

Bayonne and South Hudson

**Paper read by DeWitt Van Buskirk, before Hudson Historical Society,
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While other bold navigators and explorers may have sailed past Sandy Hook and through the Narrows before Hendrick Hudson, we Dutchmen like to regard him as discoverer of this beautiful section of America and the grandest harbor on the Atlantic Coast. Though he was an Englishman, the enterprise was a Dutch enterprise, in the interest of the Dutch East India Company.

Hudson and his bold crew of the "Half Moon" are accepted in history as the first white men to make the harbor and explore the glorious river that bears his name. When he cast anchor on the third day of September, sixteen hundred and nine, in the horseshoe inside Sandy Hook (that beautiful outer harbor of this great port), the sight that met his eyes must have been a glorious one. The Navesink Highlands to the south, the expanse of Princes Bay to the west, the Narrows and the heights of Staten Island to the north, with the broad ocean, over which he had so recently passed, to the east, must have been a picture of delight. This spot is today the "Mecca" of the yachtsmen and the sportsman. Then, later, as he felt his way through the Narrows, past the high wooded shores of Staten Island and Long Island and cast anchor, as Winfield's history has it, near the mouth of Kill Van Kull, he felt safe from every danger of the sea, and as quoted from his diary, he found the shores on both sides, "as pleasant with grasse and flowers and goodly trees as ever they had seen and very sweet smells came from them." Of the harbors he says, "We

saw that it was a very good harbor for all winds." He found the Indians on Long Island and Manhattan side of the bay unfriendly. One of his best men was killed in an attack upon the men who were sent out in a small boat to explore the shores of the bay, but he also found the Indians on the New Jersey side of the harbor to be far friendlier than those on the eastern side. Winfield says, "This attack was probably made at the mouth of the Kill Van Kull. It is also probable that the canoes were from Manhattan, for the Indians on the Jersey side visited the ship the next day and seemed to be ignorant to what happened." This would not have been so had the attack been made by any of the west side of the bay. It must also be borne in mind that there was no intercourse between the tribes on the opposite sides of the river.

From this place of anchorage of the "Half Moon" exploration parties were also sent through Kill Von Kull and up Newark Bay, afterward called Achter Coll, that is the back bay, to distinguish it from the New York Bay. Afterwards this name of Achter Coll or Arthur Kull was applied to the narrows strip of water lying between Staten Island and New Jersey from Perth Amboy to Elizabethport.

It was thus seen that Hendrick Hudson and his men had a very kindly regard for the beautiful stretch of land bounded by waters of Newark Bay, Kill Von Kull and New York Bay, known as Bayonne.

With its dense woods and the beautiful foliage, with the shores in their natural state, this territory must have been extremely attractive. Bayonne can therefore claim, with no unnecessary stretch of imagination, to have been the first of the territory explored by our distinguished Dutch discoverer.

I will endeavor, in the time that is allotted me, to trace the development of this section of Hudson County down to the present time. This section of the county has been from its first discovery and settlement, and is now more or less tied up and affiliated with the larger settlements of Bergen, Jersey City, and New Amsterdam or the great city of New York. The events of independent historical importances that appertain distinctively to this territory have been apparently few. I will endeavor, however, to outline what will be of interest to this society. I cannot claim very much of original research, but have gathered what follows from various sources, including local tradition and recollections of some of the old settlers, and I make use of much information from Winfield's History of Hudson County.

Constable Hook, by reason of its nearness to the Narrows, and also because it is at the mouth of the Kill Van Kull, appears to have secured prominence in its early days out of proportion to its later importance. This point, as you well know, is distinctive name given to that portion of Bayonne, which lies opposite New Brighton, Staten Island, and is now the center of a hive of oil and other industries. This point, containing one hundred and fifty morgens (about three hundred acres) was granted to Jacobson Roy, a gunner of Fort Amsterdam, hence the name Konstable, the title for gunner, and Hocke, Point, Constable Hook, or Gunner's Point.

In those days it was probably, as in later years, and before the greater industries located there, a piece of rolling land and sandy character with salt marshes intervening. Van Buskirk's Point, which is really a part of the same formation jutting out into the bay was to the north of the point, distinctively named Constable Hook. On VanBoskerck's Point stood a peaked roof one and one-half story stone house of moderate dimensions,

until recently, torn down by the Standard Oil Company, among the first, if not the first house ever built in Bayonne. It was the homestead of one branch of the Van Buskirk family who, generation after generation, tilled the soil as farmers, assisted by slave labor, and marketed their surplus products at the growing city of New York. Transportation of produce, etc., in those days was by "pierauga," a type of sailboat much like a schooner in rig with not jib or topsails. The old house remained in the family until recently purchased by the Standard Oil Company. Near this house was the old VanBuskirk Cemetery, where nearly all the old settlers were buried. Here was buried old Peter VanBuskirk and his descendants, also the ancestors of the Cadmus, Vreeland, Cubberly, Van Horn, Garrabrant and many old families. This burial place was not much used after 1880 and fell into decay and was neglected. The bodies of many were removed to other cemeteries and since the purchase of the surrounding properties by the Standard, the old graves and vaults have been wiped out and oil tanks have been erected where these old worthies slept; the bones of some were not cared for and re-interred elsewhere before the ruthless hand of commerce laid hold of these historic grounds; they were scattered and the stones that marked their resting place destroyed. Many old headstones and records of historic value were thus wiped out and beyond recall.

