

375th Anniversary of the Eendracht and Nieuw Nederland

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This year marks the 375th anniversary of the arrival in New Netherland of the first two ships carrying permanent European settlers to the colony. On a day in the early spring of 1624, the *Eendracht*^[1] entered what is now New York Harbor, and then proceeded up the North (Hudson) River. To the native people who lived along these waterways, the sight of a European ship was no longer remarkable, as Dutch traders had been visiting the area since Henry Hudson's arrival in 1609. But the *Eendracht* was different—it brought men, women and children who intended to stay in the colony.

We know the names of only a few of the passengers on the *Eendracht*, and on the *Nieuw Nederland* which arrived about two months later, and only four of the identified families aboard these two ships are known to have left descendants in the colony—**Rapalje**, Monfort, du Trieux, and Vigne. The other settlers appear to have died in the next few years, or returned to the Netherlands.

This is the earliest view of New Amsterdam, at the southern tip of Manhattan Island, first settled in 1625. The **Rapalje**, Monfort, du Trieux, and Vigne families came to Manhattan from their initial residence at Fort Orange (Albany). This drawing was probably made by Cryn Fredericksz, who visited the colony in 1625-26 to lay out a town and fort for the West India Company. The fort was not built until 1628, and along more modest lines. If the windmill and houses are accurately represented, then the picture may be a mirror image. North is obviously to the left, so that West should be in the foreground, yet the windmill is known to have been erected on the west side of the island. This has led to the suggestion that it is the East River in the foreground and the Hudson in the background, not vice versa. The land to the right would be Governor's Island.

The four families who survived were Walloons, from Valenciennes, Roubaix, and other towns, all now in France's Département du Nord, but then part of the Netherlands under the rule of Spain. They were Protestants, and in order to worship as they pleased they had fled north to Amsterdam and Leiden, where the Spanish were no longer in control. When the West India Company sought settlers for its new colony, these recent refugees were ready to move once again.

They sailed on tiny vessels, which took weeks to make the crossing, totally cut off from the rest of the world, only to arrive in a country which, from a European standpoint, was a wilderness. It is difficult for us today to imagine a comparable experience, unless we think of a voyage to outer space.

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The Walloon families who remained in New Netherland were soon joined by Dutch and a variety of other European settlers, and within two years Africans had been added to the mix, creating North America's most multi-ethnic colony.

As so many pertinent records of this time have been lost, we are particularly fortunate that sixty-one years after the *Eendracht's* arrival one of its passengers, Catalina (Trico) Rapalje, made two famous depositions in which she recalled her first years in the colony.^[2]

The three hundredth anniversary of the *Eendracht* was observed in 1924 with considerable ceremony, as well as an issue of U.S. postage stamps (for the "Huguenot-Walloon Tercentenary").^[3]

It is probably safe to say that those who can trace a line to one or more of the four families must now number in the millions. As we approach the 375th anniversary, thanks to the upsurge in interest in genealogy a substantial number of these descendants have become aware of their link to this momentous event, and we hope they will be encouraged to observe the anniversary in appropriate ways.

For genealogists, the best documented account of the two ships and their passengers is George O. Zabriskie's article "The **Rapalje**-Rapelje Family," part of the series "The Founding Families of New Netherland," published in the Holland Society's journal *de Halve Maen*, 46:4(Jan. 1972):7-8, 16; 47:1(Apr. 1972):11-13; and 47:2(July 1972):11-14. In his text and footnotes Zabriskie directs the reader to the primary sources from which we derive our knowledge of this period. Other secondary accounts, particularly those published in the 19th century, should not be accepted without reference to Zabriskie.

The *Eendracht* sailed from Amsterdam on January 25, 1624. Joris **Rapalje** and Catalina Trico were married in Amsterdam on January 21, and we know from her depositions that they sailed on this ship. Jean Monfort and his wife Jacqueline Moreau had a certificate (attestation) from Amsterdam's Walloon Church on January 23 "pour le West Indes," so they and their son Pierre (and any other children still living) also sailed on the *Eendracht*.

The *Nieuw Nederland* sailed on or after March 30, 1624. Philippe du Trieux had a certificate from Amsterdam's Walloon Church on March 11, "pour Wes Inde," and this has to be the vessel that brought him to New Netherland, probably accompanied by his second wife Susanne du Chesne, and his children Philippe and Marie.^[4]

Although we do not have a Netherlands record regarding the departure of Ghislain and Adrienne (Cuvellier) Vigne and their children Marie, Christine, and Rachel, they certainly were on one of these vessels, as their son Jan would be the first male child born in the new colony, or at least the first male child who survived and remained there (Sara **Rapalje** was the first female child born in New Netherland).

By the time the *Nieuw Nederland* sailed the Company had drawn up regulations to govern the new settlements. These are printed (in Dutch and English) in A. J. F. van Laer, ed., *Documents Relating to New Netherland 1624-1626* (1924). The final sections of the

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regulations read: “[20] Finally, they shall take the oath of allegiance and obedience to the High and Mighty Lords the States General and to this Company, and shall in all things comport themselves as good and loyal subjects are bound to do. [21] The foregoing articles having been read to the colonists going over in the ship 'Nieu Nederlant,' they took the oath of allegiance this 30th day of March, anno 1624.”

