

“The Schrijers Hoeck where Michiel Jansen lives [there are] 2.”—De Sille’s List, of 1660.

Michiel Jansen, from Schrabbeckercke (’s Heer Abtskerke, in the Province of Zeeland), sailed from the Texel in May, 1638, in “het Wapen Van Noorwegen,” arriving in New Amsterdam August 4, 1638. His wife and two farm servants accompanied him.—*Van Rensselaer Bowier MSS.*, 818. He went directly to Rensselaerswyck, where he remained until 1646, when he came to New Amsterdam with a fortune—according to Van Tienhoven.—Jameson’s *Nar. N. Neth.*, 375. His career in the north is interestingly set forth in the *Van Rensselaer Bowier MSS.* The patroon, writing to Van Curler, says of Jansen, “I think he is one of the most upright farmers in the colony . . . He writes most politely of all.”—*Ibid.*, 489.

On September 25, 1647, a few months after he came to New Amsterdam, Michiel Jansen was elected one of the original Nine Men.—*Laws & Ord., N. Neth.*, 75–8. He was one of the signers of the *Vertoogh*, which was written in his house on the Marckvelt Steegie (Block D, No. 21).

The bouwery at Pavonia, which he had bought from Jan Evertsen Bout, was destroyed in the Indian troubles of September, 1655.—*N. Y. Col. Docs.*, XII: 98–9. In the first horror of that event, when the record affirmed: “everything there is burned and everybody killed except the family of Michiel Hansen [*sic*]” (*idem.*), he fled to New Amsterdam with his wife and six children. As he desired “to gain a living, like the other inhabitants of this place, by doing something or another” (*N. Y. Col. Docs.*, XIII: 61), he asked permission to tap, November 22, 1655, “as he has in this recent disaster been driven off and lost his all, and in addition is an old man with a large family.”—*Rec. N. Am.*, I: 405. As he was but forty-five years old (*Van Rensselaer Bowier MSS.*, 499), he seems to have been unduly depressed. His plea for the grant of a small lot next to Martin Clock’s (as set forth in *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, XIII: 61) is indeed pathetic. The council granted that lot to him, but annulled the grant, substituting this one, February 15, 1656.—*Idem.*

He had bought “the frame of a house” at Hoboocken from Nicholas Verlett, for 230 florins. The question of getting it across the river arose. On March 28, 1656, Verlett asked the council for a guard of six or eight soldiers. The council replied that it was inadvisable at that time—“the savages would again get excited, the more so, as the savages pretended . . . that the said house barring the nails, belonged to them.”—*N. Y. Col. Docs.*, XIII: 67. However, the tavern was completed by October 23, 1656, when Schout de Sille “visited around and discovered . . . in the evening, after bell ring some soldiers and sailors drinking, . . .” Jansen admitted that “two soldiers sat and played at backgammon, and that there were 3 sailors, who waited for their skipper,” but pleaded “that nine o’clock had only struck.”—*Rec. N. Am.*, II: 194, 231.

On February 10, 1661, Michiel Jansen and others petitioned the provincial council "that a proper road may be laid out in front of their lots on the strand."—*Cal. Hist. MSS., Dutch*, 221. The Plan seems to have anticipated this improvement; although, perhaps, the actual roadway was out of repair, and was rebuilt at this time. Although he prospered, and bought other land in the city (see Block M, Nos. 17 and 20), Jansen's heart was in Pavonia. On September 5, 1661, when the first civic government in that colony was established, he was a member of it. He became one of the first schepens of the village of Bergen.—*Laws & Ord., N. Neth.*, 403-4. His name is included among those carved on the base of the Stuyvesant statue which was unveiled in Bergen Square, October 18, 1913, on the occasion of the celebration of Bergen's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary.

Michiel Jansen Vreeland's descendants are numerous in North Jersey. He died between December 28, 1662, and June 18, 1663.—*N. Y. Col. Docs.*, XIII: 234, 252.

His widow, Fytje Harmens, was living at Communipaw when the Labadists visited her, on Friday, October 27, 1679. They "could discover that there was something of the Lord in her, but very much covered up and defiled." However, they continue: "We dined there, and spoke to her of what we deemed necessary for her condition."—*Journal of Jasper Danckaerts*, ed. by James and Jameson, 82.

The building at No. 12 State Street exactly covers the site of Michiel Jansen Vreeland's tavern.