

# VOICES from RARITAN LANDING

*An Educational Guide to a  
Colonial Port Community*

Rebecca Yamin

Middlesex County  
Board of Chosen Freeholders

Middlesex County  
Cultural and Heritage Commission

*funded in part with a grant from  
New Jersey Historical Commission  
Division of the Department of State*





*Voices from Raritan Landing* was written by Rebecca Yamin, an archaeologist who has devoted much of her career to the discovery of this “lost” port community that once thrived along the bank of the Raritan River in what is now Piscataway. Dr. Yamin was also an advisor for the comprehensive exhibition permanently on view at the East Jersey Olde Towne Village in Piscataway, a project of the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission and the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Entitled *Raritan Landing, Uncovering a Forgotten Past* the exhibition displays some of the remarkable artifacts from four excavations that unearthed Raritan Landing.

Cover artifacts are from Raritan Landing excavations: pottery and ceramic shards, bowl and stem from a clay pipe, bead believed to be from the African American community at the Landing, 35<sup>th</sup> regimental button

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Acknowledgements:

Dover Publications: *2000 Early Advertising Cuts*, 1995  
*1800 Woodcuts, Thomas Bewick and His School*, 1990  
*Trades & Occupations: A Pictorial Archive from Early Sources*

New York Public Library, Manuscript Collection

Praeger Publications: *Windmills & Watermills*, 1970

Library of Congress, Historic American Buildings Survey

New Jersey Department of Transportation, images from the  
Raritan Landing Excavations

# CONTENTS

- 4 Foreword by Anna M. Aschkenes, *Executive Director, Middlesex County Cultural & Heritage Commission*  
Introduction by Rebecca Yamin, *Archaeologist*

## PROFILES

- 6 ADOLPHUS HARDENBROOK  
7 JOHN SMALLEY  
8 PETER BODINE  
9 WILLIAM DUGDALE  
10 EVERT DUYCKINCK  
11 DUNCAN HUTCHINSON  
12 JOHANNA GOUVERNEUR LOW  
13 CORNELIUS LOW  
14 CATHERINE LEBOYTEAUX BODINE  
15 JOHN BODINE  
16 EDWARD ANTILL, ESQ.  
17 JOHN CASTNER  
18 JOHN DUMONT  
19 DR. JOHN NEILSON  
20 CHARLES SUYDAM  
21 LENA SUYDAM BOICE  
22 JOHANNES TENBROOK  
23 BILL  
24 ISAAC WILSON  
25 JEAN BLAIR  
26 MARGARET DEGROOT FIELD  
27 ROBERT KIP  
28 JOHN BRAY  
29 BERNARDUS LAGRANGE  
30 ABRAHAM VAN RANST  
31 ANTHONY WALTON WHITE  
32-35 A Note about Places

## *Forword*

The past holds powerful stories, but few of us know how to listen. The voices of individual people can speak to us today through diaries, account ledgers, letters and other documents. But it is the scholar, such as Rebecca Yamin, who teaches us how to hear our ancestors and shows us how to listen to the echoes of the past. Dr. Yamin creatively employed first-person interpretation to bring some of the men and women of Raritan Landing to life. I know that educators, students and the public will join me in thanking Dr. Yamin for her devotion to the historical narrative and reminding us that history is the story of people.

❧ Anna M. Aschkenes  
Executive Director  
Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission

## *Introduction*

There are no photographs of the village of Raritan Landing or of the people who lived there. We know their names from deeds, advertisements they placed in the newspapers, baptismal and church records, and from their wills and estates. From these documents we have pieced together their lives. This process of imagining is a tool to help us better understand the past. By making the people of the Landing speak for themselves, in this publication, we hope to bring you closer to their lives and community.

❧ Rebecca Yamin

# Voices from Raritan Landing

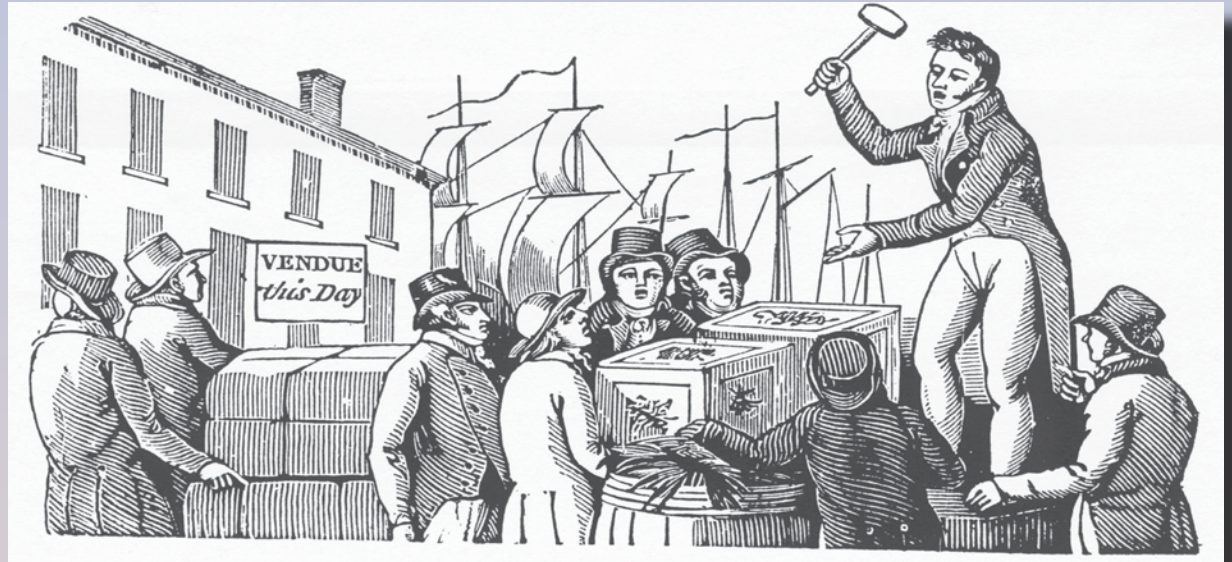
*An Educational Guide  
to a  
Colonial  
Port Community*



Voices was printed in large type format and is available in Braille, upon request

## ADOLPHUS HARDENBROOK

I CAME TO RARITAN LANDING – well, actually the place didn't have a name – in 1719. I built a warehouse right down by the river and a house up the hill a ways. I bought a good piece of Isaac Smalley's land and sold it off bit by bit. I was the first New Yorker at the Landing and it's due to me that the Lows and Duyckincks came to that growing place soon after. We were all in the shipping business. The Raritan Valley wasn't so different than the Hudson Valley where our fathers had been shippers. We, too, could carry out the grain and bring in the imported goods that were in greater and greater demand among the farmers of means and even the simple villagers. Times were changing and once the people moved into town they didn't want to make everything they needed themselves. My daughter, Effie, married Evert Duyckinck, a boy of our own class, thank God. It was good to see the second generation carrying on at Raritan Landing. I thought the place would last forever.



