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FRANS ABRAMSE VAN SALEE AND HIS DESCENDANTS: A COLONIAL BLACK FAMILY IN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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In the past few decades much has been written about blacks in early New York. In 1984 the 6th Annual Rensselaerswyck Seminar was devoted to "Blacks in New Netherland and Colonial New York." The proceedings of this seminar were published as volume 5, numbers 3 and 4 (Fall and Winter 1984) of the *Journal of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society*. But, despite the many books, articles and papers on the subject, relatively little attention has been paid to the genealogies of free black families in New York.

The earliest blacks in New York were slaves of the Dutch West India Company, brought to New Netherland soon after its settlement in 1624. The Company freed many slaves on either partial or full freedom plans from 1644 through the English takeover in 1664. The fact that slaves freed during these two decades were given land by the Company meant that they were better able to support themselves than those who were freed after 1664, often without land or money (Vivienne L. Kruger "Born to Run: The Slave Family in Early New York, 1626 to 1827" [Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1985], pp. 53, 591).

A few of these early black families (such as Van Salee) can be traced for 200 years or more into the 19th century. While the majority of records do not indicate a person was black, identification can normally be made based on name, approximate age and, in the case of church records, baptismal sponsors.¹

Although this article treats Frans Abramse Van Salee and his descendants, the story actually begins with his father, Abram Jansen Van Salee, of whom there are few records.

1. ABRAM JANSEN¹ VAN SALEE, probably was the brother or half-brother of Anthony Jansen¹ Van Salee of New Amsterdam and Gravesend, Kings County. It is possible they were sons of Jan Jansen Van Haarlem, a Dutchman in the

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¹ This introduction was adapted from Henry B. Hoff "A Colonial Black Family in New York and New Jersey: Pieter Santomee and His Descendants" *Journal of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society* 9:101-134 (Fall 1988).

service of the Sultan of Morocco, whose wife (perhaps the mother of Anthony and/or Abraham) may have been Moroccan (REC. 103:16-17). Of the many references to men named Abram/Abraham Jansen in New Netherland, the only one that appears to refer to Abram Jansen Van Salee is "Abraham Jansen alias The Mulatto," of Brooklyn, Kings County, who was fined in 1658 for not contributing to the minister's salary on the grounds he did not understand Dutch (CDM 193, 194).

Abram Jansen Van Salee died in 1659, as indicated by the following entry, dated 9 April 1659, from the records of the Orphanmasters of New Amsterdam (OM 1:84):

Catalyntje, the wife of Joresy, coming in tells Mr. Allard Anthony, that a man, called Abraham Jansen van Salee, alias the Turk, who had lived at her house, was dead, having made a testament, whereby he has devised his property to the negro-woman and the child, he has had by her, Joresy having been named executor. She says, the Deacons of the City have attached and seized the property and she had been to the Director General, who had referred her to the Orphanmasters. As the domicile is not within this jurisdiction, the case was not taken up by this Board, but again referred to the Director General and Council.

No further record of this case has been found.

Abraham Jansen Van Salee must have lived outside New Amsterdam since jurisdiction was a problem. The reference to "Catalyntje" and "Joresy" by only their first names suggests they were well known to the Orphanmasters. The obvious couple with these names living near, but not in, New Amsterdam was Joris Jansen and Catalyntje (Trico) Rapalje of the Wallabout in Brooklyn.

Although neither the sex nor the name of the child is mentioned, the fact that Frans Abramse Van Salee later appears in Brooklyn with the correct patronymic and surname is compelling evidence he was that child.

Child of Abram Jansen Van Salee:

2 i. Frans².

2. FRANS ABRAMSE² VAN SALEE (Abram Jansen¹), born prior to April 1659, perhaps was the unnamed child of "Abraham Janszen, Fortuyn" baptized at the New York Dutch Church 22 November 1654 without sponsors (BDC 38). Fortuyn [i.e. lucky] may have been a nickname of Abraham Janszen or the name of the child's mother. He was married first at the New York Dutch Church 3 November 1680 (MDC 48) as Frans Abrahamszen, of Bedford [in Brooklyn], bachelor, to Lucretia Hendricks, of the Bowery, spinster.

She may have been identical with Lucretia who was baptized with twin sister Elizabeth at the New York Dutch Church 30 May 1666 (BDC 83). Their parents are given as Dirck Hendricksen and Anna Maria, a couple who do not appear elsewhere in New York City records. The following chronology suggests that Lucretia and Elizabeth's mother, Anna Maria, was identical with an Anna Maria who was [re]married shortly before or after their baptism:

- (1) The baptismal sponsors for Lucretia and Elizabeth were Sara and Tryntje Roelofs [who probably were the daughters of the famous Anneke Jans by her first husband—see REC. 104:70].

- (2) On 25 April 1666 Augustyn Pens, negro, and Anna Maria, negress, were betrothed at the New York Dutch Church (MDC 32).
- (3) The first two children of Augustyn and Anna Maria had Sara Roelofs as a baptismal sponsor (BDC 90, 94), presumably the same Sara Roelofs who was sponsor for Lucretia and Elizabeth in 1666.

This Anna Maria seems to be identical with Anna Maria, who with Jan Domingo and Augustyn Franciscus, were baptismal sponsors in 1683 for Anna Maria, oldest daughter of Frans Abramse and Lucretia (Hendricks) Van Salee (BDC 160). And the fact that Frans and Lucretia named their oldest daughter Anna Maria would suggest in itself that one of them had a mother named Anna Maria.

If Lucretia was baptized as an infant, she would have been only fourteen when married. However, it is possible she and her sister were baptized as children, not as infants. In addition, she normally would have been called Lucretia *Dircks* [her patronymic] rather than Lucretia *Hendricks* [her father's patronymic]. However, the latter form was also possible.

From these records it appears that Anna Maria married *first* Dirck Hendricksen and had Lucretia and Elizabeth who were baptized shortly before or after their mother's *second* marriage in 1666 to Augustine Pens [also known as Augustine Manuels, Augustine Anthony, Augustine de Angola, and probably Augustine Franciscus].² As Anna Mary Van Curacao, widow of Augustyn de Angola, she married *third* at the New York Dutch Church 26 December 1691 (MDC 71) Francis Bastiaenszen, widower of Barbara Manuels. As Anne Marie Van Curacao, lastly widow of Franciscus de Angola, she married *fourth* at the New York Dutch Church 5 December 1697 (MDC 86) Jan Wel, widower of Isabel Angola.

Returning to Frans Abramse Van Salee: he was listed as Frans Abrahamse on the 1683 rate list of Brooklyn (Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan *Lists of Inhabitants of Colonial New York Excerpted from The Documentary History of the State of New York*, Baltimore, 1979, hereafter *Inhabitants*, p. 122), as the native-born Frans Abramse who took the oath of allegiance there in 1687 (*Inhabitants* 37; *Denizations* [see note 2], p. 90), and as Frans Abrahamse in the 1698 census of Brooklyn (*Inhabitants* 176) with no wife, two children and an apprentice. He witnessed a deed in Bedford in 1689 as Ffrans Abramse, signing by mark (REC. 48:117).

