

# Bayonne was Only Four Days Old When Civil War Began But City Didn't Have to Fight to Secede from Township

Abraham Lincoln was president and Bayonne was four days old when Fort Sumter, off Charleston, S. C., was fired on by General Beauregard's Confederate troops. That started the Civil War.

One of the issues was the demand of the South to secede, a privilege which came to Bayonne without bloodshed. Because for 200 years prior to April 8, 1861 this territory south of the Morris Canal was part of the Township of Bergen, now mainly Jersey City.

The new frontier of the profile of America, a study commission aimed at giving Bayonne identity was set up by legislative action in 1857, and was well under way in 1858 when Lincoln and Douglas staged their great debates for the Senate seat from Illinois.

Students of Bayonne history note that the study commission had street plans ready for Bayonne in 1859, the year John Brown invaded Virginia. Harriet Beecher Stowe that year wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which dramatized the plight of the Negroes.

When Bayonne was entitled to one candle on the cake, the Monitor and Merrimac, the first ironclad vessels, battled each other in Chesapeake Bay. Admiral Farragut took New Orleans, the Homestead Act was passed.

Bayonne was two years old when President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation setting all slaves free. The Battle of Gettysburg and the Vicksburg surrender happened the same year.

Lincoln was assassinated when Bayonne was four years old. But his Emancipation principles still live, especially on this side of the Morris Canal.

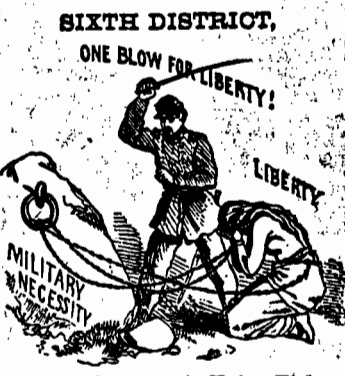
The Union's birthpangs were Bayonne's. Men fought in the Civil War after leaving their kin here and were listed from this territory.

Official records culled from the Laws of New Jersey, Session of 1861, show that the Legislature approved the formation of Bayonne, to be separated from the Township of Bergen, and consisting of all the area lying south of the Morris Canal. This, by the way, is still the boundary between Bayonne and Jersey City. The Legislature in Trenton approved this act on March 15, 1861 to become effective on April 8, 1861. Fort Sumter was April 12.

There are other dates germane to Bayonne's beginnings. For example, the incorporation as a city was authorized on March 10. A revised charter was passed March 22, 1872. But the official day that Bayonne was given identity was 100 years ago.

The Senate and the General Assembly called it Chapter 153, New Jersey Laws of 1861, which gave the inhabitants here status as "a body politic and corporate in law."

This 1861 act even set up the first meeting of the Centerville Mansion House. Another meeting was directed for the first



## Regular Democratic Union Ticket.

For Electors of President and Vice-President,  
**WILLIAM PATERSON,  
 FURMAN L. MULFORD,  
 THOMAS McKEEN,  
 WILLIAM P. McMICHAEL,  
 CHARLES R. CORNWELL,  
 FRANCIS S. LATHROP,  
 JOHN MCGREGOR.**

For Representative in Congress—8th District,  
**EDWIN R. V. WRIGHT.**

For County Clerk,  
**GEORGE W. CASSEDY.**

For Sheriff,  
**BERNARD McANALLY.**

For Surrogate,  
**JAMES O'NEIL.**

For Member of Assembly—6th District,  
**HIRAM VAN BUSKIRK.**

For Coroners,  
**DENNIS FARRELL,  
 MARTIN HANLEY,  
 GEORGE S. AVERY.**

**ELECTION 100 YEARS AGO** — These are the ballots for the 1861 national and city elections. Voters didn't cast ballots for

Monday in May at the house of Immanuel as King of Italy. But John Van Buskirk in Saltersville (u)ptown) to divide the assets and liabilities of Bayonne and Bergen.

This actually is the first re-valuation and reassessment for Bayonne. Officials of Bayonne and Bergen were directed by law to allot all the properties and moneys on hand, due or to become due, in proportion to the taxable properties and ratables, as valued and assessed within both townships as of the last assessment.

