

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 29

*St. George's Church
Tercentenary*

See back cover

Saturday, April 5

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Colonists' Day

Opening ceremony Fort Christina Park (10 am, 7th St. at Swedes Landing Rd., Wilmington, DE) followed by a procession to Holy Trinity Church and Highway Word of Faith Hall for exhibits, food, programs and entertainment by Delaware Valley historical organizations. John Tepe, SCS Deputy Governor, will be available to introduce guests to SCS's digital genealogical records. Visit colonialnewseden.org for more information and a video of the 2012 celebration.

Sunday, May 18

*Rededication of the
Governor Johan Printz
Monument by The
Swedish Colonial Society*

The Swedish Colonial Society will hold a rededication ceremony for the Governor Johan Printz New Sweden monument that was erected by the Society in 1923 at the Corinthian Yacht Club, Essington PA. The monolith commemorates the settling of the area in 1643 by New Sweden, the first in what would become the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The rededication ceremony will be the highlight of the annual Forefathers' Day Luncheon, sponsored jointly by The Delaware Swedish Colonial Society and The Swedish Colonial Society and held this year at the Corinthian Yacht Club.



SWEDISH COLONIAL SOCIETY

916 SOUTH SWANSON STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19147

To Friends of New Sweden,

The 375th Anniversary Jubilee year of 2013 came to an end all too quickly. What a very exciting time that was! The last newsletter described His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf's visit to the Delaware Valley and the superb Jubilee dinner that was held at the Chase Center in Wilmington, Delaware.

Another 375th Anniversary event was held at The Barnes Foundation, "One of the world's leading collections of French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings," in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, featuring "Swedish and Finnish Music and Spirits Since 1638," on November 1, 2013.



Every year the New Sweden History Conference, co-sponsored by The Swedish Colonial Society, dedicates a conference on the legacy of the New Sweden Colony. The "New Sweden 375th Anniversary Conference, Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology" was held in Clayton Hall at the University of Delaware, Newark, DE on November 8 to 10, 2013. The title of the conference was "Encountering 'Others' in the Atlantic World: Perspectives from the Material World." As usual, this international conference was indeed a success.

The *Swedish Colonial News* historic journal has a new editor, Dr. Edward Root, and a new designer, Gene Gilroy. Both have accomplished such a well-informed historic journal in a short period of time. The Society is very fortunate to have obtained both of these talented persons.

The Society is planning to have the Forefathers' Day Luncheon and annual meeting on Sunday, May 18, 2014, at the Corinthian Yacht Club in Essington, Pennsylvania. This will enable the guests to enjoy the completed new landscaping located at the entrance of the Club and to attend the rededication of the Governor Printz monolith presented by Michael R. D'Andrea, Chairman of the Historic Preservation Committee. The monolith was erected by The Swedish Colonial Society at this location through the efforts of Colonel Henry D. Paxson and was dedicated on June 14, 1923 to the memory of Governor Printz of New Sweden and the first settlers of Pennsylvania.

In closing, I extend my blessings to all.

Sally Bridwell

Margaret Sooy Bridwell
Governor, The Swedish Colonial Society

The Forgotten Governor

Recently discovered and translated letters of New Sweden Colony's Governor Peter Hollender Ridder (born about 1608, died 1692) are presented here for the first time in English.

Commander Peter Hollender Ridder led New Sweden from Ft. Christina (Wilmington) from 1640 to 1643 and is often forgotten among the colorful stories about the amazing Governor Johan Printz, the tragedy of Peter Minuit, and the disaster with Governor Johan Risingh. Yet we do know quite a bit about him: a series of his letters has recently been discovered and translated which sheds new light on his abilities. Five of these letters were written from Ft. Christina back to his superiors in Sweden, one of whom was none other than Lord High Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna who acted as head of state during Queen Christina's minority from 1632 to 1644.¹ Also overseeing Ridder's activities in New Sweden was Admiral Claes Fleming who gave Ridder his Commandant Instructions in 1639 (*letter 1*). Fleming was killed in a naval battle on July 27, 1644 shortly after Ridder's return from America (*letter 7*). Ridder also sent these letters to the Queen who was 14 to 17 years old when Ridder was Commandant in New Sweden.²

The rediscovery of these letters is due to the genealogical and historical researches of Tytti and Matti Halonen in Finland, including travels to Russia, Sweden, and U.S.A. Matti is himself an 11th generation descendant of Hans Hollender, Peter's father. All the letters were written in High German with some Low German forms. Only the wrapped and sealed "envelopes" were written in Swedish by Ridder and addressed to whomever they were going.

Until now the only other language they had been translated into was Finnish. The difficult job of deciphering and transcribing Ridder's Old German script was accomplished by Dr. Tette Hofstra, a native Dutch speaker and professor emeritus of Old German at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands.

The Halonens contacted our council member Earl Seppälä through the Finnish-American Society of the Delaware Valley. He immediately recognized their historical value. Dr. Alfred Wedel, professor emeritus of Foreign Languages at the University of Delaware and a neighbor of Earl and Sylvia Seppälä, agreed to translate the letters into English. They are now ready for publication after some corrections by the author.

Ridder was technically not a Governor but a Commandant (*letter 1*). We note the tensions between the Dutch crew and the Swedes and their first pastor, Torkil Reorus, who accompanied Ridder on this 1639-1640 seven-month voyage, the second of the *Kalmar Nyckel* to New Sweden.³ These conflicts continued between the Dutch and Swedish officers at Ft. Christina (*letter 2*). In part the conflicts were religious, Torkil being Swedish Lutheran and the Dutch favoring the Dutch Reformed faith.³

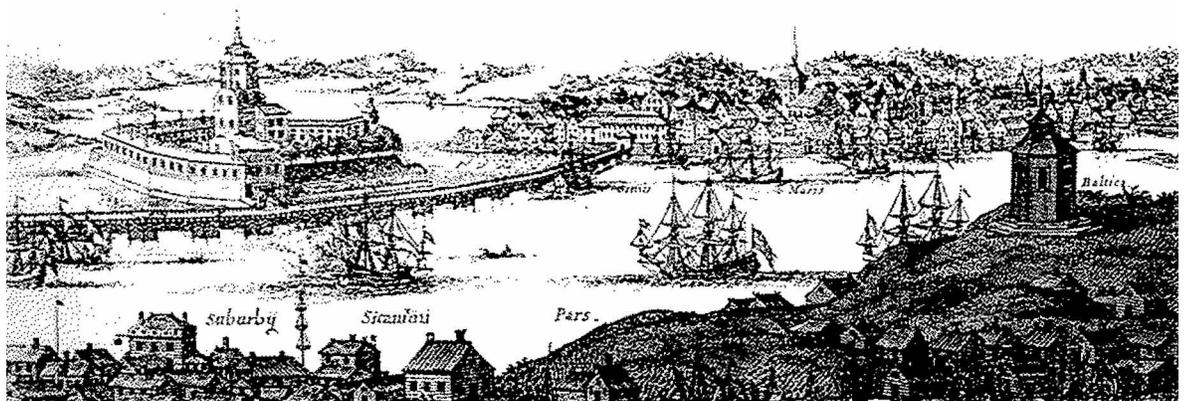
Ridder massively expanded the area of the colony on the western side of the Delaware River from Sankikans (The Falls of Trenton) to Cape Henlopen (Lewes DE) and on the eastern (New Jersey) side from Narraticon (Raccoon) Creek to Cape May. Also, it was he and not Governor Printz who suggested a new center for the colony on Tinicum Island so as to be right on the Delaware River. He recommended a fort be built "below the narrowest point of the river on which will stand Sweden's crown which is the key to New Sweden.

continued on next page

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kim-Eric Williams is the Historian and Honorary Governor of The Swedish Colonial Society. He teaches Swedish at the University of Pennsylvania and is the Archivist at the Lutheran Archives Center in Philadelphia. He is a Forefather member descending from Olof Stille and Carl Springer and lives in West Chester, PA.

Vyborg/Viipuri, Finland, where Ridder ended his government career. (Taken from a new book by Tytti Halonen which is the first-ever biography of Peter Hollender Ridder.)



Where we are now located [Ft. Christina], we cannot subdue anyone.” (*letter 6*)

As a result of these letters, many of his requests were fulfilled because on November 7 the following year *Kalmar Nyckel* and *Charitas* arrived with more settlers, especially Forest Finns, who were adept at felling trees to clear land and build log houses.⁴

There is indirect evidence that Peter was born (about 1608) in the Dutch Province of Holland,^{5,6} as suggested by Dr. Hofstra from dialectic words used by Peter in his letters.⁷ His family name in Holland was Ridder.⁸ He was the younger son of Hans Hollender, born about 1580, and Susanna Kruse,⁸ who moved their family when Peter was about 15 years old in 1623 to Ekenäs/Timmissaari, Finland,⁹ then the eastern part of the Kingdom of Sweden. They were called Hollender because they came from Holland. Ekenäs lies on the coast about halfway between Helsingfors/Helsinki and Åbo/Turku. His father became Ekenäs mayor and also its representative in the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm.⁶

Peter and his older brother Hans Hollender Ridder were sent to Sweden to study at The Stockholm Admiralty.⁶ Hans was educated as an accountant and in 1641 was appointed as bookkeeper under the governor of Viborg/Viipuri Län (County), Finland. Peter entered the Swedish Navy, appointed as a lieutenant in 1638.⁸

Upon returning in 1644 from three years in New Sweden he was sent by the Admiralty to the so-called Torstensson War against the Danes. Peter Ridder took part in the greatest naval victory against the Danes in Fämer (Femern in Danish) Straits. After the victory Peter returned to Stockholm where he married Elisabeth Johansdotter in Storkyrkan (Stockholm Cathedral) on the same day (30 Nov.) that his brother Hans married Elisabeth’s sister Brita.⁸

By 1648 he was promoted to Captain and later to Major. The Navy dispatched him for service against the Danes in several sea battles over the next years. He was Commander of the Nyland/Uusimaa “boatsmen” fleet from 1651 to 1665 and his headquarters were at Viborg/Viipuri Castle. He was wounded but not gravely in the siege of Copenhagen in 1659. Details of his naval exploits are spelled out further in Tytti Halonen’s book.⁵

Later, from 1666 to 1681, he remained in Viborg as Commandant of Viborg/Viipuri Län (County) and his family came to live with him in the Commandant’s House. Viborg remained part of Finland until taken over by the Soviet Union in 1944 during World War II.



Viborg Castle with its tower which can also be seen in the old engraving of Viborg on p. 3. On the lower right is the white Commandant Building, where, on the upper floor, Bookkeeper Hans H. Ridder had his offices 1641 - 1656. On the lower floor Peter Ridder had his staff offices 1651 - 1665 when he was head of the Uusimaa Fleet, and it was also there that he and his family resided 1666 - 1681 while he was Commandant of the Castle. (Courtesy of Tytti Halonen, photo, Viborg, Russia, 2011)

Ridder’s last years were spent in Stockholm where he was in litigation concerning rent and upkeep for a house his wife had inherited on Gråmunkegränd, Gamla Stan (The Old City). That house remains today. He died in Stockholm about age 84 in 1691 or 1692. Although initially buried at St. Mary Magdalen Church in Stockholm, in 1697 his remains were returned by his son Konstantin to Viborg/Viipuri. Six children using the Ridder surname have been identified: Brita, Susanna Kristina, Petter Petterson, Konstantin, Katarina, and Elisabet.

