

CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
MARIA VAN RENSSELAER  
1669-1689

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## PREFACE

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In the preface to the *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, which was published in 1932, attention was called to the fact that after the death of Jeremias van Rensselaer his widow carried on a regular correspondence with her husband's youngest brother, Richard van Rensselaer, in regard to the administration of the colony of Rensselaerswyck, and the plan was announced to publish this correspondence in another volume. This plan has been carried into effect in the present volume, which contains translations of all that has been preserved of the correspondence of Maria van Rensselaer, including besides the correspondence with her brother-in-law many letters which passed between her and her brother Stephanus van Cortlandt and other members of the Van Cortlandt family.

Maria van Rensselaer was born at New York on July 20, 1645, and was the third child of Oloff Stevenson van Cortlandt and his wife Anna Loockermans. She married on July 12, 1662, when not quite 17 years of age, Jeremias van Rensselaer, who in 1658 had succeeded his brother Jan Baptist van Rensselaer as director of the colony of Rensselaerswyck. By him she had four sons and two daughters, her youngest son, Jeremias, being born shortly after her husband's death, which occurred on October 12, 1674. As at the time there was no one available who could succeed Jeremias van Rensselaer as director of the colony, the burden of its administration fell temporarily upon his widow, who in this emergency sought the advice of her brother Stephanus van Cortlandt.

The task which confronted Maria van Rensselaer was not an easy one, as the colony was far from being in a flourishing condition and no suitable provision had been made for the support of herself and her family. Moreover, her health was impaired and she was obliged to go on crutches, so that it was

impossible for her to have personal supervision over so large an estate. To complicate matters further, the province of New Netherland, which by the treaty of Westminster had been ceded to his Britannic Majesty, was on November 10, 1674, surrendered by the Dutch to Governor Edmund Andros and became an English colony. With Governor Andros came over Jeremias van Rensselaer's younger brother, Nicolaes van Rensselaer, who by the Duke of York had been recommended as pastor of one of the Dutch churches in the province of New York and who a few months after his arrival was by Governor Andros arbitrarily invested in the ministry of the church' of Albany, as a colleague of Domine Schaets. Nicolaes van Rensselaer immediately took a hand in the administration of Rensselaerswyck and on October 15, 1675, petitioned Governor Andros to be provisionally appointed director of the colony. Opposition to this appointment was made by Maria van Rensselaer and her brother Stephanus van Cortlandt and as there appeared to be no authority for the appointment the matter was left to legal determination. Meanwhile, however, the relatives in Holland had decided to put the directorship in the name of Nicolaes van Rensselaer and on April 4, 1676, he presented to the court of Albany a commission from Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, whereby he was provisionally appointed director of the colony. It was thereupon arranged that Nicolaes van Rensselaer was to retain the directorship, but that Maria van Rensselaer was to be treasurer and her brother bookkeeper, 300 bushels of wheat being set apart for their salaries, of which the director was to have one-half and the other half was to be divided between the treasurer and the bookkeeper. This arrangement lasted until Nicolaes van Rensselaer's death in November 1678, when Maria van Rensselaer was left in charge of the colony. She continued as before to be assisted by her brother, who succeeded Nicolaes van Rensselaer as director of the colony, but as he resided in New York, the actual management of the colony remained in his sister's hands. From that time, until her death in 1689, Maria van Rensselaer carried on a

regular correspondence, not only with her brother Stephanus van Cortlandt, but also with her brother-in-law Richard van Rensselaer, who in 1670, after a residence of six years in the colony, had returned to Holland and who as the sole surviving son of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, the first patroon, was looking after the interests of the Holland branch of the Van Rensselaer family.

While this correspondence deals primarily with the administration of the colony of Rensselaerswyck, it has a wider interest as a source for the social and economic history of the period. Nothing, indeed, serves more effectively to bring the men and events of that remote day nearer to us than the publication of such a series of family letters, with their discussion of everyday matters and their frank expression of opinion of the motives and ambitions of persons who were related and intimately known to the writers. Incidentally, many interesting details are revealed which heretofore were entirely unknown, such as the fact that Maria van Rensselaer's eldest son Kiliaen, who afterward became lord of the manor of Rensselaerswyck, was in his youth apprenticed to a silversmith, first to an unknown craftsman at New York, and later to Jeremiah Dummer, a well-known silversmith of Boston.

Much of the correspondence is taken up with matters connected with the settlement of the estates of Jeremias, Jan Baptist and Nicolaes van Rensselaer, the extravagant claims made by Robert Livingston, who married the latter's widow, and the share which was due to Maria van Rensselaer and her children from the still undivided estate of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, the first patroon, all of which complications added to the troubles of Maria van Rensselaer and show how much credit is due to her for having, in spite of all obstacles, kept the colony intact. In addition to all these difficulties there was the most important problem of securing a patent for the colony. While the articles of surrender of New Netherland, of 1664, guaranteed to the inhabitants the permanence of their property rights, Governor Richard Nicolls had received instructions from the Duke of York

to confiscate all property that was owned in Holland. As the colony of Rensselaerswyck belonged to that category, there was grave danger of its confiscation. In fact, Jeremias van Rensselaer wrote on June 10/20, 1668, to Jan Baptist van Rensselaer that the colony had then for more than two years been under a writ of attachment issued by General Nicolls and that they only had to thank him for it that it was not confiscated during the preceding fall. When, in September 1673, the Dutch regained possession of New Netherland, Jeremias van Rensselaer petitioned the Dutch admirals that he might be continued in his former rights and privileges. This was granted for the space of one year, on condition that meanwhile a renewal of those privileges should be obtained from the States General of the Netherlands. Before such renewal could be secured, news was received in Holland that by the treaty of peace concluded at Westminster on February 9/19, 1674, New Netherland had been ceded to the King of England and would soon be restored to his brother, the Duke of York. The proprietors of Rensselaerswyck thereupon presented to the Duke of York a petition, praying that Major Edmund Andros, the newly appointed governor, might be instructed to investigate their title and to report to him, to the end that he might grant them such a patent as in his wisdom he should see fit. This petition was referred to Governor Andros on July 23d, shortly before he sailed for his post in America. Before the governor arrived and took over the province from the Dutch authorities, Jeremias van Rensselaer died and the matter of granting a patent was held in abeyance. In the spring of 1678, renewed efforts were made in London by Jan Baptist van Rensselaer to obtain a patent, with the result that on June 7th the Duke of York issued a warrant to Governor Andros to grant a patent for the colony. For some unknown reason no action was taken by Governor Andros, although no opportunity was neglected by the Van Rensselaers to promote their case, as shown by the fact, brought out in this correspondence, that Richard van Rensselaer, in 1682, obtained from the Countess of Brederode, to whom he owed his appointment as

treasurer of Vianen, a promise to bring the matter to the attention of the Princess of Orange, who in turn was to use her influence with the Duke of York. When, in 1683, Colonel Thomas Dongan became governor of New York, the Van Rensselaers submitted to him the warrant that had been issued to his predecessor and made every effort to secure from him a patent that would include the town of Albany, which in 1652 had by Director General Stuyvesant been arbitrarily taken out of the colony. Governor Dongan, although conceding that the town of Albany of right belonged to the Van Rensselaers, declined to grant their request, on the ground, as he afterward expressed it in his Report on the State of the Province, that he judged "it not to his Ma<sup>ts</sup> Interest that the second Town of the Government & which brings his Ma<sup>ty</sup> soe great a Revenue, should bee in the hands of any particular men." After having obtained from the Van Rensselaers, however, a release of their claims to the town of Albany and 16 miles into the country for commons to the king, with liberty to cut firewood within the colony for 21 years, he granted on November 4, 1685, a patent to Kiliaen, son of Johannes van Rensselaer, deceased, and Kiliaen, son of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased, the representatives of the Holland and the American branches of the family, whereby the colony of Rensselaerswyck was erected into an English manor, and Kiliaen, the son of Johannes van Rensselaer, who had recently come over from Holland, was created its first lord. The granting of this patent, which not only ended the long-standing controversy between Rensselaerswyck and the town of Albany, but also definitely removed the uncertainty that had so long prevailed in regard to the actual title to the colony, must have been a great satisfaction to Maria van Rensselaer, whose daughter Anna married her cousin, the first lord of the manor. She died on January 24, 1688/89, O.S., in the 44th year of her age, having lived long enough to see her eldest son Kiliaen, on the death of his cousin, in 1687, succeed to the title of lord of the manor which had been founded by his grandfather and of which, in order of succession, he became the fourth patroon.

The correspondence of Maria van Rensselaer, like that of her husband, which was published in the earlier volume, belongs to the Rensselaerswyck manuscripts which in 1910 were deposited in the New York State Library and which the following year were partly destroyed in the Capitol fire. As a result of this fire nearly all the letters that were salvaged are badly burned along the edges, the dates of most of them being destroyed, so that it has been difficult to ascertain even their approximate date and to arrange them in proper chronological order. While it is believed that the problem in most cases has been satisfactorily solved, a few letters may be placed under the wrong month, or even under the wrong year. In using the letters, therefore, this fact should be kept in mind and the date of each letter should be accepted only as the best that could be assigned to it on the basis of internal evidence.

The present volume brings to a close the publication of translations of the series of Dutch letters that were exchanged between the Dutch proprietors of the colony of Rensselaerswyck and their agents or directors in the colony. There are still among the Rensselaerswyck manuscripts some fragments of letters of later date, but they are mostly in English and seem of little general interest, so that no immediate publication of them is contemplated.

A. J. F. VAN LAER

CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
MARIA VAN RENSSELAER  
1669–1689

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[April 1669]

Maria van Rensselaer

Dear Sister: I can as a matter of duty not omit to send you a few lines of greeting and to inform you that we are all in good health, which I hope is also the case with respect to yourself and your worthy husband and the children. May the good Lord let this long continue if it be to our salvation.

The worsted spinner (*Syett Spinder*) can not make yarn of your wool, as his wife is dead and he can find no one who spins yarn, so that we shall be obliged to take back the wool and to collect the fl.21:5 which he owes you.

The ship *Den Hartogh van Jorcke* will put to sea after Easter. God grant her a safe voyage.

Here some Virginia traders are already arriving now and then, so that our roadstead is well provided with ships. We expect in the month of May the ship of Capt. d'Laval, from old England, and hope that father will also come on it.<sup>1</sup> We are longing

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<sup>1</sup> Oloff Stevenson van Cortlandt and a number of other Dutch merchants of New York had gone to Holland in the summer of 1668, in the expectation that a royal order in council, dated October 23, 1667, whereby three Dutch ships a year were permitted to trade to and from New York, would be continued. After one ship had left Amsterdam and the merchants had freighted another ship, called *King Charles*, they were notified that the order had been revoked and that but one ship would be allowed to sail that year. They thereupon petitioned the king for the privilege of sending the *King Charles* to New York, in accordance with the original order, which was granted on December 11, 1668. See *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:178-79; and *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, 1651-1674, p. 414.

greatly for his return. The Lord grant that he may arrive in good health. There is no news here, but from Virginia come tidings that a squadron of ships sent from Holland to the Mediterranean Sea,<sup>2</sup> to free the same from piracy by the Turks, encountered in the said sea a squadron of French ships which were also cruising there. Coming near the said French ships, they were told by the French that they should strike for the King of France, but the [ ] on the flag-ship of [ ] to play [ ].<sup>3</sup>

*Addressed:*

The Estimable, Virtuous Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria  
van Rensselaer, wife of Mr Jeremias  
van Rensselaer

Att  
Albany

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[January 1675?]

Worthy and beloved sister Maria van Rensselaer:

We hope that the health of yourself and your children may be such as ours is at present, which we pray the good Lord may let long continue to our salvation. May He this new year grant you renewed consolation and strength as to soul and body. Amen.

My last letter was by an Indian by way of the Esopus. I hope that you received it. Since then nothing has happened here that is worth writing about. I have had a talk with the Hon. Governor Andros about the affairs of the colony. His honor thought that I had the letters which Domine Rensselaer has, as

<sup>2</sup>A squadron of 18 ships, under command of Rear Admiral Willem van der Zaen, senior, left Holland on August 1, 1668. Van der Zaen was killed in battle with an Algerian ship near Cape Tres Forcas, on the African coast, March 16, 1669.

<sup>3</sup>Several lines destroyed.

his honor had expressly ordered, and also promised Sr Jan Bapt' van Rensselaer,<sup>4</sup> to deliver them, not to D<sup>o</sup> Rensselaer, but to father or to me. His honor was very much surprised that I did not have them and had also been informed by Sr Jan Bap' van Rensselaer of D<sup>o</sup> Rensselaer's condition and situation.<sup>5</sup>

My intention is to go up the river at the first opportunity to straighten out the affairs of the colony and of yourself and to promote them to your best advantage as far as it is possible for me to do so. The honorable governor also intends to go up the river to view the situation of Albany and the colony.<sup>6</sup> His honor says that it is right and fair to leave the colony intact.

You will please give my greetings to the commissioners, Marten Gerrits, Pieter Winne and Hendrick van [Nes]. I hope that they will assist you in collecting the rents and in any other way you may need them. My greetings to [Volcker]tt Jansz and all

<sup>4</sup> This promise was probably made in London in July 1674, shortly before Governor Andros sailed for his post in America, when the proprietors of the colony of Rensselaerswyck presented to the Duke of York a petition praying that he would direct Governor Andros to investigate their title to the colony and report to him, to the end that he might grant them such letters patent as he should think fit. The petition was referred to Governor Andros on July 23d, together with a letter from the Duke of York, requesting Andros to communicate to the Dutch churches in New York and Albany the Duke's recommendation of Domine Nicolaes van Rensselaer as a minister, if there should be a vacancy. See *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:224-25, and also *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 465, where mention is made of the efforts made in 1674 by Richard van Rensselaer and his brother Nicolaes to obtain a patent from the Duke of York, but nothing is said about Jan Baptist van Rensselaer's visit to England at that time.

<sup>5</sup> Stephanus van Cortlandt seems to allude to Nicolaes van Rensselaer's temporary insanity, shown by the latter's letter written on Sept. 30, [1670], at Delft, "from the house of my detention," to Dr Adriaen Pauw, president of the Court of Holland, requesting that he might be released from his confinement, of which letter a typewritten copy is in the New York State Library. See *Annual Report*, 1909, 92:21, no. 29.

<sup>6</sup> Governor Andros arrived in the country on October 31, 1674, and on August 24 and September 4, 1675, attended the sessions of the court of Albany.

the [friends. Having nothing else to write, I] shall break off.  
[With hearty greetings],

[Your affectionate brother]  
[S. V. Cortlandt]

*Marginal note:*

A few minutes ago S<sup>r</sup> Bayard<sup>7</sup> brought to father an account in which he charges fl.195:- Holland money for beavers sent by your husband, deceased, except the last 50 beavers, on which I paid the duty. As far as I can understand the words of the honorable governor, the 300 schepels of wheat will also have to be paid. [Be pleased] to let Teunis<sup>8</sup> know that he must take care to pay his debt in wheat, as it is very much needed. [With greetings] from father, mother, sister, brother, my wife and little son,<sup>9</sup> Vale.

*Addressed:*

To the Worthy Maria van Rensselaer,  
widow of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased.  
in his lifetime director of the colony  
of Rensselaers Wyck  
at Watervliett

[Seal]

FROM JAN JOOSTEN VAN ROLLEGOM

[August 1675?]

Worthy Juff<sup>r</sup> Rensselaers, Salute. This serves to let you know that by Luickes Anderiesen<sup>10</sup> I am sending 18 bags of grain to be ground. Therefore, I beg you kindly to tell Luickes<sup>11</sup> to grind the same well. By the new yacht of Abram<sup>12</sup> I sent 36

<sup>7</sup> Nicholas Bayard.

<sup>8</sup> Teunis Cornelissen van der Poel.

<sup>9</sup> Johannes van Cortlandt, born October 24, 1672.

<sup>10</sup> Skipper Lucas Andriessen was a partner of Jan Joosten. See *Early Records of Albany*, 3:96, 135, 136-37.

<sup>11</sup> Lucas Pietersen Coeymans.

<sup>12</sup> Abraham Schuyler.

bags to you to be ground. When he comes down again, I intend to go up myself and to take with me a number of bags of grain. I shall then pay you. If you should need any sugar, you only have to send me a little note. I shall then send it to you, or bring it myself. Breaking off here, I am,

Your servant

Jan Joosten van Rollegom<sup>13</sup>

*Addressed:*

To Juffrou Renselaers  
at Albanney

By skipper Luickes Anderiesen

*Endorsed:* Jan Joosten

TO JAN VAN WELY AND JAN BAPTIST VAN RENSSLAER

[November 1675?]

Mr Jan van Wely and Sr Jan Baptist van Rensselaer

Dear Uncle and Brother: I received your letter, dated [ ] , in reasonable health and learned that [you have decided] to put the directorship of the colony in the name of brother Nicolaes,<sup>14</sup> and not of my son Kiliaen, which seems very strange to me, as [I never] had [such] thoughts and it was

<sup>13</sup> Jan Joosten van Rollegom and Tryntie Jans van Hartenburgh, or Hardenburgh, made a will on February 6, 1691/2, of which an abstract is in N. Y. Hist Soc., *Collections*, 1892, 25:233-34. He died before February 10, 1693/4, when letters of administration were granted to the widow. The family name Van Rollegom may be derived from Rollegem, a village in West Flanders, 5 miles south of Courtrai.

<sup>14</sup> On October 15, 1675, the Rev. Nicolaes van Rensselaer presented a petition to Governor Andros to be provisionally appointed director of the colony. As there appeared to be no authority for such appointment, the matter was left to legal determination. On April 4, 1676, Domine Nicolaes van Rensselaer presented to the court at Albany a commission from his brother Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, which had been approved by the governor, whereby he was provisionally appointed director of the colony. See State Historian, *Third Annual Report (Colonial Series, v. 2)*, p. 369-70; *Council Minutes*, 3:61; and *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80, 2:87.

not the intention of my husband, deceased, that I should now bring up his son [ ]. Not at all, but instead [ ]. Therefore, I hope that you will not think such things. Brother Nicolaes knows best himself what he has written.

Further, as to the present situation of the colony, I shall say that on appraisal [its value] amounts to [ ]. If brother Rygart, or some one else who understands the rights of the colony, does not come over, the colony is doomed. The governor himself said to us [ ]

[in my hands to take [over the] right [ ]  
 when [ ]  
 have [ ]  
 a letter [ ]  
 summoned [ ]  
 here [ ]

]<sup>15</sup>

(as no doubt you have heard heretofore).<sup>16</sup> As to my deceased husband's account, this will be sent over next year, for it must still be copied and as several persons have left, we must have a little time to investigate. The bearer, please God, will be my son Kiliaen. I hope that he will be welcome to the relatives (for I do not know how he can earn his living here),<sup>16</sup> for he is growing up and must learn something.<sup>17</sup> My daughter Anna and Hendrick are staying with my father, Kiliaen is this winter with schout Swart,<sup>18</sup> and Maria, Johannes and Jeremias<sup>19</sup> I have with

<sup>15</sup> Two lines destroyed.

<sup>16</sup> The words in parentheses are canceled.

<sup>17</sup> Kiliaen was born on August 24, 1663. As shown by this correspondence he was not sent to Holland, but apprenticed to a silversmith, first at New York and then at Boston.

<sup>18</sup> Gerard Swart. He was engaged in 1652 as schout of Rensselaerswyck and in 1665, upon the consolidation of the courts of Rensselaerswyck and Albany, he became sheriff of Albany. April 4, 1676, he was appointed schoolmaster. *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1675-80*, 2:88.

<sup>19</sup> Jeremias is not mentioned in his father's will, dated October 10, 1674, and must have been born after his father's death. See translation

me at home. May the Lord God take them under His protection and grant that they may grow up in His ways, for I am often sick and feeble and then they must shift for themselves to some extent. What happens to me at times makes me think of the departed, but God Almighty who is full of grace and mercy will, I hope, make everything turn out for the best.

I wrote before this how much the sale of the real estate of [ ] What the friends have done is all right. If the friends think it best that I retain my share in the [colony?], it will be all right with me. Otherwise, I shall sell it in such a way as the friends think will be most profitable.

[

] what they do [

] written of the [

] the first [

] thereof [

] of my [

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to whom I shall write that you will be pleased to write to them and to whom I shall turn over their papers, as I have spoken to all the people myself. One says that he never owed Jan van Twiller anything; others will do their best to pay. Therefore, I shall have the account made up this winter and send it to you by my son.

As to your private debts, I have spoken to [Wil]lem.<sup>21</sup> He will try to pay at the first opportunity. Sander Leendersz likewise has not much. I am about to go to the Esopus, to see how it stands with the accounts of the people there. It is at present a bad time here on account of the war with the Indians to the north.<sup>22</sup> We are daily sitting in great peril, as it is to be feared

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of will in *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80, 2:13-16, and *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 472.

<sup>20</sup> About two lines destroyed.

<sup>21</sup> Probably Willem Fredericksen Bout.

<sup>22</sup> *om de noort*; literally, around the north, referring to New England. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80; 2:38-39, 48-49, 56.

that the Maquas<sup>23</sup> and the Mahicans will again become involved in war. May the Lord preserve us and soon settle the sad dissensions which prevail here in God's church and which have arisen between our brother and Domine Schaets and other friends, so that one person is turned against the other, as no doubt you have learned from other friends. I shall therefore break off and commend you to the protection of God. May He attend us all with His spirit and grace.

After hearty greetings to yourself, your son and all the friends, I commend you to God.

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[December 1675?]

Rygart van Rensselaer

Dear Brother: Your agreeable and long awaited letter of July 5th, stating that you were heartily sorry to learn of the death of your brother, my husband,<sup>24</sup> was duly received by me on the 18th of November, new style. I doubt not but it has caused a great sorrow, but as it has pleased the Lord to afflict me with such a great sorrow, I must put my [trust] in God's will. May He make me patient and strengthen me in all adversity and in my infirmity, from which at present I suffer great pain, through Jesus Christ, who gives me strength and who through His mercy will further [sustain] me.

As to the coming over of brother Nicolaes, you will have learned about that from my preceding letter. I had expected more from him. If it had pleased God to spare my husband, deceased, a while longer, things would not go so [badly]. And as to the colony, matters still stand as they did when my husband, deceased, was living. Could he have spoken with his Excellency, it would have gone better. I trust that before the receipt of this letter you will already have learned everything from my letter

<sup>23</sup> The Dutch name for the Mohawk Indians.

<sup>24</sup> Jeremias van Rensselaer died on October 12, 1674.

to brother Jan Baptist, to which I refer. That I should have liked to see you come over, is true, as you know the situation better than a stranger [and also know] the circumstances in which I am placed. I doubt not but you would have helped me in everything. But as it has pleased God to provide you with a family there, I can not advise you in the matter, as the situation of the country is well known to you.

As to the government here in this country, (it is, as far as I know) <sup>25</sup> good. Trade is carried on as heretofore to Boston and the West Indies and the trading with the Indians goes on as while you were here. The past summer there was a lively trade. As to agriculture, it has during the last two years become so much worse on account of high water and the increase of weeds that the farmers demand a reduction [in the rent]. The honorable governor has prohibited the exportation of wheat flour for six months, but allowed that of bread.

As to my house and the land across [the river?], they are in the same condition as when my late husband was living. May it please the Lord that we may [possess] them in peace and have the grist-mill and sawmill also, in order that I may be able to support myself. But we live here in great fear on account of the great war between the English and the Indians around the north and of New England,<sup>26</sup> although, thank God, we do not yet hear of any calamities. The Indians have plundered many villages and killed many [people?].<sup>27</sup> It seems that it pleases the Lord to visit us also in this region. May God Almighty preserve us and prevent that they receive reinforcement from other nations, for they are very bold, and that they may not proceed farther. The state of religion in this country is still the same, for which mercy we can not sufficiently thank God Almighty. Wherewith, with hearty greetings from myself and my son Kiliaen and Anna to you and your wife, I commend you to God.