Roy received a patent for these lands in March 1646. In 1654 patents were issued for lands between Gemonepas and the Kilvankol. What was formerly called Pamrapo but then Pemrepegh, now portion of the Third Ward of the city of Bayonne, was within this grant. It was an Indian name.

During this period, the growth of the settlement was much retarded by the unfriendly attitude of the Indians, who had been incensed by the treatment they had

received from the Dutch at New Amsterdam. The barbarous attacks upon the isolated farm houses scattered over this territory compelled the inhabitants to fly for shelter to New Amsterdam and their houses were burned, and cattle driven off. For a number of years it was unsafe for them to return to their farms and rebuild. After the troubles with the Indians had subsided this section of the country became again inhabited by the former owners and by others who came with them, until clusters of houses, build near each other for mutual protection, formed themselves into villages for hamlets. Gradually, the Indians disappeared from this locality, withdrawing to the interior where he would not be molested by the intrusive white. The forests were cleared and as the farms were extended the population increased.

Winfield relates in his history how the villages of Pemrepogh, and Mingague were accused of not contributing their fair share to the support of the preceptor and schoolmaster at Bergen. The magistrates of Bergen ordered that all should pay a certain portion of this expense. These villages disregarded this demand and the authorities in New Orange were called upon to compel them to pay their share. The result of this appeal was that these inhabitants were ordered to pay up. After this decision, it is related by the historian "the schoolmaster confided to his whip a more artistic flourish and the preceptor chanted with a cleaver voice, but his triumphant cadences were soon turned into doleful minor by the unregenerate stubbornness of Mingague and Pemrepogh. These uncircumcised in heart thought Old Hundred and Windham, piping out from under the pulpit, very good music for those who were educated up to that standard, and were willing to pay for the luxury. The schoolmaster, with eyes severe, piloting the bewildered urchin through the mazes of the multiplication table by the aid of the birch,

was very good in his way to those who lived near enough to enjoy the blessing of his wisdom. But they resolutely refused to be thus edified or instructed, and declined to contribute to the general expense of such benefactions. Persevering in their disobedience, another order was made that immediate execution should issue against these unwilling debtors. This put it up to the unwilling debtors either to fight or remonstrate against what they considered oppression. They chose the latter. Lourens Andriessen, the ancestor of the VanBuskirk family, at Mingaque, and Jooset Vander Linde were appointed agents to submit the cause of the people to the authorities in New Orange. This appeal, however, was without avail. Other disputes arose later, but were ultimately comprised without bloodshed.

Almost all of the lands of Greenville and Bayonne were used as common lands for cattle grazing, and it was not until subsequent years that these lands were divided into severalty among their respective owners.

Nothing of very marked historical importance seems to have occurred after this period until the time of the Revolutionary War, nor did this locality grow very largely in its population. It still consisted of isolated farm dwellings and two or three small hamlets. During the Revolutionary period it seems to have been to some extent a thoroughfare for the fighting forces between Staten Island and New York and Northern New Jersey. Winfield relates that when Admiral Howe's fleet came into the harbor he anchored off at the mouth of the Kill Van Kull and his troops landed on Staten Island. Fearing an attack from Staten Island, General Mercer, on July 4th, 1776, placed a guard of five hundred men at Bergen Neck.

Later it appeared that the force of men that had been placed in this locality was not sufficient to protect it, and it was proposed to send the Pennsylvania militia to Bergen Neck. The different passes in Bergen Neck were to be fortified. There were skirmishes between the outlying forces during all the time Howe's fleet was within the harbor, and this continued along the entire shore of Bergen Point to Elizabethport. Evidently some of the British forces had occupied Constable Hook. Later, when the British had full occupancy in New York, the Continental troops were withdrawn from this section and the Tory and the English contingent occupied the neck of land, and Fort Delancy was used as an outlying post by the Tory forces. This fort was located as far as can be determined, on the high ground near the old homestead of Hartman Vreeland (recently torn down) about at 52nd Street, west of Avenue C.

During the remainder of the Revolutionary War the Tories were in practical control of this neck of land, and no events of Revolutionary interest occurred there. The bushwhacking and skirmishes were of a trivial character between small bands of soldiers and hangers-on. No event of historical importance appears to have transpired in this section during this period after the Revolutionary War, and until the War of 1812, nor during that war, although the harbor of New York was undoubtedly the scene of naval activity.

Later, during what was known as the "Cholera Year," which was in the '30's, a large number of the inhabitants of this place were taken down with the scourge and died. Tradition attributes the scourge to the fact that bedding or other stuff, which had been upon some ship infested with cholera lying in the harbor, had been thrown overboard and had drifted to the shores of Bayonne and some of the people had come in contact with it,

either by using the bedding, or otherwise, and thus the disease got a foothold, which swept over the entire neck, leaving devastation in its path.

