

# I. Constructing a village: material planning

At midnight on every December 31st, at Albany's Empire State Plaza, a new year is heralded by a great display of fireworks. Hundreds of people gather to watch. Similarly, in the 1600s the exchange of the year did not go by quietly. Usually it was celebrated with much alcoholic drink and partying, and people making much noise by beating drums and shooting their muskets and firearms into the air. Authorities tried to control the festivities by prohibiting the sale of liquor and the shooting of guns on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. In Rensselaerswijck, Abraham Stevensz *Croaet* was fined *f*40 for shooting during the night in 1650.<sup>1</sup> At the changing of the year in 1651-52, West India Company soldiers at Fort Orange likely drank the customary New Year's drinks, and at some point purposely started to fire burning fuses onto the roof of the patroon's house, immediately to the north of the fort. The thatch caught fire, but was quickly extinguished by the patroon's director, Brant van Slichtenhorst and his son Gerrit, who lived in the house. The following day the 'festivities' continued. Soldiers suddenly grabbed Van Slichtenhorst's son by the hair, and simultaneously struck him on the forehead so that he fell down. In the presence of the newly appointed commissary of the fort, Johannes Dijkman, they not only beat Gerrit 'black and blue, but dragged him through the mud and mire, and treated him inhumanly as if he were a criminal.' They struck Van Slichtenhorst's two children with their guns and threatened to shoot them. Dijkman encouraged his soldiers in their evil work by calling out aloud, 'Beat him now and may the devil take him!'; and when he was told that the scandalous treatment of Van Slichtenhorst's children would be avenged, he ordered his gunner to load his pieces with [cannon ball], saying that they would fire through the director's house.<sup>2</sup>

The conflict expressed the existing tensions between patroonship and West India Company, which will be explained in this chapter. It indicated that here was an unbearable situation, which would ultimately result in the separation of the immediate area around the fort from the patroonship. First we will take a closer look at this conflict and its development. Subsequently, we will observe how Beverwijck, as the area around the fort was then named, further developed: Well over 200 Europeans had settled in the area before April 1652, and within eight years this number had quintupled. A community with so many people needed provisions and services; and despite the almost daily presence of large groups of Indians, especially in the summer, the minimal functions of a Dutch settlement were systematically established in a short time. When in 1664 the English took over New Netherland, they found in Beverwijck a full-fledged community with provisions for safety, poor relief, education, communal services, and religion.

## Van Slichtenhorst, Rensselaerswijck, and the Indians

### *Van Slichtenhorst and Van Twiller's rule in Rensselaerswijck*

In his function of *schout*, Van Slichtenhorst presided as chief officer over the court of Rensselaerswijck, acting as a public prosecutor and performing the duties of a modern sheriff and chief of police. As manager – the other part of his director's function – he held chief administrative office, and was required to collect the patroon's revenues from farms and mills, and issue licenses to trade, for which he had to render a strict account. He had to maintain friendly relations with the Indians, but was not to engage in the fur trade, or act as *commies* (agent). He had to make sure that people obeyed the ordinances, contracts and orders; and he was also charged with the advancement of religion according to the tenets of the Reformed church, including the sabbath observance, and prevention of fornication with Indian women. Further, he had to guard and defend the boundaries, privileges, rights, lands, jurisdiction, prerogatives and authority of the patroon.<sup>3</sup> He was assisted by a council of commissioners who represented the patroon, and who primarily had administrative duties. Two (later three) councilors, appointed by the commissioners, represented the colonists; their duties were mostly judicial; they were not in the patroon's service. Secretary Anthonie de Hooges was to assist the director in judicial matters and was to record in a book all instructions, commissions and executed contracts. The minister, *dominee* Johannes Megapolensis, advised in important matters.<sup>4</sup> While these people shared the responsibility for the development of Rensselaerswijck, the director's voice was the strongest.

As in previous years, it was of great importance that good relations with the West India Company were maintained. But the contacts between Van Slichtenhorst and Stuyvesant had been bad since the beginning. According to his instructions, upon arrival in New Amsterdam the 59-year old Van Slichtenhorst was immediately to address himself to the 22-years-younger director general of New Netherland, hand him a letter, and convey greetings and commendations of the patroon. He was to represent good correspondence and neighborhood to Stuyvesant and the council, and offer to extend a helping hand to them on any occasion.<sup>5</sup> But, reportedly, Van Slichtenhorst first drank himself full, and then behaved 'as if he came there in order to have authority over Stuyvesant and as if he wanted to rule over him.'<sup>6</sup> That the two men at once had a disagreement about the method of payment for Van Slichtenhorst's journey, from the Virginias to Manhattan on a company ship, did not help to create a favorable first acquaintance.<sup>7</sup> Both men appeared to be strong and stubborn characters and, even after Van Slichtenhorst had gone to Rensselaerswijck, their relations did not improve. Rensselaerswijck's director would soon refuse to recognize the general day of prayer and fasting, which Stuyvesant had proclaimed for the first Wednesday in May, in honor of the Republic's peace with Spain in 1648. This clearly demonstrated his denial of Stuyvesant's authority inside the patroonship.<sup>8</sup> Especially the building of a community north of the fort – on the west side of the river, instead

of on the east side – added to Stuyvesant’s discontent. As soon as he stepped off the ship, the new director started issuing building permits in the area close to the fort, adding to the three houses that were already there.<sup>9</sup> In July, Stuyvesant ordered him not to build within the area of a cannon shot from the fort, since according to the company, the houses obstructed the fort. But Van Slichtenhorst continued, going so far as to offer people good deals for building there, and even prohibiting his colonists from using the patroon’s wagons and horses to haul construction materials for the repairs to Fort Orange.<sup>10</sup> The fort had been severely damaged by flooding during the previous winter, and stone and timber were urgently needed for repairs, and also to build houses for some burghers inside its walls.<sup>11</sup> Van Slichtenhorst forbade the company laborers to quarry stone or to cut timber and firewood on the patroon’s land without permission. At the same time, he caused more aggravation with Stuyvesant by buying more land from the Indians at the *Paponicack kil* (Muitzes kill), Catskil and Claverack. By suggesting that the director general maintained correspondence with the English, Van Slichtenhorst more or less accused Stuyvesant of treason – which likely did not improve the relations between the two men, either.<sup>12</sup> To Stuyvesant, Van Slichtenhorst’s attitude represented a usurpation of the company’s authority and supreme jurisdiction in New Netherland. He reasoned that if such behavior were tolerated, then other ‘colonies’ such as Heemstede, Flushing, and Gravesend on Long Island could expect the same, which would deprive the company of timber needed for ships, churches, forts and other constructions; eventually, the company would have to beg the materials from its subjects, and pay for them at the highest price.<sup>13</sup> Stuyvesant did not want the company to be degraded in this manner. Thus, Stuyvesant and Van Slichtenhorst were flatly at odds with each other. Stuyvesant could not allow the company’s authority to be eaten away, while Van Slichtenhorst considered the patroon’s authority to be supreme in the area – which, he maintained, also included the ground upon which Fort Orange stood.<sup>14</sup>

