

A View of The Town of New Castle From The River Delaware, -- Taken the 4th July 1797 -- By Ives le Blanc



# New Castle History

Jim Meek

G20-- Fall 2015

Course web site and syllabus: <http://nc-chap.org/osher>

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PDFs of each week's slides

- 1 Sept. 8 -- 1493 to 1664  
**Two degrees of separation between Christopher Columbus and New Castle**  
  
Why study New Castle? 1925 and 2011 versions  
The usual correct, but incomplete and inadequate story of the beginning of New Castle.  
A more complete story with the addition of Merchant Warriors and the Spice Race  
A still more complete story of colonization: Dutch, Swedes, Dutch, English, Dutch, English, Quakers  
Where precisely was Ft. Casimir/New Amstel, what did it look like?
- 2 Sept. 15 -- 1664 to 1699  
**What Harrison Ford movie shows how the old Dutch House was built?**  
  
Life in Ft Casimir/New Amstel  
Food, beer, fear, hunger, sickness, death  
The "Mail System"  
Women in Ft. Casimir  
Problems with Lord Baltimore  
Duke of York Period  
Long Finne rebellion  
Dike Uprising  
Cranehook & Swanwyck  
First Quaker visit
- 3 Sept. 22 1699 -- to 1776  
**Why did a Pennsylvania governor stage a fake raid on Philadelphia and fire on a merchant ship sailing by New Castle?**  
  
**What fort in New Castle was financed by a lottery?**  
  
Pirates/privateers, who are the good guys? Fear of pirates  
New Charter; Delaware gets separate assembly; New Castle Common founded  
Toleration of pirates gets Penn into trouble; Gov. Markham fired  
Gov. John Evans bizarre and unpopular actions get HIM fired  
French & Indian War (1757) Fear of Indian attacks  
Trade in New Castle: official 1772 spreadsheet of ships, imports and exports  
Revolutionary war: the players; effects of the war on the town
- 4 Sept. 29 -- 1776 to 1804  
**Why were there Frisian horses upriver from New Castle?**  
  
Fortifications near Philadelphia and Wilmington.  
Whigs, Tories, Scots-Irish Prebyterians, Anglicans  
Secretary to British Commander Lord Howe visits New Castle & Spring Garden  
Seven of the setbacks in New Castle history  
Finally, self government in 1797  
The Academy (c1800), Ice Piers, proposed C&D Canal (1803),
- 5 Oct 6 -- 1804 to 1850  
**Who was the New Castle resident called America's first architect?**  
  
Latrobe Survey (1805)  
The Arsenal (1809)  
Fear in New Castle (1813)  
The fire of 1824. Started by two boys trying to warm a puppy? Reminiscences by a girl who lost her home.  
(And needlework she did, and education of boys and girls in those years).  
The NC&FT RR. Frenchtown, 60,000 stone sleepers, source of design of Baldwin's locomotives  
PBS documentary on Benjamin Henry Latrobe
- 6 Oct 13 -- Portraits -- People to 1850  
**What son of a prominent resident was an opium dealer and diplomat**  
**What FOUR people who lived or worked in New Castle signed the Declaration of Independence**  
  
Lawyers, judges, sailors, merchant, mother of 13 (!) famous architects, ministers, patriots, librarians, musicians, nationally famous bride

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# Main source for the talks:

## <http://nc-chap.org>

- Huge amount of information on New Castle (currently >4,000 entries)
- If you don't find what you're looking for, try the local google search box
- Hint: To find stuff, use drop down menus, look at interesting topics like portraits and the **resources** pages.

And for the help and information:

UD (De Cunzo, Ames, Sheppard)

State (Lukezic, Guerrant, Snyder, Cunningham)

Hist. Soc. (Anstine, Connolly, Dalleo, Smarr...)

J. Milner Assoc. (Catts)

Homeowners: Mund, Davis, McEwen, Windle, Burk,

Wipf, Jodlbauer, Davis, Fiske, Wik, Fleck, Deemer,

Koch, Viola, Jarvis, Dunn, Poskitt, Lloyd,

Kelly, Rowland, Beale, Pennell, Vukelic, Maltenfort,

Seitz, Wirt, Beaumont, Pollard, McGraw, Monigle ... ..

Google Custom Search Search

Related web sites: [NCHS](#), [DHS](#), [Courthouse UD Library City Blogs: NCHS, DHS](#)

### New Castle, Delaware Community History and Archaeology Program ([nc-chap.org](http://nc-chap.org))

"A View of The Town of New Castle From The River Delaware, -- Taken the 4th July 1797 -- By Ives le Blanc" Courtesy G. & E. Hargraves

Overview Resource Links Projects History Archaeology Images Maps

#### Recent NC CHAP Projects

**Portraits of the rich and powerful** in New Castle (1750-1850). Portraits of more than 40 people who lived within four blocks of each other, including four signers of the Declaration of Independence (2 from DE, 1 each from NJ & PA), governors, judges, state and U. S. senators, an opium merchant/Consul-General/son of a Signer, Bishop of Virginia.