The inhabitants of this section, afterwards, comprising of Bayonne, were scattered, but might be considered as divided into about forty small settlements or groups. One was at Bergen Point near the ferry landing to Staten Island. This ferry was at first propelled by horsepower and many an involuntary voyage toward New York or Elizabethport was taken, while crossing, because the power generated was not sufficient to stem the swift tide of the Kill Van Kull. Later, these inconveniences were overcome by the introduction of the steamboat. This, however, was many years afterwards. A post office was established here, known as Bergen Point Post Office.

A second and possibly the oldest settlement was at Constable Hook. In this section, there were about five or six families. Here afterwards, were the farms of the Vreelands. VanBuskirks. And Terhunes. The old tidal creek near where now stands the works of the Oxford Copper Company, was in operation to grind the farm products, wheat rye, buckwheat, of the farms of Bergen Neck and Staten Island. The mill was known as Terhune's Mill. From this point also, where Kill Van Kull joins New York Bay the transportation by boat to New Amsterdam was cheap and easy.

The first factory to invade this territory was the Bergen Point Copper Co., prior to 1848; then came White's Sulphur Works, located here in 1950. Now the whole Hook is covered with tanks and stills of the Standard Oil Company and the factories of other large corporations.

The third settlement was at Centreville. This community consisted of several farmhouses located near together. Later, however, quite a group of houses clustered

around the country store, located near what is now the corner of 22nd Street and Avenue D or Broadway. In the later days, Hanson Carragan's Store, located there, was the general dispensary of the dry goods, wet goods, groceries, clothes, tobacco, farm utensils, drugs, paints and every conceivable kind of merchandise needed by the farmer or fisherman. Here also, a post office was established called the "Centreville Post Office."

Afterwards a road house of considerable proportions, known as the "Mansion House," was built at the corner of 21st Street, or Old Hook Road and the Plank Road, and owned and run by one Dodge, afterwards called the "City Hotel," and kept by one White.

The fourth hamlet or settlement was at Pemrepough, afterwards called Saltersville. One historian says that in 1680 there were about twenty-families comprising this hamlet. In later years, when the neck of the land had become more thickly populated, a post office was established here, which was called, "Saltersville."

Civil War

At the breaking out of the War of the Rebellion, it is doubtful whether there were more than four or five hundred people residing in the limits of Bayonne. It was still a rural community. It was, however, intensely loyal. It had been difficult to get and satisfactory record of the men who went from Bayonne to serve as soldiers in this war, but a large number of men enlisted with Newark or Elizabeth companies.

At the outbreak of the War, a militia company was organized, known as the "Close Light Guards." It was so named from the fact that Joseph B. Close, who was then quite a wealthy resident and property owner here, provided money for some of the equipment. It was a company of about sixty men, captained by John J. VanBuskirk, afterwards promoted to Major. The company formed a part of the Second New Jersey

Volunteers, and went to the front in April 1861. These men were among the first who enlisted under the three months' call of President Lincoln. It was then thought that the war could be quickly terminated, and that three months would be sufficient to end it. Afterwards, most of these men re-enlisted in the Twenty-first New Jersey Volunteers, of which Hiram VanBuskirk, afterwards Colonel of the Fourteenth regiment, was Major. The Colonel of this regiment was Van Houten.

Andrew Van Buskirk and John Vreeland were captains in this regiment, both of them residents of Bayonne. They drilled in the ballroom of a hotel, which was located on the Old Plank Road near what is now 50th Street, for a time kept by Egbert Wauters.

Among the old residents and veterans of the Civil War still living in Bayonne are William Dexter, Nicholas Cubberly, John Vreeland, Jacob Oliver, Fred Boorman, and James C. VanBuskirk. James C. VanBuskirk served through the entire war from '61 to '65, and was for four and one half months a prisoner in the prison pens of Andersonville, Georgia. He served in many of the prominent battles of war, as did several of the other veterans.

Vocations

The earliest inhabitants at first subsisted by trade with Indians, farming little, where the land could be easily cleared, and supplementing their agricultural activities by fishing and oystering. Fish and oysters were abundant in these waters. Whitcomb in his history of Bayonne says: "Money was almost unknown, the unit value being beaver skin, and the currency being provided by bits of clam and periwinkle shells deftly cut and polished. They traded honorably and gave and received fair values. Yankee tricks were unknown to them. They were slow to form new acquaintances, but were firm in their

friendship. One early morning, probably once a week, it was common occurrence to see a group of Dutchman with their sugarloaf hats and leather breeches, together with their wives in the multiplied petticoats and other paraphernalia, entering skiffs to New York Bay Shore to convey them to New Amsterdam. There they would spend the day trading their fruit, vegetables, oysters, and fish for clothing, beer, tools, and the like, and gossiping with their friends. A road, or at least a path, led from this section over to Bergen Town, over which these settlers would travel occasionally for the same purpose that took them to New Amsterdam.”

Later as the heavy growth of timber, the forest primeval, was bit by bit, cleared away, the lands, which was very fertile, was devoted to farming, the commons or common land being open for grazing to the cattle of the neighborhood. Many of the inhabitants devoted their whole time to the water vocations. Then inhabitants secured a good living by theses means and were contented and happy.

