

**THE OLD STREETS OF NEW YORK
UNDER THE DUTCH: A PAPER
READ BEFORE THE NEW YORK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY. JUNE, 2,
1874**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649249077

The Old Streets of New York Under the Dutch: A Paper Read Before the New York Historical Society. June, 2, 1874 by James W. Gerard

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JAMES W. GERARD

**THE OLD STREETS OF NEW YORK
UNDER THE DUTCH: A PAPER
READ BEFORE THE NEW YORK
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY. JUNE, 2, 1874**

THE
OLD STREETS
OF
NEW YORK
UNDER THE DUTCH.



A PAPER READ BEFORE THE
New York Historical Society,
JUNE 2, 1874.
BY
JAMES W. GERARD.

NEW YORK:
F. B. PATTERSON, 32 CEDAR STREET.
1875.

PROEM.

THE desire expressed by many interested in our local history to possess a copy of the paper on "THE OLD STREETS OF NEW YORK, UNDER THE DUTCH," recently read before the New York Historical Society by Mr. GERARD, has induced its publication by the subscriber.

It relates to the most interesting and dramatic period of the history of our ancient city, over which Time is rapidly weaving his mystic web.

The style, at times quaint and familiar, and at others eloquent, with which the author has presented the subject, and the extent of his researches into the *minutiae* of the life of our Dutch predecessors, will commend the publication, not only to the antiquarian, but to all citizens who take pride and pleasure in our local annals.

A limited number of copies have been printed, solely on the publisher's account, after permission obtained from the Historical Society; and, it is hoped that the pamphlet will prove an acceptable addition to the other antiquarian publications issued by the Public's obedient servant,

F. B. PATTERSON,
32 CEDAR STREET,
NEW YORK.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN
OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

In venturing to present a sketch of some of the old streets and people of New York, under the Dutch rule, it may be well, first, to glance at antecedent discoveries and settlements in the region by other nations.

Awaking from the sleep of the Middle Ages, the aroused energy of the European mind, towards the close of the fifteenth century, developed itself in geographical, as well as scientific research.

Long intellectual slumber had created a rest which wearied as well as dwarfed.

The invention of printing had distributed knowledge no longer hoarded in cloisters. Improvements in the use of gunpowder tended to subdue caste, and give intellectual as well as civil freedom and vigor.

No longer content with dogmas and traditions, man yearned to break local boundries and forms—to expand, to learn, to discover.

Marco Paulo's travels had instigated a thirst for adventure; and men's minds were still excited by stories of the wealth and wonders of Cathay and Copango.

The art of navigation had been improved under the leadership of Prince Henry, the Navigator.

New maps were planned. New enterprises stimulated the ambition of the curious or the avaricious. The great problem of the earth was still unsolved. The earth! man's abode and man's study. What was it? What were its limits?

Pythagoras had claimed its rotundity in the mystic days of history. Still, the force of habit and the inertia of ignorance kept concert with error.

The scholastic world still dreamed its old dreams, and wrapped itself in its cloak of Aristotle. Circumnavigation was impossible.

Columbus, however, at the close of the fifteenth century, made the egg stand on its end, and rediscovered the Northmen's lost continent. The shade of Pythagoras triumphed through the Genoese.

Geography vindicated her sister astronomy, and the world *was* round.

The Portuguese, now roused in rivalry, vigorously attacked Eastern realms. Bartholamew Diaz had theretofore reached the southern point of Africa; and Vasco de Gama, in 1497, in searching for the realms of Prester John, carried the Portuguese flag around the African continent, which Pharaoh's vessels had done for the Egyptian flag over 2,000 years before.

The wealth of either Indies now lay open. Unknown El Dorados awaited adventure. Spaniard and Portuguese fiercely claimed the prize of the unknown earth.

Alexander VI. adjudged the great process.

The geographical bulls of 1493 and 1506 made the division for all prospective discovery.

A line from pole to pole was to divide the infidel world between the two most holy navigating powers, who vigorously set to work to utilize the prize.

Magellan, for Spain, in 1519, passed through the straits that bear his name, and circumnavigated the globe.

The Portuguese culled rich productions from Ceylon and the Moluccas, the Persian Gulf, and the coast of Coromandel; while Cortes and Pizarro filled galleons that bore golden fruit to Spain from Mexico and Peru.

Meanwhile the bleak northern coasts lay uncared for. The gold of southern seas and the spicy treasures of the East kept enterprise from them.

England had, in 1497, felt the geographical impulse, and nobly closed the discoveries of the fifteenth century.

The great problem of the day—the northwest passage to India and Cathay through the northern seas (since fruitlessly found by McClure)—turned Henry VII. from affairs of State to win laurels in the new field of geographical research. The Cabots commissioned by him cruised along the North American coast from Labrador to Florida.

Hence England's exclusive claim, deriding the Papal bulls, to the entire country, from these glimpses of the coast by the Cabots.

French Fishermen now began to swarm on the Newfoundland Banks, and found there an El Dorado of their own, in savage contrast with Cortez' and Pizarro's sunny conquests.

In 1524, the French appear upon the scene of discovery; and Verrazano carried the French flag from 36° to 50° of north latitude, and named the coast.

Anchoring his ship off the Narrows, in our harbor, as it is supposed from his description, the Italian, in his shallop, entered our bay.

He says, in his letter to King Francis: "We found a very pleasant situation among some steep hills, through which a very large river, deep at its mouth, forced its way to the sea. We passed up the river about half a league, when we found it formed a most beautiful lake three leagues in circuit. All of a sudden a violent, contrary wind blew in from the sea, and forced us to return to our ship, greatly regretting to leave this region, which seemed so commodious and delightful."

The first of civilized men, Verrazano gazed upon the virgin beauties of our isle, "Manhatta," then slumbering in primeval innocence,—ere long, under the magic hand of civilization, to rise and ripen into stately magnificence, the Queen City of the Hemisphere.

Estevan Gomez, with his Spaniards, succeeded Verrazano in the exploration of our bay, and named the North River, San Antonio; after him, also, called on some ancient charts, Rio de Gomez.