
EARLY DUTCH SETTLERS OF MONMOUTH COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

GEORGE C. BEEKMAN

MOREAU BROS., PUBLISHERS, FREEHOLD, N. J.

Second Edition Printed, 1915.

=====

JAN GYSBERTSEN METRN AND HIS FAMILY.

Kreijn, son of Jan Gysbertsen Metr as he spelled and wrote his name, was born in Bommel, in the Netherlands March 10, 1650. When a boy of 13 years, or in 1663, he came over with his father to New Amsterdam. Although the father wrote his name as spelled above, yet in old records of Kings County. L. I., and on the records of the First Dutch church of Monmouth and in our county clerk's office, the name is spelled VanMetra, VanMetere. VanMetteren and in several other ways. Jan Guysbertsen. The father, seems to have been better off financially than most of the Holland emigrants. We find him comfortably settled at New Utrecht, L I. and one of the magistrates of that town in 1673. He was a deacon in the Dutch church in 1683. It has been thought by some writers that he was of the same family as Jacob VanMeteren of Antwerp, who caused the first complete edition the Bible to be printed in the English language. This book was printed at Zurich in 1536, and was a great and expensive work. It is thought that VanMeteren made the translations himself, but employed an English scholar named Miles Coverdale to supervise the printing, in order to guard against errors in the translation. Through VanMeteren the English people had access to the Scriptures in their native tongue. They have, however, never exhibited any gratitude, and gave VanMeteren but scant credit for this costly and beneficial work.

Kreijn Janse VanMater is mentioned as a resident of New Utrecht, and among those who took the oath of allegiance to the English government in 1687; the length of his residence in America is then stated as 24 years. (Vol. I, O'Call. Doc. Hist. of N. Y., p. 660-1.) In a census of Kings County taken in 1698, his name is spelled "Cryn Jansen" and he still resides at New Utrecht and has a family of four children. (Vol. III, O'Call. Doc. Hist. of N. Y., p. 135-6.)

There is a tradition in the VanMater family that "Jan Guysbertsen Metr," the father, refused to take the oath of allegiance in 1687, and soon after went back to his native land. That he had urged his son very strongly to accompany him, but that he refused, on account of his great horror of sea sickness, having suffered intensely on his first voyage over. I think, however, that his great love for blue-eyed, flaxen-haired and pretty Nelly Van Cleef was stronger than his love for the motherland. He had married at New Utrecht, September 9, 1683, Neeltje (Eleanor), daughter of Jan VanCleef and a resident of the same town.

Jan VanCleef came from Holland in 1653 and settled at New Utrecht in 1659. His wife was Engeltje, a daughter of Laurens Pieteron. Neeltje, or Nelly, was born at New Utrecht January 1, 1663, the very year her future husband was tossing on the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. She had a brother Benjamin, baptized in the Dutch church at New Utrecht in November, 1683. He married Hendrika VanSutphen and removed to Monmouth County. He and his wife are communicants in the First Dutch church of Monmouth in 1711 and 1719, but her name is spelled on the records as "Hank Sutphin."

Kreijn VanMater and Neeltje Van Cleef, his wife, are named among the first members and organizers of the Dutch church of Monmouth. His name is first entered on the church records as "Kiriin Jansen" and in 1716 when Elder as "Kriin VanMetra." He purchased a large tract of land in what are now (1899) Homdel and Atlantic townships. His first dwelling, a log cabin, was erected on the farm where William Jones now resides in Atlantic township. The old family burying ground is on this farm, and in it many of the past generations of VanMaters are interred. This farm is but a small part of the original tract. Kreijn died March 10, 1720, and his wife January 1, 1747. Both are buried side by side in this graveyard, with tombstones giving their names and dates of death. His age is stated about 75 years and her age about 84 yeears. Nelly, his widow, survived him 27 years and was faithful to his memory. She is said to have been a very handsome and attractive woman, and had several offers of marriage, but none of them would she accept. She never tired of talking about Kreijn and of telling what he said and did, for in all the world there was no such man, she thought. An English visitor on one occasion thoughtlessly remarked in her presence that "Kreijn" was a "queer, harsh name." "Nodings queer," exclaimed the old lady in her broken English, which became more so when she was excited. "Kreijn von goodt name, gooter as effer vas. Just like de singing of de birdts, ven der sprink veather comes, and der coldt vinter go away." So she ever dwelt fondly on the husband of her youth until the summons came for her. She died in peace with a smile on her lips, for at last she would meet her Kreijn in the "land of the leal," never again to part. The old generations of the Van Maters were noted for their faithful attachments to wife, children and kinsmen. They labored and planned, as their wills show, to provide comfortable homes and maintain and guard against misfortune, those near to them by ties of blood.

Kreijn Janse VanMater and Neeltje VanCleeef had the following children:

- (1) Jan, b. April 26, 1687, died young.
- (2) John, b. April 17, 1688, at New Utrecht. L.I.; m. October 17, 1718, Ida, daughter of Ryck Hendrickse VanSuydam ; d. January 10, 1761, in Monmouth county. He was a communicant in our Dutch church in 1713, and his wife in 1731. (*In Book H of Deeds, p. 211. etc., Monmouth clerk's office, is recorded a conveyance from Ryk Hendrickse Suydam of Flatlands, Kings County. Island of Nassau, to John Van Meeteren (VanMater) of Middletown Township, for a tract of land in Middletown Township "bounded west by Dominicus Vanderveer, east by Auken Leffertsen, south by Swimming River, and north by heirs of Quryrn VanMeeteren. (Kreijn VanMater), and known as No. 4 containing 152 acres and thirteen fifty-sixths parts of an acre, being the seventh part of a tract said Suydam with others bought of Col. Lewis Morris.*) [Error: That he died "in Monmouth County" is uncertain. He is said to have been an Indian trader in the Shenandoah Valley, VA]
- (3) Ydtje.(Ida) b. August 24, 1691, m. Jan, a son of Adrian Bennett and Barbery, his wife. Communicants in Dutch church in 1731. She died September 13, 1774. They had the following and perhaps other children: (In all baptisms hereafter spoken of in these articles, if no church is named it is to be understood that the dates are taken from the records of the First Dutch church of Monmouth). A child unnamed, baptised January 14, 1724: Krynjans. bap. February 27, 1726; Neeltje, b. November 29, 1728: m. June 28, 1750, John, youngest son of Jan Schanck and Sara Couwenhoven, his wife, of Pleasant Valley, and died June 1, 1810. Her husband, John Schanck was born June 22, 1722; d. December 24, 1808. Their children have been mentioned in a former article on the Schencks.
- (4) Gysbert. (Gilbert) b. February 24, 1694: m. Maijke, (Micha) daughter of Daniel Hendrickson and Kaatje VanDyke, his wife. He was a communicant in our Dutch church in 1721, and she in 1740, when her sister, Francyntje, wife of Tunis DeNeis, (Denise) also joined the church. Gilbert VanMater owned and lived on the farm where Gideon C. MacDowell now resides near Old Scots burying ground in the township of Marlboro, but formerly a part of Freehold Township. I do not know where he died or where he is

buried. (*Book H of Deeds, p. 41 etc., contains record of a deed from Charles Hubs to Guysbert VanMetra and Benjamin VanMetra of Middletown township, dated April 19, 1727, consideration £365 for a tract of 148-1/2 acres in Freehold township: bounded southerly by Van Cleef's land, northerly by lands formerly Thomas Combs, northerly and easterly by other lands of said Hubs. In same book p. 127, etc., is a deed from Isaac Forman and Elizabeth, his wife, of Freehold township, to "Benjamin VanMatre and Syrenus VanMatre." dated April 4, 1730, consideration £900, for 250 acres in Freehold township; bounded southerly by Burlington road, east by lands formerly of Aaron Forman, west and north by lands formerly Robert Barclay's; and three other tracts adjacent to above. In Book I of Deeds, p. 35, etc., Benjamin VanMatre and Cyrenus VanMatre convey to this Gilbert VanMater by deed dated September 1, 1735, for consideration of £535, one-half part of a tract of land in Middletown township on which said Gilbert VanMater then resided, being the lands above mentioned conveyed to them by Isaac Forman and wife.*)

...in the office of the Secretary of State at Trenton. It was not proved until March 21, 1729, or nine years after his decease, although Benjamin VanCleaf, the testator's brother-in-law, and one of the executors swore to it May 25, 1720. This was not sufficient in law to admit to probate. The law of New Jersey, then as now, required the oath of a subscribing witness, that it was executed by the testator according to the requirements of the statute in such cases made and provided.

- (5) Engeltje, (Angelina) b. September 30, 1696, m. John Anderson.
- (6) Benjamin, b. January 22, 1702: m. Elizabeth, daughter of Jacob Laen (Lane) and Elizabeth Barkalow, his wife. Both were members of Dutch church in 1737. He died July 21, 1775, aged 73 years, 5 months and 29 days, according to inscriptions on his tombstone in the VanMater cemetery.
- (7) Cornelia, b. May 24, 1704: m. Hans (John) VanCleaf.
- (8) Syrenus, (Cyrenius) b. August 28, 1706, m. Abigail, daughter of Auke Lefeits and Maria TenEyck, his wife. Abigail was born March 15, 1708; d. August 25, 1785, aged 77 years, 5 months and 10 days. Cyrenius VanMater died December 28, 1787, and is buried by the side of his wife in the VanMater graveyard. His age on the tombstone is given as 80 years, 4 months.
- (9) Joseph, b. in Monmouth county February 5 ; bap. Aug. 13, 1710: m. December 1, 1734, Sarah, daughter of Roelof Schanck and Geesie or Ghesye Hendrickson, his wife. Sarah Schanck was born May 22, 1715, and died, according to inscription on her tombstone in the VanMater cemetery, September 1, 1748, aged 33 years, 3 months and 9 days. Her husband rests by her side and his headstone states that he died October 15, 1792, aged 82 years, 8 months and 10 days. Joseph VanMater and Sarah Schanck, his wife, became members of the Dutch church in 1737, and were said to have been active and zealous in church work, and lived consistent lives. Their children and grandchildren always spoke of them with affection and reverence.

The following is a certified copy of Kreijn Janse VanMater's will as filed

I Kryne VanMatre of Middletown In the County of Monmouth and Eastern Division of the province of New Jersey, Yeoman. This Six & Twentyeth Day of April In the fifth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George over Great Brittain. &c. King. Anno dom. One Thousand Seven Hundred and Nineteen, Being in good and perfect health and of a Sound Mind and disposing Memory, (praised be the Lord for the same) Doe Make and Declare this to be my Last Will and Testament, in Manner and forme as followeth, viz:

First and principally I Recommend my Soul to Almighty God that gave it, and my Body to the earth from whence it was taken, to be Buryed in such Decent and Christian like manner, as to my executors hereafter named shall seem Meet and Convenient ; and as touching such Wordly Goods, as the Lord In his Infinite and Rich Mercy (far beyond my Deserts) hath been pleased to bestow upon Me, I Give and dispose of the same as followeth

My Will is that all my Just Debts be Well and truly paid and satisfied within some convenient time after my Decease, Out of my Pesonal Estate by my Executors hereinafter named.

My Will is that my Son John VanMatre shall have and keep that Fifty one pounds which I formerly paid to Rak Hendrickse for and towards a plantation for my said Son John, without being accountable to my Executors for the same or any part thereof.

My will is that at the time of the Marriage of my Daughter Yda she shall have two Cows and fifteen pounds, and my daughter Angeltje to have at the time of her marriage two Cows and fifteen pounds, and My Daughter Cornelia to have at the time of her Marriage two Cows and fifteen pounds to be delivered to them out of my personal Estate by my Executors.

I Give and Bequeath to my loving Wife Neeltje VanMatre, the use of my plantation, and the Use of the Remainder of my personal Estate, for and during the time that she shall remain my Widow; and after her decease or Remarriage My Will is, that the personal Estate that she has the use of, be Equally divided Amongst all my Children, Namely John, Yda, Ghilbert, Angeltje, Benjamin, Cornelia, Sirynus, and Joseph.

I Give and Devise my whole Real Estate whatsoever and wheresoever, after the Death or Remarriage of my wife, which shall first happen, to my fowr Sons Namely Ghilbert VanMatre, Benjamin VanMatre, Sirynus VanMatre and Joseph VanMatre, as followeth. viz: My Will is that if my Son Ghilbert shall within the Space of Three Years Next after the Decease or Remarriage of my Wife, pay unto my daughter Yda or her heirs, the Sum of Seventy-five pounds, that then I give and devise One full and Equal fourth part of my real estate to him my said Son Ghilbert, his Heirs and Assignes forever, and if my Son Benjamin, shall, within the space of Three Years Next after the decease or Remarriage of my Wife, pay unto my Daughter Angeltje, or her Heirs the Sum of Seventy-five pounds, then I Give and Devise One full and Equal fourth part of my Real Estate to him, my said Son Benjamin, his Heirs and Assignes forever, And if my Son Sirinus shall live to the age of Twenty One Years, and shall within three years after the Decease or Remarriage of my Wife, or at the Age of Twenty-One Years, which shall last happen, pay to my Son John or his Heirs the Sum of Seventy five pounds, then I give and Devise One full and equal fourth part of my Real Estate to him my said Son Sirinus his Heirs and Assignes forever. And if my Son Joseph shall live to the Age of Twenty One Years And shall within Three Years after the Decease or Remarriage of my Wife or at the Age of Twenty One Years which shall last happen, pay to my daughter Cornelia or her Heirs, the Sum of Seventy five pounds thin I Give and Devise the Remaining fourth part of my Real Estate to him my said Son Joseph, his Heirs and Assignes forever, And My Will is that if Either of the said fowr Sons Depart this Life before he Attain the age of Twenty One Years, or leave Issue of his Body, that then that fowrth part of my Estate be equally divided between the Remaining Three, they paying that sum to the person that the party deceased was to pay. And My Will is and I do hereby give power to my Executors hereafter named, to divide my Lands in Fowr Equall parts or Lottments to my said fowr Sons.

And Lastly I doe hereby Revoke and Disannull all wills by me formerly made declaring this Only to be my last Will and Testament. And doe Nominate Make and Appoint my two friends and Brothers in Law Benjamin Van Cleave and Philip Folcoertson* to be the Executors of this my Last Will and Testament. To see the same Executed. In Testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the Day and Year first above written.

Signed Sealed and published by the above named Kryne VanMatre as his Last Will and Testament in the presence of

JACOBUS SWOT (or SMOK),
HENDRICK SMOCK,
JOHN LAWRENCE,
THOMAS LAWRENCE,
WILLM. LAWRENCE, Junr.

Memorandum: yt on ye 21st day of March, 1729, William Lawrence, Junr., and Hendrick Smock two of ye Subscribing Evidences to ye Above instrument come before me John Barclay, Surrogate, who upon their Oath Deposed that they saw the Above Kryn Janssen Van Meteren signe seale & declare ye same to be his Last Will and Testament, and that at ye same time he was of sound mind to ye best of each of their knowledge & that they also saw ye other Evidences subscribe their names In presence of ye Testator. Sworne ye day & year above sd before Me John Barclay, Surrogate.

Memorandome: yt on ye 25th day of May, 1729, Benjamin VanCleve one of ye Executors In the within mentioned Last Will & Testament of Kyahn VanMatre, Decd, Personally Appeared before John Barclay, Surrogate, Authorized & Appoynted to take ye Prohate of Last Wills & Testaments was Duely sworne to the Execution thereof. Sworn ye day & yeare Above Written before Me JOHN BARCLAY, Surg't.

John VanMater, the eldest son of Kreijn Janse by his wife Eyke (Ida) Suydam, had eleven children:

1. Cryn Jans, b. September 28, 1718: m. about 1750, Marya, daughter of Guysbert Sutphen and Geertrury VanPelt, his wife. Cryn-jans VanMater d. in 1766. They had the following children:

- John, bapt. August 19, 1753: m. Elizabeth Hance or Hons.
- Engeltje, bapt. March 31, 1755.
- Guysbert, bapt. July 31, 1757; married a Widow Clayton.
- Anne, b. 1759, died young.
- Isaac, bapt. November 2, 1760.
- Neeltje, bapt. February 2, 1766.

2. Ryck (Richard) b. April 16, 1720; m. Micah or Martha Osbourne, and had the following children:

- Eyda, (Ida) bapt. June 9, 1751, at Presbyterian church of Freehold. On pages 132-3 of Symmes History of Old Tennent church, date of baptisms of several of Ryck's children are given. Mr. Tennent. The pastor, has entered on the records that Ryck VanMater stated the reason for coming to him, instead of going to the Dutch Dominie was "that his wife could not speak Dutch." This was true, for his wife belonged to the English

family of Osbournes who have resided at Manasquan for several generations. Besides Eyda he had the following children baptized by the Presbyterian minister, viz:

- Jannetje, (Jane) bapt. April 15, 1753.
- John, bapt. August 24, 1755; m. Sarah Hendrickson.
- Catharine and Mary (twins) bapt. June 22, 1758.
- William, bapt. June 22, 1760.
- Eleanor or Nelly, bapt. Feb. 13, 1763; m. Jacob Schenck.

I am under the impression that one or more of their children became owners of a tract of land on the south side of Wreck Pond in the present township of Wall, but then Shrewsbury. I am, however, in possession of no facts to prove this. The son William, baptized June 21, 1760, married Martha Ward. His will is recorded in Book C of Wills, p. 136, Monmouth Surrogate's office. It was dated March 28, 1828, and proved August 31, 1829.

3. Gilbert, b. January 14, 1722, bap. Feb 4 following, and died unmarried.

4. Jannetje. b. October 29, 1724; m. Aart, son of Guysbert Sutphen and Geertruy Van Pelt, his wife. He was bap. April 13, 1718. This couple had the following children baptized:

- Guisbert, bap. August 20, 1743;
- Jan, November 3, 1745;
- Geertje, February 14, 1748.

5. Neeltje, bap. August 14, 1728: m. John VanLieu, (no other knowledge).

6. Marya, b. January 7, 1731: m. first, Peter Lefferts, second, John Bennett. By Peter Lefferts she had:

- Maria, bap. August 3, 1750 ; m. Barnes J. Smock; d. January 27, 1832, aged 71 years, 10 months, according to her tombstone in the Lefferts and Logan graveyard on the old Garret Schanck farm near Vanderburg in Atlantic township. Her husband, known as Capt. Barnes J. Smock of the Monmouth militia during the greater part of our Revolutionary war, and at its close as Col. Smock, was born January 29, 1756: d. January 30, 1834, aged 78 years and 1 day, according to the inscription on his tombstone, is buried by her side. (* see long note below)
- Krinjans, bap. February 14, 1762.
- John, buried in Lefferts and Logan graveyard. Tombstone gives date of death Nov. 8, 1836, aged 74 years, 11 mo., 20 d. His wife, Zilpha, is buried by his side.
- Lefferts. I think he is the Leffert Lefferts who owned and resided on a farm in Upper Freehold Township during the middle part of the last century.
- Engeltje, b. March 31, 1755.