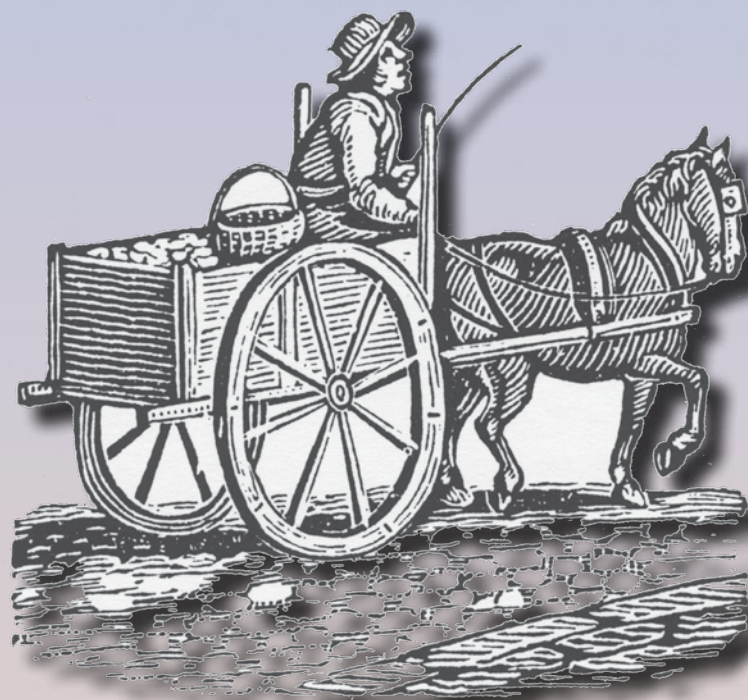


## *JOHN SMALLEY*

I COULD SEE THE FUTURE OF RARITAN LANDING when I put my lot and house up for sale in the 1720s. There weren't going to be many more farmers like me living at the Landing. It was a place for commerce and industry. I had built a good house with a well and a good cellar on an acre of ground, all that was needed for a brewer or a shoemaker or a tanner. There was a brook running through the property with a fine spring, a bark mill and ten pits already dug. I did a little tanning right there on the property although it didn't really suit me. My wife, Liddea, and I were Baptists; we belonged to the church in Piscataway and socialized mainly with people there. They were more like us than the Dutch traders at the Landing who all seemed to come from Somerset families. Of course, there were the fancy men from New York. Mr. Antill, our neighbor, was good enough to us, but we might as well have been living in different worlds. He could talk about the orchard, though, and that we had in common, but that's about all.

## *PETER BODINE*

THE 1730s WERE A GOOD TIME at Raritan Landing. The Janeway and Broughton Store just seven miles along the Road Up Raritan at Bound Brook kept me busy. I picked up wheat from the farmers who sold it to the store and got paid to freight it wherever they wanted – 2000 bushels to Amboy in 1735, for instance. Amboy was East Jersey’s only legal port of entry although, truth be known, plenty of goods were going out of and coming into New Brunswick in those days. I also supplied the store with the stuff the country farmers wanted. My neighbor, Adolphus Hardenbrook, and my own son, John, helped me out there. I paid them for orders, called “assignments,” and delivered the imported goods to the store. Raritan Landing was well placed for this business and I tried to get more people to share the boom. In 1748, I divided up a piece of property I owned into 195 lots, some of them right along the main road, and held a lottery. I wasn’t rich like Cornelius Low up on the bluff or a “gentleman,” but among the traders in the village, I was a leader and my house is still standing down the hill from the Low house.







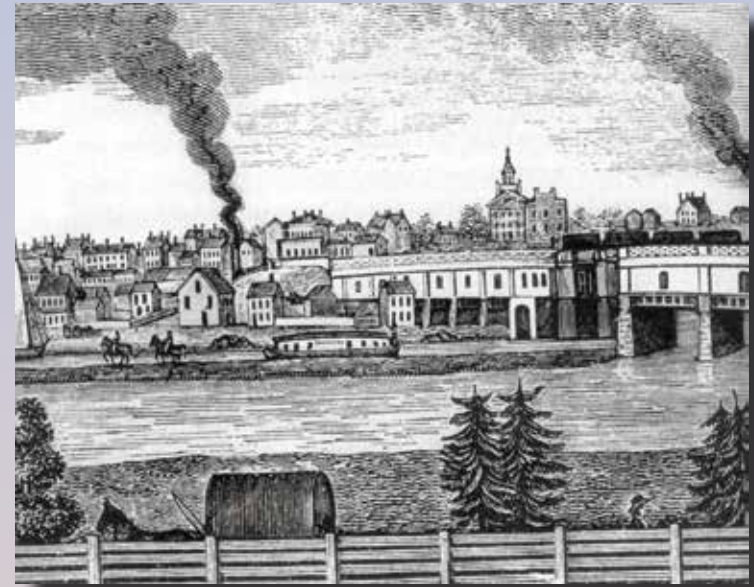
## *WILLIAM DUGDALE*

THEY CALLED ME A “MERCHANT,” probably because I did more than just trade at the Landing. I had a fine and fashionable house on the north side of the Road Up Raritan and maintained a good orchard and garden. There were 50 acres of upland and 11 of choice fresh meadow. I didn’t think it wise or seemly for someone of my status to depend only on commerce. You had to have land is what I thought; a gentleman has land. But that trader, John Bodine, bought my place from my widow, Jane, in 1741. Who knows what he did with it, being one of those modern types who lived merely from trade?

