

The homes of Claes van Elslant, Senior, and of Andries Claessen, his son.

Although this grant was not recorded until 1647 (*Liber GG*: 183, Albany), Claes Jansen van Elslant mortgaged his house to David Provoost, at that time his employer, in April, 1644.—*Cal. Hist. MSS., Dutch*, 18, 27. It seems to have been the earliest house on the block. Van Elslant was commissary for the West India Company and inspector of tobacco, in 1638-9.—*Ibid.*, 63; *Van Rensselaer Bowier MSS.*, 480. He had, doubtless, then been in the colony for some time, for Director van Twiller, on his return to Holland in 1639, left his affairs in his charge. His stewardship was not satisfactory. The new director, Kieft, in 1644, and Oloff Stevensen van Cortlandt, in 1646, demanded very sharply that he should account for his management of Van Twiller's affairs.—*Cal. Hist. MSS., Dutch*, 29, 99.

A great many early deeds contain the statement that they were "measured" by Claes van Elslant; his "bill of survey," for instance, is spoken of in the Damen-Flodder transaction, north of the city wall. (See Key to Map of Dutch Grants.) Possibly, he may have been a surveyor, though, apparently, he is nowhere so-called.

He was a court messenger for the provincial court, and, after the organisation of the municipal government, in 1653, evidently served also, on occasion, as court messenger for the city, although he was never commissioned. On January 26, 1657, his son, Claes van Elslant, Jr., who had served as court messenger since 1653, and Gysbert op Dyck were officially appointed court messengers, for which service each was to receive yearly as salary "from the Director General and Council one hundred and fifty guilders and on the part of the City . . . fifty guilders."—*Rec. N. Am.*, I: 152; II: 276. On April 15, 1658, Pieter Schaaftbanck was added as a city messenger, "on the allowance as formerly."—*Ibid.*, II: 376. Claes van Elslant, Sr., continued, however, to serve the city in this capacity, but, in 1662, because of a dispute arising over an attachment claimed to have been discharged by him, he was "forbidden by the Burgomasters and Schepens . . . to perform any more, directly or indirectly, the duties of the office of Court Messenger to or for any person whomsoever, be he who he may."—*Ibid.*, IV: 81. We know that in 1661 he was acting in the capacity of grave digger.—See description of cemetery, in Block A.

Claes van Elslant mortgaged his house pretty heavily in 1669-70, and finally, in July, 1671, contracted to sell it to Hendrick Bosch, a sword-cutler from Leyden. He died before August 20, 1672, when his heirs gave a deed to Bosch.—*Liber Mortgages*, A: 52, 75; *Liber Deeds*, B: 198; cf. *Book of Records of Deeds & Transfers* (etc.), 1665-1672 (translated), 223.