Frans Abramse Van Salee was married second at the New York Dutch Church 13 November 1705 (MDC 104) as "Frans Abrahamsze Van Betfort"

² I have assumed Dirck Hendricksen and Anna Maria were married although the New York Dutch Church baptismal records in the 17th century do not always indicate illegitimate children nor do they indicate whether the father was dead. Anna Maria's second husband, Augustine, appears with various surnames. He is an extreme example of the fluidity of surnames [but not first names] among blacks in 17th century New York. He may be identical with Augustine Sordonck or Fordonck who is on a 1673 list of blacks on Manhattan (New York Colonial Manuscripts 23:275; Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda *Denizations, Naturalizations and Oaths of Allegiance in Colonial New York*, Baltimore, 1975, pp. 85-86; *Second Annual Report of the State Historian of the State of New York*, Albany, 1897, pp. 442-44). His son Augustine, baptized at the New York Dutch Church 27 August 1670 (BDC 99), may be the ancestor of the Van Donck family (David Steven Cohen *The Ramapo Mountain People*, New Brunswick, N.J., 1974, pp. 37-41).

to "Isabelle Salomons." She was born Isabel Frans, baptized at the New York Dutch Church 14 August 1667 as daughter of Francois d'Angola and Barbara Manuels (BDC 88). Her father was also known as Frans or Francisco Bastiaenz (REC. 116:69). There is a chart of some of his descendants in Timothy Field Beard and Denise Demong *How To Find Your Family Roots* (New York, 1977) as illustration 21 following page 367, and in *The Ramapo Mountain People* [see note 2] at page 30. And, if the hypothesis set out above regarding the marriages of Anna Maria is correct, the two wives of Frans Abramse Van Salee were stepsisters, as the father of the second wife married Anna Maria, the mother of the first wife.

Isabel Frans was the widow of Anthony Salomons whom she had married at the New York Dutch Church 4 January 1698 (MDC 87) and by whom she had a daughter Maria Salomons. For the family of Anthony Salomons, see ". . . Pieter Santomee and His Descendants" [see note 1] at page 108.

Frans Abramse was on the 1706 assessment list of Brooklyn and was a member of the Dutch Church there in 1708 (Charles T. Gritman *Genealogical Data of Many Families*, 3 volumes, typescript, New York Public Library, 1:2 verso, citing Kings Co. Deeds 3:91, 133). He was on the 1713 assessment list of Brooklyn (REC. 117:225). Between 1713 and 1719 he and his wife moved to Tappan, Orange [later Rockland] County, New York, close to the New Jersey border. He bought land in Tappan from Ariantie De Vries, widow of John De Vries [baptismal sponsors of his oldest son], and Johannes De Vries, eldest son of John De Vries, by deed dated 14 May 1716, acknowledged 27 October 1717 (George H. Budke, comp. *Abstracts of Early Deeds, Patents, Mortgages and Other Instruments Affecting the Land Titles of Rockland County, N.Y.*, n.p., 1975, #92). In 1719 he contributed to the salary of the *voorleezer* [a lay minister] at Tappan (Budke Collection, New York Public Library, Book 48, unpagged),³ and was a freeholder there by 4 November 1721 (*The Rockland Record* 2:46). His wife was a pew owner of the Tappan Dutch Church in 1724 (Budke Collection, Book 48, unpagged).

As Frans Abramse Van Sellea of Orange County, he left a will dated 3 May 1737, proved 5 May 1738 (New York County Wills 13:180; WNYHS 3:245, 16:132; FW 407 [which calls him free negro]; Budke Collection, Book 68, will 1129). The will makes wife Isabella and youngest son Frans Van Sellea, Junr., the executors, and leaves all his estate to wife Isabella. At her death or remarriage all his estate is to pass to son Frans excepting a horse to oldest son Abraham Van Sellea, a cow to wife's daughter Marya Salomons, and 12 pounds, 10 shillings to each of his following children: oldest son Abraham Van Sellea, daughter Anna Mary Van Sellea, second son Cuffee Prime Van Sellea, and third son Casper Prime Van Sellea. The testator signed by mark.

Children of Frans Abramse and Lucretia (Hendricks) Van Salee:

- 3 i. Abram³, bap. Flatbush Dutch Church 30 Oct. 1681.

³ The collection of George H. Budke, Rockland County Historian, was purchased in 1933 by the New York Public Library.

- ii. Anna Maria, bap. New York Dutch Church 10 Oct. 1683, wits.: Jan Domingo, Anna Maria, Augustyn Franciscus (BDC 160), mentioned in her father's will, evidently unnm.
- iii. Jan, bap. New York Dutch Church 5 Mar. 1686, wits.: Salomon Pieters, Marritie Hendricks (BDC 172), not in his father's will.

Children of Frans Abramse Van Salee, mother unknown:

- iv. Cuffee, mentioned in his father's will as second son. No further record found under the surnames Frans, Abra[ha]mse, Prime or Van Salee.
- 4 v. Caspar.

Children of Frans Abramse and Isabel (Frans) Van Salee:

- vi. Frans, bap. New York Dutch Church 9 Oct. 1706, wits.: Abram Franse, Susanna Franse (BDC 318). As he was an executor of his father's will, he, rather than his nephew Frans (3.i), probably was the defendant Fran Van Sale/Francis Vansale in an action in the Orange Co. Court of Common Pleas, dated 1 Nov. 1739, brought by Caspar Van Salye/Van Sale (4). Either he or his nephew (or even possibly his father) had been the defendant seven years earlier in the case of *Lamb^t Smith & Co v. Francis Van Salle* in the same court, dated 1 Nov. 1732. Either he or his nephew was the Frans Vansaller who witnessed the 1742 will of Cornelius Haring of Orange Town [which included Tappan], Orange Co. (NJA 34:228), and the Frans Van Salee who, with wife Elisabeth [surname never given], witnessed baptisms at the Tappan Dutch Church 1737-1758 (Rev. David Cole, D.D. *History of Rockland County, New York*, New York, 1884, repr. 1986 with added index, Appendix of Tappan Dutch Church Baptisms, hereafter Tap., followed by entry number rather than page).

This Frans Van Salee, however, definitely was the Frans Van Salee (Van Slea, Vansaley, Van Sallee etc.) of Tappan who left a poorly-drafted and partly illegible will dated 4 June 1769, proved 12 May 1790 (original Orange Co. will transcribed by Roger D. Joslyn, F.A.S.G.; Orange Co. Wills A:107; Budke Collection, Book 68, will 16), leaving 5 shillings to cousin [i.e. nephew] Frans Van Salee [perhaps because he was the heir at law as the oldest son of the testator's oldest brother], and dividing the remainder of his estate between nephew John Van Salee and servant Sarah (who also was given her freedom, the testator's dwelling house and a milk cow). In an attempt to keep his property intact, the testator specified how, after the death of nephew John Van Salee, the property would pass to the latter's children in tail. First, it would go to the oldest son and then to his heirs. If he had no heirs, it would then go to the second son and then to his heirs, and then to the third, fourth and fifth sons, in similar fashion. And if there were no surviving sons leaving heirs, then to the daughters of John Van Salee and their heirs.

- vii. Isabella, bap. Brooklyn Dutch Church 5 Apr. 1708, wits.: Willem Daij, Susanna Salomons (A.P.G. Jos van der Linde, ed. *Old First Dutch Reformed Church of Brooklyn, New York: First Book of Records, 1660-1752*, New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch [Baltimore, 1983] p. 152), not in her father's will.
- viii. Berbetje, bap. Brooklyn Dutch Church 14 May 1710 as daughter of Frans Abrams and *Elyzabeth*, wits.: Jacob Salomonz and Elyzabet, his wife (*Ibid.*, p. 154), not in her father's will.