That it was not only Van Slichtenhorst who was to blame for this bad relationship becomes apparent in a letter from the company’s directors of the department of the Chamber of Amsterdam, to Stuyvesant at the beginning of 1650, in which they wrote that they clearly saw a threat in Wouter van Twiller, one of the patroon’s guardians who, according to them, aimed to command the North River. ‘He admits publicly that he does not intend to allow anyone to navigate the river for the purpose of trade,’ they wrote, ‘and says, he will resist anyone coming there or to Rensselaerswijck, maintaining besides, that Fort Orange is built upon the soil of Rensselaerswijck and that the Company has no right to let houses be built or private parties trade there.’ They suspected Van Twiller of having ‘once more the audacity to obstruct the navigation on the river by force,’ and forbade his taking 600 lbs. of gunpowder and 600 lbs. of lead, on behalf of Rensselaerswijck, aboard his ship. They promised to send Stuyvesant some gunpowder and lead to use in defending the rights of the company.<sup>15</sup> The directors could not understand, they wrote in April 1650, how ‘the colonists of Rentselaerswijck could take possession of *Beeren Eyland*, afterwards called Rentselaers Steyn [a small island at the most southern border of Rensselaerswijck], and go so far as to invest this place

with the right of staple demanding from everyone, except the Company, a toll of five percent on his goods, and growing so impudent that they finally asserted Fort Orange was built on their territory, and they would not permit anybody to take his residence in the fort, even though the Company had given their consent, and engage in the fur trade.' They thought it astonishing that 'Van Twiller and his set' had dared to spread a report in the community 'that the Company owned no other soil in New Netherland than Manhattans Island, while it can be clearly proved that they have bought vast tracks of land on the South River, the Fresh River, Long Island and many other places in the neighborhood. These men are therefore grossly deceiving and try only to dispossess, if possible, the Company; but we hope to balk them.'<sup>16</sup>

Testimony by Nicolaes Blanche van Aken, in January 1651, suggests that Van Slichtenhorst was under much pressure. In 1649, Van Aken had sailed to Manhattan and Rensselaerswijck as a 'supercargo' (i.e., responsible for overseeing the cargo and keeping accurate accounts of all transactions) aboard the *St. Pieter*; and during his stay along the upper Hudson, he had spoken with Van Slichtenhorst on various occasions. Two years later, he testified that Van Slichtenhorst had complained to him that in the patroonship Wouter van Twiller sought 'to direct everything according to his will and intention, only in order to draw the whole trade to his private benefit.' To make sure his orders were followed, he had sent his brother Jan van Twiller who, under the pretense of representing the patroon, became a member of the council. Wouter van Twiller had ordered Van Slichtenhorst sharply, and under oath, not to send any information regarding Rensselaerswijck's situation to its co-directors, nor to maintain any correspondence with them.<sup>17</sup> Because he feared that Jan van Twiller (who boarded with him) could cause him problems, such as having his salary cut or other possible repercussions, Van Slichtenhorst had obeyed Van Twiller's orders; but he had asked Van Aken to tell his story to co-director Blommaert, so that Blommaert would know how poorly the general goods were being managed by private interests. Van Aken had also heard from Van Slichtenhorst and others that 'one Vastrick and consorts, at the order and in the name of Wouter van Twiller and Jan van Wely, as guardians representing the patroon,' publicly had forbidden all inhabitants 'to trade with any other trader, and not to buy any gold or sell any peltry as from and to him, Vastrick, as long as he had merchandise.' Gerrit Vastrick, a cousin of Van Twiller, had received a good amount of furs, which he had all traded in the name of the colony.<sup>18</sup> In 1650, after Jan van Twiller had gone back to the Republic, Vastrick was appointed to the council on Wouter van Twiller's order. Van Twiller's efforts to monopolize the trade were a great obstruction for all traders and inhabitants of the community.

Not only were the inhabitants unhappy with this trade policy, but Van Slichtenhorst also had trouble regarding rent payments. Accusing several farmers of cheating, he so harassed some of them with processes and other difficulties, according to Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, 'that it was unbearable.' Various persons had even inquired of Stuyvesant whether or not they could live under the authority of the West India Company, in order to have more freedom.<sup>19</sup>

With many inhabitants unhappy with the policy executed by Van Slichtenhorst, and with the West India Company feeling that it could not allow its authority to be undermined – which, at some point, could create a real defense problem – it is not surprising that Stuyvesant took drastic measures. He worried about threats from foreign enemies like the Swedes, English and French, as well as the Indians. By obstructing important defensive repairs to Fort Orange, by buying more lands from the Indians at Catskil – and even by more or less accusing Stuyvesant of treason – Van Slichtenhorst, a fellow countryman, continued to undermine Stuyvesant's authority and, little by little, kept nibbling away pieces of the company's authority.

The area at the upper Hudson was of great importance for the West India Company, as the region was the main supplier of furs in New Netherland; and good relations with the natives were a primary concern. Unlike in some other areas of New Netherland, war with the Indians had generally been avoided here.<sup>20</sup> In 1628, the Maquaes had ended their four-year war against the Mahicans by driving their enemies back to the east side of the river, thus gaining control of the area around Fort Orange. The European desire for furs had brought the Maquaes products that helped make them stronger, and which gave them more power – power they needed in their wars against other Indian nations, which they had been fighting for many years. Competition between Indian nations in order to obtain European goods, and between European nations to get furs, had in the 1630s and 1640s helped create a bond of friendship between the Maquaes and the Dutch, a bond in which both parties guaranteed each other access to the goods they wanted so much. A mutual dependance had resulted, along with a friendship that in later years they frequently would protect.<sup>21</sup>

By 1650, the natives' way of life in the upper Hudson had already been disturbed, as guns and flintlocks (*snaphaenen*) had replaced the bow-and-arrow in hunting and warfare, while a new focus on the beaver trade had changed the periods for hunting; metal objects had replaced stone, textiles were being worn along with leather skins, and for some Indians alcoholic beverages had become more important than water. In the course of thirty to forty years, a new generation of natives had become dependent on the newcomers for survival.<sup>22</sup> But along with the Europeans had come epidemics of smallpox, which now also raged in the New World; and by 1680, the oldest New Netherlanders would observe that there was 'not 1/10th part of the Indians there once were, not 1/20th or 1/30th; and that now the Europeans are 20 and 30 times as many.'<sup>23</sup>

After 1628, the Mahicans had sold land to the settlers on both sides of the river; by 1648, the patroonship would stretch from *Beeren Eyland* to *Unawat's Casteel* near the Cohoes Falls, with Fort Orange situated in the middle.<sup>24</sup> In 1648-49, Van Slichtenhorst bought more land from the Mahicans. His descriptions of these land transactions, reports on journeys to purchased lands, and specifications of the expenses made on these purchases show how the relationship between settlers and Mahicans developed.