**Resources:** Online official records, laws, histories, census records, births, deaths, marriages, biographies, student theses and papers ...

**Tax records** for New Castle, 1776-1826 -- data on wealth, politics and religion! Tax records for the [New Castle Constabulary](#), 1683. An easy to understand tax method.

The State of The Town in the 1890's: Promotional picture booklets produced by the [N. C. Board of Trade](#) (1mb) and the Commercial Club -- [Ideal New Castle](#) (4 mb).

The Alexander B. Cooper [History of New Castle](#). Written in 1906-1908, this series of articles for the Sunday Star offers vignettes of early New Castle history, and glimpses of life there in the 1800's available nowhere else.

An [amazing diagram](#) compressing 247 years of ownership information into a single image.

Areas at **risk of flooding** in Historic New Castle. Comparison of an elevation map with the flooding that occurred during storms in 2012.

Fifty years ago: [New Castle on the cover](#) of the Saturday Evening Post

**Landscapes of New Castle Common** -- The [Surveys of 1704 and 1894](#) -- What property did the deed include? How does it compare to modern holdings of the Trustees? Are any of the property marker trees still standing that formed the 'metes and bounds' of the survey? Where were the farms and the farmhouses?

**Digitization of the Latrobe Survey**

# Suggested Text For This Class

- New Castle Delaware, A Walk Through Time,  
Benson & Hoffercker, 2011  
(Available in Arsenal Bookstore, NCPL or from Amazon)

Also of interest, but not a general text:

- Historic American Towns along the Atlantic Coast  
W.Boeschenstein 1999

Interesting general reference on New Castle and eight other small towns with characteristics that made them desirable and unique. Nice bucket-list of places to visit? Available in Arsenal Bookstore, NCPL.

# New Castle – an active adult community but not limited to over 55

- Safe, cute, interesting, picturesque, well documented, well preserved nearby town that is fun to learn about and visit (J. Meek)
- Easy walk to library, post office, drugstore, senior center, parks, activities, churches, restaurants
- Strong sense of community
- Housing is modest sized and affordable (maybe quirky)
- Little or no yard maintenance
- Many younger citizens including young families

# Where to start?

## -- The (usual) beginning



Peter Stuyvesant  
attr. H. Couturier

1638 Swedes come on Kalmar Nyckel;  
founded Ft. Christina (Wilmington)

1651 Stuyvesant founds Fort Casimir on South (Delaware)  
River for the Dutch West India Company (GWC)



1654 Swedes capture Ft. Casimir; Stuyvesant recaptures,  
names it New Amstel

1664 English capture New Amsterdam (NYC) & New Amstel

1674 English recapture New Netherland from Dutch

1682 Wm. Penn arrives

1776 Revolution declared on courthouse steps



Cruise liners

*"El Morro" San Juan National Historical Park, Puerto Rico*



**The Dutch West India Company (GWC) was not just a warm and friendly trading company**

The GWC in 1625 was simultaneously seeking to expand trading areas in Manhattan, Delaware River, Brazil and San Juan!



San Juan National Historic Site

## The Dutch Attack of 1625

On the ground in front of you hundreds of Dutch and Spanish soldiers died in 1625. The monument to your left and the painting on this panel commemorate their battle.

In a month-long attack and siege Dutch forces tried to take San Juan, and they nearly did. But Spanish defenders in El Morro—including many townspeople—drove them off. As they left, the attackers looted and burned the city. The 1625 attack showed Spain that even stronger defenses were needed to hold San Juan, and it confirmed the loyalty of the local citizens, who fought fiercely here, and died, for Spain.



# Reading histories focused on New Castle doesn't help with the many WHATS and WHYs

What were the Dutch and English West and East India companies? Trading companies like Macy's? What powers, how big?

How did they interact with each other, the Spanish and Portuguese and native peoples?

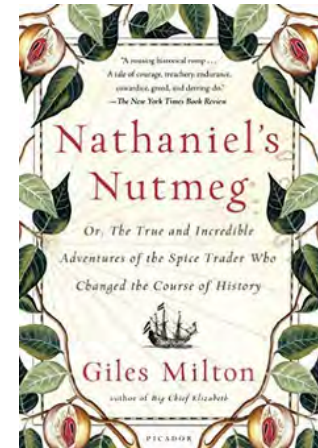
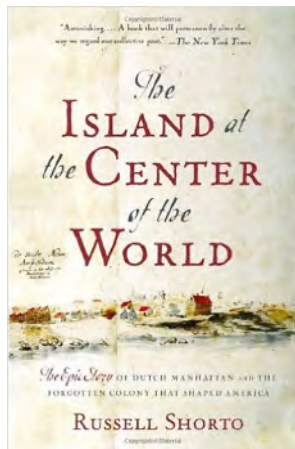
What role did New Sweden have in the area?