3. ABRAM FRANS³ VAN SALEE (Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), baptized at the Flatbush Dutch Church 30 October 1681, witnesses: Jan de Vries and Adriantie, his wife (Flat. Frost Baps. 1:23). As "Abram Frans Van Sale or Salee, born at Bedford" (REC. 84:164) he was married to Helena De Vries on 1 February 1708 at the Tappan Dutch Church. She was baptized at the New York Dutch

Church 30 April 1684 (BDC 162), daughter of his baptismal sponsors Jan and Ariantie (Dircks) De Vries. There is a chart of her ancestry in *The Ramapo Mountain People* [see note 2] at page 28 and interesting information on the De Vries family at pages 33–36, 41–42.

As Abraham ffrancen, free negro, he was on the 1712 census of Tappan with one male 16–60, one male under 16, one female 16–60 and one female under 16 (*The Rockland Report* 2:22). Like his father, he was a supporter of the Tappan Dutch Church. His bond for 160 guildens, dated 12 April 1714, was among those stolen from the church in 1722 (Budke Collection, Book 48, unpagged). He was living on 3 May 1737 when mentioned in his father's will.

Children of Abram Frans and Helena (De Vries) Van Salee:

- i. Frans⁴, bap. Tappan Dutch Church 11 Jan. 1709, wits.: Frans Van Salee, Adriaentye Dircks (Tap. #134). Any of the records between 1732 and 1758 attributed to his uncle Frans (2.vi) may pertain to him. In any event, Francis and Abraham Vansally (probably his brother), both of the City of Burlington, Burlington Co., N.J., husbandmen, bought land partly in that city and partly in adjacent Mansfield Township by deed dated 23 January 1743/44 (West Jersey Deeds, Liber G-H, p. 218). However, he may not have lived in Burlington Co. until 1773 when he and Giles Hooper [his brother-in-law] were listed next to each other as rateables in Burlington Co. (GMNJ 36:54). He left a will as Francis Vansally of the City of Burlington, dated 20 Nov. 1781, proved 21 Sept. 1786 (New Jersey Wills 11139C; NJA 35:416), leaving 5 shillings to Eleanor Vansally, daughter of brother John Vansally, and the remainder of his property to John, Jacob, Ann and Eleanor Hooper, children of brother-in-law Giles Hooper. The inventory, taken 12 Apr. 1787, came to just over 199 pounds and included a large Dutch Bible.
- ii. Ariaaentie, bap. Tappan Dutch Church 26 June 1711, wits.: Jan De Vries, Isabel Franse (Tap. #170).
- iii. Abram, bap. Tappan Dutch Church 22 June 1714, witnesses: Frans Abramse, Isabel Barber, his wife (Tap. #215). Presumably he was the Abraham Vansally who bought land in Burlington Co., N.J. in 1744 (see under 3.i).
- iv. Lucretia, b. 15 Jan. 1717, bap. Tappan Dutch Church 14 Feb. 1717, wits.: Johannes De Vries, Areiaentie Dirckie (Tap. #269).
- v. Anna Maria, b. 26 Feb. 1718, bap. Tappan Dutch Church 26 Apr. 1722, wits.: Anna Maria Van Zalee, Elizabeth Fransse (Tap. #399).
- 5 vi. Elizabeth, twin to her sister Anna Maria, m. Giles Hooper.
- 6 vii. John, b. 21 Mar. 1725.

4. CASPAR FRANCIS³ VAN SALEE (Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), mentioned in his father's will as third son. He probably was "Casper Saleega," a free baptized negro who witnessed the Lutheran baptism in New York City of Fannie, daughter of Johannes Cromwell and Lena on 28 December 1737 (REC. 98:224). As Caspar Van Salye/Van Salee he brought an action in the Orange County Court of Common Pleas in 1739 against Fran Van Sale/Francis Vansalee, probably his younger brother (2.vi) who was an executor of their father's will. As Caspar Francis Van Salee he married Johanna Cromwel on 8 November 1742 by Lutheran rite (HSYB 1903:22), both described as free negroes living at Hackensack. Although Caspar Francis Van Salee would have been at least age 37 in 1742 (since his younger brother was baptized in 1706), it is possible

this was not his first marriage. His brother Abram (3) had no recorded son named Caspar, and even if he did, it would have been quite unusual for such a child to use the name Caspar Francis (since Abram would have been the child's patronymic). Also, Abram (3) did not give double names to any of his recorded sons.

As the names Johanna and Anna were interchangeable at this time, Johanna (Cromwel) Van Salee may have been identical with Antje, baptized at the New York Dutch Church 13 May 1722, daughter of Isaac and Dina (Van Donck) *Kromwell* (BDC 434), or with Annatje, baptized at the Hackensack Dutch Church 6 November 1726, daughter of Jan and Lena (Matthysen) *Krommel* (Hack. 150).

Child of Caspar Francis and Johanna (Cromwel) Van Salee:

- i. Annatje⁴, bap. by Lutheran rite in New York City 28 July 1747 at the age of about 1½ years, wits.: Frans Smith, Liesabeth Cromwel, free negroes; the parents and godmother from Paramus, the godfather from Tappan (Rec. 100:50).

(To be continued)

NECROLOGY OF MEMBERS — 1989

Col. Robert A. L. Bentley	November 28, 1989
Frederick W. Bogert	August 24, 1989
Beatrice M. Brittain	December 9, 1988
Stephen K. Brown	November 4, 1989
Col. Donald L. DeMuth	August 21, 1989
Mrs. S. V. De Simone (Damaris H.)	June 15, 1989
George Hall Ginader	April 10, 1989
Sinclair Hatch	July 12, 1989
Mrs. Harry F. Lindstrom (Doris V.)	April 5, 1988
G. E. Long, Jr.	August 6, 1988
Mrs. Kingsley Mabon (Martha Hall)	February 4, 1988
Thomas J. Oakley Rhineland	December 2, 1989
Mrs. Marjorie W. Sederlund	December 15, 1988
Mrs. Percy W. Smith (Dorothy)	
Margaret D. Stearns	July 12, 1989
Mrs. Stephen D. Thach (Natalie K.)	September 7, 1989
George F. Vanderhule, Sr.	January 26, 1989
Leonard Wanzor, Jr.	October 14, 1989

**FRANS ABRAMSE VAN SALEE AND HIS DESCENDANTS:
A COLONIAL BLACK FAMILY
IN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY**

BY HENRY B. HOFF, F.A.S.G.

(Continued from THE RECORD 121:71)*

5. ELIZABETH⁴ VAN SALEE (Abram Frans³, Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), born 26 February 1718, baptized at the Tappan Dutch Church 26 April 1722, witnesses: Anna Maria Van Zalee, Elizabeth Fransse (Tap. #398). She married prior to 1746 Giles Hooper, son of Crispin Hooper (bachelor, born at "Deventer in Old England") and Susanna Franse (spinster, born in the Bowery and living at the Great Kill) who were betrothed at the Tappan Dutch Church 19 October 1718 (Rec. 84:167). Isabel (Frans)(Salomons) Van Salee [stepmother of Abram Franse³ Van Salee] had a younger sister Susanna, baptized 18 February 1682 (BDC 151), but there is no evidence she was Mrs. Hooper except for the slight clue that the Hoopers named a daughter Barbara, which was the name of the mother of Isabel and Susanna Frans.

