

6739

37-2

# ANNALS

OF

# STATEN ISLAND,

From its Discovery to the Present Time.

BY

*John*  
J. J. CLUTE.

"2"

"If we look for a spot which forever is blest  
By Nature with her perennial smile,

• • • • •

We never need leave our own green Isle."

ANON.

NEW YORK:

PRESS OF CHAS. VOGT, No. 114 FULTON STREET.

1877.

present County Clerk, Jonathan Lewis, Esq., and that they make an Inventory of such Books and Papers as they shall find in the office of Said Clerk, and shall deposit such Books and Papers in the office now erected in the Village of Richmond for that purpose. Resolved that Walter Betts, Esq., Richard D. Littell, Esq., and Abraham Auten, Deputy Clerk, is hereby appointed to take an Inventory of said Books and Papers, and deliver them to the said Abraham Auten, Deputy Clerk, on his giving a receipt for such Books and Papers on the Schedule or Inventory, and deliver such Schedule so signed to the Supervisors of Said County, By order of the Supervisors.

RICHARD CONNER, Clk."

In January, 1830, there is an allowance of a bill to "Frederick B. Allen for work done and yet to be finished by him on the Poor house and out Buildings. \$83 29"

In December, 1829, a bill was allowed to Richard D. Littell and John Guyon as committee men, "to take into consideration the purchasing of a Farm for the poor of said County, also for advertising and attendance to receive proposals from persons who had farms for sale."

In December, 1829, and January, 1830, bills to a large amount were audited for work, materials, &c., for the poor-house.

---

### THE COUNTY POOR-HOUSE.

Prior to the establishment of a County Poor-House, the destitute poor were provided for by being boarded in private families, and sometimes under circumstances such as now would not be tolerated, as when children were paid for taking care of their helpless parents, of which there were several instances.

On the second day of May, 1808, Joseph Barton, Sen., carpenter, and Mary, his wife, sold to the Supervisors, Justices, and Overseers of the Poor of the county, for the sum of \$262.50, two acres of land, on the road leading from Richmond to New Dorp, on which was a small frame house, containing two or three rooms. This property was purchased for the purpose of a County Poor-House, though it was not

able to accommodate one-fourth of the poor of the county, who appear to have been more numerous in proportion to the population than they are at present; the remainder were disposed of as before stated. The public charity continued to be dispensed in this manner for more than a quarter of a century after the purchase.

In January, 1829, the Supervisors called a public meeting of the taxpayers of the county, to devise some cheaper method of supporting the poor, "as the taxes were becoming burdensome." Whatever methods may have been proposed at that meeting, the proposition to purchase a farm large enough to enable the poor to earn their own subsistence by their own labor was adopted, and John Guyon and Richard D. Littell were appointed to ascertain what farms could be purchased, and at what prices, and to report at an adjourned meeting.

In the meantime an application was made to the Legislature for authority to make a purchase for the purpose proposed, and to levy a tax to pay for it. On the 8th day of April, 1829, the following Act was passed:

"An Act to provide for a County Poor-House, in the county of Richmond.

§ 1. The Act entitled, "An Act to provide for the establishment of County Poor-Houses," passed November 27th, 1824, shall apply to and include the county of Richmond, the exception in the said Act notwithstanding; but the sum to be raised by a tax, as specified in the first section, shall not exceed four thousand dollars.

§ 2. It shall be lawful for the Supervisors of the said county of Richmond to sell the house and ground at present possessed by the county, and heretofore appropriated as a poor-house, and to apply the proceeds towards the purposes expressed in the said Act, and to no other purpose."

Of the several farms offered to the county, that of Stephen Martineau, containing between ninety and one hundred acres, in the town of Northfield, was selected, for which about three thousand dollars was paid, and which still belongs to the county, and continues to be occupied as a poor-house farm.

On the 13th day of April, 1830, the Supervisors sold the old poor-house property to William D. Maltbie, for the sum

of one hundred and fifty dollars. This is the property now occupied by Dr. Millspaugh, near Richmond, opposite the parsonage of St. Andrew's Church.

From the Supervisors' accounts, it would appear that the new establishment was supplied with two or three cargoes of fertilizing materials, wagons, horses, cows, and necessary agricultural instruments. Isaac Britton was the keeper.

On the 18th of October, 1836, the supervisors purchased fourteen and eight-tenths acres of salt meadow from John Egbert for \$205.

On the 7th day of January, 1842, the supervisors purchased five acres of woodland adjoining the county farm on the west, from William Decker, for \$250.

How far the original purpose of making the paupers support themselves by their own labor, has been successful, is foreign to our present purpose; the establishment has been regularly maintained, new buildings have been erected as circumstances developed their necessity, among which are apartments for the insane, a pest-house, and recently a respectable school-house.

The present keeper is Mr. Thomas McCormack.

---

The last royal patent for lands on Staten Island was granted by Queen Anne, to Lancaster Symes, on the 22d of October, 1708. It conveyed all unappropriated lands, meadows, &c., &c., on the Island, at an annual rent of six shillings current money of New York, payable on Lady-day of each year. It is recorded at Albany in book No. 7 of Patents, page 371, and quite recently recorded in this County.

---

As an example of the manner in which the old Dutch family records were kept, we subjoin the following of part of the Van Name family. The orthography is exceedingly defective: