

Biography Information for Pieter Andriessen

Scandinavian Immigrants in New York
1630-1674

by John O. Evjen, ©1916

PIETER ANDRIESSEN.

Pieter Andriessen, a Dane, from Bordesholm in Holstein, came over to New Amsterdam in 1639, in the ship "de Brant van Trogen." Among his fellow passengers were other Danes: Captain Jochim Pietersen Kuyter, Jonas Bronck (?) and Laurens Duyts.³⁶⁵ Duyts and Andriessen were to work for Jonas Bronck in Morrisania, the present Borough of the Bronx. Bronck had advanced the two men about 121 florins to pay their board on the ship.³⁶⁶

On October 19, 1645, Pieter Andriessen got the patent of a lot behind the public tavern on Manhattan, that is on Hoogh Straet. On the same date he obtained a patent of "74 morgens, 327 rods of land on the East River, opposite Hog Island, east of Domine's Hook."³⁶⁷ The house which was erected upon this farm was nearly opposite the foot of the present Fifty-fifth Street on Manhattan Island.³⁶⁸

Andriessen owned, it would appear, some cattle before he became an independent landowner. When working in Morrisania, he bought live stock. Under date of October 15, 1641, we find a receipt of his "for a milk cow from Philip de Truy on shores."³⁶⁹ His farm must have frequently been visited by men who passed his house on the river, for he had a tavern there as early as 1648.³⁷⁰ Besides being a farmer and a tavernkeeper, he also was a chimney-sweep. He was called Pieter de Schoorstenveger (the chimney-sweep). We do not know much about his movements. When he was in the city, he likely left his farm in care of his negro slaves.

He had not been long in this country before he had, like many other early settlers, his hands in a lawsuit, and that against a woman. We have a notice of this under date of August 9, 1642, when he sued Aeltje Douwes for slander. The result of the proceedings was, that Aeltje "begs pardon of the plaintiff in court

³⁶⁵ See articles on these men. Part II.

³⁶⁶ Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, I., p. 9.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, I., p. 370.

³⁶⁸ J. H. Innes, *New Amsterdam and Its People*, p. 164.

³⁶⁹ Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, I., p. 17.

³⁷⁰ The Records of New Amsterdam, I., p. 8.

and acknowledges that he [Andriessen] is an honest and upright man."³⁷¹

On August 5, 1653, he was sued by Guliaem Wys, who demanded "payment of fl. 499:4 according to note dated 5 August, 1652." Andriessen "confessed the debt" and requested delay. But the court condemned him "to pay according to obligation within one month from date."³⁷²

A notice dated September 11, 1655, gives us the key to the nationality of Pieter Andriessen. It states that "Pieter Andrisz Van Bordolholm [Bordesholm]" is indebted to Cornelis Steenwyck, as attorney for Jacobus Schelle, the sum of 415 guilders for merchandise received in 1652. It also states that he resided on Long Island.³⁷³

It is erroneous to identify ³⁷⁴ Pieter Andriessen with a Pieter Andriessen from "Thresoni, in Brabant," who married, in 1661, Geertruyd Samson, widow of Jan Theunissen van Wesp, and died in 1664.³⁷⁵

On June 5, 1650, Pieter Andriessen, the subject of our sketch, was sponsor at the baptism of Michel and Dorothe, twins belonging to a Norwegian, Jochem Kier (Kalder).

There was a Pieter Andriessen who bought a lot in New Amsterdam on March 14, 1661. Whether this person be Pieter from Brabant or Pieter from Bordesholm can not be decided with the aid of the material at our disposal.

Pieter Andriessen, the chimney sweeper, received his small burgher right on April 13, 1657.

Before we take leave of him we shall relate these two incidents connected with him and his house on the farm.

In 1655 the Indians made one of their raids. Andriessen was one of those who suffered by it: he lost his cattle. In order to recover some of his live stock, he and a few others sailed up

³⁷¹ Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, I., p. 72.