Coin scale and coin  
Raritan Landing excavations

## *EVERT DUYCKINCK*

I CAME TO RARITAN LANDING at the behest of Adolphus Hardenbrook, probably because he and my parents wanted me to marry his daughter. The old New York families liked to stick together, you know. The Hardenbrooks and Duyckincks were active in New York commerce, but they also had an eye on the hinterland to the south and sent us out to stake a claim. Under the guidance of the man who was to become my father-in-law, I learned everything there was to know about the trading business.



View of New Brunswick, woodcut

I inherited his house and land on the west side of the brook in 1735. People call it Duyckinck's Brook these days. By the 1760s, I was supplying one of the Landing's major stores with large shipments of goods: 106 gallons of molasses in one shipment, and I delivered 500 skins to the store for Cornelius Low, Jr., in 1761, and freighted the storekeeper's bread to New York when he switched his business to baking. My son, John, and I handled a house that Peter Low owned on the bluff above Road Up Raritan. The Lows owned a group of houses on the bluff, and the one we had also had a bakehouse with all the utensils necessary for baking. Abraham Van Ranst bought the property – no big surprise since he had married into the Low family. When the war came, my son sided with the British, a mistake that eventually lost him his Raritan Landing property as well as his mills and plantation in Somerset County. He went to Canada and then England, but I saw my days out at the Landing with my dear wife, Effie, nee Hardenbrook.



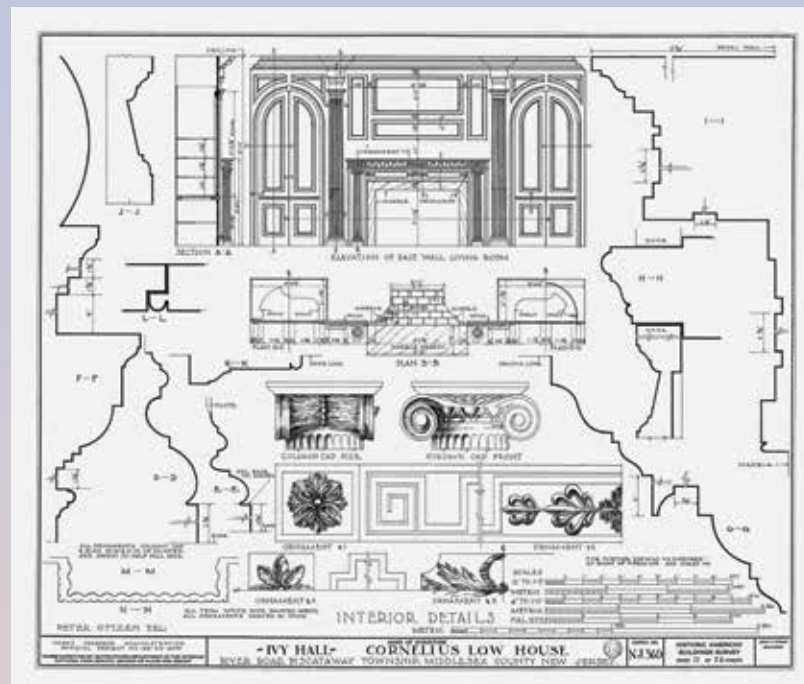
## *DUNCAN HUTCHINSON*

I WASN'T THE ONLY DOCTOR at Raritan Landing in the 1730s and 1740s – there was John Neilson, the one whose brother in New Brunswick traded overseas. I liked the sea, too, and when my wife, Elizabeth, would let me, off I'd go on some ship or other. Captain Abraham Sanford took me on when he needed help and Mr. Philip French. But my real calling was to care for the sick. I took care of all the traders – Peter Bodine, John Bodine, Cornelius Van Horn, Paul LeBoyteaux, Hendrick Smock. And then, of course, there were the babies to deliver, that is, when a midwife couldn't do the job. Someone was always having a baby and you couldn't depend on a doctor from New Brunswick to get there in time.

Copper mortar and pestle  
Raritan Landing excavations

## JOHANNA GOUVERNEUR LOW

FATHER THOUGHT I MADE a good marriage when I chose Cornelius Low among my many suitors. He came from a landed family and had dreams of making the Raritan Valley as important to New York as the Hudson Valley had always been. We moved to the little village of Raritan Landing in 1730 and no sooner settled in than my first son was born. He died before he was even baptized, and we were careful to never let that happen again with the rest of the children. There was almost one a year until 1748 when my last daughter was born. In all, ten lived – four girls and six boys, quite a houseful. There wasn't a church at Raritan Landing and the children were baptized wherever the pastor was willing (or my husband had a business partner) – two at Three Mile Run Church in Somerset, one at Middletown in Monmouth, one in New York, several in the German Church at Second River, one at the Millstone, and the last two in the barn of Arie Mooream right here at the Landing. I don't know why we never had our own church here, probably because New Brunswick was so close, but Cornelius and I were never comfortable in the Dutch Church there – so old fashioned it was. No wonder our son, Cornelius, Jr., attended the Church of England when he came of age. It was a good life at Raritan Landing once we were settled in the “house on the mountain.” We had a cluster of family houses up there and pretty much kept apart from the villagers who were less familiar with fashionable New York ways.