When the slave was introduced to assist in the farming and to be the servant of these humble Dutch settlers, I have not been able to learn. That there were slaves in several of the more prosperous families and that some of their descendants still lie in this section is an undoubted fact. Slavery was not abolished in this State until the year 1846. Previous to this, however, through the efforts of the Quakers, several legislative acts were passed in New Jersey, penalizing slaveholders and tending towards the gradual abolition of slavery. An important act of this nature was passed in 1804. In 1790, Bergen County, of which Hudson County was then a part, had twenty-three hundred slaves, and these comprised about one-sixth of the population.

In 1800 there were 12,500 slaves in New Jersey

In 1810 there were 10,900 slaves in New Jersey

In 1820 there were 7,500 slaves in New Jersey

In 1830 there were 2,200 slaves in New Jersey

In 1840 there were 674 slaves in New Jersey

These Negroes, in many cases assumed the family names of their masters, so that to this day you will find some dusky Van Horns and Van Buskirks in the directories of Bayonne and Jersey City. Many of them, after their liberation, continued to live in cabins located on the farms of their former masters and were aided and looked after more or less by them.

As the population increased, the variety of vocations increased also. The residents seldom visited New York except to mark their products.

Gradually the loveliness of this section, its beauty of location nearly surrounded by the waters of New York Bay, and its healthfulness, attracted businessmen of New York and Jersey City. Improvements were introduced, streets laid out, the sections grew together and the city was born.

The present city of Bayonne is the southerly part of Bergen Township, formerly known as Bergen Neck. This township was one of the component parts of the County of Hudson, which was set off from the County of Bergen in 1840.

Legislation relating to that part of Bergen Township lying south of the Morris Canal, looking toward making it an independent municipality, was first enacted in 1857, when a legislative commission was appointed to survey and lay out street and avenues in said locality. Messrs. A. D. Mellick, Jacob Van Horn, Jacob M. Vreeland, Hartman Vreeland, and Egbert Wauters were the first commissioners named and they were to be

paid for their services one dollar per day, each for each day employed. Rather modest pay when compared with allowances to present day commissions.

Afterwards, this section of Bergen Township was named the Township of Bayonne, this being the name originally given to that part of the township, now known as Central Bayonne, and extending from 30th street to 38th streets, from New York Bay to Newark Bay.

Messrs. Benjamin F. Woolsey, Erastmus Randall, Peter Bentley, David Smith, and associated bought the entire Cadmus tract, locally known as the Japer Cadmus and John Cadmus or Cadmus Farms, and laid them out into building lots with streets and avenues. They planted shade trees, graded and laid sidewalks and beautified developed property. Many dwelling houses were erected by them and other improvements were made. The name "Bayonne" was taken from that of the France city of the same name and seemed peculiarly fitting to this locality, by reason of its delightful situation between the two bays.

In 1869, the city of Bayonne was chartered, and since that time its growth has been remarkably rapid.

Population 1870	3,834
1880	9,372
1885	13,000
1890	19,033
1900	32,722
1905	42,000
1906	44,170

1909

48,000

In the early days, this section of Hudson County, or as it was then, Bergen County, was very sparsely inhabited. Holland Dutch farmers occupied nearly all of the lands extending from Kill Van Kull to Bergen. In the upper section, the farms ran from New York Bay to Newark Bay. Besides the Cadmus farms alluded to above, there was in this section the Jacobus VanBuskirk farm which he divided between his four sons, James C. VanBuskirk, David VanBuskirk, Abraham VanBuskirk, and Cornelius VanBuskirk.

Adjoining this farm on the north was the Jasper Cadmus farm, one part of which was entailed to his son, Jasper Cadmus. North of this was the farm of Richard Cadmus, locally known as "Uncle Dicky Cadmus." Then came the Vreeland farm, part of which was afterward sold to David B. Salter, and part was acquired by Hartman Vreeland. This was bounded on the north by the Thompson farm, afterwards acquired by James Currie. This property is still in part held by the Currie family.

Constable Hook, now a noisy, busy hive of industrial activities, where the great plants of the Standard Oil Company, Tidewater Oil Company, Pacific Coast Borax Company, General Chemical Company, Oxford Copper Company, and other industries are located, was originally all owned by the VanBuskirk and Vreeland families.

Roads of Transportation

The first road through this neck was located on the westerly side near Newark Bay, and parallel thereto, west of what is now the Boulevard or Avenue A.

There are several traces where of this road are plainly visible yet. Then the Bergen Road was laid, which became afterwards the Plank Road, known as the Jersey City and Bergen Plank Road. The new plank road was built by a stock company and was a toll road. This continued as a toll road until the incorporation of the city. When the new plotting of the city was finally accepted, and the streets were graded in accordance therewith, the old Plank Road fell into disuse and has since been abandoned and vacated, except where its line was coincident with the line of Avenue D (now Broadway), one of the principle arteries of the city.

The other old road which ran longitudinally through the city was what was called the "back road" and is now Avenue A, or from 36th north, the Boulevard. This road in the early days ran through a most delightful stretch of woodland.

The Kings Highway, leading from Paulus Hook to Bergen Point, was laid out in 1764, and this was the old road laid neared Newark Bay Shore. This became part of the stage route between New York and Philadelphia.

The Bergen Road was laid in 1796. The first means of public conveyance between Bergen Point and Jersey City was by the stagecoach. Winfield says: "In 1764 we first set up to start from Paulus Hoeck for Philadelphia via Bergen Point and Blazing Star Ferries. The vehicle used was a covered Jersey wagon without

springs. Three days were consumed in dragging it to Philadelphia. It was modestly called a "flying machine."

