

**ANNALS OF THE SWEDES
ON THE DELAWARE, FROM
THEIR FIRST SETTLEMENT IN
1636, TO THE PRESENT TIME**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649515479

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by Jehu Curtis Clay

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Cover @ 2017

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Grove's to
J. C. C. C.

ANNALS
OF THE
SWEDES ON THE DELAWARE,
FROM THEIR
FIRST SETTLEMENT IN 1636,
TO
THE PRESENT TIME,
BY THE
REV. JEHU CURTIS CLAY, D. D.

Rector of Gloria Dei Church, Philadelphia.

SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

PHILADELPHIA:
H. HOOKER & CO., EIGHTH AND CHESTNUT STS.
1858.

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1894, by
Jesse Quinn Gray, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the
Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

M'Farland & Thomson, Printers,
411 Walnut St.

PREFACE.

THIS book is presented to the public under the following circumstances. The compiler, descended on the mother's side from Swedish ancestors, felt a desire to look back into their history, and to know more than he did of the occurrences connected with their first settlement on this soil. He had observed that the geographers and historians of America, while they had been very particular in detailing the circumstances connected with the arrival and settlement of the English on the James River, and of the Pilgrims in New England, had scarcely mentioned that there was ever such a colony as the Swedes on the Delaware. He was at a loss to know why this was so; especially as their arrival here was about thirty years after that of the English in Virginia, and but about sixteen or seventeen years after the settlement of New England; and that, therefore, their being among the first colonies that came from Europe to America, and the very first that settled Pennsylvania, claimed for them a more particular notice. It is true, Proud in his

History of Pennsylvania, Smith in his History of New Jersey, and Holmes in his American Annals, have spoken of the arrival of the Swedes on the Delaware. And, some may ask, what more do we wish to know of them? As much more—their many descendants now living, if no others, will answer—as may throw light on their early history, show the relation in which they stood to the people around them, the connection they had with, and the protection they received from, the country whence they came; and the various changes, civil and ecclesiastical, through which they had to pass. Of all these matters their own historians have given full and interesting details. To those details the present writer has given much of his attention; and deeply interested as he has been himself in the inquiry, he has been led to think it would be a gratification, to at least the many among us who derive their descent from Swedish ancestors, to have the most prominent points of the history of their forefathers selected from the volumes and manuscripts where they lie embedded with much that is of no value, and offered to their perusal.

The writers to whom we are chiefly indebted for information concerning the first settlement and subsequent history of the Swedes on the Delaware, are Thomas Campanius, grandson of the Rev. John Campanius, who came over as chaplain with Governor Printz, in 1642; the

Rev. Israel Acrelius, who was for some time provost of the Swedish Churches in America, and pastor of that at Christina; and the Rev. Andreas Radman, of whom a full account is given in the following pages. These works were all written in the Swedish language, and for that reason their contents have been little known to the American reader. Within the last year, however, the public have been favored with a translation of *Campanius*, by the learned Peter S. Du Ponceau, LL.D., which he undertook at the request of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Of the work of Acrelius there has been no published translation; though there is a manuscript translation of it, in part, in the possession of the Historical Society of New York, which was furnished them, at their request, by the late Rev. Dr. N. Collin. The other work here referred to, that of the Rev. Mr. Radman, is in manuscript,* and belongs to the library of the Wicaco Church. Of this also there is a manuscript translation, in part, by Dr. Collin. Acrelius refers in his work to this manuscript of Mr. Radman, and appears to have drawn liberally from it. It has furnished to the compiler of these annals most of what, in the following pages, he offers to the public. The only originality he claims for the

*This work is entitled "Transactions relative to the Congregation at Wicaco, collected from some writings and verbal narratives."

work is, in generally presenting the facts which are detailed in his own language.

These annals are given to the public, not as a *full* account of all that has been written concerning the Swedes in America, but as presenting the most striking facts in their history, or such as the author thought would most interest his readers. He has little idea that they will be much read beyond the Swedish portion of the community, or the many descendants of those of whose early history they treat. To such he hopes the work will not be found altogether undeserving of notice. He offers it to them and to others, as a faithful narrative of past events; and such as, they will be pleased to find, represents their ancestors to view as an honest, industrious, and religious people.

It may be thought by some of the readers of these annals, that too much space is occupied in them by details relating to the Wicaco church. But it must be remembered, that this church claims a particular notice from its great antiquity, being perhaps the oldest edifice of the kind still open for public worship, and in good repair, any where to be met with in our country. The Swedish church at Wilmington (formerly Christina) was, the writer is aware, built two years before that of Wicaco, (1698,) but that, he regrets to say, has been for some time abandoned as a place of worship, and is