7. Eyda (Ida) b. February 12, 1733; bap. March 14 following: m. Benjamin, son of Jan Derrickse Sutphen and Engeltje Bennett, his wife. He was bap. November 14, 1758.

8. John b. February 7, 1735: died young.

9. Cornelia or Catharine, b. July 4, 1737 m. Stoffle (Christopher) Logan, and d. January 19, 1806; buried in Lefferts and Logan yard. Her husband's tombstone gives date of his death November 11, 1823: age 89 y, 3 mos, 13 d. They had the following children:

- Sarah, b. April 11, 1760; m. John L. Bennett; buried in Lefferts Logan graveyard Tombstone gives date of death March 6, 1833, age 72 y, 10 m, 22 d. Her husband died November 27, 1843, aged 86 y, 7 m, 27 d., according to his tombstone.
- Eyda. b. 1760, died young.
- Eyda. b. ____ ____, and perhaps others.

10. Cornelius, bap. August 14, 1739.

11. Geertje, bap. November 27, 1734 ; m. about 1764, Aart VanDerbilt, and had the following children baptized:

- Hendrick, January 20, 1765.
- Ida, August 16, 1767.
- Jeremiah and Joseph, (twins), Dec. 16, 1788.

The descendants of John VanMater and Ida Suydam, his wife, seem to have removed from Monmouth county, so far as there are any male descendants now (1899) bearing the VanMater name. I an unable to state when they removed or where they settled. Besides, many of their descendants who emigrated to other parts of New Jersey and other states, adopted different ways of spelling their surnames, as VanMeter, VanMarter, VanMeteren, VanMetere, etc.

**NOTE: [p. 70] Colonel Barnes J. Smock's will is recorded in Book C of Wills, p. 340, etc., Monmouth Surrogate's office. It is dated October 17, 1832, proved February 10, 1834. He describes himself as a resident of Middletown Township. He gives Philip Tunison, son of his sister Rebecca, \$200. To children of his sister, Eleanor Longstreet, \$300. To therine Wilburt and Phoebe Stephen, children of his sister, Sarah Smock, \$200. To John Lefferts, brother of his deceased wife, \$500; to children of his sister, Phoebe Longstreet, \$500. The residue of his estate is given absolutely to the celebrated lawyer of that day in New Jersey, Garret D. Wall, who is also made sole executor. During the war Col. Smock had been taken prisoner by some of the Monmouth Tories and incarcerated in the Sugar House, where he suffered great hardships and indignities at the hands of the infamous Cunningham. He was once taken out to be executed, but by the intercession of Col. Elisha Lawrence, who commanded a battalion of the American Loyalists and who had been sheriff of Monmouth under the King, and who knew Smock, he was reprieved. He never forgot or forgave these insults. He was a man of gigantic size, with very long legs, and was nicknamed "Leggy Barnes," on this account. He had a fierce temper which flashed out like fire. With him it was a word and a blow and the blow often came first. The Tories and such as sympathized with them he hated with a bitter hatred, and on the slightest provocation would assault them with great violence. Our court records for many years after the Revolutionary war show many indictments against him for assault and battery. He was generally defended by Garret D. Wall, who either cleared him or got him off with a moderate fine. In gratitude for these services he made this lawyer his residuary legatee and devisee, for he had no children. There are many stories told of his daring and adventures. He is said to have met his death in trying to drive for a wager close along the high bluff on the south side of the Shrewsbury River about opposite the Globe Hotel in Red Bank. That a portion of the sod near the edge of the bluff had been undermined by a late storm, and when the wheel of his carriage struck there it caved, and threw carriage and horses from the top of the bluff to the beach below. Strange to say neither his horses nor his negro driver were hurt, but he had his neck broken. Such was the end of one of the most reckless, stubborn and fiercest of the Monmouth officers in the Revolution. He was as strong in his friendships as he was bitter in his enmities. He owned and resided on the farm next to the Charles Lloyd farm, in the present township of Holmdel, owned and occupied by Joseph I. VanMater until recently. The Charles Lloyd farm was owned and occupied by Barnes Smock of the Artillery Company, and his son Barnes lived on the adjoining farm where the children of John I. Crawford now reside. Col. Barnes J. Smock owned a horse called Paoli. He thought more of this horse than of anything else in the world. Many stories are told of the intelligence and affection displayed by this animal for his master. In some of the accounts of the fatal accident at Red Bank, it is said he was riding Paoli, and was not in a carriage. I do not know which is the correct version.)*

=====

GILBERT VAN MATER, HIS DESCENDANTS, AND HIS WILL.

Gilbert VanMater, second son of Kreijn Janse by Micha Hendrickson, his wife, had the following children:

- Cyrenius. baptized December 15, 1725: married Mary Heard.
- Daniel, b. January 23, 1728, m. December 29, 1754. Mary, daughter of Rulif Corneliuse Covenhoven and Sarah Voorhees, his wife. She was born July 16, bap. August 26, 1737: d. November 8, 1767, and interred in VanMater graveyard ; her age is stated on the tombstone as 30 years, 3 months and 11 days. Daniel died in London, England, October 8, 1786, and according to tradition in the VanMater family was honored by interment in Westminster Abbey.
- John, bap. August 23, 1731: m. Elizabeth Carroll, Carle or Kerle.
- Neeltje. (Eleanor) b. in 1733: m. February 22, 1775, Edmund Bainbridge. (*Edmund or Edmond Bainbridge with John Anderson (clerk) and two others, were indicted for a riot in 1747. [Vol. VII, N. J. Arch. page 455. The coincidence of names, for above Edmund Bainbridge's wife was a of John Anderson who married her father's sister, indicates the same family. Edmund Bainridge and Simon Wyckoff headed a crowd of men who knocked down the sheriff of Middlesex County, and broke open the jail at Amboy to release John Bainbridge, Jr., on the 17th of July, 1747. See the letter of Sheriff Deare, and the affidavit of particulars on pages 463 to 471. Vol. VII, N. J. Arch. Also charge of Judge Neville to the grand jury, page 156. Idem. -Also letter of Robert H. Morris, page 471. Idem. This Morris was then Chief Justice of New Jersey, and had been lifted to this high position by his father, Lewis Morris, Governor of New Jersey. The artfulness and craft shown in this letter mark him as a true chip of the old block. His father, Lewis Morris, died in 1746, in the midst of popular tumults and disorders similar to those which occurred at the beginning of his political career in 1699-1700, and caused by similar selfish exactions and ruthless measures of the Proprietors. I am in doubt as to what relationship if any, existed between this Edmund Bainbridge who married Eleanor VanMater and the Edmund who was implicated in this outbreak of 1747. John Anderson married Angelina VanMater prior to 1747.]*)
- Hendrick, or Harry, bap. September 11, 1737 went to England with his brother Daniel, after the Revolutionary war, and was in England at the time of his brother's death. Since then nothing was ever heard of him.
- Joseph, bap. September 30, 1739, m. Catharine, daughter of James Kearney of Chinqueroras, as the region about Keyport was then called. She was b. July 26, 1752, and died May 10, 1807, aged 54 years, 9 months and 20 days, and is buried by her second husband, Rulif VanMater, in the VanMater cemetery.
- Catherine, bap. February 20, 1742; m. October 7, 1788, Stephen Jones.

The following is a copy of the will of Gilbert VanMater, father of the above seven children:

Will of Guysbert (Gilbert) VanMater.

In the name of God, Amen. I Gisbert VanMater of Freehold, in the County of Monmouth and the Eastern division of the Province of New Jersey, being weak in body but of sound mind, and memory; considering the uncertainty of this life, do make this to be my Last Will and Testament. In manner following:

And first recommending my Soul into the hands of Almighty God, who gave it; into whose Kingdom notwithstanding my own unworthiness, I hope to be received through

the merits and intercession of my blessed Savior, and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. My body I will to be buried at the discretion of my Executors hereinafter named.

And as touching such temporal estate wherewith it has pleased Ood to bless me in this life. I will, devise and dispose of the same in the following manner, and form:

First I will that all my just debts be duly and truly paid in some convenient time after my decease, by my three youngest sons, John, Hendrick and Joseph.

Item. I have already given to my two eldest sons, Cyrenius and Daniel VanMater, a plantation I formerly owned at the Scotch Meeting House, and to my eldest son Cyrenius, a negro wench -Nann- and my long gun for his birthright, and other goods and chattels; and to my son Daniel his negro Frank and other goods and chattels. I have already given my two eldest sons what I intend to give them. Secondly I give, devise and bequeath to my three youngest sons, John, Hendrick and Joseph, all my real estate, lands, and meadows whatsoever, and rights of lands which I am now seized and possessed of, interested in or entitled to, and to their heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns forever. To each an equal third in quantity, and in quality, to be divided by my executors hereinafter named. If my above named three sons or either of them, chooses, it to be upon themselves, after the above named debts are paid or before, if my executors think fitt and proper.

