trees, Chestnut-trees, which yield stores of Mast, etc." The same record says:

"For wild beast there is Deer, Bear, Wolves, Foxes, Raccoons, Otters, Musquashes, and Skunks. Wild fowl there is a great store of, as Turkeys, Heath-hens, Quails, Partridges, Pigeons, Cranes, Geese of several sorts, Brants, Widgeons, Teal, and divers others. Upon the south side of Long Island in the winter lie store of Whales and Grampusses, which the inhabitants begin with small boats to make a trade, catching to their no small benefit. Also, an innumerable multitude of seals, which make an excellent oyle; they lie all the winter upon some broken Marshes and Beaches or bars of sand before mentioned, and might be easily got were there some skilful men would undertake it."

Prime (1845) mentions the "remarkable fact in the natural history of this small territory, that of all the *land-birds* belonging to the United States, either as resident or migratory, two thirds of them are to be found on Long Island; of the *water-birds* a still larger proportion."

It is estimated that at the time of its discovery representatives of thirteen different Indian tribes occupied Long Island. The region of Kings County was occupied by the Canarsie tribe, which included the Nyacks at New Utrecht, the Marechawicks at Brooklyn, and the Jamecos at Jamaica. The headquarters of the tribe was in the vicinity of modern

Canarsie. From the names of the other tribes scattered over the Island—the Rockaways, Montauks, Merricks, Manhassetts, Patchogues, Shinnecocks, etc.—many of the town and village names of the Island are drawn. The names Paumanacke and Seawanhacka have been applied both to the grand sachems elected by all the Indian tribes and to the Island itself, which has also been given the title of Wamponomon.

The last mentioned name was evidently suggested by the fact that the chief business of the tribes in this region was the making of *wampum*, the shell-money of the Indians, and an article of manufacture for ornamental purposes also. The Island was rich in shells, and these were ground, polished, pierced for stringing. In the earlier tradings for land the red men were eager to get *runxes*, a brad awl with which they pierced the shell. They made various forms of earthenware for domestic purposes; their war implements were often of admirable workmanship; and their canoes were of a size and strength demanded by the hazards of the journeys they undertook upon sea and Sound.

"In regard to their religion," says Prime, "the Long Island Indians were polytheists and idolaters. Besides the good and the evil spirit, to each of which they seemed to ascribe supreme power, they had a god for each of the four corners of the earth, the four seasons of the year, the others of the elements of nature, the productions of the earth, the vicissitudes of day and night, besides a number of domestic deities. The good deity they called *Cauhlantoowut*, and the evil spirit was named

Mutcheshesumetook; to both of which they paid homage and offered sacrifices. They had small idols or images which, they supposed, were acquainted with the will of the gods, and made it known to the *pawwaws*, or priests. These possessed unbounded influence, from their supposed intercourse with the gods and knowledge of their will. Their religious festivals were attended with the most violent gesticulations and horrible yells, as well as other disorders. They firmly believed in a future state of existence, in a far distant country to the west, where the brave and good would enjoy themselves eternally in singing, feasting, hunting, and dancing; while the coward and traitor, the thief and liar, would be eternally condemned to servile labor—so much despised by the Indian—which in its results should be attended with endless disappointment. The dead were buried in all their personal attire, and, if warriors, in their arms. The body was placed in a sitting posture, and after being covered up, a bowl of *scaump* (pounded corn) was placed on the grave to support the occupant on his imagined journey. The period of mourning continued a full year, the close of which was celebrated with a feast, accompanied with dancing that continued from the setting to the rising of the sun. It was a peculiar custom of this singular people never to mention the names of their departed friends after their remains were deposited in tombs, and it was regarded as an insult if repeated by others. Every wigwam in which

death occurred was immediately demolished, and a new one, if needed, erected in its stead."

The wigwams of the Indians were designed each to accommodate a number of families, the bark-covered frame being of eighteen to twenty feet in width, and a length of one hundred and fifty feet or more, as might be required by the number of the families that were to occupy it. An opening at the ridge gave escape to the smoke from the family fires.

The Long Island Indians, notwithstanding the strength which might be presumed to have resulted from their insular position, were under the rule of the masters on the continent. The tribes to the east yielded to the New England Pequods. The Canarsies bowed to the majestic despotism of the Iroquois.⁵

Under the species of "protection" enforced by the Iroquois, the Canarsies were obliged to pay regular tribute for the privilege of being unmolested, and much of this tax was doubtless paid in wampum. The collection of this tax seems at the time of the first white settlements to have been intrusted to the Mohawks, who were members of the confederacy. When the tax was due it had to be delivered, or the debtors were likely to hear from headquarters. Samuel Jones, writing in 1817, says⁶ that there is no evidence that the Indians on Long Island, eastward of about thirty miles from New York, were tributary to the Five Nations; and adds that "we have no reason to believe that the Five Nations had any war with the Indians on Long Island after it was settled by Europeans." Furman⁷ regards this statement as extraordinary, and offers evidence of the fact

that farmers coming to New York city in the fall of the year from the east end of Long Island, during the early period of settlement, brought with them quantities of wampum to be forwarded as tribute to the Iroquois masters at Albany. It has frequently been claimed by historical writers that the consistory of the Dutch Church at Albany were for many years the agents for the receipt of tribute from the Montauks and other Indians on the eastern end of Long Island, which, if a fact, was, as we shall see, entirely consistent with the conservative attitude of the Dutch pioneers.

CHAPTER II

DISCOVERY AND FIRST SETTLEMENTS

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Early Voyagers. Henry Hudson. Attitude of Holland and Spain. Motives of Holland. Hudson's Reports. West India Company. Dutch on Manhattan Island. The Walloons and the Wallabout. Derivation of the Name Wallabout. First authentically recorded Settlements on Long Island. The Van Corlaer Purchase. Bennett and Bentyn's Purchase. Joris Jansen de Rapalje. Van Twiller. West India Company's Purchases on Long Island. East River Lands.

It is possible that in the voyages of the Cabots, Long Island was sighted if not touched; and the voyage of Esteben Gomez in 1524, "to find a way to Cathay," may leave the same possibility. There is every probability that the Spaniard, Giovanni da Verrazano, who in 1524 made a voyage to this country in the interest of France—the first official French exploration in this direction—entered New York harbor. From the account of this mariner it appears likely that he skirted the coast of Long Island, saw Block Island, giving to it the name of Louisa, mother of Francis I., and anchored in the harbor of Newport. Those who care to speculate as to possible visitors early in the sixteenth century, may take account also of the voyage of Lucas Vasquez de Aillon and Matienzo, made in 1526.

That one at least of the early Spanish voyagers, all of whom were looking for a passage to India, had seen the region of the coast on which Long Island lies, is indicated by

the presence in England of a map which was in existence before Henry Hudson made his first voyage. In this map the name Rio de San Antonio is given to the river afterward named after Hudson.

This being the case it is not to be considered as certain, if it is to be considered as likely, that Henry Hudson really sailed across the Atlantic with any idea of finding either a northwest passage to India, or in hope of finding somewhere under 40° north latitude any passage to the western ocean.

Why Henry Hudson should formally have pretended to seek such a passage will appear from a glance at the political situation at the time of his voyage.

When Hudson left Europe, Holland and Spain were at swords' points. Carlyle has pithily summed up the case: "Those Dutch are a stirring people. They raised their land out of a marsh, and went on for a long period of time herding cows and making cheese, and might have gone on with their cows and cheese till doomsday. But Spain comes and says, 'We want you to believe in St. Ignatius.' 'Very sorry,' replied the Dutch, 'but we can't.' 'God! but you *must*,' says Spain; and they went about with guns and swords to make the Dutch believe in St. Ignatius. Never made them believe in him, but did succeed in breaking their own vertebral column forever, and raising the Dutch into a great nation."

The Dutch were well acquainted with the work of the Spanish explorers, and the idea of contesting with Spain for a share in the profits and advantages of transatlantic discovery grew out of the war with Spain. At this time international law gave to a sovereign any new land

discovered in his name, and not already laid hold upon by any Christian prince. If Holland was to fight Spain in America it would be useful to have at least the shadow of a tenable international claim; and so Hudson ignored the earlier Spanish voyages in assuming to discover the river to which his name was given, and the land thereabouts which the Dutch, with beautiful political audacity, first claimed to own by right of discovery, and afterward claimed to own through Spain as "first discoverer and founder of that New World."

The first proposition to make a Dutch expedition to America came from an Englishman, a sea captain named Beets. The States-General refused this offer, but jealousy of Spain's resources in the New World kept alive the ambitions of the Dutch and finally resulted in the formation of the West India Company.

The theory of this company was both commercial and political. The scheme was first broached by an exiled Antwerp merchant, William Usselinx, in 1592. Before it came to completion a Greenland Company came into existence, and, while feigning to hunt up a northwest passage, its ships are said to have sailed into the North River, and to have landed on these shores in 1598. It was not until 1606 that Usselinx's ideas were formulated in a working plan. The company might then have been fully formed had not talk of a peace with Spain made it politically unwise to risk the adventure.

When in 1609 Henry Hudson, the English sailor, who already had made several voyages across the Atlantic, offered his services to the West India Company, it was ostensibly to seek a passage to India. The Amsterdam

chamber of the company fitted out Hudson in the "Half Moon," which sailed out of the Texel on April 4, 1609.

Whatever may have been Hudson's intentions as to any search for a northwest passage, he abandoned such a search in favor of one for a more southerly passage, having, it is said, been told by Captain John Smith "that there was a sea leading into the Western Ocean by the north of Virginia."

After landing at Newfoundland, at Penobscot Bay, and at Cape Cod, Hudson found Delaware Bay; but a week later, realizing that he was too far south, he steered the Half Moon into the "Great North River of New Netherland." It is the tradition that during the exploration of the great bay and river a boat's crew from the Half Moon made its first landing on Long Island, at the sandy shore of Coney Island; but there might seem to be a likelihood that a landing would be made further to the north.

The Long Island Indians whom Hudson met were representatives of the Canarsie tribe. These Indians visited the Half Moon without fear, and gladly welcomed the strangers, doubtless looking upon them with much awe. Hudson says "they brought with them green tobacco to exchange for knives and other implements. They were clad in deerskins and expressed a wish to obtain a supply of European clothing." Some of them were decked in gay feathers and others in furs. Hudson refers to the stock of maize or Indian corn, "whereof they make good bread." It thus would appear that the Island had a good reputation two hundred and seventy years ago for corn, which it still maintains. They also had a good supply of hemp which they