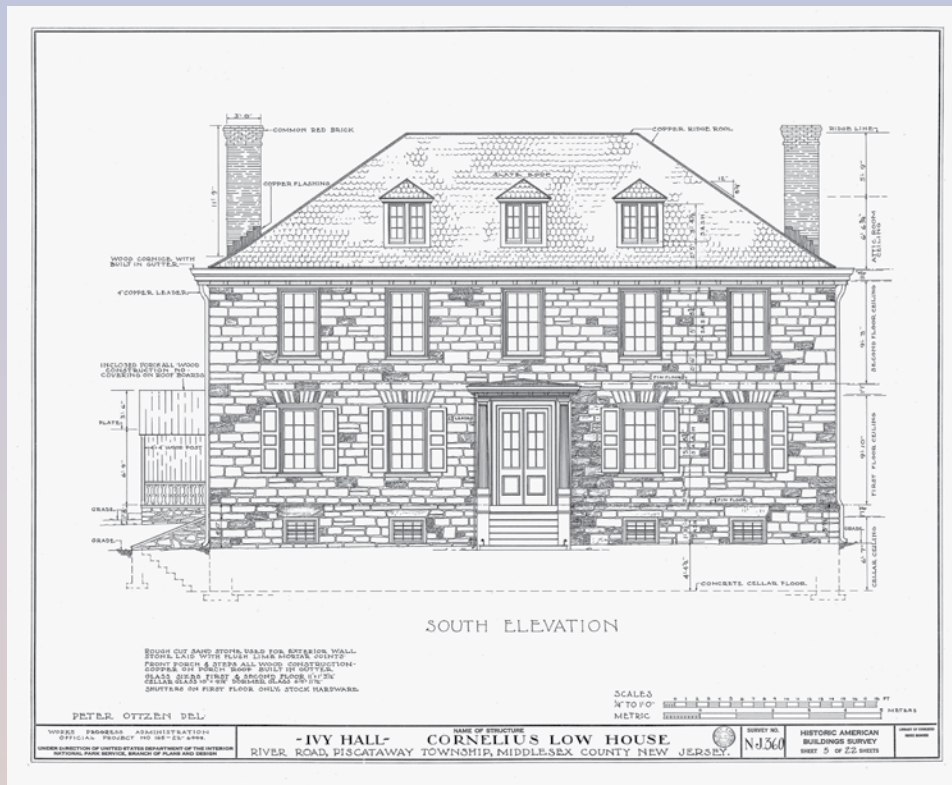


Cornelius Low House, HABS Drawing, interior, Library of Congress

## CORNELIUS LOW

IT WAS THE FRESHET OF 1738 that finally convinced me to build on the bluff. We quarried some of the stone on Aaron Lowzada's property at Chimney Rock. The stone on the front came from a quarry near Second River, big rectangular blocks that were very expensive. It had to be, because I fully intended to have the best house – and the best storehouse – in town. We chose the elegant Georgian style – all the rage in England – with a center hall and large rooms for entertaining and dining, very

different than the houses of the traders down below who preferred the old Dutch style. I was proud to move the family, which already included five children, into the new house in 1741 and we stayed there for the rest of my days. We tried to rent the storehouse in 1774 by which time my son, Isaac, in New York was handling most of the business. The storehouse was 80 feet long and 25 feet deep with a shop on the ground floor and a wheat loft above capable of holding several thousand bushels. You should have seen the Landing in those days: the wagons bringing the grain down the Road Up Raritan would line up for miles. My storehouse was the biggest, but there were many more. We all did well before the war tore everything asunder.



## CATHERINE LEBOYTEAUX BODINE

EVER SINCE MY BROTHER PAUL started a freighting business with John Bodine, I knew that was who I wanted to marry. Father thought it was fine. After all, John was one of the busiest traders at the Landing and we had a fine house right on the causeway between the Road Up Raritan and the river. Both our parents lived at the Landing, mine just a short ways up the road towards Bound Brook and John's down the road in the other direction. Even after I married I saw my mother every day, which was good because John was always working. And when he died so young, my mother helped me with the children. Gabriel was named for my father, Caterena for me, and Johannes for John, of course. We kept to the old ways and had them all baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church in New Brunswick. I wish we had had our own church at Raritan Landing, but the other Dutch families liked the excuse to go across the river and they took to the new style reverend, Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen. He was too emotional for us though, and my brother joined some other Landing residents in an effort to bring over from Holland a pastor more after our own minds.



*Woman with Children*, woodcut, Thomas Bewick, circa 1800

## *JOHN BODINE*

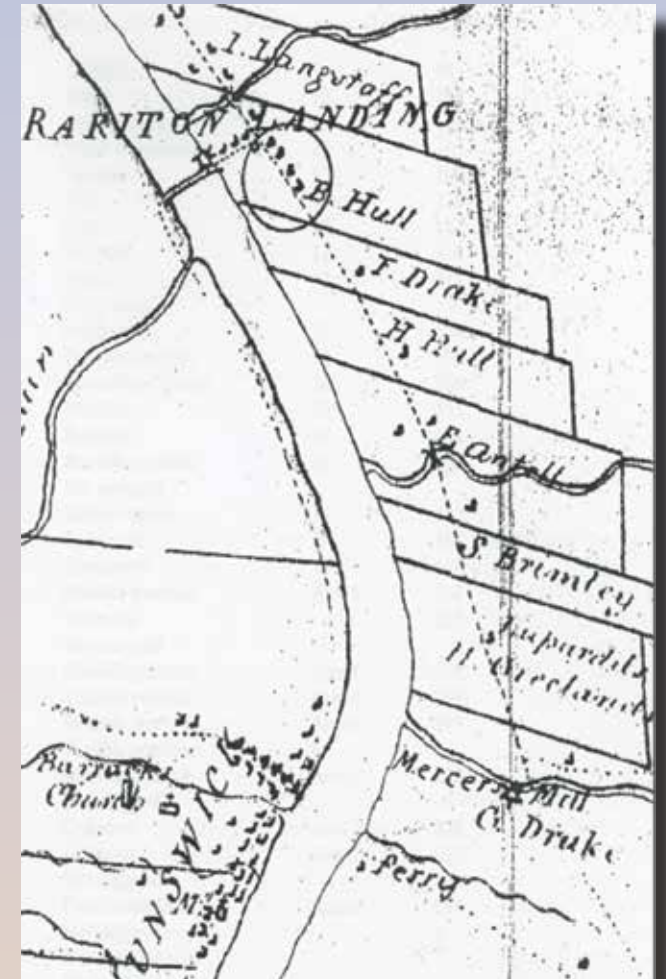


I DID WHAT MY FATHER DID – freighted along the Road Up Raritan. In 1737, the Janeway and Broughton store paid me and my partner Paul LeBoyteaux for wheat we bought and freighted, for 455 gallons of rum bought at Brunswick, for another 100 ½ gallons, and for the freight of seven hogshead. In the 1740s, we handled molasses and other imported goods, like stoneware, cotton and other sorts of things, and saw that the wheat was properly shipped to New York. We trusted Captain Miller for that, and he brought back the bill if there were any problems once he got to Bowne’s wharf in the city. I had a good house and warehouse along the causeway between the river and the Road Up Raritan where I lived with my wife, Catherine (my partner’s sister), and our children, Gabriel, Caterena, and Johannes, all baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church in New Brunswick. We were as close to Catherine’s people in Piscataway as we were to my own right here at the Landing. There was nothing more important than family in those days.