³⁷² The Records of New Amsterdam, 1653-1674, I., p. 118.

³⁷³ Year Book of the Holland Society of New York, 1900, p. 159.

³⁷⁴ Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, I., p. 27. J. H. Innes, New Amsterdam and Its People, p. 165.

³⁷⁵ The Records of New Amsterdam, 1653-1674, V., p. 66.

the East River, to his farm, which he had left when the raid took place. But the Indians caught them and kept four of them, including Andriessen, prisoners. First after the city authorities had paid a ransom for their release, were they liberated.

In regard to the capture of Andriessen and the ransom which the Indians demanded before they would liberate the captives, the following documents are of value. The Indians received a ransom; not, however, the extravagant one they had demanded according to the documents.

Director Stuyvesant wrote to Captain Brian Nuton [Newton], October 12, 1655:

"This is to inform you, that three or four canoes with savages have been seen near the Hellegat on Long Island, who have taken Pieter, the chimney-sweep, prisoner; therefore you will have to be on your guard and keep your men close together; and whereas I have been informed, that the free people, contrary to my order, do not remain together, but that every one runs here and there to his own plantation, you must once more, and this the last time, warn them, that they take care and keep together according to my order, or that I shall be obliged to take other measures herein. You are hereby especially directed to keep your soldiers together and keep a good watch. Farewell . . ."

From the minutes in regard to the appearance, before the Council, of Stephen Necker, one of the prisoners, who had been sent by the Indians to demand the ransom, we quote the following:

[October 13] "Stephen Necker appeared before the Council and reported that Peter, the chimney-sweep, with five others, of whom he was one, had sailed to the aforesaid chimney-sweep's plantation to fetch some animals from there; after they had been there about half an hour, they were attacked by about thirty savages, he does not know of what nation, who took them all prisoners; four of them had been wounded, and he with Cornelis Mourissen (afterwards shot in the back with an arrow, "which has been cut out by the barber") has been sent here by the savages, to

ask for their ransom the following articles, which the savages had marked with notches on a stick:

20 coats of cloth.	40 knives.
20 handfuls of powder.	10 pairs of shoes.
10 bars of lead.	10 pairs of socks.
10 kettles.	10 addices.
2 muskets.	10 hatchets.
3 swords.	20 tobacco-pipes.
20 strings of wampum. ³⁷⁶	

Almost at the same time and during Andriessen's absence from his house, a white settler and two negroes, one of whom was a servant of Andriessen, took possession of his house, in order to enjoy a repast of stolen chickens. They had been in the neighborhood for their prey, and had frightened the few people there by feigning Indians. They had shouted and yelled, battered the doors and on the whole played their role of savages so well, that those who were not initiated, were scared away. Finally one of the latter, Harmen the cooper, made his way to Andriessen's house, where he saw a light. He heard, to his surprise, Dutch spoken, entered the house boldly and caught the miscreants red-handed. The new visitor found a large fire in Pieter's house, and "Claes de Ruyter preparing to spit the (stolen) fowls." The visitor censured them, but the miscreants answered "that they were forced to do it by hunger"—a fabricated defense, as the city was not far distant. The city authorities got knowledge of the matter, and the visitor related before the court what had transpired in the "chimney-sweep's house." He even told that De Ruyter requested him to remain silent about the matter, and that he, on arriving at the Manhattans, would pay for the fowls."³⁷⁷

The city government, now knowing that others besides the Indians were playing the role of plunderers, issued an "Order against isolated plantations." It commanded the subjects to settle close to one another in villages and hamlets. It imposed a penalty on those who refused to comply with the command and gave notice that they must not expect any aid from the government in case of trouble with the Indians.

³⁷⁶ New York Colonial Documents, XIII., p. 43f.
³⁷⁷ The Records of New Amsterdam, 1658-1674, IV., p. 394f.