

## Chapter 3

### The Entrepreneur

**T**his is the story of Jacob, Teunis and Betty's first son. Baptized on 4 June 1634 in de Nieuwe Kerk (New Church), Amsterdam, he was brought to the New World when four years old. As an adult he must therefore have remembered a little of the land of his birth and the voyage across the ocean. Though raised a long way from his homeland he learned the Dutch language in the home and absorbed the customs and religion of the Netherlands. He would marry a Dutch girl. In accordance with the practice of the Dutch he would mostly answer to the name *Theunissen*, a patronymic (a name based on his father's given name). Already a man of thirty at the time of the English conquest of New Netherland, he would not easily accept English culture.<sup>1</sup> To the day he died he almost certainly spoke English with a heavy accent.

We have already seen a little of his parents and their personalities in Chapter 2. Some of these qualities Jacob inherited, in particular his strength and athleticism. But in contrast to his father who stayed settled in a single trade in the city, he took advantage of opportunities emerging in the flowering economy of New Netherland. In a manner that seems almost modern he tried his hand as fur trader, constable, hog farmer, tanner, and the owner of a sloop, first in Beverwyck (presentday Albany) and then in New Amsterdam. Unlike his father who stayed rooted in the one place, Jacob moved with confidence through the woods of the Hudson River Valley learning the languages and customs of the Indians. Not surprisingly, he earned the nickname *de Loper*, which in Dutch means the runner.<sup>2</sup> A critic might call him a neer-do-well. I prefer entrepreneur.

Jacob was a mostly sober man, though somewhat argumentative like his mother. He was quick to defend his rights. Most importantly, he was a good family man who cared for his parents in their aged years, and who provided for his wife and children for as long as he is able. He would die suddenly in Albany in 1684 at about the age of fifty.

The records of his parents reveal him to have been a restless, wilful, lad probably impatient with his sedentary, intemperate father. Like oldest sons of the time he would have started his working life as his father's helpmate, toting bricks and mixing mortar, probably without enthusiasm. The records we have of Jacob and his father together do not mention occupation, a fact that may mean the two were not close. This should not be surprising in that there were seven children in the family. The mason was in all likelihood distant towards his three sons, for none took up their father's trade. No records exist of Jacob being apprenticed and he certainly never went to school.<sup>3</sup>

It is hardly a stretch to think of Jacob, like most young men of New Amsterdam, being influenced by the ethos of pursuing opportunity. In the 1640s and 50s, the town swarmed with sailors and fur traders, willing to tell an impressionable youth of the rivers, forests and unexplored lands that lay just beyond the city walls. Newspapers and broadsheets did not yet exist, so news was passed by word of mouth. He was no doubt envious of the exploits of his neighbors Harry Jan Peeks and Claes Jansen de Ruyter, who lived among the Indians from time

---

1 If the researcher is not careful the records for "Jacob Teunissen de Key (Kay)" and "Jacob Teunissen Quick" can be confused on account of the desultory use of surnames. The references mentioning baking refer to de Key. As a source of further confusion, a Jacob Loper married a Neeltje Cornelis in New Amsterdam in 1647! Neeltje was a daughter of Cornelis Melyn. Loper was a mariner from Stockholm who died before 1653. ERA, 3, 43. The similarity of names is coincidental.

2 ERA, 3, 140. The translator's footnote accompanying this record reads "To judge from his mark, he (Jacob Teunissen Quick) was the same person as Jacob Teunissen de Loper, mentioned on another page". The runner is the literal Dutch meaning of "de Loper", but for another interpretation see the quote on page 34.

3 Jacob used as his mark the commercial symbol for number —#. ERA, 3, 42-43.

to time, trading with them and interpreting for the director general. There was money to be made in the fur trade. In 1653 at nineteen he left the family home and set off for “the north”.

The north meant Fort Orange in the village of Beverwyck, now the heart of modern-day Albany. Located some 150 miles north of Manhattan, it was the major post of New Netherland’s fur trading activities. Surrounded by the vast patroonship of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, it was the mecca to which hundreds of Mohawk trekked each year, bringing heavy packs of beaver skins to exchange for guns, ammunition and Dutch export goods. It lay on the west bank of the Hudson River at the foot of present-day Broadway. Like Fort Amsterdam only smaller, it was built of thick posts sunk vertically in the ground with earth heaped up on the walls inside. The village of Beverwyck, positioned for security the distance of a musket shot away up a steep hill, had about a hundred houses. The dwellings were shacks made of unpainted planks and roofed with thatch placed helter-skelter on either side of smoke-filled muddy tracks. Hogs and goats wandered at will. The center of the village was marked by a simple wooden chapel. To the landward side lay the wigwams of the Mohawk. Beyond them, to the west, stretched hostile, unmapped forests beyond the imagining of any Dutch man or woman.

Beverwyck had been given its apt name in 1652 by Peter Stuyvesant when he removed it and the fort from van Rensselaer’s domain. At the same time he established a court having jurisdiction over the fort, the village, and the other river settlements north of Manhattan. The records of this court tell us Jacob worked briefly as a laborer on a sloop, hauling grains and beaver skins southward and returning with foodstuffs, especially bread from city bakeries.<sup>4</sup> He delivered yachts.<sup>5</sup> This work took him back to New Amsterdam in the fall of 1654 where he stayed for the winter, most likely in his parents’ house on the Markveldt.

