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PHILIP GEREARDY OF NEW AMSTERDAM

By

CHARLES KNOWLES BOLTON

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PHILIP GEREARDY OF NEW AMSTERDAM,  
 LANDLORD OF THE CITY TAVERN,  
 AND HIS RHODE ISLAND DESCENDANTS.

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By CHARLES KNOWLES BOLTON, A.B., Librarian of the Boston Athenæum.

IN early colonial times settlers along the coast of Rhode Island carried on a considerable trade with the Dutch at the mouth of the Hudson. At New Amsterdam there were many well-known English and New England merchants. But on the shore of Narragansett bay few Dutchmen became permanent residents, although occasional marriages occurred. Through one of these marriages many New Englanders may claim descent from an interesting figure in old New York.

Philip Gereardy and his son Jan were perhaps not of the stuff from which some men would choose ancestors, but they were picturesque in a manner which was in harmony with their environment.

1. PHILIP<sup>1</sup> GEREARDY was an early inhabitant of Manhattan, where he contracted with Juriaen of Osnaburgh for a house. It seems that Juriaen did not build the house in the time agreed upon, for in the spring of 1641 two witnesses swore to the agreement and Philip obtained a judgment in his favor on the 13th of June. In a year or two he received a grant of a house lot on the north side of the first road from the fort to the ferry, on the present Stone street between Whitehall and Broad streets. This was known first as "the road," later a part of it as the Brouwer straat; it was the first street paved with stone, and the place of residence of the wealthy people of the town, such as Frederick Philipse of Philipse manor. Here Philip, his wife Marie Pollet, and their son Jan lived. May 24, 1644, Philip received by patent a double lot on the common highway, "on the east side of Broadway between Beaver Street and Exchange Place, 110 feet front by 230 feet deep."

In 1642 a stone tavern for the accommodation of travellers was erected, fronting on the East river. It was south of the road to the ferry "in the present north-west corner of Pearl street and Coenties alley," wrote Valentine in 1853. As landlord of this tavern Gereardy became a conspicuous man in New Amsterdam. Prize money was often left in his hands for safe keeping. In January, 1642, he was in trouble for selling beer at a higher rate than that allowed by the ordinance, but was permitted to escape punishment. Not so three months later when he was again in trouble, this time for being absent from guard duty without leave. There is a fine irony in the sentence which couples his two vocations: "To ride the wooden horse during parade, with a pitcher in one hand and a drawn sword in the other." Philip had been released from this undesirable position scarcely a twelve-month when he was seriously wounded while conducting Jan Jansen Damen home one night—probably after an evening spent at the tavern. Damen, a wealthy man and part owner of the privateer La Garce, defended Stuyvesant in Holland in 1649-50, and died upon his return in 1651.

Meanwhile Philip did not always pay his debts, and Augustyn Herrmans in October, 1644, complained of Philip's lack of attention to bills for wine. Little by little, however, he prospered; and when the city authorities, March 13, 1653, drew up a "list of the persons who shall provisionally



contribute the following sums for the purpose of putting this city in a state of defence," he was slated for the moderate tax of fifty guilders. In 1653 the tavern was turned over to the magistracy for a city hall or "stadthuys"; and October 15, 1653, Peter Wolfertsen van Couwenhoven sold to Philip the lot "situate where the sign of the White Horse hangs out, right opposite the Winekel street, New Amsterdam." Van Couwenhoven and his older brother Jacob were leading brewers. Peter himself was Schepen for six years, and lieutenant of the militia company, a near neighbor of the Gereardy family, and a witness at the christening of Philip's grandchildren. This property was no doubt acquired by Philip in order to continue his business. Philip and his wife were often witnesses at church christenings, and Philip was in 1646 appointed custodian of an estate and of orphan children.

There is no direct statement that Jan Gereardy was his son, but the evidence seems to be strong. The Rhode Island records to be mentioned later show that Jan was in the habit of going to New Amsterdam to trade with his father and mother. In all the Dutch records I find no person of his surname except Philip and Marie, who might therefore be the parents referred to. Philip and Marie, moreover, were witnesses at the christening of Jan's children; and finally Philip, according to Valentine's History of New York, left his property to Jan. Very possibly Jan had sisters or aunts in New Amsterdam. Philip Gereardy died between October 11, 1654, and January, 1656; and on November 5, 1656, at the Reformed Dutch church, "Mattheus de Vos, widower of Anna Peters, and Maria Pollet, widow of Philip Gerar," were married.