About 1840 a steamboat line was established, running to Newark. Soon afterwards this boat, the "Passaic," began making stops on her trips to and from through the Kill Van Kull at Enyard's Dock, Bergen Point, which was located near the foot of Ingham Avenue. This afforded quite quick transportation to New York. Afterwards, other steamboats running to other points, Elizabethport, Pert and South Amboy, stopped here for passengers and freight, either regularly or on signal. Prior to construction of the Central Railroad from Elizabeth to Jersey City, the company had operated a ferry from its Elizabethport terminus to New York, and the residents of the Bergen Point section of Bayonne were afforded good and quick service for those days by means of these steamboats, which made regular stops each way at a dock near the foot of Avenue C, although the original dock for these landings was further east. The first of these boats was the "Red Jacket" afterwards rebuilt and called the "Chancellor," also the Wyoming," Afterwards, the "Kull Von Kull," a large cattle freight and passenger boat, was built and put into commission on this route. The latter boat continued to operate especially to accommodate the freight traffic of Bergen Point and Elizabethport long after the railroad was in operation. This boat was used during the War of the Rebellion to transport a troop of artillery from New York to Annapolis.

About 1850 a local stage route was established by Jacob Merseles and was operated by him and afterwards by George Anderson from Centerville, at the Mansion House, corner of the Hook Road and the Plank Road to Jersey City and

New York. This was the only means of public conveyance between these sections in use until the construction of the "Dummy Railroad" by the Jersey City and Bergen Railroad Company, about 1860.

Jersey City and Bergen Railroad Company

The following are extracts taken from a report of condition of the Jersey City and Bergen Railroad made to its stockholders in June 1867:

The Jersey City and Bergen Railroad from Jersey City Ferry to Bergen Hill, was incorporated in 1859 and construction was commenced in February 1860, and opened for travel July 4th, 1860. The branch to Pavonia Ferry was built during the summer of 1863, and the cars placed on this line October 15th, 1863. The road to Bergen Point was commenced in the summer of 1862, and opened for travel to Bayonne May 13th, 1863, and to Bergen Point October 14th 1863. The distance from the Jersey City Ferry to Bergen by either the Plank Road or the Hudson City route is about three miles. The distance from Newark Plank Road or Dummy Junction to Bergen Point is six miles. The act of legislature compelled then to change their route from the Jersey City and Bergen Point Plank Road through Bayonne, to a line between Avenue C and Avenue D and run under the Central Railroad.

Quoting from the report: "According to agreement with the land owners, a substantial bridge was built over the Morris Canal, wide enough for double track railroad and the accommodation of vehicles. The cost of land to date is \$69,732.16; of equipment \$76,696.30.

The stable, feed house and car house on Bergen Hill, and engine house at Bergen Point, are substantial and commodious buildings, built of brick. The passenger house and shops at Bergen Point, and house for employees at Bergen Point, are of wood. The repair shop at Jersey City is under the rear building of Taylor's Hotel, this right having been reserved in the sale of the property to the Messrs. Taylor.

"The company have in their road 8 ¼ miles of track, laid with rails of the Philadelphia pattern, 45 lbs. Per yard, 2 ¼ miles grooved rail, 27lbs. Per yard, laid on Pavonia Ave Line, Communipaw Line, &c., and 8 ½ miles of saddle rail, 36 lbs. Per yard, on Dummy Road and Bergen Hill.

"The company owns

160 horses,	1 cart, &c., shops, tools,
40 cars,	harness,
4 stages,	6 stem passenger cars,
11 sleighs,	shops, stationary engine
3 wagons,	and tools."

The total value of the property, including the right of way and franchises, was places at \$544,000 at the date of this report.

The incorporators were Dudley S. Gregory, Jacob M. Merseles, Matthew Armstrong, Peter Bentley, John H. Cornelison and such other persons as might thereafter be associated with them.

Capital stock, \$250,000. By certificate filed with the Secretary of State, September 28, 1883, dated July 20, 1883, the capital stock under the Act of March

23,1883, concerning horse railways, was increased to a total of \$500,000. It was further increased by a statement filed September 15,1887, with the Secretary of State, to \$1,000,000. Mr. John W. Heck, through whose kindness I was enabled to secure the authentic data concerning this railroad, given herein, informs me that when the railroad was transferred to the Consolidated traction Company \$400 per share was paid for the entire capital stock of the road, making a total of \$4,000,000 for the road. That this franchise is easily worth \$10,000,000 today.

The company was empowered to “construct a railroad from some point on the Kill Van Kull, at or near Bergen Point, to the Newark Turnpike Road, leading from Jersey city to Newark, with the privilege of constructing one or more branches, extending to the several ferries in the County of Hudson south of the city of Hoboken, said road not exceeding 60 feet in width, except in cases of excavations and embankments, &c.”