Why was New Amstel founded? Trade, but with freedom and justice for all?

Why did ownership of New Amstel/New Castle keep changing, and end being English?

How did New Castle begin its life being religiously tolerant?

A Caribbean cruise and a chance walk in Battery Park provided many answers



National Park Service sign in San Juan



# Merchant Kings/Warriors

- The Dutch and English East India Companies (& Hudson Bay Co. and others) were stock corporations created as monopolies.
- Government charters granted powers to make war with other nations, seize land and enslave natives. They achieved the political goals of their nations by fighting their enemies at low cost to the host nation and bring back valuable goods – gold, spices, salt, furs, grain...
- They were big: between 1623 and 1636, the GWC sent 806 ships manned by 67,000 men.
- They were ruthless and frequently merciless.

Merchant Kings: When Companies Ruled the World, 1600--1900 Stephen R. Brown, 2009

Nathaniels Nutmeg , or The True and Incredible Adventures of the Spice Trader Who Changed the Course of History, Giles Milton, 1999

A Primer of Dutch Seventeenth Overseas Trade, D. W. Davies, 1961

The Island at the Center of the World, R. Shorto, 2005

# Why talk about Merchant Kings/Warriors?

## What about New Castle?

(VOC=Dutch West India Co., GWC=Dutch East India Co.

EIC= English East India Co., NSC=New Sweden Co.)

These companies were monopolies, generally stock companies, with charters that let them wage war, found colonies, rule native populations ... They were an inexpensive way for their host countries to fight their enemies, and hopefully earn a profit.

VOC hired Hudson who discovered the Delaware River

GWC first settled the Delaware River (on the wrong side, near Trenton and Camden)

GWC fired director Peter Minuit for laxity in preventing private trading

NSC hires Minuit to found colony in Delaware (arrives on Kalmar Nyckel)

VOC tortures and kills EIC traders in Amboyna to English outrage, seize Run Is.

NSC builds several forts on the Delaware

GWC director Stuyvesant reacts to new NSC forts by building Ft. Casimir (New Castle)

English seize New Amsterdam, New Amstel, partly in response to Amboyna

Final settlement of 3<sup>rd</sup> Anglo Dutch War:

English keep New Amsterdam, New Amstel; Dutch get Run Is. and Guyana

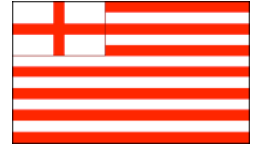
## THE SPICE RACE



Dutch  
East India Company  
*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC)*

VS

English  
East India Company



At the height of its power the VOC had 10,000 soldiers, 50,000 total employees, 40 warships, 150 merchant ships. It was the richest most powerful company in the world.

1400-1600 A word about spices

1600 QE1 approves formation of the EIC but the company expanded slowly

1601 alone, 65 Dutch ships left for the Spice Islands, competition was cutthroat

1602 VOC formed; monopoly for 21 years

1608 Dutch had sent 3 fleets of ships; 1/3 of ships lost, 800/1200 men dead. A shorter route was needed.

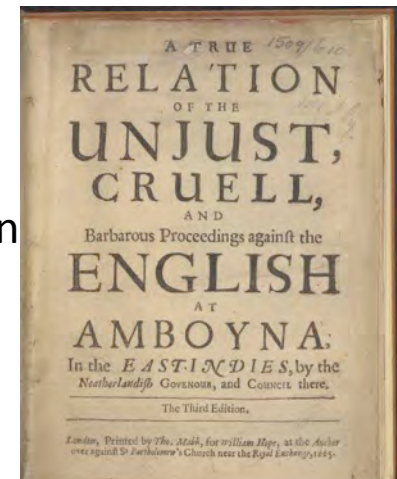
1609 'The above named Hudson shall about the first of April, sail, in order to search for a passage by the North, around by the North side of Nova Zembla, and shall continue thus along that parallel until he shall be able to sail Southward to the latitude of sixty degrees.'

1616 Nathaniel Courthope arrives in Run. Establishes relationships with chiefs, builds forts, besieged by Dutch for four years until killed

1617 Dutch Jan Coen now in complete charge, vision was monopoly since spices were abundant, competition can't be tolerated

1618-27 Coen tortures, massacres English traders in Amboyna, population relocated, sold as slaves, repopulates with slave labor; leaders killed, land into desert, captured all English; national hero vs villain.