Mathens de Vos was keeper of the city hall (which as a tavern Philip had managed), a notary public and an active attorney about the courts. In former years he had been a soldier in the service of the company, and as late as 1653 was a cadet in company 4 of the Burgher Corps. After his marriage he seems to have lived in the widow's house, where he continued his legal duties until his death in 1663.

Philip and Marie (or Marritje) had:

2. i. JAN<sup>2</sup>, born probably in the Netherlands.
2. JAN<sup>2</sup> GEREARDY (*Philip*<sup>1</sup>) was a trader, and perhaps when the hour was favorable, a privateer. He seems to have been shrewd and energetic. Previous to June 5, 1648, he became an inhabitant of Warwick, R. I., where he had been drawn through trade; and it may be was induced to settle there from an interest in Mrs. Ezekiel Holliman's daughter. Holliman, who was a man of prominence from Tring in Hertfordshire, and one of the founders of the Baptist church in America, acquired a certain distinction in history by baptizing Roger Williams. His wife Mary, widow of Isaac Sweet, had a daughter Mirabeh whose name Holliman changed to Renewed before she married Jan. How Jan the sailor found favor with such a religious family as the Hollimans must be left to the imagination. If Jan and Renewed were married before 1651 they would seem to have lived but a short time in Rhode Island, for Jan signed his name to a petition July 16, 1651, then residing "on the Island of Ahrumime in the Schuykil in the South River in New Netherland." He had made voyages to the South River (the Delaware) before this time; toward the end of December, 1647, while near the Swedish colony, Governor John Printz did "with force and violence, seize me, Jan Geræt, with my boat called the Siraen, visited the yacht, and handled the goods in an



unchristianlike manner and to the great loss and damage of me Jan Gereat, turned them upside down; took out my munitions of war, which consisted of about 60 lbs. of powder and six guns, but on my promising to use them only when obliged, returned me some powder, about 47 lbs. and three guns; the remainder he kept for himself."

In 1649 Michiel Jansen commissioned Jan to collect a debt from Reynier Dominicus at the South River. But in 1652 he was back in Warwick, where he unwittingly opened a volcano under the family hearth-stone. The case illustrates a curious side of puritan character—a relentlessness that equalled that of the oppressor in England. Arnold, in his History of Rhode Island, relates the story:

"The crew of a small Dutch vessel which had arrived there in January [1652], on a trading voyage, boarded for some two months with John Warner, who was this year the Assistant, or second magistrate of the town, and had stored their goods in his house for sale. One of these men, named Geraerd, was a brother-in-law of Warner, both having married into the family of Ezekiel Holliman. Upon settling their accounts a dispute arose which it was vainly attempted to adjust by arbitration, and the Dutchman appealed to the court. At their request a special session was held. Warner refused to answer to the case, and judgment was entered against him by default, and execution granted for the damages assessed by a jury."

Warner was tried before the General Court of Trials, degraded from office and disfranchised. His house and lands were attached "upon suspicion of insufferable treachery against the town," but were released some time later. In March, 1652, Jan sold to Stukely Westcott certain lands of John Warner taken by execution by Harmanus Harforth of New Amsterdam.

Some months later Gereardy brought down the wrath of the Narragansett sachems upon the settlers, and "four score armed men" marched to Warwick to demand satisfaction. In his crew were three infamous men who had robbed the grave of a sister of the sachem Pessicus. "We fear," wrote Roger Williams, "John Garriard was drawn in by them, at least to consent to share with them in such a booty."

"So," says Williams, "it pleased the Lord to pacify all with our attaching of the Dutchman's goods and debts, until he have made satisfaction to the sachem's charge against him."