Tytti Halonen has authored the first biography of Peter Hollender Ridder. It was published in 2013 in Finnish as *Tammisaaren Emäpiruista Wiipurin Säätyläisiksi*.⁵ Her book will certainly tell us further details about the varied and fascinating life, and the family and times, of Peter Hollender Ridder, the until-now forgotten Governor of New Sweden.



Tytti Halonen, Earl Seppälä, and Edward Root contributed to this article.

REFERENCES:

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- Halonen, Tytti. Summary in English of Ref. 5 above, *Advancing from Mothers of the Devil in Ekenäs/Tammisaari to the Gentry of Viborg/Wiipuri*, e-mail to Earl and Sylvia Seppälä, 10 May 2012
- Halonen, Tytti. “To bite off the top of the point,” e-mail to Edward Root, 21 Jan. 2014. Prof. Tette Hofstra had written to T. Halonen 25 Oct. 2011, “I am inclined to locate Ridder’s roots in the western parts of the Netherlands, . . . The Province of Holland proper.”
- Halonen, Tytti. “Answers and Estimations,” e-mail to Edward Root, 15 Jan. 2014
- Most locations in Finland have both Swedish and Finnish names. Here the Swedish name is followed by the Finnish, separated by a slash.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Letters of Peter H. Ridder

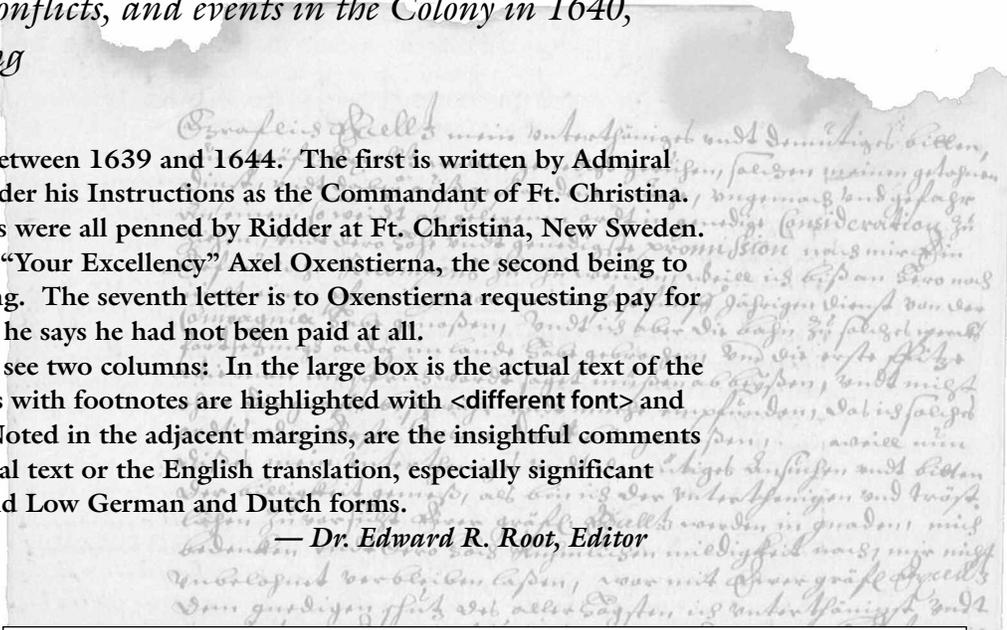
FROM NEW SWEDEN TO HIS SUPERIORS IN SWEDEN:

*A Glimpse into issues, conflicts, and events in the Colony in 1640,
2 years after its founding*

Following are 7 letters penned between 1639 and 1644. The first is written by Admiral Claes Fleming giving Peter Ridder his Instructions as the Commandant of Ft. Christina. The second through the sixth letters were all penned by Ridder at Ft. Christina, New Sweden. All but the second are addressed to “Your Excellency” Axel Oxenstierna, the second being to “Your Grace” Admiral Claes Fleming. The seventh letter is to Oxenstierna requesting pay for his years of service in New Sweden; he says he had not been paid at all.

On the following pages, you will see two columns: In the large box is the actual text of the letters in English. There the phrases with footnotes are highlighted with <different font> and the footnote superscript number. Noted in the adjacent margins, are the insightful comments by Dr. Hofstra regarding the original text or the English translation, especially significant given his knowledge of old High and Low German and Dutch forms.

— Dr. Edward R. Root, Editor



Tytti and Matti Halonen live in Helsinki and both are members of the Swedish Colonial Society. Tytti received her MA in Historic Philology from Helsinki University and her Librarian degree from Tampere University. Worked as Chief Librarian at Järvenpää Library. Matti worked as Engineer as Head of Transportation at The Finnish Broadcasting Company. Both are now retired.

LETTER 1 Summary:
 [Ridder says he personally met with Oxenstierna and Fleming in 1639 before the voyage to New Sweden (letter 7.)] He is commissioned as Commandant of Ft. Christina in Queen Christina’s and the company participants’ [investors] service. Should follow instructions from Ft. Christina’s departing captain and use the Commissary’s advice. (The latter pretty much took control as we will see.)

Instructions to Ridder from Admiral Fleming

Whereas he has been received and commissioned in our most gracious Queen’s service, as Commandant of Fort Christina in New Sweden, to have oversight of the people garrisoned there now and yet to be sent over: He shall therefore be obliged to seek with all his might Her Most August Majesty’s advantage and benefit, and the Participants’ profit; to help, to his utmost capacity, to hinder and ward off their injuries and wants; and so to conduct himself in everything that he multiplies it, and the said Most August Majesty and every honest man can and may confidently answer for it , otherwise [to conduct] himself in the rest according to the Special Instruction Captain Cornelius Van Vliet is going to leave upon his departure from there. It is therefore ordered that the people in the said Fort show him all cooperation and obedience in that which he shall with the advice of the Commissary [Joost van Langdonk], ask and command them.

Done at Stockholm July 1, 1639
 Claes Flemingsh

REFERENCE: Translated from the original Swedish by Dr. Richard H. Hulan in Weslager, C. A. *A Man and His Ship: Peter Minuit and the Kalmar Nyckel*, Wilmington DE: Kalmar Nyckel Foundation, 1990, p. 166.

DR. HOFSTRA INSIGHTS:

1. as to fishing it is a good land, if only one would have the necessary tools [Dutch verbs have – with the exception of ‘to be’ and a few other obsolete forms – no separate forms in preterit for indicative and subjunctive; maybe already in the 17th century Dutch practice did not have separate subjunctive forms; this could explain, why PR writes *Hadt* instead of *Hädt*]
2. In reference to our sowing-seed like rye, wheat, and barley
3. He ordered it to be pressed into a cask. The original has *schru-uen* (~ Dutch *schroeven*, German *schrauben*, English to screw).
4. I am inclined to read the original as: *tegen den Hollanß Kacke radt* ‘against the Dutch cockroach’ The designations of the cockroach (Finnish *torakka*, German *Kakerlak*, Dutch *kakkerlak*; French *cancrelat* with -t is a loanword from Dutch) show in West Germanic languages since the 17th century some variation as to -l and -r, and -t and -k. Another possibility could be *tegen den Hollanß Kercke radt* ‘against the Dutch church-rat’. Whatever the correct reading is, the qualification of the Dutch captain must be negative.
5. and part of it decayed and are spoiled
6. left on the ship
7. In my transliteration: *oben* ‘evening’; maybe the first character is to be read as a (*aben* with the standard a-) and it is thinkable that at the end a –d or a –t once was visible, but the paper is alas not in good shape at its edge.
8. After we had to leave the ship, when something had to be done [in the fields of consultation and decision], no ship consultation has been organized anymore.

LETTER 2 Summary:

This land is good for farming and fishing. Many complaints about the Captain and Commissary: Seeds allowed to spoil, fishing net broken, boards chopped too small, wine and aquavit, even religious, drunk up, rats on ship not controlled, and those two keep their own counsel. Captain says without orders from Sweden cannot repair fort and can't start new fort [Tinicum].

13 May 1640, Ridder letter to Admiral Fleming from Christina, New Sweden

Herewith I submit to you [this letter] in order to let you know about the opportunities in this land and about other circumstances. In reference to the first mentioned thing, that is the land, and its opportunities, [I can say] that it is a good land to use for sowing crops <and for fishing. We also have the necessary tools at hand [to work the land].¹> <In reference to our seeds for barley, rye, wheat, and oats²> it is all spoiled so that it cannot be used. The one responsible for this is the Commissary and now the Captain. They have not taken care of the goods. They ordered that the goods should stay in the fort although they were aware of the fact that the goods would go bad. They still say that everything should stay on land. The draught net that we bought in

Göteborg was used by the Captain for fishing on several occasions, and then <he ordered it to be pulled up³> and to use such brutal force that it got entangled and broke into many pieces so that it was damaged. I was unable to say anything <against this rat sh.t Dutchman⁴> in front of the crew. It is a shame [to have] to write about it. Our sawed boards they chopped into small pieces for useless purposes in front of my own eyes. Now we have received 70 pieces of sawed parts. The other goods <we have put in splints and we used part of it⁵> as our memorial [memorandum] will show.

In reference to the wine and aquavit assigned to us, it is all gone. The first of the items, the wine, was boozed away in one handbreadth; of the other item, the aquavit, only one-third remains. There was wine, a full anker [a liquid measure], assigned to the [religious] service of our Lord, and for the sick, which the preacher was supposed to use for the communion. It was also boozed away in one handbreadth. No matter how often I complained on board regarding the steward, because he was completely drunk every day, [nothing was done by the Commissary]. The Captain called for him, he forgave him on the spot, and the steward continued his orgies as before. The Captain did not want to punish him because he had hired him and also because he is a Dutchman. In the end they no longer had much of the wine or aquavit <left.⁶> Because of the way they behaved, there was no way of having any left. The Captain and the Commissary were boozing <every evening and every morning⁷> in secret so that I would not see [what they were doing]. I was also not demanding to see [what was going on].

Many things happened during this voyage, and there was no discipline on board. Everyone did what he wanted. During the time of the Captain's command, <not even the rats were kept under control. When we left the fleet [ship], when everybody is supposed to know when and what to do,⁸> only the Captain and the Commissary communicated with each other [regarding what had to be done]. I was never allowed to know where the food or provisions, and often other things, could be found because I was a Swede. It behooves Your Grace not to mention my name and that I have written this letter. Your Grace can restore a little bit of order on the ship, but Your Grace shall not think that I am afraid to speak. No, whatever I have written is the truth. I pledge it twice. I do it because I do not want anybody to say that I have given account of all that has happened, and that I have complained, and because they would keep themselves on guard against me, and keep everything hidden from me. It happened the way [I have told you]. There were loud quarrels and shameful insults. I have had enough of it. More of these fights followed, but I tolerated them with patience in order to avoid damage and loss of favor from my Graceful Lord.