*Van Slichtenhorst and the Mahicans*

Not five months after his arrival, Van Slichtenhorst bought the *Paponicack kil* (Muitzes kil).<sup>25</sup> The Mahican chief Schiwias, nicknamed *Aepjen* ('little monkey') by the Dutch, served as broker in the sale, and at the transfer all parties – sellers with their entourage, brokers, the 'gentlemen' (by whom Van Slichtenhorst likely meant interpreters, witnesses, and buyers), the minister, and the magistrates – were present. At some point the document, drawn up beforehand by the secretary, was signed by sellers, witnesses, perhaps an interpreter, secretary, and the director. The Dutch paid with two pieces of cloth, twenty-two ells of duffel, and two pounds of powder.<sup>26</sup> Having paid for the land and signed the document meant, for the Dutch, that everything was then settled. But the Indians had other expectations: The sale would be celebrated with many visits to, and entertainment in, the patroon's house. Not only before and during the transfer, but afterward as well, *Aepjen* and his group had spent several days in the patroon's house.<sup>27</sup> On seven or eight occasions, the Mahican chief had stayed there with seven or eight people, with each visit lasting five or six days. He always had some kind of errand, according to Van Slichtenhorst (involving the sale, for example, or the arrival of the sellers, or the price), and would then demand food, good beer, and two or three glasses of brandy a day for having brought this errand. At the sale itself, except for the women [*wijven*] and children, there were ten persons, all of whom stayed at the patroon's house for three or four days – and who were, along with 'the gentlemen,' *dominee* and magistrates, well entertained. *Aepjen* refused to part until 'they saw the barrels and brandy bottles empty,' and Van Slichtenhorst even had to go and get some more barrels of beer from Gysbert, *de weert* (the tavern keeper).<sup>27</sup> At the sales of Catskil and Claverack things proceeded in a similar way: Everything had to be eaten and drunk, and extra provisions were even fetched for presents on the Indians' return journey, so that 'the end would also be good.'<sup>28</sup> During the sale of Claverack, fifty Indians stayed in the patroon's house for three days. In the end, Van Slichtenhorst wrote, he had 'great trouble with all the Indian people, and great filthiness and stench of it, and everything at hand had been stolen, because one could not keep an eye on such a large crowd.'<sup>29</sup>

The colonists would soon find out that, even after the sale, ceremonial matters had not been concluded at all. If they wanted to claim the land theirs, they had to occupy it. When Van Slichtenhorst and Andries de Vos later went to inspect the water courses and the situation of the land, they felt compelled to again give presents and to entertain the Indians who were on the land – which, according to Van Slichtenhorst, ran up to a good sum.<sup>30</sup>

Van Slichtenhorst's accounts reveal the difference in the ideas about property and land use held by Europeans and natives. The Dutch applied their own concept of land ownership, in which they recognized the Indians as the native and rightful proprietors of the land. They approached the Indians in order to bargain with them about a possible exchange of land for payment and, when it seemed that they had reached an agreement, they prepared for the official ceremony of the sale. Official papers and purchase letters were prepared, witnesses and translators hired,

the sellers invited, and the payment – often in the form of textiles, gunpowder, axes, and knives – was made ready. From their perspective, the Dutch did it all according to the rules.<sup>31</sup> While at the end, for the Dutch, a sale was final, and meant that they now possessed the land, the Indians were hardly familiar with this European idea of land ownership. They thought of land in terms of *usufruct*, whereby some form of social unit – a clan, for instance, or a family, or lineage – held a right to use the land undisturbed; and as long as they did so, others recognized this right. People could lay claim not on the land itself, but on the things that were on the land during the various seasons of the year.<sup>32</sup> If the new owners did not occupy the land, they did not use it – and the Indians thought they could remain there and live on the land. Thus, it should not be surprising that one piece of land was sold twice. Land purchased by the Dutch of Papsickene in 1637, for example, was not occupied by the Dutch – and in the 1660s, it was sold again by Papsickene's heirs. For the same reason, *Aepjen* and his family received goods in 1661 for land north of Bethlehem, which thirty years before had been included in the sale to Van Rensselaer.<sup>33</sup> To the Indians, the sale meant that they were allowing the Dutch to use the land, and along with that came the ceremonial exchange of gifts. Dutch concepts about the contents of the sale were unfamiliar to the Indians, while the interpretation, behavior and intentions of the Indians were largely unknown to the Dutch. But as both parties recognized enough of their own customs and rituals in the whole event, they felt confident that they had reached the point where everyone, buyers and sellers, could put their signature or mark on the contract paper to seal the occasion of the sale.<sup>34</sup>

Although it does not seem that Van Slichtenhorst understood the ways of life of the Indians, such as their matrilinear clan structure, their ceremonies, and their ideas on land use rather than land possession, he did learn something from these transactions. He warned that if the Dutch did not immediately occupy the land after the purchase, they would have to give presents every time they came there; and furthermore, the English were waiting for their chance to claim the land. Therefore he strongly suggested that the Dutch would not buy any more land from the Indians until there were enough settlers to populate the said land; otherwise, 'the daily costs will exceed the buying price itself!'<sup>35</sup>

#### *Van Slichtenhorst and the Maquaes*

These reports and land transactions reveal the complexity of dealing with different land policies. The Maquaes, who after 1628 remained in their own villages further to the west, had allowed those Mahicans who had not fled to use the land.<sup>36</sup> But although it was from the Mahicans that the Dutch bought land, the Maquaes were quick to say that the 'Christians possessed the land that they had conquered from the Mahicans by the sword.'<sup>37</sup> Later, starting with the selling of land at Schenectady in 1661, the Maquaes on occasion sold land that previously had been owned by the Mahicans, but which, after conquest, they considered to belong to them.<sup>38</sup>

It also seems clear that the Maquaes considered that the Dutch lived on their

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 den 14 Moij a. 1664:

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In commissie des Raads sijt is  
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J. H. van Baer  
 Jan Lofker  
 Jan Darette  
 La Montagne

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8. Marks and signatures of Mahican sellers and Dutch buyers under property transactions.



land, when they obtained their annual tribute from the subjected nations situated about forty miles surrounding them and the patroonship. These nations were obligated to join the Maquaes in their war against the French Christians and Indians in Canada, 'with whom they have carried on a very cruel and inhuman war' between 1648 and 1651. The colony was situated in the middle, and the patroon's house was the meeting place of the field commanders; subjected nations were summoned to appear there. Indian passages took place from spring to fall, with one group arriving when the other left. The natives could or would not stay in Fort Orange, or in the three houses to the north of it, but the West India Company would send them, and their sick and wounded, to the patroon's house, where the front, middle, and rear house and the courtyard then filled with Indians. The chiefs were bold enough to take food and drink until it was finished. Once, according to Van Slichtenhorst, they killed two large hogs and ate them, leaving him only the heads. After being entertained for some days, the Indians even demanded corn, beans, peas, an axe, a breech-cloth, a pair of stockings, an awl, and other items. 'And if we were slow about it,' he stated, 'they claimed that they also had to fight for us Christians, and that we should supply them with every weapon: guns, powder, lead, and every other necessity, as the French do for their Indians.' They 'allowed the Christians to live there, because they should convenience them with everything, and otherwise the Christians might just as well cross the great water again.'<sup>39</sup> If the colonists did not do what the Maquaes wished, they threatened to kill the animals. Younger Indians (*loopwilden en kaephaenen*), especially, caused trouble in Rensselaerswijck; they walked around daily, saying: 'Give us bacon and meat; otherwise we will kill your cattle and hogs.'<sup>40</sup>