The juxtaposition of the names Crispin and Giles in the Hooper family makes it probable that Crispin Hooper was descended from Giles Hooper of Ashburton, Devon (born after 1635), son of Crispin Hooper by his second wife (James C. Brandow, comp. *Genealogies of Barbados Families*, Baltimore, 1983, pp. 352- 53). Giles and Elizabeth (Van Salee) Hooper moved to Burlington, Burlington County, New Jersey between 1758, when their son Jacobus was baptized at Tappan, and 1772, when the will of Elizabeth's uncle, "Jacobus De Vreese" of Orange Town, Orange County, dated 12 June 1772, proved 17 May 1774 (New York County Wills 29:95; WNYHS 8:174; FW 116), left 12 pounds to Jacobus, son of Giles Hooper of Burlington. Giles Hooper and his brother-in-law Francis Vansully were listed next to each other on the 1773 rateables list for Burlington County (GMNJ 36:54).

Giles Hooper of the Township of Burlington, Burlington County left a will dated 14 April 1791, proved 7 November 1791 (New Jersey Wills 11388C; NJA 37:183), mentioning son James Hooper and daughter Leenor Hooper (to take care of their mother), daughter Anne Evans, wife of Samuel Evans, and son John Hooper. The inventory, taken 2 November 1791, came to just over 110 pounds.

Children of Giles and Elizabeth (Van Salee) Hooper:

- i. Eleanor, b. 4 Jan. 1746, bap. (as Lena) Tappan Dutch Church 2 Feb. 1746, witness: Barbara Hoeper (Tap. #1393), d. unm. leaving a will as Ellenor Hooper of Mansfield, Burlington Co., dated 17 Feb. 1826, proved 2 Mar. 1826 (N.J. Wills 12635C),

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mentioning nephew James Evans and his son James Hooper Evans. The inventory, taken 25 Feb. 1826, came to \$74.25 and included a bookcase with books and six silver tea spoons.

- ii. John, b. 9 Sept. 1747, bap. Tappan Dutch Church 27 Sept. 1747, witnesses: none (Tap. #1487), d. probably unm. leaving a will as John Hooper of Mansfield, Burlington Co., dated 18 Sept. 1814, proved 27 Sept. 1814 (N.J. Wills 12737C; NJA 42:214), mentioning sisters Elenor Hooper and Ann Evans. The inventory, taken 3 Oct. 1814, came to \$527.15, of which \$205.00 was "purse and wearing apparel."
- iii. Ariaentye, b. 19 Dec. 1749, bap. Tappan Dutch Church 1 Jan. 1750, witnesses: Frans Van Salee and Elisabeth his wife, in name of Marytie De Vries (Tap. #1556), not in her father's will.
- iv. Susanna, b. 19 May 1753, bap. Tappan Dutch Church 10 June 1753, witness: Barbara Hoeper (Tap. #1701), not in her father's will.
- v. Jacobus/James, b. 21 Dec. 1757, bap. Tappan Dutch Church Jan. 1758, witnesses: none (Tap. #1861), d. after 14 Apr. 1791, the date of his father's will.
- vi. Ann(e), d. after 18 Sept. 1814, the date of her brother's will, m. Samuel Evans and had a son James Evans who was the father of *John* Hooper Evans, mentioned in the will of Eleanor Hooper (name corrected in New Jersey Chancery action summarized in GMNJ 53:87).

6. JOHN⁴ VAN SALEE (Abram Frans³, Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), born 21 March 1725, baptized as Jan [date not given] at Schraalenbergh by Dominic Bertholf, witnesses: Jacobus De Vries, Maria De Vries (Tap. #465). The baptism was not recorded at Schraalenbergh, however.

No record of John Van Salee as an adult has been found, either in the Tappan area or elsewhere. He evidently had children, yet no record of them has been found other than the references in the 1769 will of his uncle Frans Van Salee (2.vi) and the 1781 will of his brother Frans Van Salee (3.i).

As will be seen, in 1814 John⁵ Van Salee sold two parcels of land in Orangetown, Rockland County [set off from Orange County in 1798]. Since there is no deed recorded in either Orange or Rockland counties showing his purchase of the land, it is likely he inherited it. Moreover, all his children joined in the two deeds. The reason for this style probably was the unusual terms of the will of Frans Van Salee (2.vi) by which the property was left in tail.

Children of John Van Salee:

- 7 i. John⁵, b. c.1752.
- ii. Eleanor, received 5 shillings in the 1781 will of her uncle Frans Van Salee (3.i).
- iii. ?Daniel. "Vansaler, Daniel," owner of a house and lot assessed at \$60, was listed in the 1800 tax list of Orangetown [unpaged but alphabetically arranged, original at the New York State Archives].

7. JOHN⁵ VAN SALEE (John⁴, Abram Frans³, Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), born in Orange County, New York about 1752, according to his death record. There was a John Van Selley, enlisted man in Tryon County, New York during the American Revolution (James A. Roberts *New York in the Revolution as Colony and State*, 2nd ed., Albany, 1904, p. 259) who might possibly have been this man.

John Van Salee appears to have moved into New York City by about 1791 when his daughter Maria was born there. He was not listed in the 1790 census

of New York State, but there were a few free black households in the 1790 census of New York City headed by men named John with no surname given. He was listed in the 1800 tax list of Orangetown, Rockland County [set off from Orange County in 1798] as "Vanssaler, Johannes," a non-resident owning a lot assessed at \$24. However, he was not listed in the 1800 census of New York State. He did not appear in the New York City directories until 1810 when, as John Salee, no occupation given, he was living at Anthony Street near Church. Two years later he was listed (for the last time) as John Sallay, reedmaker, living at the rear of 91 Chapel Street. He was not listed in the 1810 census of New York State, unless he was the "John Sela" in the 1810 census of Orangetown (p. 142) who was head of a household of five "other free persons." However, his widow and sons-in-law were consistently listed in New York City censuses and were easily found by using Alice Eichholz and James M. Rose *Free Black Heads of Household in the New York State Federal Census, 1790-1830* (Detroit, 1981). Fortunately, there are two crucial deeds that identify John⁵ Van Salee and his family. An unrecorded deed in the Budke Collection (Book 70, p. 252), conveying to Samuel G. Verbryck slightly over three acres in Orange Town, was dated 6 May 1814 and was acknowledged the same day. The grantors, all of the City of New York, were John Van Sallee and Grietje his wife, Dennis Hedden and Elizabeth his wife, George De Grass and Maria his wife, Richard Reeve and Susan his wife, Margaret Van Sallee and Isabella Van Sallee. The other deed, conveying to Cornelius Bogert slightly over an acre, was also dated and acknowledged 6 May 1814 and was from the same grantors. This deed was not recorded until 20 September 1845 (Rockland County Deeds R:217).

John Van Salee died in New York City 28 January 1816 age 64. The entry in the "Official Register of Deaths of the City of New York [Manhattan] 1801-1865," microfilm, 20 reels (hereafter NYC Deaths), was as follows:

Name:	John Surley
Address:	Murray Street
Age:	64 years
Place of birth:	Orange Co.
Cause:	palsy
Cemetery:	Asbury African
Sexton of cemetery:	I. Hicks
Comments:	a black

The Asbury African Methodist Episcopal Church was one of four black Methodist churches in New York City in the early 19th century (Jonathan Greenleaf *A History of the Churches . . . in the City of New York. . .*, New York, 1846, hereafter Greenleaf, pp. 320-29).

His wife Grietje was called Margaret Van Sourlay or Van Surly in subsequent deeds and in the 1830 census of New York City (5th Ward, p. 269). She died between 22 April 1835, when she conveyed land to George De Grasse (New York County Deeds 330:374), and 15 January 1842, when her heirs began selling her property (see below).