1657 EIC gives up on Indonesia area, focuses on India



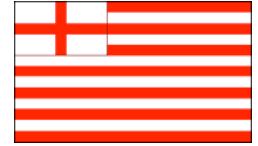




Dutch  
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EIC



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1511 Portuguese became the first Europeans to set foot in the Banda Islands, a group of six lumps of rock near Indonesia, boasting rich volcanic soil

1518 Magellan (Spanish) sailed west around Cape Horn to reach the spiceries. The short Portuguese monopoly was over.

1600 QE1 approves formation of a monopoly, 1601 EIC founded

1600 Dutch had sent 3 fleets of ships; 1/3 of ships lost, 800/1200 men dead. A shorter easier route was needed.

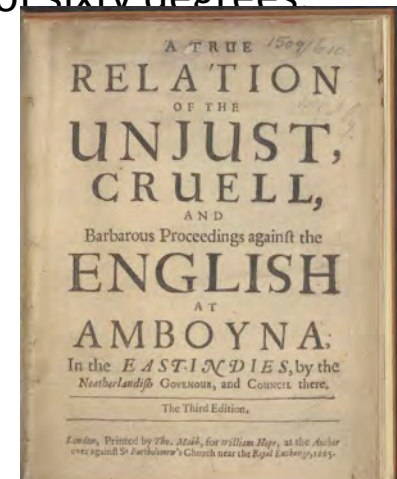
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16?? Coen tortures, massacres English traders in Amboyna

16?? 3<sup>rd</sup> Anglo Dutch war: English keep New Netherland, Dutch get East Indies including Run, Guiana and Brazilian colonies.





Dutch West India Company  
*Geoctroyeerde Westindische Compagnie (GWC)*



1621 Holland granted a 24 year charter to the GWC, modeled after its flourishing and famous draconian and bloody eastern counterpart (EIC)

‘The GWC was chartered with two main objectives: piracy and a profitable settlement of its North American territories, which would also serve as a base for further pirate raids on Spanish shipping.’

‘The settlers of New Netherland were enthusiastic about the land [Hudson R valley] in 1624

The company’s directors did not share this settler’s enthusiasm for the land. The new settlement was supposed to be a trading outpost, not a beachhead of Dutch colonial expansion.

The provisional orders governing the actions of the employees firmly placed the company’s interests first: the settlements would be run as trading posts, ruled by a governor appointed by the directors; decisions would come from head office, not from the ground up.

The settler/ employees were “to obey and to carry out without any contradiction the orders of the Company then or still to be given, as well as all regulations received from the said Company in regard to matters of administration and justice.” ‘



Peter Stuyvesant and the  
Dutch West India Company

*Geoctroyeerde Westindische Compagnie (GWC)*



We derive our authority from God and the West India Company, not from the pleasure of a few ignorant subjects.” c. 1647

1612 Born Friesland, went to university, expelled, joins GWC, sent to Caribbean

1642 Appointed governor of Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao

1644 Attacks St. Martin for salt with >1,000 men, 12 ships. Leg shot off trying to storm fort.

1645-7 Recovers in Holland, appointed to head all New Netherland to replace disastrous Gov. Keift,

1647 Stuyvesant's mission: quell push for independence by settlers, reform the community:

soldiers and many colonists unemployed, fort and town a shambles, drunkenness widespread, eliminate roaming hogs.

But he was paternalistic, refusing any real self-rule. Attempts to force him to reform ceased with 1<sup>st</sup> Anglo-Dutch war (1654)

1651 Stuyvesant founds Fort Casimir in response to forts built by New Sweden Co.'s Gov. Printz

1655 Leads expensive expedition funded by Amsterdam to recapture Ft. Casimir from Swedes. GWC nearly broke, sells Ft. Casimir to City of Amsterdam; renamed New Amstel.

“1664 King Charles gave brother James Hudson bay to Delaware river presumably so that James would seize New Netherland by force.” The Dutch had done little to prepare New Amsterdam's defense, Richard Nicolls attacked with 4 frigates and 450 troops and demanded surrender, offering greater freedom. The colonists felt betrayed by their nation and had no will to fight the enemy. Surrender.

1672 Dies in New York, last 4 years of life in his 'bouwerie' in Manhattan

Although not religiously tolerant, the surrender includes clause 'liberty of conscience in religion'