I am supposed to write to Your Grace about the matters concerning this land, <although the Sergeant Major and the Commissary will probably give you the same account.⁹> In reference to the location of the fort, it is well located but it must be made higher and it must be enlarged on the land-side, then it will be a good fort. However since I do not have any order to build longer, higher, and even to build more, the Captain said that it was not necessary to build before I receive an order from Sweden. In spite of it I want to build houses inside the fort on top of earlier ones in order to [create] more room for the people and cargo as we calculated. It is a shame that we cannot protect our few goods in the fort because of the lack of houses. In reference to the fort, <there are on several places a lot of cargo [sacks] which will tumble down.¹⁰> For this reason I want to make it more even [level] <in order to avoid the things from falling down.¹¹> I hope that this fort will still be standing <in half a year¹²> while another <in the area¹³> is being built. This way we can live here until the other one is finished. I want to arrange things so that everything is well planned, following God the Almighty's [wishes] as much as I can. I will be waiting in discomfort for your order and instructions, since at present I have my Commissioner [giving orders].

I am asking Your Grace in a very humble and friendly way if Your Grace would deign to give 100 Rp to my brother so that he could buy and send me some clothing along with linen garments, stockings <and lace boots,¹⁴> and whatever I am in need of. When I was in Amsterdam I was unable to get money in order to buy myself clothing. And before that when I was in Göteborg there was no time because I was in a hurry and because I was unable to get the money to buy clothing for myself. Therefore I am now without any doubt to assume that Your Grace will still remember me as before and will help me. It would be a help that I will earn in your service, and for which Your Grace will always find me your obedient servant. I hope also that Your Grace will send me what is written in the enclosed list of purchases which are things I need. I am asking Your Grace most humbly to let his Excellency, the Imperial Chancellor, know what the circumstances are here that drove me to write the letter. I would have liked to write the letter to his Excellency but because I was too busy this time due to what had happened, I was unable to do so. Nonetheless I will write about everything with the next ship, and I will explain better the circumstances since I arrived. I will have acquired more experience and I will know better what I have to arrange and to do here. I also wrote a brief letter to his Excellency the Imperial Chancellor. I hope Your Grace will speak to him about my situation. This time I have nothing else to report. I commend His Grace along with Her Grace, the Countess, and young Masters [to the protection of the Almighty.]

I commend His Grace and everything dear to him to the protection of Christ. May God give you 100 1000 good days and nights.

Dated New Sweden, in Christina, <May 13, 1640¹⁵>

Your obedient and loyal servant
Peter H Ridder

Letters 2 through 7: Transliteration from Old German script to Latin script by Dr. Tette Hofstra, Professor Emeritus, University of Groningen.

The High German text, with some Low German forms, was translated to English text by Dr. Alfred R. Wedel, Professor Emeritus, University of Delaware, July 30, 2012

9. but the Sergeant Major and the Commissary will probably give you a good account
10. on several places it has lost much height and it will also tumble down [Dutch *zakken*, German *sacken* means 'to lose height']
11. and amend the falling parts so that the fort will [everywhere] have the same height
12. My original transliteration *wohl aff iahr* should be corrected into *wol aff iahr* (wol without -h-); but this error and its correction would not affect the interpretation. However, I am still not sure about *aff*; maybe the transliteration should be *etl* = *etliche* 'several'. This abbreviation is unusual, but at the end of a line it is imaginable.

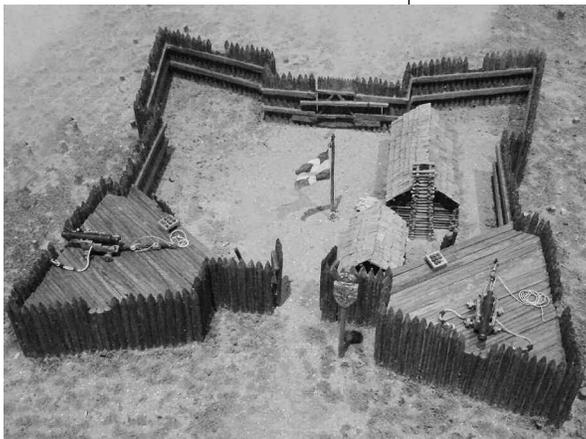
'Several' instead of 'half' would make more sense in the context. I can not feel safe in a fort that might collapse spontaneously within six months ...
13. at the river
Editor note: Alludes to construction of new fort (at Tinicum? which is 15 mi/24 km upstream) right on the Delaware River.
14. and boots with leather "shanks" (Finnish *saappaat*, I suppose) [NB: Dutch *laars*, older *leers* has the same background as German *Lederhose*].
15. May 13 Old Style [= Julian calendar].1640

In the 17th century Sweden and the Protestant parts of the Netherlands as well continued in using the old, Julian calendar. The Catholic parts of the Netherlands assumed the more adequate Gregorian calendar (introduced by the Catholic pope Gregory XIII in the year 1582) much earlier. So, mentioning the calendar style is – from a Dutch point of view – more or less useful or even necessary.

LETTER 3 Summary:
Sailed 7 Feb. from Tessel (Dutch transliteration of Island of Texel north of Amsterdam) to New Sweden 17 Apr. (69 days). Captain and Commissary 18 Apr. went up the Delaware to plant New Sweden boundary stakes without telling Ridder. Returned without action after the Dutch at Ft. Nassau on the eastern bank (now Gloucester City NJ, just south of Camden) refused them passage. Ridder "flabbergasted" and refused when they suggest taking the Kalmar Nyckel upstream. Two further forays upstream: exchanged shots with the Dutch, bought land from the Indians, placed boundary stakes, and exchanged written protests with Ft. Nassau.

- 16. So I went upstream with the shallop.
- 17. almost [or: nearly] 8 or 9 miles [Dutch *bijkans* means 'wellnigh, almost, nearly', not 'by chance']
- 18. *alſo die wester wal ſchweden zu kompt.* Therefore the west shore [of the river] belongs to Sweden. [Dutch *wal* means inter alia among other things 1. 'shore, bank', 2. 'rampart']

Model of Ft. Christina at the American Swedish Historical Museum, Philadelphia PA, accessed at "Fort Christina" on en.wikipedia.org 7 January 2014



13 May 1640 Ridder letter to Axel Oxenstierna from Christina, New Sweden

To His Excellency, your obedient servant,

Herewith I submit [the following letter] to let Your Excellency know that we sailed from Tessel on February 7 and that we landed here in New Sweden on April 17. On April 18, the Captain and the Commissary sailed up the river with the shallop. They approached the House of Nassau [the Dutch fort called Fort Nassau] and they asked for passage, but their request was not granted. Thus they came back. The Captain and the Commissary discussed the incident and decided to sail upstream right away with our ship and place it before the [Dutch] fort. This left me flabbergasted because I did not know [what was going on] since they had not informed me that they wanted to go upstream in order to place boundary stakes. Instead they used deceit and fraud because they did not want to bestow upon me the honor of sailing along with them. Nor did they let me know anything about what they had in mind with their upstream trip. I did not give them the yes-word [my consent] to go upstream with the ship. It was a waste of time and a great insolence to perform that task by force and without the consent of the gentlemen [of the Dutch

fort]. I had read the instructions given to the Captain. He was supposed to try everything in a friendly manner. In the case that they [the Dutch] did not let him go upstream, then he was supposed to try to proceed without a provocation and then see what they intended to do. For this reason I did not give them my permission, but I said that I wished to try it once more myself with the shallop since they had not tried it [the proper way] because they had let themselves be dishonored with words and by fear. <So I went upstream with them.¹⁶> On April 21 we passed the fort. They shot at us three shots. After one of us fired his musket we saw the bullets fly. When we arrived upstream we bought land from the wild men [Indians] right away and placed 3 boundary stakes further up the river, <by chance 8 or 9 miles¹⁷> further up from Fort Nassau. We placed the 4th boundary stake a little further down <where the western wall of New Sweden was supposed to stand.¹⁸> On April 25 we cast anchor and sent by land several letters that were written by Mister Blommaert. The Commissary of Nassau did not say anything bad, but let us go our way. In reference to other far-reaching circumstances dealing with the protests that they sent us, we protested against them also. Your Excellency will find out much better [all of this] from Sir Claes Fleming. On May 2 we sent our shallop with the assistant upstream in order to find out what they would do. We gave our assistant the order that if they shot [at him] that he should go by land. [He was supposed to] find out why they were shooting. He did so. They told him, "You are not supposed to go upstream because the river belongs to the West India Company. You have nothing to do here. If you return we will shoot again." Thus our men came back. Whatever Her Majesty the Queen and the praiseworthy government will do is in the hands of God and in your hands. Time will tell.

Concerning the land, it is a good land for the sowing of crops [such as] <grain,¹⁹> rye and wheat and other things. But the seeds for grain that we had were spoiled. Everything that we had taken along is now one part destroyed and the other spoiled. I should have written more [about this] to Your Excellency but I ask for forgiveness this time. There is a better way for you to know all about this. I hope that His Excellency Sir Claes Fleming will inform Your Excellency about what I have written to him. I am short of time, otherwise I would write more. I am asking in a humble and loyal manner for good instructions and for good orders for me to follow. I vow to fulfill the orders as well as possible and to remain loyal to the crown <and to its participants,²⁰> and may God help me, as I am a man of honor and hope to continue to be one. I will behave as honorably as one can possibly be, and act in a manner so that you gentlemen will not accuse me of anything. I hope Your Excellency will remain my gracious and propitious Lord, and to remain my benefactor in all things. This is all for now. I commend Your Excellency and all that is dear to you in body and soul to the gracious protection of Christ. May God guide you and protect you from all injuries and misfortune during 100 100 good days and nights. Written in Christina, New Sweden, on May 13, 1640.

Your Excellency's obedient and loyal servant
Peter H Ridder

- 19. barley
- 20. i.e. and to the participants of the Company

**LETTER 4 Summary:
Memorandum to Oxenstierna
14 May 1640 on board the
Kalmar Nyckel (as it is ready to
sail after 27 days at Ft.
Christina). Requests a variety
of things ranging from seeds
to salt to livestock, etc.
Anyone sent to New Sweden
needs to bring a "double-
muzzled rifle".**

**14 May 1640 Memorandum to
Oxenstierna²¹**

Memorandum

<What follows is what I have found [according to our records] in Christina, New Sweden:²²> <1 ton rye, 4 tons grain, 4 tons wheat and 6 tons tea which is to be used to benefit all of us.²³> In addition <there is canvas for the shallop and 1 pound of spun net yarn to mend the draught net.²⁴> <Apart from this²⁵> [we need] salt above all and also flour and malt. [I hope] that the gentlemen [Claes Fleming and Axel Oxenstierna] will be inclined to send us some animals. The 2 horses

have arrived in good condition. In case His Excellency is sending more people, then each one should bring his own double-muzzled rifle. I am supposed to write a lot, but this is what I need first of all. In reference to other things I leave it to your discretion. I do not know what else to say. I commend Your Excellency in body and soul to God. Written on [the ship] Kalmar Nyckel on May 14, 1640. Your obedient and loyal servant. I hope the others will report to Your Excellency <what has to be done here.²⁶>

Peter: H: Ridder

- 21. I doubt whether the Memorandum was directed to Oxenstierna. In the letter to Oxenstierna Peter Ridder writes about political issues (e.g. the relationship with the Dutch), and only a few lines (in the second half of the letter) are about material needs. Please compare the Memorandum with the letter to Claes Fleming (May 13, 1640), in which practical issues are discussed; the first paragraph of this letter shows why the above-mentioned products are badly needed.
- 22. What is needed here in New Sweden at Christina, as follows:
- 23. 1 ton rye and 4 tons barley, 4 tons wheat and 6 tons tar which can be used for all purposes. ("grain" Dr. Hofstra changes to "barley," and "tea" he changes to "tar"). *Teer* (both German and Dutch) is 'tar'. Tar was used in ship-building (for caulking, stopping leaks of all kinds). The designation of tea is *tee* (without -r).
- 24. canvas for the shallop and 1 pound of spun net yarn to be used for draught nets [= to make or repair draught nets].
- 25. Especially salt in the first place, and flour, plus malt.
- 26. what is going on here

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FROM THE BEGINNING: ORIGINS OF THE SWEDISH COLONIAL SOCIETY

Marcel Alphonse Viti, First President

Dr. Fredrick Jackson Turner, a prominent and well-known American historian, declared that we really do not know America unless we know the history of its people.¹ The Swedish Colonial Society (SCS) was founded in 1909 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, by a group of 24 prominent academics and cultural historians. It is America's oldest Swedish historical organization and unique in this country because of its relationship to the Swedish Royal Family and the Swedish government.²

Philadelphia's society has been and continues to this day to be heterogeneous, composed of various groups of people. So it is fitting and with good judgment that the founders of SCS decided to elect an Italian-American, Marcel Alphonse Viti, as the first Governor. Mr. Viti served as President from 1909 to 1921. The title of Governor came into being in 1944.³ The first meetings of SCS were held at The Historical Society of Pennsylvania at 1300 Locust Street in Philadelphia. Currently the SCS meetings are held at Gloria Dei Church, 916 South Swanson Street.

At the SCS meeting on December 29, 1908, the constitution and by-laws and purposes of the society were fully discussed. Two other meetings were held in the beginning of January and by the meeting of 20 January 1909 Marcel A. Viti attended as the Chairman, and Dr. Amandus Johnson acted as Secretary. Subsequently the Society constitution and by-laws were drawn up and adopted. In June 1909 President Marcel Viti prepared and sent an invitation engraved on a solid silver scroll through the Swedish Ambassador H.L.F. de Lagercrantz to His Majesty King Gustaf V of Sweden inviting him to become High Patron of the SCS. The King of Sweden's reply was "The King Accepts."^{4,5}

The first Governor Marcel A. Viti was born in Philadelphia on March 18, 1870. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and in 1893



Photo of Marcel Viti, passport issued March 13, 1920, from The Department of State general records housed at The National Archives, College Park, MD

received his law degree there.⁶ Mr. Viti argued a case, *Patson v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, 232 U.S. 138, (1914): Right to Firearms, before The United States Supreme Court on the subject of Pennsylvania Alien law. The central issue in this case was whether a state may prohibit its residents from having shotguns and rifles in their possession. Attorney Viti contended on behalf of immigrant residents of Pennsylvania that the law prohibiting them specifically from hunting wild game or fowl or from possessing a shotgun or rifle was unconstitutional. Attorney General Bell replied for the Commonwealth. This case was argued on November 4, 1913, and decided for the Commonwealth on January 19, 1914, just over 100 years ago. However the Chief Justice dissented.⁷

As an Attorney, Mr. Viti was one of the most eminent members of the Pennsylvania bar and, for a number of years, the legal advisor to the Italian Embassy in Washington D.C. In addition in 1921 the United States Supreme Court cited “a remarkable pamphlet” by Marcel Viti and adopted its policy as an excellent guide for arriving at a final interpretation of foreign treaties “not only to carry out the true intention of both parties in cases where the language of the treaty was not sufficient to establish the intention on technical terms, but also as an evidence of good faith on the part of the United States government in signing [foreign treaties]”.⁸

Mr. Viti was a member in 1891 of the Corinthian Yacht Club in Essington PA, where The Swedish Colonial Society currently hosts its annual Julmiddag celebration commemorating the anniversary of the Swedes’ and Finns’ first Christmas in America in 1638.

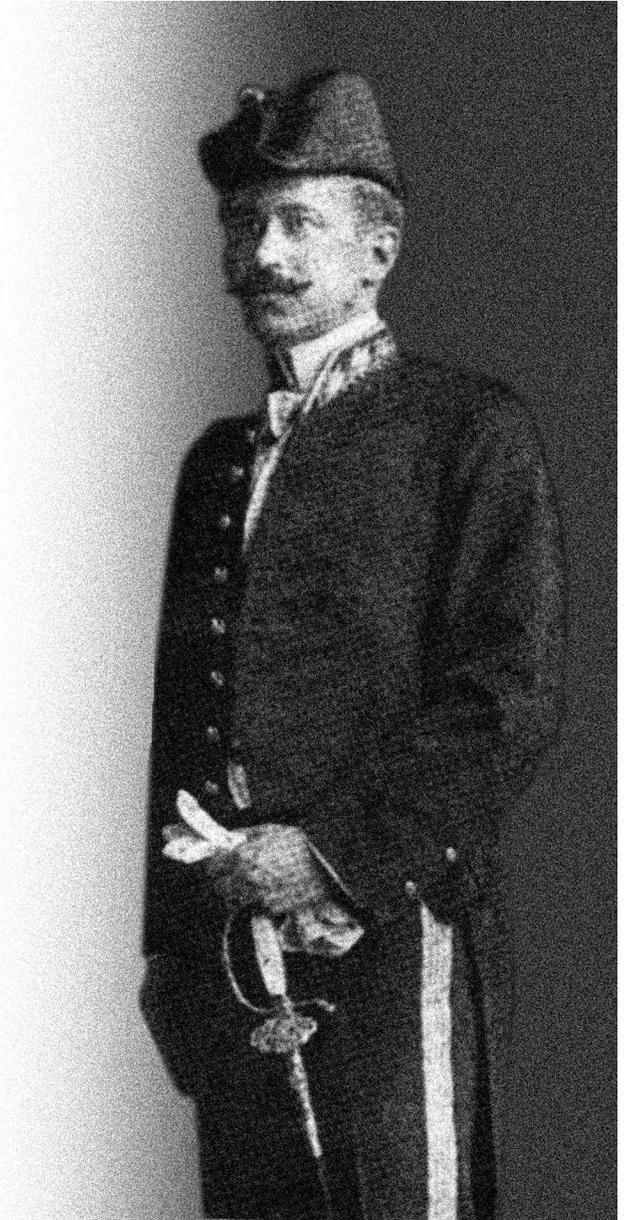
Mr. Viti was an active board member of The American Kennel Club. In February 1899 he showed his dog Royd Monarch which placed second under Field Spaniels at The Westminster Kennel Club, and his other dog, Bradford Morda, was second in Field Spaniels, Novice Bitches.⁹ The Vitis had a long history as dog lovers. In 1855, Vito Viti, Marcel Viti’s grandfather, placed an advertisement in *The Public Ledger* (Philadelphia) offering a \$5 reward for his lost black and tan terrier who answered to the name “Nero.”¹⁰

On June 25, 1938, the First Governor attended, as a Commissioner of The Delaware Tercentenary Commission, the celebration of New Sweden at Ft. Christina Park in Wilmington DE near The Rocks at virtually the same landing spot where the first Swedes and Finns sought a new home in this land in 1638. President Franklin Roosevelt welcomed Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf and Crown Princess Louise of Sweden, their 26-year-old son Prince Bertil, and their royal suite, with members of The Royal New Sweden Tercentenary Commission, and members of the Official Finnish Delegation. They had travelled over the Atlantic Ocean to America by the same route taken 300 years earlier.¹¹

Marcel Viti was made a Commander of the Vasa and a Knight of the North Star by the King of Sweden. He was a Commander of the Crown of Italy, a Knight of Malta, and a Knight of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, a member of the Racquet Club in Philadelphia, and a member of the Metropolitan Club of Washington D.C.¹²

The first Italians arriving in Philadelphia were viewed highly favorably and admired by the founding fathers of America such as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and William Penn. For example William Paca, an Italian, was one of the signers of The Declaration of Independence and graduated from The University of Pennsylvania Law School. The founding fathers sought to learn more about these early Italian arrivals’ intellectual achievements in art, music, and philosophy. In his book *Building Little Italy*, Richard N. Juliani, Professor of Sociology at Villanova University, notes that William Penn visited Italy in search of intellectual edification, aesthetic cultivation, material gain, and personal adventure.¹³ Although he never visited Italy, Benjamin Franklin frequently stated his interest in practices and products

continued on next page



HONORABLE MARCEL A. VITI, PRESIDENT 1909-1921

Viti was one of the principal founders of the Society. Although of Italian origin, he had many friends amongst the Swedes and Americans of Swedish descent. He was deeply interested in all cultural activities relating to Sweden. He served the Society as first President for a period of twelve years, and continued on the Council until his death in 1952. (Photo from *History of the Society*, Swedish Colonial Society, final draft, 1954, in Archives of SCS, Box 10, Philadelphia PA)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael R. D'Andrea was installed as the Swedish Colonial Society's first Deputy Governor-Administration in April 2011. Michael is responsible for publishing monthly reports of the SCS and is the leader of the SCS Historic Preservation Committee. Michael is a former Director of Human Resources, Department of Veterans Affairs. He retired in 2007 after 27 years of exceptional service in the federal government, and is an honorably discharged veteran, US Navy. Michael joined Montgomery College, MD in 2001 and served as an Adjunct Faculty member until 2012 in the History/Sociology Department. He received his MA Degree from the University of Pennsylvania, Annenberg School of Communications, and BA degree in Sociology from Adelphi University.

"On a personal note, like our first SCS Governor, I also graduated from The University of Pennsylvania, and in the 1970's I actually lived in the house at 2118 Spruce St., directly across the street from where Marcel Viti had lived, 2129 Spruce St., and I am also of Italian ancestry."

The author would like to extend special thanks to Kyle Mason for his assistance in the research for this article.

Marcel Alphonse Viti, First President continued from page 11



*Marcel A. Viti was instrumental in persuading the Italian government to present to Philadelphia in 1926, the year of The United States' Sesquicentennial, a replica of Italy's famed "Fountain of the Seahorses."*¹² *The original sculpture is at the popular Villa Borghese in Rome and this replica, just restored this year, is located down the hill from the west entrance of The Philadelphia Museum of Art near the Waterworks.*¹⁴

which he thought could be successfully adopted by American agriculture. Thus he had a strong interest in polenta, turnip leaves, and macaroni and admitted "if I could only find in any Italian travels a recipe for making parmesan cheese, it would give me more satisfaction than a transcription of any old stone whatsoever."¹⁵

By the early 19th century, the Italians arriving in Philadelphia were generally drawn from the upper classes of northern Italy and were accomplished in business and had excellent reputations as artists and musicians. This helped pave their way into the privileged class of Philadelphia.