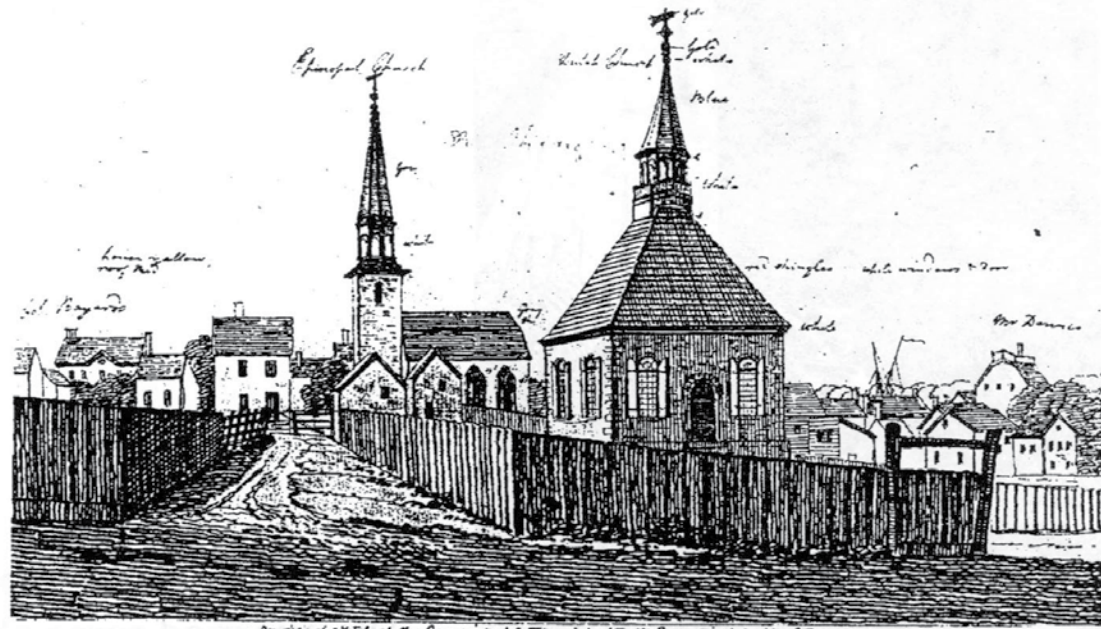
## *EDWARD ANTILL, ESQ.*

FROM MY HOUSE on the Road Up Raritan, Raritan Landing looked like New Amsterdam. That's what I called it when I advertised the property for sale in 1753. I had 370 acres, much of it meadow, but there were also 70 acres of good woodland and 10 acres of orchard in its prime together with a large collection of the best fruit trees: apricots, nectarines, peaches, plums, pears, hard and soft-shell almonds, early apples and English cherries. I even had a vineyard of about 600 vines for which I received 200 pounds sterling from the Society for Promoting Arts and Agriculture.

I was mainly what you would call a gentleman farmer, after all I was married to Anne Morris, the governor's daughter, and needed to stay above the fray – but we did some brewing on the property. My brewhouse was 60 feet long and 38 feet wide with a new boiler, called a copper, and 22 barrels that were connected to a system for carrying the liquor directly from place to place. My main income came from importing. Unlike the small-time traders in the village, I ordered linens directly from London; John Watts of New York conveyed my orders to Bristol. With other members of my class, I was a charter member of the Church of England in New Brunswick, which finally opened in 1761. I served as a vestryman and am buried in the churchyard.







*An original sketch of New Brunswick, N. J. taken just after the Revolution, by Archibald Robertson.*

## JOHN CASTNER

YOU COULD GET  
ALMOST ANYTHING in

my store, from slates, books, and primers to pewter, stoneware, and earthenware. Of course there were all types of cloth, buttons, shoes, garters, knee buckles, and mittens that every woman needed to take care of the family, but there were also shoemaker's knives, calf skins, and leather on the side. My wife Helena and I ran it together. She administered my estate along with Raritan Landing's most upstanding residents – William Williamson, Daniel Bray, Edward Antill – who made the inventory in 1755. I don't know why they were so concerned. Most of my customers came from Somerset County: out of 47 debtors, only nine of them were from the Landing. Funny, Daniel Bray was one of the debtors and so were other gentlemen: Evert Duyckinck, Peter Low, and Bernardus LaGrange.

*Sketch of New Brunswick, Archibald Robertson, circa 1795*

## *JOHN DUMONT*

I DIDN'T EVEN LIVE at Raritan Landing, but when my father Henry Dumont died I got his lots in that upcoming place. In 1741, I bought two more undeveloped lots at Raritan Landing as an investment. One was located right down the hill from John Roosevelt's land; Roosevelt was related to the Lows by marriage, but he didn't live at the Landing. I had a big farm of 650 acres in Somerset County, where my wife Annetje and I raised our large family in the old-fashioned way. There were five children, four of them boys, all but one with a good Christian name – John, Peter, and Abraham. The other boy was Dirk and the baby girl was Fenimetje. Like almost all the Dutch farmers in Somerset, we had slaves to work the land, nine in all when I made my will in 1759, valued at 265 pounds sterling. We couldn't have done the work without those slaves and they lived right in the house with us, not in separate quarters like in Virginia or the Carolinas. We sent the grain to Raritan Landing for export as wheat was the main crop.