Item. I give, devise and bequeath to my eldest daughter Nelly, my negro wench Matt, and her child Sally, and a horse and saddle and three cows, and fifty pounds in money, at eight shillings per ounce, for her outset, if she marry within the term of six years. If she should not in six years, then at the expiration of six years to be paid to her out of my estate, the aforesaid fifty pounds and three cows.

Item. My will is that my son John shall pay to my daughter Nelly the sum of fifty pounds money es aforesaid for part of her legacy, on or before six years after my death.

Item. My will is that my son Hendrick shall pay to my daughter Nelly the sum of fifty pounds, money as aforesaid, for part of her legacy on or before seven years after my decease.

Item. My will is that my son Joseph shall pay to my daughter Nelly the sum of fifty pounds, money as aforesaid, for the last part of her legacy on or before the term of eight years after my decease.

Item. I give and bequeath to my youngest daughter, Catharine, my negro wench Maryann and horse and saddle, and, when she marries, three cows and fifty pounds in money as aforesaid for her outset; but if she shall not marry within the term of six years then the fifty pounds and three cows to be paid to her out of my estate.

Item. It is my will that my son John shall pay to my daughter Catharine, the sum of fifty pounds money aforesaid, on or before the term of nine years after my decease, for part of her legacy.

Item. It is my will that my son Hendrick shall pay to my daughter Catharine the sum of fifty pounds money aforesaid, before nine years after my decease, for part of her legacy.

Item. It is my will that my son Joseph shall pay to my daughter Catharine the sum of fifty pounds money as aforesaid, on or before the term of ten years after my decease for the last part of her legacy.

I mean in the whole, to be paid to my daughters two hundred pounds in cash each, as before described already.

Item. In case either of my daughters should lose their negro wenches, which I have given them, either Matt or Maryann (but not Sally) then I give either Pegg or Betty, as they shall see cause to chose, or both if they should die, they said Matt and Maryann. That is before my said daughters should marry, or either of them: but if married and then die, then no other in their stead or after the expiration of six years.

Item. I give, devise and bequeath the remaining part of my negroes to my youngest three sons, John. Hendrick and Joseph, to be equally divided amongst them, as my executors shall see fitt, excepting them already given.

Item. I give devise and bequeath all my household goods within doors, equally to be divided amongst my three youngest sons and two daughters, to be divided in six years after decease equally.

Item. I give and bequeath the remaining part of my stock, goods and chattels, and all my farmer utensils, cattle, horses, sheep, and hogs, excepting what before I have given, to my three sons, John, Hendrick and Joseph, to be equally divided amongst them at the discretion of my executors.

Item. It is my will that if my executors should think my daughters should not be well used by my sons or either of them, to be in their power to board them at their discretion at such place and places as they shall see cause, out of my estate, until they marry or until their legacies become due.

Item. My will is that, if either of my daughters should die without issue of their body, then the other to be heir.

Item. My will is if either of my sons die without issue of their body, the others of my sons to be their heirs and the said lands to fall to them living.

And lastly I do hereby nominate, constitute and appoint my two eldest sons, Cyrenius and Daniel VanMater, both of the County of Monmouth aforesaid, to be executors of this My Last Will and Testament, hereby revoking all former wills by me in anywise heretofore made, and declaring this to be my Last Will and Testament. In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand and seal the day of October in the year 1758.
GISBERT VANMATER. (L. S.)

The copy is in possession of Mrs. Margaret Fick, wife of ex-sheriff Fick of New Brunswick, Middlesex County, N. J. She was a daughter of Joseph VanMater and Margaret Rapelje, his wife, born July 6, 1860, and granddaughter of Holmes VanMater and Micha, his wife, (daughter of Gilbert VanMater, grandson of above testator, who resided on Long Island.)

I do not know whether the will was admitted to probate, but presume it was, or else the devisees and legatees therein named were, VanMater like, governed by their father's wishes without regard to any legal compulsion. For the court records of Monmouth County show that the VanMaters have seldom engaged in litigation, either among themselves over family

settlements, or with their neighbors. I do not know of any divorce or criminal suits among the past generation of the family. They have minded their own business and let others alone. Neither have they courted popularity for the sake of office or honors, but if anything have been retiring and modest in their claims and assumptions. They have as honorable record as any family in the county, considering their numbers and the long time they have resided in Monmouth.

Cyrenius, the eldest son named in the above will, was a miller and farmer. By his wife, Meary Heard, he had the following children:

- John H., born (there is no record, he may have died young).
- Gilbert, born ____, died single in 1807. Leaves a will recorded in Book A of Wills, p. 194. Surrogate's office of Monmouth. It is dated May 6 and proved May 12, 1807.
- William, born Nov. 27, 1772, married December 24, 1797, Mary, daughter of Garret Hendrickson and his second wife, Lena VanLiew, and died May 9, 1844. Mary Hendrickson, his wife, was baptized May 2, 1779.
- Mary, baptized, ____, died unmarried in 1813, leaves will dated April 19, 1808, proved Sept. 25, 1813, recorded in book A of wills, p. 662, Monmouth Surrogate's office. She describes herself as the daughter of Cyrenius VanMater, a miller. She mentions Cyrenius son of her brother William VanMater, and Mary, daughter of her sister Micha, wife of Samuel Tilton. She devises all her property in fee to Cyrenius Tilton, son of her sister Micha. John W. Holmes and Micha Tilton are appointed executors.
- Maykee (Micha) born ____, married Samuel Tilton.
- Phoebe, born December 21, 1773, married January 20, 1791, Hendrick, son of Garret Hendrickson and Catharine Denise, his wife, died, March 12, 1836. *(A marriage license was granted to Garrett Hendrickson, (son of Hendrick Hendrickson and Neeltje Garretse Schanck, his wife) and Catharine (daughter of Tunis Denise and Francyntje Hendrickson, his wife) December 8, 1755. Garrett Hendrickson died December 18, 1801, aged 67 years, 10 months and 10 days, according to his tombstone in the Hendrickson burying ground on farm of late Senator W. H. Hendrickson at Holland in Holmdel Township. His wife, Catherine Denise, is interred by his side. She was born May 8, 1732, baptized June 4th following, and died September 8, 1771, aged 39 years, 4 months. Hendrick, their son and Phoebe VanMater, his wife, are also buried in this graveyard. Hendrick died June 6, 1837, aged 72 years, 10 months and 7 days. Phoebe, his wife, died Mar. 12, 1836, aged 62 years, 2 months and 2 days.)*

Phoebe VanMater and Hendrick Hendrickson, aforesaid, had the following children:

- Mary or Polly, bap. Oct. 30, 1791.
- Garrett, bap. Oct. 13, 1793, d. March 6, 1800.
- William Heard, b. Sept. 22, 1795, d. Aug. 9, 1855, buried in homestead yard aforesaid.
- Eleanor, b. Dec. 7, 1797, d. June 22, 1806.
- Garrett, b. Feb. 21, 1800, d. June 3, 1866, m. Angelina, daughter of Wynant Bennett of Long Island, who was barn July 13, 1813, d. Sept. 24, 1876. Both buried in Long Island.
- Cyrenius, b. Mar. 30, 1802, m. Sept. 18, 1823, Ida, daughter of Joseph VanMater and Ida Hendrickson, his wife, d. May 17, 1870, buried on homestead farm at Holland aforesaid.
- Denyse, b. July 4, 1804.
- Elinor, b. May 11, 1806.
- Catharine, born ____, -no record.

William VanMater, born November 27, 1772, by his wife, Mary Hendrickson, had the following children:

- Cyrenius, b. July 1, 1798; m. Elinor Hendrickson; d. Dec. 18, 1882.
- Rulif, b. _____, who went West and settled there.
- Gilbert, b. July 10, 1802; m. Sarah Taylor; d. Feb. 6, 1881.
- Garret, b. _____, m. Harriet Hopping; d. at Chapel Hill in 1879, leaving two children. John H. and Mary. John H. VanMater is now a practicing physician of good standing at Atlantic Highlands. Garret VanMater left a will and codicil. The last was dated Dec. 13, 1878; proved Sept. 6, 1879; recorded in book M of wills, p. 494, Monmouth Surrogate's office.
- Elinor, b. 1815.
- Catharine, b. _____; m. William Story.

Daniel, second son of Gilbert VanMater, and Micha Hendriekson, married Mary Conover aforesaid, and had the following children:

- Tryntje, (Catharine) b. Ap. 5, 1756; m. Aug. 14, 1774, Henry Disbrow and had three sons and one daughter Mary, who married Rev. Henry Polhemus. One of his sons, John H. Disbrow, married Sarah VanMater, his cousin.
- Sarah, b. Aug. 13, 1769; m. Benjamin VanMater July 12, 1778, d. Sept. 5, 1840; buried in VanMater yard by her husband.
- Gilbert, b. June 7, 1762: m. Margaret Sprague, widow of a Rapelye on Long Island. He removed to Brooklyn and lived on Long Island until his death, July 6, 1832. He had six daughters and two sons. One of his daughters, Sarah, b. Aug. 15, 1793, m. her cousin, John Henry Disbrow, above mentioned. Another daughter, Micha, b. Aug. 21, 1795, m. Holmes, son of Chrineyonce VanMater and Huldah Holmes, his wife. Holmes VanMater resided on the Academy farm in the village of Holmdel and was famous for his fast and thoroughbred horses.
- Micah, b. Jan. 20, 1764, m. first Daniel Polhemus who died Jan. 29, 1820, aged 57 years, and married second George Clark.
- Nelly, b. July 20, 1766, d. in infancy.