The Viti family's early arrival in America came long before the mass migration of Italians to America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The records of Old St. Joseph's Church, the first Roman Catholic church in Philadelphia, founded in 1732, contain numerous listings of Italians. The marriages in St. Joseph's from 1812 to 1830 include not only the names Viti, but also Bellini (or Betinni), Genari, Trabolce, Ambrosi, De Angeli, Batesta, Longo (or Togno), di Pisola, Oliveri, and Pizzini, either as spouses or witnesses.

The Viti family roots go quite far back in Philadelphia: Backdating from later newspaper advertisements shows that the firm of Vito Viti and Sons was established in Philadelphia in 1815.¹⁵ Vito was Marcel's grandfather. He arrived in the United States from Volterra (Tuscany), Italy, in November 1816.¹⁶ In 1920 he married

Martha Redman, a non-Italian, in Old St. Joseph's Church.¹⁵ At this time he listed himself as a merchant who imported cloth, show hats, alabaster, minerals, watches, jewelry, quick silver, licorice, cream of tartar, shoes and boots, marble blocks and tiles, sweet meats, fireworks, ice cream molds, writing paper, filberts, and linen, while continuing to be, along with other family members, an exporter from Volterra, Tuscany, Italy. Giuseppe Viti was a merchant of alabaster in Volterra who, in the 1880's, purchased a beautiful 15th century castle in the rolling hills of Tuscany outside the walls of the city. Many of the objects he acquired then are still present in Palazzo Viti.^{18,19}

The importation of Italian marble by the firm of Vito Viti and his sons was a very successful enterprise and continued for many years, carried on by the Viti brothers, Alonzo M. Viti (Marcel's father) and Francis A. Viti. Their firm carried on international trade between Tuscany and Philadelphia. Even Stephen Girard, one of the wealthiest men in America and a well-known Philadelphia philanthropist and banker, is listed among the Vitis' customers.¹⁵ The Viti family's accumulation of personal wealth, recognition, and influence in the city was the most prominent among Italians in the 19th century. Family members were listed in the *Social Register* along with other successful Italian families.

Alonzo M. Viti was born in Philadelphia on 22 July 1832.¹⁹ For many years until 1876 Chevalier Viti was the Acting Consul of Philadelphia for the Kingdom of Italy.²¹ His death certificate, dated February 16, 1904, listed him as a sculptor in keeping with the Viti family's interest in the fine arts, including statuary works which were sold by the Viti Brothers.

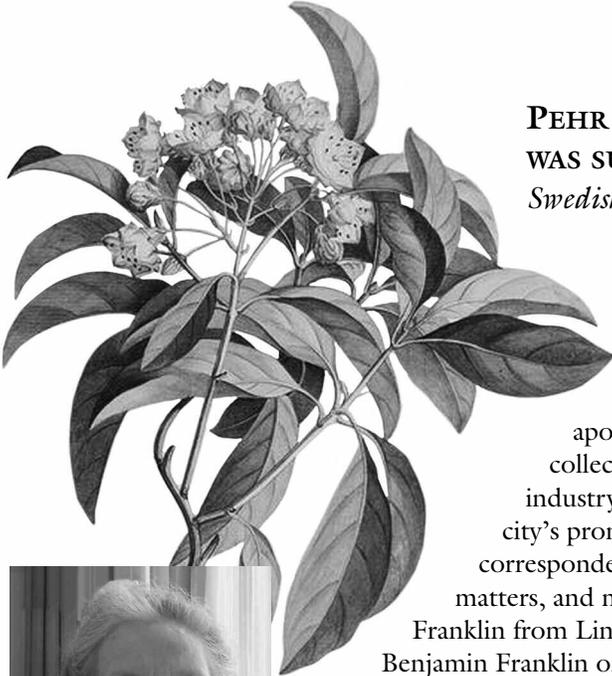
Through the efforts of Alonzo Viti and his brother Francis the first publicly funded monument to Christopher Columbus in the United States was purchased for \$18,000 and said to be the work of Emanuele Caroni. It was located along Belmont Avenue in Fairmont Park, having been erected on October 12, 1876, for the U. S. Centennial. The statue was relocated to the west side of Marconi Plaza, Philadelphia, in 1982.²¹

Marcel Alphonse Viti died on May 6, 1952, age 82, at the Viti family home at 2129 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, where he lived as a confirmed bachelor with his sister Marie B. Viti for 70 years. Many Viti family members lived at that address after Alonzo moved his family there in the early 1880's. Marcel Viti's funeral arrangements were conducted at the Oliver H. Bair Funeral Home at 1820 Chestnut Street. Mr. Viti is buried in Old Cathedral Cemetery at 48th Street and Lancaster Avenue in Philadelphia.¹²

FOOTNOTES:

1. Fredrick Jackson Turner quoted in Edward N. Saveth, *American Historians and European Immigrants*, 2nd ed., New York: The Free Press, 1964, p. 149
2. Herb Rambo, Swedish Colonial Website, <http://colonialswedes.org>
3. "Governors of The Swedish Colonial Society 1909-present," Kim-Eric Williams, in *New Sweden On The Delaware*, Philadelphia PA: Swedish Colonial Society, 2013, p. 115
4. Swedish Colonial Society Minutes, Box 9: SCS Minutes 1907-1919, SCS Archives, Philadelphia PA
5. "King of Sweden Joins Newest of Colonial Societies Formed in This City," *The Evening Bulletin*, (Philadelphia), Events, p. 1, October 15, 1909.
6. "Marcel Alphonse Viti LL. B., 1893; Lawyer," University of Pennsylvania, *Alumni Catalog* 1917, p. 129
7. Internet Find Law cases and Codes U.S. Supreme Court, *Pastone v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, 232 U.S. 138, 1914
8. "Naming of Taft Lauded Abroad," *The Washington Post*, June 24, 1921
9. "Opening of the Dog Show," *The New York Times*, February 22, 1899
10. "Vito Viti's Dog," *The Public Ledger*, Philadelphia PA, April 5, 1855
11. "Crown Prince of Sweden Due Tuesday For Tercentenary Jubilee," *Harrisburg Telegraph*, Saturday Evening, June 25, 1938
12. "Marcel A. Viti," Special to *The New York Times*, May 7, 1952, Obituary
13. *Building Little Italy, Philadelphia's Italians Before Mass Migration*, by Richard N. Juliani, University Park PA: Penn State University Press, 1998, p. 3
14. "Historic Art Museum Fountain Returns to Life," by Megan Lydon, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* staff writer, <http://articles.philly.com/2013-09-13/news/42012499>, accessed Dec. 11, 2013
15. *Building Little Italy, Philadelphia's Italians Before Mass Migration*, by Richard N. Juliani, University Park PA: Penn State University Press, 1998, pp. 266-267
16. Naturalization Applications, Landing Reports of Aliens, 1795-1930, roll 369, District Court, Eastern District, Pennsylvania. Vito Viti became a naturalized U.S. citizen on June 20, 1823. Accessed on Ancestry.com Jan. 10, 2014
17. "Palazzo Viti—Volterra," www.turismo.intoscana.it, accessed Jan. 17, 2014
18. YouTube Volterra video link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chop_HmIEvk
19. Passport Applications, 1795-1925, 1882-1887 (Roll 252—Sept/Nov 1882), Alonzo M. Viti, 9 October 1882. Accessed on Ancestry.com 10 Jan 2014
20. "Storia del Consolato di Filadelfia," Richard N. Juliani, www.consfiladelfia.esteri.it.pdf, accessed Jan. 15, 2014
21. "Columbus Day: [Councilman Mark] Squilla Invites All to Parade, Festivities," *Philadelphia Public Record*, October 4, 2012

Pehr Kalm AND THE *Mountain Laurel*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born and raised in Finland, Kristina Antoniades, MD, comes from the Swedish-speaking population. She is a graduate of the University of Helsinki Medical School, a specialist in Pathology, boarded in USA and Finland, and worked at Crozer-Chester Medical Center, Chester, PA before retiring. Kristina is a docent at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. She is interested in both botanical and art history.

Illustration adapted from *Chamaedaphne* by botanical artist Georg Dionysius Ehret (1710-70).⁴

PEHR KALM'S JOURNEY TO NORTH AMERICA (1747 TO 1751)^{1, 2, 3} WAS SUGGESTED BY CARL LINNAEUS and financed by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Linnaeus (1707-1778) was the Swedish naturalist, pre-eminent botanist and professor at Uppsala University whose most promising students, called apostles, were sent to faraway lands for discovery.

Pehr Kalm (1716-1779), who came from Finland, was one of the first apostles to travel. In the Age of Utility, the purpose of this trip was to collect plants that could be acclimatized and useful for both agriculture and industry in Sweden. Philadelphia was chosen as his destination based on the city's prominence and the area's "New Sweden" heritage. Linnaeus had also corresponded with Philadelphians John Bartram and James Logan on botanical matters, and moreover, Kalm had in his pocket a recommendation letter to Benjamin Franklin from Linnaeus' friend in London, Peter Collinson. Kalm indeed visited with Benjamin Franklin on the day of arrival. A few days later he met John Bartram.

From the beginning Kalm kept a detailed diary on everything he saw and heard; the recordings were full of information and insights on life in colonial times based on observations and on discussions with the local people of Swedish and Finnish descent as well as with Benjamin Franklin and John Bartram. In the spring of 1749 Kalm even witnessed Franklin make an early electrical experiment beside the Schuylkill River. Lenape Indian habits and diets were described and observations on the black population included comments on slavery.⁵

In an unexpected way, because he had studied theology at Uppsala University, Pehr Kalm was able to help out conducting lay services at Trinity Church, the Swedish church in Raccoon (Swedesboro) NJ, where Pastor Johan Sandin, a friend and classmate of Kalm's in Uppsala, had recently died. He, later, as was the custom for pastors, married the young widow Anna Margaretha at Gloria Dei Church, Philadelphia, in 1750 and adopted her daughter.⁶

Within a year after arrival, Kalm went north to Canada in order to fulfill the original purpose of the trip which was to find new useful plants; emphasis was on the

red mulberry tree for the silk industry and on plants for the dye industry. A second trip north to Niagara Falls culminated in a letter to Benjamin Franklin, who published it in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* as the first English-language description of the Falls.

From late autumn 1748 on, the naturalist Kalm described fauna (biting bugs, smelly skunks, poisonous snakes, noisy frogs), discussed minerals and followed the weather meticulously. He spread botanical knowledge and informed the locals of the Linnaean classification methods. The daily botanical notations were done with descriptions in Latin and comments about locations and usage. Medicinal plants were listed and the Lenape Indian supposed cure of venereal disease by *Lobelia* led to the name *Lobelia siphilitica*, still the name today. Herbariums were prepared and seeds and nuts were shipped several times to Sweden. Reports on abundant harvests, on the multitude of fruit trees and on maize, oaks, chestnut trees, tall tulip trees and on cedars were interspersed with comments that the rich soil of this new country had allowed the settlers to be careless with agricultural methods and wasteful with their forests.