The following deeds provide important genealogical evidence (all land in and all parties of New York City):

- (1) Margaret Van Surley, widow, to Susan Revy, her daughter, wife of Richard P. Revy, dat. & ack. 5 Jan. 1826, rec. 1 Aug. 1828 (New York Co. Deeds 240:91).
- (2) George De Grass and Maria, his wife, Margareta Smith and Isabella Luke; Maria, Margareta and Isabella being heirs at law of Margaret Van Surley, deceased, to William Livingston, dat. 15 Jan. 1842, ack. 17 Jan. 1842, rec. 20 Jan. 1842 (423:120).
- (3) Richard P. Revey and Susanna, his wife, Elizabeth Hedden, Margaret Van Sourlay, Isabella Lukes; Susanna, Elizabeth, Margaret and Isabella being heirs at law of Margaret Van Sourlay, deceased, to William Livingston, dat., ack. & rec. 22 June 1842 (427:184).
- (4) Richard P. Revey and Susan, his wife, and Elizabeth Hedden; Susan and Elizabeth being heirs at law of Margaret Van Sourlay, deceased, to Richard Brown, dat. 27 Sept. 1842, ack. 21 Nov. 1842, rec. 18 May 1843 (436:200).
- (5) Betsy Hedden and Richard P. Revey and Susan, his wife; Betsy and Susan being children of Margaret Van Surley, deceased, to Margaret Maria Van Surley De Grass, dat., ack. & rec. 30 Apr. 1844 (444:542).

Children of John and Margaret (—) Van Salee (order assumed from 1814 deeds):⁴

- i. Elizabeth⁶, m. by 6 May 1814 Dennis Hedden, probably a grandson of Thomas Hadden of Scarsdale, Westchester Co. who had several mulatto children, including a son Dennis ("Born to Run. . ." [see first page of this article], pp. 342-43, 387-88). Dennis *Heddy* was listed twice as the head of households of "other free persons" in the 1810 census of New York City (5th Ward, p. 103 and 6th Ward, p. 149). That year Dennis Heddy was listed in the New York City directory as a cooper. From 1812 to 1823 Dennis Hedden was listed in the city directories, usually as a whitewasher. The 1820 directory listed both Dennis Hedden, whitewasher, and Richard *Reeve* [husband of Susanna Van Salee, below] as black and living at 6 Laight Street. Dennis Hedden also appeared as the head of households of "free colored persons" in the 1820 census (5th Ward, p. 429) and the 1830 census (8th Ward, p. 148).
- 8 ii. Maria, b. c.1791, m. George De Grasse.
- iii. Susanna, m. by 6 May 1814 Richard P. Revey. He was the head of a household of "other free persons" in the 1810 census of New York City (5th Ward, p. 18). He appeared in the 1814 New York City directory as a coachman and in a few later directories without occupation. He was the head of a household of "free colored persons" in the 1820 census of New York City (5th Ward, p. 429), and was listed in the city directory that year at the same address as Dennis Hedden, husband of Elizabeth Van Salee, above. He was again the head of a household of "free colored persons" in the 1830 census (10th Ward, p. 28). Perhaps Richard and Susanna (Van Salee) Revey were the parents of: (1) Louisa Revey of 3 Chapel Street, d. 14 Jan. 1830, no age given, b. New York, bur. African Zorah, a black (NYC Deaths), and/or (2) one or more of the following persons in one household in the 1850 census of New York City (13th Ward, p. 290): Benjamin Revey, age 35, sweep, Hannah Revey, age 34, and Mary Revey, age 27, all black, all b. New York.
- iv. Margaret, m. by 15 Jan. 1842 _____ Smith, yet in the family deed of 22 June 1842 she was called Margaret Van Sourlay. Perhaps her husband was named Benjamin

⁴ The following death from NYC Deaths cannot be placed in this family: Richard Surley of 515 Broadway, died 6 August 1817, age 9 months, 18 days, born New York [City], buried Asbury African. The address 515 Broadway is much further uptown than the Van Salee family ever lived.

- Smith as there were men of this name as the head of a household of "other free persons" in the 1810 census of New York City (2nd Ward, p. 101) and as the head of a household of "free colored persons" in the 1820 census (1st Ward, p. 31 and 3rd Ward, p. 140) and the 1830 census (5th Ward, p. 315 and 10th Ward, p. 1028).
- v. Isabella, m. between 6 May 1814 and 1820 William Lukes who was the head of a household of "free colored persons" in the 1820 census of New York City (5th Ward, p. 429), next to Dennis Hedden and Richard Reevy. William Lukes of Laight Street d. 21 Dec. 1821, age 36, b. Montreal, bur. Asbury African (NYC Deaths).

(To be continued)

LUTHERAN CHURCH MARRIAGES IN NEW YORK CITY

TRANSCRIBED AND TRANSLATED BY THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR

(Continued from THE RECORD 121:95)

1790

- Jan. 13 Peter Grabach, butcher and Mary Jordan. Wit. the bride's brother Matthew Jordan, Thomas Rose and Cornelius Tiers.
- 14 William Schlegel and Mary Mountain. Wit. Henr. Purcell & Jam. Cox.
- 18 Aaron Pall, coach-maker [and] Elise Thomas. Wit. John M'Gougan.
- 20 Thomas Park, shoemaker and Ann Lambert[,] Robert Lamberts Daughter. Mr. Parks Father, Peter Park send[s] his consent in writing, and John Higgings signified the consent of her Father— Wit. John Higgings and James Butler, John Park.
- Mar. 9 James Mallis, brewer, & Apollonia Kaldare widow. Wit. Duncan Fresur witnesses that her husband is dead six years ago and William Fast.
- 10 William Thomson leather dresser and Martha Hallstaedt. Wit. Margaret Henriette Kunze.
- 21 Simon Demorest carman and Catharina Friz. Wit. Daniel Ackerman, John Bogart.
- Apr. 13 Michael Kammerdiener, blacksmith and Catharina Ries. Wit. Joh. Aesterle, Joh. Michael Nisler, Jac. Oehm.
- May 3 Nicholas Burger, pumb-maker and Hanna M'Collum widow. Wit. Alette Morris, who says that Hanna McCollum has no father nor mother, that she brought her up and that her husband Edw. McCollum died three years ago.

**FRANS ABRAMSE VAN SALEE AND HIS DESCENDANTS:
A COLONIAL BLACK FAMILY
IN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY**

BY HENRY B. HOFF, F.A.S.G.

(Continued from THE RECORD 121:161)

NOTE: Since writing the introduction to this article (in the April issue of THE RECORD, at p. 65), I have discovered further information about the descendants of Maria (Van Salee) De Grasse (No. 8 below) which brings several of them into the 20th century. Her sons and sons-in-law included a minister, a doctor purported to be the first black member of a U.S. medical society, two Civil War veterans (one in the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers, the subject of the recent movie *Glory*), and a wealthy Newport hotel owner and civil rights activist. There is interesting geographical diversity, too. Records indicate her husband was born in Calcutta, a brother-in-law was born in Montreal, one child had a father-in-law born in Virginia, and three other children had fathers-in-law born in the West Indies.

In 1910 a descendant mentioned the existence of a family Bible whose first entry was dated 1630. Nothing further about this Bible has been discovered.

8. MARIA⁶ VAN SALEE (John⁵⁻⁴, Abram Frans³, Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), born in New York City about 1791. She was married there 26 October 1808 by the Rev. William Thatcher, a [white] Methodist minister, to George De Grasse ("Baptisms and Marriages, Methodist Episcopal Church of New York City, 1785-[1837]," MS., NYG&BS, p. 343, "George De Grass and Maria Surley"). The marriage was reported in *The Weekly Museum*, 5 November 1808, p. 3, col. 3, listing her as Miss Maria Sleigh (erroneously abstracted as Miss Sarah Sleigh in American Antiquarian Society "Index of Marriages and Deaths in the New York Weekly Museum 1788-1817," 2 vols., typescript, 1952).

