

More Excerpts From Edwin Jaquett Sellers' Book, *Allied Families of Delaware*

The Governor Lovelace Deed to Tymen Stiddem and Other Matters Dealing With Land

Continuing where we left off in Issue 6, Mr. Sellers now provides some background into how the city of Wilmington came to be laid out, which in turn, leads to a transcription of the deed from Governor Lovelace of New York. Sir Francis Lovelace was the Governor-General of the territory granted to the Duke of York in 1664, by his brother Charles the Second. The document was signed at Fort James, which was the old Fort Amsterdam in New York. After the English had conquered the Dutch, all the inhabitants of the region were required to have their deeds recorded in New York.

Excerpts from the book are indented and written in smaller type, including references he cites, as written. New evidence is provided where known, following Seller's text, including commentary by the editor, interspersed where appropriate.

Scharf's "History of Delaware," page 630:

"The origin of the city (Wilmington) is to be found in the building of Fort Christina by the Swedish pioneers in 1638. Its site was within the present limits of Wilmington, on the South side of the creek, near 'The Rocks' and in the vicinity of Old Swedes's church, around this fort, according to Governor Rising, fifteen or twenty houses were clustered when the Dutch captured the position in 1655. By them the name was changed to Fort Altena and a little town laid out west of the fort under the direction of Governor Beekman, which was called Christianaham, and in 1661 lots were granted to settlers, among whom were Tymen Stidham. The lots were adjoining the fort and were thirty feet in breadth; double lots, sixty feet. The fort, which was nearly destroyed in the Dutch assault in 1655, was in 1658 repaired, and eight thousand brick were brought from Fort Orange

(Albany, N.Y.) for that purpose, and a few men placed in charge. Christianaham at that time was next in importance to New Castle, at which place Vice-Director Beekman resided most of the time from 1658 to 1663, although New Castle belonged to the City of Amsterdam and Christianaham to the Dutch West India Company. In 1664 Fort Altena was captured by the English and permitted to go to ruin. The town of Christianaham ceased to exist and is not later mentioned."

Following is the transcription by Mr. Sellers of the Lovelace deed. It should be noted that Mr. Sellers spells Dr. Stiddem's name as Tymen (also Tyman) Stidham, although a

look at the original document shows in each case where he is named by Governor Lovelace—five times in all—it is spelled as Tymen Stiddem.

Wilmington, Delaware.
Deed Liber A, folio 18:

"Francis Lovelace Esqr., one of the Gentlemen of his Majesties Honr Privy Chamber and Governor-General under his Royal Highness James Duke of York and Albany & of all his Territories in America, To all to whom these presents shall come sendeth Greeting:

Whereas there is a certain parcell of land in Delaware River near unto New Castle now in the tenour and occupation of Tyman Stidham, as his

proper right, Beginning at the Fall of the Brandywine Kill & Stretching in length to the Rattle Snake Kill, and in Breadth from the Rattle Snake Path in a like Breadth to his house, as also his meadow or valley upon the Hooke, from the Black Kath Kill to the Great Brandywine Kill, so along to Christiana Kill.

Now for a confirmation unto him, the said Tyman Stidham, in his possession & injoyment of the premises, Know ye that by virtue of the authority and Commission



**Dr. Stiddem's house as it looked in the mid-to-late 1800s
on the land noted in the Governor Lovelace deed.**

unto me given by his Royal Highness I have ratified, Confirmed and granted and by these Presents doe ratifye Confirm and Grant unto Tymen Stidham, his heirs & assigns, the aforesaid recited Parcel of Land and Premises, Together with all & singular the appurtenances, to have & to hold the said Parcell of Land and Premises together with the meadow or vally upon the Hooke unto the said Tymen Stidham his heirs and assigns forever, yielding & paying yearly and every year as a quit rent unto his Majest^t use one Bushell of winter [wheat] when it shall be demanded by such officer or officer in Authority as be impowered and establisht in Delaware River and Partes Adjacent to Command & receive the same.