In the case of a small evergreen tree which had caught his attention early on, we can see how observation is added to observation. On 20 November 1748, during an overnight visit to Peter Rambo in Raccoon, NJ, Swedish names of local trees were discussed and, coming to the laurel (so-called because it resembled *Laurocerasus*), Rambo told him that the Swedes called it “spoon tree” because the Indians, due to its hardness, used it to make spoons, later mentioning that the English made shuttles and pulleys. He continued telling about how forest fires stop when they reach these trees. Everybody Kalm met described the toxicity of the laurel, how sheep died after eating the leaves and how Mårten Still’s (sic) calves got quite sick from them. Later, during the winter 1749, Kalm stated that its branches were used to sweep chimneys, that it is an evergreen with several variations and that it usually grows on the north side of creeks. While telling about Christmas traditions, Kalm mentioned that as the organ in the Swedish church was out of order, he visited the Catholic one and saw how laurels were used for decoration all along the aisles and at the altar.

In spring, with a diary entry of 22 May 1749, Kalm finally saw the laurel blooming all over. He described the flowers as so beautiful and impressive that he had hardly seen their like with innumerable flowers in clusters, the color starting out red, changing to rose or white when fully open. His detailed descriptions of the individual flowers with petals fused to a cuplike corolla with small pouches holding filamentous springing anthers were accurate and quite similar to those given by *Kalmia* experts of today (Richard Jaynes in Connecticut).⁷

Now Pehr Kalm realized that this was a completely new genus and not *Laurocerasus*, not *Andromeda*, not *Chamaedaphne* nor *Chamerhododendron*, as it had been called before by earlier admirers. In fact, in England around 1740 George Ehret and Mark Catesby had painted watercolors of Mountain laurel plants procured from Pennsylvania, calling them *Chamaedaphne*.⁸ Kalm himself at this point wished to name it *Tessinia* after the Swedish statesman and president of the Royal Academy of Science, Count Carl Gustaf Tessin, an early supporter.

On Kalm’s return to Sweden in the summer of 1751 Carl Linnaeus wanted to meet him immediately to learn of the North American plant collection. Kalm described over seventy new plants, more than any of the other apostles, contributing substantially to Linnaeus’ landmark study then in preparation: *Species Plantarum*, published in 1753. Based on the detailed descriptions of this native North American plant, Carl Linnaeus honored Kalm instead of Tessin, or as Kalm himself says, “Dr. Linnaeus, because of the peculiar friendship and kindness with which he has always honored me, has been pleased to call this tree *Kalmia latifolia*”. This is the Linnaean binomial name with its new genus *Kalmia*, the epithet *latifolia* referring to the leaves of this large shrub.

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Pehr Kalm Revival in Åbo, 2012

Only one Pehr Kalm portrait is known and there is no traditional statue, but in 2012 in Finland, at Åbo Akademi, an environmental artwork “Pehr Kalm Revival” was constructed and planted on one-eighth of the site of Kalm’s original



academic garden (most of the space is taken up by the Sibelius Museum). The art work part (by Jan-Erik Andersson) consists of bright red whimsical pergolas flanking the botanical part which contains plants (selected by Aaja Peura⁹) first described by Kalm in North America. In August 2013 the author saw young plants of *Kalmia latifolia* and other *Kalmia* variants, brome from the prairies (*Bromus kalmii*), St. John’s wort (*Hypericum kalmianum*) and beebalm (*Monarda didyma*, earlier known as *Monarda kalmianum*). Cockspur hawthorn which Kalm brought over is going to be used as a hedge for this garden next to a large oak said to have been planted by Pehr Kalm himself.



“Pehr Kalm Revival” garden and art work in Åbo, August 2013. (Photo by the author.)

Pehr Kalm and the Mountain Laurel

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Kalm then settled as Economics professor at Academia Aboensis (Åbo/Turku, Finland), the only university in the then Finnish half of the Kingdom of Sweden. He finished the first three volumes of his travels and had them published. Two gardens were established, one academic in the city and one in the countryside. Few of the plants from America survived the harsh climate. A son, Pehr Gabriel, was born 1752.

Kalm was finally ordained in 1757. Six years later he moved from his first parish to the more prosperous St. Mary's Church close to the University where he taught for over 20 years. He was quite fond of the rectory garden because he could plant whatever he wanted, not worrying about teaching requirements.⁶ He died there in 1779.



William S. Robinson, *Laurel*, 1921, oil on canvas, 24" x 32". Private collection. The pink-blooming plants are set against a forest background with a cove behind and clear blue sky above.

The Mountain Laurel in Politics and Art

The botanical reclassification of the Mountain laurel, a long favored native shrub, and the naming of the plant in honor of Pehr Kalm by Carl Linnaeus, who at that time was at the height of his fame and whose books were read in North America, led to continued appreciation. Making it a national flower was suggested at the end of the 1800's. In 1907 Connecticut designated Mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) as its state flower. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania followed after a lengthy fight in the State Assembly; Mountain laurel won over tulip tree and honeysuckle and was voted official state flower of Pennsylvania in 1933.

It comes as no surprise that artists in the late 1800's and early 1900's noted this flower, so eminently suited for their palette with brilliant pink buds exploding into white flowers contrasting with shiny green leaves, blooming during the lightest time of the year, May and June.

Winslow Homer painted the flowering bush in the 1870's at Houghton Farm in Mountainville, NY along the Hudson River. This was very close to the area where Kalm had noticed it on his way to Canada about one month after he had described it blooming in New Sweden.

In the early 1900's painters from New York flocked to Connecticut to summer at Florence Griswold's boarding house, gradually establishing the Old Lyme Art Colony. Many of the artists later became undisputed masters of American Impressionism. They were painting *en plein air* and Mountain laurel became one of their most loved subjects. Their early June pictures show small gnarly trees with masses of white and pink blossoms against shiny dark green leaves with a background of blue water and brilliant sky with fluffy white clouds. Childe Hassam, who has been called the father of American Impressionism, painted nudes against backgrounds of Mountain laurels while most Old Lyme artists concentrated on the flowering plants.



Edward W. Redfield, *Laurel Run*, 1916, o/c, 30" x 50". Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH. Depicted are a slope with a creek running through it with green Mountain laurel shrubs set against a sun-lit white snowy background with bluish shadows.



Matilda Browne, *Vase of Flowers (Mountain laurel blooms)*, 1905, o/c, 16" x 12". Private collection. Matilda Browne depicts branches of Mountain laurel in a vase, and the flower details of the brilliant white and pink flowers are painted with characteristic impressionistic brushstrokes.

Edward Rook, Willard Metcalf, William Chadwick and Frank Bicknell were other prolific Old Lyme Mountain laurel painters.

In Pennsylvania the mood seemed more somber. The painters of The Bucks County School lived year-round near New Hope and most of their paintings were winter scenes.

Edward Redfield, their leader, painted "Laurel Run". It has been told about Redfield that he went out in the coldest winter, tramping through the snow with his easel tied to his back and came back with a painting completely finished, all painted outdoors. He is for good reason called "America's Winter Painter". The Laurel motif was dear to him and frequently repeated: "Under the Laurel", "Laurel", "Late afternoon", all winter scenes with green laurel contrasting with white snow.

These paintings show the beautiful Mountain laurel, evergreen in winter and brilliantly blooming in spring, in settings similar to those described by Pehr Kalm. It graces our woods and gardens in its original white and pink forms and in the numerous variations based on modern cultivation methods.

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The Letters of Peter H. Ridder *continued from page 9*

27. In view of the plans for building a new fort this is the better interpretation (cf. "The purpose of this is that if the fort is supposed to be moved away to another location, one can always use the [same] houses"). The following interpretation, however, is possible as well: upstream of the former houses.
28. I am also thinking of building on top of the warehouse a row of dwellings. [*die reg by langest* might be 'in a row', German '*der Reihe entlang*'; *reg* can be German *Riege* 'row, line']. Alternative: I am also thinking of building a row of houses upstream of the warehouse
29. and with the next ship more people should come, so that one can do more
30. Your Excellency will see what we have in stock according to my inventory, although the captain at first [or: in the first place] did not want to give powder
31. Number 2, so much food as necessary for a (whole) year
32. barley
33. turnips
34. The seed that we had with us was spoiled [no longer fit for use]. Number 4
35. These above-mentioned things
36. half a load of tar for all purposes
37. [to make or to mend]
38. and oil
39. is going on [or: is needed]

LETTER 5 Summary:
He studied the land for 1 mile* around the fort. It is good for crops, fishing. There are meadows for livestock and hay and fodder. Fort still needs repair but no orders. Three dwellings built. Requests artillery pieces, powder, and lead. Also food, vegetable seeds and oxen needed. Continues to need tar and hemp. A new request is for "a dozen glass panes for windows". Requests more instructions what to do and what not to do.

*1 Swedish mile = 10 km = 6.2 English miles

8 June 1640 Letter to Axel Oxenstierna from Christina, New Sweden

[From] Your obedient servant:

With this letter, I your devoted servant, am letting you know that I have sent you letters with the ship Kalmar Schlöttel [Nyckel] on May 13. From [these letters] Your Excellency will understand the things that have happened and the opportunities that this land offers: [these things] might have already been reported to you by word of mouth by those who have already been here. Regarding the place where our fort is located, it is a good place. I have inspected all sides one mile outside the fort in order to study the land, and I have found out after my inspection that it is a good land for sowing crops. It also offers a good opportunity for fishing because there are many small creeks. The same is true for the other places because there are many beautiful meadows for animals such as oxen, cows, horses and sheep. If there were 200 cows, there would be enough hay and fodder for them.

The 2 horses and the 1 filly that are here now are in excellent condition. The same is true of the pigs.

Regarding our fort as it stands, everything is fine, but it had to be enlarged at the land-side and made higher at the edge of the water, and it will remain so. I wanted to begin our work with the few people I have at my disposal, but since I have not received any orders, I must leave it the way it is since the Captain forbade me to begin the work. In spite of it, I have allowed three dwellings to be placed <on top of former houses²⁷> at the eastern wall within the fort. <I am also thinking of building the warehouse and the foundations on which the largest houses can be placed.²⁸> The purpose of this is that if the fort is supposed to be moved away to another location, one can always use the [same] houses. Concerning the wall, I want to repair it because it is about to tumble down in three places. If it is supposed to stay put, the wall must be made larger <since more people will come with the first ship. By doing this, one can build more [houses].²⁹> Each one carries his own gun. We are in dire need of more [field] pieces [artillery] especially two more of those that can shoot [cannon balls], and along with this we need powder and lead. <Your Excellency will see what we have in stock. According to my inventory and the Captain's inventory I need the following]: Number 1, powder. The Captain³⁰> did not want to give us powder. <Number 2, the same amount of food as a year ago.³¹> Number 3, regarding seeds, we need seeds for rye, <oats,³²> wheat and peas. In addition [seeds for] green vegetables, such as cabbage, <rapeseed,³³> or beets, and parsnips, carrots. <Number 4,³⁴> it would be great if some cows along with a pair of strong oxen and three mares could be sent to help us with our work; oxen would be the most suitable.