In the account of their daughter Serena's golden wedding anniversary, an article in *The New York Tribune*, 22 November 1891, p. 18, gave the following description of her father: "Mr. de Grasse was a native of Hindostan. He was a protege of the celebrated Count de Grasse of Paris, France—in fact his adopted son. Circumstances brought Mr. de Grasse and the noted Aaron Burr into contact with one another and a warm friendship grew up between them . . . Mr. de Grasse named one of his daughters Theodosia Burr, after Colonel Burr's daughter. . . ."

Some of this account seems to be plausible. George De Grasse was described in the 1850 census as born in Calcutta, and thereafter his children consistently reported that he was born there or in the East Indies.⁵ But any connection to the Count de Grasse, i.e. Admiral Count François-Joseph-Paul de Grasse-Tilly

⁵ His granddaughter even noted "his Hindoo name was Azor" (S. A. M. Washington *George Thomas Downing: Sketch of His Life and Times*, Newport, R.I., 1910, p. 7).

(1722-1788), hero of the American Revolution, seems unlikely as there is no evidence the Count de Grasse was ever in India (Le Marquis de Grasse *Histoire de la Maison de Grasse*, 2 vols., Paris, 1933, 1:249-60).⁶ As for Aaron Burr, the only reference to George De Grasse in Mary-Jo Kline, ed. *The Guide and Index to the Microfilm Edition of the Papers of Aaron Burr 1756-1836* (New York, 1978) is to the 1802 deed from Burr to De Grasse for a New York City lot (New York County Deeds 64:351, dated 16 November 1802, acknowledged 1 December 1802, recorded 18 July 1803).

George De Grasse, servant, was naturalized in New York City 5 July 1804 as a former British subject. The only official record of his naturalization found is a brief entry in the Mayor's Court Minutes 1803-06 for 5 July 1804 (at the New York County Clerk's Office, Division of Old Records). His naturalization certificate is given *verbatim* in William C. Nell *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution* (Boston, 1855) p. 316.

George De Grasse appeared in city directories, deeds and Minutes of the Common Council variously as a grocer, victualler, porter, and proprietor of an eating house. He was one of the executors of the 1822 will of William Lambert (New York County Wills 57:176). He was the head of a household of "free colored persons" in the 1820 census of New York City (1st Ward, p. 32), in 1830 (11th Ward, p. 183), and in 1840 (16th Ward, p. 218). According to the 1850 census (5th Ward, pp. 47-48), he was age 70, mulatto, born Calcutta, and his wife Maria was age 59, black, born New York. The 1868 death record of their son John stated father born Calcutta, mother born New York City.

About 1856 George De Grasse moved from New York City to Brooklyn (Kings County Deeds 403:398), and he was listed in the 1856/57 Brooklyn directory for the first (and last) time. His wife Maria was buried in the De Grasse plot in Cypress Hills Cemetery, Brooklyn, 1 August 1861, age 65 at death, but as there is no death record for her in Brooklyn or New York City in July 1861, it is probable she died earlier. Neither she nor George De Grasse has been found in the 1860 census of Kings County.

George De Grasse died at 2 Stanton Street, Brooklyn 25 May 1862 age 90, and was buried in Cypress Hills Cemetery (Brooklyn death book, 1862, May #420, "b. East Indies"; Gertrude A. Barber "New York Evening Post . . . Deaths [1801-1890]" [title varies], 55 vols., typescript, 1933-41, hereafter Eve. Post D, 38:38; James de T. Abajian *Blacks in Selected Newspapers, Censuses and Other Sources: An Index to Names and Subjects*, 3 vols., Boston, 1977, plus 2-vol. Supplement,

⁶ Interestingly enough, the only De Grasse family mentioned in New York City records between 1800 and 1837 (other than that of George De Grasse) were the Count de Grasse's daughters who had come to the United States in 1794 (*Histoire de la Maison de Grasse* 1:260-62; Edwin Martin Stone *Our French Allies*, Providence, R.I., 1884, p. 413n.; REC. 91:39).

If George De Grasse was born De Grasse, it is not impossible that he had some Portuguese ancestry, judging from the existence of two men named De Grass who settled in Massachusetts. One was Joseph De Grass, "a colour^d Portuguese" from the Cape Verde Islands, who came to Martha's Vineyard in 1775 and married a Gay Head Indian wife. The other was Pascall De Grass, from "St. Antone" [possibly Santo Antão, one of the Cape Verde Islands], who settled on Cape Cod and married a Mashpee Indian wife. Information courtesy of Bruce D. Thompson, C.A.I.L.S.

1985, hereafter Abajian, 1:549, citing *San Francisco Pacific Appeal*, 28 June 1862; records of Cypress Hills Cemetery). No probate has been found for him in Kings County or New York County.

Children of George and Maria⁶ (Van Salee) De Grasse (order uncertain):

- i. Maria Margaret?, b. New York City ca. 1809 or later, d. 1530 Dean Street, Brooklyn 24 June 1885, age 76 years, 10 months, bur. Cypress Hills Cemetery (Brooklyn Deaths, 1885, #7005). She was called *Margaret Maria* Van Surlay De Grass in family deeds 1841-1844, but was listed as Maria M. Degrasse in the 1842/43 and 1847/48 New York City directories. She was listed in the 1850 census of New York City (5th Ward, p. 47) as Maria M. Degrass, age 35, mulatto, b. N.Y., in a household headed by her brother-in-law [and future husband] Peter Vogelsang. The household of Peter Vogelsang, as given in the 1860 census of Brooklyn, seems to include Maria [see discussion below]. The 1865 state census of Brooklyn (5th Ward, 3rd Dist., p. 33) lists Maria M. De Grass, age 40, b. N.Y., no occupation, with only her niece, Hariete Vogelsang, age 20, b. Conn., school teacher. Maria Margaret De Grasse m. Peter Vogelsang, the widower of her sister Theodosia, between 20 Aug. 1865, when Peter Vogelsang was mustered out of Civil War service, and 27 Oct. 1865, the date of their marriage notice in the *San Francisco Elevator*, cited by Abajian 1:549; 3:568.
- ii. (Rev.) Isaiah George, attended Geneva (later Hobart) College 1834-36, graduated from Delaware College (later University of Delaware) 1836, ordained 1838, Rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, New York City,⁷ d. apparently unm. Kingston, Jamaica, 9 Jan. 1841 (*Hobart College: General Catalogue of Officers, Graduates and Students 1825-1897*, Geneva, N.Y., 1897, p. 42; records of Hobart College [including copies of records of the University of Delaware]; *The Long Island Star*, 10 Mar. 1841, card file at the Brooklyn Historical Society; Abajian 1:549).
- iii. ?Emma C. An Emma C. Berry, age 51 at death, was bur. 8 Jan. 1865 in the De Grasse family plot in Cypress Hills Cemetery; however, no death record has been found for her in Kings Co. or New York Co. The household of George De Grasse in 1820 and 1830 included four girls; this would allow for the existence of Emma. If this identification is correct, she probably was the mother of Samuel V. Berry, listed in the 1868 New York City directory as living at 15 Cornelia Street. He, in turn, probably was the father of Frank Berry, d. 15 Cornelia Street, New York City 8 Apr. 1868, age 4 years, 3 months (Manhattan Deaths, 1868, #6538), bur. in the De Grasse plot in Cypress Hills Cemetery.
- 9 iv. Theodosia Burr, b. c.1817, m. Peter Vogelsang.
- v. Lavinia, b. New York City c.1821, d. there 1 Nov. 1825 age 4, bur. African Burial Ground (NYC Deaths).
- 10 vi. Serena Leanora, b. c.1823, m. George Thomas Downing.
- 11 vii. (Dr.) John Van Surlay, b. 6 June 1825 or 1826.