Jan or John, third son of Gilbert VanMater and Micha Hendriekson, married Elizabeth Carrol, Carle or Kerle, and had at least two daughters.

The fifth son of Gilbert VanMater and Micha Hendriekson was Joseph, who married Catharine Kearney, or Karney as they spelled it. The descendants of this couple became known as the "Kearny VanMaters." and were noted for the marked difference in their characters, from the past generations of the family, and from the descendants of the other branches. They had the following children:

- Rulif, bap. July 16, 1775 - no other record.
- Joseph Kearney, b. _____; m. Sept. 10, 1794, Ida Hendriekson, daughter of Garrett Hendriekson and Lena VanLieu, his second wife. He owned and resided on a farm west of Colts Neck and on the south side of the turnpike to Freehold, nearly opposite the Thomas Ryall farm, formerly known as the Stoutenburg farm.

There were two other children, but I have no record of them.

Joseph K. VanMater, by his wife, Ida Hendrickson, had the following children:

- Ida, b. May, 1795, m. Sept. 18, 1823, Cyrenius Hendriekson of Pleasant Valley, and were the parents of the late Henry D. Hendriekson so well known to the present generation of people in this county, and of Catharine, wife of the late Joseph L. Tunis, who owned and resided on a farm near Wickatunk and died a few years ago.
- James Kearny, b. Nov. 11, 1807, m. Elizabeth VanMater and died childless on Nov. 25, 1850. His will is dated March 24, 1849; proved Dec. 12, 1850, and recorded in Book F of Wills, p. 44. He leaves all his personal and real property equally to his three sisters.

Ida, wife of Cyrenius Hendriekson, Ann K. VanMater and Elizabeth, wife of Joseph Probasco.

- Ann K., b. May 11, 1815, m. Benjamin Vanderveer.
- Elizabeth, b. Feb. 1, 1820, m. Joseph Probasco and had the following children by him: James K., Robert, Johanna, Hulda, Mary Jane, Hendrick and Cyrenius.

=====

DANIEL AND HENDRICK VAN MATER WHO JOINED THE KING'S ARMY.

Daniel and Hendrick, two of the sons of Gilbert VanMater and Micha Hendriekson, and named in his said will, enlisted at the beginning of the Revolutionary war in the first battalion of Skinner's brigade, commanded by Elisha Lawrence of Upper Freehold township, and who was the last colonial sheriff under King George III in Monmouth county. The majority of Americans who belonged to this command of Col. Lawrence's were doubtless natives of this county, which then included Ocean County. They were called the New Jersey Royal Volunteers, but were popularly known from the color of their uniforms as the "Greens," or "Skinner's Greens." Many of the men who thus joined the British army were conscientious and honorable men and carried on war in an open, soldier-like way. They were widely different from the Refugees at Sandy Hook, the Pine Robbers, and other desperadoes who took advantage of the unsettled times to plunder and murder. The people, however, who suffered from their depredations were not in any condition of mind to make a distinction between the Americans who sided with the British.

One of the sisters of these two VanMaters had married a Bainbridge who belonged to an intensely loyal family, and one of their brothers, Joseph, had married a Kearny, a family likewise strong on that side. They were also socially intimate with Col. Elisha Lawrence, the Ex-Sheriff, with Ex-Sheriff John Taylor of Middletown, and other old colonial officials who had sworn allegiance to the king of Great Britain. It was perhaps these social, family and political influences which carried them away from their Dutch kindred into the ranks of the enemy. The same extravagant promises of royal approbation, honors and reward, were doubtless made to them, as to other Americans by the British officials and agents to get them to enlist.

At the close of the Revolutionary war they found themselves stripped of all their property, their families broken up and scattered, and themselves exiled from their homes and friends. They went to England. I think, with Col. Elisha Lawrence, in order to get some recognition from the English government for their services and losses, for, according to Lawrence's affidavit hereinafter printed, he was in London at the same time, and it was evidently made to help Daniel VanMater with his claims against the government. This affidavit is otherwise historically important, because it shows that Colonel Lawrence, with part or all of his command, was in Monmouth as early as December, 1776, arresting prominent and active patriots. At this time the people were disorganized, with many non-committal among them. Lawrence seems to have met with no resistance in capturing the "rebels," as they were called. This, too, helps explain the letter written by Hendrick VanBrunt and others to Governor Livingston of New Jersey, printed on pages 261-3 of "New Jersey Revolutionary correspondence." This letter is dated September 15, 1780. In it they write that the captivity of some of them has lasted nearly four years. This would agree with the time Lawrence says he was in Monmouth County taking prisoners, viz., December, 1776. Among the Monmouth officers named in captivity in 1780, we find Major Hendrick VanBruntf Col. Auke Wyckoff, Capt. Jonathan Holmesf Lieut. James Whitiok, Lieut. Tobias Polhemusf Capt. Jacob Covenhoven, Col. John Smock. Capt. Barnes Smock and Henry Smock. It seems that some of these men had languished in captivity nearly four yuears, and it may be that some of them were not exchanged or released until the war closed,

Daniel VanMater and his brother Hendrick, had all their hopes of government aid outside of grants of land in Canada, hashed to the ground. Like other American loyalists who had been seduced by the fine and extravagant promises the English are so prone to make, when they need help or favors, they found only coldness and ingratitude on the part of the high-caste Englishmen, misnamed "nobility." who acted and spoke for the government, and who really control the government of Great Britain for their class interests. The following extract from the proceedings of the British House of Commons on June 19, 1820, shows what help and reward they got, after sacrificing everything. Mr. Williams, one of the members, speaking of the claims of the American loyalists, said: "It is more than 30 years since these claims accrued. Three-fourths of the claimants are dead, and many of them died of broken hearts." Mr. Lockhart, another member, said, "The American Loyalists have never received any compensation for their losses."

Daniel VanMater died in London, England. October 8, 1786, without receiving any compensation except a grant of land in bleak Nova Scotia. I doubt also the truth of the tradition handed down among the VanMaters, that he was buried among the heroes and great men who lie in Westminster Abbey. I think he had lost and suffered enough for the English government, to entitle him to this honorable grave, but he bore a Dutch name, and was a stranger from over the seas, and why should they care to bury his poor corpse when he was no longer of any service to them? In the eyes of the so-called "nobility" or the Brahmin caste of England, he was no better than a dead dog who had fetched and carried for them in his lifetime.

The following papers which belonged to him were probably sent to his children by his brother, Hendrick VanMater, after his death:

[Addressed]

"General Burch. Commandant etc.,"

[Endorsed]

"Referred for inquiry to the police."

S. B.

[Below] "This matter is one that must be decided after troops are gone."

D. MATHEWS, Mayor.

(The above indorsement are in the handwritings of Gen. Burch and Mayor Mathews of New York City.)

"General Burch, Commandant of the City of New York, v. v.

The humble memorial of Daniel VanMater most respectfully sheweth:

Whereas your humble memorialist hath a cousin in New Jersey, who was brought up in our family. Built a schooner for his own private use, and she was impressed in the Provincial service in order to carry the cannon and sick to Brunswick. The British took the said schooner and converted her to their own service, where she has remained until lately, and now is in the hands of Captain Nailler, by the name of Schooner Pool. Your humble memorialist claims the said schooner by a deed of gift from under the hand of his cousin Cornelius Covenhoven. Now your humble memorialist prays, as she never was condemned and made a prize to the British, that the General will grant an order that said Captain Nallier shall deliver up the said schooner to your humble memorialist, or show cause why he detains the said Schooner Pool in his possession. Your humble memorialist shall be in duty bound to ever pray
DANIEL VAN MATER.

May ye 20th, 1783.

(The English army evacuated New York in the month of November, 1783.)

As this claim was returned to him, it appears, they did not or could not return his schooner. Soon after this he must have sailed for England to push his claims there. The following affidavit shows that he was in London in 1785:

AFFIDAVIT OF COL. ELISHA LAWRENCE.

Elisha Lawrence maketh oath that he has known Mr. Daniel VanMater, late of Monmouth County, New Jersey, in North America, many years previous to the late rebellion in America. That Mr. VanMater has always shown the strongest attachment to his Majesty's Person and Government. That in December 1776, this Deponent was ordered into the said County of Monmouth. Mr. VanMater was very active in rendering every assistance to the Troops, and disarming and taking Rebels prisoners. That he with some others took Tunis Vanderveer, a Rebel Captain of Militia (This is a mistake about Tunis Vanderveer being a rebel captain. He was a sergeant, and lived where his great-great-grandson, David Arthur Vanderveer, now lives in Freehold Township. He was a bold, resolute and active patriot. He was in the British prison of New York at the same time Garrett Wyckoff was there. They were released at the same time and came home together, as they were quite near neighbors.) and some Privates and brought them unto this Deponent. That this Deponent as Sheriff of the said County of Monmouth, sold to Mr. VanMater part of the farm he possessed at the commencement of the Rebellion, as will appear by the titles, and is well acquainted with the land, and thinks it was worth about that time at least £8.00 (\$40.00) per acre. New York currency. This Deponent is also well acquainted with Thomas Leonard and John Longstreet, Esqrs. Thinks them to be good judges of land and particularly acquainted with Mr. VanMater's land, and from their characters, thinks that the greatest credibility may be given to their testimony. And further saith that Mr. VanMater was esteemed an Honest Man, as far as this Deponent knoweth. As to the value of Mr. VanMater's movable estate the Deponent cannot pretend to say. He Knew he had many Negro Slaves and a considerable stock on his farm of all kinds, and in particular it was a general received opinion that Mr. VanMater's horses were some of the best in the country.