Tensions existed among the Indians as well as among the colonists, and special meetings were organized during a good part of August 1648 to address some of the issues. At the beginning of the month, eighteen sachems of three castles, along with their women and children, came and were given pieces of cloth, lead, and gunpowder to maintain the old friendships, and to ensure that their Indians would not kill any more horses, cattle, and hogs. Thereupon, Maquaes and other Iroquois from twenty-one castles, from as far as fifty or sixty miles, gathered and lodged for six days with their entourages in the patroon's house, according to Van Slichtenhorst. All Indians were called together, he wrote, and publicly – first in the house, and the following day on the hill – 'we called out for all of them that they should not kill any more cattle, horses and hogs of their brothers the Christians, and that they should maintain good peace and agreement with the Dutch.'<sup>41</sup>

After having suffered a big defeat at the 'great lake,' in which they lost some 500 or 600 people (most of their first two castles), the Maquaes began attacking the French again, and at various times brought them great damage. The Dutch paid large sums in ransom in order to keep some French captives alive. The settlers lived in fear because of all the great Indian meetings; and like the Maquaes, they feared a French attack, according to Van Slichtenhorst. The sachems of the first castle demanded, in the beginning of July 1649, that two Dutchmen come along to their castle with two horses to transport palisades. The Dutch were barely given time to think about it, as the Indians immediately threatened that, upon a negative

response, they would kill the horses and cattle, take the two men with their horses by force, and kill the rest. The Maquaes were so afraid of a French attack that all male and female Indians left their land and houses at night and fled into the patroon's house. 'So that one can honestly say,' Van Slichtenhorst stated, 'that the first three years in the colony we have not been free of Indians for half a day.'<sup>42</sup>

Within five years, the friendship and brotherhood that had been established in 1643 seems to have grown into a relationship in which the Indians dominated the area.<sup>43</sup> The colonists may have caused some of the problems themselves, as many went into the woods to obtain furs, delivered notes, and sent brokers – all of which caused much mischief and discord. These activities should be stopped, the court judged, but that could only be done properly with the consent of 'those of Fort Orange.'<sup>44</sup> The Indians became so obtrusive that Rensselaerswijck's court and the commissary of the fort, under pressure, even granted permission to the Indian *Den Uyl* (the owl), or Stichtigeri, to erect a small house north of Fort Orange.<sup>45</sup> 'The insecurity of our lives and property oppresses us continually, living as we do under the unrestrained domination of inhuman people and cruel heathen,' Van Slichtenhorst reported, describing the colony's situation in September 1650, when rumors of a war with the Maquaes were circulating. Hope for a solution was placed in Arent van Curler, Gerrit Wencom, Cornelis Theunisz van Breuckelen, Thomas Chambers, and Volckert Hansz, who were willing to go with a gift to the Maquaes' territory, in order to renew the former alliance and bond of good friendship. When requested to do this, they also asked Jan Labatie, who lived in Fort Orange, and who was reasonably experienced in using the Maquaes' language. However, Labatie – who in the 1630s had frequently travelled into the Maquaes' territory – said that he would not accompany them for anything in the world, and that it did not make much difference to those in the fort whether it was war or peace.<sup>46</sup> No report of the journey seems to have survived, and it is not clear what happened. It is not listed in Van Slichtenhorst's court case as an expense, so perhaps they did not go. The feared war did not take place and, in November 1650, Rensselaerswijck's court gave its consent to Jan Labatie to buy the house from *Den Uyl* (who had become a great nuisance to the colony, as well as to the fort), on condition that a proper recognition to the patroon and co-directors of the colony be paid to the directors.<sup>47</sup> Van Slichtenhorst's accounts offer a unique insight into just how frequent and strong the native presence had become in the settlement – which, in the meantime, was growing steadily. In the following section, we will step back a few years and take a look at how Rensselaerswijck's center was planned.

## Planning a center for Rensselaerswijck

### *Value of maps*

Soon after he had bought land from the Indians, patroon Kiliaen van Rensselaer had a West India Company mapmaker draw a map of his domain. Maps offered power to individuals who possessed land elsewhere: With the help of a map, they

could plan and lay out faraway areas, and make decisions about that land.<sup>48</sup> The new map allowed Van Rensselaer, from his house on the Keizersgracht in Amsterdam, to control an area located more than 3,000 miles away, as he could now plot out his colony. He was able to place names on his map, and to plan farms and mills at certain locations; he could indicate exactly where he wanted the colonists to live, and to create a center for the patroonship.

From the very beginning, he had planned to establish this center on the river's east side. He sent instructions and mapped-out plans to his agent in the domain, along with lengthy instructions. It was, for example, his 'definite intention that the church be put opposite Castle Island, north of the small grove and south of the farm of Gerrit de Reux, deceased, not far from the grove on a small hill near or on the bank on the east side of the river,' he stated in August 1639, in a letter to his agent Arent van Curler. 'Near the church ought to be built a dwelling for the minister and one for the sexton and this at the least expense,' he wrote, and he ordered Van Curler to inquire how much the carpenters would charge for these three buildings, with a palisade around the churchyard. 'I should also be pleased, and it would be advantageous to the people, if some of the mechanics and others would build their houses around the church, as for instance Reyer Stoffelsz Smith, who would be nearer to the farms there than anywhere else; also the wheelwright, the carpenter and such like, but as they are freemen, I can not command them.'<sup>49</sup>

By May 14, 1642, the patroon had worked out his plan further. Hendrick Albertsz would become ferryman and build his house near the *Beverskil*, in order to 'ferry the people from there to the church neighborhood and back, as the church, the house of the minister, that of the officer and further of all the mechanics must hereafter be built there, just as Abraham Staes and Evert Pels, beerbrewer, have agreed to settle there, for I do not in any way wish or consent that, with the exception of the farmers and tobacco planters who must have their houses near their farms or plantations, any people following other trades shall hereafter and on the expiration of their years of service settle anywhere but the church neighborhood, according to the accompanying order and plan, for if everyone lived where he saw fit they would be too far separated from one another and in case of sudden attack be in peril of their lives, as sad experience near the Manhatens has taught.'<sup>50</sup> A month later he would repeat the same instructions in a memorandum for *dominee* Megapolensis: The church neighborhood should be 'to the south of *De Laetsburgh*, placing the center thereof at the place on the river where inland the swamp is deepest and so may serve as defense in times of need, as Abraham Staes knows; and all houses must be located there as indicated on the accompanying small map.'<sup>51</sup>