<sup>25</sup> The words in parentheses are canceled and other words are substituted in the margin, which are illegible.

<sup>26</sup> King Philip's war, June 23, 1675-April 12, 1678.

<sup>27</sup> See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80, 2:56.

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[June 1677]

Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Corttlantt

Worthy and dear Sister: I received your two letters, but having been very busy I have until now not been able to answer them. I have written at length to Domine Rensselaer. I hope that he will take everything into consideration and will see how matters stand. If you should happen to speak to him about it, offer to leave everything in love and friendship to impartial persons and show him that the fault is not yours but his and that you will always inform him of everything you receive, provided he does the same on his part, and that you will help each other in the household with whatever is received from the mill, one advising, assisting and consoling the other. Give him full measure, without loss or detriment to yourself in any way. Consult some one and do your best to arrange matters on a firm basis. Should he at times talk somewhat extravagantly, let it pass unnoticed, for it is only provisionally<sup>28</sup> and will apparently not last long. But if he will not allow you to do anything, whether to receive anything, or to enjoy any revenue from the mill to live on, you must see what is best to be done, but you need not abstain [from doing anything], even if he will not allow it, but may go on [according to the instructions] from Holland.<sup>29</sup> But if [ ] is. The [

not to leave any]  
vacant plantations, for I fear a trespass on the colony, as the colony has many enemies. Since May I have had no time to do anything about your affairs. When the busiest time is past I

<sup>28</sup> Meaning that Domine Nicolaes van Rensselaer was only provisionally appointed director of the colony of Rensselaerswyck.

<sup>29</sup> On July 3, 1677, Maria van Rensselaer produced in court letters from the relatives at Amsterdam, dated November 3, 1676, whereby she was granted permission to have the grist-mill and the foreland of Broer Cornelis. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80, 2:253-54.

shall take the matter up again to make an end of it. Meanwhile, I hope to hear better tidings from above than heretofore, which may God grant. Commending you to His protection, I remain, after greetings,

Your affectionate brother

S. V. Cortlandt

If possible, I would ask you to send me 60 good floor boards to repair the rear part of the house,<sup>30</sup> whereby you will do me a favor.

*Addressed:*

Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer, widow of  
Mr Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased,  
in his lifetime director of the colony of  
Rensselaers Wyck

at

Watervliett

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[January 16, 1678]

]<sup>31</sup>

[ ] if not [  
] lighten [  
] to his [  
] your aunt Maria Loockermans<sup>32</sup> died the 17th of

<sup>30</sup> *tott het achterhuys te maecken.*

<sup>31</sup> Several lines destroyed. It is apparently the letter dated N. Yorck, January 16, 1678, which in E. S. Wilde, *The civic ancestry of New York—City and State*, p. 39, is mentioned as having been sealed with the signet of New Amsterdam in New Netherland that was sent over by the directors of the Dutch West India Company in 1654.

<sup>32</sup> Maria Jansen, the widow of Govert Loockermans, whose sister, Anna Loockermans, was Maria van Rensselaer's mother. An abstract of her will, dated May 7, 1677, with codicil of November 1, 1677, probated June 8, 1678, is in N. Y. Hist. Soc., *Collections*, 1892, 25:48-49. See also J. H. Innes, *New Amsterdam and its People*, p. 233-45, and *Executive Council Minutes*, 1:90, note.

November and Joff<sup>r</sup> Lasselyr<sup>33</sup> [stays] in her mother's house until Jacop *neef*<sup>34</sup> [comes home], or her husband, who is expected daily.

I have most highly recommended your affairs to my son. He has retained Pieter de la Noy,<sup>35</sup> who will help him somewhat. I hope that even before summer there will be an end of it. Your brother Steven will no doubt write you about everything.

Your brother Jacobus is still at Baston. He wrote to me in English. He is growing up (*wort groott*) and is well. By a yacht which just arrived from Baston he sent all the medicines which Dr van Dyck<sup>36</sup> had put down for me in writing to order for you, so that they are now here, and if you think it advisable come down freely with your dear children, to stay a while with your father and mother. Be always of good courage. God will grant you relief in all your troubles.

I have two millstones, 5½ feet across and 15 inches thick. If you have any use for them there in the mill, I shall be glad to trade them to you for wheat. Further, how everything goes here, your brother and sisters will write you, to whom I refer. After hearty greetings from father and mother, I commend you all to the mercy of God.

Your affectionate father  
O. Stevens Cortlant

<sup>33</sup> Elsie Loockermans, the wife of Jacob Leisler.

<sup>34</sup> Cousin Jacob, meaning Jacob Loockermans, who in 1677 took up his residence in Maryland.

<sup>35</sup> Pieter de Lanoy was bookkeeper in the Customs Office, under Collector Dyre. He afterwards became mayor of New York and a member of Lt. Gov. Leisler's council. By his will, dated Sept. 2, 1696, proved Nov. 20, 1696, he left "to my brother, Abraham De Lanoy, my clothes and my School books, and my Dutch books of Divinity, Provided I have no child by my present wife, Mary." N. Y. Hist. Soc., *Collections*, 1892, 25:268-69.

<sup>36</sup> Dr Cornelis van Dyck.

Greetings to  
[Cou]sin Schuyler and wife,  
[ ] and wife  
and all other good friends.

*Addressed:*

The Worthy, Virtuous Joff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer  
at Watervliett  
in Albania

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[June 1678]

S<sup>r</sup> Reygart van Rensselaer

Dear Brother: I can not refrain from letting you know that we are all well. I hope that the same is true of all the friends. In the year 1676, I sent over an order of Jan Gau<sup>37</sup> on one Willem Verspeck,<sup>38</sup> in the sum of fl.51:15, which you were to receive, but as I have no letter from you, I do not know whether the order was accepted. Be pleased to let me know, otherwise Jan Gau must pay here. But if you received the money, I would ask you kindly to send me a good piece of linen for it, as that which you left with us has been stolen and I am in need of it. Also two intelligent market gardeners.

I had planned to send over Kiliaen, but as the war still rages so severely I have on the advice of the friends apprenticed him here in this country to a silversmith to learn that trade and meanwhile to see what God may grant with respect to the war.

Enclosed herewith goes a letter from Thunis de Metselaer.<sup>39</sup> He asks you kindly to be pleased to deliver this letter to Paeus Cornelisz, as he sailed before he [Thunis] knew it.<sup>40</sup> And in

<sup>37</sup> Jan Cornelissen Gouw, alias Vyselaer.

<sup>38</sup> Willem Verspeck resided on the Rokin, at Amsterdam. See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 469.

<sup>39</sup> Teunis Teunissen, the mason. A translation of his will, dated August 7, 1685, is in *Early Records of Albany*, 4:117-19.

<sup>40</sup> Poulus Cornelissen departed for Holland shortly after April 3, 1678. See *Early Records of Albany*, 3:446.

case he should already have left, he asks you to be pleased to forward the letter to his friends, taking off the cover of the letter.

We are longing very much for the arrival of the governor,<sup>41</sup> in the hope that something may have been done in the matter of the colony.

I received a letter from brother Nicklaes, stating that one Dirck Wesselse and Mr Cornelis had bought a piece of land with a swale (*vley*), situated on the east side, directly opposite the land of Broer Cornelis,<sup>42</sup> although they were told and it was proved to them that it was purchased land. Nevertheless they go ahead, so that we do not understand how it is with the colony, whether it is [ ] or whether it is again for sale. Gerrit Slechtenhorst bought [ ] morgens of land, which land has already been surveyed for him. It lies close to Klaverack.<sup>43</sup> Barent, the shoemaker, has 38 morgens of land, lying near Bere island.<sup>44</sup> So it goes, one piece after another.

Be pleased to give my hearty greetings to uncle van Wely and to tell all the friends that they must excuse me this time for not writing to them. The reason is that I should like to send their account with it, which I hope will be sent over [at the next oppor-

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<sup>41</sup> Governor Andros arrived at New York on August 8, 1678.

<sup>42</sup> This would seem to refer to the swale, or *vly*, called Taxkichenok, and the piece of maize land called Kekantik, on the east side of the Hudson river, which on June 11, 1678, were bought by Dirck Wesselse ten Broeck and Dr Cornelis van Dyck of a Mohikan Indian named Knaep, although according to Mr Berthold Fernow the same were located in Columbia county, instead of opposite the land of Broer Cornelis, north of Albany. See *Early Records of Albany*, 1:182-83, and *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 13:519.

<sup>43</sup> See deed from the Indians to Gerrit van Slichtenhorst, dated January 1, 1677/8, for land in Claverack, between the farm of Jan Roothaer and the land of Major Abraham Staets. *Early Records of Albany*, 1:173, and *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 13:515-16.

<sup>44</sup> See the release, dated August 5, 1679, from Barent Meyndertsen to Sir Edmund Andros for land near Schotax island, for which a patent had been granted by Gov. Andros on Sept. 29, 1677, in *Early Records of Albany*, 2:59.

tunity]. I am at present [ ] to send over the things of the colony [ ] now is [ ] half [ ] thereof [ ], for I do not intend to depart until that is done and shall have been sent to the friends, if no extraordinary events occur. Brother, be pleased to remember what you promised me when you took leave of me. Brother will also remember what my husband, deceased, wrote to you about the piece of gold of 28 gl. That was given to me as a christening gift (*pillegift*)<sup>45</sup> and I should therefore like to keep it as a remembrance and also because my daughter is growing up.

As there is no further news here, I shall break off and commend you and your wife and the children to God's keeping. May He grant to all of us what will save our souls and bless our bodies.

Your faithful and affectionate sister  
Maria van Rensselaer

*Endorsed:*

My private copies of letters. Copy of my [ ].

REV. NICOLAES VAN RENSSELAER TO JAN BAPTIST VAN  
RENSSELAER

N. Yorck, 16 October 1678<sup>46</sup>

S<sup>r</sup> Jan Baptista van Rensselaer

Monsieur et très cher frère, Salut!

Both your letters, the first sent to me from London in April and the other in May, duly came to hand and have already been

<sup>45</sup> Meaning, apparently, that the gold piece of the value of two *gouden ryders*, of 14 guilders each, was sent to Maria van Rensselaer as a christening gift for her daughter Anna, who was born on August 1/11, 1665.

<sup>46</sup> The original of this letter was among the Van Rensselaer Bowier manuscripts which in 1909 were submitted to the New York State Library for identification by Mr Howard Townsend and which shortly afterwards

answered from N. Albany. I have handed my letter to Sr Livinus van Schayck,<sup>47</sup> who sails for Patria in the ship *Blossom*. Since then I duly received your last letter of June 10/20 from London,<sup>48</sup> but it was kept at N. Yorck for several days before I received the packet. I found all the papers in good order in accordance with the numbers and saw from them with joy the desired outcome of the affairs of the colony and how his Royal Highness has restored to us the Fuyck, which was unexpected news to all of us. This is an evident mark of his great favor toward us and inviolable justice is shown in the passing of a just judgment after the long lapse of 26 years in a matter which could not be righted in so many years. *Sic tandem justa et bene causa triumphat.*

I therefore immediately went with my dear wife to N. Yorck to see the honorable general, so as to make everything turn out for the best. However, I have not yet had a conference with his honor, as there was no opportunity for it on account of the departure of the *Blossom*, which is about to drop down the river and with which this letter goes. I still hope to meet the honorable general today and to show him the authentic warrant<sup>49</sup> and in case this happens I shall advise you of my visit.

This afternoon I again called at the fort, but could find no opportunity to see the general, as his honor was still very busy

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were returned to Holland. See list of those manuscripts in N. Y. State Library, *Annual Report*, 1909, 92:28, no. 72. The translation is made from a typewritten copy of the letter which was made at the time and which was salvaged from the Capitol fire of 1911.

<sup>47</sup> Livinus van Schaick was a son of Goose Gerritsen van Schaick by his second wife, Annetje Lievens. He was born in 1661, presumably at Albany, although in *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York*, 2:1196, it is stated that he was a native of New York City. He removed to Amsterdam, where he established himself as a merchant.

<sup>48</sup>An extract from this letter is printed in E. B. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland*, 1:124-25.

<sup>49</sup>Apparently referring to the warrant from the Duke of York to Governor Andros to issue a patent for the colony of Rensselaerswyck, dated June 7, 1678, of which an authentic copy may have been sent to Domine Nicolaes van Rensselaer. See *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:269-70.

getting his letter ready. We arrived here last Tuesday, the 14th, toward noon. It just happened to be his Highness' birthday and the day of election of the magistrates and therefore a very busy time. Nevertheless, I went to pay my respects to his honor the governor, who received me very politely, as did also my Lady, who immediately sent me to get my dear wife to have dinner with them in the fort, but at that time I said nothing about the papers or about our affairs. However, in the evening his honor said to my brother-in-law, Sr Stephanus van Cortlandt, that he would give me a brief abstract.<sup>50</sup> I, on my part, shall not fail to use my utmost endeavor to secure it. Capt. Matthias Nicolls, the secretary, has also promised me his assistance, whom we shall not neglect to offer a grateful acknowledgment for it.

The rumor of such a remarkable change immediately alarmed the Albanians,<sup>51</sup> every one being afraid of loss and damage to the beaver trade, which might be transferred to Schaneghtade, but through a letter from our secretary to my father-in-law, on the report of the honorable general, that heavy stone has been lifted from their hearts, the council having assured them that they would not tolerate it and that it would ruin Albany. I have by kind and consoling words quieted the feelings of the good people as much as possible and everybody is awaiting my return to know how everything will be taken by the honorable general and be worked out. God give that everything may succeed and lead to a desirable and good end.

The election of two new commissaries of Albany and the approval of two new ones for the colony had already taken place and been sent off before my coming hither. For the colony, Hendrick van Nes and Teunis Spitsenbergh<sup>52</sup> are commissaries.

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<sup>50</sup> *een korte expedietie*; meaning apparently an abstract of a patent for the colony.

<sup>51</sup> See letter from the commissaries of Albany to Governor Andros, dated October 25, 1678, in *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1675-80*, 2:361-62.

<sup>52</sup> Teunis Cornelissen van der Poel. He and Hendrick van Nes were appointed commissaries on October 15, 1678. *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1675-80*, 2:360.

Everything must be worked out in time and as opportunity offers. The success will be communicated to you by way of Baston or Maryland and we shall further conduct ourselves according to your letter and in every way seek to obtain and to retain the good graces of our honorable governor as well as of the entire community of Albany. Meanwhile, our farmers are very happy about the good news. Further I refer to my preceding letter. The friends are God be praised all still well and send you hearty greetings. Breaking off here, I commend you together with brother, the sisters and uncle van Wely, after fraternal greetings, to God and the words of His grace and remain,

Your affectionate and faithful brother  
Nicolaus van Rensselaer

Greetings as before. I do not have time to copy this as I go in a few minutes again to the fort. My dear wife also sends hearty greetings to all the good friends.

P. S. In the afternoon I had no opportunity to speak to the honorable governor. Meanwhile I have had this copied, *raptim*.

*Addressed:*

Monsieur  
Mons<sup>r</sup> Jan Baptista van Rensselaer  
Merchant  
at Amsterdam

By the ship *The Blossom*  
which may God conduct

*Endorsed:* 1678 D<sup>o</sup> Rensselaer  
October 16, N.Yorck  
Received, December 17  
Answered, the 23d ditto  
For postage from London, 8 stivers

TO STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[November? 1679]

Sr Stephenes van Cortlant

Dear Brother: This will serve to advise you of the condition of the colony and that last Thursday night, at about 2 or 3 o'clock, the house next to Gerrit Reyerse's burned down to the ground, but that through God's help the houses next to it were saved. But Friday, toward noon, cries were heard that the farm of the Hooge Berg<sup>53</sup> was on fire, so that many people at once ran toward it and found it to be true. Before any one could get there, everything was burned, the house, barn, two barracks<sup>54</sup> full of grain, yes, even the pig sty. The man himself<sup>55</sup> was so badly burned that Mr Cornelis<sup>56</sup> doubts whether he will live, and this because he was so busy with the animals. The woman's face is burned because she tried to get her blind mother out of the burning house, which she just managed to do. Eleven cows were burned, but the milch cows and the horses they got loose. Everything else was burned, the linen, woolens, bed and household effects, yes, even the pots and kettles were melted. Friends have taken the old people into their houses and have asked me to assist them, so that they may again dwell there. Therefore, Marten Gerritse, with the consent of the other friends, the next day tore down the house of Scherluyn,<sup>57</sup> which Hendrick van Nes was

<sup>53</sup>A farm on Papscanee Island, afterwards known as Staats Island, which since 1648 had been leased to Gysbert Cornelissen van Breuckelen, often referred to as Gysbert Cornelissen van den Berg. *Van Rensselaer Bowier MSS.*, p. 769-70, 837. On September 7, 1696, this farm was leased to Samuel Staets, surgeon, of the city of New York, whose descendants have occupied the island to this day. Munsell's *Annals of Albany*, 7:101-3.

<sup>54</sup>bergen; meaning structures like a Dutch hay-barrack, consisting of five poles with an adjustable roof.

<sup>55</sup>Gysbert Cornelissen was still living in 1685.

<sup>56</sup>Dr Cornelis van Dyck.

<sup>57</sup>Probably Dirck van Schelluyne, the former notary public, who in 1669 had moved to Niskayuna.

to have, and they will immediately take it to the other side and at the first opportunity put it up again. The farmers will this winter do their best to haul the timber for the barn, to help the man, and Gerrit Gysbertse will also put off his own building to help his father. Now, on top of this fire, there are many who complain. Piter de Vlaming has given up the lease of his farm<sup>68</sup> and moves to his mill,<sup>69</sup> and that house must be repaired. I do not know what to do about the farm. There are tenants for it, but they do not suit me, so that you ought to write what I am to do. I shall wait until I hear from you before having it posted to be let at public bidding, for there must still be [ ] with the person who leases it. Hendrick van Nes [ ] build [ ]

]<sup>60</sup>

and I must this year give 6 beavers.<sup>61</sup> The colony can not produce it and [I am] therefore requesting his honor that this year we may be exempt from paying the [tax of] 300 schepels of wheat, because we have so many expenses to meet at present and can not well manage it. I doubt not but his honor will take the matter into consideration. I also hope to hear that you have accomplished something with his honor in the matter of the colony.

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<sup>68</sup> On August 25, 1677, the Rev. Nicolaus van Rensselaer renewed the lease of the farm occupied by Pieter Winne, for the term of three or six years, at the option of either party, the lease to begin on May 1, 1678. This farm was apparently situated in Bethlehem. On the same date the director of the colony leased to Pieter Winne a small piece of land on the east side of the river, opposite Bethlehem, formerly used by Pieter Quackenbos, and two small islands, lying south of the island then used by the farmer of the Hoogenbergh. "Leases and Contracts of Rensselaerswyck," 1666-1708.

<sup>69</sup> This mill was situated on the Bethlehem kill, called by the Indians the Sakax kill, and now known as the Vlamans kill, of which the water rights were leased by Rev. Nicolaus van Rensselaer to Pieter Winne on May 31, 1678, for six years. "Leases and Contracts of Rensselaerswyck," 1666-1708.

<sup>60</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>61</sup> These eight words are canceled.

Furthermore, there is a request here of Gerrit Thunisse who, subject to our approval, has turned over his farm to Klaes van Pette<sup>62</sup> for 1100 schepels of wheat and the little island which lies in front of his door to one who is called Schipper, for 180 schepels. Therefore, they have asked me whether I would consent to it, which I did not want to do without your knowledge and I have referred them to you as being the master thereof.<sup>63</sup> You may do therein as you please, but as for me, I must say that I do not know how Gerrit dares to be so bold and is not ashamed to do so, for my husband, deceased, would never allow any one to do so, and Domine, deceased, would not allow it either that another person was to be master of the farm. If he did not care to stay, he might have spoken to me about it. But he is too proud and mighty; he wants to do it and talks big. But as for me, if brother takes the same view of it, I would not consent to it, but according to his contract cancel his lease at the end of the third year, which will expire in 1681, and according to appraisal by impartial persons let the next lessee take over what he has [built] thereon, as the contract reads: "The term of the lease will last six consecutive years, notice to be given by either party at the end of three years." Verily, it seems to me that we have reason enough to cancel his lease at the end of the third year and then [not] to place the man who leases it in such [position?]. He claims that we [ ] farm [ ]

[ ]. I do not know what the man has to pretend [ ]<sup>64</sup>

<sup>62</sup> On April 22, 1680, Klaes van Petten took over the lease of the farm of Gerrit Theunissen van Vechten, situated near Papscanee Island. The lease was dated December 10, 1677, and was for the term of three or six years, at the option of either party, beginning on May 1, 1678, so that the lease still had four years to run. "Leases and Contracts of Rensselaerswyck," 1666-1708. See also *Early Records of Albany*, 3:515-17.

<sup>63</sup> After the death of Nicolaes van Rensselaer, in November 1678, Stephanus van Cortlandt had been appointed director of the colony.

<sup>64</sup> Several lines destroyed.

and was promised by Domine, deceased, to Gerrit Gysbert[se] Therefore, I leave it to brother. Whatever you do therein will be satisfactory to me.

The said Gerrit has bought the yacht of Clas v. Pette, the price to be deducted from that of the farm. The said Gerrit has again sold the yacht to Piter Schuyler, so that I do not know how it goes here with Gerrit. He still owes us nearly 900 schepels of wheat on our book. Therefore, brother may well consider what he had better do in the matter, as everything depends on you.<sup>65</sup>

Davit Schuyler called on me this morning to buy the lot on which the house stood that is now torn down. He says that he spoke to you about it when you were here and therefore requests me to write to you about it to ask for how much it is for sale, for it can be of no use to us now that the street has been done away with (*weg geroyt is*).<sup>66</sup> He will write to you himself.

Secretary Livingston troubles me so much about the account of Domine, deceased, and I can not give it to him, because it is not complete. Therefore, I would ask you to write to him some time to be pleased to wait until your arrival in the spring, for I am afraid that if I give him half the account, he will afterwards have a counter account. I have at present so much to do with one thing and another that I wish that it were spring and that I might be relieved of this trouble, for it is too much for me. The grist-mill is running and grinds a good deal more than the other.

*Endorsed:*

To Joff. Cornelia van Cortlant

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[April?] 1680

[  
who delivered them [

] ]<sup>67</sup>

<sup>65</sup> See bond of Gerrit Teunissen for the payment of 927 schepels of wheat, dated April 27, 1680, in *Early Records of Albany*, 2:79-80.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *Early Records of Albany*, 2:124.

<sup>67</sup> Several lines destroyed.

except for good [merchantable beavers] ]  
 you [settle?] with Gerrit [Teunissen van Vechten] ]  
 and [give] security [ ]<sup>68</sup>  
 shall at the time [write to] S<sup>r</sup> Richard [van Rensselaer to make]  
 an end of all accounts [ ]  
 if it please God. [I have] ]  
 spoken to the honorable governor [about a ground-]  
 brief for Klaverack [ ]  
 obtain the promise thereof. [Please ask Mr Adriaen] ]  
 van Ilpendam sometime to say [ ]  
 where the house of Jan [van Twiller stood, whether outside]  
 or inside the place in [Fort Orange?, as]<sup>69</sup>  
 is written in the groundbrief [ ]  
 but the governor will not [confirm it, unless?] ]  
 the street and the place of the house [are indicated in it?]

I have received a letter from [Holland from] Abel de Wolff,  
 in which he writes about [ ] merchandise sent by S<sup>r</sup>  
 Jan Bap[tist van Rensselaer to] your husband, deceased, but  
 [ ] I think S<sup>r</sup> Richard already  
 [ ] have orders. With sorrow [I  
 learned of] the high water in the [colony. I hope that] without  
 damage [it will subside] again, [which may] grant God, to  
 whose prot[ection I commend you in the hope that] He may give  
 you and us what [will tend to our salvation].