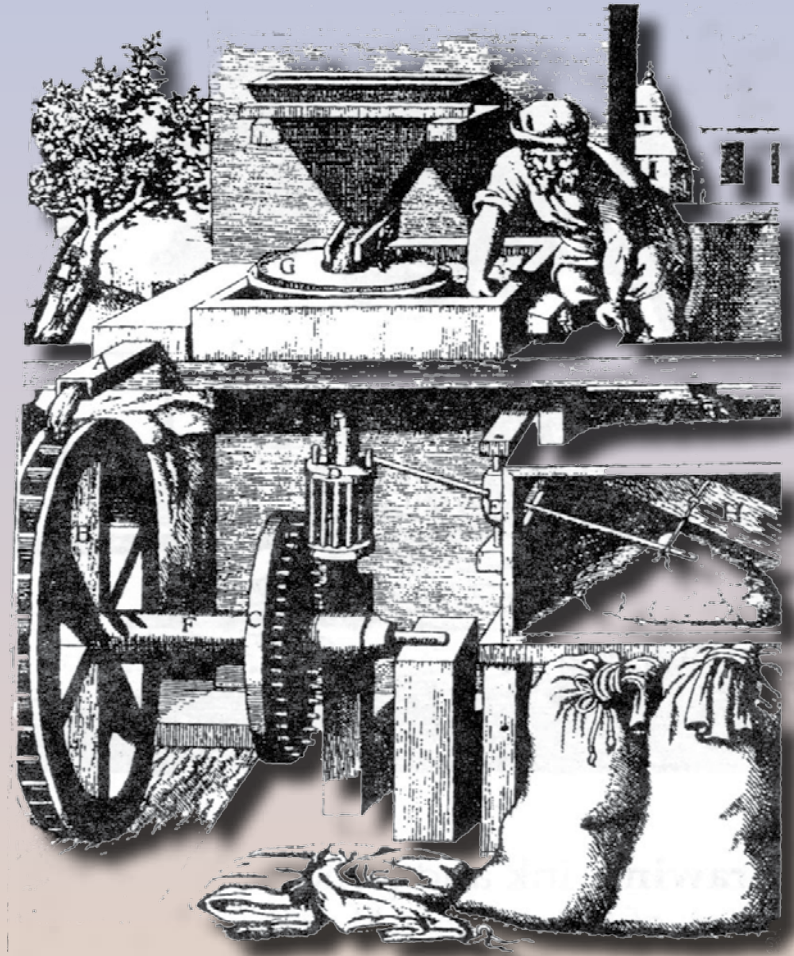


## *DR. JOHN NEILSON*

MY BROTHER JAMES was the successful one in the family. By 1750, he was the biggest trader in New Brunswick – owned two schooners and a sloop in partnership with Richard Gibb. They knew what they were doing, ordering all sorts of fancy goods from overseas to convince the emigrants from Albany that life was just as genteel in New Brunswick. Not where I lived though, not at Raritan Landing. I just went about my simple ways, doctoring when someone needed me and doing a little freighting on the river. My wife Johanna, nee Coeyman, didn't want to keep our property when I died and there were debts. She and brother James, my executors, eventually sold it to Jacob Flatt in '68. I loved that house with its fine store and the new boat besides. I hope the Flatts kept a store there. It was a convenient place for a store.

## *CHARLES SUYDAM*

YOU COULDN'T JUST BUILD a mill in those days. I had to get permission from the New Jersey Assembly to put up a mill dam. That I did, and by 1750 I had the only mill on the north side of the river. That's why my friend, John Duyckinck, and I sponsored the project to build a new bridge across the river in 1772. With the bridge, the grain came from two directions, that is, along the Road Up Raritan and over the bridge from Somerset County. It was a lucrative operation, that is, until the British destroyed it. I sustained damage worth 2,033 pounds sterling in that damn war. I never recovered.



*Miller, engraving, Georg Andrea Bockler, Nuremberg 1661*



## *LENA SUYDAM BOICE*

I GREW UP in Somerset County. There were 11 children and we all helped on the farm. Father called it a “plantation.” My brother Charles and I ended up at Raritan Landing. He opened a mill there in 1750 and I married George Boice, a farmer like my father. We lived right on the Road Up Raritan from 1748 until my husband’s death in 1779. I thought it unfair that he left all the property to our son and only six silver teaspoons to our daughter, Lidda. But that was the custom: boys got everything important.

*Woman Feeding Chickens*, woodcut  
Thomas Bewick, circa 1800

## JOHANNES TENBROOK

I ASKED ABRAHAM DUMONT and Henry Dumont to manage my lottery for me in 1748. They were to sell 2000 tickets at 14 shillings apiece; Daniel Bray and Henry Lane would oversee the drawing, and I, of course, was responsible for turning over title to the prizes.

The three highest prizes were: 1) a lot of ground 100 feet square with a good storehouse right opposite it with as much ground back as the breadth of the storehouse to the end of the lot; 2) a good dwelling house with a fine shop and good kitchen to it, good well, and a fine garden; and 3) a new storehouse and barn, and ground at the front to build a large dwelling house. My wife, Catheryntje, and I lived next to the prize lots, with our son, Johannes, just nine years old in 1748. Johannes kept asking whether the new owners would have a boy his age to play with. I hoped so.





## *BILL*

I WAS A GOOD BAKER so I knew I could get work somewhere else, if they would have me, but I couldn't stay with Cornelius Clopper anymore. He taught me the baking trade, but he made me wear an iron collar. I didn't want to wear that collar so I left with only the clothes on my back: an old red cloth jacket and a pair of homespun trousers. I thought my low Dutch would serve me well at other Dutch communities in New Jersey. It had been useful at Raritan Landing where so many people still spoke Dutch, but my English was good, too. I was young and strong and would settle wherever possible, as long as I could be free. That's what mattered most – and not to have to wear that collar.



*Runaway African American Slave*, woodcut, artist and date unknown  
Bead believed to have been left behind by an African American living at Raritan Landing,  
Raritan Landing excavations

## *ISAAC WILSON*

IT WAS LISSES BETEAU who put me up to it. He didn't like my situation with the Manning family and persuaded me to run with him. It was that hot July of 1770, and it was hard to work over the anvil in the heat, especially in the clothes my owner, Andrew Myer, made me wear. Can you imagine a brown cloth coat, blue breeches, stockings, and a wool hat in summer? They thought we weren't human and I guess they wanted us to cover up our brown skin. I let Lisses do the talking so no one would recognize me by my lisp (a speech impediment, they called it) and pulled that damned hat over that funny spot of grey hair on my forehead. They only offered 40 shillings reward for our return. That's all they thought we were worth – and me a skilled blacksmith. They were wrong and we would do better in the city where we headed.