Van Rensselaer never changed his mind about the location of the colony center; the last time he made mention of it was half a year before his death, when he wrote Van Curler that he had changed his mind about the church construction. He wanted a suitable building to be erected that could first be used for preaching, and later on be turned into a dwelling house. The location had to remain 'as directed and this dwelling must be placed with the others in proper order. Next to the house of *dominee* Megapolensis would not be unsuitable and later it could be used as a school.'<sup>52</sup>

The patroon may have been so persistent about this location because he wanted to avoid any possible problems with the West India Company. With the center of Rensselaerswijck at the opposite side of the river from Fort Orange, the members of the community would be less tempted to become involved in the fur trade; but in dangerous times, they would still have access to the safety of the fort. At the same time, they could provide the twenty-five men occupying the fort with grain, and other agricultural and necessary products, from their mills, farms, breweries and distilleries. Van Rensselaer estimated that his colony, in this way, could draw some *f*2500 a year, and therewith pay the laborers' wages.<sup>53</sup> Since the very beginning of the colony, he had made great efforts to maintain a good relationship with the company, and this had proven to have a positive effect. Bastiaen Jansz Krol, commander of Fort Orange, had helped with the acquisition of the first two tracts of land from the Mahicans. During the years of anti-patroon policy from within the company's board, his nephew Wouter van Twiller, then director general of New Netherland, had assisted him in many ways – for instance, with buying cattle for him whenever possible and sending it up to Rensselaerswijck.<sup>54</sup> With Willem Kieft, who succeeded Van Twiller in 1638, the patroon had maintained correspondence and, to maintain a good relationship, presented him with some gifts.<sup>55</sup> Just how important this relationship was to Van Rensselaer he clearly expressed after being informed of an incident involving the lowering of the patroon's flag by Fort Orange officials. '... Believe me, Sir,' he wrote Kieft in May 1640, 'the success of my colony depends mainly on the good relations between your honor and myself and it is far from my purpose intentionally or knowingly to hurt the Company in the least in their power or revenue. If my people speak any foolish words, it is by reason of their weakness and not of my orders.'<sup>56</sup>

Van Rensselaer was well aware of the West India Company's power and he did not wish to steal away its fur trade, but seriously intended to focus on agriculture.<sup>57</sup> After the company had given up its monopoly of the fur trade, in 1640, he was certainly interested in having a share in it, but only second to the company. To Arent van Curler he stated that he could not forbid the company, but only private individuals, the right to trade in his colony. 'Of substitution of private individuals for the Company there can be no question, for next to the Company, I come.'<sup>58</sup> Van Rensselaer needed good relations with the company for himself; when his farmers were disobedient to his orders, it was important that he could threaten them with interference by the militia commander of the West India Company, Hendrick van Dijck, who promised to help him suppress them.<sup>59</sup> The location of the patroon's trading house, at the edge of the moat around Fort Orange, may be proof of these good relations as well. No indications have yet been found as to exactly when it was built; but the trading house seems at least to have been there soon after the trade was opened up.<sup>60</sup> In 1640-41, Arent van Curler was able to have a house built for the patroon, just a little north of this trading house and the fort, which also suggests that patroonship and company were then maintaining positive relations. On various occasions, they actually seem to have cooperated – as in 1643, for example, when Van Curler, Jacob Jansz, and Jan Labatie of Fort Orange went together to visit the Maquaes.<sup>61</sup>

Some incidents indicate that, after 1644, contact between the West India Company and the patroonship turned downhill; and, especially after Van Slichtenhorst's arrival, relations changed dramatically.<sup>62</sup> New Netherland's new director general, Petrus Stuyvesant, arrived on May 11, 1647 in New Amsterdam; meanwhile, Jan van Wely and Wouter van Twiller (who had been recalled as New Netherland's director ten years earlier) as guardians of the young patroon, in November 1646 hired Brant van Slichtenhorst and changed the policy regarding the location of the patroonship's center.<sup>63</sup> After Van Slichtenhorst arrived, the building of a *bijeenwoning* close to the fort would become a major disagreement between patroon and company. It seems clear that, by 1647, the guardians of the young patroon had changed Kiliaen van Rensselaer's original plan, and that they had instructed Van Slichtenhorst to establish the *bijeenwoning* on the west side of the river, north of Fort Orange.

It is likely that Van Curler, who between 1645 and 1647 was in the fatherland, provided the guardians and Van Slichtenhorst with information during his stay. Being related (and, both he and Van Twiller were from Nijkerk and had experience in New Netherland), it is unthinkable that they would not have discussed the colony at large. Van Twiller had left New Netherland in 1638, while Van Curler had arrived in Rensselaerswijck at that time. Conditions had changed remarkably since then: The fur trade had opened up to everyone, and to the south a series of wars between the West India Company and the River Indians had produced a sense of insecurity among the colonists. Van Curler may have suggested building the center of the colony closer to the fort, instead of on the river's east side – an idea he may have shared with Cornelis Theunisz van Slijck, who, according to Kiliaen van Rensselaer in 1639, seems to have preferred that location. Perhaps more colonists felt this way.<sup>64</sup> Van Curler must have been well aware of the colonists' feelings; besides, he does not seem to have experienced bad relations between the inhabitants of the colony and those of the fort. Therefore, he would not have expected problems between the two. He may also have seen good possibilities in diverting the trade of those Indians who were then trading with French Indians to the patroon, as Kiliaen van Rensselaer already had considered doing in 1641.<sup>65</sup>

Often, Van Slichtenhorst is the individual blamed for changing the location of Rensselaerswijck's center to the west side of the river – a move that, in time, would cause great damage to the patroonship.<sup>66</sup> When we look at some of the correspondence, however, it becomes clear that Van Twiller and Van Wely had sent him to the New World with a brand-new design and map for the future *bijeenwoning*, and that they had given him instructions to implement a plan that differed considerably from Kiliaen van Rensselaer's original ideas. On October 20, 1648, Van Slichtenhorst wrote to Stuyvesant and the council that 'he would have most cheerfully exhibited, and is still willing to show to his Honor and his councillors not only his commission and orders, but even the plan of the settlement itself.'<sup>67</sup> The patroon and co-directors may have been referring to the same plan, or perhaps a revised version, when they wrote to Van Slichtenhorst, in March 1651, that nobody should settle himself in the *bijeenwoning* 'who has not previously ac-

cepted and subscribed, in the presence of the commissioners and secretary, the contract entered into with Andries Herpers [an influential inhabitant of the community] and others, and that the same *bijeenwoning*e shall be developed in accordance with the plan sent over therefor.<sup>68</sup>

