



New York State Archives

**New Netherland Council Dutch Delaware River Settlement
Administrative Records A1878**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series contains letters, minutes, and other administrative documents, in Dutch, created by the West India Company during its struggle to dominate trade and establish trading posts on the South (Delaware) River. The records, generated in the Delaware region and sent to New Amsterdam, largely relate to Swedish activities in the region; the takeover of New Sweden in 1655 by the Dutch; and agreements and terms met during the struggle with Sweden for control over the region.
Creator:	New Netherland. Council
Title:	Dutch Delaware River settlement administrative records
Quantity:	1.5 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1646-1664
Series:	A1878

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Arrangement

Chronological by date.

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Administrative History

Dutch settlement of the Delaware region by the West India Company (WIC) began in 1624 on High Island (Burlington Island). High Island was abandoned and Fort Nassau was built shortly after.

In 1631, Swanendael was established according to the patroonship plan of colonization, but only existed for a short time. In 1638, Peter Minuit, a former WIC official, established Fort Christina in the Delaware region on behalf of Sweden, and from 1638-1647, the Dutch coexisted with New Sweden in the region.

In 1648, Fort Nassau was abandoned and Fort Casimir was built on the west side of the river in order to intercept the Indian trade and better compete with the Swedes. In 1654 a Swedish relief ship destined for Fort Christina captured Fort Casimir on its way up the river. The WIC directors decided that the Swedes had to be eliminated. In 1655, Petrus Stuyvesant led a force of 340 soldiers and seven ships to the Delaware. Among the ships was a forty-two gun warship belonging to the city of Amsterdam. New Sweden was quickly taken and incorporated into New Netherland. Although the WIC directors urged Stuyvesant to scatter the Swedes elsewhere--even send them to the Esopus to assist in the Indian wars--he refused to do so, allowing them to maintain their identity as the Swedish Nation.

In 1657, the WIC repaid the city of Amsterdam for use of its warship by granting it a large section of the Delaware to administer as a quasi patroonship under the name of Nieuwer Amstel (New Amstel). The WIC maintained control of Fort Christina, renaming it Fort Altena, and the region from Bombay Hook to the mouth of the Bay. By 1663 the city of Amsterdam was granted the entire region and bay. New Amstel was considered subordinate to New Netherland as was the patroonship Rensselaerswijck.

The first director of New Amstel was Jacob Alrichs, who served from 1657 until his death in 1659. He was succeeded by Alexander d'Hinojossa and from 1659 to 1664 the colony prospered.

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Scope and Content Note

This series contains administrative records created by the Dutch West India Company (WIC) in the Delaware region and sent to New Amsterdam. The records relate to problems with the Swedes and include a report on Swedish activities in the Delaware region prior to Stuyvesant's arrival in New Netherland. Additional material includes extracts from Petrus Stuyvesant's letterbook regarding the Delaware region from 1648 to 1650; records pertaining to the takeover of New Sweden in 1655; council minutes of Jean Paul Jacquet, vice-director of WIC territory on the South (Delaware) River until 1657; letters from Jacob Alrichs, director of New Amstel, to Stuyvesant from 1657 to 1659; letters from Willem Beeckman, vice-director of WIC territory on the South River from 1659 to 1664; and documents relating to agreements and terms met during the struggle with Sweden for control over the region.

Records created by Jacob Alrichs and Alexander d'Hinojossa during their tenures as directors of New Amstel (1657-1664) are no longer extant. Since Stuyvesant's copybooks of outgoing correspondence to authorities in the Delaware region also do not survive, this series represents an incomplete record of Dutch administration.

Known as the "Delaware Papers" of the Dutch period, this series originally constituted volumes 18 and 19 of the New York Historical Manuscripts in the New York State Library. The original records are in the Dutch language.

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Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Item list: E.B. O'Callaghan's *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State* (1866).

Folder list is available at the repository.

Translated in: *Delaware Papers (Dutch Period): A Collection of Documents Pertaining to the Regulation of Affairs on the South River of New Netherland, 1648-1664*, trans. and ed. Charles T. Gehring ("New York Historical Manuscripts, Dutch," vols. 18-19) (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1981).

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this material.

Items Online

[Dutch Delaware River settlement administrative records, 1646-1664](#)

Access Terms

- New York (Colony)--Politics and government
- New York (State)--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775
- New Sweden
- New York (State)
- Minutes (administrative records)
- Boundary disputes
- Delaware--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775
- Dutch--New York (State)
- Balance of power

- Administering settlements
- Commerce
- New Netherland
- Correspondence
- Dutch--Delaware
- Delaware River (N.Y.-Del. and N.J.)
- New Amstel
- Dutch Colonial Records
- West-Indische Compagnie (Netherlands)
- Stuyvesant, Peter, 1592-1672