9. THEODOSIA BURR⁷ DE GRASSE (Maria⁶ Van Salee, John⁵⁻⁴, Abram Frans³, Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), born about 1817 (from age at death), presumably in New York City. She married Peter Vogelsang, born 21 August 1815, son of Peter and Maria (Miller) Vogelsang (Roydon W. Vosburgh, ed. "Records of Christ Episcopal Church in New York City, N.Y.," 2 vols., typescript, New York, 1919, 1:128; 2:49). Peter Vogelsang [Sr.] was a building agent in 1823 (MCC

⁷ St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, located at Division St. and the Bowery, was organized in 1836 as a black congregation, but dispersed in 1841 (*Inventory of the Church Archives of New York City: Protestant Episcopal Church. . . .*, Works Projects Administration, New York, 1940, p. 86; Greenleaf, p. 97).

II 13:154), a “manager of the steamers of the Albany line” about 1827 (Abajian 3:568), and a proposer of a national Negro convention in 1830 (Carter G. Woodson *The Negro in Our History*, 4th ed., Washington, D.C., 1927, p. 272). The record of the death of Peter Vogelsang [Sr.] on 9 November 1844 says he was born in the West Indies (NYC Deaths). Although his naturalization has not been found, it is possible he was from the Island of St. Croix where there was a government official named Peter Vogelsang a generation earlier (Hugo Ryberg *A List of the Names of Inhabitants [in] the Danish Westindian Islands (the Virgin Islands) from 1650-ca.1825*, Copenhagen, 1945, pp. 24, 307, 308).

George De Grasse and wife Maria sold part of a lot to “Peter Vogelsang, Jr.” in 1841 (New York County Deeds 421:355, dated 28 December 1841, acknowledged 4 January 1842, recorded 15 January 1842).

Peter Vogelsang was listed in the 1844/45 New Haven, Connecticut city directory and had a child born in Connecticut. He returned to New York City and was listed as Peter *Wogelstene*, porter, in the 1850 census of New York City (5th Ward, p. 47).

Theodosia Burr (De Grasse) Vogelsang died in New York City 10 May 1854, age 37 years, 10 months and 22 days (NYC Deaths; James P. Maher *Index to Marriages and Deaths in the New York Herald, 1835-1855*, Baltimore, 1987, hereafter Maher, p. 539). Her death record says she was buried on Long Island without naming the cemetery. She was not reinterred in Cypress Hills Cemetery until 16 April 1871.

By 1860 Peter Vogelsang had moved to Brooklyn and, as Peter *Woolensack*, he was listed in the census there (5th Ward, p. 417). The census entry contains obvious errors in names and ages, including listing his sister-in-law, Maria Margaret De Grasse, as “Maria, age 39,” as if she were his wife (and understating her age).

On 17 April 1863 Peter Vogelsang enlisted at Readville, Massachusetts in the 54th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, the Civil War unit that was the subject of the recent movie *Glory*. He was rapidly promoted, and was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant 28 April 1865, and as 1st Lieutenant 18 July 1865. He was wounded in action and received a pension (Compiled Military Service Record and pension record, both at National Archives). Shortly after returning to civilian life in 1865, he married his sister-in-law, Maria Margaret De Grasse. By 1872 he was working in the Customs House in lower Manhattan as a clerk and/or messenger, according to the Brooklyn directories. He appears to be the “George P. Vogessong” with wife Maria listed in the 1870 census of Brooklyn (5th Ward, p. 732), but the entry is even more erroneous than the 1860 one. He has not been found in the 1880 census of Kings County.

Maria Margaret (De Grasse) Vogelsang died at 1530 Dean Street, Brooklyn on 24 June 1885, age 76 years, 10 months, and was buried in Cypress Hills Cemetery. Peter Vogelsang died at 116 McDougal Street, New York City [the home of his son John] on 4 April 1887 age 74, and was buried in Cypress Hills Cemetery (Manhattan Deaths, 1887, #597465).

Children of Peter and Theodosia Burr⁷ (De Grasse) Vogelsang:

- i. George Peter⁸, b. N.Y. c.1841, clerk, d. 25 Clark St., New York City 2 Nov. 1877, age 36 yrs., 6 mos., bur. Cypress Hills Cem. (Manhattan Deaths, 1877, #277619), m. Anna _____. They were listed in the 1870 census of Brooklyn (21st Ward, p. 567). In 1874 he bought two lots in Canarsie, Flatlands, Kings Co. (Kings Co. Deeds 1175:154). After his death, his father petitioned for administration of his estate (Kings Co. Admins. 31:50). Child.
- ii. Maria T., b. N.Y. c.1845, m. Brooklyn in Aug.-Oct. 1862 John Rivers of Charleston, S.C. (Abajian 3:568). Two Rivers children were bur. in the De Grasse plot in Cypress Hills Cem.
- iii. Louisa Harriet, b. Conn. ca. 1846, a school teacher living with her aunt, Maria Margaret De Grasse, in the 1865 state census of Brooklyn.
- iv. John V., b. N.Y. c.1847, waiter, porter and clerk, d. Harlem Hospital, New York City 20 Feb. 1912 age 67, bur. Cypress Hills Cem. (Manhattan Deaths, 1912, #5662, father Peter Vogelsang, b. U.S., mother Theodosia De Grass, b. U.S.). He m. (1) Mary Luretta ____ who d. at 116 McDougal Street, New York City 5 Aug. 1887, age 36 yrs., 7 mos. and 11 days, bur. Cypress Hills Cem. (Manhattan Deaths, 1887, #611840, b. U.S., father Samuel, mother Delia, both b. U.S.). Based on the records of Cypress Hills Cem., he m. (2) Jerusha ____ who was bur. there 18 May 1911, age 55 at death. It would appear that most, if not all, of the later generations of Vogelsangs buried in the De Grasse plot were descendants of John V. Vogelsang.
- v. Thomas Miller, b. N.Y. c.1848, d. New York City 28 Apr. 1852, age 3 yrs., 4 mos. (NYC Deaths; Maher p. 539; Eve.Post D 28:65), reinterred in Cypress Hills Cem. the same day as his mother.
- vi. Jenny, b. N.Y. c.1851, d. New York City 23 Mar. 1852, age 1 yr., 4 mos. (NYC Deaths).