Jan, whether at this time a citizen of the Dutch or the English town, carried on a thriving trade with both nations. That the nature of this commerce aroused suspicions is certain. In 1654 Giles Glover, testifying "vpon oath in the assemblie sayth, that he hath been twice at the Dutch, and that for the last time he was there John Gariond did trade something there, and fordere sayth that he saw an order vnder the hand of Mr. Holiman and John Greene, Junior, for their goinge thither, and sayth we brought howes, gunnes and powder, but traded with [them]. He tarred but ten dayes, and [said] that he traded with some that weare not his Father and Mother, and that we brought eighteen ankers of liquers the first voyage, and six the last. Robert Westkote went about to buy bever and liquers; but doth not know that he bought any [thing]



but one hundred howes upon John Gariard accounte, and that John Gariard brought some deare skimmes but some he had from his mother."

In the midst of trading and speculation Jan found time for the christening of his two daughters October 11, 1654, at New Amsterdam. They were called Philippe and Marritie, no doubt from his father and mother. The witnesses were "Philip Geerardts, Pieter Wolfertszen, Marritie Geerardts, Thomas Hall, Hester ter Neuf." Thomas Hall was a man of wealth with whom Jan seems to have had much to do. They were both interested in Newton, Long Island, where the directors on the 5th of November, 1653, granted to "Jean Gerardy" Newton's Point or the Green Hook, comprising twenty morgens or about forty acres. Three days before this "Philip Gerardy" had been granted twenty-five morgens at Long Island.

In 1655 Jan became a freeman of Warwick; and the same year in a deed of a house and lot at G<sup>d</sup> [Gravesend?] to Isaac Grevenraat he signed his name "John Gerardy" (Bergen's King's County Settlers). May 5, 1664, Jan or John Gereardy and two others were allowed £3. 2s 6d. by the assembly for bringing an Indian to prison from Warwick to Newport, they having spent five days in the service. (Austin.)

Jan's next appearance in the records is so little to his credit that whatever construction is given to the words he is left in an unenviable position. Probably Rhode Island justice, as in the case of Jan's brother-in-law, John Warner, was sometimes more relentless than fair, for in New Amsterdam as well as in New England men were persecuted under the guise of justice. Fuller's Warwick gives the record: "July 2, 1666. Ordered that John Garyardy who hath confessed himselfe to be a thiefe and stands convict in a court of record for stealing, bee not for ye future admitted to have anything to doe in ye towne meetings, but is by this order expunged ye soecyety of honest men, which order did pass upon a bill presented by Edmund Calverly Town Clarke."

In 1681 Gereardy and his wife were living in Providence, for Mary Holliman, widow of Ezekiel, in her will dated July 31, 1681, provides that

"In consideration of the Great Love and affection I do bear unto my Son in Law, John Garrardy and my Daughter Renewed Garrardy his wife both formerly of Warwick but now of Providence," they are to have her right, title and interest which she then possessed in the "House lot, meadows and uplands &c. in Warwick."

Jan Gereardy had died before February 24, 1719, when Samuel Gorton testified that he, Gereardy, "did marry a daughter of Mary Holiman formerly wife to Ezekiel Holiman, named Renewed, and that the wives of Jeremiah Smith of Prudence and John Smith now of Kings Town, were reputed to be daughters of John Gereardy by Renewed, their names being Mary and Phillis." (Austin). A facsimile of Jan's autograph appears in the Rhode Island Historical Society publications, new series, vol. 4 (1896), page 109.

Jan and Renewed had:

3. i. MARY.
4. ii. PHILLIS OR PHILIPPA. And probably
5. iii. JOHN.



3. MARY GEREARDY (*Jan<sup>2</sup>, Philip<sup>1</sup>*) was baptized in the Reformed Dutch church in New Amsterdam, October 11, 1654, as "Marritie," when her grandfather and grandmother witnessed the ceremony. She married at Warwick, R. I., January 2, 1672, Jeremiah Smith, son of John Smith of Prudence Island. (N. E. Gen. Reg., July 1883, p. 275.) The facts relating to her husband and his brother I owe chiefly to Austin's invaluable Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island. Jeremiah Smith was a constable in 1688 and a justice of the peace in 1709. He purchased of his wife's uncle James Sweet 300 acres in "Pettaconsett" in 1710. His will, dated in 1716 and proved in 1720, makes Mary one of the executors, and leaves to her the whole income of his lands for life, with a negro woman and girl. In 1722 Mary made a deed to the children of her son Ephraim.