The winter of 1654 was one of those winters that for its severity figures in the memory of every generation. It was the coldest the oldest inhabitant could remember. The Hudson and East Rivers were frozen solid from shore to shore and the lands and trails were blocked with high drifts of snow. It was a topic of amazement that a horse-drawn sleigh could be safely driven across the ice of the East River from Manhattan to Brooklyn and back again. The cold was so intense that people stole planks from the fort to burn in their fireplaces. But Jacob would remember this winter for another, more personal reason. She was a girl, Neeltje Cornelis. Neeltje (who from now on I shall call “Nellie”) was an orphan from the Deacon’s Orphanage of Amsterdam, just arrived in New Amsterdam the previous fall.<sup>6</sup> She was an accomplished seamstress having received her training in the orphanage. On Wednesday 24 March 1655 they were married in St. Nicholas church.<sup>7</sup>

With the coming of spring the couple set up housekeeping in Beverwyck. Jacob traded furs (sometimes illegally)<sup>8</sup>, while the enterprising Nellie earned money darning linen. She was even

---

4 MFOB, 1, 71. He had to give evidence at least once against his skipper who sold brandy illegally to the tribes at Catskill.

5 RNA, 1, 285, 287 and 293.

6 The conclusion that Nellie was an orphan is based on these facts. In November 1654, 50 orphans, all young men and women of marriageable age, were sent from the weemshuis (orphans-house) of Amsterdam bound out for a five-year term. Nellie described herself as from Amsterdam and had no family in New Amsterdam that I have been able to discover. In addition in 1658 (before her bond period would have expired) Jacob was required to appear before the court of Fort Orange to settle her 60 guilder debt to the West India Company, being described as half of her passage money. (“The defendant’s wife not being able to deny the bond or her signature to it...”) MFOB, 2, 114. Nellie’s marriage would have required her husband to make restitution. Cornelis was almost certainly Nellie’s father’s given name. This is the earliest-known source of that name in the Quick family. The name Cornelius, a variant of Cornelis, was in use in the Quick family well into the 20th century.

7 NYGBC, 1, 19. Witnesses names were not recorded.

8 MFOB, 1, 223.

entrusted with the mending of the funeral pall of the Beverwyck chapel.<sup>9</sup> In 1657 the couple rented a house from Pieter Bronck, a place described in the records as “one board long” that sat on the hill overlooking the fort. Jacob built a shed next to an old Indian wigwam to store his furs.<sup>10</sup> The area where the house once stood can be found today on a map of the city of Albany in the block bordered by North Pearl Street, Steuben Street, James Street and Maiden Lane.<sup>11</sup>