I remain,

Your [faithful brother]  
 [S. V. Cortlandt]

*Addressed:*

Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt  
 at Watervliett

*Endorsed:* 1680

<sup>68</sup> Cf. bond of Gerrit Teunissen, dated April 27, 1680, in *Early Records of Albany*, 2:79-80.

<sup>69</sup> See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 164.

## FROM JOHN DARVALL

[ ] came to hand [ ]  
 serves [to let you know that I received] the 50 boards, [with which] I have credited [your account]. I also called on his wife, who [accepted?] the boards. Livingston wrote lately about the [ ] grain in boards, which are due [to him from] me because I agreed [that I] would pay [ ]. It would be very well [ ] pleased to agree to pay. [I am sorry to hear that?] Livingston treats you so uncivilly and wants money. I have his letter [that he] will receive nothing but 235 boards. [ ] has [pleased] the Lord to visit her with the tertian [ague]. I hope that He will restore her to her former health, to [her sal[vation]].

I shall break off with the hearty greetings [from myself], my wife, father, mother, your son Kiliaan [ ], who are still in good health. [With greetings to] sister Teller and all the friends, I commend [you to the] protection of the Most High.

Your [affectionate brother]  
 [John Darvall]

N. Yorke, the 17th of June 1680

*Addressed: To the Worthy Widow Jeremias v: Renslaar*

at Albany

Q.D.G.

## FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[July 12, 1680]

[ ] thereon with [ ]  
 your expenses and [ ] on the grain extract [ ]  
 reduction of the seawan, or thus all your [ ].  
 You must know that one can almost [ ] an account

<sup>70</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>71</sup> Several lines destroyed.

by [charging] that little [in] one's account of some beavers [ ] as disbursement, all of which must be entered and noted down distinctly and properly. I must admit that it was difficult for you to [draw up] such an account [as it was] outside of your calling and duty (*buyten u beroep en dienst*), for if it had been [during the lifetime] of our brother, your husband, deceased, he would have had to render a proper account of his administration. [Now we] must take it for what it is worth. I shall [ ] propose what if you please [you ought] to pay. As far as this account is concerned [ ]

[ ], at least as far as the capital is concerned which your [husband], deceased, took with him when he departed for New Netherland, [this] amounted to [ ]; and as to the commission on the goods which were entrusted to him for sale not having been enough, because on account of the departure of our brother [Jan Baptist] the administration of the colony was recommended to him, [he] drew a salary of fl.1000, with which salary he could hardly get around, so that in addition he took for his household [ ]. From which it may sufficiently appear and [ ] that your husband, deceased, [owed] the colony so much. [I wish] with all my heart, and God knows it, that I did [not have] to reproach and trouble [you] on account of this account, [for] no one knows the situation better than I and the minor children are innocent thereof. Therefore, knowing your condition and situation and wishing to help and [ ] you and your children in that respect, for which I call upon God to be my witness, I would propose to you to [submit] your affairs regarding the [colony to ] , as on the other hand I find myself obligated to [guard the interests of the] minors and those who find themselves unable to bring about what might in any way be to their own advantage, however legitimate it may seem, and notwithstanding, through various circumstances, they are very much in need of what is theirs, that state [ ]

]<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Several lines destroyed.

[ ] always [ ]  
here in this country has taken so [much] trouble and [ ]  
turns out so badly that one can not come to any end in the matter,  
about which I am writing provisionally to your brother. If you  
will leave the matter to me, to render a decision regarding the  
account, when I shall have carefully examined it, I shall bind  
myself, for so far as I am personally concerned and as guardian  
of the minor children and with respect to my s[ister], that here-  
after you will not be molested, in order that we may at all times  
live together in harmony.

You also have an entry of fl.300 for the improvements on the  
farm on Turckeye,<sup>73</sup> [with which] you have debited the colony  
too much, for that was not paid to me in money, but your husband,  
deceased, paid that for me to the carpenters for building on the  
Vlackte<sup>74</sup> and for materials, in payment of the fl.1000 for the  
[buildings] on Turckeye, which expenses and carpenters' wages  
you [should not] have charged to the colony, for otherwise you  
would charge the colony twice for the same thing.

You ask me to send over sometime a copy of [the lists of]  
goods which concern your husband, deceased, and brother Joan  
Baptist, deceased, in order that you may know how those matters  
stand. I wish to say that it would cost me a great deal of labor  
and trouble to look up those things from the beginning in order  
to send you a copy thereof. I would not mind taking that trouble,  
however, but can not do so at present on account of the mul-  
tiplicity of affairs. If, from the beginning, when brother,  
deceased, left, you examine the letters which he wrote from time  
to time, to see what he sent, and then in turn examine the copies  
of the letters which your husband, deceased, wrote, you will be

---

<sup>73</sup> A farm near the mouth of the Mohawk. An item in the accounts reads: "To brother Ryckart van Renselaer for 2 years' rent of the farm on Turckyen founded by him, 1667 and 1668, amounting to fl.300." See also *Minutes of the Court of Albany, Rensselaerswyck and Schenec-tady, 1675-80*, 2:115.

<sup>74</sup> The farm afterwards known as the Schuyler Flatts, about four miles north of Albany, which had been occupied by Richard van Rensselaer.

able to find out what return cargoes he sent and for whom, from which you will be able to make up an account.

You have no doubt heard that Jan van Twiller died at Nykerck shortly after Jan Baptist, deceased.<sup>75</sup> I think what came from the estate of Arent van Curler is for the account of the masters of Jan van Twiller. You will please write me how much of it is due to Messrs Momma and how much of it is due to Jan van Twiller's sisters, in order that I may let every one have what belongs to him [or her].

[ ]  
[ ] on account of [ ]  
hoped that she [ ] in the married [state  
] as it would have [ ]. As  
regards this man [ ], but was on account of our  
brother, deceased.

I do not doubt that our [brother] duly noted down everything that he received from the colony. Whatever he received in excess of [his share] will have to be paid for, for [he] had [no more right] thereto than we have. I have [written] to your brother about the matter of Domine, deceased, [who will no doubt] communicate it [to you]. You were not at all obliged to let S<sup>r</sup> Rob. Lifvinston see [the will] of uncle, deceased, for she inherited from her husband, deceased, [and] he died before uncle, deceased, did. I am daily [busy] collecting [the debts] of uncle's estate and shall see what is coming to every one from his estate.

For the present it is impossible for me to go over, as many things force me to remain here. Otherwise, I should have liked very much to see if we could not bring the affairs there both of the [colony? and of yourself?] to a good end. However, I shall [do] my [best] to send over [what is] coming [to you]. By this opportunity the brother of Pieter Meeusen goes over also. [You will please, as far as] you can, assist him in everything and,

---

<sup>75</sup> Jan Baptist van Rensselaer died on October 16, 1678.

<sup>76</sup> Several lines destroyed.

[as to the] farm, let him have it. Herewith I commend you to the Almighty and with hearty greetings from all of us, [remain]

Your faithful [brother]

R. V. R[ensselaer]

[I wonder] what the reason is that according to your brother Stephanus' letter not more than a small part was sent over for the account of the colony of what came from the second distribution of the estate of Arent van Corlaer. It is sad that everything must smother and stay there and that we must bear here almost all the expenses paid for soliciting, etc. If it is in any way possible send us something from the colony.

*Addressed:*

The Worthy, Vituous Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt,  
widow of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased

In Rensselaerswyck  
in America

By skipper Jacob Mourits,  
whom God conduct

*Endorsed:* № 15

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[August 1680?]

[ ]  
 [ ] is very weak on account of [ ]  
 [ ] has not left [the bed?], but the [Lord restore him?]. He wishes that the limits of [the colony] were fixed and that the friends [ ]. I have had Stevanus [inquire] for letters from [Holland?], but have not heard of any and do not know whether you received any.

I have also copied your accounts.

No. 1 is a copy from Book P, of which the balance is [ ]

No. 2 is a copy from Book Q, of which [the balance is ]

---

<sup>77</sup> Several lines destroyed.

No. 3 is a copy from Book R, of which [the balance is ]  
No. 4 is an account of what I owe you.

If there are any errors, please let me know and I shall try to correct them. And if there is anything in which according to my feeble power I can help you, be pleased to let me know. I doubt not but the Lord will grant a good ending, on which one must depend. For the present receive with your children the hearty greetings of your father and mother. Commanding you to the mercy of God, [I am]

Your affectionate father  
O. Stevensz [v. Cortlant]<sup>78</sup>

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[September? 1680]

S<sup>r</sup> Reygart van Rensslaer

Dear Brother: Your favor of the 12th of July came duly to hand and from it I saw that you duly received the account of my husband, deceased, your brother, regarding the colony, and that you and your sister were quite shocked when you saw the balance of the account. In answer thereto I shall say that if my husband, deceased, had made up the account himself, there would have been quite a bit more due. Do not think, dear brother, that it is an account which is made up out of my head. God preserve me from doing that. We have taken it from his own writings and if I should include all the expenditures which have been made and charge for all the extraordinary meals, a great deal more would be coming to me. Dear brother, you well know yourself how it went, first upon the arrival of the English, then upon the arrival of the Dutch, and then again upon the arrival of the English, and how, whenever any one of importance came from New York, he had to be entertained to keep up the dignity of the colony. You also well know that brother Jan Baties[t] wrote that one should not be particular about 1000 gl. or two. For

<sup>78</sup> The second sheet with the address is missing.

whom, then, was it done, except for the colony? For ourselves we did not need it; we could have got along very well with one authority (*overich[eyt]*).

And as to what brother writes about loss on grain, seawan, etc., you also know how the grain has gone up in schepels, to 5 and 6½ schepels to the beaver, which is a great loss to the colony, and the seawan from 20 to 25, 30 and 36 gl. to the beaver. What would have become of us, then, if we had not had something else besides? If you examine the receipts of the colony, you will see that one year with another it could not produce enough to cover the expenses. One has to pay the schout, the secretary, the governor, the councilors, and in addition pay all expenses. If brother will take that into consideration, he can only say that it is true.

And as to what you write about my deceased husband's [capital] having been great when he went to New Netherland and that [the business] which he afterwards did on commission [as well] as in brewing did not leave anything, I will not deny it, and therefore, brother, be pleased to consider also how the goods sent to him by [Jan] Batiest, deceased, and others have dwindled in the colony and that now little [is left] to me [

] I shall have [

] pay out [ ].

That the friends in Holland through the war have suffered great loss makes us heartily sorry, God knows, but consider, dear brother, whether to lose my health and in addition to lose my property and my dearest partner and to be left with six children and such an encumbered estate is not hard on me either, especially, to sit here and not to know what I have and to get further and further into debt, for as long as I remain thus in possession of the undivided estate it will be nothing but loss to me and to the friends. And as to there being some items in the account which, as you write, have been entered twice, I shall in the spring write about it to my brother and find out what there is to it and if there is anything that is not right I shall be glad to see it straightened out. Therefore, dear brother, do me the favor to examine the

account and talk it over with the friends and if, please God, you intend to come over, we can inform each other of everything and settle all accounts as to one thing and another, in order that for once we may know where we stand. And if the friends do not at the same time resolve to do something about the colony, things will run entirely wild.

You also complain that nothing is being sent over. How can anything be sent over when so many outlays had to be made and must still be made? On the farm called Turckeyen a new house has been built. On the farm of the Vlaming<sup>79</sup> a new house must be built. On the farm of Thunis Dircx a new house must be built. Gerrit Gysbert, at Bettlem,<sup>80</sup> will in the spring build a barn. Jonge Jan must build. Hen[drick] Mase must build. Hendrick van Nes must build a dwelling house and the old grist-mill must be completely torn down. One hears of nothing but expenses and at present there is such a poor harvest that many will not have any grain for bread. Furthermore, much money has been spent on the new mill, as I thought that it would produce some revenue, but now bolting is also prohibited,<sup>81</sup> so that I am at a loss to know where a stiver is to come from to be sent over. Yes, if 700 schepels of wheat did not have to be paid and if they were private farms, every one would sell his grain with a profit and send over his. I shall keep all the farmers waiting as long as I can, in order that I may learn whether it is possible for you to come over so that you may see things for yourself sometime.

I have written before this about the farm of Broer Cornelis and the old grist-mill, which you may think at present. . . . .<sup>82</sup>

Further, I recommend my affairs to you most highly, in order that I may know how matters stand. I doubt not [

] leave it to [you?]

<sup>79</sup> Pieter Winne, *alias* the Fleming.

<sup>80</sup> Bethlehem.

<sup>81</sup> See order of the governor and council, dated January 20, 1680, prohibiting the bolting and packing of flour for exportation except at New York, which was published at Albany on March 30, 1680. *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80, 2:480-81.

<sup>82</sup> The last part of the sentence is canceled.

## FROM CATRINA DARVALL

[  
 [ ] for [  
 request [ ] wheat and [  
 they make [ schepels. His [shirts]  
 the shoes are also worn out. Hendrick is already with his master.  
 They [like?] each other. The *Sinte Pieter* has [just] arrived  
 [here]. The news will be communicated to you. Also the ship  
*De Margriet*. [I] shall hereafter write more at large. [There-  
 fore, I break off] with my hearty greetings [to you and the]  
 children and commend you to the protection [of God].

With hearty greetings from

Your s[ister]  
 Catrina Darvall]

The 9th of October 1680  
 in Nu Jorck

P. S. The wheat costs 4 schepels 100 lbs [ ]  
 bought [buck]wheat. Could at present get [no better] price  
 because the farmers [ ]. Hearty  
 greetings from my husband.

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Renzelaer  
 at Water-vliedt

## FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[October?] 1680

[  
 [ ] judge [ ] agreement [  
 seems to me that he already [ ]  
 and therefore in my opinion can not well resolve [  
 ]. Let me know sometime the account which  
 you have [ ], in order that [I] may write to him

<sup>83</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>84</sup> Several lines destroyed.

about the items which he deducts, for as to the large [ ] to the governor, etc., that is by order [ ]. [He] writes that they will not be particular about one [thousand guilders] or two. The [ ] if not entirely, at least it [can] in these perilous times not be prevented that there is some loss [ ]. There has been no objection to the account in seawan. Know that the beavers ran as high as 20, 24 and even 30 [guilders seawan] and wheat at 6 schepels for [one beaver], so that he should be informed thereof. But if you write, put it off until some other opportunity, for I can not thoroughly [judge] of what [ ]. They already go pretty hard [after] Mr Livingston and if they have your word that [you?] leave [it to me?], they may easily go hard also [after me?].

[ ]<sup>85</sup>

Before one fully resolved [to do so], it would in my opinion [be necessary] to write to them about everything in full and then to let them know that one would [not] let it last any longer, for meanwhile they keep the inheritance of mother and uncle in their possession.

As to renting half the farm of Cees Oom,<sup>86</sup> you may tell him that I shall not consent to it in any way. If he will not stay on it any longer according to the contract, let him get off it the first of May, even if the farm should remain unoccupied, for if it be once divided and agreed to, we shall always have to do so. Cornelis knows very well that it is expressly provided in the contract and therefore it will not be done. Had I known it when I was above, he would have had to leave, even if I should have taken the farm myself.

As to the building of Jan Thomassen's son, the father and Volckert Jansz know very well that the island may not be

<sup>85</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>86</sup> The same as Kees Oom, or uncle Cornelis, meaning Cornelis Teunissen van Vechten. The lease of his farm was renewed by Stephanus van Cortlandt on September 14, 1680, for six or three years from May 1, 1681.

crowded more than when they bought it. They have already turned so much of the pasture into [arable?] land, contrary to their right and [ ] they want to make an additional farm [ ]

]<sup>87</sup>

learned from your letter [from] Holland, which was the reason that [they] have not written.

After my greetings to you and your children, I commend you to God.

Your faithful bro[ther]  
S. V. C[ortlandt]

*Addressed:*

[To] Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlant  
Widow of Jeremias van Rensselaer  
In the Colony of Rensselaerswyck

*Endorsed:* 1680

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[November?] 1680

[ ] received [ ] will write [ ]  
at length to [ ] hope [ ]  
R[ ]  
[ ] were by my wife [ ].

I am pleased that you settled the matter with Cees Oom and that everything is straightened out.

Kiliaen and Hendrick are both in good health, as are also all [the friends]. I hope that the same [is true] of you, which may God grant. Commending you to God I remain,

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

<sup>87</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>88</sup> Several lines destroyed.

Our brother Jacobus left  
yesterday for the West Indies.  
The Lord grant him a safe voyage.

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt  
Widow of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased  
at Watervliett  
Albany

*Endorsed:* 1680

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[December 1680?]

[ ]  
 [ ] and [ ]  
 doing [ ] which could be worse [ ]  
 must urgently demand payment from those who still owe grain  
 and see to it that there is something coming in. I [duly] received  
 your letters by the first [ ] and by the ship *De Bever*  
 [a letter from] S<sup>r</sup> Richard van Rensselaer, whereby [he informs  
 me of] the harsh letter of S<sup>r</sup> [ ] and the efforts  
 which] brother-in-law Livingston is making for his [wife?] to  
 free himself from the large debts which Domine Rensselaer is  
 said to have left in Holland. S<sup>r</sup> Richard, indeed, writes [ ]  
 [ ] if he is threatened so. [I wish with all my]  
 heart that you and he had already settled accounts regarding the  
 estate of [ ]. I notice that they are pretty  
 hard pressed and that [you] will have to keep a sharp lookout.  
 I hope that everything will come out all right.

I wish that S<sup>r</sup> Richard might come over shortly, in order that  
 the farmers might be satisfied sometime, for they are indeed put  
 off from time to time and there is no end to it. I do not know  
 what to write to them to satisfy them, except that S<sup>r</sup> Richard will  
 come over. I trust that Jacob [ ] knows

<sup>89</sup> Several lines destroyed.

or has heard. Meanwhile, the house of Jurriaen must be repaired. The rest must wait until [ ]<sup>90</sup>

second part [ ]

await [ ].

[We are] all still in good health, [including your] two sons. Kiljaen is a m[an] of [ ] and Hendrick is [boarding?] with his master and wife. I hope that they will both grow up to be worthy men and that God may bless them here and hereafter to their salvation. Commending you to God's protection, I remain, after greetings from myself and my wife to you and the children and best wishes for your happiness and blessing in the New Year,

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlant, widow of  
S<sup>r</sup> Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased  
At Watervliet, in the colony of  
Rensselaers Wyck  
Albany

By the Indian messenger

FROM THOMAS [CHAMBERS]

[December 1680?]

[ ]<sup>91</sup>  
[ ] that  
[ ] an Indian came  
today with the letters [ ]  
but I had to give him, in order to [continue] the journey, a piece  
of duffel and two [ ].  
[He is] a very strong, young Indian [whom I have urged] with  
all speed to continue his journey [ ].

<sup>90</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>91</sup> Several lines destroyed.

I further wish you good health [ ]  
in all circumstances and remain,

Your friend

Thos [Chambers]

*Addressed:*

To the Worthy, Virtuous  
Juf<sup>r</sup> Renselaers, widow of  
Jeremias van Renselaer, deceased  
In the colony of Renselaers Wyck

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[January 1681]

Joff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlant

Worthy, Beloved Daughter: I duly received your agreeable letter of the 30th of December and have noted the contents. You are having quite a good deal of trouble in the colony, but it is pleasant to hear that you bear the afflictions of the Lord with such fortitude and patience. Be of good courage and the Lord will grant a good ending which will be to the glory of His name and best for your salvation.

The comet<sup>92</sup> which shows itself where you are is seen here in the same way. I also understand that there was a poor harvest in the colony and that we must not count on getting much wheat from above.

It is sad about your throat and I do not know what to say

<sup>92</sup> *De Starr met de Staert*; referring to the great comet of 1680, which caused much consternation in the province. See letter from the commissaries of Albany to Capt. Anthony Brockholes, dated January 1, 1681, in *Minutes of the Court of Albany, Rensselaerswyck and Schenectady, 1680-85*, 3:57-58; also printed in *Doc. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:882-83, and Munsell's *Annals of Albany*, 6:95-96. See also I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island*, 4:320, under November 18, 1680.

about it. I have not spoken to Doctor Karffbyll<sup>93</sup> about it. When you come down in the spring, you must use the best remedies to get rid of it. Your children, as well as father, mother and Cornelia are still well. Jacobus is in the West Indies. [They] thank niece (*nicht*) Renselaer<sup>94</sup> for her New Year's letter. Grandmother will remember her.

The ship *De Beever*, with the honorable governor,<sup>95</sup> Captain Gem[es] Catrick,<sup>96</sup> and S<sup>r</sup> van Twist,<sup>97</sup> has departed. Your brother Steven writes to you at length, to whom I refer.

Ending, I commend you and your dear children to the protection of God. May He attend all of us with His favor and grace and grant us what is blessed for our soul and body. With hearty greetings from father, mother and sister Cornelia, I commend you to the grace of God.

Your affectionate father  
O. Stevens Cortlant

*Addressed:*

Worthy, virtuous Joffr Maria v. Cortlant,  
widow of Mr Jeremias van Renselaer, dec'd  
In Albania

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<sup>93</sup> Dr Johannes Kerfbyl. He came over after October 28, 1664, the date of his marriage contract with Catharina Rugh, executed at Amsterdam before Notary Jan Hendricksen van Lauven. See abstract of their joint will, dated February 1, 1688, proved November 4, 1704, in N. Y. Hist. Soc., *Collections*, 1892, 25:400.

<sup>94</sup> Anna van Rensselaer, eldest daughter of Maria van Rensselaer.

<sup>95</sup> Governor Andros was recalled on October 29, 1680, and sailed on January 7, 1681.

<sup>96</sup> Captain James Carteret, a younger son of Sir George Carteret. See *Executive Council Minutes*, 1:129.

<sup>97</sup> John van Twist, an alien, against whom on November 9, 1680, a judgment was issued for trading in the province contrary to the act of Parliament. I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island*, 4:305.

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

N. Jorcke, March 25, 1680<sup>98</sup>*Sister Cortlandt:*

With joy I learned of the good health of yourself and all the friends. Father, mother, the sisters, your children and all of us are also still well. God grant that on both sides it may long continue, to our salvation. Brother received a letter from Holland from S<sup>r</sup> R. V. Rensselaer, in which he writes that his sister Susanna died, which again causes him new work and will probably prevent him from coming over. What he writes further in his letter, I shall write to you in my next letter, as I have no time now to go to father's house to read it. Therefore, be pleased to excuse me that I make this so short. Meanwhile, I commend you and the children to God's protection and remain, with my greetings,

Always your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortland, widow of  
Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased  
at Watervliett  
Albany

*Endorsed:* 1680

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[April 1681]

[ ]<sup>99</sup>  
and the colony gave [ ] 300 schepels of wheat  
and was thereafter [forced thereto?] by Stuyvesant. The dispute which arose between [the colony] and the late Governor Andros was not about the 300 schepels of wheat, but about the

<sup>98</sup> March 25, 1680/1. See letter from Oloff Stevenson van Cortlandt, dated May 2, 1681.

<sup>99</sup> Several lines destroyed.

quit-rents in the Fuyck, so that we must keep [ ] on that, and when a constable comes to your house to [inquire about] the quantity of the land of the colony and Claverack, put him off with the statement that I shall [settle] everything here, both as to Claverack and the colony, with Capt. Lewin.<sup>100</sup> I have already informed Capt. Brockhols of this. He told me that it was [all right]. Capt. Lewin does not go up [the river] to deprive any one of his rights, or to abridge the same, but to inquire into the Duke's revenues and the situation of the trade and commerce in his highness' territories, and also to inquire whether any one has any complaints against Governor Andros, whether in general or in particular, against which I hope you will guard yourself, even if you should have reason thereto. Be also pleased to admonish Mr Marten Gerritsz, when he is in discourse with Capt. Lewin and mention is made of the governor, not to say anything to the detriment of Sir Edmond, but to say that all he did was for the best interest of the entire province, for they intend [

].<sup>101</sup>

As to those of the Claverack, [I shall] communicate everything [in detail] here to Capt. Lewin myself. I should have liked to go up the river with him, but it can not be. Mar[ia] and Anna are sick. The Indians arrive daily. I must ship a quantity of goods to the Bardados and have men at work, so that it is impossible for me to go up before June.