Given under my Hand & Sealed with the Seale of the Province of Fort James in New Yorke the third day of May in the Twenty third Year of his Mag^{ts} Reigne Anno Domini 1671.

(Subscribed)

FRANCIS LOVELACE.

Recorded by order of y^e
Governo^r

MATHIAS NICHALLIS, SCR."

Mr. Sellers then lays out a series of court proceedings dealing with Dr. Stiddem's land and its relationship to others in the community. This time he uses the spelling of Tymen Stiddem consistently throughout.

It will be observed in the foregoing that the size of the tract is not expressed, and also that it is not an original patent, but merely confirmatory of land already in Dr. Tymen's possession.

Prothonotary's Office, Wilmington. Liber A, folio 102:

"Att a Court held in the Towne of New Castle on Delaware By his Maj^{ties} Authority February the 4th & 5th Annoq. Dom. 1678/9

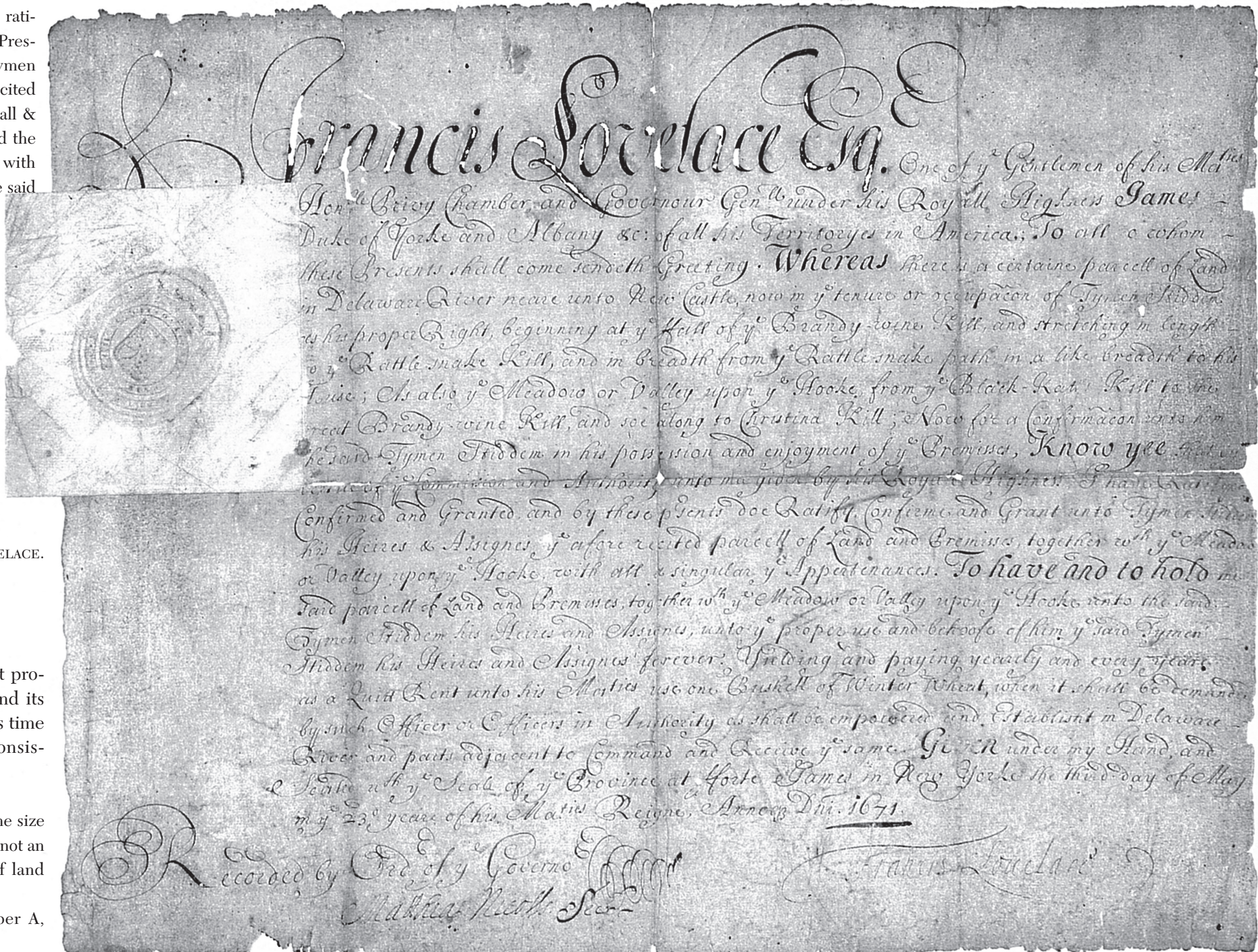
Mr. John Moll
Mr. Peter Alrichs
Mr. Gerret Otto
Mr. Joh. De Haes
Mr. Abram Maw
Mr. Will. Sempill
P^r Sent: Justices.
Tymen Stiddem preferring in Co^{rt} a Peticon, Showing