Unfortunately, no other correspondence, nor a copy of this map of the *bijeenwoning*e, have been found. So we are left with many questions. Who designed the plan – Van Twiller and Van Curler? And what were their purposes in erecting a center so close to the fort? Was their idea to establish a village? Or a town, perhaps, in the long run? Did they look at plans of other colonial settlements, and were they influenced by ideas about city designs of, for example, Simon Stevin's? Did they look at New Amsterdam's lay-out? What did the plan look like, and was it used in the later development of the village of Beverwijk? Only limited information of the planned lay-out of the *bijeenwoning*e has survived. Loss and fires have left their marks. An entry in the Rensselaerswijck court minutes may illustrate the difficulty of putting all information together: The planned location for a poor house had changed, but exactly at the place where the new location is written, the manuscript has been damaged by fire in such a way that the remainder of the page is unreadable.<sup>69</sup>

### *Building a bijeenwoning*e

Immediately after his arrival Van Slichtenhorst, armed with a new map, started issuing building permits; and, by August, the *bijeenwoning*e had already expanded from three to eight houses.<sup>70</sup> On July 23, Stuyvesant warned that the buildings had weakened the fort, and he requested the patroonship to refrain from building within a cannon-shot from the fort.<sup>71</sup> Stuyvesant, who had spent several years on Curaçao, likely had the general rules and standards for a fort in mind.<sup>72</sup> Many Dutch forts were built with similar strategies. At Fort *de Goede Hoop* (Good Hope) at Cape Town, South Africa, for example, a building line was drawn all around the fort, and it was forbidden to erect structures within fifty rods of the fort because they blocked the view in the direct vicinity of the fort, and obstructed the field of the cannon. Only small gardens were allowed. Ron van Oers, who has studied Dutch town planning overseas during the East and West India Company eras, found that in nearly all Dutch settlements this open field of fire could be seen between the town and the fort. Often this space functioned as parade ground or a formal square, while it played a dominant role in the city plan.<sup>73</sup>

Van Slichtenhorst, however, protested against Stuyvesant's warning; the patroon's trading house, according to him, had stood undisturbed on the border of the moat of Fort Orange for several years, and that very ground (and all land around the fort) had for many years belonged to the patroon.<sup>74</sup> In August, Carel van Brugge, then commissary of Fort Orange, reported that Van Slichtenhorst had proceeded with the building of new houses; and on September 4, Stuyvesant ordered that the houses be pulled down. If Van Slichtenhorst were to offer opposition, additional men would be sent from Manhattan. The patroonship's director ordered the continuation of the building and, on September 14, publicly leased six

more lots.<sup>75</sup> Four to six soldiers were then sent to the commissary, 'for the assistance and the better execution of his orders to demolish the house with the smallest loss to the owners.'<sup>76</sup> On October 20, Van Slichtenhorst protested that Carel van Brugge and Mr. Labatie, assisted by an armed soldier, had come unexpectedly into the patroon's house, declaring that some soldiers and sailors had been sent by Stuyvesant to demolish and pull down the house and building of Jan Thomasz and Rem Jansz, the smith, which house, according to him, was beyond a musket shot or 550 paces, and even out of sight of Fort Orange. Van Slichtenhorst thought it strange that, even though a hostile attack would come principally from the west, the patroon's woods to the west, southwest and northwest of the fort were not being meddled with; and he also found it odd that Stuyvesant had tolerated a number of streets full of buildings within thirty paces of the fort at Manhattan, and that he had not first applied a remedy there.<sup>77</sup> Van Slichtenhorst kept offering good deals for building in the *bijeenwoning*. The tailor Jan Verbeeck, for instance, could pay his debt to the patroon in five installments of *f*150 a year; and if he were to build on the west shore, he would for the first year be free from paying rent.<sup>78</sup> On October 31, Stuyvesant ordered Van Slichtenhorst to appear before him and the council on the first court day of April; and, in November, he authorized Van Brugge to maintain the West India Company's high jurisdiction and the use of the gardens and lands situated under the fort, unless he was ordered differently. Finally, Stuyvesant ordered the removal of the houses that were 'blinding and blockading the Company's fortress,' and which had been built within musket or small cannon shot range.<sup>79</sup> Stuyvesant's orders did not stop Van Slichtenhorst from pursuing his goal, however, and when Stuyvesant sent seven soldiers and five boatswains to tear down the houses, Van Slichtenhorst's son Gerrit, in the position of lieutenant, stood guard night and day and helped to prevent the demolition.<sup>80</sup> Van Slichtenhorst continued to distribute lots to construct the *bijeenwoning* – promising Rutger Jacobsz in December 1649, for instance, that he would suffer no damage or loss for building on the first kill.<sup>81</sup>

Also matters of common interest were located within the *bijeenwoning*. Religious services were now definitely held on the river's west side.<sup>82</sup> During Van Curler's administration, the patroon's storehouse (*packhuys*) had already been used for this purpose.<sup>83</sup> Between 1646 and 1648, Willem Fredericksz Bout had made a pulpit, a sounding board, a seat for the magistrates and one for the deacons, a window with two lights, a rail near the pulpit, with a corner seat, and nine benches. From a petition by Anthonie de Hooges in March 1648, we learn that the place where religious services were held had changed. He had to build a new house, he wrote, as the patroon's storehouse, which was assigned to him, had been changed into a church.<sup>84</sup> In the same year, Abraham Pietersz Vosburgh started to do some work on the patroon's house. In addition to major repairs and adjustments on the building itself, such as making two windows above in the church and a few doors underneath it, he made a table with two saw horses on which the Holy Communion was distributed. Evert Duykinck made new windows and repaired some old ones; he would be happy to make some stain glass windows as well, he wrote, and if Slichtenhorst so wished, he could just send off the coat of arms or the

house marks (*wapens ofte marken*).<sup>85</sup> By 1649, the old storehouse seems to have been torn down and the services, from then on, were held in the rear part of the renovated patroon's house.<sup>86</sup> The church building on which, in 1650, a 'convenient staircase' was made, then, was probably the expensive house that Arent van Curler had built in 1640-41, and where he, and later Brant Aertsz van Slichtenhorst and the brothers van Rensselaer, lived.<sup>87</sup> (See illustration 42-44).

Attention was also paid to education. In 1648, Evert Nolden received permission to establish himself as a school master, and in September 1650 Arent van Curler and Goosen Gerritsz were appointed trustees of a fund for the building of a school.<sup>88</sup> It seems that teaching, as in many places in the fatherland, was done in the teacher's house, as nowhere it is mentioned that they succeeded in this building project. But since a community had a responsibility to support its more unfortunate settlers as well, a lot was designated for the poor in January 1651. Perhaps the settlers thought that, as long as there were not yet that many poor, teaching could be done in the poorhouse that would be built there.<sup>89</sup>

In January 1650, it was decided that attention should be paid to the maintenance of public roads, to reduce the inconvenience and danger to the inhabitants. A bridge with railings, and benches to sit on, needed to be built across the first kill in the *bijeenwoning*. There also needed to be a bridge across the third kill, one with railings across the Beaver kill and, furthermore, a wagon bridge at the rear. Two years later, Steven Jansz was paid by Van Slichtenhorst for building a bridge in the *Fuyck* (the area defined by the eastern part of present-day State Street and Broadway) and one across the Beaver kill in 1651 and 1652.<sup>90</sup>

It is interesting that Van Slichtenhorst usually referred to the settlement as the *bijeenwoning*, the 'living-together,' and not as *het dorp*, or 'the village.' If a name can be taken literally, the fact that, in August 1648, Nicolaes Coorn was granted permission to build a city tavern (*stadsberbergh*), at a place to be assigned, could indicate that the patroon was thinking in terms of a town, rather than a village. City taverns also existed in the fatherland and in other colonial town-like settlements: There was one in Manhattan, and both the fort at Colombo and the old town near this fort had one as well.<sup>91</sup> Like other city taverns, Coorn was not granted the exclusive right to operate a tap; at least four other people were allowed to serve liquor as well.<sup>92</sup> The intention may have been that the place would function in the community as a privileged and official meeting place that also would lodge important persons.

#### *Company versus patroon: Escalation of the conflict*

Van Slichtenhorst ignored Stuyvesant's order to appear before the council of New Netherland in April 1649; but when, in the spring of 1651, he was summoned again to Manhattan to explain his actions (he had torn down a posted West India Company ordinance concerning excise taxes), he went. Soon after his arrival in Manhattan he was thrown in jail; but in September he escaped, and was able to get a boat ride back.<sup>93</sup> During the rest of 1651 and the beginning of 1652, Van Slichtenhorst proceeded to grant new building lots within the dis-



puted area around the fort.<sup>94</sup> In this tense situation, forty-five persons took the oath of loyalty to the patroon on the November 28, 1651.<sup>95</sup> Even when (as we saw earlier), at the turn of the year, it was so clear that the situation had become intolerable, Van Slichtenhorst kept defending the patroon's rights. On February 5, Fort Orange's new commissary, Johannes Dijckman, requested that some company ordinances be posted in Rensselaerswijck; but Van Slichtenhorst answered, 'In no way, as long as I have a drop of blood in my body, unless you show me first an authorization from their High Mightinesses or our honorable masters.'<sup>96</sup>

All this time, Stuyvesant had been directing his attention to a confrontation with the Swedish colony in the southern area of New Netherland at the Delaware River, and to negotiations of an eastern boundary with New England. But when, in 1652, the treaty of Hartford had been concluded with New England, and Fort Casimir had been built on the Delaware to guard against further encroachments by the Swedes, he would turn his attention to Rensselaerswijck. On March 5, the council passed an ordinance proclaiming the West India Company's jurisdiction around the fort and ordering the erection of boundary posts.<sup>97</sup> When Van Slichtenhorst refused to publish the proclamation and tore it off the walls of the patroon's house and Gysbert Cornelisz' tavern, Dijckman responded by visiting the director with eight armed soldiers.<sup>98</sup> He hauled down the patroon's flag, rang the bell, and proclaimed the establishment of the court of Fort Orange and village of Beverwijck. Van Slichtenhorst was taken out of his house by the soldiers and, guarded by four soldiers, sent in the company sloop to Manhattan, where he spent the next sixteen months under detention (during which time his term of office would expire).<sup>99</sup>

On April 4, the directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the West India Company had sent instructions to proceed against Van Slichtenhorst, in essence giving Stuyvesant a mandate to uphold the sovereignty of the fort, including the area within 3,000 feet of its perimeter. They had heard that the owners of Rensselaerswijck had agreed that Van Slichtenhorst would soon be replaced.<sup>100</sup> Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, the patroon's oldest brother, had been sent to check on the situation in the patroonship in 1651 and, while Van Slichtenhorst was in jail, he replaced him as director. A letter from May 8 stated that the patroon and co-directors had appointed him, and on July 24, 1652 Jan Baptist van Rensselaer took the oath.<sup>101</sup> In September 1652, Van Rensselaer reported that the company had taken the *bijeenwoning*, Catskil and the flags. Dijckman, he wrote, with as many as forty men well provided with guns, had put three boundary markers at each side of the fort at 1,200 steps (or 600 paces), which included all of the *bijeenwoning* and one small farm.<sup>102</sup> 'They have absolved the burghers from their oath to us, which they consider very suspicious, and took their oath and flag and made a court of justice in the fort where everyone should appear who has something to demand of those who live within the boundary posts, as according to them, nobody else as they has something to say there.'<sup>103</sup> The residents of the area within the 3,000-foot jurisdiction around the fort had been ordered to swear allegiance to the company, and were absolved from any obligations to the patroonship.<sup>104</sup> In

one stroke, Rensselaerswijck had lost its major community, where most colonists had built houses and pursued their various trades.

When Van Slichtenhorst's civil arrest at New Amsterdam ended in July 1653, he returned to Rensselaerswijck, where he tried to collect his fines and close his accounts with Jan Baptist van Rensselaer and the commissioners.<sup>105</sup> They were not able to reach an agreement, and once he was back in the Republic he brought a court case against patroon Johannes van Rensselaer in order to receive payment for what he considered the patroon owed him. The case dragged on between 1656 and 1661; but when the patroon died in 1663, Van Slichtenhorst discontinued his action.<sup>106</sup> He would die in 1666, too soon to know of the West India Company's eventual recognition that the patroon was indeed the legal owner of the disputed land, on April 2, 1674. This recognition, however, added the clause that should the province again come under Dutch rule, the recognition would become invalid and the situation would revert to that of 1664.<sup>107</sup>

Although Van Slichtenhorst claimed in his court case that he had built a *bijeenwoning* of about a hundred houses before April 1652, I have been able to trace, in the available source materials, only fifty-two to fifty-four persons who received contracts for lots on the river's west side.<sup>108</sup> In twenty-two of these cases, it was specifically mentioned that their lots were located in the *bijeenwoning*. Another seventeen lots were definitely on the west side, eight of them were to the south of the fort, and eight or nine were between the fort and the first kill. Another thirteen were most likely also on the west side, somewhere between the second kill (along Broadway) in the direction of, and perhaps even north of, the third kill (see Appendix 2). The fact that Jan Baptist van Rensselaer wrote, in November 1652, that the *bijeenwoning* had grown rapidly in a short time and that there were '38 houses standing and four or five were laying half finished,' suggests that Van Slichtenhorst had made quite an overstatement.<sup>109</sup> It seems unlikely that the West India Company would have ordered the soldiers to tear down fifty-seven houses, only to start rebuilding them elsewhere. Elsewhere, in his court case, Van Slichtenhorst would state that his son had helped prevent the demolition of the houses.<sup>110</sup>

While lots were also given out south of Fort Orange, the concentration of buildings where people lived together was north of it. Houses were planned along the two trails that shaped the area, which was frequently called the '*Fuyck*' by the inhabitants, a name that first appears in Rensselaerswijck's court minutes of September 1648.<sup>111</sup> Looking north over a coastal plain from the fort and the patroon's house, one could see a trail that, after crossing the first kill – also called the '*Fuyckenkil*' – split into a trail leading to the north along the river, and another trail that went more toward the west or northwest, parallel to the first kill, over the hill into the woods. The shape of the trails may have resembled that of a *fuyck*, which means 'hoopnet': The narrow part began just north of the fort and, where the trails split, the hoopnet started widening. The Maquaes had used these trails since the early trading days when they came to the settlement to trade their pelts; since 1628, they had stopped by during their journeys to other parts of their territory to collect tribute from the Mahicans. When they came from their settlements in the