[1] *Eendracht* is usually translated as “Unity,” or “Concord.”

[2] The depositions were recorded in N.Y. Colonial Manuscripts 35:182 and N.Y. Secretary of State Deeds 7:98-99, and transcriptions published in E.B. O'Callaghan, *Documentary History of the State of New York*, vol. 3(1850): 49-51. A new transcription of the second and longer deposition is in Peter Christoph, ed., *The Dongan Papers 1683-1688, Part 2* (1996), pp. 216-17.

[3] Although the Protestants of France are properly called Huguenots, these Walloon settlers are not referred to as Huguenots in contemporary documents. The Amsterdam church which most of them attended called itself the French or Walloon church or congregation.

[4] Zabriskie notes that the Walloon church certificate does not mention Philippe's wife, so that she could have followed on a later ship. Since the church register contains no separate entry for Susanne and she clearly came to New Netherland, it is equally likely that she accompanied her husband.

Following are brief bibliographies of the most reliable genealogical accounts of the four families.

Rapalje (Rapareilliet, Raparlié, Rapalyea, Raplee, etc.)

For documentation of Joris (Georges) **Rapalje's** origin and marriage see George E. McCracken, “Joris Janzen **Rapalje** of Valenciennes and Catelyntje Jeronimus Trico of Pry,” *The American Genealogist* 48(1972):118-20; George O. Zabriskie's article in *de Halve Maen*, cited above; and Hugh T. Law, *How to Trace Your Ancestors to Europe* (1987), pp. 83-87. As both McCracken and Zabriskie acknowledge, it was Law who actually discovered the key marriage and baptismal records, in 1964. All of these authors emphasize that earlier accounts of the **Rapalje** ancestry are unreliable. It should also be noted that the form “de **Rapalje**” which appears in a few New York records is not found in any European documents of the family.

Recently much new information has come to light on Catalina (Trico) **Rapalje's** family connections: see Dorothy Koenig and Pim Nieuwenhuis, “Catalina Trico from Namur (1605-1689) and Her Nephew, Arnoldus de la Grange,” *New Netherland Connections [NNC]* 1(1996):3:55-63, and “Further Information About Catalina Trico,” *NNC* 1:4:89-93. The latter article reveals the name of Catalina's mother, Michele Sauvage (p. 92) and also supports Law's argument that Catalina's birthplace of “Pry,” once misread as Paris, was Prisches, Hainaut (now in France), near Valenciennes.

On the early descendants of this couple see George E. McCracken, “Catelyntje Trico **Rapalje**,” *The American Genealogist* 35(1959):193-200. Some lines are traced further in

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James Riker's *Annals of Newtown* (1852) and other works but there is no overall, generally-available published genealogy of the family.

Monfort (Monfoort, Montfort, etc.)

On the origin of the family in Valenciennes see Harry Macy, Jr., "Sara (De Planck) Monfort," *Record* 122(1991): 143-49, and "New Light on the Origin of the Monfort Family," *Record* 129(1998):94-96. Some descendants are traced in Henry A. Stoutenburgh, *A Documentary History of [the] . . . Dutch Congregation of Oyster Bay. . . .* (1903-7), and Fred Sisser III, *The Monfoort Family of New York and New Jersey* (1969).

The Monforts returned to Amsterdam between 1630 and 1636 and came to New Netherland again in 1639.

du Trieux (Truex, Truax, etc.)

This was the first of these families to be properly researched in the Netherlands, as reported in Kathlyne Knickerbacker Viele, "Philippe Dutrieux," *Record* 45(1914):51-53, 392. Many American generations are traced in "The House of Truax, Descendants of Philippe du Trieux, 1586-1653," edited by Howard S.F. Randolph from the notes of T. de T. Truax, *Record* vols. 57-59 (1926-28) beginning at 57:208; Genealogies of various branches of the family have also been compiled. The Philippe du Trieux Descendants Association is active and publishes a newsletter.

Vigne (Vigné, Vinje, etc.)

In 1947 Herbert F. Seversmith wrote an article "Ariaentje Cuvilje (Adrienne Cuvellier), Matriarch of New Amsterdam," published in *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 35:65-69. An extended account is in his *Colonial Families of Long Island, New York, and Connecticut*, vol. 2 (1951), pp. 847-63, with additions at 2:1032-33, 3:1467, 4:1980-82.

Recent research has uncovered considerably more information, as revealed in Dorothy Koenig and Pim Nieuwenhuis, "The Pedigree of Cornelia Roos, an Ancestor of Franklin D. Roosevelt," *New Netherland Connections [NNC]* 2(1997):85-93, 3(1998):1:1-5, correction 3:2:34-35. See also William J. Parry et al, answers to queries, *NNC* 1(1996):4:95-97. Koenig and Nieuwenhuis (2:1:2) indicate that Adrienne's husband's name was Ghislain Vigne or Vigné, not Guillaume as previously thought. Like Zabriskie, the *NNC* authors agree that the Vigne family had to be among those who first came over in 1624, and that the Labadists had erred in implying that Jan Vigne was born in New Netherland in 1614.

Unlike the first three families, the Vignes quickly died out in the male line, and later descendants are to be found in accounts of other surnames.

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