*Woman Churning Butter,*  
painting by La Baratteuse,  
circa 1866

## *JEAN BLAIR*

I OUTLIVED MY HUSBAND by a good twenty years and took over our “good stand of business” at the corner of the causeway and the Road Up Raritan. We supplied meals ~ “diet” we called it ~ by the week to other businessmen at the Landing. We got supplies from the storekeeper down the road, for instance, in exchange for three months diet in October 1759 and another 6 weeks and 5 days of the same in December. Of course, we also did other work, freighting for the storekeeper as well as others, and we even kept a substantial garden. I didn’t have any children, but there was plenty of work to do and when I made my will in 1784 I left my negro servant, Harry, to my friend Mary Covenhoven of Somerset County. I gave my mulatto slave his freedom forever, 50 pounds sterling in cash, a wagon, and two horses and a certain plot of land at Raritan Landing joining Raritan River to him and his heirs forever. I wonder what the villagers thought of that.

## *MARGARET DEGROOT FIELD*

I MARRIED BENJAMIN FIELD at the Landing and we inherited his aunt's house along the causeway when she died in 1784, but I had my own land, too.

My father, Jacob Degroot, didn't believe that only the oldest son should get all the property. When he made his will in 1749, it said my younger brother, sister, and I were to divide equally among us the meadows in Somerset County joining Bound Brook and also the meadows of Lafert Sebring. And we got the lots fronting on the Road Up Raritan, too, next to the land Robert Clauson lived on. My oldest brother, John, would get the farm and all its land when our mother died or remarried. Other women at the Landing envied me for having my own land. Their fathers weren't so generous. And besides that, my father-in-law, Jeremiah Field, left me his house in 1769.





## *ROBERT KIP*

I HAD MY BUSINESS right down by the wharf. That's where they needed me most, you know. They brought the grain from Somerset in open wagons, but before it was loaded onto ships, most times they put it in barrels – my barrels. I was a skilled cooper and could make more barrels in a day than most coopers made in a week. It was a good business and my family kept at it until there were no more ships being loaded at Raritan Landing. When they built that canal, you see, the boats didn't come to Raritan Landing anymore. Everything went right into New Brunswick. I am glad I wasn't there to see that sad day.

*Cooper, shop of a barrel maker,  
watercolor and gouache,  
artist and date unknown*

## JOHN BRAY

I SERVED AS ASSISTANT COMMISSARY OF ISSUES to Charles Stewart during the Revolutionary War. With warehouses and a wharf in New Brunswick, and a house and large warehouse at Raritan Landing as well, I had no shortage of sources of supply. But my wife stayed on our property in Lebanon, out in Somerset County, during the war, and in 1780 I tried to sell my Raritan Landing holdings. It included "... a very good dwelling house with a convenient storehouse and kitchen almost new, and a large garden adjoining." I had also come by 500 pairs of "the very best men's shoes and a quantity of sole leather" which I advertised for sale in 1780. At the end of the very same year, I put my Raritan Landing slaves up for sale – a couple with a 15-month-old child. I had followed my father, Daniel, into the trading business – he had a sloop registered in Perth Amboy in 1763 – and fell easily into a leadership position at the Landing. In 1782, I was an agent for the court that tried the pirate, Adam Huyler, for taking tackle and apparel off the sloop *Savannah* and seizing the sloops *Catherine* and *Jane* near Prince's Bay.



John Bray when he lived at the Landing, painting, circa 1780, artist unknown  
Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission

## BERNARDUS LAGRANGE



to Staten Island, where Triff he was, unless he alters his  
conduct. Your son in law E. D. has mimick himself by his  
folly. Let the father take warning by the example. Their  
conduct is not a fit Companion for your Flagrant. I pity some  
others in this Town whose efforts are in a fair way to be  
confiscated, one of whom is Bishop Collins. —  
According to your wishes the fleet has at last arrived  
and what have they done, or what are they likely to do?  
they have made your Country Husband run, and meanly  
hide himself. Remember it is high treason to revile  
against the States of America, or the ruling Body  
of them. — Mr Lagrange used to say that the Church  
to which he belonged was in danger of being destroyed  
let him read the New Constitution of this Province,  
and ever after keep silent upon that head, the  
Presbyterians are not such Devils, as you formerly  
imagined. neglect not giving God advice to your  
Husband. —

I remain yours &c. H. L. a Mechanic.

As you come to some of it by my name. —

WE COULDN'T BUILD A CHURCH without money so the first thing we did was hold a lottery. Other Landing residents, all gentlemen, worked on it with me. Edward Antill, William Mercer, M.D., and Peter Kemble were on the committee along with some upstanding residents of New Brunswick. Antill, Mercer, and Kemble were also charter members of the Church of England congregation, as was Frances Brasier, my brother-in-law, and Patrick Riley. We were close in the 1760s, but when the war came we took different sides. I believed we should stay with England, and paid dearly for it – lost my land and was chased out of town. They threatened me with terrible letters and actually burned an effigy of me. I wasn't the only Tory at the Landing. My brother-in-law favored the English, too. Some families were split over the war. Evert Duyckinck, for instance, sided with the rebels while his son, John, stood with me. I left the Landing and my law practice in New York and New Brunswick and settled in England. I filed a claim for compensation for the farm at Raritan. William Paterson had bought it for only a fraction of its real worth.

Gentleman Farmer, woodcut, Thomas Bewick, circa 1800  
Bernardus LaGrange letter written when he lived at the Landing,  
Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission

## ABRAHAM VAN RANST

WHEN I MARRIED CATHERINE ROOSEVELT in 1766, I connected myself with one of the Landing's richest families – the Lows. Catherine was a grandniece of Peter Low, Cornelius Low's brother. We moved to Raritan Landing from Bushwick, Long Island, in about 1774. After just two short years of peace and prosperity, the village was turned topsy-turvy by British soldiers. They occupied our land and did a good deal of damage to the house, storehouse, and bakehouse. I entered the baking business in the 1760s; it had become particularly profitable because of shortages in Europe. We shipped our bread to New York City and Rhode Island, and from there it was shipped abroad, or sometimes down to the Caribbean. I wasn't the only baker at Raritan Landing in those days and we kept ship captains John Sleight, John Abeel, and Paul Miller busy conveying the product, with almost daily cargoes.