I am glad that father Schuyler and Theunis [Theunisz]

<sup>100</sup> Capt. John Lewin. His commission and instructions from the Duke of York, dated May 24, 1680, are in *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:279-82. He arrived at New York on Oct. 16, 1680. *Ibid.*, p. 302. On March 26, 1681, the Court at Albany ordered all inhabitants within their jurisdiction to give in the space of 14 days an account to the constables of Albany of the quantity of lands and meadows by them already seated and appropriated and the amount of the quit-rents reserved and payable therefor. On May 3, 1681, Capt. Lewin published his commission at Albany. *Minutes of the Court of Albany, Rensselaerswyck and Schenectady*, 1680-85, 3:96-98, 113-14.

<sup>101</sup> Several lines destroyed.

have come to an agreement.<sup>102</sup> I hope that they will long live in friendship with each other.

Father, mother and all the friends are still well. I thought that we were soon to have a wedding of our sister Cornelia, but it seems that it will be delayed for some time. I was sorry to learn of the discord between sister and brother,<sup>103</sup> due to his excessive drinking. I did not wish to tell father about their disagreement, because he did not know about it, but that he drank both father and mother knew. We hope that he now abstains from it and that they get along together better, which may God grant, to whose merciful protection I commend you. With greetings from myself and my wife, I remain,

Your faithful and affectionate brother  
S. V. [Cortlandt]

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[ ]  
[ ] shall [ ].<sup>104</sup>  
[Jacobus received a letter]<sup>105</sup> from S<sup>r</sup> Rychartt [van Rensselaer]. [He] writes that his [sister] Susanna [died ] anno 1681, leaving two young sons, whom the father<sup>106</sup> [hardly] looks after, so that all the burden of settling the estate comes on your brother Rychartt's shoulders. S<sup>r</sup> Rychartt sends hearty greetings to you and Steffen and begs to recommend to you their interests in the colony and if it is in any way possible, yes, even beyond expectation, to send to them the value of two or three hundred schepels of wheat, even if it should be necessary to sell

<sup>102</sup> A fragment of a copy in the handwriting of Maria van Rensselaer of a contract made [ ], between Philip Pietersen Schuyler and Theunis Theunisz Metselaer, whereby Schuyler agreed to take over the lease of the land leased to the Metselaer, is among the Rensselaerswyck manuscripts, marked 378.

<sup>103</sup> Andries Teller, who married Sophia van Cortlandt.

<sup>104</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>105</sup> See letter from Stephanus van Cortlandt, dated March 25, 1680/1.

<sup>106</sup> Jan de la Court.

a farm or some increase of cattle, in order that for once they might see a little revenue come from the colony which has cost so much money.

You received some payment for Joffr Vastrick.<sup>107</sup> You might write to her sometime what you have received for her and where she may expect the payment and whether there is any hope of receiving what is still outstanding.

For the present no more than greetings from all of us. Commending you to the grace of God,

Your affectionate father

O. Stevens Cortla [nt]

N.Yurck, May 2, 1681

*Addressed: Worthy Virtuous Jfw Maria van Renselaer  
at Watervliett  
in Albania*  
[Seal with van Cortlandt arms]

TO OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[December 1681]

Very dear and beloved Father: These few lines will serve to inform you of the state of our health, which now, thank God, is fair. I hope that father, mother and the friends are likewise still well, which I very much long to hear. Times are bad here; [there is] little grain, so that it is again bad for the colony. I am wishing and longing for a letter from Holland, for I can no longer live in trouble and can not stand any exertion. If I keep quiet, without exertion, I am reasonably well, but the least trouble makes me sick. If it should please God to have brother Rygert or some one else come over, I should get rid of the farm, for I can not stand it.

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<sup>107</sup> The widow of Robert Vastrick. See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 79, 471.

TO STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[December 1681]

Sr Steven van Cortlant

Dear Brother: These few' lines will serve to let you know the state of our health which, thank God, is fair. I hope to hear the same from you. Some time after your departure I had a talk with Marten Gerritse about the tax which we must still pay for the place in addition to the 300 schepels of wheat, [saying] that we did not intend to give more and that he need not try to collect it. At first Marte Gerritse said that it could not be, that all things must stand until the governor came and that first the other commissaries must know about it. I then told him that he could tell them if he pleased. He thereupon said that they wanted to have it, to which I replied that they should wait until spring, when my brother came up the river. As a result they sent me on the 20th of November the enclosed by Marten Gerritse, from which you can see what they want and other words in addition which Marten said to me. I told him that I would write to you and that I would await your answer to it before I would pay one [stiver].<sup>108</sup> I wish that we could manage not to pay. Braggarts and pompous men (*groot sprekers en groote manne*) I can not stand. I shall therefore await your orders. It has been a very bad harvest, worse than last year. Now that we come to threshing there is not  $1\frac{1}{2}$  schepels to the *vim*. I do not know what I shall do to get grain. The river is not yet closed. It has been covered over, but one can not drive on it. The north wind begins to blow quite sharply and I think that the river will be closed tomorrow. We have no snow either to take a ride sometime to visit the farmers. Many, like Piter Schuyler, Sybrant,<sup>109</sup> Livingston, Gabriel<sup>110</sup> and others, have had sleighs made for two horses to [ ]

<sup>108</sup> See *Minutes of the Court of Albany, Rensselaerswyck and Schenectady, 1680-85*, 3:185-6.

<sup>109</sup> Sybrant van Schaick.

<sup>110</sup> Gabriel Thompson Striddles. See *Early Records of Albany*, 3:44.

so that there [will not be] such [ ] as  
 in many years [ ]  
 how it will go with us [ ]  
 by night of the farmers.

Joffr' Teller<sup>111</sup> has had a dispute with Mr Cornelis.<sup>112</sup> I think that you will hear of it, for they will write to Capt. Bro[ckholst] about it. The dispute is about the place where the powder is stored, behind brother Teller's,<sup>113</sup> in an old house of Gab[riel] Tho[masse], and all the women who live thereabouts want to have the powder removed, or want to tear down the house. The people are full of fear since the fire.<sup>114</sup>

Brother Teller has since your departure been drinking heavily, so that at times he was unconscious and did not behave well at all in the house and on the street. On Friday, being drunk, he went toward morning into severe convulsions. This lasted until ten o'clock in the evening, without pause, so that all of us thought that he would not recover. There was great sorrow that he would thus depart out of this world, but the great [God . . .]<sup>115</sup>

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[December 1681?]

[ ]  
 [ ] name [ ]  
 [ ] gives [ ] and let [ ]  
 [ ] joy [ ] her sick-  
 ness [ ].  
 [I was] pleased to hear that you are well [and also that] our

<sup>111</sup> The wife of Willem Teller. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany, Rensselaerswyck and Schenectady, 1680-85*, 3:187.

<sup>112</sup> Dr Cornelis van Dyck, one of the commissaries of Albany.

<sup>113</sup> Andries Teller.

<sup>114</sup> A fire which originated on November 10, 1681, in the house of Jeronimus Wendell and which destroyed several houses. *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 3:177.

<sup>115</sup> At this point the draft of the letter ends abruptly.

<sup>116</sup> Several lines destroyed.

brother-in-law is better again. I hope that he will abstain from indulging himself in drinking so hard as he has done heretofore.

I saw the resolution of the honorable commissaries, dated the 6th of December, to make no change [in the tax], as it is an ordinance of the honorable governor, especially for the colony as well as for Albany. Now, whether that ordinance will last forever, I doubt, but I am wondering why the Messieurs are so anxious punctually to observe the ordinance of the honorable governor where it is to their own advantage, but pass or issue no resolution to maintain the interests of his Royal Highness (for which the governor must make his special ordinance). There is no one among the old inhabitants of Albany but knows that we are compelled to give annually 300 schepels of wheat, which grain heretofore was used for the maintenance or payment of the minister, and although the governor levies that for his Royal Highness, it is hard that we must furnish other money for the payment of Albany's expenses. When, please [God], I come up the river, which I hope will be by the first sloop, we shall together consider making a protest against these improper procedures. Meanwhile, let them observe the laws of the country. If they find therein that we are bound to [pay] the tax in addition to the 300 schepels of wheat, let them get the court of Albany to levy it by execution. [

]<sup>117</sup>

[ ] then [ ] not [ ]  
also [ ] think will  
do [ ] consider or take,  
at least postpone it until I come up the river, in order to discuss the matter with them. The magistrates do not dare collect the house tax which is the sole revenue of the place, but let everything rest until further order, [which they?] expect. Meanwhile, I beg you to exert every effort to get as much grain as possible. Capt. Brockhols would like to have wheat, but I see in the old contract that we may pay him in any other grain than wheat. He is much in need. What I on the contrary may use [I do] not

<sup>117</sup> Several lines destroyed.

[know?]. I owe brother Jacobus some wheat. If you could buy for me 60 or 70 [beavers' worth] of wheat at 5 schepels to the beaver, you would do him and me a favor. I have also written to brother Teller, but owing to his indisposition, he may easily have forgotten it. Be pleased to ask him sometime whether he sees a chance of doing so, and do [your best] therein as much as possible. All the friends are still well. As far as I can notice, [we] might in the spring come to an agreement with my sister and my brother-in-law, which I for myself would much rather see than [to be quarreling] with one another. [He seems] to be angry with me about it, but [I know of no] personal reason why.

Lady Andros sailed on the 17th of November.<sup>118</sup> I hope that long before this she [arrived] in England. Capt. Bowne [departed] from here on the 20th of October. We have had several tidings from Sir Edmund Andros. Everything is uncertain. There [ ] ships [ ].

Commending you to God, I remain,  
 [Your affectionate brother]  
 S. V. [Cortlandt]

*Addressed:*

Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer  
 at Watervliett  
 at Albany

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[Worthy] and Dear Daughter: I received your letter in health and from it learned your situation. I have not yet spoken to your brother about your circumstances. His wife was confined on January 9, 1682, of a daughter, who died on Wednesday, the 11th.

It is now about two months ago that the ship *De Beever*

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<sup>118</sup> Lady Andros sailed on the ship *De Beever*, to join her husband, who had sailed for England on January 7, 1681. J. R. Brodhead, *History of the State of New York*, 2:355.

sailed from here;<sup>119</sup> since then I have received no tidings. Meanwhile, I shall confer sometime with your brother to see what can be done to secure for you a quiet life. I have noticed for a long time that all this quarreling is neither good for you nor profitable. Be of good courage. I hope that God after all these troubles will grant a happy ending. Come down sometime in the spring. I hope that God will grant you health and strength to do so. Here nothing special happens that is worth writing about. Wheat is getting dear; it already brings 7 gl. in silver and it is not abundant. We are having a dry, mild winter here; good weather every day. Father, mother and all the friends are still well and will, I trust, all write to you. Therefore, I commend you and your dear children to the protection of God. May He grant all of you what is blessed.

With hearty greetings from us and commanding you to the grace of God, [I am],

Your affectionate father  
O. Stevens Cortlant

N: Jorck, the 12th of January 1682

*Addressed:*

Worthy, Virtuous Joff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Renselaer  
at Albania

FROM JOHN DARVALL

[ ]<sup>120</sup>  
[ ] New Year to [your] salvation. On account of your timber, I have caused 1016 guilders to be handed to Mr Steenwyck, for which I have credited your account. If there is anything you wish, you will please only drop me a line and it will at the first opportunity be sent to you according to your wish.

I shall break off with hearty greetings from myself and my

<sup>119</sup> The ship *De Bever* sailed from New York on November 17, 1681.

<sup>120</sup> Several lines destroyed.

wife and child. Commending you and all the friends to the protection of the Most High, I remain,

Your very affectionate brother  
John D[arvall]

N: Yorke, January 13, 1681/2

*Addressed:*

To Madam the Widow Jermias van Renslaar  
at Albany  
Q.D.G.

TO CORNELIS VAN DYCK

[ ]  
[ ] so long ago [ ]<sup>121</sup>

] in the spring, when [my brother has] resolved to come here with one of the first yachts, if it please God, in order then to speak with them about the said matter. I therefore beg you kindly to let the matter rest until the aforesaid time, on which we depend.<sup>122</sup>

Maria van Re[nsselaer]

January 25, [16]81/2

at Watervliet

This 30th of January delivered to Mr Cornelis by Anna van Rense[laer].

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER

[January 1682?]

Sr Reyga[art van Rensselaer]

Brother: [ ]<sup>123</sup>  
gone, but the governor being away, was not well satisfied and

<sup>121</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>122</sup> This letter, requesting that the collection of the tax in the colony might be delayed until the arrival of Stephanus van Cortlandt, was read in court on February 7, 1682. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1680-85*, 3:203.

<sup>123</sup> The first part of the letter is missing and the words "Sr Reyga" and "broed" are written at the end.

Capt. [Brockholes], taking the governor's place, would not approve it, as being not according to law. The said captain married the daughter of Joff. Teller, named Susanna,<sup>124</sup> who is a very good friend of mine. Now, while the governor is away and he has few friends at [Manhattan?], the case of Livingston is changed, for all those who hear from Livingston that he still has the farm, criticize us. I also understood from Livingston himself that you had written that the Domine, deceased, had no property except in the [colony], but he says that mother, deceased, had no right to do so and that she could not dispose of [her] son's [inheritance] and on this turns the case of Livingston, for they begrudge him the land and as for me, I can not bear to see him any longer in possession of the patroon's garden, where my husband, my child, and brother, deceased, lie buried, [and to know] that he is the master of it.

Further, I have spoken about the colony with a Capt. [John Lewin], who came to see me several times. I think it was to hear whether I had any complaints against our governor, as the said [Capt. Lewin] came over to inquire into the interests of the Duke, and as there are many complaints about the governor, I trust that he will not come back, for his wife sailed on the ship [De Bever] while I was at New York.

When he asked how it stood with the colony, we showed him the deeds of purchase, but he [said] that it was not necessary for him to see the deeds of purchase, but that he must have a record [showing that] it extended as far as [ ] and also wished to look it over as the [ ] consent [ ] it must extend [ ] as [ ] restoration [ ] extend to the Verdrietige Hoeck.

[ ] and as I see it, there will be no escape, unless you do it, if you wish to keep the colony as it is now. Capt.

<sup>124</sup> Capt. Anthony Brockholes married at Albany, on May 2, 1881, O.S., Susanna Schrick, a daughter of Willem Teller's second wife, Maria Verleth, who was the widow of Paulus Schrick. *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1680-85, 3:113; Early Records of Albany, 1:345-46.*

Manning will return with the ships to [England] to take the report to the Duke how it [ ].

Further, I wish to recommend to you my affairs, to see to it that in one way or another I may get one of the grist-mills and the sawmill and the land of Broer Cornelis. The old mill is no good. I shall for [the present] keep it standing with props as long as I can, but it is [decayed]. I beg you, dear brother, [to remember] that as you well know I have nothing but the house and if in addition I then had the piece of land and the mill, I could still live and keep up my husband's station. I am sometimes very feeble. If you are pleased [to do so, you can] do much in the matter. I hope that you have already [done] so and also [approved] the account, for I do not doubt your friendly inclination.

Kiliaen will this [spring?] come up the river, as his term is up,<sup>125</sup> and if it please [God] I intend to [send] him regularly to the farmers to see if I can not send over something, about which I shall do my best.

I have made up the account of brother Jan Bat[ist] as far as I could, but it is short a good deal, unless more was [sent] over than I can find in the books. My children are, thank [God], all still in good health. [Breaking off, I remain], with my hearty greetings to you and your dear wife and children,

[Your] sister

[Maria van Rensselaer]

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[March 1682?]

[ ]  
 [ ] the [ ]  
 [ ] as M [ ]  
 [ ] know [ ]  
 [ ] rec[eived your] agreeable letter [ ]

<sup>125</sup> Meaning his term of apprenticeship, apparently with a silversmith at New York.

<sup>126</sup> Several lines destroyed.

[as] Sr Rychartt van [Rensselaer] has not written to you by this ship, I do not know what to do. It may be that your last letter to him has raised some objection and requires some time to answer the same. I have a short letter from him, but he does not say anything about you. He only writes that it seems to him that brother Steeven is not looking after the interests of the colony as he wrote he did. Your brother now goes up the river. I hope that together you may come to an agreement with the farmers, with Leuesteyn,<sup>127</sup> [and with] Captain S[chuyler], and that it may tend to the benefit of the colony and [peace] among one another.

As to the expenses which have to be incurred there, if a farm does not pay for itself, what is the proprietor to get out of it? The rent of the farms and the mills ought to amount at least to so much that they can be kept in repair for it and then there ought to be something left over for the proprietor.

You will please write once more to Sr Ryckard that it seemed [strange to you] not to receive a letter from him and please let me know sometime what I should write to him for your best interest. It seems to me that it would not be strange to ask him to make up your account of the colony and the account of Sr Jan Baptist, deceased, and [to do] what was further in his power to put you as far as possible on an even keel. Also write a note to brother Jacobus asking him to be pleased to see to it that the 53 schepels of pease sent to him for Joff<sup>r</sup> Vastrick may reach her, and also write her a short letter, stating what you have done and that when the opportunity offers you will also send to her what was received by your husband, deceased.

For the present no more than the hearty greetings from your father and mother to you and all the dear children, whom I commend to the mercy of God.

Your affectionate father

O. Stevens Cor[tlant]<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Robert Livingston.

<sup>128</sup> Second sheet with address missing.

FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER

[Amsterdam, May 4/14, 1682]<sup>129</sup>

[ ]<sup>130</sup>

] aforesaid [

] would not have been my [

] and that I answered your last letter very late  
[you will please] excuse. The inclination is good, but the

[ ] leave me little opportunity, yes, often even too little opportunity to attend to the common business. Now, I hope that for taking care of what has devolved upon me the Almighty in His mercy will reward me here below, but especially hereafter, and that it may please Him to spare my life long enough that in time I may be assisted by my brothers' and sister's children, among whom your son Kiliaen, being the eldest, would be the first to be available and both in regard to his father's estate and the common interests could render me no little service, for which I wish that the Almighty may grant him wisdom and especially His blessing.

I wish that you had sent me a power of attorney to settle the account of the colony which is still open. Owing to lack of that instrument I have not yet [shown] the account to the co-participants and I have not even completely examined it myself. It was [ ] and what by balance of account was due to you.<sup>131</sup>

As to your writing from time to time about my coming over sometime in order, if possible, to settle everything, my desire indeed has been to be there sometime, and if [Jan] Baptist van Rensselaer, deceased, had remained alive one of us two would beyond all doubt have gone over, but owing to the death of our brother those plans have been changed and you can well imagine

<sup>129</sup> See Richard van Rensselaer's letter of May 12/22, 1682 and letter from Maria van Rensselaer of January 1683.

<sup>130</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>131</sup> See letter from Maria van Rensselaer to Richard van Rensselaer, of September 1680.

that, being alone and having no near-relatives who can assist me, I am forced to stay here and for you and the joint [heirs] to take care that everything is properly administered, for the estate of our father, deceased, can not well be managed by friends and through my absence would be much neglected. I therefore pray Almighty God that for the sake of seeing each other once more He may spare me some years longer in health, to our salvation.

Now as to the decline of the colony on account of the poor harvest which there has been for some years past, this is plausible and thereby the farmers will get not a little in arrears. You must try to manage things for a while yet and if you do not send over your son Kilyan (which in my opinion would be best), you must spur him on a little to be of service to you [

]<sup>132</sup>

[ ] us, but [ ] the fall of the [ ] must under [ ] magistrates [ ] is [ ]], but can according to what your brother Stephanus [writes] be [un]pleasant too. I wish that sometime we could talk with each other, for here things are likewise going badly. On the farm Cralo, which would now be recovering from the devastation by the French,<sup>133</sup> as each year the timber is getting more fit to be cut once more, from which a pretty penny is to be expected, we must with sorrowful eyes see that the little which heretofore has annually been cut for brush mats<sup>134</sup> is being damaged and chewed off by deer and other game, so as to cry unto heaven. And this, which we must bear patiently, serves only for the entertainment and pleasure of his Highness the Prince of Orange, who with this game has stocked the Goy,<sup>135</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>133</sup> The Cralo estate, near Naarden, was devastated by French troops in the summer of 1672. See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 465.

<sup>134</sup> *rys beslach*; an interwoven structure of willow or other twigs for protecting the face of a dike or river-bank.

<sup>135</sup> The Gooi; a former district in the province of North Holland, of which the city of Naarden was the capital.

to the sorrow of all the proprietors. I hope, however that an experiment will be tried to prevent this damage, but I fear that it will avail little, for at court they are not much concerned about Joseph's loss (*schade Joseps*). You may be glad that with your family you are in that country. Even if one has a little trouble, it is at present better there than here, for our country in general is in bad condition and moreover sin and ungodliness are increasing not a little.

Whereas since the last war trade has quite declined and I thought it advisable for me to give up business, in which I had suffered not a little loss, I have for the maintenance of my family resorted to other means whereby to a large extent [I can make] an honest living which, as long as I live and may enjoy the same in peace, will tend in no small measure to the consolation of my dear wife and children. Through her grace [the Countess] van Breederode, lady of Vyanen, I secured the offices of treasurer of the city of Vyanen, administrator of the fiefs (*Stadhouder van de Leenen*) of Vyanen, Ameyde and Harlaer, and collector of the taxes of Vyanen and the surrounding bailiwicks,<sup>136</sup> which offices cost me a capital of fl.5000, for at present no offices are obtained in our country except for money, which nets the Prince a large amount of income, as he makes use [of these offices] and most of them are granted by him. Now, as through her grace of Brederode I could get some access to the Princess, [

]<sup>137</sup>

[ ] would [ ] therefore [ ]  
 [do not] have to do, as heretofore I have rendered a proper account to our brother, although he [ ] his own signature more force [ ] the subtlety which he<sup>138</sup> employs. He will [ ] the

<sup>136</sup> A copy of his commission from Hetwich Agnes, countess of Brederode, dated August 8, 1681, is in the New York State Library. See *Annual Report*, 1909, 92:22, no. 33.

<sup>137</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>138</sup> Robert Livingston.

debts which the Domine, deceased, has here in this country, which amount to some [ ]. The others, which they reject, I put together. But as to this gentleman's thinking that they can keep possession of the patroon's place and the farm in the Gryne Bos without paying therefor such rent as others paid who had the use thereof, far be it from it. I think that according to law, as far as he remains responsible for the estate of Domine, deceased, he can draw no more out of the colony than one of us, each of whom has the same interest in it as our brother, the Domine, deceased, and not a scrap of a nail more. And as to the patroon's place, if he will not voluntarily leave and relinquish the same, you might provisionally protest against it, in order that he may not in time claim the ownership of it, as he intimated to you, saying that if he claimed that after about four years and meanwhile had had possession thereof, it would be his own. I consider that an old wives' fable. He wrote some time ago that he had made a list and inventory of the effects and debts which Domine, deceased, left at Albany and that he paid the debts as far as the assets allowed, yes, and in addition about fl.300 in beavers more, which he now wants to take out of the colony. If I had the [same] here, I would teach him differently. No executor of an estate has the power to pay any debts before preference and sequence is given before the court, and such notice must be publicly posted and affixed not only in Albany, but even in Holland, for the debts in Holland belong as legally to the estate as those which were made in Albany, although he has managed to dispose the court there to [ ].

Mr Livingston is also ignorant of the fact that aside from all this there is a person in London, named Steeven Carson, [who, I] fear, is a trouble maker, who has an assignment for fl.1300 given by Domine, deceased, on his paternal inheritance, which [ ]<sup>189</sup>

[ ] is [ ] or about [ ]

<sup>189</sup> Several lines destroyed.

Domine, deceased, because Mr Livingston [ ] through ignorance [ ] mislead [ ].

The enclosed memorandum which you sent me [showing what was received?] from the estate of the widow van Corler, deceased, I have [examined]. I find that at the second distribution the patroon [received] 33 1/5 schepels, while the preceding and last term amounted to [ ]. What has become of the 63 schepels of wheat I do not know. I shall await your explanation why the [patroon] has to suffer so much loss by it and I beg you once more to read my last letter, to get from it an answer to some of the propositions.

Let me know sometime whether Ludovicus Cobes, our former secretary, is still living and whether you think that I should send him a power of attorney to be used against Secretary Livingston. Let me know your opinion about that sometime.

Our sister,<sup>140</sup> the widow of Johannes van Rensselaer, deceased, we buried on May 3/13,<sup>141</sup> at Nykerck. She leaves a son<sup>142</sup> and a daughter,<sup>143</sup> who have attained legal age. Wherewith I shall break off for the present, commanding you and your children to God's protection.

With hearty greetings,

Your faithful brother  
R. V. Rensselaer

<sup>140</sup> Elizabeth van Twiller. She married in 1655, at Hoevelaken, near Nykerck, her cousin Johannes van Rensselaer, who died in 1662.

<sup>141</sup> As Richard van Rensselaer could hardly have attended a funeral at Nykerck on May 3/13, 1682, and the next day have written a long letter at Amsterdam, the date is probably a mistake for April 3/13, 1682, or else intended for May 3/13, 1681.

<sup>142</sup> Kiliaen van Rensselaer, who came over in 1685, married his cousin Anna van Rensselaer, and died on February 22, 1687.

<sup>143</sup> Nelle Maria van Rensselaer. See *Van Rensselaer Bowier MSS.*, p. 38.

RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER TO ROBERT LIVINGSTON

[May 4/14, 1682?]<sup>144</sup>[]<sup>145</sup>

] but say that wile I [

] and estate of our brother, the Domine, deceased, which, as far as I can observe, has been accepted, not under benefit of inventory, but as universal heirs. Inasmuch, then, as the common creditors can not address themselves more directly than to your person in order to demand and obtain such sums of money as they are lawfully entitled to, therefore I, among them, as guardian of the minor children and as administrator of the estate of my brother Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, deceased, demand of you such sum as according to the account sent to me is due to the deceased, amounting in all by balance of account to fl.3324:11:8, besides the accrued interest. And as to your trying in your letter to minimize that sum and to reduce it to nothing, you are greatly misled and deceived therein. I do not know how you dare to transfer and charge to the account of the colony the 12 bills of exchange, amounting to fl.2367:7:4, for account of the Domine, deceased, which my brother, deceased, at his urgent request paid for his maintenance in London. I think that if I should submit such samples to the patroon and co-directors, they would judge that you seek to avail yourself of unfounded claims and that you are a solicitor of fraudulent affairs. In short, if you do not wish to hurt or to burn yourself against the very hand [

]<sup>146</sup>

[ ] has [  
] account [ ] sent to me [  
] as you [ ] from the account  
[ ].

<sup>144</sup> See letter from Maria van Rensselaer of January 1683, and letter from Richard van Rensselaer to Governor Dongan and Council, dated September 1/11, 1684.

<sup>145</sup> Several lines destroyed. The letter is a copy in the handwriting of Jacob Sanderson Glen.

<sup>146</sup> Several lines destroyed.

And further, as to the other entries which now and then have been paid on account of my brother, deceased, [it is evident?] that these must be paid back, [otherwise] one would be unfortunate and dread to pay one's brother's debts, for if it would suffice to reject the debt, I could have followed the same tactics, for my brother, deceased, has many a time paid much money for me, but I consider that it would be a dishonest trick to act in that way. It is true, as you write, that if our uncle, Joan van Wely, deceased, knowing the lawful debt which existed between the two brothers, had taken care that upon his death the same could be paid out of the late Domine's portion of the estate for so far as it would reach, there would have been no dispute, but that portion of the estate would have served to settle the outstanding account, in case brother, the Domine, deceased, had lived until after uncle's death, but having predeceased him, he could not inherit from him, as appears from the decision of jurists.

Now, to proceed, I also see that you took the inventory of the estate of your [predecessor], except his share in the colony, and that according to the inventory it was appraised at fl.3440:3 in beavers,<sup>147</sup> and that you credited the estate therewith, which according to my opinion is all right. But I see further that you [ ]<sup>148</sup>

so that I fear [ ] be [ ]  
you are reasonably [ ] understanding [ ]  
and all my [ ] office of [ ]  
without any doubt [have exercised] this [and] similar functions  
that you have undertaken of your own accord to pay such debts,  
to the number of 44 accounts, or, if it was done by order of the  
court, you have deceived the magistrate who gave you power to  
do so, for if you undertake to pay some debts which our brother  
the Domine, deceased, left behind according to your own desire,  
you will let us and the remaining creditors look on. I really think  
that you seriously burned your fingers, unless you thought to

<sup>147</sup> See inventory in *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1680-85, 3:49-52.

<sup>148</sup> Several lines destroyed.

yourself that the remaining debts could be easily paid out of his share of the colony, whereas I think that it will not be sufficient by far, and to show that heretofore I have not written you any lies, I am sending you herewith a memorandum, which is an extract which my brother Jan Baptist, deceased, made from the book of brother the Domine, deceased, showing what his estate was in the year 1667. In your prudence you should have proceeded herein in another way, as according to form and practice of law one must first publicly post and affix a notice, not only in Albany, but even here in Holland, that if any one has any claim against the estate of Domine Nicolaus van Rensselaer, deceased, he must present the same, as the executor of the said estate will by order of the court hold [

]<sup>149</sup>

payable by brother the Domine, deceased, which has had its effect [ ] in the colony. Now what shall [I say?]. Hereby they cut off the creditors' means of releasing our brother from his debts. I, for myself, do not care about that, except that I have to speak for [the minor children]. It is not worth while either to answer your statement that the debts contracted by our brother the Domine, deceased, must be paid out of his inheritance from his mother, deceased, which you even try to prove by the provisions of her last will, notwithstanding it contradicts the same in every particular, so that such frivolous writing only bores me, who have something else to do than to waste much time in reading such writings. If one wishes to propose something and benefit by it, one must adduce sufficient reasons and proof, but I think that your object only is to keep the settlement of the estate dragging along and, if it will not succeed, to renounce the estate, but I think that you will then find that it is too late and that it will plague you thereafter, for although the matter may not be settled in my time, those who are now minors will not abandon what is theirs. You may in the future remember that I foretold you so, if there is any justice to be had in that country.

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<sup>149</sup> Several lines destroyed.

In order now hastily to conclude this, as I understand that contrary to all justice and fairness you keep in your possession the patroon's place and also the farm in the Greyne Bos, without being willing to pay any rent or compensation to the patroon and co-directors [

] <sup>150</sup>

for our brother [ ] have paid rent. If you continue to let [them occupy] and cultivate it, you are to pay for it such rent as others who heretofore have used it, for we do not intend to let the affairs of the colony run down as they have done since the death of our brother, deceased. Therefore, if you desire to be advised as a friend, be careful in all these transactions, for I have made a note of all that is done and administred by you, especially in the matter of the colony, for it consists of a partnership, which will not abandon its interests, and if you should wish to recover your private actions and claims from the common owners who have nothing to do with them, you will be quite mistaken.

If I have anything against you in my capacity of guardian of the estate of my brother Jan Baptist, deceased, that is between you and me, but in regard to the colony, there are the patroon and co-directors, who will maintain their right. Finally, I must say, while I still think of it, that I am very much surprised that you write me that the effects of the estate left by the Domine, deceased, have been appraised at fl.3440:3, in beavers, as I have [positive] knowledge that at the time when our brother left England he took no capital with him and also that according to the letter from your wife, dated January 9, 1679/80, in which she wrote that in the world [

] <sup>151</sup>

the property of [brother had considerably] accrued, as heretofore I have [written?] that he must have paid for the house<sup>152</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>151</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>152</sup> A house on the north-west corner of State street and North Pearl street, purchased by Rev. Nicolaes van Rensselaer from Elmer Otte on November 6, 1675. *Early Records of Albany*, 1:122, 185; 2:15-16.

partly out of the revenue of the colony, of which I have not yet received any account. If so, it will be bad business, for our brother, the Domine, could not draw from the income of the colony any more than any one of us. How do you think that will be taken? I leave that to you to think over. Ending here-with, I commend you to God's protection.

Your obliging friend  
R. V. Rensselaer

*Endorsed:*

[ ]  
[ ] Holland

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FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

Vyanen, May 12/22, 1682

[Juf]fr Maria van Cor[tlandt, widow] of brother Jeremias van R[ensselaer]

Dear Sister: On the 4/14th of this month I wrote at length from Amsterdam. This will still reach you by the same skipper and I shall only say that whereas the court at the request of the reverend consistory have appointed me and Abel de Wolf to find a second minister to serve the church at Albany, etc.,<sup>153</sup> I have made every effort to secure a person who by his preaching and conduct might edify the congregation and in whom they might find satisfaction. I had hoped to send the same by skipper Jacob Mourits, which, however, did not succeed, as the candidates are very scarce, many pulpits in our fatherland being vacant. There was a minister in the Bommeler Weert, who offered to go thither, as he bitterly complained that his salary was not being paid and was much in arrears, but upon inquiry as to his comportment and conduct there was no good testimony at all about him. And

<sup>153</sup> June 7, 1681. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1680-85*, 3:130.

whereas the most important consideration in a minister is his good conduct, in order to edify the congregation and not to scandalize them by the bad example of a leader upon whom nearly all eyes are centered, I have paid no further attention to him. And whereas now one Domine Streso,<sup>154</sup> minister here at Vyanen, has very diligently exerted himself and taken much trouble for my sake and in the interest of the church of Albany and especially of the congregation in our colony [to find a minister], therefore, a candidate has presented himself, named Domine Dellius, whose father is minister at Kooten, near Wyck [by] Duerstede, but whose place, on account of his old age, is supplied by his son, or his brother. At my request the aforesaid Domine Dellius yesterday preached here at Vyanen. I found that he has reasonably good gifts and I doubt not but he will render great service to the church of Albany, etc. His call will be promoted by us as speedily as possible, as I have written to Sr Abel de Wolf about him, in the hope that he might be with you even before the winter. I doubt not but after a safe voyage he will address himself to you in order that he may enjoy the favor of your friendship. He is a person of good promise and a happy disposition. He is well recommended and his testimonials are good. You might, with my greetings, communicate this to their honors and the friends.<sup>155</sup> Wherewith, commanding you and your children to the protection of God, I remain, with hearty greetings,

Your affectionate brother  
R. V. Rensselaer

<sup>154</sup> In a tax list of the Hague, for 1674, printed in *Die Haghe, Jaarboek*, 1914/15, p. 26, mention is made of Do. Ludovicus Streso, minister at Vianen, and Juffr. Constantia Streso, each assessed at fl.2,223.75, for property on Toornstraet (Torenstraet), the Hague.

<sup>155</sup> Cf. Letter from the magistrates of Albany to the Classis of Amsterdam, dated October 12, 1682, which refers to letter from Abel de Woff and Richard van Rensselaer of May 24, 1682. *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York*, 2:826-27.

*Addressed:*

Worthy, Virtuous Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlant, widow  
of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased, in his life-  
time director of the colony of Rensselaerswyck  
In America

*p<sup>r</sup> mane*

*Endorsed:*

1682

About D<sup>o</sup> Dellius

FROM JACOB SANDERSEN GLEN

[ ]<sup>156</sup>  
[ ] has come to hand.

In reply [ ]  
is still well. I stopped this morning at Luyckas Pieterse's. He will today make preparations to saw and expects to begin to saw today or early tomorrow morning. The honorable commissioners have not called upon me [ ], although I have been before the court about the matter of Slingerlant, which is to remain pending until the arrival of Mr A. Staats, who with Gerrit Reyerse will be asked to appraise the same.<sup>157</sup>

By Jacob Schermerhorn I am sending you the money of the mill. There is, well sewed up in your bag, fl.61:10 in seawan, [and fl. ] in silver money, paid by Mary Loockermans. Your son Johannes van Renselaer is still well and in good health. I asked him last Saturday and again today whether he did not want to go to the Manhatans. He said no, but asked [to tell] his mother, aunt Cornelia and uncle Brant to send or bring him each a large piece of cake.<sup>158</sup> We were today, by order of Sr Brant Schuyler and his bride, Juff. Cornelia van Cortlant, invited

<sup>156</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>157</sup> Meaning the orchard of Albert Andriessen Bratt, of which Teunis Slingerlant was to have possession. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1680-85, 3:260-61.*

<sup>158</sup> soete Coeck; meaning honey or molasses cake.

to attend the wedding on Wednesday week.<sup>159</sup> We thank them very much and wish them much happiness and every blessing.

[ ]  
[ ]<sup>160</sup>

                ] and be pleased [  
                 ] rose trees [  
                 ] Wednesday behind [  
                 ] kicked by [a horse?] of which [he] died.  
 Arenhout Vielle left last [ ] by order of the  
 colonels [ ]lant for the Seneca country, to  
 fetch the sachems of [ ] . He expects to  
 make the journey in 20 days. Ending herewith, I commend you  
 all to the protection of the Lord and remain,

Your faithful servant  
 Jacob Sandersen

A° 1682, the 26th of June  
 Albany

*Addressed:*

To the worthy and virtuous  
 Maria van Re[ensselaer]  
 In [New York]

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[About August 10, 1682]

Beloved Daughter: Your letter dated the 3d of August I received in reasonable health. We were glad that you got home speedily and safely. Brother Jacobus was [taken sick] on Monday, but [now] begins to improve somewhat. I hope that in time he will be all right. Your son Kiliaen writes a letter to you

<sup>159</sup> In the marriage records of the Dutch Reformed Church of New York, the banns of marriage of Brant Schuyler and Cornelia van Cortlandt are entered under June 17, 1682. They were married on July 12th.

<sup>160</sup> Several lines destroyed.

[saying] that he stayed about five weeks with Padderschall,<sup>161</sup> but that he is now with his master,<sup>162</sup> who is a good man. I hope that he will try to stay there until Easter.

Last Sunday skipper Jan Gorter arrived here. He had been twelve weeks under way.<sup>163</sup> Joff'r Helena Verbael<sup>164</sup> and her family and her brother Teller<sup>165</sup> also arrived, as well as Domine Selyns and his wife, but I have heard nothing of letters from Rychartt v. Renselaer. I understand that he obtained a position at Cuylenburch<sup>166</sup> and that he spends most of his time there. The [ship] *De Beever* is expected every day. We must await that, when we shall be able to judge what is best to be done. I trust that brother Steeve and brother Darvall will also write to you, to whose letters I refer.

For the present, receive with your dear children the hearty

<sup>161</sup> Richard Pattishall, of Boston. He was the master of a yacht on which Jasper Danckaerts and Peter Sluyter, the Labadist missionaries, embarked at New York for Boston, on June 19, 1680. He was killed by the Indians at Pemaquid in 1692. See *Journal of Jasper Danckaerts, 1679-1680*, ed. by B. B. James and J. F. Jameson, p. 234, 252, 256.

<sup>162</sup> Jeremiah Dummer, a well known silversmith at Boston. See next letter.

<sup>163</sup> Rev. Henricus Selyns, who was one of the passengers, arrived at New York on August 6, 1682. On October 28, 1682, he wrote to the Classis of Amsterdam: "After leaving our Fatherland we ran in at Dover, (Doeveren), where, at the request of the Mayor, I preached for the gratification of the Hollanders there. We spent twelve weeks between Dover and New York. The voyage was longer than usual, partly owing to calms, or to little wind, or to contrary winds; but we experienced not the slightest storm, nor did we suffer in the least for want of food or drink." *Ecclesiastical Records*, 2:828, 836.

<sup>164</sup> Helena Teller, widow of Jan Hendricksen van Bael. On September 26, 1683, she married in the Dutch church at New York, François Rombouts, widower of Anna Elizabeth Masschot.

<sup>165</sup> Willem Teller, jr. He sailed for Holland shortly after June 29, 1674. *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 463.

<sup>166</sup> Culemborg, or Kuilenburg, a city in the province of Gelderland, about 8 miles east by south of Vianen, of which latter city Richard van Rensselaer had in 1681 been appointed treasurer.

greetings from [your] father and mother. Commending you to the mercy of God, [I remain],

Your affectionate father

O. Stevens v. Cortlant

*Addressed:*

To Joff<sup>r</sup> Maria V. Renselaer  
at Albania

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[About August 10, 1682]

[ ] our minister Selyns [and his wife], Joff<sup>r</sup> van Baele and her children, and several other passengers, but [no] minister for Schenechtade, on account of the scarcity of ministers, but [father] is surprised that [we] have not received a letter from Mr van R[ensselaer], although only three days before the departure of the ship he spoke at Amsterdam with Jan Gorter. We must have two or three weeks patience, until the ship *De Bever* comes into port and if then no letters for us arrive, we shall send them a copy of the debit [account or] Day Book and do then as we shall think most fitting. Everything is still all right. Brother Jacobus is improving. No letters from England, nor by [the ship] of Capt. Bowne. I hope that you agreed with the farmers about the tithes and that they will have a good crop and pay their debts this winter.

I am anxious to hear whether brother Teller, who on account of his second fall was not very well when he left here, [is all right again]. The man to whom I recommended your son at Boston, hanged himself, so that Mr Patichall and Mr Uscher have apprenticed him to one Mr Jeremy Dommer.<sup>168</sup> It seems that Kiliaen is not used to living so plainly as they do there. I shall [ ] write to him, to [ ] him.

<sup>167</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>168</sup> Jeremiah Dummer.

After my greetings to you and the children, I commend you to God and remain,

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer  
at Watervliett

FROM JOHN DARVALL

[Very?] affectionate sister Maria van R[enslaar]

Dear Sister, Salute! Your letter with the enclosed account I duly received, from which I learned [of] your [good] health. According to your request I have with the account been to see my brother W<sup>m</sup> Darvall<sup>169</sup> and adjusted accounts with him, as appears from the enclosed [account]. You write at the end of your account that you paid two beavers, but do not give the date when. Another time, please to write that, in order that I may govern myself accordingly.

Skipper Jan Gorter duly arrived here, together with Domine Selyns and his wife and the widow Baalen<sup>170</sup> and children and W<sup>m</sup> Teller. I have asked Master Hans Kiersteden several times for his account, but thus far have not been able to get it. As soon as I receive it, I shall send it to you by the first opportunity. *Pro governo.*

If there are any boards ready there, [be pleased to] send down 100 or 200 at the first opportunity, for which I shall satisfy you.

With the hearty greetings from my [wife, father and] mother and all the friends, I commend you to the protection of the Most High and remain,

Your very affectionate brother  
John Darvall

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<sup>169</sup> William Darvall was a merchant trader. He had been commissioned an alderman of New York City on October 13, 1672, and in 1675 was Mayor of New York.

<sup>170</sup> Helena Teller, widow of Jan Hendricksen van Bael.

P.S. Herewith goes a package of salve  
which your son Kiljaan sends you, as  
you will see more fully from the enclosed  
letter.<sup>171</sup> Brother Jacobus has had no fever  
now for two days. We hope that the Lord  
God will restore him to his former health,  
for his salvation. Amen.

N: Yorke, August 15, 1682

FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[August 15?, 1682]

Dear Sister: By skipper Jacob Mourits [ ]  
I wrote you at length, which letters<sup>172</sup> I hope you duly received  
in good health. This only serves to let you know that Domine  
Dellius, who received a call to be minister at Albany, goes over  
in the little ship of S<sup>r</sup> Lyselaer.<sup>173</sup> I hope that the Lord may let  
him safely arrive there and that the congregation will be pleased  
with him. I have recommended you to him and you are also  
requested to do for him whatever you can to be of service to him  
in return. I intend by the next opportunity to send him a com-  
mission to look after our interests and the affairs of the colony.  
We shall then see whether everything can be put again in good  
shape, for if things should run along in this way and there should  
be no authority, the colony would by and by go to ruin. This,  
however, must be prevented as far as possible and toward this

<sup>171</sup> This letter has not been preserved. See letter of Oloff Stevenson  
van Cortlandt of about August 15, 1682.

<sup>172</sup> See letters of May 4/14 and May 12/22, 1682.

<sup>173</sup> Jacob Leisler. Domine Godefridus Dellius sailed on August 15, 1682, but on reaching Dover found that the ship which was to take him to America had left, so that he was compelled to return to Holland. He sailed again from the Texel on May 9, 1683, N.S., in the ship of Jan Gorter, and arrived at New York on July 28th. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1680-85*, 3:374-75; *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York*, 2:840, 859, 862.

you will please also exert yourself according to the best of your ability, in order that the colony may still remain in existence. Further, I refer to my previous letters. Commanding you and all the friends and your children to the protection of God, I remain, after hearty greetings from myself and my wife,

Your willing servant and brother  
R. V. Rensselaer

Be pleased, after greetings, to tell the wife of Jacob Loockermans that I hope that she duly received the goods sent by Jacob Mourits. I shall send her the account by the next ship.

*Addressed:*

Worthy, Virtuous Madam,  
the widow of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased,  
in his lifetime director of the colony of  
Rensselaerswyck  
in America

By a friend whom God conduct

FROM CATRINA DARVALL

Joffr Mari] a v. R[enzelaer]

[Dear] Sister: Your letter of [ ] duly came to hand. [ ] have [

] neglect which [

] and that I [did] not [

] little which [ ] received [

] first I had [sent] you a [

] by Jochem Ge[

] by Andries [ ] and now by Claes

[Jansen] Stavast [ ] and sister Teller

[ ] the half [ ]

with a little cross.

We received by J[ ] yn a letter from Kiliaen together with one for you. I trust that you have already received it before this by Jan Joosten. He writes that he is not sorry that

he went away. He is with a good master, but does not earn any money now. We do not know whether he earns his board there or not. He stayed for six weeks at Pat[erschall's] house, at 12 gl. a week, which amounts to 72 gl., and has had 1 gallon of Canary wine, at 10 gl., amounting together to 82 gl. Brother Jacobus paid that to Mr Paterschall and Kiliaen is only awaiting an answer from you to know what he is to do. And as Mr. Paterschall was about to depart, my husband, with father's advice, wrote him a letter that he should stay there until further order from you, for he himself writes that he sees a fine opportunity for the trade in [silversmith's] work.<sup>174</sup> Mr Utscher and Mr Paterschall are his sureties, in case he should undertake some big piece of work and spoil it, so that he would have to make good the loss. Mr Paterschall left last Monday, but took no letter from you with him, as it came two days too late. I shall try to forward it at the first opportunity.

I expect a short letter from [my] daughter Cornelia and your daughter [

]<sup>175</sup>

Andros [	]
and the [	]
this well [	] Jan G[orter?]
again [	].

As there is not much to write for the present, I shall break off.  
With hearty greetings to yourself and the children [I remain,]

Your very affectionate s[ister]  
Catrina D[arvall]

New York, August 31, 1682

In haste

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Renzelaer  
at Albany

<sup>174</sup> *datt hy de handelingh van t werck fray siet.*

<sup>175</sup> Several lines destroyed.

## FROM CATHARINA DARVALL

[ ]  
[ ] the boards [according to which  
you] can regulate [yourself]. I also received [ ]  
] for Mr Graem<sup>177</sup> and she [ ] of  
a son. I trust that before this you duly received the watermelons  
and the small pears. I have not much to write for the present.  
I hope that when you receive this you will be quite well again.  
I shall break off. With my hearty greetings to yourself and your  
children, I commend you all to the protection of the Most High  
and remain,

Your very affectionate sister  
Catharina Darvall

The 20th September 1682, in Nu Jorck

*Addressed:*

To the Worthy and Virtuous  
Maria van Renzelaer  
att Albanie

## STATEMENT OF ROBERT LIVINGSTON

[ ]  
] <sup>178</sup>  
[regarding] the administration of [the estate of] Domine  
[Nicolaes van] Rensselaer. In answer [thereto I wish to say  
that I intend] to keep in my possession the farm found in the  
possession of the Domine upon his death, as well as his other  
property, until the entire estate shall have been settled and until  
the family of Domine Rensselaer shall have rendered an account  
of all claims which I have against them on account of the afore-  
said estate of Domine Nicolaes van Rensselaer, deceased, when

<sup>176</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>177</sup> James Graham?

