



A History of the City of Brooklyn and Kings County

Stephen Ostrander

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Excerpt:

The name of Stephen M. Ostrander has been honored in the city of Brooklyn as that of a man whose career exemplified a stainless citizenship. The honors have been not those of public favor offered in a citizen's lifetime, nor of memorials after he has passed away, but the monuments of a cherished memory, the recognition of a generous and wholesome personality.

Stephen M. Ostrander was born February 3, 1832, in the city of Brooklyn. He was of Dutch stock, his earliest ancestor in this country being Pieter Ostrander, who came to America in 1659. When Pieter Ostrander reached America with his wife and three children—a son, Pieter Pieterszen,¹ and two daughters, Tryutje and Geertje—Peter Stuyvesant was Governor of New Amsterdam, and the settlement on Manhattan Island occupied a small patch of land on the southern point of the land now occupied by the vast metropolis of New York. Settlers had been living on the Brooklyn side of the East River for a[xii] little more than twenty years, and the Indians were still a formidable obstacle to the peace of the struggling young communities. Dutch immigration had not yet been checked by that bloodless conquest of the British, which five years later transformed New Amsterdam from a Dutch to an English colony, and changed its name to New York.

We afterward find Pieter Pieterszen living at Kingston. This second Pieter among the American Ostranders was born at Amsterdam, Holland, in 1650, and before coming to this country with his father had been enrolled as a cadet in the army of the Dutch king. In 1679 he married Rebecca, daughter of William Janszen Traphagen and Joostje Willems Van Northwyck. Among the children from this marriage was Hendrick Ostrander, born at New Hurley, N. Y., in 1693. Hendrick acquired the ownership of two thousand acres of land at Plattskill, which were evenly divided among his ten children. He was "a staunch adherent of the Reformed Dutch Church,"² and served in the army previous to the Revolution. His marriage to Elizabeth Van Bommel, of Kingston, took place in 1724. His son Christoffer, born and died at Plattskill, was the father of Stephen Ostrander, born at Poughkeepsie in 1769, and afterwards of Pompton Plains and Brunswick, N. J., who[xiii] was an eloquent minister of the Dutch Church. An illustration of the conditions prevailing at this period is offered by the fact that Stephen Ostrander preached in both English and Dutch.

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