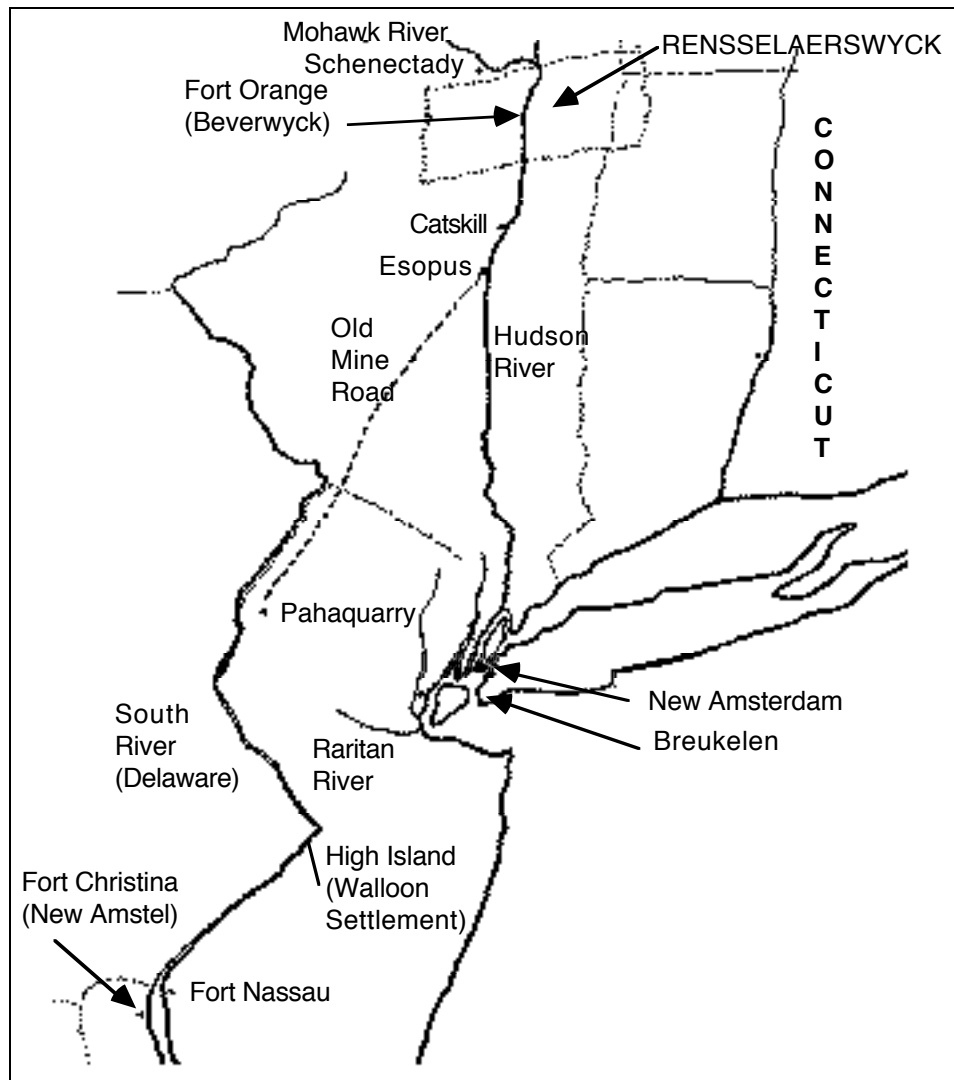


Figure 1. *Settlements in New Netherland, 1624-1664. The colony of Rensselaerswyck was 48 miles long by 24 miles wide encompassing 700,000 acres in present day Albany, Rensselaer and part of Columbia counties New York.*

9 First Dutch Reformed Church Deacons’ Account Book, 1652-1664, in *The Dutch Settlers Society of Albany, Yearbook*, 7, 8.

10 MFOB, 2, 124 and 130; ERA, 1, 249. Jacob paid his rent in beaver skins. His landlord, Pieter Bronck, was granted land in 1663 near presentday Coxsackie, New York, 22 miles south of Albany. His house still stands maintained by the Greene County Historical Society. It is well worth a visit.

11 J. Munsell, *Collections on the History of Albany* (Albany, 1865), 4, 211.

By 1657 Jacob was a twenty-three-year-old second-generation New Netherlander, strong and rough. He drank and he brawled with the best of them in the taphouses of Beverwyck village. He wielded his big fists and his good Dutch knife so impressively that he was offered the job of schout by nacht (night watchman) of the town.<sup>12</sup> And he was nicknamed *de Looper*. The translator of the old Dutch records, A. J. F. van Laer, offered this theory of the origin of his nickname:

(Jacob de Looper) Night watchman, or constable. He is apparently the same person as Jacob Teunissen de Looper, who in Early Records of Albany, 3:42, has been identified with Jacob Teunissen Quick. The above entry seems to show that the designation “de Looper” is not, as suggested, a play on the English name of Quick, but a sign of his employment as night watchman. See ordinance of the city of Harderwijk, in Gelderland, of 1546, whereby the schepens granted the “lopers”, or city roundsmen, an increase of pay of 2 1/2 stivers per night (J. L. Berns, *Rechtsbronnen der Stad Harderwijk*, p. 49).<sup>13</sup>

A night watchman was more than a person who made the rounds of a city. In addition to the duties of breaking up brawls in Beverwyck village and collaring get-rich artists selling brandy to the Indians, he had to patrol on horseback the entire territory under the court’s jurisdiction, narrow strips of territory on both sides of the river from Beverwyck in the north to Esopus (present day Kingston) in the south, a circuit of 150 miles. This stretch of country was a wilderness of unbroken woods, horse paths and Indian trails, unbridged streams and isolated Indian villages. And if this was not enough the job was despised, as many Dutchmen trafficked in brandy in one way or other.<sup>14</sup> It seems he could stomach the job for a couple of years but no longer. He quit in 1659. To the people of Albany, however, who loved their nicknames, he would always be known as *Cobus de Looper*, or just Cobus (short for Jacobus). Nellie would no doubt have called him by the affectionate form Coose—pronounced “Goose” in Dutch.

At first, the family attended services in the small log chapel. But in 1657 a proper church was built at the intersection of the two main trails in the village (at the crossing of State Street and Broadway). This building, at least for a few years, combined the functions of church and fort. It was like a blockhouse with loop holes in the walls for shooting through in case of attack. Extra firepower could be brought to bear from three cannon mounted on the roof. Though a primitive house of worship, to be sure, it was a building the villagers were proud of and within which they preserved a good deal of nostalgia for their homeland. The oaken pulpit was the gift of the West India Company; the bell came from Holland; and the stained glass window was a gift of the van Rensselaer family, as it displayed their name and the family’s coat-of-arms in brilliant colors.

Jacob and Nellie’s children who are known to us, namely Belitje, Cornelis, Geertje and Theunis, were born in Beverwyck in the decade between about 1655 and 1665. They were no doubt baptized in the blockhouse church by the Reverend Gideon Schaets (whose ministry spanned the years 1652 to 1683). It is a pity that only in 1683 with the arrival of Schaets’ successor, Geddefrides Dellius (whose ministry lasted until 1699), would the dominies begin recording baptisms in a proper register.<sup>15</sup> Thus the dates of the childrens’ baptisms and their order have to remain unknown.<sup>16</sup>

We know from reports of the period that parishioners in the blockhouse church were not

---

12 MFOB, 1, 246; 2, 44; ERA, 1, 247.

13 MFOB, 2, 138. The date of the record to which this footnote refers was 23 July 1658. Jacob was first referred to in the records as de Loper on 4 July 1657. MFOB, 2, 50.

14 Felons that he dragged back to Beverwyck after, no doubt, much effort were very often acquitted. One instance is recorded in MFOB, 2, 170-171.