# The **Very Beginning**, or the Dutch West India Company and the founding of New Castle

Geotroyeerde Westindische Compagnie

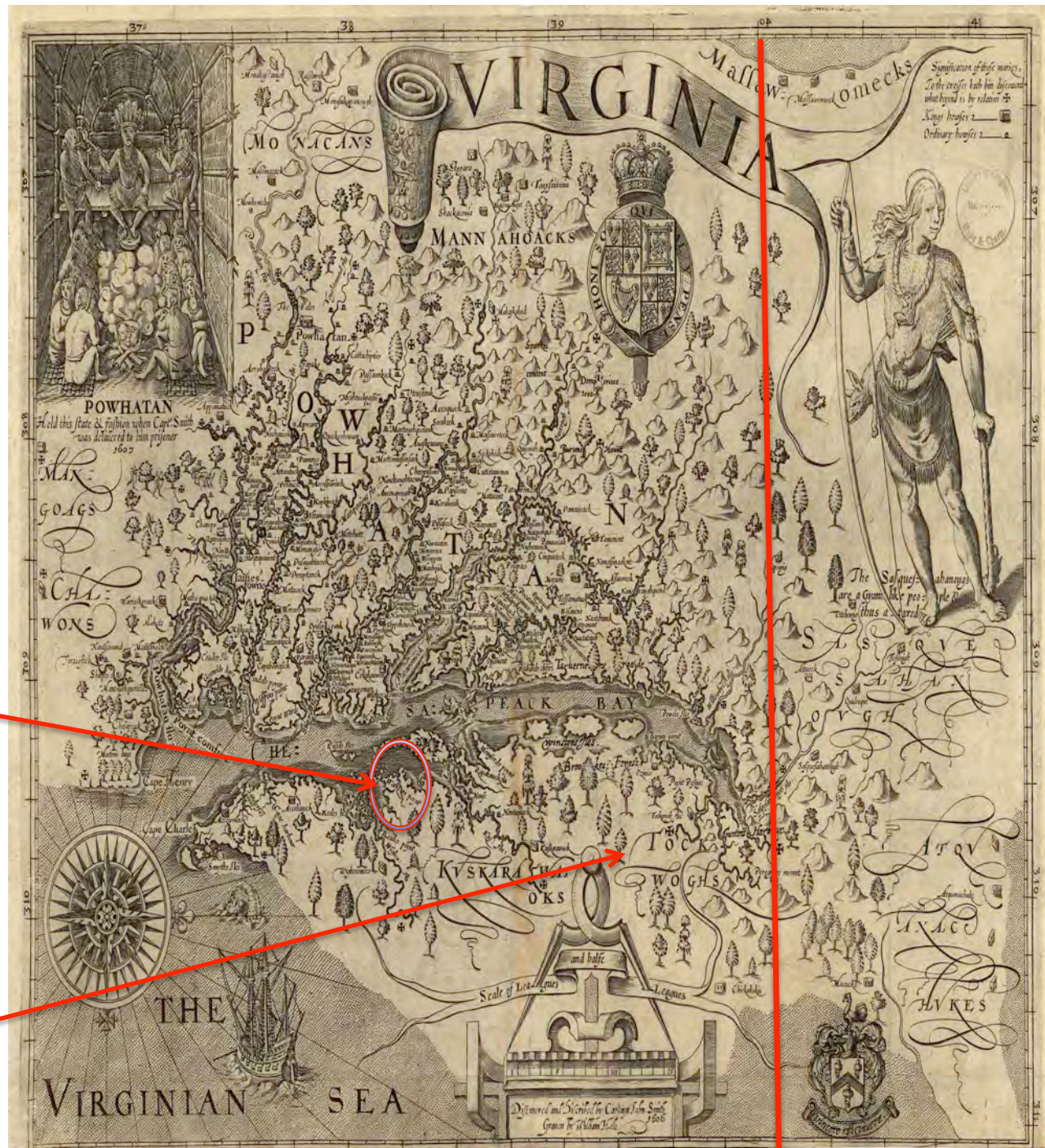


<1650   >1650

- \*1492-1508 Columbus discovered Puerto Rico, found gold, built fort, started colonization
- 1498 Pope gave Caribbean and West Coast of America to Spain; Portuguese got Brazil  
The Caribbean was a "closed sea" Trade was restricted to Spain
- 1500s Dutch and English came to Caribbean anyway to trade salt, hides, spices, dyewoods
- \*1625 WIC attacked Puerto Rico; couldn't get into the forts. Burned San Juan; built fort on South River (Delaware)
- 1647 WIC names Peter Stuyvesant Director General of Dutch West Indies islands: Curacao, Aruba, Bonaire; later America
- \*1651 Stuyvesant builds Ft. Casimir for WIC to counteract Swedish presence  
2 degrees separation from Columbus!

# John Smith map of Virginia (1608/1612)

- Influenced Hudson's 1609 voyage
- 1632 Maryland Charter (Charles I to Cecil Calvert, Lord Baltimore): from Potomac or Watkins Pt to 40<sup>th</sup> Parallel (including all of Delaware)
- Chesapeake Bay Oriented Left to right – as you read or would enter
- Best map of area until Augustine Herman's map (1660-1670)
- Note Tockwogs at head of bay (as in the YMCA camp)







## Some more details on the beginning

1609 H. Hudson discovers the Delaware river for the Dutch EAST India Co. 'VOC'

He traveled north, then west and south to the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay (known British)

Then to the South River (Delaware) North River (Hudson), Fresh River Connecticut and home.

Note colors: Green: Tockwogh & Iroquois Indian; Yellow, GWC; Pink, New England, uncolored Virginia, New France

Note exquisite birds eye view of Manhattan at lower right.