<The things [needed] mentioned [in my last letter]³⁵> and the following items that we still need would be greatly appreciated, if Your Excellency would deign to send them: We need <half a load of tea for the benefit of all of us³⁶> since we have none. In addition [we need] four pounds of hemp fiber in order <[to mend]³⁷> the fishing nets. Furthermore a dozen glass panels for the windows besides some steel. In this land we are also in great need of vinegar, aquavit <and beer.³⁸> These items are also very important for our bodily health, especially salt. Your Excellency knows well what <must be done³⁹> here or there. With regard to Commissary Joost, [Joost van Langdonk] he is the same as ever. [He says] that I should write to Your Excellency with more details and more often about the

circumstances here, but I doubt that my letters would ever get done. For this reason I will leave out the details. I am writing, most humbly, like in my last letter, for instructions regarding what I am supposed to do or not to do. I shall be, as much as I can, conscious of my duties, in order that Her Majesty the Queen, or Your Excellency, will have no reason to blame me [for anything]. I hope that Your Excellency will remain, as he was before, my gracious Lord and benefactor. This time I have nothing further [to report]. I commend Your Excellency, and all who are dear to you, in body and soul, to the merciful protection of Christ. May God save Your Excellency from any injuries and danger during 100 100 good days and nights. Written in Cristina, New Sweden, June 8, 1640.

Forever your humble,
obedient and loyal servant

Peter: H: Ridder

LETTER 6 Summary:
Ridder received a letter from the Government on 2 November 1640 that had new instructions to “keep the river free” and establish colonies. Requests orders to build new fort “below the narrowest point of the river . . . which is the key to New Sweden” so ships can be subdued. A new request is for especially carpenters and farmers, because “there are no dumber or coarser people than the ones that are here now.” Also needs coat of arms to hang over fort entrance. Pigs have escaped and are wild. Commissary has too much power. Has endured here “a life of little comfort.” Editor note: Ridder says Oxenstierna can get more info from Adm. Fleming, as though other letters had been written to the admiral.

3 December 1640 Letter to Axel Oxenstierna from New Sweden

Your Excellency [my] great gracious Lord. Herewith I [your obedient subject] submit to Your Excellency [this letter] in order to let you know that I have sent you besides this one 2 [other letters]; the first one with [the ship] Kalmar Schlottel [Nyckel] on May 13, <the other one some months ago on June 8.⁴⁰> From these letters Your Excellency will have well understood [everything]. Whatever happened after that time regarding the circumstances and possibilities of the land and wrong things that occurred Your Excellency can find out from gracious Sir. Claes Fleming. Mr. Jost Bogaert arrived here on November 2. I received the highly praiseworthy government letter. I saw the instructions and I have understood the content [of the letter]. I have followed the instructions as much as it was possible for me. <Thus I told him [Joost] about a beautiful place where one can keep the river free.⁴¹> The land around it is good enough for the establishment of colonies. It lies <about 4 miles away from where our fort stands.⁴²>

<[Our fort] lies in a beautiful area;⁴³> it is, however, a shame that it lies so badly at a creek. I have written to Your Excellency about the circumstances of the fort and I have asked you gentlemen [Fleming and Oxenstierna] to deign us permission to build a

new fort. A fort below the narrowest [point] of the river on which [will] stand Sweden’s crown which is the key to New Sweden. Where we are now located, we cannot subdue anyone. [I hope] <that the praiseworthy government will give me, besides these orders, some goods among them; food stuffs and people. I pledge to arrange⁴⁴> things in the manner that <will not fall short of what his Excellency is expecting from me⁴⁵> in his letters. <His Excellency will find that my suggestions are well founded.⁴⁶> <In reference to cut stones [for building]⁴⁷> they could easily be made here <[and] lime is found here too.⁴⁸> With these materials one can build a fort nearby and a beautiful stone house. [I hope] Your Excellency will deign to send all of what was requested in my previous letters. <We are in need of 2 pairs of good oxen,⁴⁹> several cows. besides 3 more mares. Of the powder and lead we have left only 100 [pouches] of powder and <about the same amount of [pouches] of other goods.⁵⁰> We also need a coat of arms of

40. the other a few months later on July 8
41. He got a beautiful place, so that he can keep the river free
42. More than 4 miles from us.
43. As to the place where our fort stands, it is good soil and it has a good location
44. When the praiseworthy government will give me the order and some goods, besides food stuffs and people, I pledge to arrange ...
45. [*an mir sol es nit fehlen* Literary: it will not be my fault [if we will not be successful]]
46. His Excellency will quite well conclude from this what my opinion is
47. In reference to bricks [*metz*, see Dutch *metzelen* ‘to build with bricks’]
48. because here is good clay [or loam]
49. as to one or two pairs of good oxen
50. the same regarding the cannons (guns) and other goods [=?] and we need also some cannons and other (military) goods]

- 51. which I wrote earlier / already about
- 52. will have no reason to be dissatisfied with me
- 53. It should not be dealt with [this matters] so niggardly as now. We don't even have .. [Dutch *nau* means 'narrow']
- 54. wooden [Dutch *houten* ~ German *hölzern*]
- 55. nearly 100 / almost 100
- 56. but we do not have corn [*magis* = *ma-is*, cf. German *Mais*; the name of this Central American product is a loanword from Taino, a language spoken in Haiti by the Arawaks, *mahís* = English maize/corn]
- 57. what the cargo can give
- 58. that no corn is sent to us
- 59. from this letter
- 60. that I am tolerating much
- 61. to avoid
- 62. how much I am tolerating

Her Majesty the Queen made of wood or stone which can be placed over the entrances [to the fort]. We also need the tools <which I requested.⁵¹

I will arrange everything in such manner that you gentlemen [Oxenstierna and Fleming] <will not find me ungrateful towards you.⁵²> They are not supposed to start anything in New Göteborg. I am supposed to supervise the people doing the work, but you must send carpenters and people with a trade. It <has been somewhat overlooked that we don't even have⁵³> one single man here that can build a <hovel-like⁵⁴> peasant house, or saw a board, nor is there anyone who knows how to work in the field or do farm work. In general one cannot do much with these people. In all of Sweden there are no dumber and coarser people than the ones that are here now. I beg Your Excellency to see the letters that will be in his Excellency's [Fleming's] possession where Your Excellency [Oxenstierna] will be able to understand everything better. In reference to the horses that are here, they are all in good condition. One part of the pigs have become wild so I have given the order to shoot them as soon as they are found. I shot a piglet two miles away from the fort and I got hold of 8 old live pigs at the same place. I have taken part in [catching] the pigs on several occasions. God only knows, I can never agree with the Commissary. He is always against me. Now we have as many piglets <all together 100⁵⁵> at home <but we do not have a storehouse.⁵⁶> I have ordered therefore to slaughter the old pigs and to place the bacon in the flue [for smoking]. The reason for this is that they ate more than <what the garrison could pay.⁵⁷> It is the Commissary's fault <that we do not have a storehouse.⁵⁸>

I am supposed to tell you everything, but because I am so busy it will not be possible this time. Your Excellency will understand <from the various letters⁵⁹> that I have sent what a life of little comfort I have endured here. It is a shame that I want to prove with witnesses <[that I am enduring all this very well?]⁶⁰> but I do it <[to avoid?]⁶¹> the displeasure of my Gracious Lord and disagreement among our people. Even Joost Bogaert is amazed at <how much I am suffering.⁶²> He is saying that the Commissary has been left with too much power in his instructions. Enough for this time. I want to commend Your Excellency in body and soul and whatever is dear to him to the Almighty. I hope Your Excellency will remain my propitious gracious Lord and benefactor. I will also carry out your orders as they appear in Your Excellency's letters. Dated in New Sweden, December 3, 1640.

Your Excellency's obedient and loyal servant.
Peter H. Ridder

- 63. 1644 (1944 is a mistake, "slip of the pen")

LETTER 7 Summary: Addressed to "Gracious Count" and "my Lord the Count" (Editor note: most histories say Oxenstierna didn't become Count until after the Treaty of Brömsebro, 1645, so why did Ridder address him Count in 1644?) Seeking "a substantial compensation," as previously agreed, for nearly 5 years of service, saying he has "not enjoyed a single penny". Says he visited Admiral Fleming about the matter and was referred to the Admiralty. (Editor note: This letter refers to "the late admiral" so this letter must have been written after 27 July 1644 when Fleming died in battle on his flagship Scepter while fighting the Danes.)

1644⁶³ To Oxenstierna after return to Sweden

Highborn Sir, My Lord the Emperial Chancellor, Gracious Count,

Your Excellency, my Lord Count, might well remember when I was received by your Excellency at the very beginning of the enterprise in New Sweden which took place in the spring of 1639. On that occasion I was commissioned to the rank of Commander [of New Sweden] as documented by the enclosed copy

written by hand and bearing the seal of the late Sir Claes Fleming. Herewith I received the power of attorney [for this office] from the mentioned and highly respected departed gentleman. Thereafter <I was sent⁶⁴> to your Excellency, the Count, to Tidö [palace], in order to hear and to receive most obediently your command and instructions regarding the impending voyage. <Included [in the document] was a money order with the amount to be paid as my wages for my services in the company.⁶⁵> On that occasion Your Excellency, the Count, spoke highly of me and said that I should continue the voyage in good spirits, and that I should use all my diligence, my loyalty, and my best abilities in governing the enterprise New Sweden. I was assured that I could rely on the word of Your Excellency, and that I would be recompensed and that I would receive benefits. It was also determined that not only I, but also my children, would have cause to be thankful to Your Excellency and to the praiseworthy company as long as they lived. <Thereupon I continued my voyage in the service of the company, and when I arrived in America I used — in spite of the few people I had at my disposal — all my efforts and enterprise and did what was humanly possible to establish and to arrange things for the benefit of the company.⁶⁶>

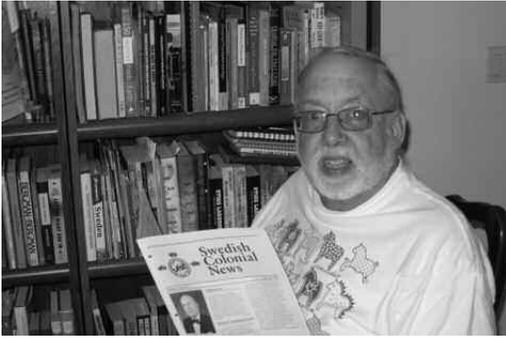
I worked in the service of the company for 5 years. It was in the year 1643 when I was relieved of my duties by the new governor Johan Printz, and I was free to go back home. Once at home, I visited the house of the now departed Sir Claes Fleming <in order to relax after my efforts in the service⁶⁷> of the company located at such a far distance. <However, since the Danish War had just broken out, Sir Fleming was so overwhelmed by the many things he had to do that I decided not to become a nuisance to him and decided to wait for a better time [to discuss my affairs with him]. I had to be satisfied with just his advice. He told me that for the time being I should arrange things with the Admiralty,⁶⁸> but after Sir Fleming died during the expedition, I remained continuously in the service of the Crown and I was active traveling from one place to another. There was no occasion after that to bring my humble request to your knowledge, and I am fully aware that it is I who is guilty [at not having acted earlier]. I hope your Gracious Excellency will deign to take into consideration the time I served [for the company] and also the efforts I made, the discomforts I suffered, as well as the perils I had to overcome <in such a wide and distant country.⁶⁹> I hope you will provide for me as you gracefully promised a substantial compensation since I have not enjoyed a single penny for my almost 5 years of service in the company. I was, however, the person who opened the way for the enterprise [in America]. As the refrain says, “I had to bite off the top of the point”. In spite of the difficult task assigned to me by the Count, I have enjoyed my difficult mission since according to the command given to me [by the Count], I was named the first Commander [of the company]. I am sure that my humble petition, due to its just cause, will be gracefully received by Your Excellency, my Lord, the Count. Your Excellency will think of me with grace, and because of your glorious renown and your compassion you will not leave me unrewarded. <The protection of the Almighty will be upon you. I, the most humble and most loyal servant, remain joyfully expecting your resolution.⁷⁰>

Your Excellency, my Lord the Count, I the most obedient and loyal servant will remain conscious of my obligation toward you as long as I live.