COL. ELISHA LAWRENCE.

London, March 2nd. 1785.

[Endorsed] Copy of Col. Elisha Lawrence's deposition.

In a letter from Cyrenius VanMater to his brother, Daniel VanMater, dated March 28, 1785, he speaks of the death of "Rike VanMater" about January 1, 1785. On the inside page is a letter addressed to Harry VanMater (Hendrick was his baptismal name). This is also signed "Your Affectionate Brother, Cyrenius VanMater." These letters are folded in the old fashioned way and addressed to Mr. Daniel VanMater in London, at Jacob Taylor's Pimlico, near the Queen's Pallace No. 25.

This would show that Daniel and his youngest brother Henry or Hendrick, were both in England at that time. Another letter is dated at Brooklyn, February 17th, 1786, from Gilbert VanMater and addressed to Daniel VanMater, London. Gilbert heads the letter "Honored Father," and expressed a strong wish that he should return and live with his children. That the separation of so worthy a father "is much felt by your family in general and in particular by your affectionate son, Gilbert VanMater."

In another letter from the same son dated "Hampstead South, May 26, 1785" he speaks of having returned to farming and is doing well. He begs to be excused from going to England on

account of the expense and inconvenience. The letter is directed to "Mr. Daniel VanMater, at Pimlico, London."

In another letter from Gilbert, dated Brooklyn, October 11, 1786, he speaks of living in Brooklyn and in the same business as when his father left. He also speaks of the death of his grandfather, Conover, in New Jersey about two months before from a stroke of the palsy. The letter is addressed to Daniel VanMater to be left at the New York coffee house, London by favor of Capt. Townsend.

=====

**DANIEL, HENDRICK AND CHRINEYONCE VANMATER'S ESTATES CONFISCATED.-
DEATH OF FENTON, THE PINE ROBBER.**

In the clerk's office of Monmouth county. Book A of Executions, beginning in back part of book, is the record of 110 executions against Monmouth county land owners who joined the British army, or were detected going within their lines.

On page 11 of this book is an execution against Daniel VanMater, and on page 31 a similar one against his brother, Hendrick VanMater. Under these executions all their real estate was seized and sold to the highest bidders. The following is a true copy of the execution against Daniel VanMater. They all follow same form.

Monmouth County, ss.

The State of New Jersey to Samuel Forman, Joseph Lawrence, Kenneth Hankinson, and Jacob Wikoff, esqrs. Commissioners duly appointed for the said County, on the part and behalf of said State to take and dispose of, for the use and benefit of the same, the estates of certain Fugitives and offenders in the said County, or to any two or more of them. Greeting.

Whereas, lately, that is to say of the term of October, in the Year of Our Lord, seventeen hundred and seventy-nine, in the Court of Common Pleas held at Freehold in and for said county of Monmouth, before the Judges of the same Court, final judgment was had and entered in favor of the said State of New Jersey, pursuant to law, against Daniel VanMater, late of the Township of Freehold on an Inquisition found against the said Daniel VanMater for joining the Army of the King of Great Britain, and otherwise offending against the form of his allegiance to the said State, etc., and returnable to the said Court, as may fully appear of record. You are therefore commanded and enjoined to sell and dispose of all the estate. Real of what nature or kind soever, belonging to or lately belonging to the said Daniel VanMater, within the said County of Monmouth, according to the direction of "An Act for forfeiting to and vesting in the State of New Jersey, the real estate of certain 'Fugitives and Offenders' " made and passed the eleventh day of December, A. D. 1778. Witness John Anderson. Esq., Judge of the said Court at Freehold afd, the 22nd of January, A. D., 1779

By the Court, ANDERSON, C'l'k.

Recorded May 15, 1779.

On pages 76 and 99 of Book A of Executions are similar writs against Chrineyonce, son of Joseph VanMater, and Sarah Roelofse Schenck, his wife. The first seems to be for going within the British lines and the last for joining the King's army.

Chrineyonee, it is said, carried on the mill now known as Taylor's Mills, near the old VanMater homestead, in Atlantic township, but they were owned by his father Joseph, who did not die until 1792. He was also interested with his cousin, Daniel VanMater, in the ownership of

several schooners, which carried hogshead staves, corn meal and flour to the West Indies, and brought back to Perth Amboy or New York, sugar, molasses, rum, wine and other tropical products. The fear of the loss of these vessels and their lucrative trade, may have influenced them in their political stand, thinking the English government must ultimately win.

The bold and out and out stand taken by these three VanMaters, named in above executions, for the English Crown, and because of their social standing, and the bitter feeling it aroused among their nearest relatives among the Covenhovens, Schencks, Van Dorns, Hendricksons and others, who lived all around them, and could not understand how a true Dutchman of republican antecedents, could take sides with the English King, their course was bitterly condemned. The impression prevails today among the people of Monmouth, that all the VanMaters were Royalists. This, however, is incorrect and not the fact. Like many other families, they were divided in their allegiance. There were more VanMaters who served faithfully on the American side than on the British, but as the VanMaters are not given to blowing their own trumpet, these patriots have been forgotten or overlooked.

For instance, Cornelius VanMater was a captain in the first regiment of Monmouth militia, Benjamin VanMater was a private in Capt. Barnes Smock's artillery company. Chrineyonee, son of Cyrenus VanMater and Abigail Lefferts, his wife, and Cyrenius, son of Benjamin VanMater and Elizabeth Lane, his wife, served in Capt. Waddel's company. It was through the instrumentality of William VanMater, born June 22, 1760, and a son of Richard VanMater, that the chief of the Pine Robbers was killed.

This was no less a person than Lewis Fenton, who for several years had headed those banditti, and perpetrated many robberies, murders, and other crimes. So daring and ferocious had been many of his atrocities, that he had become what in our day is called a "Holy Terror," to the people of Monmouth.

On page 351 of Barber & Howe's His. Coll. of N. J. is an account of the death of this Fenton. While generally correct, there are some errors in the details of this narrative, as I have heard the story.

It was not Burk, who helped Fenton rob and beat VanMater, but one DeBow, for Stephen Burk, alias Emmons, with "Zeke Williams" and "Stephen West" had been killed at Wreck Pond Inlet, by a party of militia under Capt. or Major Benjamin Dennis, in January, 1779, and Capt. Dennis had brought their corpses to Freehold for recognition, and to secure the reward offered by Governor Livingston. To avenge the death of these three men, Fenton waylaid Capt. Dennis in July, 1779, while traveling from Coryel's Ferry to his home in Shrewsbury, and brutally murdered him. Thomas Burk, alias Emmons, had been hung at Freehold in the the summer of 1778.

In August, following the murder of Capt. Dennis, Fenton and his gang murdered two aged people, Thomas Farr and his wife, in their own home, not far from the Yellow Meeting House in Upper Freehold Township. Wainright, a tax collector, was also found murdered about this time on the south side of the Manasquan River. This was also laid to the Fenton gang.

So great was the terror caused by his ferocity, cruelty, and daring, that Governor Livingston about this time, offered a reward of £500 (\$2,500) for Fenton, and smaller sums for his abettors and followers.

This large reward is evidence of the dread he inspired, and how difficult it was to induce anyone to hunt him down in his pine lairs and swamps. It seems from concurrent testimony that he was a desperate and dangerous man, quick and active as a panther in his movements,

cunning and deep in his plans, with a coolness and nerve no danger could shake. Masterful and cruel in his disposition, he exacted unquestioning obedience from the half savage denizens of the pine woods, whom he dominated and led.

On the 23rd of September, 1779, William VanMater, a lad of some 18 years of age, had been sent by his father on an errand to Longstreet's Mills, in the vicinity of what is now Our House Tavern. He rode there on horseback early in the morning. When within a mile or two of what is now Our House Tavern, but then a dense pine woods, his bridle was suddenly grabbed by John Fenton, a brother of Lewis, who was hidden behind a big pine tree close to the roadside. Lewis Fenton and DeBow then came out of the woods partially intoxicated. They pulled VanMater off his horse and began to search his pockets, while John Fenton unbuckled and took the saddle off the horse. Finding no money on his person. DeBow began to strike and kick him and finally knocked him down. Then, picking up his musket which had a bayonet affixed, he made a vicious lunge at his throat, as he lay on the ground. VanMater threw up his arm to fend off the thrust, and the bayonet pierced the fleshy part of his arm. At this moment a wagon with five or six men in it, was seen coming up the road from the direction of the Shark River salt works. The miscreants at once left their victim and retreated into the woods, John Fenton taking the saddle with him.

VanMater, who was young and active, at once sprang up, leaped on his horse and rode off bareback on a run. After going nearly a mile he stopped, tore off a strip from his shirt and bound up the wound in his arm. It then occurred to him that he had heard that Lee's rangers or light dragoons, were stationed at Freehold to protect the people. Smarting under the indignities to which he had been subjected, he at once resolved to ride there, and lodge his complaint against the robbers. This he at once did, running his horse all the way to Freehold. He fell in with a sergeant of the rangers to whom he told his story. This man had heard of Governor Livingston's \$2,500 reward for Fenton, dead or alive. He at once went to Major Lee and obtained permission to take three of the soldiers and go after Fenton.