These were the days when the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, tingled feminine hearts by visiting the United States. For the men there was more interest in the first pony express between Sacramento, Calif., and St. Joseph's, Mo., 1,980 miles apart. And the same year when Bayonne came into status, Giuseppe Garibaldi led 1,000 volunteers to Sicily to unify Italy by force. He deposed Francis II of Naples, and hailed Victor

## BAYONNE TOWNSHIP Regular Union Ticket.

*Superintendent of Schools,*  
**T. W. Wells.**  
*Town Clerk,*  
**F. I. Smith.**  
*Assessor,*  
**J. B. Stronham.**  
*Commissioner of Appeals,*  
**D. W. C. Morris.**  
*Collector,*  
**Hartman Vreeland, Jr.**  
*Judge of Election,*  
**Hartman Vreeland.**  
*Commissioners of Appeal,*  
**D. Labourette, John Combs,  
 H. K. Van Horn.**  
*Township Committee,*  
**G. Davis, J. Van Buskirk, Jr.,  
 T. C. Brown, D. B. Sanford,  
 John Rowland.**  
*Police Keepers,*  
**B. Van Horn, Wm. W. Vreeland,  
 John Rowland.**  
*Poor Master,*  
**William W. Vreeland.**  
*Constables,*  
**B. Van Horn, Wm. W. Vreeland,  
 Samuel Odell.**  
*Road Masters,*  
**Robert Taylor, Daniel Salter,  
 Henry Post, Thomas White.**  
*Surveyors of Highways,*  
**J. B. Glose, Peter Vreeland.**  
*Game Keepers,*  
**Jacob Van Post, John Post.**  
*Justices of the Peace,*  
**F. P. Miller, F. I. Smith.**

**APPROPRIATIONS**—School purposes, \$3000; Road purposes, \$800; Poor, \$100.  
**Fall and Spring Elections to be held at H. F. Crawford's Hotel, Bayonne.**

Lincoln, but for his electors. These sample ballots were obtained from pharmacist K. Jacob Sandler.

territory, Hudson's loop cast anchor about halfway between Robbins Reef and Bird's Point. He made peace with the Indians and gained first knowledge of the river that was to bear his name. After a permanent settlement was established at New Amsterdam Henry Hudson sailed away to Albany.

In Europe the Hudson voyage was hailed as the forerunner of a new age in space. Patrons then turned their attention to William Shakespeare who was to retire in Stratford in 1610, after his most productive decade which included Hamlet, Macbeth, Henry V, etc.

Bayonne in Hudson's time, was a favorite trail end for Indian tribes who paid periodic visits here to gather oysters and fish. Both Newark and New York Bay shorelines, as we now know it, were natural oyster beds, and were thronged each season with millions of pelicans, ducks, geese, and many other water

fowl. Animals and Indians supposedly made well beaten trails on this peninsula, a legend has it that the Boulevard follows closely one of the old Indian trails.

When Dutch settlers established here 300 years ago, they gave the name of Bergen to that territory from the southerly end of the Kill van Kull what is now, roughly, the Kill of Hackensack. This was all Township of Bergen, from which Bayonne was separated "as a body politic" in 1861. Present scholars in Jersey City say that Bergen-op-Zoom was the inspiration for calling it Bergen. Certainly, the present Bayonne inhabitants are more qualified to celebrate the tercentenary of Hudson's landing, since it was in Bayonne that the first white traced the firm.

John Jacoba firm. John Jacoba firm, a gun on the Half-Moon, possibly native of Bergen-op-Zoom, the distinction of being the first recorded real estate landowner in Bayonne. Records show that in 1646, Ray secured a "patent" for about 300 acres of land on this peninsula, and he selected Bird Point, or the Hook. Eight more years, no other real estate transactions were recorded and then 10 more were authorized by Dutch Governor William Kieft. Early landowners were Jacob Walling, Jan Carnelissen, Buys, Jan I. bersten, Lubbert Eysbert Gerrit Peetersen, Jan Schmaker, Jan Ferritsen Van men, Hendrick Jansen, Schalkwyck and Jan Cornelissen Crynnen. All patents were for "25 morgens" between "municipal and Kill van Kull."

One of the later purchasers of one tract was an ancestor of the Vreeland family. Another early grantee posed of his property to Iliam Douglass for a negro. More and more settlers began to farm here and set up homesteads.

Then came the Indian war. Many early settlers were murdered or were forced to flee to New Amsterdam. An Indian massacre took place in 1655. Farms were isolated settlements were deserted nearly 20 years. Then in 1660 Van Buskirk's settlement, on the north side of Constance Hook became a thriving center. The years between were noteworthy. In 1609 the grims landed at Cape Cod. In 1626, Peter Minuit bought Manhattan from the Indians for \$24. In 1630, the first settlement was founded in 1630. The first adventure and romance are narrated by old records between the 17th and 18th centuries. For one thing, city of New York grew rapidly as a great seaport attracting vessels with trading goods from England, France, Spain and Holland. The age of piracy took hold.

New York harbor was an ideal rendezvous for the sea marauders. Taverna on the sides of the Hudson River became great news distribution centers.  
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