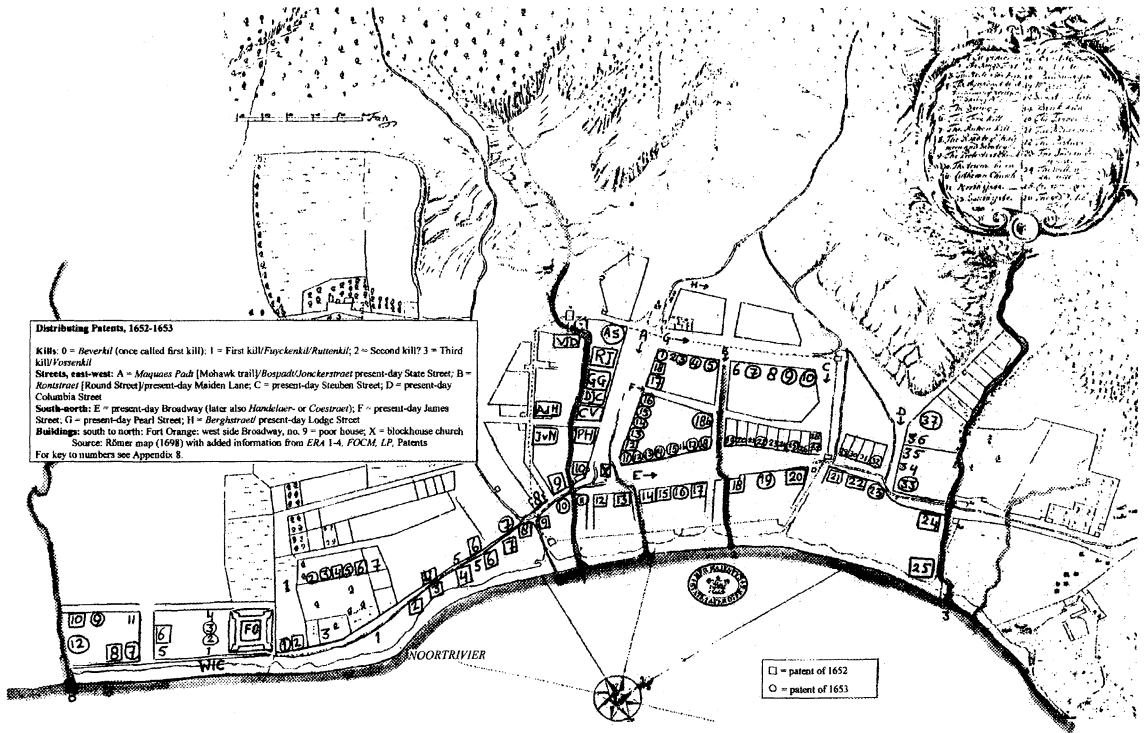
Mohawk Valley, they would canoe with their furs until present-day Duaneburgh. From there, they would continue their journey either with canoes on the Normanskill or on foot, as the high falls at Cohoes blocked further boat traffic down to Fort Orange. The trail leading up along the hill and into the woods was sometimes called the ‘Maquaes *padt*’ (Mohawk trail), and followed the route of present-day State Street as far as Schenectady. The trail northward went along the river where Broadway is now located. The first building lots were allocated along the river, at the mouths of the kills, along the sides of the *Fuyckenkil*, and between this kill and the Maquaes *padt*. By April 1652, several people had asked permission to build between the two kills.<sup>112</sup>

With the loss of the *bijeenwoning*, according to Van Rensselaer, the patroon would suffer at least an annual damage of *f*1500; most of the brewers were in the area now named ‘Beeverswijck,’ and they would no longer give the patroon ‘a tun of money.’ Several refused to pay a penny of the arrears they owed in rents for their lots, saying that Stuyvesant had ordered them to withhold payment.<sup>113</sup> Half a year after Stuyvesant’s action, the loss of Rensselaerswijck’s major community seemed to be an established fact. By then, Stuyvesant had distributed the first patents in the area among the inhabitants of Beverwijck.

## Development of Beverwijck

### *Distributing patents*

As Jan Baptist van Rensselaer had described, a lower court of justice (*kleine Banck van Justitie*) was erected in the fort, which went into effect on April 10.<sup>114</sup> The area around the fort no longer belonged to ‘Van Rensselaer’s wijck,’ but had become ‘Bever wijck,’ emphasizing the central role of the beaver (and not Van Rensselaer) for all inhabitants. The new court immediately continued the building started by Van Slichtenhorst. On April 15, commissary Johannes Dijkman, Volckert Jansz, and Cornelis Theunisz van Westbroeck were appointed a committee to look after the surveying of lots and gardens, and Abraham Staets was requested to assist when possible.<sup>115</sup> The carpenters Dirck Jansz and Abraham Pietersz Vosburgh were chosen and appointed to make a proper survey for several persons who had applied for permission to build on some lots between the two kills.<sup>116</sup> Two days later they took the ‘usual burgher oath’ before the court, and April 23 at least thirty-two to forty-two persons received patents for lots for gardens and houses distributed by Petrus Stuyvesant; twenty-six of those individuals had previously received lots from Van Slichtenhorst.<sup>117</sup> On October 22, 1653, the carpenter Harmen Bastiaensz also took the oath as surveyor (*rooymeester*, a term for a job, typical for an urban area), and three days later a second batch of patents for house- or garden lots was distributed among at least forty-nine, possibly sixty persons.<sup>118</sup> Of these, six to eight people had already received patents in 1652; and now they were given additional land, often to be used for a garden. Thus, by the end of 1653, seventy-four to possibly ninety-three individuals had received patents for lots,



9. Distribution of 1652 and 1653 patents, filled in on Römer map.

and at least forty-five of them had built or contracted for lots on the west side of the river prior to Stuyvesant's action. (See illustration 9 and 56). They were probably included in the 230 men able to bear arms, who were mentioned by Jan Baptist van Rensselaer in June 1653.<sup>119</sup> Also, during the following years various patents were distributed. In September 1654 there were daily calls for lots, and the court asked Stuyvesant and the council for places where new lots could be given out, as there were no more left.<sup>120</sup> Lots were never again distributed in such large numbers as in the years 1652 and 1653, but between 1654 and 1661 at least thirty-four, possibly fifty-six people were given additional lots.

TABLE 1.1: Number of people receiving patents<sup>121</sup>

	Certainly	Likely	Had earlier a patent
1652	32	42	
1653	49	60	6-8
1654	8	20	3
1655	4	8	4
1656	2	7	1
1657	2	2	1
1658	7	7	2
1659	5	6	3
1660	4	4	3
1661	2	2	1