Visscher map (1650/1685)



# Why did the Dutch want to come to North America?



Seal of New York City



Seal of New Netherlands



# Dutch Forts in New Netherland



Peter Stuyvesant, attr. H. Couturier  
Director General from 1647

Hudson River (black), Delaware River (blue)

Fort Nassau (1614), North River, Albany, New York, lost to floods

Fort Orange (1624), North River, Albany, New York

Fort Amsterdam (1625), the Manhattoes at the mouth of the North River

Fort Wilhelmus (1625), on the South River (near Trenton), soon abandoned

Fort Nassau (ca. 1627), near Camden NJ, relocated 1651, becoming Fort Casimir

Fort Huis de Goede Hoop (1633), near the Fresh River at Hartford

Fort Beversreede (c1633), Schuylkill River, near Philadelphia (Beaver Road)

Fort Casimir (1651), New Castle

# New Sweden (1638-1655)

Johan Printz (1592-1663)  
Governor (1643-1653)



Twelve expeditions left Sweden in 17 years  
Between 1648 & 1654 no ships arrived

Fort Christina (1638) - Brandywine Creek later renamed  
Fort Altena (1655)

Fort Mecoponacka (1641) - Chester, Pennsylvania

Fort Nya Elfsborg (1643) - near Salem Creek, New Jersey

Fort Nya Gothenborg (1643) - Tinicum Island near Printzhof  
in Essington

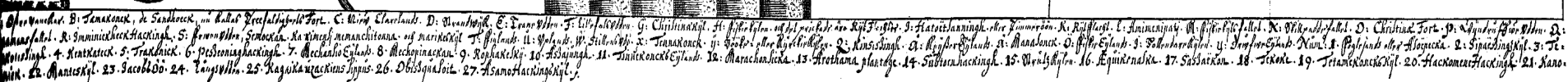
Fort Nya Vasa (1646) - Kingsessing, Philadelphia

Fort Nya Korsholm (1647) - Schuylkill River, Philadelphia

*(Stuyvesant Director General of New Netherlands in 1645  
Builds Fort Casimir in 1651)*



NOVA SUECIA: Ellr the Swenskar REVIER, IN INDIA OCCIDENTALI.



- O Christina Fort  
G Christina Kyl  
E Trane udden, Crane Hook  
D Strandwyck [Swanwick]  
B Tamakonck, Sandhoek, Trefaldighets Fort [now New Castle]

Drawn by Peter Lindstrom Royal Swedish Engineer,  
1654 & 1655 [published by Acrelius 1757]

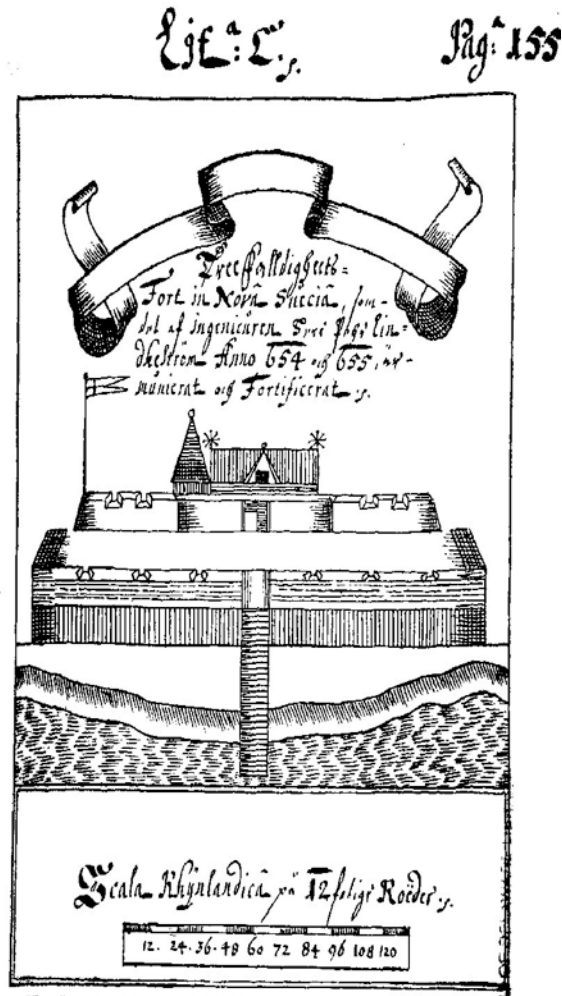


# Claims to Delaware by Dutch, Swedes, and English (Baltimore & Penn) were conflicting

- 1497 Italian John Cabot claims all North America for English based on discovery of Newfoundland
- 1609 Dutch claim New Netherland, including Delaware based on Hudson and settlement
- 1632 Charles I granted Maryland from north of the Potomac and Watkins point to 40<sup>th</sup> parallel
- 1638 Swedes claim land near Ft. Christina based on settlement and treaty
- 1676 Charles II granted James, Duke of York, James II “Hudsons river, and all the lands from the west side of Conecticut, to the east side of Delaware Bay.” (NY, NJ)
- 1681 Charles II grants Wm. Penn “All That tract of land in America Called by the name of Pennsilvania as the same is bounded on the East by Delaware River, **from twelve miles distance Northwards of New Castle Towne**, unto the three and fortieth degree of Northern Latitude, etc”
- 1682 Subsequent grant of the New Castle and south (Three Lower Counties)