15 L. Duermyer ed., *Records of the Reformed Dutch Church in Albany, New York, 1683-1809* (Gen. Pub. Co., 1979), viii-x.

16 Perhaps the birthdate of one child may be inferred from this record: On 7 January 1662, Jacob swapped his beloved 3-year-old stallion for Teunis Dickensen’s milk cow! ERA, 3, 140.

pampered. There was no central heating. In the dead of winter they had to bundle up well to keep from freezing. The Reverend Schaets preached his sermon in a hollering voice wearing full winter dress of heavy fur cap and large woollen mittens. Jokesters said his sermons were best when he was hotblooded drunk—a condition he affected more often than not. The men hunkered down in galleries around the colder, outer sides of the building forming a human insulation. Women and children crouched down front under blankets and beaver skins. To provide a measure of warmth for themselves and their children mothers brought footstoves from home made of metal and filled with live coals taken from their fireplaces. The carbon monoxide fumes would occasionally cause children to faint. Parents were commonly seen hauling their children outside to revive them with a snowpat to the face. Shaets was popular, so his rantings though offensive to the occasional visitor, suited his rough congregation.

Our family moved from place to place in Beverwyck as Jacob's fortunes waxed and waned. In 1659 when Bronck sold his land on the hill Jacob moved his family to a house owned by Mary Goosens.<sup>17,18</sup> Later, he leased a house from Aryan Symense.<sup>19</sup> He was a lackluster trader at best.

During these years when the children were very young relations between the Dutch and the Mohawk were testy but business-like. Downriver tribes became increasingly disquieted in response to Dutch business practices. It seems inevitable that the proximity of the races and the trade in illegal brandy should lead to trouble. Brandy had the effect of corrupting the Indians and exacerbating bad behavior. Strictly speaking, the Dutch were forbidden by law from trading in spirits with the Indians, but many did so anyway as many Indians had a taste for it and preferred it over other forms of payment. Farmers would pay off their Indian workers with drink and then not surprisingly be "insulted" by the same after they had drunk through their wages. The problem was especially acute around Esopus, a settlement established by farmers who had moved from Rensselaerswyck in 1652. To provide some defense for these people, who by 1658 numbered 65 men, women and children, Stuyvesant ordered the building of a small wooden fort there. In September 1659 he dispatched Ensign Dirck Smit from New Amsterdam with soldiers and a supply of arms to garrison the place.<sup>20</sup>

As soon as the force landed in Esopus 500 Indians attacked the fort. At least two people, Thomas Chambers and the son of one Evert Pels, were abducted. In October Stuyvesant arrived with 200 men to relieve the place, but by then the attackers had withdrawn to the interior. When heavy rain and general flooding prevented their pursuit, Stuyvesant returned with his troops to New Amsterdam. Conditions remained quiet in Esopus through the fall and winter.

By this time Jacob de Looper was a wellknown figure in Beverwyck for his talents as an Indian interpreter. The commissary of Fort Orange, William de la Montagne, prevailed on him in February 1660 to ride to Esopus to try to ransom young Pels (Chambers in the meantime having escaped). After Jacob had been in Esopus some days Smit passed on the following news in a letter to la Montagne, dated 24 February:

I inform your Honor herewith, that Jacobus Theunissen arrived here on the 19th inst. to ransom the boy of Evert Pels, in which he does not seem to have been successful, as Jacobus has been here four days and four nights and the savages have kept him day for day and he has been on the road to the savages, but he could not get through on account of the deep snow and they promised every day to come to us and they say, the boy has a wife there and the wife is with child, who will not let

---

17 ERA, 1, 249.

18 RNA, 6, 126-127, 133 and 138. In 1668 Mary Goosens sued Jacob in the court of New Amsterdam for rent money due her. Sometime previously she had ejected Jacob de Looper from her house in Beverwyck. Apparently Jacob had moved to NYC without paying his rent.

19 ERA, 3, 88-89.

20 The fort stood near the Esopus creek in what is now the oldest part of Kingston. M.B. Fried gives a scholarly, modern account of early Esopus in *The Early History of Kingston and Ulster County, New York* (Ulster Co. Hist. Soc., Marbletown, Kingston, NY, 1975).

him go and he will not leave her, as they say and as the snow is deep now, he dared not wait any longer. I wish, he have not come here to make such a difficult journey for nothing,... Therefore your Honor ought not to incur any more expenses...<sup>21</sup>

Jacob's ride did come to nothing, it seems, for Pels was "adopted" by the Indians, apparently willingly.

There is evidence to suggest that Jacob as a member of the militia and advisor of sorts to the ensign, wanted no part of Smit's Indian strategy—which is to say, of luring them into ambush. On the morning of 29 May Claes Jansen de Ruyter arrived at Esopus with provisions and a letter from Stuyvesant to deliver to Smit. Smit, however, with his band of 75 men had just left the fort to pay a "visit" to the Indians. Forcing a chief's son to guide them they spied an old Indian fishing from the opposite bank of "Kit Davietsen's River" (Rondout Creek), but as they had no means of crossing the creek that was deep at that point, they returned to the fort. The wife of "Jurjen Westphalen"<sup>22</sup>, a local settler, then told them where they might cross further upstream. Armed with this information they returned. They crossed the stream, found the old man, Preumaker by name, who turned out to be the chief of the Esopus Indians and the father of their guide, and "gave him a whack with his own hatchet", killing him on the spot. They then returned without encountering the main body of the Indians. Smit related these events in a letter to Stuyvesant on 30 May. From the following extract he expresses irritation at what can be interpreted as Jacob and De Ruyter's openness about Dutch intentions towards the Indians:

Before the arrival of Claes de Ruyter I have tried diligently to attract the savages and to outwit them with flattery, but since he and Jacob Toennissen have been with the savages, we have not seen one of them, for none has been here in the fort, except a mute one, who coming with some Highland savages, our friends whom we did not dare to molest, brought some fishes."<sup>23</sup>

Jacob stayed on at Esopus until the breakup of that hard cold winter of 1660.<sup>24</sup> Nellie was glad to have him back as he had been gone all of three months.<sup>25</sup> A treaty in July brought this "First Esopus War" to an end.