<sup>178</sup> Several lines destroyed. A copy of this statement was inclosed in  
the letter from Maria van Rensselaer to Richard van Rensselaer of January  
(?), 1683.

I shall render an account of the revenue of the said farm, both as to the tithes and rent.

Rob. Livingston, [administrator]  
of the estate left by Domine  
Rensselaer, deceased

*Actum, October 14, 1682*

FROM JOHN DARVALL

[Dear sister Maria van Renslaar:]

[This will] serve briefly to advise you that I received for my account [ ] hundred boards, with which I have credited your account. If you have any more ready, be pleased to send them to me and I shall satisfy you in full, as I have occasion for them at present. Dear sister will please not take it ill that I write this, because brother Andries Teller is somewhat dilatory in sending me the boards which he promised me. But keep it to yourself, to prevent all trouble, of which I doubt not.

The ship *De Beaver* is bound for the Bar[mu]dus. I was pleased to receive by Mr Poulus Schrik<sup>179</sup> a letter from your son Kieljaan van Renslaar, which was delivered to me only yesterday, in which he advises me that he lives with his master<sup>180</sup> and works for his board, on condition that the latter must teach him to make the big pieces [of silver] (*'t Groot werck*). He also writes for a hat, because one blew overboard. I shall take care to send him one at the first opportunity. He also writes that he is well resolved to stay there a year and Mr Paaterschall told me and father Cortland that he is praised by every one, to our

<sup>179</sup> Paulus Schrick was the master of a sloop. He was born at Hartford, Connecticut, and was doubtless a son of Paulus Schrick, from Neurenberg (Nuremberg, Bavaria), whose widow, Maria Verleth, married in 1664 Willem Teller. Paulus Schrick, from Hartford, married May 11, 1686, at New York, Maria de Peyster. He died before August 6, 1687, when the banns were registered of the marriage of his widow and John Sprat, young man from Wigton. N. Y. Gen. and Biog. Soc., *Collections*, 1:29, 59, 62.

<sup>180</sup> Jeremiah Dummer, a silversmith at Boston.

great joy. I shall break off with the hearty greetings from father, mother, brother and sister Cornelia and myself and my wife. I thank you heartily for the apples. I hope to recompense you at the first opportunity with a keg of oysters. *Pr governo.*

Commending you and your dear children to the protection of the Most High, I remain,

Your very affectionate brother  
John Darvall

Your daughter Maria and your son Hendrick,  
who are still well, send you hearty greetings.

*Vale.* October 24, 1682.

I paid to Goris for your account for  
the *cott* [beaver]<sup>181</sup> for the two hats. I shall  
[shall send them] when [they are delivered  
to] me.

*Addressed:*

To the worthy widow  
Jermias van Renslaar  
at Albany  
Q: D: G:

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[November], 1682

[<sup>182</sup>] [I] have [shipped] in the ship *De M[arriet?]* 50 beavers in one package as [ ] and consigned the same to S<sup>r</sup> [Richard van Rensselaer?], as shown by the enclosed bill of lading, and written that by [ ] I would again [send ].

Mr Patischall is here. He will [sail] in [ ], by whom I shall transmit to your son Kiliaen six pounds in money, in order to encourage him to learn diligently before he comes

<sup>181</sup> See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 32, note.

<sup>182</sup> Several lines destroyed.

home next summer. He wrote that he earns his board, etc., and works hard, so that he is confidently planning to [set up in business] for himself.

In the yacht of Jacob Teller is a keg for you with oysters, which are very good. Be pleased to [accept them]. What further happens here I shall write now and then. A ship arrived here from Holland, in which the minister, Domine Godefridus Dellius, was to have come over, but he left the ship in a lighter at Dover and his goods were put on land there.<sup>183</sup> We are still well and hope that you are too. I would have sent cousin Pieter<sup>184</sup> some fish, but came too late, as everything was sold. I shall, please God, provide them next year with everything. Herewith, dear sister, with my hearty greetings, I commend you to the mercy of God. Greet all the friends. I remain,

Your faithful brother

S. V. Cortl [andt]

The wheat sent by you I  
have delivered to Cap<sup>t</sup> Brockhols

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt  
at Watervliett in the  
colony of Rensselaers Wyck  
Albany

*Endorsed:* 1682

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

Dear Daughter: I duly received your very pleasant letter, from which I learned that your health is still reasonably good. Your [father] and mother are also still well. Mother has a slight cold, otherwise, praise God, everything is all right.

The winter here is very changeable. Grain is worth 7 gl. a schepel, and is much in demand. Hendrick van Renselaer con-

<sup>183</sup> See letter from Richard van Rensselaer of August 15?, 1682.

<sup>184</sup> Pieter Schuyler.

ducts himself well. Your brothers and sisters are writing to you, from whom you will learn everything that has happened here. The ship *De Barchittyn*, in which your brother had a horse, is stranded, whereby he loses at least £ 150. Captain Gemes Catrick<sup>185</sup> is dead. It is said that the Beeltsnyder<sup>186</sup> is making an altar—they intend to build a popish church over it.

Willem Darval has gone to live on the South River. His warehouse burned down there. Our governor<sup>187</sup> is daily expected by the first ships. I hope that he will rule and do everything in such a way that it will tend to his honor and the preservation of his family. Daughter, be always of good courage. You are still in the care of your father and mother, who will always promote your best interests, and please come and visit your father and mother at every opportunity, which will please them very much. Wherewith, after hearty greetings from father and mother, I commend you to the mercy of God.

January 16, 1683, [New York]

[Your affectionate] father  
[Oloff Stevensz v. Cortlant]

*Addressed:*

To Joff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlant  
Widow of Sr Jeremias van Renselaer  
at Albania

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<sup>185</sup> Captain James Carteret (Cartwright). See *Doc. rel to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 2:200, 214.

<sup>186</sup> *de beeltsnyder*; literally, the image carver, but probably referring to Anthony de Beeltsnyder, a soldier who accompanied Director Stuyvesant to Fort Orange in 1662. See *Early Records of Albany*, 3:183.

<sup>187</sup> Governor Thomas Dongan arrived at New York on August 27, 1683.

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[January?] 1683<sup>188</sup>

Mr Reygart van Rensselaer

Dear Brother: Yours dated the 14th of May I received in reasonable health, together with the enclosed [letter] to Secretary Livingston, which I copied, sealed and sent to him.

I see from your letter that you would like to have my [son] Kiliaen come over to assist you and in time to get acquainted with his father's house. I should be heartily pleased if it were possible to send him over, but as Hendrick lives with Momville<sup>189</sup> and Johannis is still too young to take charge of anything, Kiliaen must remain with me, in order to have better supervision here. He is at present at Baston. I hope that he will soon be home, for I need him badly. I can well believe that you have much to do in [settling] the estates of father and mother, deceased, brother Jan Baptist, deceased, and uncle, deceased, and that it all comes down on you. May God Almighty give you strength and health, so that things may come to an end there, for here they are going from bad to worse and while there is no governor here things drift along and every one does what seems best in his eyes.

My request once more is that you may at last be pleased to make an end of the account of the colony and if brother and the other friends should come together I would ask at the same time that, as I have requested before, I might have the farm of Broer Cornelis, with the small island and the grist-mill and the sawmill, and this not only for my portion but for what I would give in addition. I have had Piter Meese and Klaes Ripse inspect the mills to see in what condition they were. The grist-mill is no good. The lower millstone is in three pieces and [there is] not a thing about the mill that is in good condition, but they have

<sup>188</sup> See next letter, which seems to be another draft of the same letter, sent early in the year 1683.

<sup>189</sup> Gabriel Minvielle. He was appointed mayor of New York City on October 14, 1684.

appraised the crank, the sawmill and the chute (*guett*) at 150 beavers. Now if brother should be pleased to give me some help, as you promised me you would, help me now to make an end of my account and that I may get what is above mentioned, for I leave it to you and whatever you do will be agreeable to me.

As to what you write about an item having been entered twice, that may well be. Brother will know that better than I and also knows more about my deceased husband's estate and circumstances. Therefore, brother, I once more ask you to let me know what is my mine, for as long as I do not know what belongs to me, it is impossible for me to pay the friends, as you may see from the enclosed accounts of the masters of Jan van Twilder<sup>190</sup> and the widow of Vasterick what I owe them. By the next ship I shall send over the other accounts, of brother, deceased, and the other friends, for it is too heavy a task for me now. I hope that God Almighty will make it all come to a good end. I am very feeble, but God, who strengthens the weak, will give us what is good for our soul and body. Having heretofore learned of your departure for Vianen, I was quite upset, but I now see from your letter the necessity of it for the sake of your family. Therefore, *may the Lord thy God bless thee in all that thou doest and preserve thee in thy going out and thy coming in, for evermore*,<sup>191</sup> together with our sister, your dear wife.

The situation of the colony is very bad. I hope that this year it will go a little better. Whether the harvest is good or bad, the taxes must be paid just the same. The house in which Thunis Dircxs lived, wherein [ ] lies under foot; I shall put another [ ] Hendrick van Nes and Hendrick Mase [ ].

It is sad when one has suffered much loss in one's country, like you have there, that then, on top of it, things should be

<sup>190</sup> Jan van Twiller had been the trading agent of Guilliaem Momma and his partners. See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 95-96.

<sup>191</sup> Psalms, 121:8. "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."

destroyed. It is truly a pity. I hope that you may obtain something from his Highness.

I wish that sometime we could have a talk together, but we must have patience, for that is impossible. But we must now on both sides bear a true and honest heart toward each other, which I hope will not be wanting on my side.

I have spoken to Mr Livingston about the garden and the farm. He did not wish to give up anything, but rather expected to get something else in addition. As to Mr Rygart having written something about so much being owed by Domine, deceased, he cares nothing about that. He intends to attach the colony until Mr Rygart renders him an account and pays the balance. As my brother Cortlant was up here, he spoke to him and asked him to give a note over his signature, which he did, as you can see from the enclosed.<sup>192</sup> He will write to you himself, for he is not afraid of anybody, but he wished that Mr Rygart had come over, in order the sooner to come to a final settlement. I can not write very well [what he had to say]. He just talks. He says he will write about everything himself. I have heard that Livingston wrote to England by Bon<sup>193</sup> to find out the opinion of the lawyers and he still intends to do so by these ships. As he says, he will not sleep, as Mr Rygart thinks.

I have already inquired about Lowies.<sup>194</sup> He drinks too much and is easily talked over. But at New York there is one Piter Lanoey, who married the widow of Beddeloo,<sup>195</sup> an honest, God-fearing man, and up here there is also a Mr [Jan Becker], who knows you well, but Piter is likewise an honest man. But if you send a power of attorney, you must have the skipper and the mate

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<sup>192</sup> See statement of Robert Livingston, dated October 14, 1682.

<sup>193</sup> Apparently Capt. Bowne. See p. 74.

<sup>194</sup> Ludovicus Cobes, the former secretary of the court of Albany, who at the time was sheriff and secretary of Schenectady.

<sup>195</sup> Pieter de Lanoy, young man from Haerlem, married April 22, 1680, Elisabeth de Potter, widow of Isaac Bedloo, both residing at New York. N. Y. Gen. and Biog. Soc., *Collections*, vol I (Marriages, D. Ref. Ch. N. Y.), p. 47.

and two or three others of the ship by which you send your letter certify that the power of attorney is signed with your hand. And please do not delay any longer to give it to some one who goes hither, for it is high time. The friendship which we entertain is very slight, because I will not side with him. So, I thought, he may do as he pleases (*soo dugh ick hy magh gaen*).

You ask what has become of the 63 schepels of wheat received from the estate of Joff. Corlaers.<sup>196</sup> I do not know what has been the trouble. Therefore, I send you herewith [blank] beavers for my account. I hope, please God, to send you some more by the next ship. It is very bad here for any one who is not a trader. I can not get any beavers, but when Kiliaen comes home, he will take better care, for I can not do so, as I am troubled with severe fainting spells and need much rest.

The congregation are much pleased that a second minister is to be expected. May God grant him a safe voyage, for one is much needed here. I shall break off and commend you all to the protection of the Lord. May He give you all that is blessed for your soul and body. After hearty greetings to yourself, our sister, your wife, and the children, and to our sister Leonora and all the friends, I commend you all to God.

1683.

If it is possible, please make an end of my affairs. Whatever you do will be all right and I shall not fail to show my gratitude in return.

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[January? 1683]<sup>197</sup>

S<sup>r</sup> Reygart van Rensselaer

Dear Brother: Your letter of May 14, 1682, came duly to hand. Brother will please not think it strange that I was surprised not to get any letter, for I am here alone and like to hear

<sup>196</sup> Anthonia Slachboom, the widow of Arent van Curler, who died in December 1676. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80, 2:185.

<sup>197</sup> Cf. preceding letter.

that you and our friends are well. Be pleased, therefore, not to take it ill that I wrote so, and also, how I was to proceed with the farmers. I am very sorry to hear of your long illness and of all the misfortune and sadness that has befallen you. The good Lord himself said to His disciples: "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."<sup>198</sup> Only let us always keep our leader, Jesus Christ, before our eyes and firmly trust that nothing happens without His will.

You write about my son Kiliaen's [coming over] to help you and be of some service to you. I hope, please God, that this may take place soon. I heartily wish that my son Kiliaen were with you, but it seems that this can not well be, for I shall need him very much. It seems that it pleases God to send me more feebleness, for I have had a severe fainting spell, and I can not miss him. He is at present at Baston to see how it is there with the silverware business (*met de silver wurcken*), but if it please God he will soon be home and write to you himself.

Further, you write about the account of the colony that it still stands as [before]. Therefore, as you know my situation better than I do myself, I beg you to be pleased to make an end of everything, as I am sending herewith [a statement of] what I have received from the colony and of my personal disbursements, [together with] the appraisal of the old grist-mill. Therefore, I beg you kindly for myself and my innocent children to bring about this much that I may obtain the Fifth kill and the farm [of Broer] Cornelis and the small island, both for my portion [

] and the account in addition and that together [ ] counted [ ] and with each other [to see to it] that I may finally have a piece of property, for as long as I do not have anything that is my own, I can not pay the friends, for the rent mounts up too high and I and my children must live. I only send herewith the amount, from which you can see how high [the total of] the rent [due] has grown to be, and no matter whether there is anything to grind or not, the rent goes on.

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<sup>198</sup> John, 16:33.

Brother will wonder perhaps how [it happens] that my debt is larger than my deceased husband's. You must know that I have put down no expenditures, although I have suffered damage enough.<sup>199</sup> Therefore, dear brother, I put it all into your hands. Do as you think best, if only I may get rid of it, for brother can do it without loss to himself. Do let me hear glad tidings.

That there is a sum which has been put down twice, is quite possible, but without my knowledge. Nevertheless, I hope that brother will make an end of it. It is also very necessary that an end be made sometime of the colony, for it is going very badly. Many expenses have been incurred and must still be incurred, and that in Holland it is also going so badly with the farms is very sad. But what shall I write about that, of which I have no knowledge. So that likewise falls on your shoulders. I hope that you will be rewarded for all your trouble, for everything now depends on you, as you are alone. Even before you wrote I had heard that you had left for Vyanen, which upset me very much, but now from your letter [I see] what [position] you have there and [that it] was for your best interest. May Almighty God bless you in all you do and preserve you long in good health, together with your dear wife and children and our sister, to the benefit of all our friends.

Herewith go two accounts, one of the widow of Robbert Vasterick and one of the masters of van Twilder, which, after hearty greetings, you will please deliver to them. I would write to them myself, but I do not know the friends and, therefore, brother will please tell them that I shall try to send over in time what is still due on my part and ask them to be pleased to have patience for the present.

I am now busy with the affairs of brother Jan Batist, deceased, and hope to send that account also by the next ship. It often saddens my mind to have to deal with things with which heretofore I never had anything to do, and as he owes much and I am mostly sickly and in pain, you can imagine how it then goes with

<sup>199</sup> *ve moet weeten dat Ick geen spendase en heb gestelt hoe wel als dat Ick aenstoot genoch gehadt heb.*

me. Therefore, dear brother, if you do not take care that I get some property, I can not settle my estate (*Ick kan myn staet niet Redde*).

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[February? 1683]

[]<sup>200</sup>  
 [                  ] mother and all [  
     ] and since of which [

] about which I hope he will do his best, as also to get from him as much as possible. What he then comes short, we shall have to try to get out of the crop and then get as good a farmer in his stead as we can. As to Broeder's sons,<sup>201</sup> I do not know them. It seems to me that they are somewhat lazy, but I leave that to you.

I can not believe that Harmen<sup>202</sup> bought any land at Schachtkook and that Captain Brock[hols] gave orders to purchase it for him. It may be, but I know nothing about it. He will not give permission to others to do that, so that I do not know what there is to it. I think it will be best if you have Gerrit Teunisz cited and then condemned by the court to pay and satisfy promptly what he owes,<sup>203</sup> for he has not been of such great benefit to the colony that he deserves to be favored and no matter if every merchant draws away the grain with the sleigh, the farmers must nevertheless pay their rent, or otherwise be made to do so by legal proceedings, so that you have done well to accept Jan Caspersen and Livingston as sureties. Kees Oom<sup>204</sup>

<sup>200</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>201</sup> Meaning the sons of Cornelis Theunissen van Schlick (Slyck), alias Broer Cornelis, who was buried on December 10, 1676.

<sup>202</sup> Harmen Jansen Knickerbacker. Cf. contract of sale between him and Anthony van Schaick for land at Half Moon, opposite Skachkook, dated December 11, 1682. *Early Records of Albany*, 2:174-75.

<sup>203</sup> See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, March 6, 1682/3, 3:322, 334.

<sup>204</sup> Cornelis Teunissen van Vechten.

has promised me that he will pay his rent this winter. I doubt not but he will do so, and the other farmers too.

I am longing very much for tidings from Holland and for a change in the colony's affairs, in order that for once there may be an end [to the dispute] between him<sup>205</sup> and the estate of Domine N. V. Rensselaer and the colony, to our peace of mind. As to his account, I can for the present not copy it. I shall see whether it is among the papers and [send?] the same [

]<sup>206</sup>

[ ] answer for it [ ].

[I shall send?] Kiliaen an order to receive my account [from the] widow Taylor,<sup>207</sup> but if there [ ] requested him to render me an account. I trust that he will be able to get along with that until you give him orders what to do. He writes me that there were three or four [men] at Springhvelt who wrote him to come there, as such were your orders, but not receiving any letter from you, [neither he] nor Mr Uscher [could] resolve [to do so]. According to what Mr Uscher writes, he is with a good master,<sup>208</sup> where he learns well and is well liked, so that I think that it is better for him to serve out his term there than to come back so hastily.

Everything here is still all right. Father, mother, the sisters, brother and all the friends are still well. We hourly expect a new governor,<sup>209</sup> called Col. Dongan, an Irish gentleman and a Catholic. We hope that he will be a good man and that he will let us practice our religion in peace, which may God grant, to whose protection I commend you.

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<sup>205</sup> Robert Livingston.

<sup>206</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>207</sup> Apparently a widow with whom Kiliaen van Rensselaer boarded at Boston.

<sup>208</sup> Jeremiah Dummer, a well known silversmith at Boston.

<sup>209</sup> See Stephanus van Cortlandt's letter of May 28, 1683, in which the same expression is used. Governor Dongan did not arrive at New York until August 27, 1683.

After greetings from myself and my wife to you and all your children, always

Your affectionate [brother]  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt, widow of  
Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased, in his  
lifetime director of the colony of Rensselaers Wyck  
at Watervliett

FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER

[April 11/21], 1683

[ ]<sup>210</sup>  
I have not yet [settled the account] of his administration of the colony, as nothing can be done therein by me alone and we are at present in litigation with the young patroon, the son of our brother Joannes, deceased, at Nykerck, on account of the suit brought by Brant Aertsz van Slichtenhorst,<sup>211</sup> [in connection with which] our nephew has instituted proceedings against [me] before the court at Naerden. What the result will be time will show. In due time you will be advised of what has been done and when this case is settled we shall [take up] your [affairs].

As for the other co-participants, they pay no attention, whether to this or anything else. They say that he who has managed things for so long may continue to do so. I have had them cited before the court to obtain satisfaction of an account due to the estate of our father, deceased, for disbursements exceeding his receipts from the colony. I did so in order that they might not claim prescription. I shall not press the matter much for the present, as it involves great expense and it is not convenient for me to advance the money for it. The best part of it is that meanwhile we keep the [land] of the colony in our possession and we shall not relinquish it until we receive satisfaction.

<sup>210</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>211</sup> See *Minutes of the Court of Rensselaerswyck*, 1648-52, p. 20.

I have again taken up the affairs of the colony and her grace, *froulyn* Brederode,<sup>212</sup> has promised me that she will recommend them to her Highness the Princess. God grant that what was obtained by our brother Joan Baptist van Rensselaer, deceased, from the Duke of York<sup>213</sup> may be brought to perfection during my lifetime, whereupon all the affairs of the colony will also be [settled]. For the present they must remain *in statu quo*.

Your brother, Mr Stephanus, has written me that at present the farms are in good posture and well provided, except that of Jonge Jan and the island of Jan Reyersz, which we were glad to hear. The latter two should also be brought to perfection. I received from [the skipper] of the ship *New York*, for the account of the colony, 50 [beavers], which you had sent. I sold them for  $5\frac{1}{2}$  gl. apiece, [as] there was much small stuff among them. I have credited the colony with the amount. I hope that some more may be sent to us, [so as to pay?] for the expenses which we incur for the promotion [of the affairs of the colony].

[ ]  
as [ ] I [ ]<sup>214</sup>

Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, deceased, to demand from him [ ] such sums as according to the accounts are due to him. He roils a good deal of water. And as to his saying that I must render him an account of his predecessor's inheritance, brother, deceased, did that more than 20 years ago, and an account was rendered also in the year 1665, by our uncle, Johannes [van Wely], so that a more complete account was rendered to him than was ever rendered to me, I having been satisfied with what my elder brothers had been satisfied with. All that matters now and the point on which the whole business turns is that I declare under oath before the court that I have nothing in my custody, much less possess one penny's

<sup>212</sup> Hetwich Agnes, countess of Brederode, lady of Vianen, etc.

<sup>213</sup> See Warrant to Governor Andros to issue a patent for Rensselaerswyck, June 7, 1678, in *Doc rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:269-70; also in *Annals of Albany*, 7:267-68.

<sup>214</sup> Several lines destroyed.

worth [of what belongs to him]. What Domine, deceased, or his heirs, may further be entitled to, I do not know, but there would be more reason for me to demand from them an accounting of my inheritance from father, deceased, since brother, the Domine, deceased, being the elder brother and at the time my guardian, [was obliged] to do so. But enough of this.