A large farm wagon with horses was procured, two barrels were set in front, and a lot of hay was placed in the body. The three soldiers with loaded and cocked muskets by their sides, were ordered to lie down behind the barrels, and were covered over with the hay, so that they could not be seen, and were instructed that when they heard the sergeant strike his foot against the barrel, they were to rise up and shoot any person, whom the sergeant had his pistol pointed at. Two bottles filled with applejack were also procured, one the sergeant placed in his pocket; the other he gave to VanMater to carry. He also took off his uniform and dressed himself in an old suit borrowed from a farmer. A board was placed across the two barrels, and, with two loaded pistols under his coat, the sergeant took his seat by VanMater on this board. The whole rig resembled the usual teams or wagons of the farmers going after salt to the Shark River salt works. VanMater was directed to drive to the place where the robbers had attacked him. They reached the spot early in the afternoon but found no one there.

The sergeant then ordered VanMater to drive on a slow walk down the road leading to the Shark River salt works. This he did, and when they had gone about two miles, a hoarse call came from the woods to "Halt." Out strode the robber chief, a cocked rifle in one hand and a big horse pistol in the other, and another in his belt. He was still under the influence of liquor and more reckless than usual. Addressing VanMater with a vile oath, said "After the licking you got, how dare you show your rabbit face around here?" Then, noticing the barrels, he asked "Have you got any rum in them bar'ls?" "I have got some in a bottle," replied VanMater. "Hand it out dam quick, then," commanded Fenton, "or I'll blow your head off." The young man passed the bottle to him; he put his pistol back in his belt, let the butt of his rifle drop to the ground, and seizing the bottle, raised it to his mouth. As the rum gurgled down his throat, the sergeant gave the signal, and fired his pistol at the broad breast of the desperado, who was

only three or four feet from him. The ball struck him and he turned half around, letting the bottle fall, and made an effort to raise his rifle. At this moment the three soldiers, who had risen, fired, blowing off the top of his head. A few seconds later, the report of a gun was heard off in the woods. Thinking it was a signal, and that the gang might attack them from the thickets, they threw the corpse of the robber into the wagon and started back on a run towards the Court House. They reached there without any molestation; and great was the rejoicing when the news of Fenton's death went over the county. I suppose Governor Livingston paid the \$2,500 reward to these soldiers for killing Fenton. There ought to be records in the State House at Trenton to show this and who they were. It would be interesting to know their names.

At all events William VanMater did more for the people of Monmouth when he effected the slaying of this arch fiend of the pines than his three cousins ever did for the Royal side. The many stories told generation after generation about the three VanMaters who joined the army of King George, and fought against their own kinsmen, has also added to the popular belief, that the whole family were the worst kind of Tories.

Such tales grow and are exaggerated each generation. Great injustice and wrong has in this way been done to the VanMaters, who, as a rule, have been conscientious and honorable men, and have contributed much by their industry and ability, to the agricultural progress of Monmouth County, particularly in introducing blooded and fast horses and other stock.

As a great writer has said:

"Rashly, nor oft-times truly, doth man pass
judgment on his brother ;
For he seeth not the springs of the heart, nor
heareth the reasons of the mind.
And the World is not wiser than of old, when
justice was meted by the sword.
When the spear avenged the wrong, and the
lot decided the right.

When the footsteps of blinded innocence were
tracked by burning ploughshares
And the still condemning water delivered up
the wizard to the stake ;
For we wait, like the sage of Salamis, to see
what the end will be,
Fixing the right or the wrong, by the issues
of failure or success.

Judge not of things by their events: neither of
character by providence ;
And count not a man more evil, because he is
more unfortunate
For the blessing of a better covenant, lie not in
the sunshine of prosperity,
But pain and chastisement, the rather show
the wise Father's love."

Now I have seen an account, coming from the patriotic side, of a raid into Monmouth County. by a part of the brigade under Cortland Skinner. [sic] The three VanMaters served under him and were probably in this raid. This account says: "It is acknowledged their favor that they

behaved remarkably well to the persons of our people." There was a wide difference between these regular troops under reputable officers, and the whale boatmen from Long Island, the mongrel crew from the Refugee camp on Sandy Hook, and the bandits of the pines.

This story is given as an item of news fresh from Monmouth County, in the issue of the New Jersey Gazette "of June 27, 1781. (See files of this newspaper in the State Library):
"On Thursday last a body of 1,000 men, New Levies, British, and foreign troops, under command of Cortland Skinner, made an incursion into Monmouth county. They arrived at Pleasant Valley about 11 o'clock a. m. The militia by this time were beginning to collect, and a pretty severe skirmishing was kept up the remainder of the day, in which our people behaved with great spirit.

"They began their retreat about sundown, and made no halt till they got to Garrett's Hill, where they continued during the night. During the night one of our gallant officers made a descent upon them and rescued a number of stolen sheep.

"The next day they embarked again. They have taken off 40 cattle, 60 sheep, with loss of one man killed, and a number deserted. Their loss in wounded is unknown.

"Loss on our side. 1 killed, 3 or 4 wounded.

"They burned two houses, but it is acknowledged in their favor that they behaved remarkably well to the persons of our people. By their coming out in such force it was expected their aim was to have penetrated further into the county. To prevent which the militia of the neighboring counties were called upon, and it was truly surprising to see with what spirit and alacrity they flew to arms, and were crowding down from every quarter to the assistance of their brethren on this occasion, when accounts of the hasty retreat of the enemy, rendered their further services unnecessary."

This was evidently a foraging party after beef and mutton from Staten Island or New York City, but it was a very strong force for our militia of Middletown Township to fight, and compel them to retreat.

=====

ESCAPES OF DANIEL AND CHRINEYONCE VANMATER, ROYALISTS. -THE PINE ROBBERS OF MONMOUTH.

There are also two stories told of Daniel and Chrineyonce VanMater, repeated generation after generation, during the long winter evenings around the firesides in many of our farmhouses; and these tales have added to the belief that all the VanMaters were devoted Royalists. As has already been stated, Daniel and his brother Hendrick (Harry), were born and raised on the farm, near the Old Scots burying ground, only it included more of the adjacent lands. These and other lands belonging to them were confiscated and sold under the executions aforesaid. After serving in the New Jersey Royal Volunteers, or "Greens," a year or two, Daniel became very anxious to see his sister Catharine, who was then unmarried and kept things together at the homestead. He accordingly came over from Staten Island one night in the fall of 1778, and managed to reach his old home undetected. Next day one of the young negroes thoughtlessly mentioned to a patriotic neighbor that "Mar's Dan'l was home." This news flew all over, and along in the afternoon a part of light horsemen surrounded the hiuse and captured Daniel VanMater. He was allowed to mount one of his horses, and surrounded by armed horsemen, was escorted to Freehold to be lodged in jail. They reached the court house about dusk, and rode into the yard which was in front, and then inclosed by a stout and high board fence. A

sentinel was placed at the gate while they awaited the coming of the sheriff, who happened to be away. Thinking that their prisoner, who still sat on his horse, was entirely safe within this yard, they paid but little attention to him. VanMater gradually walked his horse over close to the court house, so that the whole width of the yard was between him and the front fence. It was now quite dark, when VanMater suddenly started his horse on a dead run for the front fence, which is said to have been fully six feet high. His horse, accustomed to the fox chases of those days, leaped like a deer, and went over that fence like a bird. It was a wonderful jump, and done so quickly in the gloom of evening, that before the light horsemen could recover from their astonishment, the rapid beat of his horse's hoofs was heard on a dead run going down the road, and 'his wild whoop of triumph sounded through the darkness. They knew it was hopeless to follow him on his blooded horse, and so VanMater escaped, and was never afterwards seen in Monmouth County. The whole county rung with his daring jump and escape, and the story has been told over and over down to this day.

Another well authenticated story is told of Chrineyonce VanMater, who is said to have carried on the mills at the place now known as Taylor's Mills, in Atlantic township. He had a slave called Tommy, who was very faithful and of whom he thought a great deal, and made careful provision for his comfortable maintenance in his old age.

A small party of militia was sent to arrest him, but Tommy saw them before they reached the house, and gave him warning when the party was about a quarter of a mile away.

Chrineyonce at once mounted one of his best horses, and started down the road which led to the Refugee camp on Sandy Hook. Among the militia was a resident of Colts Neck, and a bitter personal enemy of Chrineyonce. He was mounted on a very fine and fast horse, and armed with a sabre and pistols.

As soon as the militiamen discovered that their "bird had flown." they started in pursuit, for VanMater was not over a quarter of a mile ahead of them. When they reached bourn's corner without gaining on him they all gave up the chase, except the Colts Neck man, who swore he would have him or his corpse. Brandishing his sabre and striking his horse now and then with the flat side, he kept right on in VanMater's track, for he intended to cut him down or shoot him. They passed through Middetown village like a flash, but when VanMater began to mount the high hill, which lies east of the intersection of the Red Bank road with the road from Middletown to the Highlands, he discovered that his horse was showing signs of distress. Chrineyonce was a large, heavy man, resembling physically his maternal grandfather and was noted for his great bodily strength, but his great weight was telling on his horse. When he reached the top of the hill and looked back, he saw his pursuer was now gaining on him, and not over 500 yards behind him, flourishing his sabre and showing in every move his deadly purpose. Just as Chrineyonce passed over the crest of the hill, he met a boy on a fine horse with a bag of meal in front, coming towards him. Riding close up to him he caught him by the collar, and lifted him off of the horse, at the same time tossing off the bag of meal. He at once changed horses and went on a run towards Sandy Hook. When the Colts Neck man reached the top of the hill and saw VanMater skimming away on a fresh horse, he swore many bitter oaths, but gave up the chase. Chrineyonce reached Sandy Hook, and from there went to New York and joined Col. Lawrence's battalion of the New Jersey Royal Volunteers, and for this the second execution on page 99, Book A of Executions, in clerk's office, was perhaps issued against him. His father, however, in his will, made provision that Chrineyonce's children should have what he left, if there was any likelihood of confiscation. This last execution was not recorded until February 4, 1784. Gilbert VanMater seems also to have been on the patriotic side. The following news item appears in the June 14, 1780, number of the New Jersey Gazette, then printed and published at Trento, N. J.