In August 1664 without warning the English under Colonel Richard Nicolls forced the surrender of New Amsterdam, and in effect the whole of New Netherland. It was over very quickly. In September Colonel Cartwright sailed up the river to reduce the Esopus, Fort Orange, and Rensselaerswyck to English control. There was no resistance.

The immediate effect of the conquest on the people of Beverwyck was slight. The town received the new name Albany and a small English garrison, but the court continued to function in the former manner and in the Dutch language. The bulk of the English population of the colony, now renamed New York, lay concentrated on Manhattan and Long Island. Some years would pass before Englishmen would migrate in any numbers to the predominantly Dutch-speaking north.

There is ample evidence Jacob had little liking for the English. So he must have had good reason to dislodge his family from Albany in 1665 and return to the city. He purchased a lot on the west side of Broad Street a few yards north of his parents' house.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps the reason had to

---

21 NYCD, 13, 143.

22 This was Maria (Hanson) Westphalen, or "Westvall", Van Luyderdorps (he rarely used the surname). In 1672 her daughter, Rymerick, would marry Jacob's brother Thomas.

23 NYCD, 13, 170-171.

24 In March his name ("Jacob Toennissen from Naerden") appears in a list of 75 men on the muster roll of the "Company at the Esopus". NYCD, 13, 153-154.

25 MFOB, 2, 261. On 8 June Jan Labatie, a Frenchman living in Beverwyck, took Jacob to court to demand the return of his saddle and bridle which Jacob had borrowed for his ride to the Esopus. Jacob had left it there "in the care of" Thomas Chambers.

26 He is mentioned in the "de Sille List" of 1665. MHNy, 1, 338-340. I could not find the deed to his

do with his parents' situation and ages. His father was now about sixty and his mother about fifty-five. His parents may have depended on Jacob (he was their oldest son after all). And his mother had only just returned the previous year from her mission to Holland (after perhaps placing the two in straitened circumstances). Perhaps he felt that the change would benefit him. After all, he had not exactly gotten rich in Albany; at thirty-one he now owned a house for the first time.

Jacob and his family would live in this house for the next thirteen years. Evidence suggests the years were tough ones. Jacob was evidently irritated by the steady encroachment of the English into the political and economic life of the city, and in 1666 when some busybody heard him uttering "seditious" statements about Colonel Richard Nicolls he found himself making a quick "visit" to Albany.<sup>27</sup> But there was no escape. At Nicoll's insistence he was arrested in Albany, made to pay a healthy fine and allowed to return.<sup>28</sup> He was often in debt for petty matters.<sup>29</sup> On one occasion Nellie appeared in court for him.<sup>30</sup> He no doubt worked for the tanners in the neighborhood of upper Broad Street—the likes of Carsten Luersen, his brother-in-law, and his friend Jacob Abrahamsen. Perhaps his Indian knowhow helped him bring in skins for the tanning. Sometimes he paid off his debts in hogs that he raised in a pigsty on his land in the Sheeps Pasture.<sup>31</sup>

Jacob and Nellie get along well enough together but they scrapped and feuded with the neighbors.<sup>32</sup> In August 1667 Jacob was accused of beating up Abram Carpyn's wife. Carpyn, the plaintiff, complained "that deft. pushed and kicked his wife, so that she lay 3 long weeks in bed from it". Captain Thomas Delaval, the mayor, and a witness to the fracas told a different story:

"... the wife of Abram Carpyn came at the house of Jacob Teunissen Quicq, whoe after some discourses, began to fal out against the sd. Jacob in foul language Callinge him Roge & pokie Roge etc: Whereuppon the sd. Jacob Teunissen toocke hur up in his arms & Carried hur out of his house; but did not see that the sd. Jacob did thrust or Kike the sd. Woman".<sup>33</sup>

As a result of this statement (which was given and written down in the English language), and the testimony of two others, the parties were dismissed with costs.

The children grew quickly in the house on Broad Street. Nellie, with her rudimentary knowledge of reading and writing, insisted on schooling for her sons. Thus Cornelis and Theunis were taught to read and write.<sup>34</sup> Belitje was the first of the children to marry, in 1673.<sup>35</sup> This was the year Jacob's father died.

The struggle for New York was not yet over. In 1673 and 1674 New York Colony underwent two changes in sovereignty, the first bringing jubilation to the Dutch inhabitants, the second resignation. In 1673 the Third Anglo-Dutch War erupted on the high seas, and on 9 August a Dutch fleet sailed into New York harbor, fired a broadside at Fort James, the English name for

---

property.

27 NYCD, 3, 117.

28 The entry "from the sheriff for the fine of Cobus the runner (Looper) 33: 7" appears in the Deacons' Account Book of the Reformed Dutch Church of Albany in June 1666. J. Munsell, *Collections on the History of Albany* (Munsell, 1865), 1, 26.