The motive power to be used was limited to horsepower. This limitation was removed by Act of 1863, page 284, in which it is enacted that said company may use and run upon their road, steam passenger cars similar to those now owned by them, built by Grice and Long and known as Dummy Cars, and such steam cars only, but said cars shall not be run on any part of said road at a greater speed than twelve miles an hour, nor in the cities of Jersey City and Hudson at a greater speed of eight miles an hour; further power to regulate and control speed, &c., given to the several cities; the act also contains the following proviso: “That said company shall not construct a road on that part of Avenue D as laid down on the map of Bergen Township, south of the Morris Canal, in the County of

Hudson, which lies south of Thirty-seventh Street, as laid down on said map, but shall locate and construct the same between Avenue C and D, as near equi-distant from each as practicable, from Thirty-seventh Street to Fifth Street on said map; and said road shall not cross the Central Railroad of New Jersey on a level therewith, but shall so be constructed as to pass over or under the same.”

A Supplement, Laws 1867, page 1018, allowing them to uses upon that part of the road from the Newark Plank Road in the Town of Bergen to the Kill Van Kull, their cars and steam dummy engines free from all control or interferences by any of the municipal authorities of any town or township except in the Town of Bergen where the Council might regulate the speed of the cars at not less than six miles per hour, and not faster than ten miles an hour; and prohibit the running of cars on Sunday except for funerals south of Newark Plank Road, and that whenever the carriage way outside of the rails should be paved on Ocean Avenue from Newark Plank road to Myrtle avenue, then the company to pave their tracks between their rails and to use horse instead of steam power thereafter between said Plank Road and Myrtle Avenue.

By Act of 1873, page 1458, the company was empowered to lay a railroad to connect with the tracks of the “railroad known as the New Jersey Railroad and Transportation Company, at or near the place known as the Bergen Cut in Jersey City and to be operated in connection therewith and to extend the railroad herby authorized through the County of Hudson to some point on the Kill Van Kull at Bergen Point, to establish a ferry across the Kill Van Kull to Staten Island; and there to connect with any other railroad now built or hereafter to be built.”

By ordinance of the City of Jersey, approved June 17, 1864, the use of steam or dummy engines in any of the tracks of any house railroad company in Jersey City laid on any of the streets was prohibited, with penalties, &c.

The early ordinances of the city of Bayonne on the matter are as follows:

(1). Passed September 15, 1885, D.W. Oliver, Mayor, authorizing the laying of tracks on Avenue C from the city line and Morris Canal to Meigs Street, to Avenue D; to Linnet Street; to Orient Street; to Fifth Street; to Avenue R; to First Street; and fare not to exceed five cents for any distance within city or from any point within the city to or from any point in Jersey City on the Greenville route. Cars to run at least once every half hour each way between six in the morning and eight in the evening and hourly between eight in the evening and midnight.

(2). Ordinance passed September 24, 1886, to lay rails in Avenues D and S to Meigs Street to Fifth Street.

(3). Ordinance passed April 20, 1888, to lay tracks on Fifth Street and Avenue R to Avenue A; on Avenue A to First Street and on First Street to the Old Dummy Road, connecting with the tracks on Avenue R.

The act passed by the Legislature March 28, 1882, regulating fares on horse cars in the cities of the first class, introduced by the Hon. James C. Clarke, fixed the fares at five cents for each passenger, prior to that, excess fare was charged to certain portions of the city and Bayonne, aggregating eight and ten cents.

“The Junction” at Grand Street and Communipaw Avenues, derived its name from the fact that it was the junction where the dummy road started for Bayonne; some time afterward the use of the Dummy cars were prohibited in Jersey City in 1864.

The cars used on this our first railroad, were combination cars, with steam engines in the front portion and passenger spaces behind, with only a light wood partition between. The engine was an upright low power affair. The cars had small driving wheels and were a slow, unsatisfactory means of travel. They had a very bad habit of jumping off the track. This consisted of a light iron rail, laid on triangular wood sleepers and there resting on ties embedded in the earth, no ballast being used. The result was that the road was never in fit condition to carry the cars with safety for reasonable speed, had the engines been capable of speeding, and the schedule of time could be maintained. Besides, after a time, Jersey City would not allow the steam propelled cars on its streets, so that a transfer to horse cars, at first at the Junction, and later at Claremont, was necessitated with its incident delays and inconveniences.

The passengers were often called upon to assist the composite engineer and fireman, and the conductor, comprising the train crew, in “boosting” the car on the track or in assisting it up the steep grades.

At what is now 28th Street a turntable was built in the woods surrounding a hotel and picnic resort, known as “Bayonne Groove.” Here many of the cars terminated their trips and were sent back to Jersey City. This grove was a very popular resort for a time, having a large dancing pavilion, swings, etc. It was

immediately in the rear of the first schoolhouse built in Bayonne, known as the "Little Red School House," fronting on the Plank Road, afterwards Avenue D.

The dummy cars were discontinued shortly after this, although the Jersey City and Bergen R.R. Co. kept its franchise alive in a desultory way by running horse cars drawn by mules until the introduction of the "trolley" cars.

The line of this road through Bayonne began at Avenue D and Morris Canal, and ran thence along Avenue D to where its now 32nd Street, where the road turned to the northwest then out midway between Avenues D and C, and ran thence over a private right of way direct to West Eight Street, where it passed under the Central Railroad near Eight Street depot and continued on to Kill Van Kull or First Street, terminating along side of the La Tourette House.