Peter H. Ridder

64. I was sent by the highly respected late lord [= Fleming]. See above letter of instruction, letter #1.
65. also to get / to arrange / bring about [*auss zu wirken*] there a more detailed instruction and a decision about my wages in the Company
66. Thereupon I continued my voyage in the service of the Company, and when I arrived in New Sweden I used all my efforts and energy for establishing and arranging this new enterprise to the benefit of the Company, as far as God had given vigor and power and as far as it was humanly possible with so few people.
67. in order to ask for a compensation for my efforts in the service [Middle High German *ergetzen*: ‘to make forget; to compensate’; Modern German *ergötzen* ‘to amuse’ is the result of a semantic development.]
68. Since the Danish War in those days had just broken out and the late Lord otherwise was overwhelmed by many things, I preferred not to bother him but to wait for an appropriate occasion. I contented myself with the late Lord’s promise that, as soon as God would help him to return home from this expedition [against the Danes], the compensation would occur to my full satisfaction. [He told me that] in the meantime I should place myself in the service of the Admiralty.
69. in a country so far away
70. I commit you in the most humble way to the merciful protection of the Almighty, and expecting your Excellency’s most gracious and gladdening resolution,

Edward R. Root, MD



Edward R. Root, MD's, father was a journalist but Ed never had the yen to follow in his father's footsteps, but it appears "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree": Ed feels honored to be your new editor for the *Swedish Colonial News* and says he will strive to keep it up to its well-deserved excellent reputation since its inception in 1990. The *News* will continue to adapt to the digital age; one possibility is to have supplemental materials and information available for some articles on the website. For example, this issue's flower pictures could be in color there!

Like the Beattys, SCS Genealogists, he was born in Iowa and moved elsewhere! Ed has no known Swedish ancestors but he was first attracted to things Swedish after seeing Ingmar Bergman's "*The Seventh Seal*" in high school. He relates that he thought the film was so mysterious in its meaning and the Swedish language was so beautiful with all its pure vowel sounds that "even curse words sounded good". So he has basically been studying Swedish since then (so he likes to joke that he has known Swedish longer than younger Swedes.)

Growing up in Syracuse NY, he attended Syracuse University, receiving a BA in International Relations. Then he went to Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx, receiving his MD degree in 1973. He specialized in Pediatrics and Psychiatry until retiring 2 years ago.

He speculates, "Recently I got back my DNA analysis from Geno 2.0 which says I have Danish ancestors. Quite a surprise! The Root family is said to come from Badby, England, which turns out to lie near the western border of Canute's Danelaw of nearly a thousand years ago." Maybe there's a connection?

Ed lives in Lakewood NJ with his wife WenJen; they have three adult children. Ed looks forward to your ideas, comments, support, (and your articles!) as he undertakes this exciting challenge. But most of all he hopes you continue to enjoy the *Swedish Colonial News!*

NEW MEMBERSHIP

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Robert Moore, Los Angeles, CA
Kristina Johnson O'Doherty, Blue Bell, PA

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Rebecca Muratori, Huron, OH
Mats Olsson, Sollentuna, Sweden
Lyn Palmer, Louisville, KY

NEW FOREFATHER MEMBERS

Active members of the Swedish Colonial Society may apply for recognition as "Forefather Members" if they can prove descent from Swedish colonists arriving in the United States prior to the Treaty of Paris, marking the close of the Revolutionary War, in 1783. Application forms may be obtained from the SCS website www.ColonialSwedes.org. Also on the website is a complete listing of active SCS members and their respective forefathers.

Nancy Binder Zickgraf descends from

Forefather Peter Gunnarson Rambo and Brita Mattsdotter through their daughter Gertrude who married Anders Bengtsson. Their son Andrew Bankson, Jr., married Gertrude Boore.

George McCormick
Edward McCormick — descend from
Rebecca Muratori

Forefather Peter Gunnarson Rambo and Brita Mattsdotter through their son Gunnar Rambo who married Anna Cock. Their son John Rambo married Anna Lycon.

Patricia Mortimer descends from

Forefather Pål Jönsson Mullica and Margaretha Andersdotter through their daughter Christina who married Nicholas Dorrell. Their daughter Margaret Dorrell married Robert Money.



*New Members
Welcomed!*

**THE SWEDISH COLONIAL SOCIETY
welcomes new members.**

**No Swedish relative or ancestry
is required – only an interest
in colonial history.**

**Contact our Registrar: Peg Berich,
The Swedish Colonial Society,
916 S. Swanson St., Philadelphia,
PA 19147 or visit us online at:
www.ColonialSwedes.org.**

**The annual membership fee for
an individual is \$45. An annual
family membership, which
includes two adults and minor
children, is \$52.50.**

Judith Paz, Fayetteville, AR
Kay Ragan, Leesburg, GA
Ward J. Rambo, Toledo, OH
Harmony Rowland, Front Royal, VA
Russell Smith, Claymont, DE
Barbara Warrick-Fischer, Rochester, NY
Thomas G. West, Washington, DC
Mary Ann Wieck, Ashtabula, OH
Nancy Zickgraf, New Castle, DE

St. George's 300th Anniversary Celebration

Dear reader: Please read page 24 first.



Present day St. George's Episcopal Church (Courtesy of the church)

On March 31, 1717, a log church was dedicated by Dean Andreas Sandel and named St. George's Church. The church name reflected the name of the patron saint of England and the recently crowned King of Great Britain, George I, who was simultaneously Defender of the Anglican faith and a German Lutheran as Elector of Hannover. The New Jersey Swedish Lutheran parish had a rectory at Pilesgrove Township after 1720 and the pastor served congregations in both Raccoon/Swedesboro and Penn's Neck.

By 1742 the mixed Protestant population of the area made it necessary to have all services in English according to the *Book of Common Prayer*, which the Swedish pastors had already used frequently.

The last Swedish Lutheran pastor to serve the congregation was Nils Collin (served 1770-1786). He then moved across the river to become rector of Gloria Dei Old Swedes Church at Wicaco in south Philadelphia. In 1792 St. George's became a member of the newly formed Protestant Episcopal Church. In 1808 the present brick church replaced the log church. In 1870 it was resolved to rebuild by "taking down the walls to the lower windows," thereby removing the second floor because the foundation was not strong enough to support the weight of the old walls. The renovation in Gothic style with a steeple added was accomplished in 1877. A Carrara marble altar was made by Thomas Jacquett and consecrated in 1902. A parish house built in 1896 was replaced in 1953. Further renovations to the church took place in 1976 and 1987.

In 1964 a 120-person Swedish delegation associated with the American Order of Vasa presented the congregation with a Bridal Crown, which may be worn by any woman of the parish marrying in the church. This Swedish tradition dates back to medieval wedding "crowning ceremonies" relating to The Virgin Mary. It is still followed in many Swedish Lutheran congregations in Sweden and this country.

Note: See also St. George's Episcopal Church, Pennsville, NJ, by the Rev. Dr. Kim-Eric Williams, Swedish Colonial News, vol. 4, no. 5, Spring 2012, p. 12

We invite you

**to attend this special celebration
with members of St. George's Church.**

Scheduled for Saturday, March 29th Tercentenary Celebration:

11:00 am – 12:00 Noon: Reenactment

12:00 Noon: Swedish Luncheon in Parish Hall. Advance reservations required.

12:00 Noon – 3:00 pm Docents available for historic tours of St. George's Church

All are Welcome! Välkomna!

**Celebration details and luncheon reservation forms at
www.colonialnewsweden.org**

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SWEDISH COLONIAL NEWS

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New Sweden authors (left to right) Ken Peterson, Ron Hendrickson, and Kim-Eric Williams at the book-signing.



The hardcover photo book of historic locations, *New Sweden on the Delaware*, which makes an excellent gift, can be ordered through the Society's website; the cost is \$25 plus s/h.

St. George's Episcopal Church

300th Anniversary Celebration of the decision to build a church in Penns Neck

A very special anniversary celebration is planned for March 29, 2014, at St. George's Church in Pennsville Township NJ (near the Delaware Memorial Bridge). Three hundred years ago it was here that the decision was made to build a church on the eastern shore of the Delaware River. The Church had its beginning as a Swedish Lutheran Church.

by Martha Rogers, Historian, St. George's Episcopal Church

Kim-Eric Williams, Historian, The Swedish Colonial Society, contributed to this article

Although the colony of New Sweden was established first at Ft. Christina (now Wilmington, Delaware) in 1638, by the end of the 17th Century a significant number of Swedish and Finnish colonists settled permanently across the river in New Jersey. The majority of the Swedes settled in the northwestern area of Penns Neck township, once known as "Churchtown". The Finns settled several miles downstream in Finns Point which still retains this name today. They built their farmsteads and farmed the land but since no church had been established in the area they remained members of Crane Hook Church erected in 1667 on the west side of the river. They made the often difficult round trip across the Delaware in their own boats or canoes for 30 years. "Church Landing Road" retains its name today in honor of these early settlers who followed a path to the river to depart by boat to attend church services at Crane Hook and later at Old Swedes Holy Trinity Church, until they established St. George's Church.

In 1697 the Church of Sweden renewed its mission on the Delaware and sent three Lutheran pastors to the area. The members of Crane Hook Church on both sides of the river, under the leadership of Rev. Eric Björk, helped build and finance Holy Trinity Church in Christina/Wilmington, replacing Crane Hook Church in 1699. Parishioners from New Jersey, who made up 40% of the congregation, were assigned pews at Holy Trinity. The congregation purchased a boat for the church from Henry Tussey to provide transportation for those traveling by water to services. Finally in 1703 Trinity Church was established at Sveaborg/Swedeseboro, New Jersey, on the Raccoon Creek.

With the population of Swedes and Finns continuing to grow in Penns Neck it became desirable to have another congregation. Thus on December 3rd, 1714, a parish meeting was held to establish their own church. Four acres of land near Kings Highway were donated by Jean Jacqueline.



Log church on Kings Highway, dedicated 1717, wings added 1766, replaced 1808 (Courtesy of the church)

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