29 RNA, 6, 94-95, 121-122, 126-127, 281, 284, 291, 295, 307, 350, 356; 7, 27, 28 and 32.

30 RNA, 6, 71.

31 RNA, 6, 163-164.

32 RNA, 6, 101-102, 106, 120, 126-127, 131, 168, 299 and 307. Jacob and Nellie were sued once for "defamation of character". But at no time did they sue anyone thusly.

33 RNA, 6, 56-57, 59-60 and 62-63. The record quoted is obviously in English complete with arbitrary 17th century spellings.

34 It bears pointing out that at this time educational possibilities for Dutch colonists of the Quicks' status in New York was better than in England.

35 The marriage records of Belitje, Cornelis (two records), Gerritje and Theunis are printed in NYGBC, 1, 37, 50, 54, 56 and 68 respectively.

Fort Amsterdam, and landed troops. To Jacob's joy, the English surrendered without much of a fight. The city was renamed New Orange. In the following year, however, when by treaty the war was ended, the United Provinces handed back New Orange to the English. Edmond Andros became the governor of what was again called New York. The colony would remain in English hands.

It seemed that as his friends and relatives prospered about him Jacob could not advance himself beyond raising hogs. He lived in a very poor "fourth class" house in the area of the Sheep's Pasture and the Princes' Graft—roughly the west side of Broad Street between Wall and Beaver Streets.<sup>36</sup> In 1674 he and his mother were of such little financial worth their names were not included in a list of homeowners compiled for tax purposes.

The taxes ended up going partly for the building of a new wharf in the harbor. The wharf was ordered in 1676 by the Common Council to foster commerce. It consisted of two curved piers stretching out from the land to form a large semicircle. An open space at the outermost point on the arc allowed vessels to enter and seek a berth. It was very modern for its time. The wharf, in fact, presages a turn in Jacob's fortunes: once the wharf was completed he hired a sloop for the occasional hauling job.<sup>37</sup>

Certainly it was that Jacob could not establish himself as an independent tanner; there was too much competition. Success in such ventures needed political connections: some had them and some didn't. In 1676 the Council appointed Conraet Ten Eyck and William Boyle, two local tanners, as searchers and sealers of leather. This gave them the responsibility of inspecting and marking with an official seal all leather and hides before shoemakers and tanners could sell or process them. John Harperding and Jacob Abrahamse were named tanners of the city and all others were forbidden to exercise the trade.

In any case the days of tanning on Broad Street were numbered. The city was growing rapidly and the stench arising from the tan pits soon became objectionable to nearby residents. It was no help that tanners dumped refuse from the tan pits—rotting animal flesh and dung amongst other things—routinely into the canal. This waste combined with the refuse from the market at Beaver Street, adding to the odors of the waterfront. The tides, which formerly had the power to flush out the waterway, had become ineffectual against the quantity of effluent arising from the increase in population. In 1678 the Council ordered the Broad Street canal filled in and the tan pits removed to Maiden Lane further north. Carsten Luersen, Jacob Abrahamsen and two others purchased a tract of land bounded by presentday Broadway, Ann, William, and Gold Streets (in what was then open countryside near the end of today's Brooklyn Bridge) and again set up tanneries. To get established in any trade required capital and connections, or so it seemed, advantages that Jacob did not possess.

The most successful of Jacob's relations to date—and the object of envy no doubt—was his brother-in-law Jacob Teunissen de Kay. The two Jacobs were about the same age. But whereas Jacob Quick had wandered about the colony, Jacob de Kay had remained steadfast in the city working steadily at his bakery in the old Quick homestead. Then in 1678 his fortune was assured by a stroke of good luck: Governor Andros passed the Bolting Act. This in essence gave de Kay

---

36 In July 1674 he paid a tax of 4 shillings (in produce) on the house in "The Heere Graft and Ye Bever Graft and Market" (near where the bridge crossed the canal in Broad Street). Com.CM, 1, 58-59. In a list of homeowners compiled in this year, the monetary worths of Jacob and his mother were so small they were not recorded. D.T. Valentine, *History of the City of New York* (Putnam, 1853), 319 and 328. His brothers-in-law Carsten Luersen and Jacob de Key owned "second class" houses and were worth \$7,500 and over \$18,000 respectively. (Valentine's dollar estimates of 1853). The state of Jacob's house is revealed by the following record. In February 1677 a survey was made of chimneys in order to identify those that were defective. Homeowners with defective chimneys, or none at all, were ordered to build chimneys or repair their existing ones so as not to present a fire hazard. Cobes de Looper's house had no chimney! Com.CM, 1, 42.

37 RNA, 7, 123



and a few other bakers the monopoly of the baking and bolting of flour in the whole province. This event is worthy of examination as de Kay is to have some influence on the careers of Jacob's sons Cornelis and Theunis.