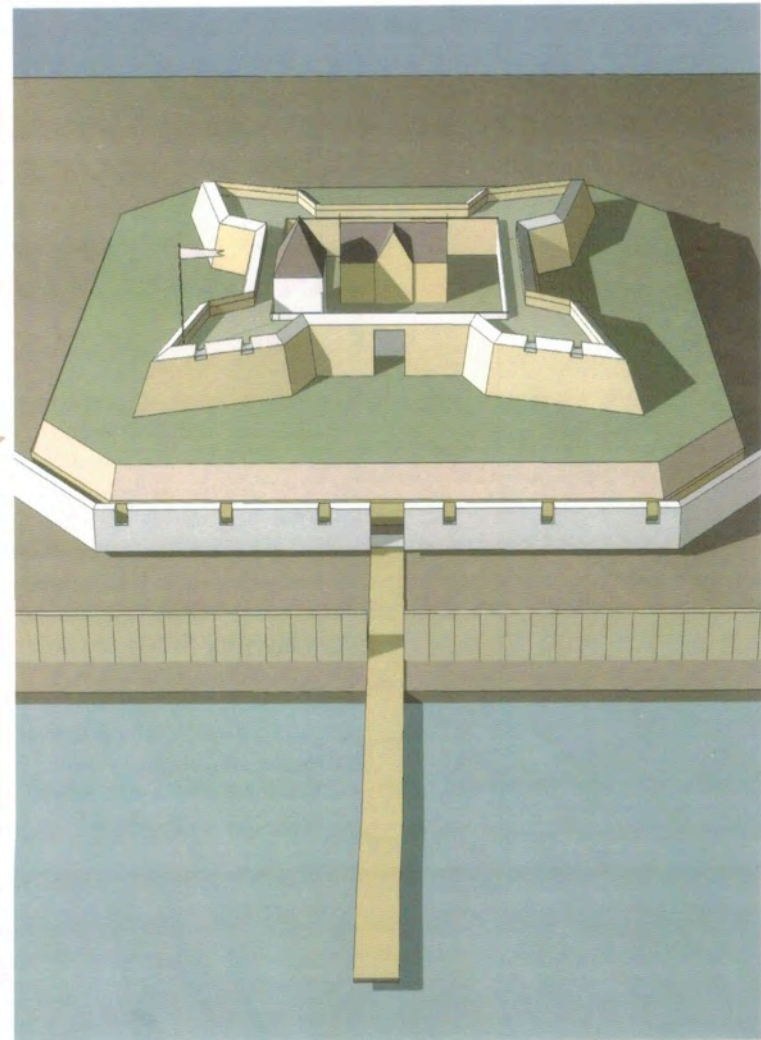
In the end, “might makes right”, possession is 9/10 ....”

# Fort Casimir/ Fort Trefalidighet



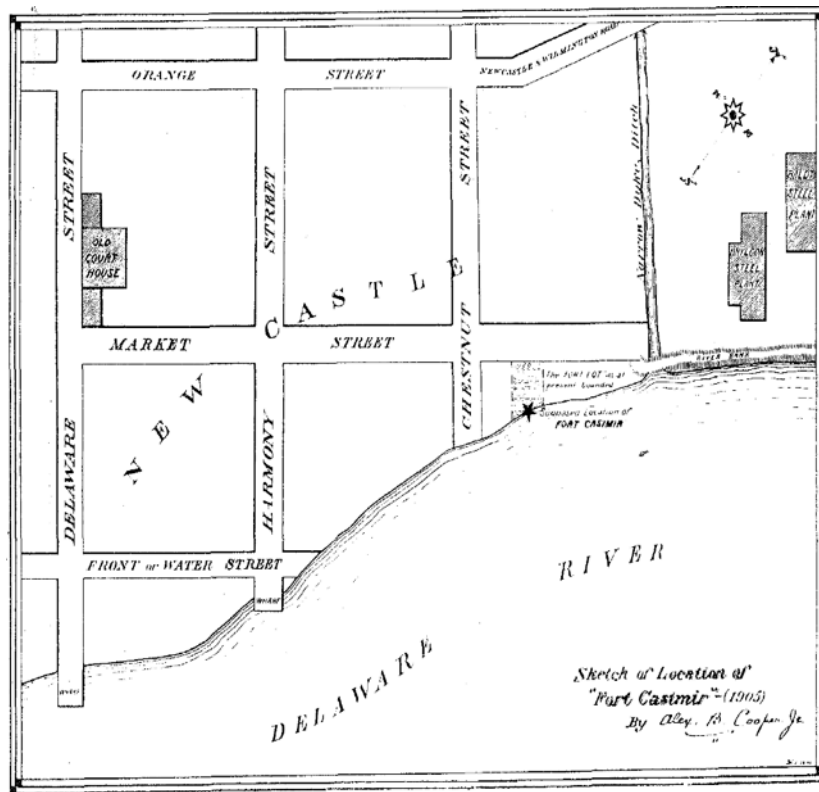
"FORT TRINITY IN NEW SWEDEN, AS IT WAS MOUNTED AND FORTIFIED, 1654 AND 1655.  
BY MR. PEHR LINDESTROM." FROM THE ORIGINAL SKETCH IN THE *Geographia*.

Pehr Lindestrom, 1655/1695



Len Tantillo, The Edge of New Netherland, 2012

# Location of Fort Casimir



Alexander B. Cooper, 1905





# What did New Amstel Look Like?

(1651-1664)

Maybe like New Amsterdam 1650-1657.



Maybe like some of the buildings in New Castle in 1804  
(and 1884)





# Views of New Castle, 1926 vs 2011

## NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE an EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY Town

By Wm. D. FOSTER White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs, 1926

THERE are few communities to-day which have retained their early American flavor as completely as has New Castle, Delaware. The examples of our colonial architecture in such centers as Boston and Philadelphia ... are so surrounded by present-day business ... that they can give little of the feeling of the actual community which existed when they were built...

There is ... a real pride and understanding in the community of the architectural heritage represented by these buildings, an appreciation of tradition which is in restful contrast to the incessant changes which are sweeping away so much of our colonial background.

# New Castle, A Walk Through Time

Benson & Hoffercker, 2011

New Castle is an extraordinary town, an early outpost of European explorers and settlers and a colonial capital beautifully situated on one of America's great rivers.

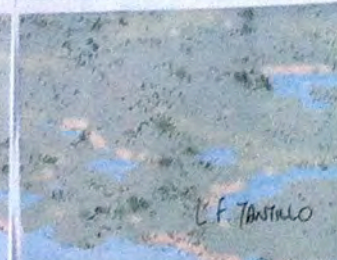
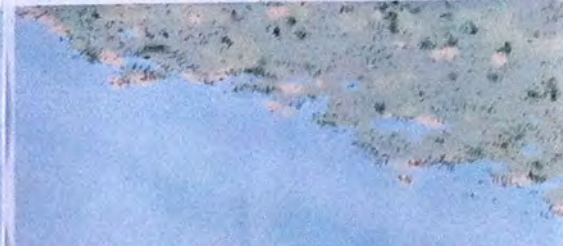
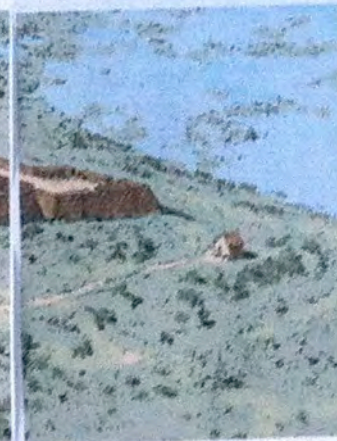
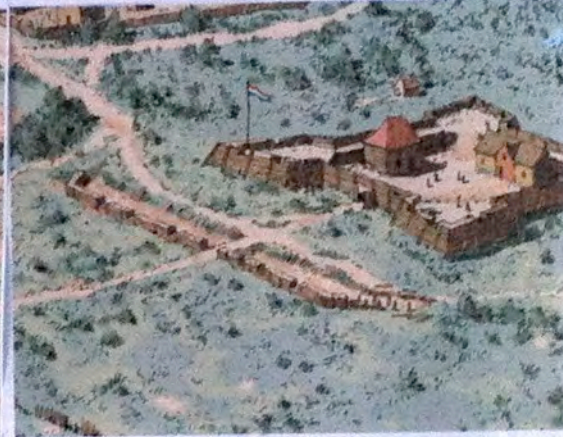
In a compact space it provides an unusual richness of architecture that spans more than three centuries. Sometimes people say that New Castle is so beautiful because it is a town that time forgot, but that isn't exactly true ... the town itself is not a museum, nor is it a place that remains frozen in an earlier era.

....[it was] the most multicultural town in all of 17th century America.

**New Castle is the crown jewel of Delaware...**

# Fort Casimir: Key to the Delaware Valley

This site, called Sand Hook by the Dutch, was the focal point of a three-nation struggle for control of the Delaware River. Dutch settlers recognized the strategic importance of this site and established a fort here in 1651. Swedish settlers responded by seizing the fort in 1654 and renaming it Fort Trefadlighet (Fort Trinity). A year later Peter Stuyvesant forced the surrender of the fort to the Dutch. It remained in Dutch hands until the English assaulted the fort in 1664, resulting in its capture and, with its fall, final control of the Delaware Valley.



Conceptual View of Fort Casimir by L.F. Tantillo