that heretofore that hee had purchazed from Moens Andriessen & Jacob Vander Veer a Certayne peece of Land, Lying on the North syde of Brandewyn Creeke Just above ye Land Called ye smiths Land for w^{ch} hee hath paid the Quit Rent and being desierous to have further Confirmacon thereof by Pattent from his hono^r ye Governo^r did therefore desire this worpp^{ll} Courts order to the Surveigho^r for to lay

out the sd. Land being 100 Acres.

And hee the sd. Tymen Stiddem further Complayning to ye Co^{rt} that Jacob Vander Veer had notwthstanding hee was forwarned by him the sd. Tymen of Late Caused a Resurveig to bee made of his (?) land and in the sd. Resurveigh had Comprehended and Included this same Land of him ye Peticon^r and that hee dayly Cutts downe the timber thereof. The

The saga between Dr. Stiddem and Jacob Vander Veer concerning this piece of real estate lying on the North side of "ye Brandewyn," continues in the next issue with "Excerpts from *Allied Families of Delaware*," by Edwin Jaquett Sellers.



The Governor Lovelace Deed dated the third of May, 1671, reproduced here courtesy of the Historical Society of Delaware.

Co^{rt} having examined the premises do think fitt before they proceed further therein that ye sd. Tymen Stiddem do bring att the next Court all his papers and evidences touching the sd. Land and that Jacob Vender Veer then also appeare for to vindicate himself as when the Co^{rt} will proceed to a fynal determinacon therein and in the mean tyme Jacob Vender Veer is to forbear Cutting of Timber upon ye same Land."

Round One above went to Dr. Stiddem, at least for the time being as far as his neighbor Jacob Vanderveer and his trusty tree ax were concerned. Round Two below took place a month later when both returned to court.

Liber A, folio 110:
"March ye 4th 1678/9

Tymen Stiddem Plt.
Jacob Vanderveer Deft.

In an action of ye case for a piece of Land in ye Brandewyn Creeke.

The Sherrife Returned his writt non Est Inventus."

Prothonotary's Office, Wilmington, Del., Liber A, folio 47:

"March ye 5th 1678/9
Tymen Stiddem Plt.
Jacob Vander Veer Deft.

The plt demands a Conveigance for a Certayn parcell of Land by him bought of ye deft in ye yeare 1667 Lying on boath sydes of ye Brandewyn Creeke.

The Deft Replies that hee hath sould to yee Plt. no other Land but what Lyeth on the South syde of the Brandewyn Creeke w^{ch} the Plt now possesses.

The Debates of both partees being heard Itt is ordered that the Land w^{ch} Mr. Tymen Stiddem had bought of Walraeven Jansen & Moens Andries That hee the Plt may Cause the Same to bee Surveighed and obtayned a Pattent for the Same."