Table 1. *Marriage Records of the Children of Jacob Teunissen and Neeltje Cornelis Quick in St. Nicholas Church, New York City, 1673-1689. The (days) of the week given here were added by the author for the reader's information and are not part of the original records.*

Translation of Dutch Entry	Notes	Date of Banns/Marriage
Gerrit Cosynszen, young man, from New Netherland and Belitje Jacobs, young daughter, from Fort Orange, both on Stuyvesant's farm.	(a)	24 Sep 1673 (Sun) 25 Sep 1673 (Mon)
Cornelis Jacobsen Quick, young man from New Albany, and Abigail Abrahams, young daughter from New York, both living in New York		23 Jan 1682 (Tue)
Leendert Albertszen de Grau, young man from New York, and Gerritje Jacobs Quick, young daughter from New Albany, both living here		13 Oct 1683 (Wed) 24 Oct 1683 (Sun)
Cornelis Jacobszen Quick, widower of Abigael Abrahams, and Maria Van Hoogten, young daughter from New Yorke, both living here	(b)	2 May 1685 (Wed) 28 May 1685 (Mon)
Theunis Quick, young man from New Albany, and Vrouwje Jans, young daughter from Stuyvesant's farm, the first living here, and the second on Tappen.	(c)	30 Oct 1689 (Sun) 1 Dec 1689 (Thu)

Notes:

- (a) "Stuyvesant's farm" refers to Peter Stuyvesant's original land holdings, an area then on the outskirts of New York City but which is now bordered by Third Avenue, the East River, Sixth, and Sixteenth Streets (between Stuyvesant Square and Tompkins Square). Belitje Jacobs is described as of "Fort Orange" since in August 1673 New York colony had been retaken by the Dutch and renamed.
- (b) Cornelis's story is continued in Chapter 4.
- (c) Vrouwtje means "little wife". Her full name was Vrouwtje Jans Haring. She was the daughter of Jans Petersen Haring and Grietje Cosyn of Tappan, New York.

By the fall of 1678 Jacob's mother had died. It seemed that the last of the bonds holding him to the city had gone for good. He and Nellie left their teenaged children in the little house on Broad Street and retreated to the familiar surroundings of Albany. He bought a sloop and straightaway found trade hauling stone for Albany merchants.<sup>38</sup> His fortunes were changing for the better.

What Jacob had learned about sloops in his youth now bore fruit. In 1681 he gave his sloop to his newly-married son, Cornelis, and invested the small capital he had accumulated in the tanning trade—what he had learned on Broad Street. On 25 May 1681 he partnered with five others to purchase from Gerritt Ryerse a lot on the north side of Albany.<sup>39</sup> To our view this piece of land, about fifty-five feet square on the west side of Coe Street (literally Cow Street—now Broadway)

38 ERA, 3, 454.

39 ERA, 2, 125-126.

near the corner of what is now called Colonie Line, seems impossibly small.<sup>40</sup> They built a horse-powered mill to start with, to supply bark for the tanneries on the nearby Vossen Kil (creek).

### **Baking and Bolting in Old New York**

Since the days of New Amsterdam the bakers had often been involved in the milling and the bolting of the flour as well as the baking of the final product. The wheat that was grown on the farms of the Hudson River Valley was shipped by sloop to the city for grinding, sifting and blending. The grinding was done by wind-mills and the new mills powered by horses. The sifting was effected with a cloth screen or a sieve in a process called bolting. Bolting separates the more desirable flour portion of the wheat kernel from the germ, bran, and other harder parts of the grain that are often discarded or used in inferior types of bread. The flour market of New Amsterdam had always been extensive with the millers shipping flour throughout the colony, to the West Indies and elsewhere in the Dutch overseas empire. The product, however, was not of a uniform quality on account of the variations in bolting which tended to depend on the baker. In 1678, in an effort to improve the manufacture of flour Governor Andros granted a few leading bakers in the city—those with the resources to produce a standardized product—exclusive, and immensely profitable, rights.

What came to be known as the Bolting Act triggered the first economic boom of New York City. The manufacture of flour became the city's leading industry with almost two-thirds of its citizens dependent on it in one way or other. The act remained in force for sixteen years; and in that time city revenues increased three hundred percent. Land values soared more than ten times, resulting in a frenzy of land speculation. Trade grew by leaps and bounds. Many fortunes were made in a very short time. In the late 1670s, the young Theunis Quick would serve his apprenticeship in Jacob de Kay's bakery. And Cornelis would one day haul wheat in his sloop for his successful uncle, growing richer with each passing year. Such were the effects of the Bolting Act on our family and many others.

### **Tanning in Old New York**

Tanning, the process of curing or preparing a raw animal skin to prevent its decomposition, was a growing industry in Albany as it was in New York City. A skin is turned into leather by the action of the tannic acid in the bark of oak trees. Oak bark was gathered in the spring from the clearing of land. After drying, the bark was shaved and pounded into strips with an axe on blocks of wood—or hammered in a contrivance like Jacob's horse mill. The skins were soaked in water to soften them and then stored in a heated shed to prevent them from drying out and cracking. The hair on the skins was removed by scraping with a metal instrument or made to fall out naturally by applying milk of lime or wood ashes. The hides were piled on top of one another in a trough sunk in the ground with the oak strips placed between each skin. The pit was filled with water and the hides left to tan in the dilute acid for several months. The hides were then taken out and rubbed with bear oil, hog lard or tallow to make them soft and pliable. Soot and hog lard were also applied to blacken the leather to make it resistant to soiling. The product went into the making of shoes, boots, harnesses, mens breeches and waistcoats, and into leather petticoats and jerkins for the hardy women of the western settlements.

