

Church
and
Ministers
of
New Utrecht, L.I.

By
Henry Onderdonk, Jr.

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1872.

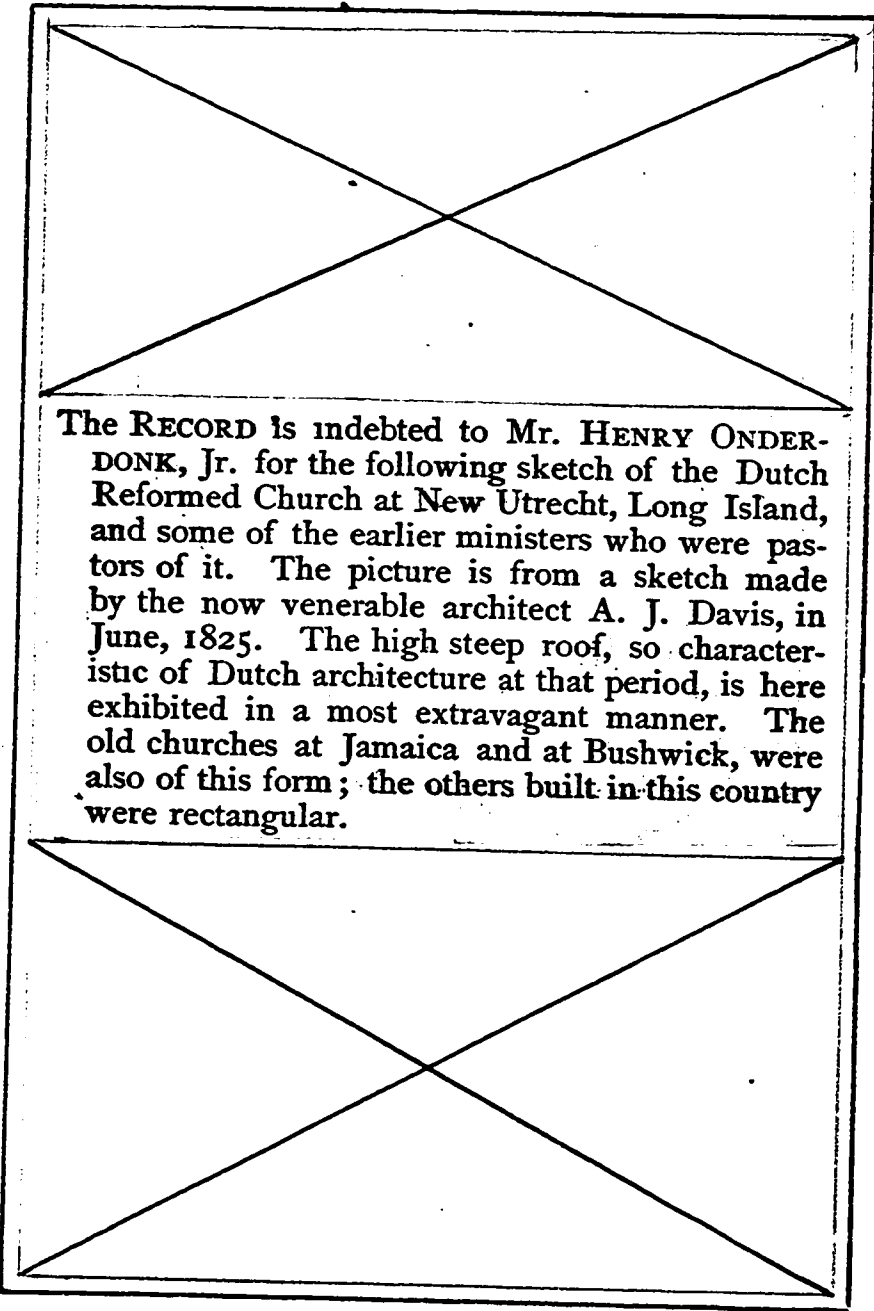
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OLD DUTCH CHURCH AT NEW UTRECHT.

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The RECORD is indebted to Mr. HENRY ONDERDONK, Jr. for the following sketch of the Dutch Reformed Church at New Utrecht, Long Island, and some of the earlier ministers who were pastors of it. The picture is from a sketch made by the now venerable architect A. J. Davis, in June, 1825. The high steep roof, so characteristic of Dutch architecture at that period, is here exhibited in a most extravagant manner. The old churches at Jamaica and at Bushwick, were also of this form; the others built in this country were rectangular.



CHURCH AND MINISTERS



AT NEW UTRECHT, L. I.

The church at New Utrecht, was built in 1690, of granite stone, the walls being four feet thick. The roof was steep and painted of a red color and surmounted by a cupola in which was a bell. The form of the building was octagon which occasioned a singular arrangement of pews inside, which of course were adapted to the shape of the edifice and upon the whole were more convenient than a stranger

would suppose.¹ It did in fact seat a large congregation. Internally it was neatly finished. The pulpit built according to the fashionable standard of those day