I received from Philip Schuyler a letter in which he writes me that on account of the loss and damage caused him by the cattle of Teunis de Metselaer, he is, in order to avoid all trouble, forced to buy the rear land of Broer Cornelis, opposite the island which Barent Pieters used, as also the land that Teunis cultivates. He has offered for the same fl.2000 Holland money, or fl.3200 in seawan. I have written him in reply that I should prefer to see the said land made into a complete farm and that such a farm could produce as much as 400 or 500 gl. yearly in rent, but in order to accommodate him therewith and to avoid trouble I left it to him for fl.2500 Holland money, or 500 whole beaver skins, free on board, but with this condition that you were to be entirely content and satisfied with it, for you now have the opportunity

[ ] Dear sister, the reason why I

<sup>215</sup>

[ ] where [ ] for which he [ ]

the matter for you [ ] payment, for the farmers got into arrears. At the first opportunity I shall sign the power of attorney. Send me sometime a list of the passengers [ ]

while sometime by my [ ]

can sell few here [ ]

[ ]. I hope that it will improve, as Barent, the miller,<sup>216</sup> to whom about fl.4000 is due from the estate of the D[omine], deceased, which brother, deceased, had [had] from him [according to his] account, has ordered me to pay that money to Cornelis Jacobs, through a

<sup>215</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>216</sup> Barent Pietersen Coeymans.

merchant at Amsterdam, which is very inconvenient to me, as you can imagine. However, in order to maintain the credit of the said estate, the money which cousin Philip offers for the purchase of the land would stand me in good stead. You might try to dispose him to give the utmost and in my opinion it is not too late. But in case he refuses to go higher, let it go for the fl.2000. This between us. I shall send to your brother, Mr Stephanus van Cortlandt, the power of attorney to convey the land to him and further authorize his honor to sell one of the least valuable farms, to relieve thereby the estate, for which we are also responsible. I beg you heartily to be pleased to lend the helping hand that the same may be sold to the best advantage.

Marten Gerritsz has written me to ask what I would be willing to take for the island<sup>217</sup> and for the farm on Paepsekanee. I consider that the island must remain in the possession of the patroon, for that being sold, we should have lost the best part. I beg you, do your best that by the first ship you may be able to send over either a bill of exchange or beavers. I shall count on it.

Tell me sometime how you stand with Barent, the miller, whether he does not owe the patroon and whether he does not pay rent for the water rights of his saw and grist-mill near Beren Island.

My wife, after an interval of four years, was on the 10th of April again brought to bed of a son, who is named for his father. The mother and child are, God be thanked, reasonably well according to the circumstances.

I shall break this off for the present. Commending you and your family to God's protection, I remain, after hearty greetings from [all of us],

Your affectionate brother  
R. V. Rensselaer

[ ] the account  
of the Domine, deceased, which

<sup>217</sup> Marten Gerritsen's Island, now Westerlo Island, in the southern section of the city of Albany.

you sent to me. [

]

of [ ] of Soelen,<sup>218</sup> on  
account of uncle, deceased,

[ ] already 3 years in  
litigation [ ] try] to  
obtain, as [

]

*Addressed:*

Worthy, Virtuous Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt,  
widow of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased, in  
his lifetime director of the colony of  
Rensselaerswyck, on the North River  
in America

By skipper Jan Gorter,<sup>219</sup> whom God preserve

*Endorsed:* [168]3, [ ] [Seal]  
Nº. 14

RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER TO ROBERT LIVINGSTON

[April 11/21], 1683<sup>220</sup>

[ ]  
 [ ] of our brother, deceased, [ ]  
 [ ] you [ ] much less [ ]  
 according to the practice of our country [which is also the] practice  
 and custom of that country [that where there is no] community  
 of interest in the estate, one can accept the said estate  
 under benefit of inventory and by that means relieve oneself of

<sup>218</sup> Zoelen, about 3 miles north west of Tiel, in the Neder-Betuwe.  
province of Gelderland.

<sup>219</sup> Jan Gorter left Holland in April 1683. He died at New York, October 30, 1683. *Minutes of the Court of Albany, 1680-85*, 3:374: *Ecclesiastical Records*, 2:869.

<sup>220</sup> See letter from Richard van Rensselaer to Governor Dongan and Council, dated September 1/11, 1684.

<sup>221</sup> Several lines destroyed.

[the debts of] the estate, [which] can then be managed aside from one's own interest therein. This benefit can not [be enjoyed] by her and the creditors need not consent thereto. I, for myself, in my capacity of guardian of the heirs of my [brother], deceased, and for what I have to claim for them, shall go by the joint estate.

As to the part or division which our brother, deceased, had in the entire colony, I have advised you about that in my preceding letter. To state it once more and more clearly, our father, deceased, left nine children, among whom was one child of the first marriage, who after the death of our father, deceased, became hereditary patroon. Of the eight children of the second marriage, two sisters died, who by will appointed their mother to be their heir, and our mother inheriting likewise a child's portion, each child ought to receive a one-tenth part of the 6/10 interest which our father, deceased, possessed in the said colony. This is now, as [

can bring in something [

]<sup>222</sup>

his father-in-law Philip Schuyler [has] there of my [

] for many years traded with my [brother], deceased. I doubt not but he will be able to give good testimony that the patroon's place and the farm in the Gryne Bos were found in the possession of your predecessor. This can not be disputed, for as the directorship of the colony was offered to him by [the patroon], he could claim the patroon's place, but as to the farm, he will have to conform to the way in which it was possessed by his former brothers, who had to pay rent for it. Now as to what you propose to me and the co-participants, to have the farm in the Gryne Bos and the sawmill there appraised in connection with your predecessor's portion, no resolution can for the present be taken on that, for the reason that the affairs of the colony are now being presented by me through her grace, *froulyn* Brederode,<sup>223</sup> to her Highness, the Princess of Orange, in order to promote thereby our interests before the Duke. For the sake of the good

<sup>222</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>223</sup> Hetwich Agnes, countess of Brederode, lady of Vianen, etc.

result of these efforts, the affairs of the colony must be kept *in statu quo* and when we have obtained some result, we shall send you our decision by letter.

[ ]  
 [ ] understand this, but [ ]  
 [ ] that affair somewhat [ ]  
 [ ] colony would be [ ]  
 which for a [ ] might tend to [ ]  
 [ ] of our brother's widow.

As to what I wrote on December 23, 1678, to our brother, the Domine, deceased, as far as I knew then he was still living and after his death it was written as far as the account of the estate of his mother, deceased, was concerned, but as to what [is due] to the children of brother Johan van Rensselaer, deceased, at [Nykerck], on account of the provisional judgment pronounced in Gelderland in the suit of Brant van Slichtenhorst, the young patroon has brought suit about that against me at Naerden. How that suit will turn out, God knows. I am sending you herewith an account, as the same was delivered to me.

Now as to the account with the co-participants, I see little chance of getting any of it. I have had them cited before the court, in order they may hereafter not claim prescription, but to prosecute the case would involve no little expense, which it would not be convenient for me to incur, for at present the suit with the young patroon costs me no little money and where I shall for the present procure it, as so little revenue comes to us from the colony, I do not know. [ ]

[ ] but you make no mention of [ ]

[ ]. As I have had the administration of the estate of father, deceased, I shall say that already nearly [twenty] years ago an accounting, proof and settlement was made to our brother by his uncle, Johan van Wely, deceased, as his former guardian, but that none was made to me, I having contented myself with what my elder brothers had received.

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<sup>224</sup> Several lines destroyed.

I wish that hereafter you would not trouble me any more with such and similar matters. If in any other way I can be of service to you I shall gladly do what is in my power. For the present I refer to my preceding letter. Ending herewith, I commend you to God and after greetings remain,

Your friend, willing to serve  
R. V. Rensselaer

*Endorsed:* 1683

RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER TO PIETER DE LANOY

April 12, 1683

]<sup>225</sup>

[ ] Secretary Livingston [

] our brother D[omine Nicolaes] van Rensselaer

[ ]. I can not otherwise [

] deceased, demand from the same the sum of fl.3324:11:8, together with the costs [ ] which was due by brother, the Domine, deceased, to his father's estate, as appears from the account heretofore sent to the aforesaid Livingston, which I extracted from the books of my brother Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, deceased, as he wrote me some time ago that his wife had accepted the estate of her husband, deceased, under benefit of inventory, whereupon she sold the effects of the estate and with the proceeds paid some of the debts, without having previously given notice thereof to the common creditors in Holland, in order that they might obtain the proper preference and sequence, so that each of the creditors pro rata might receive his share of the proceeds. This was the first great mistake, as the credits here are of no less consequence than those at Albany or in that country. The second mistake which I find has been committed by them is that no widow who has enjoyed community of property and therefore is also liable for the debts, can accept the estate under benefit of inventory, and whereas the country was surrendered on the express condition that

<sup>225</sup> Several lines destroyed.

all Netherlanders were to retain the laws [relating to inheritance] as the same are practised here in our fatherland, it appears that she is responsible for the debts. Furthermore, we also see that Secretary Livingston takes possession of everything on account of the share which our brother, the Domine, deceased, had in the colony of Rensselaerswyck, on the unfounded claim that the [accounting] must be made to him, and first of all that I must render to him legal proof and accounting of the estate and inheritance of [ ] because, according to the declaration enclosed herewith I had charge of the administration of the said estate [ ]

]<sup>226</sup>

in the custody of Secretary Livingston. I am not [sending] you a copy of the account of [the estate] of my brother Joan Baptist van Rensselaer, but doubt not that I shall be able to do so at the next opportunity. I should have done so now, but [my duties] would not allow it, as I have rather much to do. I therefore beg you to be pleased to do and promote everything for us to the best of your ability; you will be gratefully rewarded for your trouble. And if the Secretary has solicited anything from the government to our prejudice, to protest against it, in order that hereafter my action may remain intact until I receive further information about it. I would have written to you more at length, but the hasty departure of the skipper of the ship *N. Jorck* does not allow it. The power of attorney I am sending to you inclosed herewith.<sup>227</sup> Wherewith I commend you to God and remain

Your willing servant and friend  
R. V. Rensselaer

[As you] write me, you might send  
me the letters and the [ ]

<sup>226</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>227</sup> In the Inventory of the Rensselaerswyck Manuscripts, in New York Public Library, *Bulletin*, 1924, p. 528, is listed a "Power of Attorney in Dutch from Sr Richard Van Rensselaer to P: D: La Moy, dated 15th April 1683."

of Mr Stephanus [van Cort]lant  
and sometime speak to him about  
the matter to see whether he could  
induce his brother-in-law to a  
compromise to avoid all estrangement,  
which would be best.

*Addressed:*      The Worthy, Discreet  
                        Pieter de la Noy  
                        [at] N. Jorck

*p<sup>r</sup> Couverto*

*Endorsed:* Letter from S<sup>r</sup> R. V. Rensela[er]  
                        to P. D. La Noy 1683: 12 April  
                        N<sup>o</sup>. 7

FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[April 12/22], 1683

Dear Sister:

I have thought it well to send you together with my letter the letter to Secretary [Livingston] and also the letter to [Pieter de Lanoy], which after you have read them, you may, if you think it advisable, have copied by your son and delivered to S<sup>r</sup> Lanoy, not forgetting to seal the same. It would be better for the secretary to let everything go, for he might have a good deal of trouble with some creditors here in this country and in the [colony]. Furthermore, even if his wife, the widow of Domine, deceased, is a co-heir of the estate of mother, deceased, she can not receive anything from it, for [among the papers] of mother, deceased, there is a document whereby she declares that Domine shall not receive anything from her estate or inheritance until he shall have made payment to his brother Jan Baptist, so that it might not turn out so well for them, even if his legitimate portion were due to him. Be pleased to advise him to his best advantage and, if not, he must await what will come of it. If S<sup>r</sup> Pieter de

Lanoy has earned anything, you may satisfy him, for it must be charged to the estate of [Domine], deceased.

Wherewith, commanding you to God, I remain,

Your affectionate brother

R. V. Rensselaer

Write me sometime how your daughter and the other children are.

*Addressed:*

The Worthy, Virtuous Madam Maria van  
Cortlandt, widow of Jeremias van Rensselaer,  
deceased, in his lifetime director of the  
colony of Rensselaerswyck  
in America

By the ship *N. Jorck*, which may God conduct

*Endorsed: 1683*

FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER TO MARTEN  
GERRITSEN VAN BERGEN

[April 12?, 1683]

[Marten Ger]rits, commissary [

] the int[

all the affairs [

and what you [ ] for the [

for the present [answer] briefly. As to [

] since the [death]

of Domine, deceased, I kindly request and heartily beg you to persevere therein in order that there may be some who [have at heart] and promote the welfare of our paternal colony. And as to the expenses and trouble involved in it, it is only fair that you should be reimbursed for so far as the colony is interested therein and the expenses be divided among [ ], as it is in their interest also, and that you should have a little more is reasonable also. You must [talk it over] with Mr Stephanus

van Cortlandt and our sister, [the widow of Jeremias] van Rensselaer, deceased, who no doubt will [allow] you what is fair. You must remember that it is better for you to rule than to be ruled and that in order to be prominent one must have [

], of which I have evidence also. May the Lord God preserve you long in health, together with your wife, to your salvation, Amen.

You write also that you have heard that some farms in the colony were to be sold and that you wish to know at what price we should be willing to sell the island,<sup>228</sup> or the farm on Pap-skanee, and for what kind of payment. I shall say that, indeed, we have thought of this and given orders to sell some of the colony's farms, but with the understanding that they must be those which are the least profitable as far as the colony's revenue is concerned and on which the colony must pay the heaviest charges. As to the island, of which you have the use, you know that it lies [in the heart] of the colony and that from time to time [the rent of it should be raised, so as] with a few others to raise the revenue of the colony, for otherwise the revenue of the colony would in truth [amount to nothing]. If you had written what you thought it was worth and the highest price you would be willing to give for the same [

]<sup>229</sup>

[ ] request [

Livi] nghston be pleased [

] pretended claim [ ]

for [ ] retains our portion [and] has [written me] to render him an accounting of the paternal inheritance of his predecessor, our brother, the Domine, deceased, which I am in no wise obliged to do, as I am the younger brother and, moreover, as long ago as the year [1665], an accounting, proof and settlement was made before the court by our late uncle, Jehan van Wely, deceased, to our said brother the Domine,

<sup>228</sup> Marten Gerritsen's Island, now Westerlo Island.

<sup>229</sup> Several lines destroyed.

deceased, more than was ever rendered to me, but I have rested content with the aforesaid statement and proof.

I intend to execute a document under oath before the court, whereby I shall declare that I have nothing belonging to my brother, the Domine, deceased, in my possession, but that on the contrary, in my capacity as administrator of the estate of my brother Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, deceased, I have a claim against the estate of his [Livingston's], predecessor, as also against his present wife, who was married to our brother, deceased, on the basis of community of property, according to an account which I sent to the said Secretary Livingston and which amounts to more than fl.3000, which is due to the estate of my brother, deceased, and which I shall demand from him and further [collect] out of the property there, on account of his share in the colony, as well as his wife's property, and which I doubt not the court will grant me. And if this does not happen in my time, the minor [heir] will seek to recover it in his time. This for your information. As to the matter of [confirming] the title to our colony, which was promoted by my brother, deceased, in England in the year 1678,<sup>230</sup> but which on account of his death remained in abeyance, this has been brought up again by me. I hope that it will be put into effect, which may our merciful God grant, to whose protection I commend you. With greetings to yourself, your family and the friends, I remain,

Yours willing to serve,  
R. V. Rensselaer

Give my greetings to your father-in-law, Meyndert, the smith, and Pete, his wife,<sup>231</sup> if they are still living.

<sup>230</sup> See Report of counsel on the petition of the heirs of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, June 4, 1678, and the Warrant to Governor Andros to issue a patent for Rensselaerswyck, June 7, 1678, in *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:269-70; also in *Annals of Albany*, 7:266-68. See also extract from letter of Jan Baptist to Nicolaus van Rensselaer, dated London, 10/20 June, 1678, in E. B. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland*, 1:124-25.

<sup>231</sup> Myndert Fredericksen and his wife, Pietertje Teunisse van Vechten. Their daughter, Neeltje Mynderts, became on January 21, 1686,

*Addressed:*

Worthy, Discreet S<sup>r</sup> Marten Gerrits Van Bergen  
Commissary in the colony of Rensselaerswyck  
in America

By the ship *N. Jorck*, which God conduct

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT  
[April? 1683]

[ ]<sup>232</sup>  
[a ship] at the Santpunt,<sup>233</sup> which arrived from Holland and brings the news that the market for wheat is very low there. Here, it does not bring 14 shillings, because the situation in regard to flour is bad. Therefore, if Gerrit Teunisz paid you in silver it would be best, better than in wheat.<sup>234</sup>

If Kiliaen needs anything in setting himself up in his craft, only let him write, or write yourself; I shall help him in whichever way I can. After greetings, I commend you to God and remain,

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

The wheat which you sent last fall in the yacht of brother Brandt [Schuyler] amounts to 88 schepels, of which I took 35 schepels and Capt. Brockhols 53 schepels. If last fall you sent down any more grain, he received that in addition and you must note it down that way. Of the 500 schepels which I now brought down, Capt. Brockhorst received 247 schepels, which with the above [53] schepels makes 300 schepels, and I [kept] the remainder, being 253 schepels. Be pleased to enter that thus also.

---

Marten Gerritsen's second wife. At the time the letter was written, however, Marten Gerritsen's first wife, Jannetje Teunis, a daughter of Teunis Dircksen van Vechten, was still living, so that the latter, and not Myndert Fredericksen, was the father-in-law referred to in the text.

<sup>232</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>233</sup> Sandy Hook.

<sup>234</sup> See bond of Gerrit Teunissen van Vechten to the patroon, dated April 27, 1680, with satisfaction of mortgage by Maria van Rensselaer of July 11, 1683, in *Early Records of Albany*, 2:79-80, and *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1680-85, 3:322.

Be pleased to send down the beans also. I stopped at Sara van Borsum's<sup>235</sup> about the millstones. She was out of town. Her daughter said that they were for sale. When she comes home I shall agree with her.

Herewith goes a saddle for Kiliaen. If he likes it, he can keep it, otherwise he can return it at the first opportunity. Herewith go also 40 lbs of candles.

The horses of Gerrit [Theunisz should be] rounded up, the sooner the better, and fed up a little, in order that they may not be [used?] on Gerritt's [farm].

*Addressed:*

To Juff'r Maria van Cortlandt, widow  
of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased  
at Watervliett  
in Albany

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[April? 1683]

[ ]  
 [ ] those [  
 ] of Albany meal [  
 ] from brother Brandt [Schuyler  
 ] cause consternation there [ ]

but like all wordly things, it will pass. It has held me back somewhat from buying the millstones, until we see how things turn out. If you have not yet ground for yourself, it will be best to wait a while until the Messieurs of Albany have maintained [the privileges of] their city and place and straightened out everything. If there is any favor I can do, you only have to command me.

I understand that Gerrit Theunisz has delivered the horses.

<sup>235</sup> Sara Roeloffs, daughter of Anneke Jans. She married (1) Dr Hans Kierstede, (2) Cornelis van Borsum, and (3) Elbert Elbertsen Stoothoff. Her will, dated July 29, 1692 (N. Y. Hist Soc., *Collections*, 1892, 25:225-26), mentions a daughter Anna van Borsum, who was simple-minded.

<sup>236</sup> Several lines destroyed.

You will please send them down at the first opportunity. I hope that he will be equally prompt in paying his capital, otherwise the mortgage and interest must remain in force.

The ship of Frederick Philips will leave this week. I shall then write to S<sup>r</sup> Richard whatever is necessary. If we could again make ready some beavers before the ship *De Bever* sails for Amsterdam, it would be very good. I hope that nephew Kiliaen is already exercising his trade and supports himself bravely.<sup>237</sup> If there is any way in which I can help him and you, I shall not fail to do so. Meanwhile, I commend you to God and after greetings remain,

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt, [widow of]  
S<sup>r</sup> Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased  
at Watervliett

*Endorsed:*

I am in need of some [good] dry boards. You have some lying in your barn. If you can spare these, send them to me by the very first yacht. You will thereby do me a great favor.

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

A° 1683, the 28th of [May]

Sister van Rensselaer:

Your letter of [ ] May was received, from which I saw that my father-in-law was sick, but afterwards I learned with sorrow [the news] of his death.<sup>238</sup> But what consoles us in our

<sup>237</sup> *Ick hoope Cosyn Kiliaen syn ambaght all by der handt heeft ende syn selven lustigh ali [menteert].*

<sup>238</sup> Philip Pietersen Schuyler made his will on May 1, 1683, died on May 9th and was buried on the 11th in the Dutch church at Albany. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1680-85, 3:424-28; G. W. Schuyler, *Colonial New York*, 1:162-66, 182-84; and Munsell's *Collections on the History of Albany*, 1:42. In Cuyler Reynolds, *Albany Chronicles*, p. 83-84, the date of Ph. P. Schuyler's death is given erroneously as March 9, 1684, and that of his burial as March 11, 1684.

sadness is that he died with sincere repentance for his sins and with a foretaste of eternal joy. We shall go to him, but he will not come back to us.

As to the candles sent [to you], our intention was to send 40 lbs, but through haste only 20 lbs were weighed. If you [need any more], only write and I shall send them to you.

Be pleased to send down the horses of Gerritt Theunisz at the first opportunity, and if he does not pay in the [summer?] what is agreed upon, our contract is void and I shall pay him the 80 schepels of wheat for the horses in specie.

That Gerrit Gysbertsz refuses to carry out his contract and [ ] regarding the moving of the house is not right. He ought to keep his word like a man, even if it were to his loss, just as we had to do about the barn and about deducting two years' rent for bad years, etc. If we had contracted and he were to profit by it, he would wish us to obey the contract all right and would not leave us in peace until it was satisfied. He can not acquire an honorable reputation by not keeping his word. I leave it to you to [make] him [carry out his contract], or not, as you think best.

Be pleased, on receipt of this, to inform sister [Fytje]<sup>239</sup> of our health. I am sorry that her husband indulges himself so.

Your second letter of May 16th I duly received, together with the memorandum of nephew Rensselaer.<sup>240</sup> I shall order everything he writes for and if there is anything else he lacks, let me know it at the first opportunity, for I am willing to help you and him in every way I can. Niece Anna is trying to find out where alum can be obtained. The rest of the materials for him she has bought. If there is anything lacking in his shop, write me about it and I shall procure it. We can arrange about the payment later.

If you receive the payment from Gerrit Theunisz we shall try to send over another 50 beavers. The governor is expected

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<sup>239</sup> Sophia van Cortlandt, the wife of Andries Teller, who was very intemperate in his habits.

<sup>240</sup> Kiliaen van Rensselaer, who was setting up a silversmith's shop.

hourly. God grant that he may be a good man. After greetings I commend you to God and remain,

Your affectionate brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt, widow of  
Sr Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased  
at Watervliett  
at Albany

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[Beginning of June? 1683]

]<sup>241</sup>

[ ] will by running [  
] inquire how [  
] pay except in beavers [  
] so that it therefore [  
] buy the same for beavers if possible [  
] as you can not do that [ ]

send down as many as you can and we shall sell them for the account of the colony.

The boatmen have promised me to bring down the two horses this time. I hope that Gerrit Theunisz will pay his debt, so that we may get together a little money to order a pair of millstones from Holland by the ship *De Bever*, as Sara van Borsum will not sell hers, except with the ironwork, which is intended for a windmill and costs a great deal of money and would not suit us. The ship *De Bever* will sail in about 5 or 6 weeks at the longest, so that he must see to it that the payment is made by that time.

Father and mother are still well. We hope that the same is true of you and the children and that nephew Kiliaen has his shop ready and begins to work. If he lacks anything, only let me know and I shall procure it for him, either here or from England.

<sup>241</sup> About two lines destroyed.

No news yet from Europe, so that I break off. Commending you to God, I remain, after greetings,

Your affectionate brother  
St. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To the Worthy Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer  
at Watervliett  
or Albany

FROM CATHARINA DARVALL

[ ] we received the 100 boards by the boat of Jan de Brouwer [ ] will credit you for them at 24 [for one beaver?]. [We are glad to hear] that you are all well. We are also still in reasonable health. We thank God for His mercy. There is no news here. I shall break off. With my hearty greetings to you and all your children, I commend you all to the protection of the Most High, [praying that] He may preserve us and you, and remain,

Your very affectionate [sister]  
Catrina Darvall

June 13, 1683, in Nu Jorck

*Addressed:*

To the worthy widow Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Renzelaer  
at Albanie

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[June? 1683]

Sister Rensselaer:

Hearty greetings. My wife<sup>243</sup> arrived here in good health. We thank you for the friendship shown to her, which is more pleasing to me than anything else. I shall return it with friendship on my part.