Albany had changed in the thirteen years of their absence. A new fort stood on the hill (near where the state capitol building stands today) and a high wooden palisade surrounded the town. The layout of the resembled the shape of an arrowhead, with the fort at its tip pointing menacingly west towards Indian country: the Mohawk River Valley and the new outpost at

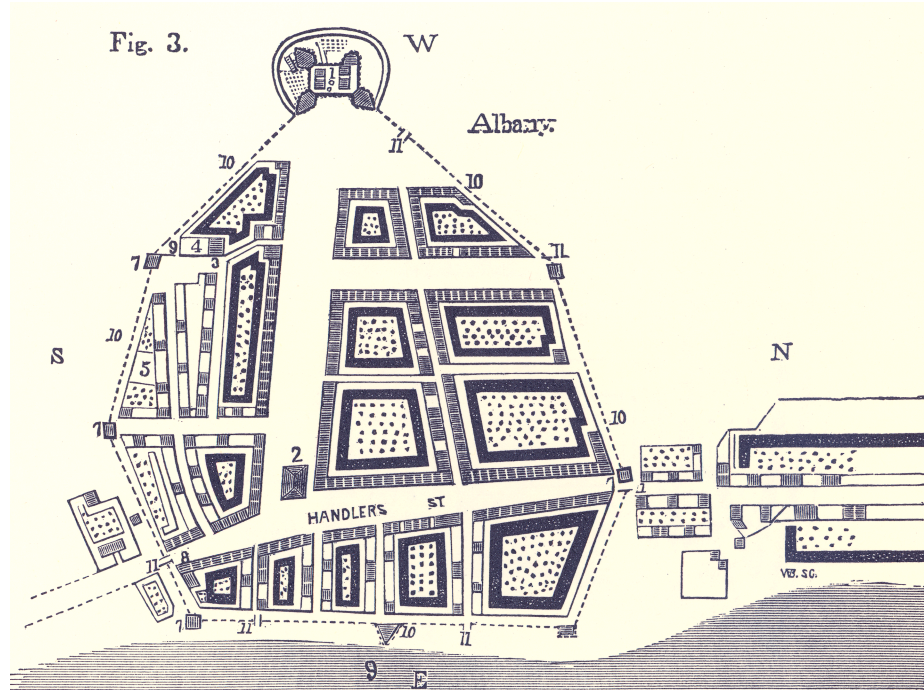
---

40 J. Munsell, *Collections on the History of Albany* (Munsell, 1865), 4, 199. A rough map of the property is given herein.

Schenectady (Figure 2).

To judge from the number of occurrences of Jacob's name on Albany deeds, he felt at home there immediately, settled in and energetically went to work. On 8 July 1681 he and a partner, Johannes Mingael, described in the records as "both shoemakers of this town", bought a house and lot from Jan Andries Dow. This was Jacob's second lot. It too was very small measuring about 40 feet long by 15 feet wide. It lay on the west side of Broadway in the section of the city now bordered by James and State Streets, Broadway and Maiden Lane.<sup>41</sup> On the following day Jacob received Mingael's half interest in the place so he had clear title.<sup>42</sup>

Figure 2. Albany in 1695. (1) the cemetery of the Dutch Reformed Church where Jacob was probably buried; (2) The Dutch Reformed Church at the corner of Jonkers and Handlers Streets (now State and Broadway).<sup>43</sup>



In the meantime the children in the family home on Broad Street in New York City were maturing into adults. In 1682 and 1683 Jacob and Nellie traveled there (aboard Cornelis's sloop no doubt) to attend the weddings of Cornelis and Geertje. Geertje married Leendert Albertsz de Grau. Cornelis married Abigail Abrahamse, a daughter of the Jacob Abrahamsen mentioned earlier.

Jacob's story ends abruptly and in mysterious circumstances. In the late summer or early fall of 1684 he died. Evidence for his death appears in September as fragmentary entries in the deacon's account book of the blockhouse church: "from the friends of Cobus the runner (looper) for a piece of 8, out of gratitude (tot dankbarheyt)".<sup>44</sup> And again, from the same book on 1 October: "From the heirs of Jacobus de Loper for the pall fl. 10:-"<sup>45</sup> Just what his services might

41 ERA, 2, 128-129. Munsell, 4, 202 contains a rough sketch of the property.

42 ERA, 2, 129-130.

43 From an engraving in J. Miller, *A Description of the Province and City of New York* (London, 1695)

44 First Dutch Reformed Church Deacons' Account Book, in Munsell, 1, 45. This sum of money was given to the church in his memory for reasons unknown.

45 First Dutch Reformed Church Deacons' Accounts, 1684-1687, in *The Dutch Settlers Society of Albany, Yearbook*, 8, 14. Jacob died without a will.

have been to solicit this note of gratitude I do not know. He had just turned fifty in May of that year. We do not know for certain but most probably Nellie and the children would have had him buried in the cemetery of the Dutch Reformed Church on the south side of the town near the palisade.

Soon after Jacob's death his land in Albany must have been sold (though in fact we do not have the record of the sale). Nellie almost certainly moved to New York City to be with her children, probably on Broad Street. She was certainly there on 12 April 1688 standing as godmother in St. Nicholas Church at the christening of little Helena, Cornelis and Maria's second daughter (Cornelis by this time having married Maria van Hoogten, his second wife).<sup>46</sup> This is the last record we have of the orphan bride.<sup>47</sup>

---

46 NYGBC, 2, 185.

47 I have been unable to find the burial record of Neeltje Cornelis in the records of the Dutch Reformed Church.