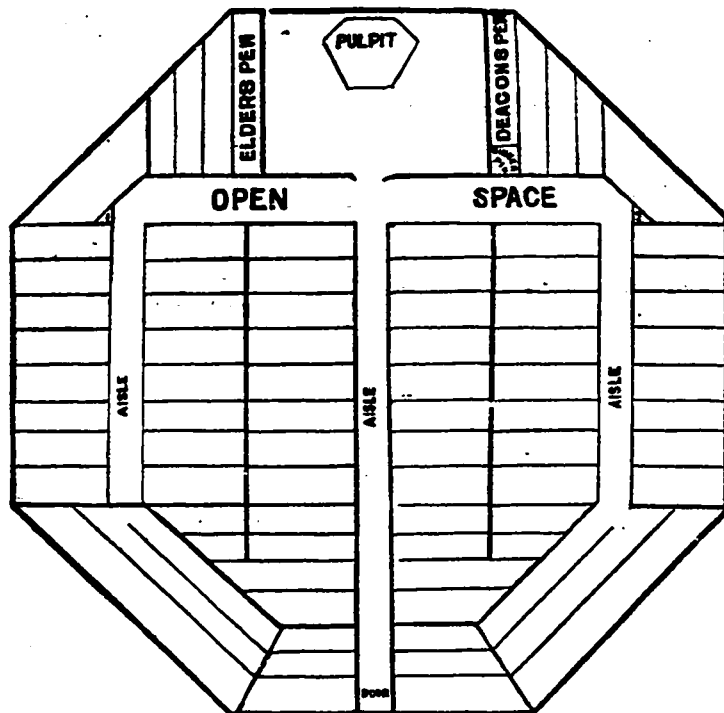


DIAGRAM OF PEWS.

stood on a pedestal and was ascended by a steep flight of stairs. Over the pulpit was a sounding-board on the summit of

¹ The accompanying diagram shows the arrangement of the pews. Nos. 1 and 2, were pews for one person each. The plan is from the Jamaica Church, built in 1719.

which was perched a dove carved out of wood and bearing in its beak the emblematic olive sprig. In September, 1776, the church with the adjoining building was used as a hospital and prison by the British, where Gen. Woodhull and other American prisoners, taken at and immediately after the battle of Long Island suffered great hardships at the hands of an angry foe. The church was taken down in 1828, and the stone used in the construction of a new church near the same site.

Before the erection of this church the people held religious services mostly at the house of Elbert Elbertsen Stoothoff, but on great occasions at the Church in Flatbush where the pastors of the combined churches in Kings County resided.

Caspar van Zueren

The first minister was Johannes Polhemus, 1654. The second was Henry Selyns, 1660. The third was Casparus Van Zueren from 1677 to 1685.

The following extracts from the Journal of an early traveler gives us a glimpse of

ferred since these late intestine troubles. Some pay, some wont pay at all, especially for the six months he was unjustly imprisoned in the Fort in New York. New Utrecht is also in arrears."

The close of Van Varick's career is veiled in obscurity. He was succeeded in 1694, by Wm. Lupardus, who died Feb. 10, 1702.

In Nov. 1705, Bernardus Freeman was installed in this church as Pastor of the churches in Kings County. He with his colleague V. Antonides resided in Flatbush.

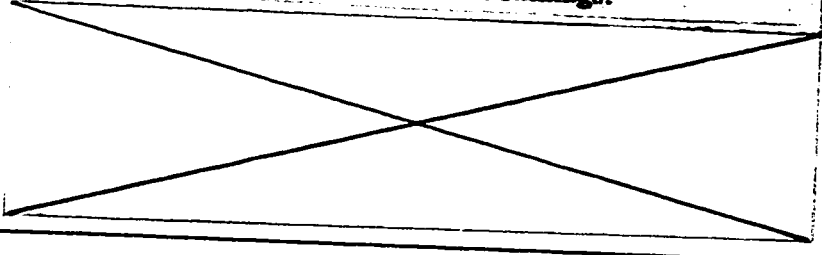
On the death of Freeman, in 1741, J. Arondeus was called. In 1747, Ulpianus VanSinderen became his colleague. In 1755 A. Curtenius was called, and on his decease, in 1756, J. C. Rubell succeeded in 1759.

On the breaking out of the Revolutionary war Rubell sided with the King and carried his politics into the pulpit, called the Whigs "Satan's Soldiers," said they were accursed and many were already in hell and the rest not yet dead would go there. He prayed for good King George, Queen Charlotte and the rest of the Royal family and both houses of Parliament. At the close of the war when the whigs returned to their homes he was deposed

from the sacred office he had so abused. Van Sinderen on the other hand was a count; and to prevent Green from printing extra copies for himself, he procured the passage of an act prohibiting the printing of any more copies than he should direct; and in this enactment we find the origin of copyright in this country.

In 1674 the first press was established in Boston by permission of the General Court; and two additional licensers were appointed—one of whom was the Rev. Increase Mather. The printer was John County. A sermon well adapted to the occasion was preached by the Reverend M. Schoonmaker. The ceremony drew a large congregation together and was conducted with the usual solemnities.”—

NOTE. In 1720, it was agreed by the church people that all who came in New Utrecht since the building of the church should have seats on paying six guilders for each, and seats not occupied by their owners shall be rented for six guilders annually. No one shall set chairs in the aisles. Six shillings shall be paid for each person buried in the church; but if the dead be carried on a bier then twelve shillings.



J. Q. Lypardus

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whig. In 1786, he was declared emeritus, and died in 1796, in his 89th year.

"1787, Oct. 28th, on Sunday morning, Mr. Peter Lowe was admitted and ordained in the church at New Utrecht one of the ministers of the six united churches of Kings

County. A sermon well adapted to the occasion was preached by the Reverend M. Schoonmaker. The ceremony drew a large congregation together and was conducted with the usual solemnities."—

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