## *ANTHONY WALTON WHITE*

I WASN'T A LUCKY MAN, but it was an interesting life. In October 1775 I was appointed an aide to General Washington and the following February 1<sup>st</sup> was made lieutenant colonel of the 3rd Battalion of New Jersey troops under the future president. By 1780, I commanded two regiments and was with the army under Lafayette until the capture of Cornwallis at Yorktown. I married a beauty from South Carolina, but there were always financial difficulties. We squandered her fortune and mine, and when we finally came back to New Brunswick we were not well off. The house where I was born – called Buccleuch by a later owner – had been sold in the 1770s and we had to live with my wife's sister on Livingston Avenue. I missed the view of the river and the bustle of Raritan Landing, but even a general, when he's bankrupt, can't have everything he wants.

## A NOTE ABOUT PLACES

The names of places mentioned in the first-person narratives of residents of Raritan Landing may not be familiar to you, even if you know the area well. Many of the place names used in the 1700s have changed. Here are some places and features that you may not recognize at first reading.

**Raritan Landing** was one of several settlements located within Piscataway, one of the earliest townships established in Middlesex County. Piscataway, today, about 19 square miles, is much smaller in size than it was in 1666 when first settled by John Martin, Charles Gilman, Hugh Dunn, and Hopewell Hull. Raritan Landing was located on the river, at the limit of deep-water navigation on the Raritan River. Piscatawaytown, another settlement within the 300-square mile township, was in the eastern section, along present-day Woodbridge Avenue, County Route 514, in Edison Township.

**New York** was originally called Nieuw Amsterdam, named by Dutch settlers from the Netherlands for their capital city in Europe, and was the leading community of Nieuw Netherland, the Dutch colony that included parts of present-day New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. English forces took control of Nieuw Amsterdam and Nieuw Netherland in 1664.

**The Raritan Valley** includes all of present-day Middlesex County and portions of Somerset, Hunterdon, Mercer, Monmouth, and Morris Counties. The major tributaries include South River, the Millstone River, Bound Brook, Green Brook, and the Lamington River.





**Somerset** was both a county and a small settlement in that county. Somerset County was created from part of Middlesex County in 1688. Franklin Township, created in 1798, included the settlement known as Somerset.

**Road Up Raritan** was the name used in the 1700s for the present-day River Road, from Highland Park through Piscataway to Bound Brook. Originally, this road was a trail used seasonally by the Lenape, the Native people of New Jersey.

**Bound Brook** was settled as early as the 1680s, established on a stream of the same name that flows into the Raritan River. Bound Brook was part of Bridgewater Township, which was created in 1749. In 1869 Bound Brook became a separate municipality.

**Amboy** was a name used by the Lenape for the area at the mouth of the Raritan River, where the River meets the Raritan Bay. On the north bank, settlers from Scotland who established the town in 1693, named their community Perth Amboy, for the Earl of Perth, a Scottish nobleman who was one of the original proprietors, or land owners, of New Jersey. Perth Amboy, which received a royal charter as a city in 1718, was one of two colonial capitals of New Jersey



**East Jersey** was one of the two divisions of the province of New Jersey. The dividing line that separated East and West Jersey ran from southeast to northwest. Perth Amboy was the capital and official port of East Jersey. Burlington, on the Delaware River, was the capital and official port of West Jersey. The Colonial Assembly met part of the year in each community.

**New Brunswick**, first settled by Dutch families in the early 1600s as a place called Hollander Dorp, meaning Dutch village. In 1626 there were six houses and 31 inhabitants. By 1670, when the village had 32 houses and 180 residents, the English had taken control of Nieuw Netherland. John Inian, one of the three leading landowners in the area during the English proprietary period, began ferry service across the Raritan River in the 1680s, and the community came to be called Inian's Ferry. The community continued to grow, and was known as New Brunswick by the 1720s, in honor of King George I of England, who was born in Germany, where his family was known as the House of Brunswick, and were the rulers of Hanover. Though German by birth, he became King of England in 1714. New Brunswick received a royal charter as a city in 1730. Like Raritan Landing, New Brunswick flourished as a port, a place where ships load and unload, principally grain grown on farms in the Raritan Valley. In 1784, New Brunswick had nearly 3,000 residents, the most populous community in Middlesex County.

**Duyckinck's Brook**, a small creek at Raritan Landing, is called Metlar's Brook today.

**Middletown**, a township originally comprising the land between the Raritan Bay and the Navesink River, was formed in 1693, in Monmouth County, one of the original four counties of New Jersey.

**Second River**, where Cornelius Low and his wife Johanna Gouverneur Low had family, is present-day Belleville, in Essex County. The community was originally part of Newark Township, established in 1693. In 1812, it became part of the newly-created Bloomfield Township. Belleville was incorporated as a township in 1839.



Shard, Raritan Landing excavations

**Millstone**, a small community named for the Millstone River, a tributary of the Raritan River, was first settled in the 1690s. It became part of Hillsborough Township in Somerset County in 1771.

**Chimney Rock**, a rock formation in the first range of the Watchung Mountains, was a well-known landmark in the Raritan Valley, overlooking a narrow pass between the hills. During the Revolutionary War, that pass was used by American, English, and Hessian troops.

**Bristol**, a city and port in southwest England, was a center of commercial trade with North America in the 1700s.

**Lebanon**, originally part of Amwell and Tewksbury Township in Hunterdon County, was established in 1714.

**Prince's Bay** was the harbor area on Staten Island, opposite Matawan Creek on the New Jersey side of Raritan Bay. Today it known as Princess Bay.



**Raritan** was the early name for the community known as Somerville, in Somerset County. Several residents of Raritan Landing, including Cornelius Low and Bernardus LaGrange, owned farms at Raritan.

**Bushwick** was a small Dutch settlement on the western end of Long Island. It became part of the city of Brooklyn, which became part of New York City in 1898.

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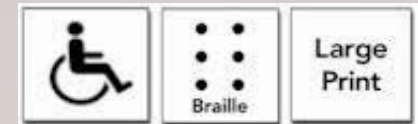
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Funding provided in part by a grant from New Jersey Historical Commission/Department of State

*Voices from Raritan Landing* was revised to serve as a companion piece to the exhibition on permanent view at East Jersey Olde Towne Village, entitled *Raritan Landing, Uncovering a Forgotten Past*

Colour Design and Update, Anna M. Aschkenes