Extract from a letter from Monmouth Co. of June 12:

"Ty, with his party of about 20 Blacks and Whites last Friday afternoon, took and carried oil Prisoners, Capt. Barnes Smoek and Gilbert VanMater, at the same time spiked up the iron four pounder at Capt. Smock's house, but took no ammunition. Two of the artillery horses and two of Capt. Smock's horses were taken off. The above mentioned Ty is a negro who bears the title of Colonel, and commands a motley crew at Sandy Hook."

Although this is a brief notice, it involves quite a long explanation in order to understand it. Tye, who was a mulatto, and a runaway slave, was acquainted with all the bypaths and woods in this part of Monmouth. He had led his men through the woods, and by unfrequented paths, and had taken Capt. Smock by surprise. The spiking of the cannon was to disable the gun and prevent an alarm.

It has often been asked, why the Sandy Hook Marauders and the Pine Robbers passed by the rich and fertile farms around Shrewsbury and Eatontown villages, so much nearer to them, and went to a more distant region like Colts Neck and Pleasant Valley.

The reason was that this was the very heart of Monmouth county, where the most active and resolute patriots lived. Around Shrewsbury they were lukewarm, to say the least. This Pleasant Valley region was known among the Tories of Monmouth as the "Hornets' Nest," a name given at a later date to the Democracy of the old township of Middletown. Capt. Barnes Smock lived on the farms where Charles Lloyd lived, and the one now owned by the children of John J. Crawford, deceased, lying on the north side of Hop Brook and west of the road from Holmdel village to the bridge over this stream. This last farm was afterwards owned and occupied by his son Barnes.

In Stryker's book, "Officers and Men of New Jersey in the Revolutionary War," he is described as Capt. Barnes Smock of an artillery company. The other Barnes Smock was captain of a light horse company. The last Barnes Smock was often called "Leggy" Barnes on account of his long legs, for he was a man of great size. They were both designated as captains during the Revolution. On the tombstone of the last Capt. Barnes Smock in Lefferts-Logan graveyard, his name is inscribed "Col. Barnes J. Smock."

The residence of Capt. Smock near Hop Brook was the rallying place for the Middletown patriots to meet. A circle of about four miles drawn around, with Capt. Smock's dwelling as the center, would take in the greater part of the most active and zealous of the patriots in old Middletown Township. This region was well called the "Hornets' Nest," for their stings meant death to the Tories. The four pounder was placed here, and used as a signal gun. On any ordinary day or night, the boom of this cannon could be heard for miles around. The Schancks, Hendricksons, VanDorns, Smocks, Hyres, Holmeses, and Covenhovens, through Pleasant Valley could hear it. The Hulsarts, (Hulses), VanKirks, Wyckoffs, DuBoises, VanCleafs, Covenhovens and Schancks who lived in the vicinity of old Brick Church could hear the report.

So the boom went westward among the Strykers, VanSicklens (Sickles), Wyckoffs, Voorheeses. VanDerveers and Conovers, living through what is now Marlboro Township. It went roaring southward to the Scobeyville and Colts Neck neighborhoods, among the VanBrunts, VanDerveers, Lefferts, Bennetts, VanSutphens, Polhemuses, Conovers and VanSchoicks. The report of this four pounder was a notice to all that the enemy was making a raid somewhere in Middletown township. Every man among the associated patriots seized his rifle or musket, swung his powder horn and bullet pouch over his shoulders and often barefooted and in his shirt sleeves would spring on his horse, and ride as fast as the horse could run, over to Capt. Smock's house. Therefore, even in the middle of the night, if a scout brought word to Capt.

Smock that the enemy was landing from their boats at ilatawan creek, Navesink, Shoal Harbor creek (now Port Monmouth), or on the Middletown side of the Shrewsbury river, the cannon was fired. In a few minutes, from all around, armed men would come, riding in on horseback, and at once a troop was formed to meet the coming raiders, sometimes by ambush, and sometimes by a wild tornado charge on horseback. This explains the swiftness with which the many raids of the enemy were met and repulsed, although the newspapers of that time do not report one-fourth of the fights, skirmishes, and raids through this part of Monmouth. The rich farms with their cattle, horses, sheep, hogs, and well stocked cellars, smokehouses and barns, constantly attracted the Refugees from Sandy Hook, foraging parties from Staten Island, the crews from the British transports and men of war in the Lower bay, who craved fresh provisions like chickens, milk, butter, etc., after their long voyage across the ocean, living on salt provisions. The spiking of this four pounder by Tye and his gang was a serious matter, and so was the kidnapping of Capt. Barnes Smock with Gilbert VanMater, who doubtless helped him load and discharge this cannon.

The people of this vicinity were well called "Hornets." and Col. Tye knew enough not to bring them about his ears, for he got safely back to Sandy Hook with his two prisoners and four horses. Only two or three years previous the people of this vicinity were slow moving, good natured, kind hearted farmers, as many of their descendants, who still live on these lands, are today. They had no military training, and knew nothing of war or camp life, but were men of peaceable lives and kindly deeds.

After three years of war had passed these quiet and hospitable farmers had become a stern faced, haggard band of desperate men. In that time many of them had fathers, brothers, or sons, who had starved to death in the British prisons of New York. Others, who had skeletons, and told horrible and ghastly tales of Cunningham's brutality, of slow, lingering death, with insults and cruelties superadded to embitter the dying hour. When they heard these things, they thought it was easier to die fighting, than to suffer death by inches amidst such horrors.

Others of them had seen a father, brother, or son suddenly shot down while at work in his field by a hidden assassin in an adjoining thicket. Others again had seen a father, while working near his home to provide for wife and children, suddenly shot down, and then bayoneted before the eyes of his horror-struck wife and terrified children. Others again had come home from the battles of Brandywine, Germantown, or other scenes of conflict, and found their wives and daughters dishonored and gibbering idiots, their stock gone, and often their houses and outbuildings burned to the ground.

While these outrages cannot be charged on the Regulars, British and Royal American troops under honorable officers, yet they can be on many of the whale-boatmen from Long Island, the Refugees on Sandy Hook, and the outlaws of the pines. These wrongs and sufferings had changed the quiet farmers of Pleasant Valley, into a band of fierce and desperate men to whom fighting became a joy, if he could only kill, and kill, and kill these demons who had wrecked his life. Col. Asher Holmes' regiment was made up principally of these farmers, and, at the battle of Germantown, they stood and held their ground after the regular troops had twice broke and run. *

(See letter from Col. Asher Holmes to his wife, written after the battle of Germantown, and published in Monmouth Democrat. Asher Holmes was a native of the old township of Middletown, and a farmer by occupation. He was the first sheriff of Monmouth County under our republic, a staunch patriot, a brave man, and a good officer, although he had no military education or training.

The following extracts are from entries in an old Bible, much dilapidated, mouse eaten, and torn, now in possession of Asher H. Holmes, his great grandson, who resides on the Tylee Schanck homestead in Marlboro Township:

"John Watson and Hope Taylor, joynd in Bonds of Holy Matrimony ye 15th of December, in the year of our Lord, 1737-8." (1738).

Then follows births of three children by this marriage, but names are torn off. On the next page, (first entry):

"Asher Holmes and Sarah Watson were married on Thursday, 21st day of February, 1771."

Then follow births of several sons and daughters, and, finally:

"Asher Holmes departed this life June 20, 1808, aged 68 yrs., 4 mo., and 4 da. Sarah Holmes, widow of Asher Holmes, departed this life Sept. 11, 1830."

Then follow two entries, copied from some other records, as follows:

"Sarah Salter, daughter of Samuel Holmes, died January 14, 1757."

"Samuel Holmes departed this life February 20, 1760."

I understand that Col. Asher Holmes is buried in the yard of the Baptist church at Holmdel village, but I have never made a personal examination of this cemetery. Asher Holmes Conover, who owned and occupied a farm in the township of Freehold, about a mile and a half from Old Tennent church, and who died last spring, and his brother, Peter H. Conover, who also owns a farm in this same vicinity, are great grandsons of Col. Asher Holmes.)

This, too, after marching all day and the preceding night, and going into battle without rest or food. The militia of Somerset county, and Monmouth had come under the eyes of General Lafayette, and he remarked that "for coolness and bravery they exceeded all his expectations of the militia."

But it had required a baptism of fire, misery and wrong for three years, to stir up their quiet blood and easy nature, and bring them up to this pitch of savage desperation and wild fury. Gilbert VanMater and others of this name on the patriotic side had endured and suffered with the rest, and therefore, I contradict the current story, which has so long been told, that all the VanMaters were Royalists.