<sup>242</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>243</sup> Gertrude Schuyler, the eldest daughter of Philip Pietersen Schuyler.

I have sent to brother-in-law Livingston a case with candles, one-half of them to be for you, but if he wishes to keep all of them, I have written him to return the case, in which event I shall send it up to you again full.

We still have no news whatever from Europe. Everything is still going reasonably well here. We are looking forward to the arrival of the horses any hour. I just heard that Francis [Ri]chardson has arrived from the South River. He will undoubtedly bring news with him, which will be communicated to you by the next boat. Meanwhile, with hearty greetings, I commend you to God and remain,

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer  
at Watervliett

FROM CATHARINA DARVALL

[ ]<sup>244</sup>  
 [ ] that [he intended] to go to  
 Holland [ ] brother Steven's advice that  
 [ ] when I spoke, he replied that if  
 he had known that he wanted to go to Holland, he would not  
 have urged the matter so, as there is no [ ] here  
 [ ] of Domine Renselaer and brother himself would  
 have gone to the governor to speak for him, in order that he might  
 have the farm on Craloo (*die bouwery op craloo*), but he thinks  
 it not advisable to go and thinks that he might do better above,  
 for in Holland everything must be purchased with money and he  
 would [cost] you a lot of money. He thinks that 50 beavers is  
 altogether too little money, but if you nevertheless intend to send  
 him, he will speak about the passage here. But he can not fur-  
 nish you any beavers. You could get some money from father's  
 estate, but no beavers. He will write to you about that. I trust  
 that brother Steve will be better able to speak a good word for

<sup>244</sup> Several lines destroyed.

you now that Liffington is away. Brother Jacobus has had much trouble with it and has spoken for you. He now also has charge of your affairs. Be pleased to write to him also. Breaking off, I remain, with hearty greetings to you and your children,

Your loving sister

July 9, 1683

Catrina Darvall

*Addressed:*

To Maria van Renselaer  
at Albany

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[July 1683]

[]<sup>245</sup>  
[ ] good [

] order from Holland upon proper [

] the money [

] purchase. I hope [that

you] will be here before the ship *De Beever* leaves, in order that we may speak together about it and at the same time about what you wish to have ordered for Kiliaen, in addition to what is mentioned in the little list. Otherwise, write about it at the first opportunity, without forgetting anything.

Herewith go 4 lbs of alum, at 30 stivers a pound, in a little bag marked KVR. If he needs more, let me know. I am glad that he is busily at work (*lustigh aenden arbeyt is*). I hope that it may be to his best advantage. Everything here is still all right. Father, mother and the friends are still well and I hope that the same is true of you. After greetings, I commend you to God and remain,

Your faithful brother

S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To the Worthy Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlandt,  
widow of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased  
In Albany

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<sup>245</sup> Several lines destroyed.

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[Beginning of August 1683]

[ ] his [ ]  
 ] the [contract] ]  
 is in the colony's [book] ]  
 the term of the lease expires [ ]  
 or to his [ ] S<sup>r</sup> Richard [ ]  
 let settle thereon [ ]  
 where the director will [ ].  
 That you [sold] the farm of the Vlamingh<sup>247</sup> is well. [ ]  
 ] will then necessarily have to provide [ ].  
 I shall not be there [until] my wife is well again, as one of these  
 [days she will be brought] to bed of [a child].<sup>248</sup>  
 Be pleased to do your best to collect as much as possible.  
 [I have] not yet been willing to grant any reduction [in rent],  
 but [they complain] bitterly, so that after the arrival of [the  
 baby] I shall go up the river in order that, it go as it may, we  
 may for once make an end of the matter, but it will be hard for  
 me.  
 The package from Holland I have given to your daughter  
 Anna. Jacob Sanders is here. He would not do me the honor  
 [to stay with me], but sleeps at Joh[an Verbrugge's and eats  
 now?] here and then at other [places]. If brother Brant<sup>249</sup>  
 [ ] I have given him orders  
 [ ] . I therefore request you [to]  
 let [him] do [ ] also [ ]  
 a schepel or two [ ] and [ ]

*Addressed:*Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Cortlant

Widow of Mr Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased

at Watervliett

<sup>246</sup> Several lines destroyed.<sup>247</sup> Pieter Winne, the Fleming.<sup>248</sup> Philip van Cortlandt was born August 9, 1683.<sup>249</sup> Brant Schuyler, the husband of Cornelia van Cortlandt.<sup>250</sup> Several lines destroyed.

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[August 15?], 1683

[]<sup>251</sup>] longing [ ] July [

] came and the ship on the 20th ditto, in which Domine Dellius came over.<sup>252</sup> [She] sailed for Holland on the 29th ditto. I trust that [he] will be welcome, as [he has been eagerly] expected.

As to what you write about my son Kiliaen, namely, that he is to look after the calves, he will not neglect to do so, for he can get along very well with the farmers and also knows the patroon's cattle, yes, down to the calves, so that he pays due attention to them. This year I let him settle with the farmers about the tithes. He is a diligent (*kloeck*) young man. I have had him put up the silversmith's shop in the country.<sup>253</sup> He makes good use of his time. He is also a member of God's church. May the Lord let him grow up in virtue and grant him His blessing as to soul and body.

As to the list of the animals, as soon as I arrive above it will be sent to you by my son. I am very sorry to hear that you are having so much trouble with the young patroon and other things that you have not been able to settle my account, for which I am longing very much, as also that of my deceased husband, your brother. I beg you once more, dear brother, to be pleased to make an end of it while we are still living.

As to what you write about taking up again the affairs of the colony, I can not say much in reply to that, as brother knows the situation better than I do. But to express my opinion I shall only say this, that I believe that you will never attain your purpose and that whatever you do and spend on it will be money wasted,

<sup>251</sup> Several lines destroyed.<sup>252</sup> Domine Dellius arrived at New York on July 28, 1683, N.S. *Ecclesiastical Records*, 2:859.<sup>253</sup> *buyten*; meaning outside the town limits of Albany and probably near the house at Watervliet.

[  
I []<sup>254</sup>

] the colony [

] are busy to get [possession of?] the colony, so that the colony has [ ] for the commissaries themselves dare to purchase [land] in the heart of the colony [ ] Greene Bos, as I have written heretofore and buy all [

] so that the colony's jurisdiction [ ] and in addition give 300 schepels of wheat and that [ ] [three?] commissaries who are more opposed than [favorable] to us. [ ] to Mr Livingston 200 gl. for his [ ] ]. It can not go thus, but it would be better, as you wrote to my brother Cortlandt, to sell some places and to see that the friends get something before things are running wild further, and to have the best farms well kept up and to take good care [of them]. What right or [advantage?] does the colony get for its 300 schepels of wheat? The 300 schepels of wheat are sent down every year [ ] and if they were but common farms it would be far better, for no one is allowed to trade in the colony or to keep a [beaver?] in his house which he receives for his wheat, [or] to keep more than 24 gl. in seawan in his house, and one must be half human and half devil [not] to be opposed to that. Marten Gerritsen has told me himself that the governor offered to give him the island, but that he would not take it. He is sorry [that he did not] take it, for then he would have had it and the governor would have made it all right; and others likewise. So you can imagine how it goes. As soon as I get home, I shall [write you] more fully about everything. [

]<sup>255</sup>

[As to what you write] about the land of [Broer Cornelis], to sell the same to S<sup>r</sup> [Philip Schuyler], he died on the 9th of May. [ ], for as soon

<sup>254</sup> Several lines destroyed.<sup>255</sup> Several lines destroyed.

as a reliable farmer [can be found I shall] cause him to leave, for Teunis de Metselaer lives there, so that he will be the nearest [ ] when it is sold. Are we to sell the best farms? That can not be demanded, but we shall do our best to sell the poorer places.

Jurrejan Thunissen<sup>256</sup> would like to buy the farm which lies near the island on which Piter Winne used to dwell. It is poor land and yields no revenue. If he is willing to give enough money and pay cash, we would resolve to sell that farm rather than land above.

Brother Cortlant will send you 100 beavers, which I hope will after a safe voyage duly reach you. I shall further do my best to send you as much as possible.

As to what you write about Barent, the miller, he pays no rent. I suppose that he is still indebted on the colony's book. I shall let you know about it at the first opportunity when I reach home.

I am sorry to have to inform you that after my departure from home there has been a very heavy rain, which continued for a long time, as Kiliaen writes, and this in the middle of the harvest, when the grain stood in the field after being mowed, so that it is all sprouted and spoiled. In addition the water was so high that all low lands were inundated, so that there are [farmers] both in the colony, at Schenechtade and in the Esopus who have neither oats nor seed grain nor bread stuff, so that everything is again [ ]

]<sup>257</sup>

[ ] we hope [ ]  
 colony will not be [hit] so hard [ ]  
 that the wife of G[errit Bancker] [ ]  
 goes over with this ship [ ]  
 will tell you no doubt sometime how [matters stand].

I hear that brother delivered the account to the [agent?] of the widow of Vasterick, with the request that she be pleased to have a little more patience, for one can not [always pay] as

<sup>256</sup> Juriaen Teunissen Tappen.

<sup>257</sup> Several lines destroyed.

promptly as one [would like], but I shall take care to pay [her] shortly. I shall also send you the account of brother Jan Baptist, to let you see whether it is correctly drawn up, for I do not know how it must be divided and how much of it is due to you.

I have heretofore also written to you about the mill and the land of Broer Cornelis. I hope that brother will not reject my [offer], for I have for my money as much right to them as any one else and brother knows that I can not live [without them] and the rent mounts up and in the end I shall not be able to pay it. I can not live with my family on 200 schepels of wheat and then receive calls from the most prominent people every day. I pray brother to take that into consideration sometime and to [help] a sorrowful widow . . .<sup>258</sup>

*Endorsed:* 1683

FROM PIETER DE LANOY

[August?] 1683

[ ]  
the arrears [ ]  
attachment [ ]

of the property left [by Domine] van Rensselaer, [deceased, for the benefit of the] widow, who lived in community of [property with] the deceased. I do not know the particulars, but what in my opinion is necessary to be done is, in the first place, that all the accounts relating thereto be [made up] and sent over. As I fear that he will not allow the same to be [examined?], or, if he does, that they will not be [accepted as?] authentic, therefore, [before] the same are sent over, they should be sworn to and be authenticated before a magistrate. Secondly, a copy having been [submitted] by a friend of the administration and [accounting] of the said Levenston, it was found that Mr Levenstone, after he had administered the estate, secured the appointment of some men to examine [the account] of his [administration], who reported that he had paid out [more] than [the value of] the

<sup>258</sup> Here ends the draft of the letter.

<sup>259</sup> Several lines destroyed.

effects in his hands, or than he could be reimbursed for [out of the] first [available] effects [of the estate]. [

[that he] had been cheated in the [ ] of the colony and represented himself to the Council of England<sup>261</sup> as the only [director?] of the colony and the sole [representative of?] the patroon, to whom all the rest [owed obedience, without?] their having any share therein, and [under] these pretenses, as I understand, he obtained from the Council of England [

], of which Albany intends to make use, although they do not have the least authority to order any [ ]. Thereby he will seek to induce those of Albany to allow the said pretenses, unless you give to the bearer a timely statement and proofs how and in what manner and by virtue of what right the said Domine Rensselaer, [deceased], is concerned and interested therein. [ ] has promised [to give] you sufficient notice [that he would] consult a jurist at London about the [ ] in order to be thus in a position to [sell?] the best [part] of the colony. Therefore, you ought to take [pains to do this], in order that everything [may] fully [appear and it be shown] how the affairs of the colony stand.

[ ]<sup>262</sup>  
[shall do whatever the case] may require.

After cordial greetings I commend you to the Lord.

Endorsed: 1683

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[End of August 1683]

[ ]<sup>263</sup>  
[ ] try [my] best to obtain [a patent for the] colony. I trust that it will not be [ ] to us, or be [ ] on account of my access to

<sup>260</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>261</sup> *de Consul van Engelandt.*

<sup>262</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>263</sup> Several lines destroyed.

the governor. I shall, I hope, bring about that much that the title to the land be not taken away from us and no burdens be imposed on us against our will. I shall, while your son is here, keep him under my supervision and duly keep an eye on him. It seems to me that he is very sedate (*besaadight*) compared with what he used to be, so that there is no fear of his seeking the company of common people (*by hett gemeene Volckje te Loopen*).

I have to announce the arrival of the governor<sup>264</sup> and [the receipt of] your letter about sending down wheat. He sends you his hearty greetings. I am glad to hear that you are so well again. I and my wife and all our children and the friends are also still well. God grant that on both sides it may long continue to our salvation. I commend you to His protection and remain, after greetings to you and the children,

Your faithful brother  
S: V: Cortlandt

*Addressed:*      The Worthy Widow  
                         Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer  
                         at Watervliett

TO STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[                          ] of Jan [Bricker?]

] <sup>265</sup>

] to the governor to [have a patent for the] island which she<sup>266</sup> has cultivated. [He] has promised her one, as she herself says. As far as I know the islands which lie [up the river] were bought for the patroon, as you can see from the deed of purchase which is in your custody, for which you may make search sometime. I hope that your mother-in-law will make no trouble for us about the farm. As soon as you come up the river, let us execute a deed to her, as brother Ryckert has written, in order that she may know how far her land extends.

<sup>264</sup> Governor Thomas Dongan arrived at New York on August 27, 1683.

<sup>265</sup> Several lines destroyed. See next letter.

<sup>266</sup> Margareta Schuyler, the widow of Philip Pietersen Schuyler.

You will please look sometime for the contract of Andris, the baker. I can not find it here. There is already a dispute with Mees<sup>267</sup> and the neighbors, so that I believe that Mees will not remain farmer long. If you have Andries Hanse's contract,<sup>268</sup> you may send it up. By Klaes Lock I have sent down 100 boards for my account.

My leg is very sore and inflamed. I hope that God will restore it. Breaking off, I commend you all, together with young Phlip and every one, to the protection of God.

Your faithful and affectionate sister  
Maria v. Rensselaer

11 Sept. 1683, at Watervliet

*Addressed:*

Mr Steven van Cortlant  
Merchant  
at New York

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

N: Yorcke 1683, 7b<sup>r</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 20<sup>th</sup>

Dear Sister:

I received your letter and the 100 boards sent by Lock. I understand also that a dispute has arisen between Mees and Andries. I have searched for the contract, but can not find it. I have an impression that it is recorded in the Journal and I trust that you will find it there.

I have spoken to the governor about the colony. He says as

---

<sup>267</sup> Mees Pietersen Hoogenboom. On March 31, 1683, O.S., Stephanus van Cortlandt leased to him the farm called Turkeyen, near Van Schaick's Island, at the mouth of the Mohawk, for the term of three or six years, at the option of either party. *Leases and Contracts*, 1666-1708.

<sup>268</sup> March 4, 1677/8, Rev. Nicolaes van Rensselaer leased to Andries Janse the farm in the Greene Bosch, last occupied by Melgert Abrahamse, for the term of three or six years, commencing May 1, 1678. Apparently, Andries Janse had another contract for a farm near Turkeyen, which is not recorded in *Leases and Contracts*, 1666-1708.

before that he will settle the matter. I found several papers which mention the islands bought up the river, but whether [the purchase] was in the name of Bricker<sup>269</sup> I can not [tell]. I shall take care that nothing is done that will be detrimental to the colony.

Every one here is still well. I hope that the same is true of you and the friends. Therefore, after greetings, I commend you to God and remain,

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

The Worthy and Virtuous  
Maria van Rensselaer  
at Watervliett

OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT TO  
RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[September?] 1683

[Copy]

[ ]<sup>270</sup>  
little has happened. [You may] have [heard] that our governor, Thomas Dongan, has arrived here. He has continued the council of the former governor. Sir, as far as I hear everything in the colony is all right, [except that] the widow of your brother is not very well and as the said widow of your brother is somewhat crippled and might become unfit to attend to the supervision of the colony and then would be much embarrassed, she would like very much to have something of her own. I hope, Sir, that you will help her to get this as far as a godly conscience will allow you to do so.

I also understand, but I do not know for certain, now that Schuyler and Livingston have been refused the land here, that

<sup>269</sup> Jan Bricker.

<sup>270</sup> Several lines destroyed.

they will address themselves to you with some present and also some beavers in payment and out of spite promise more than others in order to outdo your brother's widow, but I know very well that you will not allow your brother's widow and orphans who need it for their support to be shown this disrespect and shame. I shall expect your letter to hear whether everything is all right. If anything is wrong, it will be made right. After cordial greetings, I remain,

Your servant  
O. Stevens Cortlandt

*Endorsed:* Copy. To Rygert [van Rensselaer]  
1683

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[September? 1683]

Dear Sister: My last letter to you was [sent] by brother Jacobus. Since then I have received yours by nephew Hendrick (who still has fever now and then, but goes out into the street and attends to his affairs), from which I learned the discord which exists between Mees Hoogeboom and his neighbors, for which reason you have canceled his lease of the farm. What you have done therein is all right. You write about leasing Broeder's<sup>271</sup> little place. Would it not be better if that place were leased with Turckeyen? It would then make a good-sized farm for an energetic farmer and avoid much dispute and trouble, for a planter or cotter causes the patroons as much trouble and quarrelling as the best farmer in the colony and now that Mees leaves the place there may perhaps come a man who would rather rent both places than one alone. But I leave that to your judgment. Meanwhile, you must give Mees notice to leave the farm and see whether another tenant can be obtained.

That you will send down the p[osts?] and boards is very good, for I shall need them badly. We are at present busy

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<sup>271</sup> Cornelis Teunissen van Schlick (Slyck), alias Broer Cornelis.

writing to Holland and for what is to be received we have [ordered] linen, on which most profit is to be made.

I see that you are improving and that your sickness is getting better, which I am pleased to hear. As far as I am concerned, I am reasonably well. I can not yet get rid [of the pain in] my ears and I [am much] troubled by headache. It seems that in this world it [ ] makes that I [do] not [ ] believe [ ]

]<sup>272</sup>

The carpenter and mason are busy in your house and because they had no klinkers, [they?] have [ ] done. I urge them on diligently as Capt. Brockhols begins to put his goods into it.<sup>273</sup>

*Addressed:*

To the worthy Juff'r Maria van Rensselaer  
at Albany

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

October 12, [1683]

[ ]<sup>274</sup>  
I shall speak to him sometime [whether he] has [ ]. I hope that brother has examined the account [ ] and that the friends made some pr[ofit] [ ]. I wish that I knew to whom I must write. I would write [at once]. The account of brother Jan Baptist, deceased, I shall also send over as good as I can make it, though not perfect. May it please brother to settle the account of my husband, deceased.

As to what you write about the price of houses being so low, I am ready to believe that, but I fear that it will be still worse, as there is talk of war. Therefore, it seems to me that the best thing to do would be to sell, so that every one would know what was his, for which I am longing very much, for it is better to have

<sup>272</sup> Two or more lines destroyed.

<sup>273</sup> The last lines are written in the margin.

<sup>274</sup> Several lines destroyed.

nothing than to have the reputation of having something and to be in debt. If brother can not manage it alone, you ought to engage a faithful man to help you, for thus it can no longer go and I must also be free from debt, even if I should have to sell everything I have. If you will be pleased to send me the trunk and whatever else there is, Lysbet Bankers<sup>275</sup> will apparently be glad to bring it with her and to put her things in it, [so as to save] the freight. Piter Winne has asked me [permission] to purchase the land that lies opposite Betlem, on the east bank. It contains about four morgens of poor land. He still claims some money for his service in the colony. It seems to me if he gave 50 beavers and then canceled his claim, it might do, but if you [can do] better, [all right]. What Marten Gerritse claims for the service performed [by him], I do not like. He has no right to speak of that. Gerrit Tunisse and Dirck Thunisse know very well that Marten Gerritse was a very good advocate on their side before the governor and that otherwise they would not have had it.

[ ]<sup>276</sup>  
 have, because there are no [ ]  
 bad times with all things [ ]  
 and here also a great [sickness?] [ ]  
 all the [fevers?] so that [ ].  
 What shall we say? It is our [ ].  
 The Lord may preserve us from severe [ ]  
 and that it may serve to arouse us [ ] and [tend  
 to our] salvation. Wherewith, dear brother and sister I com-  
 mend you to the Lord and remain with hearty greetings,

Your affectionate and faithful sister  
 Maria van Rensselaer

This 12th of October  
 at Water vliet

<sup>275</sup> Elisabeth Dirckse van Eps, wife of Gerrit Bancker. She had apparently gone to Holland to collect money in connection with the settlement of the estate of her mother, Maritje Damen, deceased. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1680-85, 3:145-47, 252-54.

<sup>276</sup> Several lines destroyed.

Being busy making out the account of brother Jan Baptist and Piter Hartgens,<sup>277</sup> I find many mistakes and as the yacht is leaving I must break off. I shall not let a ship depart without sending it to you. I must examine the copy made by my husband, deceased.

Volkert Janse<sup>278</sup> is dead. A sad widow.

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[October 12, 1683]

[ ]<sup>279</sup>  
 [ ] you will [convey] to me the land for the order which my father [has given on ] and which I sent to you. [I hope that for the sake of brotherly] love, being the guardian and uncle of your brother Jeremias' children, you will leave the land in the possession of myself and my children, together with the foreland<sup>280</sup> and the old grist-mill, which is in very bad condition, the conveyance of which I shall [expect] by the first ship. Brother, know this, that I am the nearest relative in point of inheritance and yet that every one seeks to have the preference over me and my money, as the interloper, Philip, and his bitter family<sup>281</sup> are doing even today, both as regards

<sup>277</sup> After his return to Holland, Jan Baptist van Rensselaer entered into a partnership with Pieter Hartgers to trade in New Netherland. See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 196, 201, 221, 246.

<sup>278</sup> Volckert Jansen Douw, from Stapelholm, in Schleswig. His widow was Dorothea Jans, from Bredstedt, Schleswig. Douw was a Lutheran, so that his burial is not entered in the accounts of the Deacons of the Dutch Reformed Church of Albany. On January 8, 1683/4, Douw's widow made application to the Court of Albany to be appointed administratrix of his estate. See *Early Records of Albany*, 2:91; *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 2:617; and *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1680-85, 3:412.

<sup>279</sup> Several lines destroyed. The letter is in the handwriting of Jacob Sandersen Glen and is in part a duplicate of the preceding letter.

<sup>280</sup> At this point a marginal note was inserted which is destroyed.

<sup>281</sup> den onderkruyper Philip en syn Bittere geslacht. Philip Pietersen Schuyler died on May 9, 1683.

Liffington and her, who is now to write to the participants to get them to side with him and to come to a division of the estate and thus to gain his object as to [the portion of] Domine, deceased, and the land above here, about which they are now writing to [ ]], and they have said with bitterness that I shall retain nothing.

Dear brother, if I have [said anything

]<sup>282</sup>

I should be heartily sorry, for I have affection and respect for you. I have heard my husband, deceased, say that his and your father, deceased, had with his participants founded the colony in order that his children with God's mercy might live of it and that they should not alienate it.

I have examined the account of Barent, the miller. I find that he owes 25 beavers and shall ask him what counter claim he has. I hope that brother has sent to you the account of what was delivered by the friends.

You write that the houses and [farms?] are [valued] at a low price. I am ready to believe it, but I fear that it will be still worse, for there is talk here of [ ] there.

[<sup>283</sup>] be indebted in the name of all. [If you have so much] to do, it would be best if you engaged another trustee to assist you in everything, for thus it can go no longer, and if you should happen to die, it would have to be done by friends, as I should like very much to have all our accounts settled between us.

I beg you to send me the trunk with what is still there. Please ask [Lysbet] Banckers to be pleased to use the trunk to put her things in it and to bring it over that way, for to ship the empty trunk hither would cost too much in freight.

<sup>282</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>283</sup> