

YOUR PLACE IN THE LINE

A RYKER GENEALOGY

ANCESTORS AND DESCENDANTS

Of

JOHN GERARDUS RYKER

Compiled by

David Edward Ryker

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wife, Louise Gladys Westbrook Ryker, who for more than a half century has provided me with love and encouragement in all my endeavors including the past 15 years while working on the genealogy of the Ryker Family. For her willingness to go with me across the country to search out information and visit with researchers, relatives, and to check court house records, and other records for documented information; and for her understanding of the time, energy, and cost required to develop and print this book. And to my son, David Edward Ryker, Jr. for the joy, love, understanding and encouragement he has given me.

PREFACE

This book is divided into three parts. It was felt that some history must be developed which would give the reader an idea of social, economic, and religious conditions existing during the early days when the Ryckens-Rikers-Rykers came to America, established homes and reared their families. No effort has been made to develop early American history, but to highlight only those times and events in which Rycken-Riker-Ryker families were involved. I have not attempted to give a history of the entire Ryker family, but to provide information on one specific line of the family. Others have done considerable work on branches of the family and much information is available. See the reference pages.

This early history includes some information on the European ancestry, but primarily covers the period in America from 1600 to 1800. Abraham Rycken, acknowledged as the first of our ancestors in America, came to Newtown on Long Island around 1636-38. His descendants became farmers, merchants, lawyers, doctors and mechanics. Many of these played important roles in the early days of Newtown, New Amsterdam and New York.

During the third generation the spelling of the name was changed to Riker. Their basic religion was Dutch Reformed and Presbyterian. During the Colonies struggle for independence, the Rikers were on the side of freedom and took part in the Revolutionary War. During the war years most of the descendants of Abraham Rycken lived in New York and New Jersey.

As the area in New York and New Jersey became crowded, some of the Rikers along with other Dutch families moved farther south and southwest into Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky and other areas in search of land and opportunity. Among the Rikers who migrated from New Jersey around 1778-1780 was Gerardus (fourth generation) who moved his family first to Conewago, Pennsylvania, and later down the Ohio River and into Kentucky. Gerardus was among a group of settlers that was killed by Indians in September 1781 at an ambush on Bullsken Creek in Shelby County, Kentucky. His family, including three sons, continued to live in the area until 1804-1810. John, the eldest, probably moved in 1804 to Indiana Territory, Samuel about 1805 and Gerardus about 1810. Samuel ~~settled near where Hanover College is today~~, John and Gerardus settled about 3 to 4 miles northeast of Madison on what is now known as Ryker's Ridge.

When Gerardus Riker, Jr. moved from Kentucky to Indiana he changed the spelling of the name from Riker to Ryker. Descendants of Abraham Rycken in New York, New Jersey, and other areas continued to spell the name Riker. Consequently, today there are many Rikers and Rykers who are all descendants of Abraham Rycken.

The second part of this book includes biographies in a direct line from Abraham through Gerardus, Jr. No effort has been made to trace the children and their descendants of the first five generations other than the author's lineage. Franklin Ryker (2) and others have traced their

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lineage from Gerardus, Jr. and much information is available on many lines. Kenneth Wilton Ryker (12) in his book traces the lineage of Samuel (184-85) a younger brother of Gerardus Jr.

This book covers the descendants of John G. Ryker, second child of Gerardus, Jr., and the author's great-great grandfather. Biographies are included on those persons on whom sufficient information could be obtained through research and of those persons of current generations who provided material for biographies. Biographical information was requested, where addresses were known, but with a family as large as the Rykers, it is almost impossible to secure current addresses and sources to research. Consequently, many biographies are left out of this work.

The third part includes Family Record Sheets. These, while not totally complete to current generations for the same reason listed above, do include most of the descendants of John G. (Gerardus) Ryker. On current generations children who are not married remain on their parents record sheet and the same is true on several earlier families where information was not obtained on the marriage, dates, or spouses and children.

While many of these children were married and reared families, information on them is not currently available to me concerning their families. Consequently, they remain on their parents Family Record Sheets. It is hoped, however, that these family record sheets will encourage others to complete their lines of descent from where this material ends to the current generations.

The author has worked on this History and Genealogy for many years and plans to continue to gather information, and hopes to put out an addendum or a second volume depending on the volume of material available. Therefore, up-dated material or additional material as well as corrections to this material will be appreciated. You are encouraged to send material to David E. Ryker, 400 North University, Little Rock, AR 72205.

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EXPLANATION OF:

- (1) Numbering System
- (2) Family Record Sheets
- (3) How to Trace Your Lineage

The first part of this book is straight reading matter and needs no explanation. It involves the early history of the Rycken-Riker-Ryker families in the area around New Amsterdam and New York from 1600 to 1800.

The second part involves biographies of certain descendants of Abraham Rycken, the first of our line in America, in a straight line down to John G. Ryker of the sixth generation in America. At this point the work is expanded to cover most of John G. Ryker's descendants on which information could be obtained. The only information needed here concerns the numbering system used in the lines of descent. The line of descent is based on the order of birth within the family, with each number representing the order of birth of that individual in the family. For instance, 184 represents Abraham Rycken, the first in America as 1, the 8 represents his eighth child Abraham, Jr., and 4 represents Abraham Jr.'s fourth child, John and continues in this manner through the 10th and 11th generations.

Letters of the alphabet along with a dash and a number in parenthesis (F-2) have been used in the biographies and some other places to conserve space. The letter represents the generation (F the sixth letter represents the sixth generation) and the 2 represents the order of birth in the family. Therefore, (F-2) represents John G. Ryker...184-842. By following the above numbering system, each person will have an exclusive genealogical number in the Rycken-Riker-Ryker family. The computer records set up by Charles A. and Mary Ryker Alig at Kansas City, MO use this numbering system.

The third part of this book is made up of family records. These records list the descendant, the spouse and their children along with dates and places of births, marriages, deaths for each so far as information has been available. The descendant and the children have been given their genealogical number. The spouse does not have a number unless they are also a descendant. Where both are descendants the genealogical numbers follow the particular lineage being considered at the time.

On these particular forms, the husband is always listed at the top of the form, even though he may not be a descendant. This is done merely for ease in developing the forms in some uniformity. The forms contain as much statistical information as could be obtained.

It has not been possible, in this period of time, to gather material on all of the descendants of John G. Ryker. The family records contain as much information as has been obtained. Some records lack the last two or three generations to make them current. Apology is made to those descendants of John G. Ryker who are not listed in this book. A person can usually find their lineage if they know the names of their grandparents or great grandparents. The wide dispersion of Ryker families from the Jefferson County, Indiana area in the last 100 years has made it extremely difficult to find descendants and their addresses in order to secure information.

The current generations are 11 and 12; however, there are still many of the 10th generation still living. It is regrettable that some of these records had to conclude with the 8th, 9th, and in a few instances the 7th generation for lack of information. The author will appreciate any information that will help to bring these lines down to the current generations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the preparation of this manuscript on the Ancestors and Descendants of John G. Ryker, material has been gathered from many sources. Persons who have done research on family histories and genealogies know that material comes from a myriad of sources and that while an effort is made to recognize all of these, quite often several may be overlooked in the public acknowledgements. Many persons have provided me with information by word of mouth or letter, an item here and an item there, which I have included in the manuscript. To all these persons I wish to express my deep appreciation for their interest, for answering requests, for sending clippings from papers, and for volunteering information.

Through the reference section in the back of the book, I have endeavored to list most of the major sources of information. Numbers in parentheses throughout the manuscript refer to these sources.

Certain persons, over the past several years, have been particularly helpful in providing information and guidance in the development of this work. To them I express my heartfelt gratitude for their contributions and encouragement.

My special thanks to Franklin Alexander Ryker of 5227 Carita St., Long Beach, CA 90808 for permitting me to use research he had previously done and reported in his book, *History and Genealogy of the Ryker Family*, and for his encouragement and guidance in the preparation of this manuscript. His lineage comes from Jared, a brother to John G., and Jared's lineage is covered in Franklin's book.

To Lewis Eugene Jones of 917 South Mitchner Street, Indianapolis, IN 46239, who photocopied and sent to me some 700 pages of research which he had done over the past 40 to 50 years. Needless to say that I have drawn heavily on this material in the development of this book, particularly his research on John G. Ryker and David J. Ryker. For his helpful suggestions through correspondence, his personal encouragement, his discussions at the Ryker Reunions, for photo copies of his research compiled over many years and for his friendship and his willingness to help me, I am very grateful and appreciate the influence he has had in the development of this book.

To Helen Ryker of 523 La Salle Street, Buffalo, NY 14215, who some 15 or 16 years ago got me started on this research, and to her sister Marion Chiarello of 1444 Kenmore Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14216, my grateful thanks. Helen and Marion have been working on Ryker family history for many years and have volumes of material on many lines of the descendants of Abraham Rycken, particularly Gerardus (D-4). For their kindness and willingness to read the biographies on the first seven generations and for the additions and corrections they made which improved them, I am most grateful. And my thanks for their encouragement which has given me incentive to complete this book.

To Mary Alice Ryker Alig and her husband Charles A. Alig of 4000 N.E. 59th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64119, I owe a very special thanks. Mary Alice, my second cousin once removed, and Charles have spent so much of

their time and money gathering material on the Riker-Ryker families. The information has been placed on a computer to preserve it and have it available for researchers. In gathering the material they have employed the services of professional genealogists and have traveled many miles and have searched records in many areas of America. They are working to secure information on all the descendants of Abraham Rycken (A-1) while my research has been confined largely to the descendants of John Gerardus Ryker. All the information they obtained on the John G. line has been made available to me. It would have been impossible for me to gather all the information needed for this book without their help. It is hard to adequately express my gratitude to Mary and Charles for they have not only provided me with information but have become close and loving family members for whom I care very much.

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EARLY HISTORY

"Scarce two centuries and a half have elapsed since Mespat 'by the Indians so called' was the undisputed domain of the red man. Those richly cultivated farms that now pay their annual tribute to the garner of the husbandman, then lay in all the wild grandeur of a primeval forest, whose lone recesses were only disturbed by the prowling beast, the peans of the bird of prey, or the stealthy tread of the Indian hunter. Where now graze the kine, the herd of graceful deer roved and fed in native pastures. Flocks of wild-fowl bathed in the streams across whose waters the timid beaver constructed its dams. Daylight was made vocal by hosts of plumed songsters, and swamps echoed, through dismal glades, the nocturnal howlings of rapacious wolves, as they pursued to death some ill-fated victim. In union with the natural wilderness, arose the rustic hamlet of the natives, a group of bark-clad wigwams, and their adjacent planting grounds. Here dwelt the untutored son of the forest, passing the period of his existence in the few and simple employments of savage life, the chief of which were the amusements of the game or dance; the graver pursuits of hunting and fishing, or the fearful exploits of war." (1-pg 13-14)

Today, after we add another 125 years of growth and progress to the area described above, we find very little open land but a sprawling metropolis on Manhattan Island known as New York City.

In explaining the term Mespat, James Riker, Jr. (1), in his book ANNALS OF NEWTOWN in QUEENS says, "This is the Indian name for Newtown, is written Mespantes by some of the earliest Dutch authorities, but it was usually shortened to Mespat and in modern days (1851) corrupted to Maspeth, and confined to a small settlement near the head of Newtown Creek." (1-pg 13)

Newtown, with its outlying farms, is not too well described. However, it covered much of the present day Burrough of Queens. In 1664 the English took the area away from the Dutch at which time they changed the name of "New Netherlands" to New York. Consequently, in 1866 Thomas Dongan, Captain-General, Governor and Vice Admiral of New York, under his majesty James the Second of England, affirmed previous patents granted to the people of Newtown by Richard Nicoll, Esq. former governor of the province. In this affirmation, Dongan says ... "the freeholders and inhabitants of Newtown, aforesaid, their heirs, successors and assigns, and all that the said tract of land herein mentioned to have been purchased from the Indian natives as aforesaid, bounded on the east by Flushing creek and in line to be drawn from the head thereof due south, extending to the south side of the hills; on the north by the Sound; on the west by the said Mespat creek or kills, and a line to be drawn from the most westerly branch thereof due south, extending into the south side of the said hills; and on the south by a straight line to be drawn from the south point of the said west line amongst the south side of the said hill, until it meets with the said east line aforementioned to

extend from the head of Flushing creek, as also all that one third part of a certain neck of meadow called Seller Neck, situate, lying and being within the bounds of Jamaica, upon the south side of Long Island ..." (1-pg 109)

Among the freeholders whose patents were affirmed by Thomas Dongan was Abraham Rycken. While the original petition was made in 1666 "it was about the beginning of the new year, 1686, when Newton received a draft of the proposed confirmatory charter. On inspection it was found to require amendments, and it was not till the month of September following that the inhabitants were fully agreed on the verbal construction of the instrument. Their improved draft being allowed by the governor and council, the new charter, engrossed on parchment, and having the governor's signature and the impress of the provincial seal, was soon after received, and read as follows: ... (1-pgs 108-113)" See footnote.

When Hendrix (Henry) Hudson sailed his gaily painted ship, the Half Moon, into this area and up the river which today bears his name, in the year 1609 there were two powerful Indian tribes--the Algonquian and the Iroquois. The Algonquian was the largest family of tribes in the new country. They inhabited the land from Labrador southwest to the Carolinas and Tennessee and west to the Mississippi River, surrounding the Iroquois. In the days of Henry Hudson they were a rather friendly and peaceable group, but as the colonists began to infringe upon their territory, particularly after the English took over and began an expansion program, the Algonquians became less friendly and in the French and Indian wars they fought stubbornly against the English.

About the same time Hudson was sailing up the Hudson, the French explorer Samuel Champlain was coming down from Canada to the lake that bears his name. It is said that at one time Champlain and Hudson were within 60 miles of each other. Champlain made friends with the Iroquois, or five tribes, as they were called, because they consisted of five tribes, the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas, and later were joined by the Tuscaroras...for six nations. The Algonquians on the other hand consisted of at least 20 family tribes and covered the large territory mentioned above. The Iroquois fought on the side of the English during the French Indian Wars and also the Revolution for the freedom of America.

Hudson did not find the Northwest Passage for which he was looking. Although an Englishman, his explorations were carried out under the Dutch Flag. He returned to the Netherlands where he made a rather glowing report of what he had seen in this new area of the new world.

When Holland received the report of Hudson of the rich and fertile country beyond the great waters, that soon thereafter received the name of New Netherland, from the land of its adoption, the Dutch followed up the discoveries with most successful results. The merchants of Holland

Footnote: This statement includes a lot of legal terms, descriptions, names, etc., and would add little to this manuscript.

were convinced of the great advantages to be derived from the establishment of trading posts in the New Netherlands, whose abundance of valuable furs presented the most flattering prospects for commerce, and the speedy accumulation of wealth.

"Less than five years had elapsed, therefore, when ships were fitted out, dispatched to this new country, and a mart for Indian traffic planted on the southern point of the Island of Manhattan, where several houses were erected, and a trade opened with the surrounding tribes of natives. The settlement soon took the name of New Amsterdam. (1-pg 14)

"But in order more fully to reap the benefits of Hudson's discovery, a commercial organization, intitled the West India Company, was formed by the Holland merchants, for the purpose of establishing a closer intercourse with the New World, and to whom by an act of incorporation, conferred by the States General of the Netherlands, in 1621, the trade to New Netherland was exclusively conceded. The first Dutch settlements were made on Manhattan Island in 1623 and then at Albany (then called Fort Orange) in 1624."

One of the first governors of the West India Company was Peter Minuit who was appointed governor and director general of New Netherlands in 1625. It was in 1626 that he purchased Manhattan from the Indians for \$24 in goods. He was recalled to the Netherlands in 1631 after he lost favor with the West India Company because of the success of the patroon system gaining large tracts of land.

The above paragraph is paraphrased from the World Book Encyclopedia only to show the type of country and the existing situations when our forefathers came to America beginning around 1632-38.

"Much profit attended this enterprise, and valuable cargoes of beaver and other skins were annually transported to Holland, to enrich the coffers of the Company. But as yet no direct effort had been made to colonize the country; and up until 1629 the population chiefly consisted of a few individuals in the employ of the Company, and connected with the several trading posts.

In 1629 the States General adopted a Charter of Freedom and Exemption authorizing the West India Company to establish 'colonies' or manors and this gave a stimulus to emigration from the Netherlands. (1-pgs 14-15) Earlier the English had established settlements at Jamestown (1607) and at Plymouth, 1620.

The Dutch West India Company was concerned chiefly, in the early days, with the trading for fur and failed to build a strongly united colony. Also, large grants of land were given out under the patroon system which later resulted in rivalry between the patroons and the governors appointed by the Netherlands. The patroon system permitted any member of the Company to select as his own property any tract of land outside of Manhattan Island, extending 16 miles along one side of a river or bay, or eight miles along two sides, and as far back into the country as convenient, provided he should, within four years, establish there a colony of fifty persons over 15 years of age. (See patroon in World Book Encyclopedia.)

This system did not work and in 1638 when the Governor-General became aware of the situation "and by proclamation, declared the monopoly of the country abolished, and the New Netherland to be open to all, whether Dutch or foreigners, for the purpose of trade, or the

cultivation of the soil; making, however, those who should emigrate thither, subject to the authority of the West India Company, from whom every person was entitled to receive as much land as he or his family could properly cultivate; for which, after it should have been a specified term of years under tillage, he was obliged to pay the lawful tenth of its produce..." (1-pg. 15)

About this time, 1638, when the monopoly was abolished, our ancestor, Abraham Rycken, came to America for it was in this year he received an allotment of land from Governor Kieft.

EUROPEAN BACKGROUND

There is disagreement among those who have studied the Rycken, de Ryke, deRycken, de Riecke, Riker and Ryker family concerning the European branches of the family in the 17th and prior centuries. At this time I know of no one who has made a serious effort, in recent years, to trace the family prior to their coming to America in the 1630's. James Riker, Jr. (1) in his book, ANNALS OF NEWTOWN IN QUEENS published in 1852 in New York by D. Fanshaw, provides some information. Also, Franklin A. Ryker, (2) 5227 Carita St., Long Beach, CA 90808, has done considerable research and has quoted other sources in his book, HISTORY AND GENEALOGY OF THE RYKER FAMILY, revised 1981.

Therefore, I will quote liberally from these two books, giving sources which they have researched, in the hope it will be helpful to other researchers who might wish to study the genealogy of our European ancestors.

The following statement is taken from FAR (2-pg 8-10) and quotes verbatim from COLONIAL FAMILIES OF AMERICA, Vol. 5, pages 11-14, edited by Ruth Lawrence, Published by the National Americana Society in America.

THE OLD COUNTRY AND 17TH CENTURY AMERICA

"In November 1095 A.D., Urban the Second convened the famous Council at Clermont. In addressing the assembled clergy and laity he delivered the most celebrated sermon of the Middle Ages, the sermon in which he advocated the First Crusade.

"It has often and erroneously been stated that Peter the Hermit was the author of the First Crusade. The author of the First Crusade was Urban the Second, a scholarly churchman and astute statesman. Peter the Hermit brought the idea of the Crusade to the people, he popularized the Pope's sermon and was one of the chief leaders in the early days of the Crusade. Mounted upon an ass, he rode through certain sections of

NOTE: The writer has a photocopy of the entire book of James Riker, Jr. ANNALS OF NEWTOWN IN QUEENS taken from micro fiche. The book can be found in many libraries (in micro fiche) in the American Civilization Series. I expect most college and university libraries will have the series. The identification number in the Series is LAC 14571. The book was recently republished by Hunterdon House, 35 Swann St., Lambertville, NJ 08530

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France and the valley of the Rhine preaching the remission of sin through a mighty act of faith. His eloquence kindled the religious flame which was to set Europe ablaze. All sorts and conditions of men responded to Peter's appeal, and by 1096 five companies had assembled. They were led by William the Carpenter, Gottschalk, Peter the Hermit, and Walter the Penniless. This first chapter of the First Crusade is known in history as the Crusade of the People, and was followed by the Crusade of Princes.

"Only the divisions of Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless were destined to reach Constantinople. The other were annihilated by the Hungarians in their march through southern Europe. Walter and his followers arrived at Constantinople first and awaited Peter and his followers, who suffered seriously at the hands of the Bulgarians. The army of Walter was soon wiped out by the Turks, few of his followers escaped to return to their homes. Peter failed to measure up to the heroic standards of his age and played a minor role in the second chapter of the Crusade. In describing his somewhat inglorious attempt to escape from Antioch in 1098, Guilbert de Nogent calls him 'a fallen star'.

"Among the followers of Walter the Penniless were two knights, Hans von Rycken, a petty noble of lower saxony, and Melchior, his kinsman, who had already settled in Holland. They enjoyed what was known as allodial rights, in other words, holding their lands in fee. 'Allodium, a legal term for lands which are the absolute property of their owner, and not subject to any service or acknowledgement to a superior.' It is thus the opposite of fe-odum or fief. Allodial tenure seems to have been common throughout northern Europe.

"Hans von Rycken commanded a troop of 800 men. He perished during the Crusade, but Melchior survived to be the progenitor of a strong and worthy race which for two centuries held positions of influence as merchant princes in the city of Amsterdam.

"Some of the lineal descendants of 'Hans von Rycken, lord of the Rikers' immigrated to the Netherlands from 1600 to 1663 A.D.

"When the Hollanders rebelled against the yoke of Spain, the Ryckens suffered for their patriotism and a cadet from their house sought to retrieve his fortune in the New World.

"Abraham Rycken, or de Rycker, as the pioneer, was the ancestor of the family which for nearly 300 years has been identified with the history of New York. He was the son of Captain Jacob Simonsz de Rycker. In 1638 he received his first allotment of land from Governor Kieft at the Wallabout, now a part of Brooklyn. Later he built a house on the Heeren Gratch (Broad Street) and became a prosperous merchant. In 1654 he received a grant of land in Middleburg, later known as Newtown; finally in August 1664, receiving from Governor Peter Stuyvesant the patent for what has since been known as Riker's Island. This was probably one of Stuyvesant's last official acts. This grant was confirmed by the first English governor, Richard Nicoll, on December 24, 1667. Abraham Rycken was also named as one of the proprietors of Newtown in the charter

granted by Governor Dongan, November 26, 1686. Abraham Rycken and his wife were members of the Dutch Church, their names appearing on the list of 1649."

The following paragraphs are from James Riker's book Annals of Newtown, verbatim beginning on page 299.

"We are informed by writers on European genealogy, that the Rikers were originally a German family, located at a very remote period in Lower Saxony, where they enjoyed a state of Allodial independence, at that day regarding as constituting nobility. They there possessed the estate or manor of Rycken, from which they took their name, then written 'von Rycken,' indicating its territorial derivation. Subsequently the name suffered various changes, being found written de Rycke, de Ryk, Riecke, etc. and in America finally assuming its present form.

"Hans von Rycken, the lord of the above manor, and a valiant knight, with his cousin, Melchoir von Rycken, who lived in Holland, took part in the first crusade to the Holy Land, in 1096, heading 800 crusaders in the army of Walter the Penniless. Melchior lived to return, but Hans perished in that ill-fated expedition. The coat of arms first borne by the family are represented above, and are thus to be explained; the color of the shield (azure) is emblematic of the knighthood, the horns indicate physical strength, the golden stars a striving for glory, and the white roses are symbols of discretion and fidelity.

"But in the year 1225 the descendants of Hans von Rycken adopted as a new coat of arms the escutcheon of their fee-farm, Barrenhop, which name signifies in Low-Saxon 'a heap of bears' and hence there were bear's heads in their arms and crest. Their posterity is now most numerous in Lower Saxony, Holstein and Hamburg. In time the descendants of Melchior von Rycken extended themselves from Holland to the region of the Rhine, and into Switzerland, and from these originated a branch of the family which became distinguished in the city of Spire, to one of whom, a patrician of that city, the emperor, Lewis Fifth, in the year 1329, in consideration, as we are told, of the self-acquired honors and estates of his family, presented a new armorial device, the shield bearing crossed spears and a fish. This branch of the family wrote its name Ricker, by which as well as by its escutcheon, it continued to be distinguished.

FIRST IN AMERICA

"As regards the American portion of the Riker family, I am, with present information, disposed to believe them descended from a branch of the family of considerable wealth and importance at Amsterdam, where they had occupied places of public trust for two centuries, until the Spanish War occasioned a great reverse in their fortunes. In this war Capt. Jacob Simonsz de Rycke, a wealthy corn merchant of the above city, and a warm partizan of the Prince of Orange, distinguished himself by

his military service. It has been conjectured that he was the grandfather of Abraham de Rycke,*the head of the family in America, from the early occurrence of the name of Jacob in the family history and since tradition states that their ancestor was an early and zealous supporter of William of Nassau, when that prince took up arms in defence of Dutch liberty, and that the family, for several successive generations, during the long and sanguinary struggle with Spain, followed a military career. But it remains for future research to remove the uncertainty which envelopes this era of the family history." (1-pgs 299-301, and 2-pgs 10-11)

The following is a footnote which appears at the bottom of page 300 in James Riker's ANNALS OF NEWTOWN (1/ pg. 300) also (2/ pgs 11-12)

"Notices of the Riker family, contained in Knapps TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE and Thompson's LONG ISLAND, state that the father of Abraham was named Gysbert, who locating early at the Poor Bowery, obtained a grant of land, etc. I have failed to find a particle of documentary evidence in favor of this statement, which probaly refers to either Hendrick Harmensen, the father-in-law of Abraham, or to Abraham himself, who afterwards settled there; and though a Gysbert Riker appears among the early emigrants to New Netherlands, our records warrant the belief that he was not the Father of Abraham. If we may judge from that almost unerring guide among the Dutch at that day, the names of the elder grandsons, we may conclude with much confidence that the father of Abraham was named Jacob, who probably never came to America." (end of footnote)

Information obtained by FAR (2/ pg 17) includes the following:

"The earliest representative of the family in this country, and the founder of the branch in which we are interested, was Gysbert or Guisbert Rycken, who is said to have come to New Amsterdam from Holland in 1630, in one of the vessels of the West India Company, and to have received extensive grants of land in different places, the most extensive being at Newtown, Long Island which is said to have been a mile square and to have included the island now bearing his name. Very little is known concerning him, and the records which mention his name are few and scanty. March 31, 1639, he entered into an agreement with Jan Jacobsen respecting the use of a farm and some cattle, the record of which is preserved in the register of the Provincial Secretary of New Amsterdam (Volume 1, page 90), and three months later his contract became the subject of court proceedings, which were finally referred to arbitrators to settle. He died leaving a son Abraham, and one daughter. In the old Riker burying ground at Newtown, Long Island, is a monument bearing the following inscription: 'The grave of Abraham Riker, son of Abraham and Margaret Riker, born 1655, died August 20, 1746 in the 91st year of his age; and in memory of his grandsire, Guisbert Riker, a native of Holland, who came to America in 1630, obtained a patent for land at the Bowery bearing the date 1632.'.. Around this monument are grouped the graves of generation after generation of the Rikers, and the inscription on the toombstones for a very interesting chapter of the family history."

It was mentioned earlier that the Netherlands wished to colonize the new territory but that little was done until the Director-General

did away with the patroon system and opened the area up to all who wished to come, whether Dutch or others. Therefore, "When New Netherlands invited the virtuous and the daring to seek a home in her wilds, several of these (Rycken) Rikers joined the adventurers coming hither. These were Abraham, Gysbert, Rynier and Hendrick Rycken, the last of whom came out a few years after the others and was the ancestor of the Suydam family, his sons assuming that name. Gysbert owned land at the Wallabout, and is last named as a church member in 1649, and living in 'Waal Straat' in 1665, but is not known that either of these two left issue. In addition to these, our records mention 'Hendrick Rycken, skipper, under God, of the ship 'Sphaera Munda' who trading on this coast in 1658 was compelled by misfortune to touch at New Amsterdam, where he shipped a quantity of beavers and tobacco to European markets. There is no further notice of this skipper, and though possible, it is hardly to be supposed that he afterwards abandoned the area, took up residence here, and was identical with the Suydam ancestor." (1/ pg 301)

An opposing view concerning the Riker (Ryker) family origin and name in Germany and the Netherlands has been presented by William J. Hoffman, F.G.B.S., in an article entitled "An Armory of American Families of Dutch Descent" and printed in the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, Volume 67, 1936 (R929), and published by the society and found on pages 58-64. While the article is quite long it is quoted verbatim in as much as it is in direct conflict with other sources that have been researched by James Riker, Jr., Franklin A. Ryker, Lewis E. Jones (8/), Irene Olson (4/), Marion Chiarello and her sister Helen Ryker (15/) and others.

While the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record carried the Hoffman article, it also carried an article by James R. Gibson, Jr., on James Riker, Jr. in Volume 20, pages 175-176 and published by the society in 1889, and attests to the accuracy and authenticity of the writings of James Riker, Jr.

It will be up to future genealogists and researchers to study this controversy relating to names and crests. This writer is inclined to accept the work of James Riker, Jr. and others who have studied the Ryker family.

However, regardless of the outcome, it remains a fact that the progenitor of the Ryker clan in America was Abraham Rycken and his descendants have been traced down to the current generations.

The Hoffman article ... "Riker - Lent - Suydam"

In 1852 James Riker (1822-1889) published his Annals of Newtown in which were published on pages 299-315, and 319 respectively, the genealogical data about the Riker, Lent and Suydam families.

"Riker was one of the pioneers in the field of genealogical writing in America. The books written by him enjoy a deservedly high reputation among the early reference works and contain much valuable material. But Riker lived during a period when the 'science' of genealogy was still in its infancy and when the publication of reliable

source material was only just starting. In common with many other authors and genealogists of the past as well as our present days who deal with the genealogy of families of Dutch descent, he had an inadequate knowledge of the Dutch language and was insufficiently versed in the intricacies of the Dutch genealogy to make in all instances the proper logical deductions from the material at hand.

"Hence the numerous errors in the genealogies of the Dutch settlers in most of the older publications, which are constantly being repeated, as these statements of the past have been taken in most instances at their face value.

"The last two decades have seen the growth of a different attitude toward genealogical research. The standard of most of the present day published material surpasses in every respect that of the past. Documentary evidence has taken the place of supposition and tradition, with the inevitable result that many of the old fallacies had to be discarded to make place for the proven facts based on logical deductions.

"The genealogical data on the Riker family as published, by James Riker in 1851 under the title A Brief History of the Riker Family and in the Annals of Newtown, page 299, and from these repeated in Historic Families of America, Volume 1, page 45, Colonial Families of America, Volume 2, IX:301, and other publications are a case in point.

"The fact that the author of the Riker genealogy failed to recognize Rijcken as a patronymic in the names Abraham Rijcken and Hendrick Rijcken, the respective progenitors of the Riker-Lent and Suydam families, has led to all sorts of misstatements and faulty deductions. No one sufficiently familiar with Dutch genealogy would have made this error.

"Rijck (Rijck(n)) is the possessive form with the patronymical ending, the abbreviation of Ryckert or Ryckaert, the Dutch for Richard.

"In the Netherlands surnames are practically never used as first names. The fact that Abraham Rijcken, and Hendrick Rijcken each had a son, the oldest in both cases named Rijck, is a proof of my statement that Rijck was no surname, and no one thoroughly versed in Dutch genealogy would come to any other conclusion. (Footnote follows: 'Hendrick's oldest son named Rijck died in infancy, but a younger son was again named Rijck.').

"Yet with the above evidence at hand, Riker makes the following statement (page 300, Annals): 'If we may judge from the almost unerring guide among the Dutch at that day, the names of elder grandsons, we may conclude with much confidence that the father of Abraham was named Jacob, who probably never came to America.'

"The fact is that Abraham's father's name was Rijck.

"At that early period patronymics were fast disappearing and developing into real surnames. It was a time of transition both here and in the Netherlands. Hence part of the descendants of Abraham Rijcken and variations (later by evolution changed to Riker, the

present orthography of the name), that is, they adopted their father's patronymic as a surname, while the descendants of two of Abraham's sons assumed the name of Lent. There may be a possible indication of the origin of the family in the adoption of the last surname.

"From the foregoing it becomes evident that these settlers on our shores designated as Rycken, Rycke, or Ryken, are not necessarily related, unless this is proved by the records, for they only had the same patronymic, i.e., had fathers named Ryck-Richard, and it hardly seems necessary to emphasize the fact that this does not indicate a relationship.

"Yet Riker in Annals, page 301, states, 'When New Netherlands invited the virtuous and daring to seek a home in her wilds, "several of the Rikers" joined the adventurers coming hitherto. These were Abraham, Gysbert, Reynier and Hendrick ---'.

"It follows from the above statement that Riker considered the Suydam and Rikers to have a common descent, for, again speaking about Hendrick Rycken, the progenitor of the Suydam family, he calls him 'a member of the Riker family'. (Annals, page 320.) This assertion is based solely on the fact that he took the progenitors of these families, Abraham Rycken and Hendrick Rycken to be relatives, on account of their having what he considered the same surname. We now know this assumption is based on faulty premises.

"It follows from the foregoing that it is a decided error to call Abraham, Gysbert, Reynier, and Hendrick Rycken (to whom could have been added another Hendrick, as I will show in the following pages), 'members of the Riker family' or to refer to 'others of the name who emigrated to New Netherlands in the first half of the 17th century', a statement which has been repeated by many copists. There should be documentary evidence in support of such a claim other than the similarity of patronymics, and as far as I have been able to find, there is none, unless the fact that Abraham Rycken and Gysbert Rycken owned adjoining tracts of land on Long Island might be considered to give a slight indication of a possible relationship between these two individuals.

"As a matter of record I will enumerate what is known about the various persons, quoted in calendar form from the different authentic records:

"HENDRICK RIJCKEN, skipper of the ship 'Spaera Munda'. Traded on the coast in 1658. See D.M. page 197, dated May 28, 1658.

"JAN CORNELISSE de RYCKE. (Since none of our direct ancestors names appear in this part of the record, I have left out this portion of it. FAR)

"GYSBERT RYCKEN. 1639, March 31, Gysbert makes a contract about a farm (C.D.M.:6)
1639, July 28, Gysbert Rycken appears in court. (C.D.M.:68)
1640, April 19, court proceedings, Abraham Rycken vs. Gysbert Rycken. (C.D.M.:71)

1640, August 8, Abraham Rycken receives a grant of land on Long Island opposite Rinnegaconck bounded by Gysbert Rycken (C.D.M.: 365, C.D.N.Y. XIV:32)

"REYNIER RYCKEN. (16 bits of evidence appear in this section and since none of our direct line of ancestors is named there, I have left out this portion of the record. FAR)

"ABRAHAM RYCKEN, progenitor of the Riker and Lent families.

1640, August 8, Abraham Rycken receives a grant of land on Long Island opposite Rinnegaconck, bounded by Gysbert Rycken, which had already been granted to Abraham in 1638. (C.D.M.:365, C.D.N.Y. XIV:32)

1640, April 19, court proceedings Abraham Rycken ve. Gysbert Rycken (C.D.M.:71)

1640, April 26, court proceedings Abraham Rycken vs. Jan Schepmoes (C.D.M.:71)

1642, March 27, court proceedings, Abraham Rycken vs. Jacques Bentyn (C.D.M.:70)

1642, April 10, (ditto, C.D.M.:80)

1642, November 20, Abraham Rycken receives first ground brief inside of walled city for a lot at numbers 82 and 86 Broadway. The deed was made out to Jan Pietersen and Abraham Rycken.

The property was sold in 1643, April 4th, to Michel Picet or Picquet (C.D.M.:18,366, Icon. 2:235, Icon. 2:383; C.D.M.:21)

1643, July 2, Abraham Rycken leases land on Long Island (C.D.M.:23)

1646, February 4, Abraham Rycken receives a grant on the 'Graft'. (C.D.M.:370, Icon. 2:296)

1652, January 29, sells land on the Heeregraft. Is a witness (C.D.M.:55;C.E.N.Y. XIV:152)

1652, November 15, Abraham Rycken sells a lot on the Heeregraft (C.D.M.:376; Icon. 2:397)

1655, June 3, petition to Council to have Abraham Rycken reopen a road leading to the poor farm, 'as said Abraham Rycken is a poor man, who has no more than he can earn with his hands.' (C.D.M.:149; C.D.N.Y.XIV:326)

1656, June 23, Abraham Reycke makes a declaration that on April 14-15 he was aboard the bark 'de Fenix' when same ran ashore. (C.D.N.Y.XII:148)

Following is a copy of the will published in the Record: (New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, page 116, 1934)

"Abraham Rick, of Newtown, 9 March, 1688, bequests of 30s to son Rick Abrahamsen, and 25s to younger children, Jacob, Mary, John, Altia and Hendrick. Residue to Abraham Rick.

"Son Abraham executor; Witnesses: Thomas Stevenson, Aernout Webber, Daniel Phillips. Inventory filed 5 April, and will probated 10 April, 1689."

"From the evidence presented it follows that the assumption that Abraham Rycken belonged to a branch of an old feudal German family

named von Rycken (one of the suppositions of (James) Riker and followed in later publications) is without any foundation in fact, is untenable, and must be entirely discounted. Hence to the arms of this family the American Riker family can and should lay no claim. (The following footnote: 'Riker in his Annals of Newtown, page 229, shows the rose in the so called Riker arms to be "proper", that is a natural rose. Rietstap in his Armorial General calls also for a natural rose. The arms as shown in Colonial Families of America, volume 5, page 11, shows the heraldic or conventional rose, which must be an error. Rietstap, who published his armorial after the Annals of Newtown had been published, undoubtedly either obtained his information from Riker's publication or possibly was Riker's original source of information. He adds to the description of these arms, 'Saxony, Netherlands, and America.'

"But it should be stated that there is no evidence that these arms ever have been used in the Netherlands, by any family. Rietstap's genealogical publications have been proved by modern research to be rather unreliable. His Armorial, although a valuable publication in many ways, is full of inaccuracies and mistakes. The fact that a coat of arms is listed in the Armorial does not signify that he found these arms in authentic documentary sources; he included in his Armorial any and all arms he found mentioned or shown in existing publications. This is a fact quite often overlooked by the searcher for a coat of arms.' End of footnote.) The assumption of these arms is based on claims which cannot be substantiated by any documentary evidence, but only by that much abused genealogical fallacy, a rather far-fetched similarity of surname, that ever present nigger in the genealogical woodpile, which after all in the present case does not even exist.

"Another supposition pointed out by Riker (Annals of Newtown, page 300) is that Abraham Rycken was a descendant perhaps of Captain Jacob Simonsz de Rycke, (Footnote follows: 'Colonial Families in America, Volume 5, page 12, calls Abraham Rycken a son of Captain Simonsz de Ryck'. End of footnote), a well known figure in the struggle for liberty in the Netherlands during the later part of the 16th and early 17th centuries. In speaking about Jacob Simonsz de Ryck, Riker states, 'A branch of the (von Rycken) family (was) of considerable wealth and importance at Amsterdam, where they occupied places of trust for two centuries until the war occasioned a great reverse in fortune', and to this Colonial Families, Volume 5, page 12, adds, 'A strong and worthy race, which for two centuries held positions of influence as merchant princes in the city of Amsterdam.' But instead of this rather glorified description, the true version is found in the splendid publication on the Magistracy of Amsterdam by Elias, entitled De Vroedschap van Amsterdam, Volume 1, page 380, from which we learn:

1. 'Ryckert, Albertsz, alias van der Graft, also known as Ryckert the carpenter, born at Graft c1480. His son:
2. Simon Ryckertsz, died 1558, a grain merchant in Amsterdam, and captain and executioner of the Crossbow Archers of the city militia. His son:

3. Jacob Simon Ryckertsz, alias Jacob Simonsz Ryck or de Ryck, the well known captain. His surname was therefore derived from his father's patronymic in the same manner as happened in the Riker family. He had three children, two daughters and one son, Simon de Ryck. This son born in 1565 and who died in 1652 became a wealthy merchant and magistrate at Amsterdam, leaving at his death, 380,000 guilders, but no children for he never had any.'

"The conclusion is evident. But one wonders why the Riker family imagining itself to be descended from Jacob Simonsz de Ryck, which of course is impossible, didn't lay claim to his arms: argent a chevron gules between three martlets sable, rather than the von Rycken arms which were never borne by any family in the Netherlands. In the final instance the Rikers can make no claim to either arms. As a matter of interest Jacob de Ryck and his son Simon did not have the right to the arms they bore either, for by using the coat mentioned above, they assumed the arms of a southern Netherlands family 'van der Gracht' and had apparently been induced to do so only by the fact that their own ancestor was born in Graft. Such procedures were already known in by-gone days and it seems that history is repeating itself." (2/ pg 61-66)

On page 64 of this reference of the Genealogical and Biographical Record, Volume 67, under the Suydam ancestry is the following quotation:

"It should be stated here again, that there is not the slightest evidence of a relationship between the progenitors of the Riker-Lent and Suydam families (all that is known is that both had a father named Rijck (Richard), nor of any relationship between the American Suydams and the bearers of a similar name in the Netherlands."

As to the Coat-of-Arms referred to James Riker (1/ pg 299 says: "The coat of arms first borne by the family are represented above (on the following page), and are thus to be explained; the color of the shield (azure) is emblematic of the knighthood, the horns indicate physical strength, the golden stars a striving for glory, and the white roses are symbols of the discretion and fidelity." Riker goes on to say "But in the year 1225 the descendants of Hans von Rycken adopted as a new coat of arms the escutcheon of their fee-farm, Barrenhop, which name signifies in Low-Saxon 'a heap of bears', and hence there were bears' heads in their arms and crests. Their posterity is now most numerous in Lower Saxony, Holstein and Hamburg." (1/ page 299-300)

Franklin A. Ryker (2/ pgs 58-60) has investigated a number of sources relating to the family crest. The following is verbatim from his work.

RYKER COAT-OF-ARMS

"There is some controversial material concerning the Ryker coat-of-arms, as can be seen in the following quotations from various sources. I have tried to present all sides as a matter of interest. There is a difference of opinion among the different writers as to the motto, the

crest, and the coat-of-arms, and you may judge for yourselves whether which, if any, of the sources you wish to accept as authentic.

"The following is taken verbatim from J. B. Rietstap's Armorial Genera, Volume 2, page 573, date of publication unknown. The book was published in France and is considered an authority on coats of armor:

"Riker: Saxe, Holl., New York. D'Azur a une rose, naturelle de'arg., acc de trois etoiles d'or. C: ea rose entre deux prob. Coupees atl. d'azur et d'arg."

"The Librarian of the genealogy department of the public library in Los Angeles, California, Mrs. Paota Patrick, kindly translated the French for me as follows: "Riker: Saxony, Holland, New York. Blue with one rose in natural shape, but of silver, surrounded by three stars of gold. Crest is a rose in the center of two horns, one of blue and one of silver."

"In the volumes of Armorial General Plates, by J. B. Rietstap, Volume 5, page 102, per H. V. Rolland, 1921, published, La Haye, by Martinus Nyhoff, will be found the Riker Coat-of-Arms as described in Rietstap's Armoria Genera.

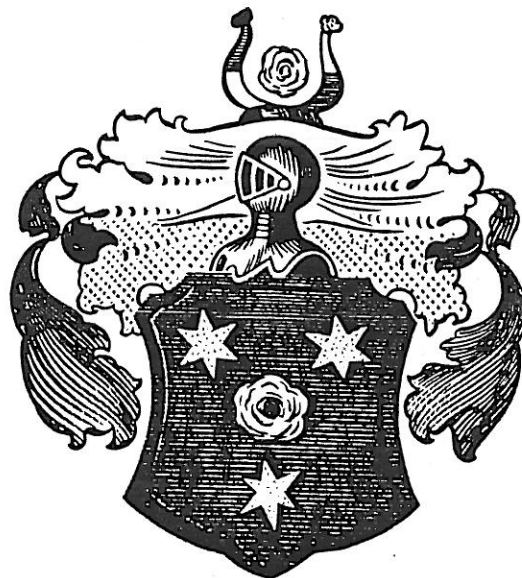
William Armstrong Crozier, F. R. S., edited a book which is entitled General Armory, a Register of American Families Entitled to Coat Armor, published in 1904 by Fox Duffield & Company, printed by the Crown Press for the Genealogical Association. On page 112 of this work is the following description:

"Rijker, New York.

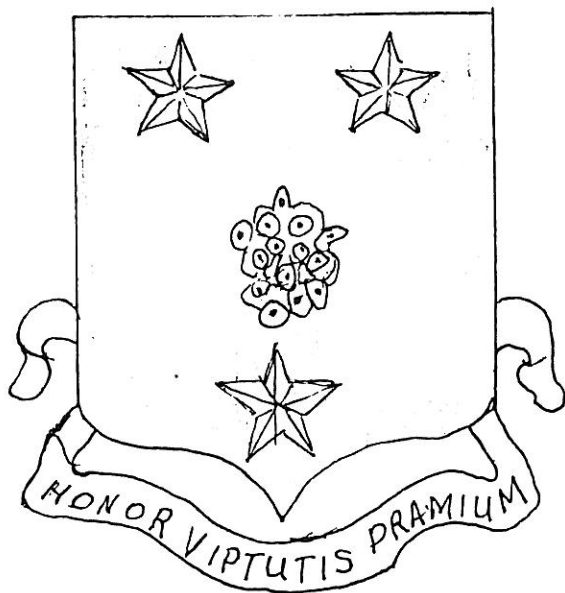
"Abraham Rijker, New York, 1638 (Holland), Azure a rose argent between three stars or,
Crest - a steel helmet in profile.
Motto - Hilariter."

American Heraldica, edited by E. de Vermont, illustrated by Henry Rykers, published by Brentano Brothers, New York, 1886, Volume 1, pages 51-52, plate 7, gives the following information:

Ryker



Hilariter



"Some of the lineal descendants of Hans, Lord of Ryckers, in Germany, in the time of the First Crusade (1096 A.D.) emigrated to New Netherlands from 1638 to 1663.

"Their names were Abraham, Gysbert, Rynier, and Hendrick Rycker, and anglicized returned to Ryker or Rykers.

"Used as a crest: a steel helmet in profile.

"Motto: Hilariter (Merrily).

"Bibliological sources:

James Riker, Jr., Annals of Newtown, New York,
page 299.

Pearson, Genealogies of the First Settlers of
Albany, 1869.

Rietstap, J.B., Armorial Universal, 1885.

James Riker, Jr., Riker Genealogy, 1851."

The next reference is taken from Colonial Families of America, Volume 5, edited by Ruth Lawrence, and published by the National Americana Society in 1929, pages 11-14:

"Arms: Azure, a rose, argent, between three mullets, or.

"Crest: A rose argent between two horns, azure.

"Motto: Honor Virtutis Praemium. (Honor first or above all)"
(The translation is by Mrs. Paota Patrick, librarian
in the genealogy department of the Los Angeles Public
Library.)

While there is still some controversy concerning the Ryker coat-of-arms, most of those with whom I have talked who have researched the Ryker family, seem to accept the crest as explained first by James Riker. Each individual can, based on the above information, draw his or her own conclusion. Perhaps future researchers may solve the controversy.

The following statement concerning James Riker, Jr. (1/) is found in the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, Volume 20, pages 175-176, published by the Society in 1889 and it refers to the accuracy and authenticity of the writings of James Riker, Jr. The statement is found also in the book by FAR (2/ pgs 66-69 inc.)

"JAMES RIKER"

By James R. Gibson, Jr.

"James Riker, historian, who died at Waverley, Tioga County, New York, on the third of July 1889, was born in the city of New York, May 11, 1822. He was a descendant of Abraham de Rycke, who came to New Amsterdam about 1642, and who, in addition to lands at the Wall-about and elsewhere, acquired Riker's Island by patent in 1664.

Abraham married Grietie Harmensen, and their eighth child, Abraham married Grietie van Buytenhuysen, who also had a son Abraham, born in 1691, and who married Geesie van Alst. Jacobus, one of the ten children of the third Abraham, was born in 1736 in Newtown, Long Island, and married Anna Patrina Rapelje by whom he had Daniel. Daniel was a Justice of the Peace at Newtown for eighteen years, but removed to New York in 1827. He married for his first wife, Deborah, daughter of William Leverich, and had a son James, the father of the historian. James Riker, Senior, was a grocer, assistant alderman in 1832 (his relation Richard Riker, being then recorder of the city) retired from business and removed to Harlem in 1848.

"He married Elizabeth, daughter of Jon Van Arsdale and Mary Crawford, of Orange County, New York, by whom he had six children.

"James Riker, Jr., received a classical education at the Cornelius Institute, under Professor John J. Owen, and designed to enter the ministry, but relinquished his purpose on account of the bronchial trouble that finally caused his death. His tastes led him to the study of local history which he pursued with enthusiastic devotion to the end of his life, although almost continually engaged in other avocations. He was vice-principal of the Twelfth Ward School in 1850-1858; engaged in the office of the Home Missionary Society until 1863, and for three years in the Internal Revenue Service in New York City.

"During all these years Mr. Riker was preparing himself, and carrying on his real work. With the assistance of a Hollander, whom he had befriended, he learned the Dutch language, and familiarized himself with the perplexing subject of family names of the early Dutch and French settlers. Years were spent among the town, city and state archives of New York, Albany, Kingston, and elsewhere, church records of baptisms and marriages studied, and family names pursued through their patronymic and eccentric alterations, obscured by time and transcribed in the curious orthography of the early Dutch domines. To cull from these original sources - and Mr. Riker compiled scantily, if ever, from any other - the 'multitudinous facts and innumerable details' (as he feelingly expresses it) contained in his histories, is a work requiring so much time, patience, labor and endurance, that perhaps we ought not to wonder that so many of the 'local historians' of today, seeking remuneration rather than fame, avoid by superficial transcripts of unverified data, this dreary task.

"Mr. Riker's wonderful accuracy in these details deserves the highest praise. His conscientious carefulness can be partly appreciated by the fact that nearly a year and a half were consumed in passing the History of Harlem through the press.

"It is not the purpose of this sketch to criticise Mr. Riker's works, or to determine his rank as a historian; it seems faint praise, however, to claim that his books are authorities on the early history of New Amsterdam and its first settlers, and as compendiums of family genealogies, are invaluable works of reference.

"Mr. Riker's first publication was A Brief History of the Riker Family, a pamphlet of 19 condensed pages, in 1851, followed in 1852 by the Annals of Newtown, The History of Harlem (a title which conveys a limited idea of its full scope) was published in 1881, after 25 years of labor, although this history in addition to its historical and genealogical stores 'reveals the origin of many of the land titles between Yorkville and Kingsbridge' and (to quote the words of a prominent lawyer) 'To us members of the legal profession is invaluable', it was with some difficulty that the edition of 600 copies was disposed of. A project to issue a much enlarged and revised edition of 200 copies, at \$10.00 a copy, was relinquished from want of encouragement. His desire also for the editorship of a magazine in whose pages he could give to the public the gathered treasures of a lifetime could not be carried out.

"Besides Mr. Riker's contributions to the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record and other periodicals, he published in 1881 a pamphlet of 56 pages entitled Evacuation Day, with Recollections of Captain John Van Arsdale.

"Chiefly on account of ill health he removed to Waverley, Tioga County, New York, in 1869. Here, with his own collection of books and manuscripts as the reference department, he established a town library of which he was librarian. This was abandoned after three years, and his time then devoted to the compilation of genealogies for families.

"He was a member of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, since 1852, when his name was proposed by the then president, Judge James Savage; and of many others.

"Mr. Riker was one of those rare men in cosmopolitan New York who pursued the study of local history and genealogy with genuine love and disinterested zeal. With the modesty of a real student, his own personality was always hidden. His writings were not remunerative, but his chief desire - as he expressed it - was to leave a work behind him which would be appreciated and valued.

"Mr. Riker married in 1853 his first wife, Vashti W., daughter of the Honorable Charles Bodle, of Bloomingburgh, New York. She died July 20, 1864. He married a second wife, Anna C. Clute, of Herkimer, New York, February 13, 1867. By his first marriage he had three daughters of whom two survive him, Catharine B., who married Dr. Henry B. Whitehorne, and Maria Hunter, wife of Frederick Parkhurst of Orange, New Jersey."

In Volumes 1-3, of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, page 92, is the anniversary address by Henry R. Stiles, M.D., President, in which he made the following remarks:

"In 1852 appeared the excellent History of Newtown (probably the Annals of Newtown) in Queens County, by James Riker, Jr., containing 26 carefully prepared genealogies of families of that county - mostly of Dutch origin. Mr. Riker's modest work may be considered as the first

successful and authoritative* essay towards the development of the peculiarly perplexing, yet as peculiarly interesting, lines of Dutch genealogy, and was indeed for many years, the only perfect specimen of this class ---."

RELIGION

Religion has always been basic with most people. So it was with the early Dutch who came to Newtown...New Amsterdam... However, according to James Riker, Jr. (1) it was not particularly religious persecution which brought the Dutch to America but "The enlarged agricultural and commercial advantages, as well as the religious and political freedom now promised to the inhabitants of New Netherland." (page 15). When the States-General, in 1638 declared the monopoly of the country abolished (Patroon system) and the country open to all persons, it stimulated emigration from the continent of Europe and also from New England, whose inhabitants were already being faced with some of the strict religious discipline they fled England to escape. Many of these in New England had come to America via Holland and had some idea of the religious freedom in that country. Consequently, many as they continued their search for religious freedom, settled at Mespat or Newtown as it came to be known. One of the first ministers in Newtown was an Englishman, Francis Doughty, who had followed the Pilgrims to New England but soon found himself at odds with the ministers of the colony and was soon to go to New Amsterdam where he received a grant of land in 1642 and began a church in 1643. Later he preached to the English at the church within Fort Amsterdam for many years.

THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH

The Dutch did not establish a church in Newtown (Dutch Reformed) for almost 80 years. James Riker, Jr. (1) gives reasons such as, "There were few Dutch inhabitants; most of them lived on the western borders of the town and had easy access to (Dutch) churches as Bushwick, New York, or Harlem." (pages 236-7) Franklin A. Ryker (2, pages 14-15)

In 1686 several families decided it was time to erect a church in Newtown. That year the "families of Arnout Webber, Hendrick Wiltsee, Abraham Rycken, Harek Krankheyt, and Teunis Cornelissen, all residing at or near the Poor Bowery, attended the ministrations of Dominic Selyns in New York. Those who lived further inland had greater problems getting to church and often it was a matter of walking miles, with the family, to attend services at Flatbush. When a congregation was formed at Jamaica many of the Dutch residents of Newtown were connected with it and supported its construction. <

As the Dutch population increased in and around Newtown, it seemed desirable to form a church there. Riker, (1) reports "In the year of our Lord Jesus Christ 1731, on the 2nd of December, the members of the Reformed Low Dutch congregation of Newtown, in Queen's County, on Nassau Island, and some other, having convened in the house of Samuel Fish, Jr., and have resolved in peace and love to build a church

or house of God 50 feet in length and 40 feet in breadth, in said town, on the ensuing year... said church shall be built on the land of Peter Berrien, near the townhouse, he having promised to convey a plot of ground to the congregation on 70 feet in length and 60 feet in breadth..."

The congregation raised 277 pounds and 12 shillings and appointed Abraham Remsen, Isaac Bragaw, Joris Rapelye, Abraham Lent, (Ryckens oldest son) Nicholas Berrien, and Abraham Brickerhoff, a committee to oversee construction. Peter Berrien transferred the land on April 3, 1738 (as recorded in 'Newtown Great Book of Records' pp 297-298' to Abraham Rycken Jr., and Elbert Luyster as trustees of the congregation.

The building committee reported, on August 30, 1735, that the edifice was ready for divine service. Two seats per pew were assigned in March 1736, with those who contributed the most having first choice, etc. downward until everyone had seats. The church was without a minister for a number of years but at a meeting held at Flatbush, July 23rd 1739 the congregation united with three other churches of Queen's county, those of Jamaica, Success, and Oyster Bay, in engaging the ministerial services of Dominie Van Basten, for one year, at the salary of L75 (75 pounds). This type cooperation continued until 1802.

Van Basten was succeeded by Rev. Johannes Henricus Goetschius, of Pennsylvania in 1740. Riker (1) "On November 1st, of the same year (1740), Mr. Goetschius administered the Lord's Supper to the members of the Newtown church and other Christian brethren from the adjacent towns, for the first time. Ninety communicants were present, and their names are yet (1851) treasured in the archives of the church."

This brief statement concerns the beginning of the Dutch Reformed Church at Newtown. For the full details refer to James Riker, Jr., (1) pages 235-244)

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

At the first efforts under governors Fletcher and Cornbury to introduce the Church of England in this province, the religious preferences of the people were of quite another cast, and clearly averse to the forms and doctrine of the established church. Hence so little progress was made for some years, that, but for the contenance and support rendered by the government, the enterprise must have failed; at the same time the harsh means used by the provincial governors to force the people into conformity, only 'alarmed the dissenters, and increased their prejudices against the Church" (1) pages 244-245.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mr. Samuel Pumroy settled in Newtown and began the Presbyterian Church with only eight members in full communion. He continued to pastor the church until his death in 1744 (36 years). Catherine Pumroy who was born this same year (1708) married Jacob Riker 25 May 1720. According to Riker (1) the church at Newtown was rather destitute and

Mr. Pumroy's pecuniary support was the contributions of his people, and the profits of the parsonage property (acquired by the church earlier) which at the time consisted of the dwelling-house...and an adjoining farm, fifty acres ... but increased to 74 acres in 1700.

Most of the work in the early years fell on Mr. Pumroy and he was in need of assistance in the governing of the church and its many duties. In 1724 he suggested three ruling elders be chosen. They were Content Titus, James Renne, and Samuel Coe. He gave the congregation time to consider the men and to make any objections (a few weeks) then. No objections were voiced and on the Lord's Day after evening sermon, Mr. Pumroy reminding the congregation that there were no objects asked the men if they would freely and willingly take on the office. They answered they were and on June 28, 1724 the Newtown church installed its first elders. The first Riker to serve as an elder of this church was John L (Lawrence) Riker in 1849, and was serving in 1851 when Riker (1) published his book.

The church prospered and grew under the ministering of Mr. Pumroy and he and the church associated itself with the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Later he joined other clerical brethren for the dissemination of Presbyterianism on Long Island, and when the growth of that denomination in this country required the formation of additional presbyteries, he united, in 1717, with Messrs. Macnish of Jamaica, the Phillips of Setauket, in organizing Long Island Presbytery; the first association of the kind in this province, and to which all the Presbyterian churches of Westchester and New York City as well as Long Island, were for many years subject. (Riker (1) page 225)

His epitaph, which was probably designed by him before his death is interesting and I believe worth repeating here: Riker (1) page 228.

Here lies the body of ye Reud.
Mr. Samuel Pumroy who depd
This life the 30th of June 1744,
In the 57th year of his age.
Kind earth keep safe my sleeping dust,
Till Christ shall raise it with the Just;
My ministerial work is done
For you dear people of Newtown,
Years almost thirty-six I try'd
To spouse you for Christ Jesus bride.
If you do still refuse to hear,
Gainst you at last I must appear,
When Christ shall come to raise the Dead
And call me from this gloomy bed.

RYKER'S ISLAND

"Riker's Island lies in the middle of the Sound, nearly opposite the mouth of Flushing Bay; the banks are of considerable height, but

by no means so rocky as the last mentioned (Brothers Island). There is however, a conspicuous mass of granite upon it, and several smaller rocks scattered about. From the loose and gravelly material which it consists, its sides are gradually crumbling down and washing away, notwithstanding it is thickly spread with rocks and stones, the remains of former washings and encroachments of water." (2) page 53 from Thompson (18) Vol. 1. third edition. He quotes further from Thompson, "Riker's Island is, however, the largest and most important one appertaining to the town. (Ravenswood is the town in question as nearly as I can ascertain), containing more than 50 acres and lies nearly in the middle of the East River opposite Flushing Bay ... "

The following is again taken from Irene Olson's book, Descendants of Abraham Rycken, pages 30-31 (1961):

"Information about the present use of Riker's Island contained in the United States Works Progress Administration's 1939 New York City Guide: 'When Abraham Rycken obtained a patent for Riker's Island in 1664, and through the long years of Riker family ownership, it amounted to only 87 acres of land. Since New York City annexed it from Newtown, Queens, in 1884, the size of the island has increased to 400 acres, and it is still growing through the dumping of old metal, refuse, cinders, and dirt. For thirty years subterranean fires smoldered in the rubbish and hordes of rats foraged there.

"The island is now entirely given over to the City's Model Penitentiary. The 26 fireproof brick buildings, costing \$9,106,000 constitute one of the most modern and efficient penal institutions in the country. The new prison with a total capacity of 2,550 houses annually more than 25,000 offenders whose sentences run for not more than three years. The rapid turnover creates many special problems of management.

"'Much of the made land has been landscaped. A 60 acre farm cultivated by prisoners is being steadily enlarged; the renowned prison piggery produces more than 50,000 pounds of pork every year. The modern plant includes a fully equipped hospital and a large laundry which serves the prison, the Department of Sanitation and other institutions. The management uses a scientific classification system for determining the needs and attributes of each prisoner in preparation for the prison's unusual educational, vocational, and recreational program.'"

Riker (1) (page 63) says that "William Hallett ... of the town of Flushing purchased a large tract of land from Shawestcont and Erramohar Indians. It is described as 'beginning at the first creek Sunswick; westward below Hellgate, and upon Long Island, and from the mouth of the aforesaid creek, south to a markt tree fast by a great rock, and from that said markt tree southward, fifteen score rods, to another markt tree, which stands from another little rock a little westward, and from that markt tree east, right to the point of an island which belongs to the poor's bowery, and from the point of the island belonging to the poor's bowery round by the river through Hellgate to aforesaid creek westward where it begins;

also an island which is commonly called Hewlett's Island, which island the aforesaid Hewlett did formerly live upon and also other islands within this tract of land aforesaid mentioned.'

This sale was confirmed by Thier Sagamore, Mattano, 'chief of Staten Island and Nyack' on December 5, 1664, for 58 fathoms of wampum, seven coats, one blanket, and 4 kettles as full payment."

Mr. Hallett, an Englishman, was a staunch supporter of the English claim to the area and consequently could not have consulted Stuyvesant about the purchase and it was not recognized. Riker (1) (page 64) says "This is evident also from the fact, that on August 19th 1664, new style (see footnote) Abraham Rycken, a planter on the north bounds of the town, obtained from the Director-General (Stuyvesant), it being one of his last official acts, a patent for Hewlett's Island, above named. It was also called from the ancestor of the Hewlett family, of Long Island. ..." After the British took over, "Governor Nicoll, recognizing the authority of the Dutch governor, to dispose of the island, confirmed it to Rycken, December 24th, 1667, and it is yet (1851) owned by the descendants of the original patentee, and known as Riker's Island." (1) pg 65.

RYKER MANSION

In 1654 Abraham Rycken obtained a grant of land at the Poor Bowery and began construction of the "Rycken Mansion" which was added to over the years. Complete details of the Riker Homestead, which existed until 1938 when it was leveled by fire, can be found in the History and Genealogy of the Ryker Family by Franklin A. Ryker, 5227 Carita Street, Long Beach, CA 90808 (revised 1976 and 1981).

The following is abstracted from an article in the New York Sun of April 2, 1930 (the year and date could be a typo error for other references all refer to 1938. See: Long Island Daily Star of April 18; the Historic Building Survey made in 1935.)

For almost 300 years the Ryker Mansion, the old Ryker home place, stood on a hill in the northeast corner of Long Island City, immediately overlooking Bowery Bay. Directly opposite, a mile from the mainland lies Riker's Island. Included around the house was 100 acres of land.

The old colonial homestead was as sturdy as the Dutch settlers who built it back in 1654. The old home no longer stands, it has been destroyed by fire. The article reports, "where, two weeks ago, stood a famous old mansion, once the meeting place of fiery patriots gathered to discuss liberty and equality there now remains only desolation and smoldering ruins." According to the paper (New York Sun) the fire was March 23, 1938. The article went on to say that "more than once the

Note: Under the Dutch the mode of reckoning time in this town was after the new style. The old style, introduced by the British ... the year commenced on 25 March, and the month began ten days earlier than by the new style (after 1700 it was 11 days earlier). The new style used by the Dutch began on January 1.

house figured in local history, and became well known toward the end of the 18th century for its hospitallity. Because of the loyalty of the Rikers to the cause of the colonists, many famous patriots gathered around the ancient fireplace. The house remained in the Riker family for nearly 200 years until it was sold by Daniel Riker to Charles Rapelye."

Irene Olson (4) in her book Descendants of Abraham Rycken, has included seven newspaper articles. Franklin A. Ryker (2) has included these articles in his book, The History and Genealogy of the Ryker Family. These articles have been abstracted to eliminate duplication.

From the Long Island Daily Star, July 12, 1934: "The old Riker mansion on the North Beach shore of Bowery Bay, will be included in a record of historical buildings throughout the country to be compiled and filed in the Library of Congress at Washington, D.C.

"The property is to be surveyed by the Works Division of the Department of Public Welfare in cooperation with the Department of the Interior; and a short history of the building, built 300 years ago, together with the drawings and photographs, will be sent to Washington for filing." (see the following)

Historic American Buildings Survey
William Dewey Foster, District Officer
25 West 45th Street, New York, New York

HABS No. 4-29
Page 1

Ref. N. Y. 41 Bow B

THE RIKER HOMESTEAD
Bowery Bay, Queens County
New York

Owner:

Date of Erection: 1700 or earlier.

Present Condition: Well preserved. Numerous alterations and additions since first construction.

Materials of Construction: Wood walls, floors and shingle roof. Field stone and brick foundations.

Other existing records: Written records. Whittemore, "Historic Homes on Long Island, 1901".

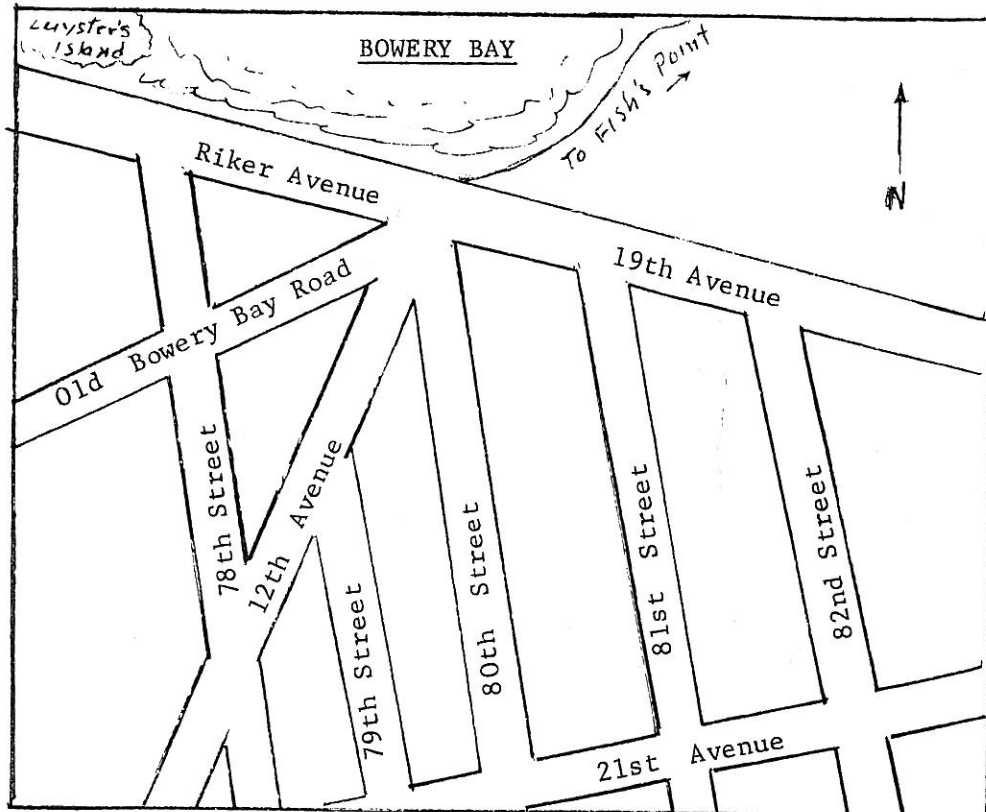
The house stands 300 feet from the main road. A more beautiful site for a country home could hardly be found on the shores of Long Island.

The house in its present condition fairly represents the different generations who have occupied it, each making changes to suit the improved

conditions of the age. Much still remains of the original structure. It is built in the old Dutch style, long and narrow. It was, no doubt, originally one story with a pitch or gambrel roof. A story, however, has been added covered with a hip roof. Shutters cover all the windows.

The Homestead property contains about 120 acres and came into the family 250 years ago (1654).

Compiled April 24, 1935 from notes submitted by the Squad Leader to the District Officer. HABS National Headquarters.



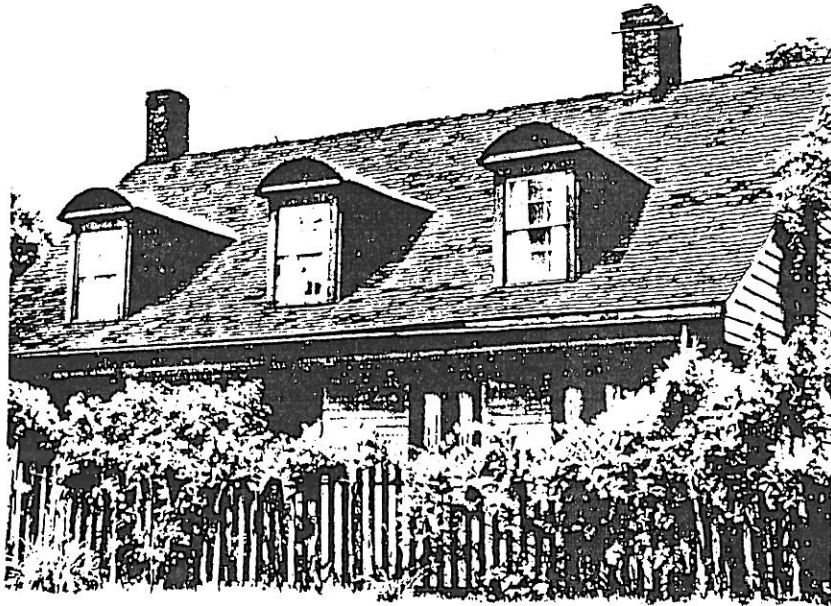
"The Old Riker Burying ground is situated about 25 yards inside the city limits, on the road east of the water works. It adjoins the old homestead of Jacob P. Rapelye." (H. Whittemore (15). On the opposite side of Bowery Bay Road, there stood until recent years the lovely Riker mansion." Long Island Star Journal--22 August 1940.

From the Long Island Daily Star April 18, 1938. The article is entitled North Beach Airport Job Dooms 284-year old Riker Homestead. It says, in part: "By the time this story is perused by Star readers, one of the old Newtown's most historic mansions will be nothing but a memory. A house that was prominent as the birthplace of many historic characters of the American Revolution, as well as the gathering place of patriots of international fame, will have been razed to the ground in order to make way for the North Beach Airport now in course of construction at Bowery Bay, which will be one of the largest of its kind in the world. (Compiler's note: It opened in 1939 as LaGuardia Field.)



HISTORIC RYCKEN HOMESTEAD

Built in 1654 by Abraham Rycken. Rebuilt a century later after being partially destroyed by fire. Ultimately destroyed by fire in 1938-1939. LaGuardia Field now occupies the land.



LENT-RAPELJE HOUSE

Built in 1729 by Abraham Lent, Grandson of Abraham Rycken

Drawings taken from Franklin A. Ryker's book. (2)

Before the building was razed it was destroyed by fire according to an article in the local newspaper (name and date not given) but included in Olson's (4) book. "One of the oldest structures in greater New York was nothing but ashes yesterday after a fire of unknown origin destroyed the old Riker mansion in Queens..." "... The fire was beyond control by the time the Fire Department had run its necessary 2,000 feet of hose from the nearest fireplug to the mansion. The feeble stream that finally played on the roaring wooden structure was ineffectual, and nothing was saved." ...

"It (the Riker mansion) was sold to the Rapelye family in 1809 by Daniel Riker, who had already dropped the Dutch name*, and was sold recently to the New York Air Terminals, Inc. as part of the site for a proposed landing field on Bowery Bay. William F. Carey, head of the company, had planned to turn the old mansion into a clubhouse.

*"Just how the island and the mansion lost the original name of Rycken and became Riker is buried the uncertain growth of the city."

James Riker, (1) on page 301 says: "... his descendants in the third generation having assumed the present mode of spelling the name"...

LENT HOUSE

The historic Lent House, now referred to as the Riker-Rapelye house, is equally important in the development of the area during the late 1600 and early 1700's. It was built by Abraham Lent, grandson of Abraham Rycken whose first son Ryck Abrahamsen assumed the name Lent. Construction was about 1729 according to a report in the Long Island Star-Journal of December 24, 1941. The same paper on August 22, 1940 reported: "Within a few yards of the Riker Cemetery on the old Bowery Bay Road, lying west of LaGuardia Field (northerly end of 78th Street, and 19th Road) is one of the finest of the old Dutch farmhouses of Queens County extant, the Lent-Rapelye house."... three generations of Lent family owned the house until its sale about 1800 to Issac Rapelye, one of the members of that widespread family of Huguenot stock to settle in this area."

An article in the above named paper of September 24, 1941 reports that: "Today it was announced that the Riker family had purchased the home built by Abraham Lent and that the homestead will be used to house the caretaker of the cemetery, 65 year old Rudolph Durheim." Announcement of the sale of the Lent homestead was made by representatives of the John Lawrence Riker Estate of Manhattan. Riker, an importer of drugs and chemicals died in 1909.

The article continues: ... In the 1880's Steinway & Sons, the piano manufacturers, acquired the house and farm (from Rapelye) and rented it out to tenants. Some time around the beginning of World War II a branch of the Rikers reacquired the property." (see above for date)

In an article written by Vincent Seyfried (1959) of 163 Pine Street, Garden City, Long Island, for a visit by members of the Long Island

Historical Society, he said soon after it was purchased by the Rikers the Chicago Tribune sent Mr. Clyde Forcey and his wife Louise from Chicago to assume the foreign cable department at the New York Daily News. They rented the house, which by this time was in some ruined condition.

Mr. Forcey died in 1951 but at the present time (1959) "Mrs. Louise Forcey enjoys a lifetime lease of the Riker-Rapelje house and grounds, paying a monthly rent to the Riker estate." (Rapelye often spelled with j -- Rapelje)

Irene Olsen (4) in 1961 says: "Mrs. Louise Forcey was leasing the Lent-Rapelje house from the John L. Riker Estate of Manhattan (the lease included a provision of \$100 a year for taking care of the cemetery); and in 1959 she had a fatal fall when chasing some boys who were on the property. The antiques in the house were sold at an auction. A Mrs. Jack Russell, who grew up practically across the street from the homestead and is interested in the historical nature of the neighborhood, persuaded her husband to purchase the house from the Riker estate. There is a stipulation in the purchase contract that the buyer care for the cemetery which remains with the estate. Mr. and Mrs. Russell and their children are now living at 7803 19th Road, Jackson Heights, New York."

Since the Riker and Lent original properties provide much of the land upon which LaGuardia Airport is located, when your plane lands there you are on or very near the birthplace of the Rycken-Riker-Ryker family in America.

The above discussions of the Riker and Lent-Rapelje houses are only some of the highlights of the property. A full text of this information along with complete drawings of the Riker house is found in Franklin A. Riker's book on the History and Genealogy of the Ryker Family (2). This book is available through many of the members of the Ryker family and also in the Library at Los Angeles, CA, Indianapolis and Madison, Indiana.

THE OLD RYKER BURYING GROUND

Henry Whittemore in an article in the Long Island Historic Homes, Ancient and Modern, says: "The old Riker burying ground is one of great historic interest. It is situated about 25 yards inside the city limits, on the road east of the water works. It adjoins the old homestead of Jacob P. Rapelye or Ropelye (Lent-Repelye house) and is separated from his garden plot by a high board fence. While he (Jacob) lived he guarded his plot with jealous care.

"Near the center of what was probably the entrance stands an immense willow tree, some 25 feet or more in circumference, gnarled and knotty with age, but with branches and foliage all gone, shorn of all its former beauty and grandeur, it still stands bidding distance to the storms that have beaten upon it year after year as one generation after another of this grand old family have been laid to rest. As a faithful

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sentinel, it seems, lothe to depart, and it's not at all probable that while any of the present generation remains the woodman's axe will ever mar it. Its decay is very slow and the vitality of the old trunk seems wonderful. The veneration for the old landmarks and old association, which has ever been a characteristic of the Riker family, is not lacking in any of the present representatives and none will have occasion to enter the protest: 'Woodman spare that tree touch not a single bough'. To add to the picturesqueness of this ancient landmark, the artist has taken the liberty of omitting the modern board fence and leaving the old tree in its natural state, and thus greatly enhancing the beauty of its surroundings."

A plat of the cemetery was made between July 9 and August 1, 1919 during the locating and plotting of cemeteries in Queens and perhaps other areas of New York. It is listed as No. 5 Riker Cemetery, North Beach. A copy of this map is included on the following page and is taken from Franklin A. Ryker's book, page 26.

The Long Island Star-Journal of September 24, 1941 reports on the Rikers buying the 200 year old Lent House at North Beach to house a caretaker of the famous old burial ground. (2-page 47)

"There is a lonely little burial ground over in North Beach, shut off from the teeming community around it by a high brick wall. Today the little burial ground has a companion - a plot with a house which dates back a half century before the Revolutionary War. For more than two centuries the little private cemetery of the Riker family and the house built by Abraham Lent in 1729 have been there side by side. Cow-paths became country roads during this time and then turnpikes, and later city streets and finally, engineers using radio beams carved highways in the skies for airliners to use in coming to and leaving nearby LaGuardia Field.

"Today it was announced that the Riker family had purchased the home built by Abraham Lent and that the homestead will be used to house the caretaker of the cemetery, 65 year old Rudolph Durham.

"The cemetery on 19th Road, near 78th Street, is the burial plot of Abraham Rycken - the name later was changed to Riker -... (the progenitor of the Rycken, Riker, Ryker families in America)

"Announcement of the sale of the Lent homestead was made by representatives of the John L. Riker Estate of Manhattan. Riker, an importer of drugs and chemicals died in 1909, and there are still nearly a half a hundred beneficiaries to the estate. Few of them live in Queens, where the original Abraham Rycken laid out his farm. The purchase of the Lent homestead, it was announced, was made from the Astoria-Riker Corporation, a realty firm which although having no members of the Riker family in the organization, purchased land originally owned by the family.

"Durheim, who came to this country from Switzerland, has been caretaker of the Riker burial plot for 10 years. It has been a lonely job for Durheim, but experiences of the past prove it is important for him to be there. Several years ago vandals entered the burial plot and carried off several markers from the fronts of which the weather had

erased all marks of the identity of the person for whom it had been placed. One of the vandals was later arrested. He explained that the gravestone markers had been taken to form the stones for a garden path." Durham died and is buried in the cemetery he took care of for many years.

After Durham's death, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Forcey (Louise) rented the property, began repairs and restored it to its 18th century grandeur. Forcey came from Chicago to take charge of the cable department at the New York Daily News. After Mr. Forcey died in 1951, Mrs. Forcey continued to live at the home and in 1959 had a lifetime lease. The above is taken from an article written by Vincent Seyfried, 163 Pine Street, Garden City, Long Island, for a visit by members of the Long Island Historical Society.

Irene Olsen (4) in 1961 reported that a provision in Mrs. Forcey's lease provided \$100 a year for taking care of the cemetery. After Mrs. Forcey had to give up the property because of health the property was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Jack Russell. There is a stipulation in the purchase contract that the buyer care for the cemetery which remains with the estate. The Russells were living in the property in 1961.

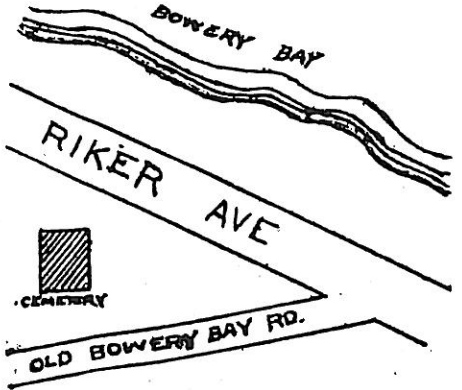
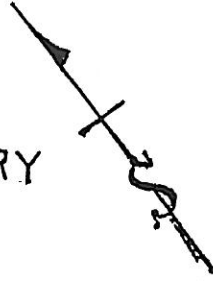
George Miller, 3115 Samara Drive, Tampa, FL 33618, who writes for the Madison Courier, Madison, IN 47250 visited this cemetery and reports on it in an issue August 7, 1971. In his article he explains how he got to the station. I will not quote his entire article since it is reported in Franklin Ryker's book but will start with a point I expect most everyone can get to easily. "... the extreme southwest corner of LaGuardia Airport ... walk along the West Side, just outside the fence until the street turned left (west) and then follow it a couple of blocks and I would see 19th Road. ... Most of the area on 19th Road is built up in townhouses it wasn't difficult in the spotting an old Dutch house (Lent-Riker-Rapelye) with three dormer windows at 7803, the address, phone 728-0072. But I didn't see the cemetery. As I walked around the house I spotted a brick wall overgrown with rambler roses and other vines, with a small iron fence along the top of the brick wall, which itself (the brick wall) was six or seven feet high, and facing the 19th Road near the southeast corner of the walled-in area was an iron gate. I walked up and there over the gate in an old iron arch was the word 'Riker'. I tried the gate but it stuck, probably rusted shut. I took a piece of wood, about 18 inches long, and hit the latch a rap and it opened. I stepped into a weeded enclosure perhaps 40 by 50 feet or more and near the center of a stone rising above the weeds and hanging on the front of it was a wreath and a small flag hung on a staff near the ground." (Note: See plot of cemetery - it is more like 60 by 75 feet)

George Miller further states: "I should add that as you walk west from LaGuardia on 19th Road, 19th Road cut off bearing slightly southwest. The two streets form a 'Y' and at the point of a new set of townhouses are going up, then as you come to the old farmhouse on the grounds of which are the Old Burying Ground, then west of this is a commercial firm, AEI Artistic Exhibits, Inc. It is not visible from the street nor is it from 19th Road. First find the old farmhouse (Lent-Rapelye-Riker) and then the cemetery."

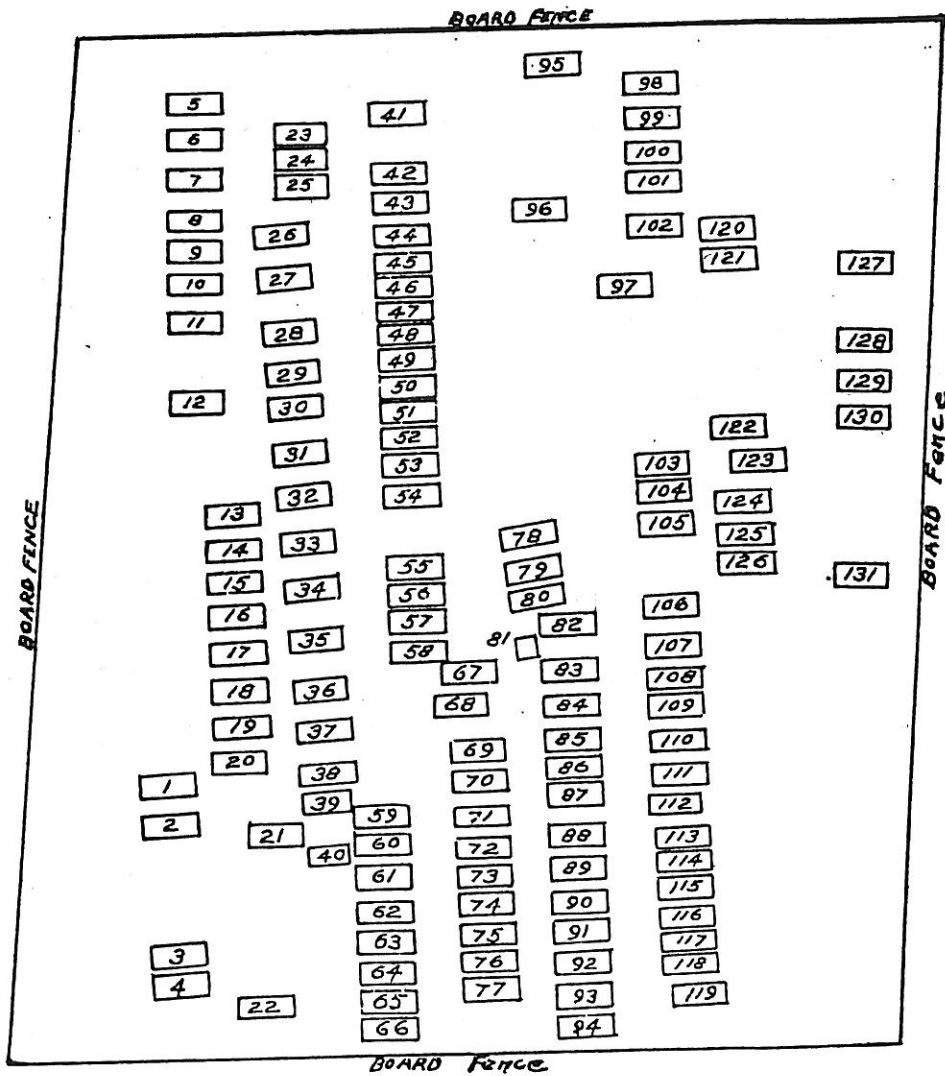
No. 5.
RIKER CEMETERY
NORTH BEACH

SCALE 0 5 10 15 20

SURVEYED JULY 9-AUG 1, 1919



SCALE 0 100 200 300



RIKER - RYKER

in

REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Most of the Riker men, who were of proper age, participated in the Revolutionary War and were on the side of independence. The Revolutionary Spirit was not the creature of a day nor an impulse of mushroom growth. James Riker, Jr. (1) reports in his book, Annals of Newtown in Queens, on events leading up to the war and the struggles of the colonists for their freedom, in Chapters 10 and 11, pp 173 to 224. Since most Americans are acquainted with these causes, they will not be discussed here.

Riker (1) also discusses some aspects of the war and the participation of Rikers in his chapter on the Riker Family on pages 299-315. For information on those who had moved from Newtown and New York to New Jersey, William S. Stryker, who was Adjutant General of New Jersey beginning in 1867, developed an Official Register of the Officers and Men of New Jersey in the Revolutionary War. (7) This register was printed in 1872 at Trenton, N.J., by Wm. T. Nicholson & Co., Printers.

Others who have researched specific Riker-Ryker family members are: Professor A. M. Tuttle (6) on Jacob Smock and Gerardus Riker, both our ancestors. Jacob's daughter Leah married Gerardus Riker, Jr.; Franklin A. Ryker (2) pp 71 & 71-12; and Irene Olson (4) pp 15 and 33. Other writers have referred to Riker-Ryker service but most are based on the above manuscripts.

England's attitude toward the American Colonies almost from the beginning was one of oppression and strict adherence to the rule of the Crown. In the 1760's restrictions were placed upon manufacturing and commerce, and duties were imposed on imports. This latest round of Parliamentary acts beginning about 1764 led to a feeling of consternation among the colonists.

Consequently, in Philadelphia on September 4th, 1774, a continental congress with delegates from the several provinces met to discuss suitable means of resistance. The suggestions made by this assembly was not accepted by all the peoples of the colonies. The assembly at this time "...pledged not to import or consume tea, or any articles from British possessions until the repeal of the revenue acts, and advised the appointment of committees in the several counties and towns, to aid by mutual, correspondence and otherwise, in carrying out the objects of the association." Riker (1) p. 175.

The area of Newtown was not to be the site of battles, however, the area was taken by the British who remained in control of the area until November of 1783. Riker (1) p. 173 says: "The American Revolution now opened, during which, for the space of seven years, Newtown was to be ravaged and made desolate by a scourge as dreadful as a

visitation of famine or pestilence. Her fertile territory a prey to hostile armies, but not the scene of battles, she nevertheless heard with anxious interest every rumble from the fields afar, where freedom gained its triumphs."

One of the first to show his support for the independence movement was Samuel Riker, son of Andrew and great grandson of Abraham Rycken. In December of 1774 he was chosen as one of the Newtown committee of correspondence (to keep the public informed) in which capacity he was actively engaged until forced to flee before the approaching British troops. Later his brother, John Berrien Riker, who was educated at Princeton College and became a doctor, would serve with distinction as a surgeon in Washington's army. His commission was as a surgeon with the 4th Battalion of New Jersey troops, bearing the date of 18 February 1777. <

Abraham Riker, son of Andrew and nephew of John, 184, our ancestor, was made a captain in the army and was present at the fall of Montgomery at Quebec. He then became head of a company in the 2nd N.Y. continental regiment and was involved in several engagements where he earned a reputation as an intrepid and active officer. His battalion suffered heavy losses at Saratoga and the next spring at Valley Forge he contracted spotted fever and died 7 May 1778.

Abraham, b. 10 May 1756 served as an artificer* in the continental army at Peekskill. Jacobus, son of Abraham, 183, desired to take no part in the Revolution and like many others, was forced to an apparent compliance with the Loyalist measures in order to remain in Newtown. But during the occupation his bitter experiences and observing other atrocities, turned firmly to the side of freedom and independence.

Stryker (7) lists our ancestor Gerardus Riker 184-8 as serving as an ensign in the Bergen Company Regiment and also as ensign in the State Troops, p. 456. Franklin Ryker (2) p. 71 points out that Gerardus Ryker, Sr. was "an ensign in Major Mauritius Goetschius's Battalion, New Jersey Troops, and in 1789 was a lieutenant in Colonel Teunis Day's Bergen Regiment, Militia." < ?

According to the Provincial Congress of New Jersey a plan for regulating the Militia was passed on 3 June 1775 and revised on August 16, 1775. Bergen County was to provide one regiment at this time. Men between 16 and 50 were asked to enlist...for a period of time. Under this plan some men served in more than one unit and at different times during the war years.

The State Troops were established on 13 February 1776. There were volunteers from the militia of the several counties and were liable for duty when needed in New Jersey and adjoining states.

Gerardus, Sr. served in both the Militia and the State Troops. Stryker (7) or F. Bazley Lee (16) neither gives an exact date when Gerardus may have served; however, it is likely that he served first in the Bergen County Regiment, Militia, and then later in the State Troops, under Captain-Major John Mauritius Goetschius and Colonel Theunis Dey. ?

*many meanings but mainly a skilled or artistic worker

Gerardus served in the above units prior to 1779 although he may have continued to be listed in 1780. Research by Vince Akers (3) shows that Gerardus had moved to Conwego, Pennsylvania, possibly in 1779 for he spent the winter there and moved down the Ohio to Kentucky in the spring of 1780. ?No

Satisfactory evidence has been established of his service and has been accepted by DAR. Professor Tuttle (6) on page 3 of his mimeograph says: "D.A.R. Lineage Book 123, pp. 160-161, reads, 'Gerardus Ryker (1740-1784) served as ensign in Col. Theunis Dey's Bergen County Regiment, New Jersey Militia. He was born in Closter, New Jersey, died in Bullskin, Kentucky. He married Rachel Demarest (b. 1746 in 1762)' D.A.R. Lineage Books 108 and 116 make similar statements identical to the above Gerardus Riker."

There is no record of Gerardus Sr. filing for pension or land bounty. Probably because he died on 14 September 1781 at Floyds Defeat in Kentucky, and his widow, Rachel, married John Van Cleave. These actions were before the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783. There are pension records available on a Gerardus Riker. He was the son of Abraham Riker (184-1), a brother of Gerardus Riker. The writer has copies of these records in his files.

Other Rikers listed by Stryker (7) from New Jersey include: Isaac Ryker, Captain Lyon's company, Fourth Battalion...also militia, p. 278; Jacob Riker from Essex County, p. 734; John Riker, Essex County, p. 734; John Jacob Riker, Essex County, Captain Cornelius Speer's company, Second Regiment, also State Troops and Continental Army; Cornelius Ryker, Jr. from Somerset County, p. 743; Peter Ryker, Essex County, p. 743; James Riker, p. 470; John B. Riker, p. 37 and 74; and others whose names and company affiliations are not available to the author at this time.

The writer recognizes the danger in trying to list our ancestors who served in the Revolutionary War. However, this partial list is provided in the hope it will be of help to any who might want to do further research. It is regrettable that a complete listing with company and battalion connections cannot be made. Lack of time and the availability of research material make it impossible at this time.

EARLY ANCESTRY

As pointed out earlier there is much controversy concerning the Rycken-Riker-Ryker ancestry before coming to America (see Hoffman article). It is thought by some that Captain Jacob Simonsz de Rycke was the father of Jacob who was the father of Abraham -1. They list Jacob's children as being: Abraham, born 1619 (some records say 1615); Maurice; Gysbert; Raynier; and Hendrick Rycken. These researchers do not believe that Jacob ever came to America, including James Riker, Jr. (footnote (1), page 300)

Other sources say that Gysbert Rycken was the father of Abraham. Riker (1) page 300 seems to believe that Abraham's father was Jacob the son of Captain Jacob Simonsz as listed above. However, Whittemore (15) in discussing the Old Burying Ground... (Riker Cemetery) says there is this inscription on a marble obelisk: "The grave of Abraham Riker, son of Abraham and Margaret Riker; born 1655; died August 20, 1746; in the 91st year of his age; and in memory of his grandsire, Guisbert Riker, a native of Holland, who came to America in 1630, obtaining a patent for land at the Bowery bearing the date 1632." This marker would seem to lend credence to the story that Gysbert (Guisbert) was Abraham's father and the grandfather of Abraham -18 described in the above marker. However, Riker (1) says he can find no documentary proof of this relationship (page 300).

On the maternal side of the family, one of the first of our ancestors to arrive in New Amsterdam was Hendrick Harmensen who James Riker, Jr. (1/ p. 21) says "may have been the first white man to turn a furrow in that section of the township." The location of Harmensen's farm was, according to Riker "Upon the northern border of Mespat what is now Fish's Point (1851) Hendrick Harmensen, otherwise called Henry the Farmer, had a bowery, or farm under cultivation.

Harmensen erected a cabin, and obtained, in 1638, several heads of cattle, from a lot imported that year by the Director-General for the use of the colonists. But within a few years Harmensen died, and there is some reason to believe that he was slain in the Indian massacre of 1643.

"A tradition exists in the Riker family that their ancestor located, at a very early period, at what is now called the Poor Bowery, and obtained from the natives a large tract of land at that place, that having previously been an armourer in the Dutch service, he was accustomed to forge Tomahawks for the Indians round about him; but that on a certain occasion the savages under a certain excitement, assaulted him, and one of them gave him a fatal blow, and terminated his life with one of the instruments he had made for him; that after this his widow remarried, and the property was disposed of to the Dutch church. This tradition, which doubtless has a foundation in truth, can relate to none other than Hendrick Harmensen, the original proprietor of the farm mentioned above. He was a progenitor of the Riker family, as his daughter Margaret (Greetie) married Abraham Rycken, their ancestor." (1)p. 22 footnote, and (2) p. 12)

After his decease, "... his widow, Tryn Herxker, intermarried, in 1645 with Jeuriaen Fradell, a native of Moravia, and subsequently a deacon of the Dutch Church at New Amsterdam, who on September 5th of the above year, obtained a ground brief in his own name for the estate of Harmensen. It is therein designated as 'a piece of land lying on Long Esland, east of Hellegat, and next to the great bend, (right over against three islands called the Three Brothers) being

the most westerly corner of the same land that lies easterly from the said bend; and extends from the beach off next along a certain swamp, being west 216 rods, to a great fresh-water meadow; along said meadow to a fresh-water creek, (which creek is the division betwixt the land of Mr. Doughty (see chapter on Religion) and this said parcel of land.) and runs further along the said creek, till to the aforesaid bend, and further along the river shore to the place of beginning; containing by measurement 69 morgens 183 feet: to this land appurtains also 8 morgens of the aforesaid meadow; also to this belongs a little island lying about west from the house." (note: a morgen was a Dutch land measure equal to 2.116 acres) (1 pg. 21-22)

Riker (1) also says on page 22: "A good deal of interest attaches to the history of this bouwery, which was subsequently owned by the corporation of the Dutch church at New Amsterdam."

Lee (16) in his Genealogical and Memorial History of New Jersey, says:

"The earliest representative of the family in this country, and the founder of the branch in which we are interested, was Gysbert or Guisbert Rycken, who is said to have come to New Amsterdam from Holland in 1630, in one of the vessels of the West India Company, and to have received extensive grants of land in different places, the most extensive being at Newtown, Long Island which is said to have been a mile square and to have included the island now bearing his name. (see p. 7) Very little is known concerning him, and the records which mention his name are few and scanty. March 31, 1639, he entered into an agreement with Jan Jacobsen respecting the use of a farm and some cattle, the record of which is preserved in the register of the Provincial Secretary of New Amsterdam (Volume 1, page 90), and three months later his contract became the subject of court proceedings, which were finally referred to arbitrators to settle. He died leaving a son Abraham, and one daughter..."

Regardless of who the father and grandfather of Abraham -1- was, it is generally agreed by those who have studied the Rycken-Riker-Ryker family that Abraham Rycken and Margaret (Grietje) Harmensen, daughter of Hendrick Harmensen, were the progenitors of this family in America. Therefore, I will do as most other researchers have done, leave it to the individual descendant to make up his or her own mind, and to future researchers to document any earlier relationships of Abraham in America, Holland and Germany.

"Abraham, only son of record of Gysbert Rycken, was born in 1619 and died in 1689. He seems to have accompanied his father from Holland and about six years after the latter had received his patent for his Newtown land, to have obtained from the West India Company a tract of land adjoining for himself, which he had patented to him two years afterward by Governor Kieft. The grant to his father was in 1632, that to himself in 1638, and his patent is dated August 8, 1640, signed by William Kieft, Director General." (16.Lee) (2) pg. 19)

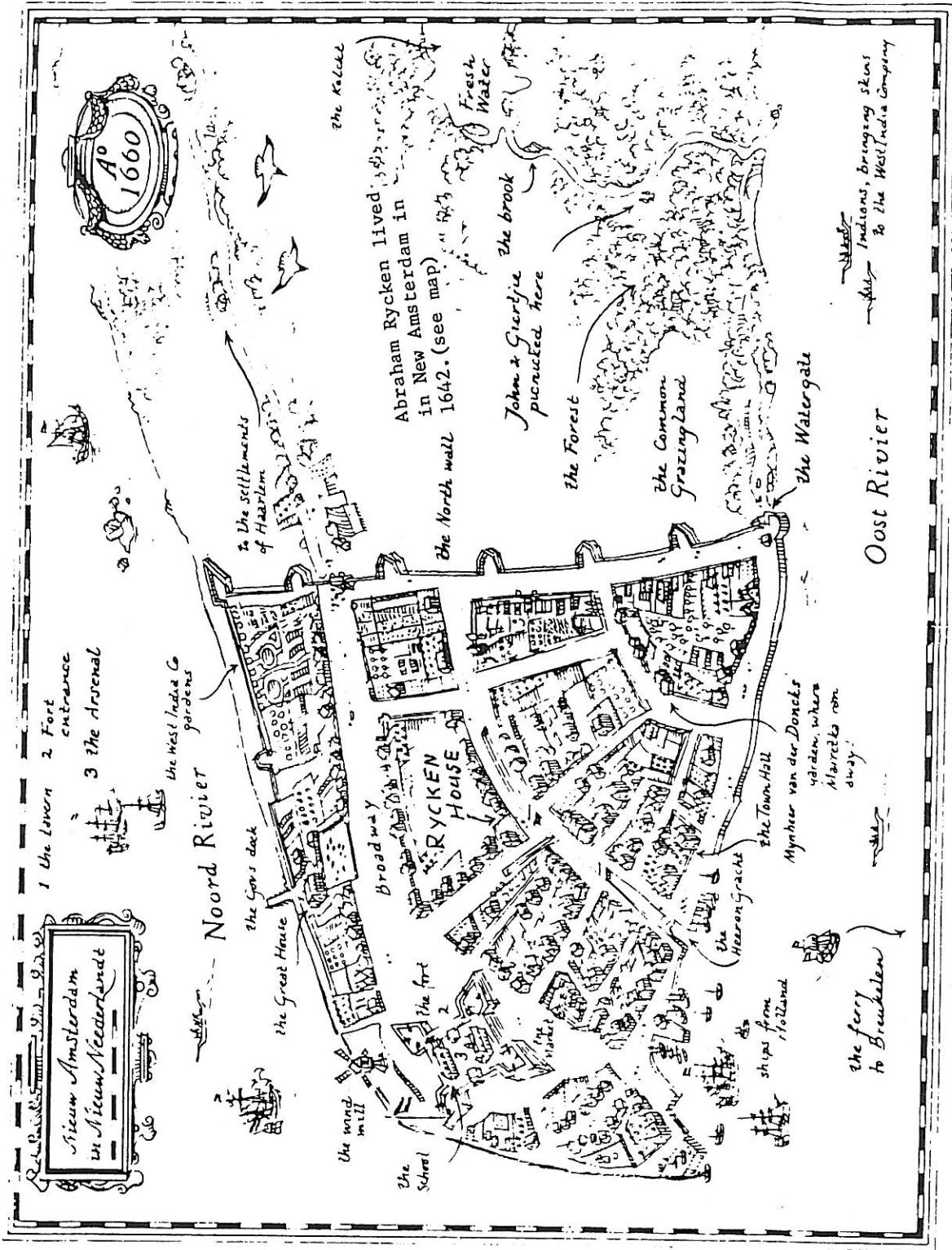
In the meantime, Abraham married Margaret (Grietje or Grietie) Harmensen, daughter of Hendrick Harmensen and Tryn Herxker who lived "upon the northern border of Mespat, at what is now (1852) Fish's Point." (1) pg. 16. There is no date given for the marriage of Abraham and Grietie, but we can assume it was in 1637 or earlier or the first couple of months of 1638 since their first child Ryck Abramsen was born ca 1638. If, in fact, Abraham was born in 1619, as earlier reported, he would have been 17 or 18 years of age when married.

It is possible (but not documented) that his marriage at this age might have been the basis of the first land grant in 1638 mentioned above. "Abraham and Grietie were members of the (Dutch) Church as appears on the list of members for 1649. Most of their children were baptised in (the Dutch Church) within Fort Amsterdam." (1) pg. 302 and (2) pg. 102

Abraham Rycken was involved in many land deals in his early years in Newtown. It was not unusual in those days for "overlapping grants" and for patents to be given. First there was the patroon system and then came the various Dutch Governors from Peter Minuit to Peter Stuyvesant who was the last governor before the English took over that area and renamed it New York, in honor of the Duke of York.

The following is from the Genealogical and Memorial History of New Jersey by Frances Bazley Lee. (16) (2) pgs. 19-22

"...February 26, 1654, he (Abraham) received the ground-brief of a farm which turned out afterwards to be included in the grant that had been made to the Dutch Church in New Amsterdam for an 'Armen Bouwerie'. June 3, 1655, Reverend Dr. Johannes Megapolensis, the Dutch minister at New Amsterdam, and Johannes de Peyster, deacon and schepen of the city, appeared before the council and stated in behalf of the overseers of the poor, 'that said board had some time ago bought for the behalf and best of the poor a certain bouwerie situate on the other side of Hell-gate, and that the Honorable Director General Petrus Stuyvesant had given to the board a piece of land near the said bouwerie, which annex they intended in time to turn into a new plantation or bouwerie, when God's blessing had increased their stock of cattle.' They had discovered, however that 'this piece of land or a part of it had afterwards been given to one Abraham Rycken, but as the said Abraham Rycken is a poor man who has no more than he can earn with his hands, they are neither able nor willing to disturb him; yet they have cause to remonstrate, because the said Abraham Rycken closed up and fenced in a public road, which had been in use as such for many years, to the great prejudice and disadvantage of said bouwerie of the poor. They request, therefore, most respectfully, that said Abraham Rycken be directed and ordered to remove the posts and rails or palisades erected by him and to make the road and then leave it as it had been formerly and long before he came there. They give also to understand, that the small farm obliquely opposite the said Poor Farm, commonly called Huelicken, or Borger Jorissen Island, would be very suitable, useful and profitable to their board for the pasturing of their pigs and

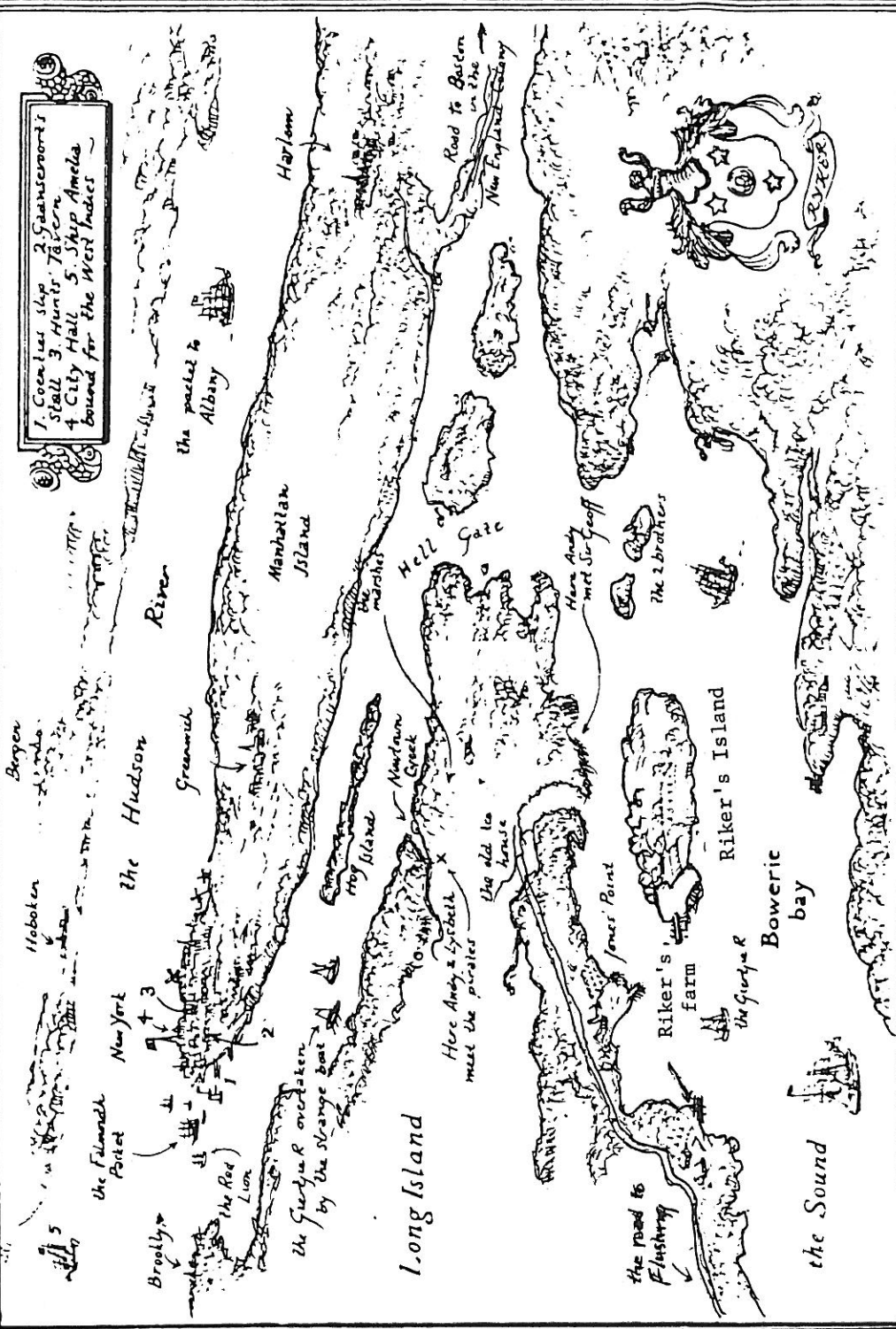


From ISLAND CITY by Lavinia Riker Davis

A View of 17 181

1 View of the Island of Manhattan a Part of
Islands & waters: faithfully executed by P.E. Spar

Long Island, showing the various Settlements.
Aeneas Damm 1720



From ISLAND CITY by Lavinia Riker Davis



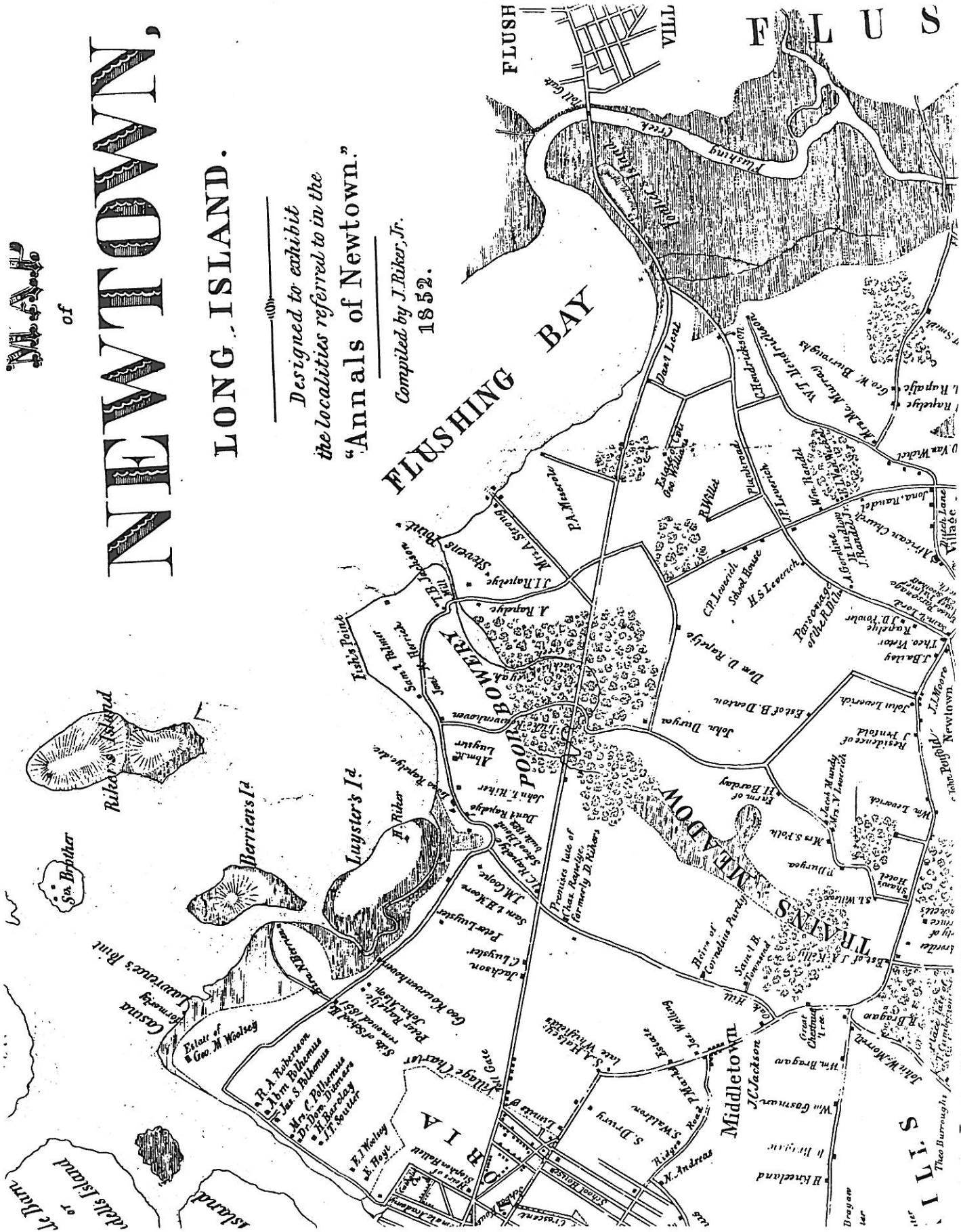
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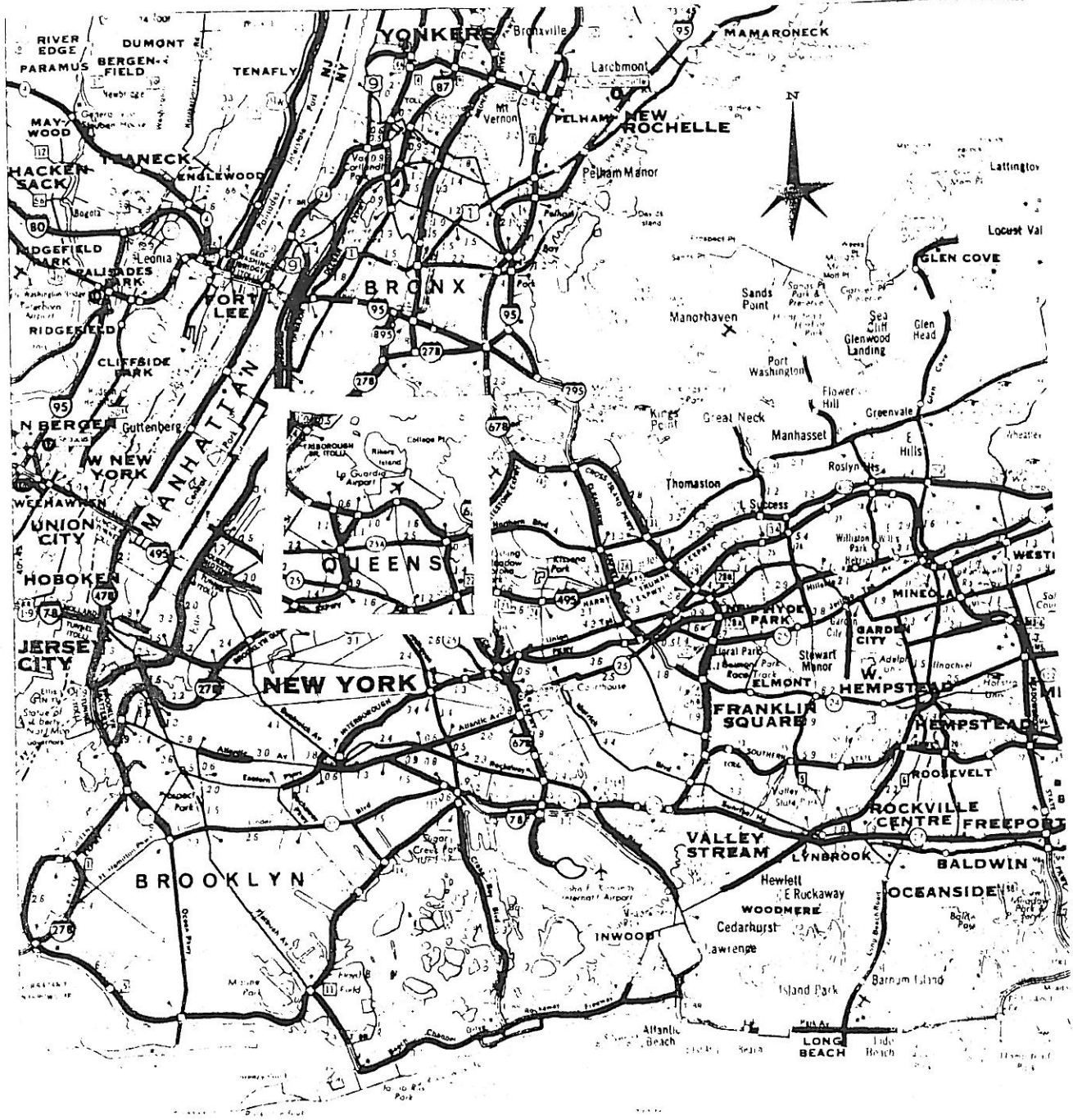
NEWTOWN,

LONG ISLAND.

*Designed to exhibit
the localities referred to in the
"Annals of Newtown."*

*Compiled by J. Riker, Jr.
1852.*





The area within the square on the current map of New York City is the approximate area covered by James Riker, Jr. with his map in 1852 shown on the preceding page.

S
 I.I.I.S
 These Burroughs
 John

cattle, and requested therefore that if it had not been given to others it might be given and granted to the board for the benefit of the poor.' To this petition the council replied 'that a committee shall be appointed to proceed and inspect the road closed up by Abraham Rycken, as to the island it had been granted away a long time ago.' The island referred to was Hewlett's or Suyster's Island, called 'Huelicken' because acquired by 'hewelyck', or marriage. To the above incidents may be traced the origin of the name 'Poor Bowery' by which the old plantation at Newtown has been known for centuries. August 19, 1664, Governor Peter Stuyvesant, patented to Abraham Rycken, the whole of his Long Island property, which included not only what he had procured for himself, but also Riker's Island and the other tracts of his father Gysbert Rycken, and three years later, after the surrender of the English, Governor Nicoll, December 24, 1667, confirmed the patent.

"In 1642, in company with Jan Pietersen, from Amsterdam, Abraham Rycken obtained a patent to a house and lot next door to 'Master Heyl', at what is now the northwest corner of Bridge and Broad Streets. April 4, 1642, Pietersen and Rycken sold this land to Michel Piquet, a Frenchman from Rouen, Normandy, who in turn leased it on August 28, 1645 to Teunis Craie. November 20, 1642, Pietersen and Abraham Rycken procured a patent for another lot containing 15 rods near Fort Amsterdam, which was apparently sold to Mighiel Paullussen, as May 6, 1645, Abraham Rycken obtained a judgment in his favor from the court in an action he had brought against that person for the price of the land. February 4, 1646, he obtained a third patent for 'a lot on the Graft on Manhattan Island, next to Adriaen Vincent and Laurens Petersen and heretofore occupied by Peter the Italian.' This man was Pietro Alberts, and the tract extended along the easterly side of the ditch that ran down the middle of the present Broad Street, and gave it its name of Heere Graft, in remembrance of the street in old Amsterdam bearing the same name. The Broad Street frontage of the two lots owned by Adriaen Vincent and Abraham Rycken was about 200 feet and extended from the north corner of the present South William Street to a narrow crossroad, later known as Prinse Street, and which somewhat widened exists today as an easterly extension of Beaver Street. January 21, 1651, Abraham Rycken sold one half of his lot to Jochem Beeckman, a shoemaker, and on the other half upon which as early as 1647 he had built a house, he seems to have lived himself, or rather to have kept the property as his town house, and the center of his trading operations, spending at least part of his time after 1655 on his farm on Long Island. Previous to this date the latter property had been occupied by William Hutchinson, who held it under lease dated July 2, 1643.

"In 1656, Abraham Rycken made a voyage to the Delaware in hopes that he might be able to procure the skins which the West India Company's laws forbade him dealing in in New Amsterdam. Ascending the river in canoes, the boat in which he and his companions were stranded near the falls of the river and had to be unloaded before it could be gotten again afloat. Bidding his boatmen encamp on the banks of the river until his return, Abraham Rycken visited Fort Casimir near New Castle, where he learned that his efforts to obtain peltries would

prove abortive. He then returned to New Amsterdam, and sometime afterwards he took up his permanent residence on his farm at the Poor Bowery. In Dominie Hendrik Selyn's list of the members of the Dutch Church in New York in 1656, Abraham is noted as one of the five families living on the 'Arms Bouwerie', and in Valentine's list of owners of houses and lots in New Amsterdam in 1674 the residents of that part of the Heere Graft on which his house had stood instead of reading Adriaen Vincent, Simon Felle, Abraham Rycken and Jochem Beeckman, reads, Adriaen Vincent, Johannes de Peyster, John Vincent, Anna and Jochem Beeckman, showing not only that the property had changed hands, both Felle and Rycken having sold out, but also that the city was rapidly building up, the two lists showing the difference between 1655 and twenty years later. November 25, 1683, Governor Dongan gave Newtown a patent of land granted to the inhabitants in 1652 by Stuyvesant, and in the list of 107 patentees, named Abraham Ricke is the twenty-second. His will is dated March 9, 1688 and the inventory of his estate April 5, 1689. They are recorded in Jamaica deeds, liber A, page 36."

The above material is apparently based on materials and sources available in the office of the Secretary of State of the State of New York in Albany, because I found these same sources listed in the Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State, Albany, New York. Dutch. (2 pg. 21) This reference is edited by E. B. O'Callaghan and printed in 1865 by Weed Parson & Company, Printers. My reason for calling this particular source to your attention is because of the humor I find in the incidents listed below and which I have taken word for word from the Calendar of Historical Manuscripts. (2 pg. 21)

On Page 18 of the Calendar of Historical Manuscripts this reference is shown as being found on page 13 of the Register of the Provincial Secretary:

"March 27, 1642. Declaration. Tobias Tonisen, that Jacques Bentyn had said that certain stolen hogs had been eaten in Abraham Rycken's house."

On page 79 of the Calendar of Historical Manuscripts the next reference is to the Council Minutes, pages 116-118:

"March 27, 1642. Court proceedings. Abraham Rycken vs. Jacques Bentyn, slander."

On page 80 of the Calendar the next reference is to the Council Minutes, pages 121-122:

"April 10, 1642. Court proceedings. Abraham Rycken vs. Jacques Bentyn, slander; defendant proves that pork had been eaten at plaintiff's house."

"It would appear that our ancestor got nowhere with his suit for slander in this case, since the defendant proved that pork had been

B I O G R A P H I E S

Biographies in this book are in a straight line of the lineage from Abraham Rycken (A-1) 1619-1689 to David Jones Ryker (184-842-5) 1823-1896.

David Jones Ryker and Elinor Hall had three children who lived to be married and have issue. The biographies begin with these children, Rebecca Jane, John Henry, and Jared Alexander.

Unfortunately, biographical material on the descendants of Rebecca Jane have not been obtained, however family record sheets (pages 401-441) lists statistical data on many of these descendants.

John Henry Ryker and his wife, Miranda Fugate had twelve children and biographical material on several of these descendants have not been obtained in sufficient detail to do biographical sketches. Where material has been available, they have been included, some to the current generation.

Most of the biographies on the line of Jared Alexander (the authors line) have been brought down to the current generation.

Every effort has been made to document the information in the biographies. Most of them have been obtained from the descendants who provided information on themselves and or their parents and grandparents. Still, there are likely to be errors of commission and omission for which the author is truly sorry if they cause anyone discomfort.

eaten in Abraham Rycken's house. However, it would appear that Abraham Rycken's character was not particularly besmirched since he proceeded to better himself financially and in every other way, according to later records. Abraham Rycken was in court many times, mostly in connection with problems concerning land."

FIRST GENERATION

Line of Descent: 1

Abraham Rycken (A-1) 1619-1689, married Grietje (Margaret Hendricksee) daughter of Hendrick Harmensen and Tryn Herxker, (about 1637) date not known. They were members of the Dutch Reformed Church and brought their children up in that faith. (Note: see previous pages for details of activities)

The children of Abraham Rycken and Grietje Harmensen were:
(Note: page numbers in parenthesis in the statements on the children are taken from the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, Vol. 67. Apparently they are from the church records showing baptismal information) (2 pages 102-103)

- B-1 Ryck Abramsen. Born 1638. He adopted the name of Lent and became the ancestor of the family of that name, removed to Westchester County, New York, and was one of the original patentees of the famous Ryck's patent.
- B-2 Jacobus. Born 1640 and died in infancy. Baptised in New Amsterdam, father Abraham Jijck. Sponsors, Hans Hansen and Anneke Dominco. (page 11).
- B-3 Jacobus (or Jack). Born 1643, baptised in New Amsterdam, October 18, 1643. Parents Abraham Rijck and Grietje Hendricks, sponsors Borger Joris, Geertie Rederhas. He Joined his brother Ryck in procuring Ryck's patent, but in 1715 sold his interest to his nephew Hercules Lent, lived at upper Yonkers, and died without issue. (page 16)
- B-4 Hendrick. Born 1646, baptised in New Amsterdam, February 17, 1647, father Abraham Rijck, Sponsors, Pieter van Aerden, Hillegard Joris, Beertie Boudewijn. Died in infancy.
- B-5 Marytje or Mary, Born 1649, baptised in New Amsterdam, February 12, 1649, father Abraham Rijcke. Sponsors, Antie Gerrits. Married Sibout H. Krankheyt and afterwards of manor of Cortlandt.
- B-6 Jan or John. Born 1651, baptised in New Amsterdam, July 25, 1651. Sponsors Jochem Joehcns, Tryntie Jans (page 29) Married in 1691 to Sarah Schouten, widow of Paulus Vanderbeeck.
- B-7 Aeltje or Aletta. Born 1653, baptised in New Amsterdam November 9, 1653, father Abraham Rijcke. Sponsor Hillegard Joris, Marritie Maens (page 36). Married Captain John Harmense, also of manor of Cortlandt.

- B-8 Abraham. Born 1655, baptised December 26, 1655, parents Abraham and Grietje Hendricks (Rijcke). Sponsor, Sara Sanders (page 40). Abraham Rijcke (Rycken, Jr.) was married in New Amsterdam to Grietje Janse van Buytenhuysen in 1682 as Abraham Abrahamsz Rijcke (page 50). He died August 20, 1746.
- B-9 Hendrick. Born 1662, baptised September 28, 1662, parents Abraham Rijcke and Grietje Hendricks, no sponsor (page 66). Joined his brothers Ryck and Jacobus and changed his name to Lent.

SECOND GENERATION

Line of Descent: 18

Abraham Rycken (Riker) (B-8) was the son of Abraham Rycken (A-1) and Grietie (Margaret Hendrickse) daughter of Hendrick Harmensen and Tryn Herxker. He was born in 1655 in New Amsterdam (exact date not given) but church records show he was baptised on 26 December, 1655. "He was married on 10 January 1682 at New Amsterdam to Grietje Janse daughter of Jan Gerritis Van Buytenhuysen of New York by his inter-marriage with Tryntie, daughter of Jan Van Luyt, of Holland." (1) pg.302.

The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, Vol. 67, page 50, lists his name at marriage as Abraham Abrahamsz Rijcke.

Abraham (B-8) proved to be a man of intelligence, and inheriting the paternal estate, added considerable to the extent of his lands, his most important purchase being that of a third of the Tuder patent, on November 2, 1688. James Riker, Jr., (1) gives a full account of the events leading up to the Tuder patent on pages 108-114. In general, the situation evolved from the "confirmatory charter" in 1686 giving to Newtown (its residents) certain lands which they had inhabited and improved. Governor Richard Nicoll presented this about the first of the year 1666 but it needing revision was not fully acceptable until 1686 when Governor Thomas Dongan, who had replaced Nicoll, approved the revised document on the 25th day of November 1686. Riker (1) says on page 113, "As will be observed, this patent reserves to the forty-six individuals first named therein, being original purchasers of the township, or possessed of purchase rights, the exclusive control of the unappropriated land within the purchase lines; the exercise of which right subsequently became a cause of dissatisfaction among the remaining inhabitants. In that section of the town formerly known as the out-plantations, very little vacant land remained, but this was government property. The principal, if not the only tract, lay in Hellgate Neck, and was bounded on the south by the line of the Indian purchase, to the eastward by poor's bouweries, to the westward by the lines of the patents belonging to the inhabitants of Mespat Kills, and to the north by the lands of William Hallett.

"On the 18th of March 1886, John Tuder, of New York, an attorney-at-law and subsequently recorder of the city, applied to the council for

the above described land, which was granted to him, and a patent issued July 22nd following, reserving an annual quit rent of one bushel of winter wheat. Two years later, Mr. Tudor sold his patent to three of the inhabitants of Newtown." (Abraham (B-8) was one of the three)

In his later years, Abraham lost his sight and was entirely blind for a number of years. Just before his death he regained his eyesight, and then almost immediately died. His death came in his 91st year on 20 August 1746. His wife, Grietie Rycken, who was born 10 January 1661 preceded him in death at age 71 on 15 November, 1732.

The following is taken from an article in the New York Sun of April 2, 1930 (1938 - see earlier explanation). It has to do with the destruction of the house by fire but also mentions the Magic Pear Tree with this paragraph:

"Before the fire two weeks ago, buried in the soil in the front yard, were sprouts and roots of an old pear tree that also had a story. Abraham Rycken, the second, son of the man who built the house, was 91 years old. For more than a score of years he had been blind. At his side his children had grown into old men and women; his grandchildren had matured; and great-grandchildren had been born. Abraham grieved because he could not see them. After one sight of them, he said, he would die in peace. One late afternoon, 20 August 1746, Abraham was sitting under the pear tree. Suddenly his sight returned. He rushed to the house and feasted his eyes on the children the years had changed, the children he had never seen. Then he calmly walked back to expire beneath the branches of the tree. That episode started a legend that the pear tree had miraculous powers."

Before his death, he settled his estate on his sons, Abraham (C-5) and Andrew (C-7) on 10 November, 1733. Abraham and Andrew divided the property. Abraham located upon that part of his father's estate which included a third of the Tudor patent. The tenement which he erected yet remains, and forms the center room of the house standing on these premises, now owned (1851) by the heirs of Charles Rapelye. Andrew, who was named after his uncle, Andrew Buytenhuysen, inherited the homestead at the Bowery Bay.

I find no mention in the ANNALS OF NEWTOWN (Riker (1)) or other sources available to me at this time, of Abraham (B-8) making any provisions for his other children. It is possible, even likely, that some arrangements were made with Abraham and Andrew for the welfare of the other children since his will was made 13 years before he died, yet was already blind. I mention this because our ancestor, John (C-4 - 184) is not mentioned.

Abraham who died in 1746 and his wife Grietie who died on 15 November 1732 are buried in the family cemetery in the Poor Bowery. A rude slab marks his grave. (This is the Old Burying Ground discussed earlier)

Abraham Rycken, Jr. (B-8) and his wife Grietie Van Buytenhuysen had issue of eight children, five boys and three girls. (1) pg. 303 and (2) pg. 104. Their children were:

- C-1 Catherine Rycken, born 1683. No further information about Catherine.
- C-2 Margaret Rycken, born 1685 and died January 8, 1775 at age 90. She was married three times, first to Peter Braisted, then Thomas Lynch, and later Anthony Duane who was the father of James Duane, who became mayor of New York. Margaret left no issue.
- C-3 Mary Rycken, born 1688. She married Hasuelt Matthyus Keuren, of Kingston. No date of death given or if she and Keuren had issue.
- C-4 John Rycken, born in 1690, died in 1783. He was 92 or 93, depending on the date of his birth which is not available to me at this time. He married Geertie, daughter of Teunis Wiltsee. Wiltsee owned a farm in Hells Gate area of Newtown.
- C-5 Abraham Rycken, born 1691, died 23 February 1770. He married Geesie Van Alst, daughter of Johannes Van Alst, of the Dutch Kills.
- C-6 Hendrick Rycken, born 1696, died 27 July 1761. Married 20 October 1722 to Elizabeth, daughter of John Peek. Hendrick was a blacksmith at Burling Slip, where he owned property.
- C-7 Andrew Rycken, born 1699 and died 12 February 1763. He inherited the homestead at Bowery Bay and married 13 November 1733 Jane, widow of Captain Dennis Lawrence and daughter of John Berrien, Esq.
- C-8 Jacob Rycken, born 1702 and died 1778. Married Catherine Pumroy on 25 May 1729, daughter of the Rev. Samuel Pumroy, a Presbyterian minister. (See Religion - Presbyterian Church)

THIRD GENERATION

Line of Descent: 184

John Riker, (C-4), son of Abraham Rycken, Jr. (B-8) and Grietie (Greetie) Van Butenjaunsen, was born in 1690 in Newtown (New York). He married Geertie (Gartrung) daughter of Teunis Wiltsee of Newtown, (1) page 309. We do not know the date of birth of John or Geertie nor do we have the date of marriage. She was baptised at Flatbush 25 April 1698.

Geertie was from one of the "old families" at Newtown as her grandfather was Hendrick Martensen Wiltsee who early emigrated from Copenhagen, Denmark, and was the ancestor of many families bearing this name, now written variously but more commonly Wiltsie (Wiltsee). He married at New Amsterdam, in 1660, Margaret, widow of Harmen Jansen and daughter of Jan Meyrinck. ...

"In 1681 he bought the farm at Hellgate, now owned by the Polbemus family (1851) which in 1706 he conveyed to his son Teunis (Wiltsee). He had sons Martin, born 1666; Hendrick, born 1669; Myndert, b. 1673; Teunis, b. 1674; and Jacob, b. 1676, all of whom married and had families. ..." Riker (1) pg. 373.

John -184- Riker's father Abraham, Jr. -18- inherited the family estate from his father Abraham -A-1- and added to it considerable new lands. It is not known if John inherited any land from his father, whose will was proved 21 June 1765, and mentioned only his sons Abraham and Andrew. (See Abraham Jr. -18-)

John grew to manhood in Newtown and married. His activities as a young person are unknown. After his marriage he and his wife continued to live in Newtown until 1744 when they moved to Closter, then Rockland County, New York, and now Bergen County, New Jersey (1851). (Note: In 1744 it was probably Orange County New York as Rockland County was formed from Orange County in 1783, according to Handbook for Genealogists from Everton Publishers, sixth edition.)

John had purchased a farm and in 1745 built a house "on the spot where his grandson, Jacob Riker now lives" (1851). Jacob was the son of John Jr. (D-6) who inherited the paternal farm from John -184-. John Jr. was 50 years of age before he married Margaret Blauvelt and Jacob was born with twin Gertrude on 19 August 1786. (1) pg. 309

Apparently John -184- added to his original purchase of the farm at Closter, although we have no documentation, for he speaks of property in Orange County New York. We have no documentation of what John did while he resided in Newtown, perhaps he farmed or operated a sawmill since this was the work in which he engaged in New Jersey. Since his will was proved in Orangetown (Orangeburg) N.Y. it is likely that he owned property in both states. Research by Helen Ryker (23) and her sister Marion Chiarello of Buffalo, N.Y. provide some basis for this in that his fifth child Elizabeth was born in 1732 at Harrington which lies partly in Bergen Co. N.J. and partly in Orange(town), Rockland Co. N.Y. He also mentions in his will "... which I owned in Orange County."

John and Geertie Riker were members of the Reformed Dutch Church at Schraalenburgh, N.J. and "they yet live in the memory of their descendants as devout christians." (1), pg. 309.

He survived his wife Geertie two years and died in 1783, possibly in September or October since his will was proved on 28 October 1783. (Libr. 25, Pg. 288) Geertie who was baptised at Flatbush on 25 April 1689 in Newtown, N.Y. died in 1781.

The children of John (C-4) and Geertie Wiltsee were:

D-1 Abraham, born 25 November 1721, died 9 February 1820. In the war of independence he was a warm friend of liberty, and most of his sons did service in the militia. He was a devout christian and lived to be 98 years old. He married Elizabeth Concklin.

- D-2 Deborah Rycken, No date of birth, death or of her marriage to Daniel Martine is listed.
- D-3 Margaret Rycken, No date of birth, death or of her marriage to Gov. Blauvelt.
- D-4 Mary Rycken, No date of birth, death or of her marriage to John Bell.
- D-5 Elizabeth Rycken, No date of birth, death or her marriage to Abm. Blauvelt. (2) carries the name as Abner (1) abbreviates it to Abm, which could also stand for Abraham.) There is no further information on this family available at this time.
- D-6 John Rycken, born 25 October 1736, died 6 October 1828. He married Margaret Blauvelt when he was 50 years of age. Their children were: Jacob and Gertrude, twins; and Abraham who married Grace Gracie, Jacob married Leah Paulas, and Gertrude married Michael Hines.
- D-7 Catherine Rycken, born 1738. No date of death. She married John Laurence and later John Ryder. No dates.
- D-8 Gerardus Rycken, born 16 November 1740, died 14 September 1781. Gerardus married Rachel Demarest (Demaree) 20 November 1762 at New York and before his father's death moved to Pennsylvania and then to Kentucky.

Will of John Riker 184, son of Abraham Rycken, Jr. 18, son of Abraham Rycken - 1. (Number of will - 1412B, State Archives, Trenton, N.J.)

N.J. ARCHIVES 1st Series Vol. 35 Wills VI p 339 June 21, 1765.

Will of John Riker of Orangetown, New York; eldest son of Abraham, to my wife Geertie all personal & real estate while my widow, son Abraham the house and lot and 1/2 the saw mill and 1/3 of my salt meadow; and half of rest of land in swamps to be equally divided between my sons Abraham and Grades (Gerardus) and John. My son Grades must have 40 acres off my farm where I live; son John 1/2 my saw mill and the house where I live and 1/3 of my salt meadow and 1/2 the rest of the land and swamp which I owned in Orange County. My youngest son Grades the house and land where he lives and the said 40 acres which I owned in Orange County; also 1/3 of the salt meadow.

Children: Abraham, John, Grades, Deborah, Margaret, Mary, Elizabeth, Catherine the personal estate. And my five daughters to be paid 100 b.; to Deborah (wife of Daniel Martine) 20 b.; to Margaret (wife of Corn. Blauvelt) 20 b.; to Mary (Wife of Johnnes Bell) 20 b.; to Elizabeth (wife of Abm. Blauvelt) 20 b.; to Catharine 20 b..

Exec. son Abraham and son-in-law Daniel Martine.