10. SERENA LEANORA⁷ DE GRASSE (Maria⁶ Van Salee, John⁵⁻⁴, Abram Frans³, Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), born about 1823. She married at St. Philip's Episcopal Church, New York City 24 November 1841 (*The Long Island Star*, 25 November 1841; *The New York Tribune*, 22 November 1891) George Thomas Downing, born in New York City 30 December 1819, son of Thomas Downing [born Accomack County, Virginia] and his wife Rebecca West (S. A. M. Washington *George Thomas Downing: Sketch of His Life and Times*, Newport, Rhode Island, 1910, hereafter Washington, p. 3). About 1845 they moved to Newport, Rhode Island where he had a long and successful career as a caterer and hotel owner. At the same time, he was a national leader in the movement for equal rights for blacks. There are numerous biographical accounts of him, some of which are mentioned in Abajian (1:599-601 and supplement 1:314). One of the most recent is Lawrence Grossman "George T. Downing and Desegregation of Rhode Island Public Schools, 1855-1866" *Rhode Island History* 36:99-105 (1977), with a photograph of his family at p. 103. The following summary of his career is extracted from his obituary in the *Newport Mercury*, 25 July 1903 (all Newport material courtesy of Bertram Lippincott III, C.G., Librarian of the Newport Historical Society):

While still young Mr. Downing allied himself with the movement for the abolition of slavery. In his father's place of business [an oyster bar in New York City] he met many men of prominence, some of them leaders in the movement for the freedom of the colored race. Perhaps Mr. Downing's most effective work for the advancement of his race was done after the Civil

War was over, during the trying period of the reconstruction. He secured a position in charge of the capitol cafe [in Washington, D.C.] and there he came in contact with the men who administered the affairs of the country. His opinions carried weight with the leaders in Washington and he was in a position to be of much service to his people. All his efforts were directed toward the amelioration of the condition of his race. His services were given freely with never a thought of remuneration. He declined public position for fear that it might interfere with his work for the benefit of his people.

Mr. Downing was prominent in this city as well as in the affairs of the nation. In 1844 he removed to Newport with his wife, who was a daughter of George de Grass, and engaged in the restaurant and hotel business. He owned a valuable block on Bellevue avenue which was destroyed by an incendiary fire, and which was replaced by the present Downing's block. He was one of the 17 men who made up the bequest from Judah Touro to an amount sufficient to purchase Touro Park and turn it over to the city. He was one of leaders for equal rights in this state. He was one of the committee that laid out Bellevue avenue from its first terminus near Perry street.

Mr. Downing held a number of honorary appointments and had been tendered offices which he declined. He was an intimate friend of the late Charles Sumner [U.S. Senator from Massachusetts and strong advocate of emancipation] and was with him when he died. He regarded him with the highest veneration and was prominent in the movement to erect a monument to his memory.

In 1891 they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary with an elaborate party that was written up in several newspapers. Serena Leanora (De Grasse) Downing died in Boston 27 March 1893 age 70, buried Newport (*Newport Journal*, 1 April 1893; Massachusetts Vital Records 438:127, "father George born Calcutta India, mother Maria M. Van Surlay born New York, N.Y."). George Thomas Downing died in Newport 21 July 1903 (*Newport Journal*, 25 July 1903; *Newport Mercury*, 25 July 1903; *The New York Times*, 22 July 1903, 7:6).

Children of George Thomas and Serena Leanora⁷ (De Grasse) Downing (based on Washington pp. 21-22 and the 1860 census of Newport, p. 282):

- i. Serena Ann Miller⁸, b. N.Y. c.1843, m. Boston 1861 George Washington, Jr. (Abajian 1:601). She was the author of a biography of her father, published in 1910. Children.
- ii. George Isaiah, d. young.
- iii. Thomas, b. N.Y. Dec. 1845, d. Boston 2 Dec. 1913, age 67 yrs., 11 mos. and 25 days, bur. Newport (Mass. Vital Records 20:399; *Newport Mercury*, 6 Dec. 1913). He worked in the U.S. Post Office in Boston. Based on the 1900 census of Cambridge, Mass. (enum. dist. 681, p. 13), he m. (1) _____, (2) c.1894 Carrie _____, b. N.Y. May 1865. Child.
- iv. Cordelia, b. N.Y. c.1848, d. 1917 (obituary of brother Philip), m. May 1870 Mark R. De Mortie (Abajian 1:600). Children.
- v. Rebecca Medora, b. Newport c.1851, d. unm. there 28 Mar. 1905 (*Newport Mercury*, 1 Apr. 1905; Alden G. Beaman, comp. *Newport County, Rhode Island Births 1751-1860 from Death and Marriage Records, A-J*, Rhode Island Vital Records, New Series, vol. 12, Princeton, Mass., 1986, p. 234).
- vi. Mary, d. young.
- vii. Georgenia Frances, b. Providence, R.I. May 1854, d. between 1860 and 1891 (*Alphabetical Index of the Births, Marriages, and Deaths Recorded in Providence, Rhode Island*, 25 vols., Providence, R.I., 1879-1946, 3:158).
- viii. Philip Bell, b. Providence, R.I. 22 Mar. 1857 (*Ibid.*), d. Boston 30 May 1934, age 77 yrs., 2 mos. and 8 days, bur. Woodlawn Cem., Everett, Mass. with his wife (Mass. Vital Records 15:201; records of Woodlawn Cem. and monument in Downing plot,

- both courtesy of Ann S. Lainhart; *Newport Mercury*, 8 June 1934). He was an inventor and worked in the Customs House in Boston. He m. Eva Evangeline Howard, b. New Brunswick, Canada 23 July 1857, d. Everett, Mass. 15 Sept. 1925, dau. of Walter and Sarah (Newton) Howard (Mass. Vital Records 20:458). Children.
- ix. unnamed son, b. Newport 4 Nov. 1858 (Newport Births 1:30), d. young. Perhaps he was the son John Brown Downing mentioned by his father (Abajian 1:600), though not by Washington.
 - x. Peter John, b. Newport 4 Nov. 1859 (Newport Births 1:39), d. Brooklyn, N.Y. 13 July 1905, married, bur. Cypress Hills Cem. in the plot purchased by his grandfather Downing (Brooklyn Deaths, 1905, #13337; records of Cypress Hills Cem.). He worked in the Customs House in New York City.

11. JOHN VAN SURLAY⁷ DE GRASSE (Maria⁶ Van Salee, John⁵⁻⁴, Abram Frans³, Frans Abramse², Abram Jansen¹), born in New York City 6 June 1823 or 1826. After studying at various schools in the U.S. and in France (Abajian 1:549), he graduated from the Medical School of Maine in 1849 (*General Catalogue of Bowdoin College and the Medical School of Maine: A Biographical Record of the Alumni and Officers 1794-1950*, Brunswick, Maine, 1950, p. 465). As John V. De Grasse, physician, age 27, born New York and residing there, son of George, he married in Boston 5 August 1852 Cordelia L. Howard, age 27, born Boston and residing there, daughter of Peter (Massachusetts Vital Records 62:88). In 1854 he was elected a Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society (*Catalogue of Its Officers, Fellows and Licentiates 1781-1893*, Boston, 1894, p. 97), and it has been claimed variously that he was the first black doctor elected to that society or to any U.S. medical society. He served as an Assistant Surgeon in the 35th Regiment of U.S. Colored Troops in 1863-64 (Compiled Military Service Record).

He died in Boston 25 November 1868, age 42 years, 5 months (Massachusetts Vital Records 213:204), and was buried in the De Grasse plot in Cypress Hills Cemetery, Brooklyn. After his death his widow Cordelia L. De Grasse petitioned for administration of his estate (Suffolk Co. Probate File 49179).

She died in Boston 14 March 1899, age 74 years, 5 months and 14 days (Massachusetts Vital Records 495:128; "music teacher, father Peter Howard born Cuba, mother Margaret Gardner born Rhode Island").

Child of John Van Surlay⁷ and Cordelia L. (Howard) De Grasse:

- i. Georgianna Cordelia⁸, b. Boston 5 Dec. 1855 (Mass. Vital Records 92:122), mentioned in her father's administration as his only child, m. Boston 3 June 1879 Jasper Asbury, caterer, b. Dec. 1852 either in Mass. or Va., son of Jasper and Sarah (-) Asbury (Mass. Vital Records 309:64; 1900 census of Boston, enum. dist. 1272, p. 133). Children.

(Concluded)