Jeremiah *Smith* and Mary had:

2016587

- i. JOHN, who received 300 acres in Kingstown by his father's will, an income of £4 per year for life, with cows and sheep, also an addition to his house to be built for not more than £25.
  - ii. EPHRAIM, who shared with Ebenezer all right in Boston neck, to have the north part with house. Ephraim Smith's daughter *Renewed* married Daniel Carpenter in 1733, and their daughter Mary Carpenter married Joseph Knowles, who was drowned in 1810 at Prudence Island.
  - iii. EBENEZER, to have the south part of Boston neck, the ferry and ferry house to be equally for the two sons; also £100 to build a house.
  - iv. SARAH, born in April, 1678; died March 12, 1765. Married before 1699 Jeremiah Hazard of North Kingstown. Had: *Mary, Ann, Robert, Sarah, Martha, Hannah, Susannah*. To have £50 and a silver cup by her father's will.
  - v. MARY, married John Congdon of North Kingstown, R. I. They had: *Jeremiah, Mary, John, James*. Received £50, a negro girl Maria, and a silver cup in her father's will.
  - vi. DELIVERANCE, married — Reynolds. Received £100 and a silver cup in her father's will.
4. PHILLIS GEREARDY (*Jen<sup>2</sup>, Philip<sup>1</sup>*) was baptized at the Reformed Dutch church in New Amsterdam, October 11, 1654, as "Philippe," probably in recognition of her grandfather Philip. She married John Smith, brother of Jeremiah, her sister's husband. The brothers were actively engaged in the ferry at Boston neck, Kingstown, R. I.
- In her husband's will, proved in 1730, she was to receive £20 yearly while his widow, a third of the income of his part of the ferry, a negro girl Judah, and some necessities mentioned therein. (Austin.)
- John *Smith* and Phillis had:
- i. JOHN, executor of his father's will. To have farm at Boston neck and building, and then to John's sons John and William. To his five daughters a gold ring each.
  - ii. DANIEL, to have farm in Coweset. Then to his son Daniel.
  - iii. A son.
  - iv. HOPESTILL, married Joseph Northup of North Kingstown. She had *Joseph* and four other children. She was to receive from her father's will £150 and 200 acres at Coweset and a bible for each child.
5. JOHN GEREARDY (*Jan<sup>2</sup>, Philip<sup>1</sup>*) married Deliverance, widow of that John Corp who was sexton of the church at Bristol, or, as the record says, digger of graves, sweeper of the meeting house, and ringer of the bell. Corp died November 1, 1691. If *Renewed*



*Philip Gereardy of New Amsterdam.*

Gereardy had died by this time, John who married the widow Corp *might*, unless future information proves the contrary, be the first Jan, son of Philip. He would however be a man of seventy or more, and as Mr. Austin says in a letter to me, this is hardly likely. As John Corp, first child of Deliverance, was born in 1680, she herself was probably not far from the age of John Gereardy if he was the son of Jan and Renewed. In 1702 John Corp, the son, prayed for permission to dispose of real estate, having leave from his mother Deliverance and stepfather John Gereardy.

John Gereardy and Deliverance had:

6. i. JOHN, born at Bristol, December 22, 1695-6. (Vital Record of R. I.)  
ii. SWEET, a daughter, born at Warwick, May 15, 1699.
6. JOHN GEREARDY (*John<sup>3</sup>, Jan<sup>2</sup>, Philip<sup>1</sup>*), born at Bristol, R. I., December 22, 1695-6. Married November 3, 1720, Mary (Sarah?) Draper. Mr. Austin gives Mary, and the Vital Record gives Sarah as the wife of John.

Children of John Gereardy and Sarah, born at Warwick:

- i. JOHN, born Feb. 12, 1721-2.
- ii. MARY, born March 6, 1723-4.
- iii. EPHRAIM, born March 6, 1726-7.
- iv. PHEBE, born March 8, 1729-30.
- v. SARAH, born August 9, 1733.
- vi. ELIZABETH, born August 21, 1737.