Later, the horse car route was abandoned, and through the urgent influence of David W. Oliver, when he was Mayor of Bayonne, the Jersey City and Bergen Railroad Company obtained the franchise to build and built its road in Avenue C and Avenue D over the route now operated by the Public Service Corporation and equipped it with electricity for trolley cars.

The means of transportation afterwards had the competition of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, which company, under an act of Legislation on 1860, was authorized to bridge Newark Bay between Elizabethport and Bergen Point and extended its road to Jersey City. This extension was completed and opened for travel in 1864.

The building of the Central railroad of New Jersey furnished the first real and satisfactory transportation facilities to and from Bayonne to New York and to

Elizabeth and town to the west. Through the courtesy of Mr. William G. Besler, Vice President and General manager of this railroad, the following history of the development of the road and its construction through Bayonne and Jersey City had been prepared, and I take the liberty incorporating this in my paper.

Scraps of History Concerning Central Railroad Of New Jersey

The Central Railroad of New Jersey was built between Somerville and Elizabethport in the years 1834 to 1842 by John Owen Sterns and Coffin Colkett, and after completion was leased to and operate by them. In 1846, after liquidation of the property, these two men purchased it and reorganized it. Mr. Sterns was elected as Superintendent. Later, the Somerville and Easton railroad was organized and built to the Delaware. The new and old companies were consolidated in 1849 and the Central Railroad of New Jersey, and Mr. Sterns became its Superintendent. He continued in this position until his death in November 1, 1862. During the later years of his incumbency the line from Elizabethport to Bergen, now Jersey City was projected.

The act authorizing the extension was passed in 1860 and the road was opened for travel into Communipaw Ferry on August 1, 1864. The bridge across the Newark Bay was not yet completed. At that time the road reached the waterfront at Jersey City by a trestle one mile in length, extending from just east of the present Communipaw Station to the North river front. The filling of this trestle began immediately and street dirt and rubbish of every description was hauled from New York on scows and dumped in the trestle. Within a few years the entire trestle was filled to the bulkhead front along the river.

A very primitive frame structure was erected for a station and occupied the site of the present Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal Building. The ferry between Jersey City and New York, known as Communipaw Ferry, was the first legally established ferry between Manhattan Island and the Jersey Shore. It was originally located at the foot of the Communipaw Avenue and was established there in 1661. William Jansen was in charge of it. Prior to the entry of the Central Railroad into Jersey City, with ferry facilities to the foot of Liberty Street, all passengers were taken to the Elizabethport water front and transported from there by steamer to New York.

With the establishment of the line railroad from Elizabethport to Jersey City began the development of that section of the country from Bergen Point to Jersey City. In the beginning the track was laid upon the natural surface of the ground, uphill and down dale and through meadow. A steam shovel was put to work in the cut just east of Bay Bridge and afterwards in the vicinity of what is now 33rd Street, and also at Communipaw, to provide a graded surface for a roadbed, and the track was laid upon it as fast as it was completed, a single track upon the graded roadbed being operated first in connection with the track laid upon the natural surface of the ground referred to above. Shortly after, the second track upon the graded roadbed was completed and the temporary track was removed.

Benjamin S. Moore, who until four years ago ran a passenger engine for the Central Railroad of New Jersey handled the first passenger train from Bergen Point to Jersey City over this temporary track. The engine was brought from

Elizabethport on a float to the end of the trestle work that was under course of construction from Bayonne shore westward, and had reached a short distance out into the bay, and was then drawn up from the float on to the trestle by incline rails with block and tackle with the supervision of Samuel Moore, who was then the General Master Mechanic of the Central Railroad of New Jersey. This engine was called the "Clinton," and was also used in work train service hauling dirt from the steam shovel while the construction of the roadbed was under way. The car used for transporting passengers was an ordinary light flat car with temporary seats built upon it.

The bridge across Newark Bay, connecting Elizabethport with Bayonne, was commenced in 1861 and completed in 1865, at a cost of \$327,653.49. The draw span was operated by hand power, two men being employed in the daytime and two at night. Under the tracks of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, in close vicinity to what is now the subway at West Eight Street station, there was a steam dummy line, which ran from Bergen Point to Jersey City, through what is now the Bayonne district. The neighborhood of what is now East 49th Street was then called Saltersville and was one of the most important points in its locality. It was the headquarters for the contractors building the road. Their employees, who lived across the bay, came from Elizabethport to Bergen Point by steamer and there took the dummy line to Saltersville. This dummy line consisted of a small car propelled by steam, the boiler in the engine being located in a small compartment in the forward part of the car, the passengers occupying seats in the second or rear compartment. The car, while simple in construction and plain in

appearance, was a dwarfed representation of the gas electric cars now manufactured.

The first station built by the railroad to serve the public was near the location of the present West Eighth Street Station. At that time Bayonne consisted of a number of small communities scattered along at intervals through the district, and were known by the names of Bergen Point, Centreville, Pamrapo, Saltersville, and Bayonne, all of which were afterwards consolidated inot what at this time constitutes the city of Bayonne.

When the railroad ran between Elizabethport and Somerville only three trains were operated in each direction. After its tracks were extended in to Jersey City, and Newark Bay Bridge put in operation, several additional trains were put on the schedule, and as business warranted an increase in the number of trains, others were added until the present train service was reached.

