



ARENT VAN CURLER & THE FLATTS
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DOCUMENTS

Commission to Arent van Curler as secretary and bookkeeper of the colony of Rensselaerswyck, May 12, 1639

May 12, 1639

Arent van Corler, who sailed as assistant of the colony of Rensselaerswyck, is hereby promoted to and qualified as Secretary and bookkeeper of the said colony, to enter upon the records faithfully all resolutions and public instruments; also to keep proper books and accounts of the increase of the animals as well as of their deaths, indicating the day and month and as far as possible the cause of death: also to make proper distinction between expenses which must be charged to the patroon or the colony and those that must be charged to the farms and to the accounts of the individual farmers, tobacco planters or other servants, the patroon's intention being that after he has once erected the houses of the respective farmers and provided them with [hay] barrack and barn, wagon and plow, the same shall thereafter be kept in repair, half at the expense of the patroon and the participants and half at the expense of the farmers, not including herein the household effects which each farmer must provide at his own charge; moreover, to prevent all carelessness, the farmer must bear one half of the damage by fire to his house and what belongs to it ; also to enter the 16 guilders a year extra for expenses of each farm hand,[^] which covers all small expenses and also the earnest money and agent's commission for procuring said farm hands and to which shall be added only the annual wages which they receive: also to demand of the farmers annual returns of the increase of the animals and the surplus grain, one half belonging to the patroon or the participants and the other half to themselves, the wheat being valued provisionally at six guilders a mudde. for reasons more fully specified in the instructions, with promise that those who will serve him conscientiously, faithfully and justly will receive as much more than six guilders as circumstances will in his opinion in any way permit: also to keep proper account of how much each farmhouse costs and

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to see to it that the timber be hewn for them in winter and that the carpenters do good work at reasonable wages, the patroon intending that he shall, with the advice of *Cornelis Theunissen* as representative'^ of the patroon and the participants, contract at a reasonable rate for the houses which may be erected there until other officers or commisen specially qualified to do so shall arrive in the colony, in order that the carpenters may receive proper wages and the patroon get good and cheap work. And as the administration of justice in the said colony ought not to be neglected either, the said *arent Van Corler* shall advise with the person above mentioned and in more serious cases also seek the assistance of *Pietter Cornelissen* and with them provisionally and until further order fill the post of officer. Upon receiving good reports and results of their services the patroon will pay proper attention to the promotion which is most suitable to them. The patroon recommends to each one to do his duty and to live with the others in friendship, peace and harmony, to hold religious services at the proper seasons especially on Sunday by public prayers, hymns, thanks, and readings from the Holy Scriptures and the authors of the Reformed Christian Church. Further, he orders this document to be entered on the records after it and also the commissions of the others have first been publicly read in the full council of the colony. Done at Amsterdam, this 12th of May of the year of our Saviour Jesus Christ one thousand six hundred and thirty-nine and in witness of the truth signed by me. Was signed: *kiliaen van rensselaer*, patroon- of the colony of Rensselaerswyck, and further sealed with the seal of the said colony.

Source: Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts, pp. 433-434.