One of the foremost in the development of the New Jersey Central Railroad was Mr. John Taylor Johnston, who served as president of the company from 1848 to 1877. It was he who projected the line from Elizabeth to Jersey City through Bayonne. From a railroad publication, to which I have had access through the kindness of Mr. Besler, I have culled two letters written in 1863 and 1864 by Mr. Johnston to his wife, which throw an interesting side light on the conditions existing.

Jersey City, July 25, 1863.

“Yesterday I spent on the extension, taking Messrs. Dodge (William E. Dodge, Sr.) and Green (John C.) and Chancellor Williamson, over the route for

the first time. The party consisted of six. They were pleased and astonished at the purchases at Bergen Point, etc., that had been made, and the superiority of the character of the peninsula through which the route runs. The work on the road is at least fairly under good headway, and I begin to think that the time will come, one of these days, when I can have the first fair glimmer of an idea of what can be accomplished this season. At Bergen we lunched under the trees on provender brought with us from Jersey City and had a rather good time. The bay was crossed in a boat to see the work of our great pivot pier. Here, on the bridge and on the road west of the bridge I was quite uplifted in spirit in finding everything further advanced than I had dared to expect. At Elizabethport we found a lot of "Secesh" prisoners and wounded, mostly wounded, which had come down the road waiting transportation by the United States to David's Island, east River. I talked with a number of the men and found them generally civil, decent fellows and rather talkative than otherwise. Some of the wounds were awful. There were many whose arms had been amputated at the socket, and one poor fellow had his lower jaw almost nearly shot off. The only way that they could give him water or nourishment of any kind was by pouring or throwing it into what little mouth he had left. There was another lot on the road coming down, and they expected to send about 10,000 down this way. What is the reason for sending them so far I cannot say."

The second letter deals with the celebration which took place on the occasion of the formal opening of the extension from Elizabethport to Communipaw, and is of absorbing and historic interest. It reads:

Plainfield, July 30, 1864

My Dear Wife,

“I telegraphed you last evening before leaving the city, what the excursion had gone off splendidly. There were no mishaps of any kind to be over looked or apologized for. The day was fine, hot in the afternoon, but a good breeze always. The train stopped for me on its way to Flemington, and the excursion proper started from there at 11:30 a.m., stopping at the different stations for the invited guests. At Elizabeth the bulk of the guests joined, and from there we left with two trains of ten cars, each well crowded. At least 1,000 people were in the two trains. Now came the new road, but we went on to the Newark Bay Bridge, one and one-half miles long, over the celebrated draw that is exercising the Newarkers so much, and then stopped to let the excursionists get out and see the draw (216 feet long) revolve on its axis to let sundry craft through. It all worked well. A blunder head of schooner went through with a double wiggle that looked as if she would run into the bridge, but she didn't and several other craft went through with a rush, all loudly cheered by the crowd. The train only stopped again at the steam paddy, which tickled the party so much that I had to work hard to start away again. Arriving safely at Communipaw, there was the Central, and on board they went. Two long tables were set through the carriage ways, from end to end of the boat, and I had arranged to have a blessing asked at each before they set to work but before and such thing was possible, all hands and mouths were hard at work, and it is very doubtful if twenty on board knew whether we went down the bay or up the bay, or both as we did. They did find an abundance of time, however, to

praise the boat. She is universally admitted to be a beauty, even by those interested in running her down. The fifty baskets of champagne, and forty baskets of claret (don't tell John Bard or the Doctor) began now to disappear with marvelous celerity, and though, as a whole, the crowd, behaved well, yet, as soon as we saw some beginning to get noisy, we stopped off the wine and kept the fun within bounds. Before we landed I got on one of those tables and made them a short speech, thanking them for their attendance, making suitable allusion to John O. Sterns, and giving necessary information about the return trains. They then began cheering for one another, and at 4:45 I had the satisfaction of landing them at Pier 2, North River, without accident or drawback of any sort. It was a successful opening and it was a decent one. So far as I saw there was no drunken man or even half seas over in the lot, and we had plenty who do that same occasionally. For the day President Johnston was a very popular man, and was complimented right and left.

Signed,

John Taylor Johnston.

Churches

In the colonial days, far more than at present, the life of a community revolved around the church. It was the hub of every activity and this was particularly true of a Dutch community with its inherited religious proclivity. The settlers of Bergen Neck were almost exclusively of Dutch descent.

Prior to 1828, the residents of this locality, had been supporters of the old Bergen Church.

From Dr. Brett's research, it appears that the Rev. William Jackson became the first pastor of the church in 1753, although there had been a church organization there since 1661. Religious services were held in the schoolhouses located at Bergen Square, as early as 1662, and the first church was built here in 1680.

In this church the inhabitants of the hamlets, settlements, or villages, as you choose to style them, of Greenville, Pamrapo, Centreville, and Bergen Point, were constant attendants.

Dominie Jackson also had charge of the Dutch Reformed Church of Staten Island, and each Sunday he drove down from Bergen to Bergen Point and crossed the Kills to Port Richmond.

After a time some found it more convenient to attend the church on Staten Island than to drive or walk a long distance, often over muddy or impassable roads, to Bergen.

This led to the organization of a congregation and the building of a church known as the Dutch Reformed Church of Bergen Neck.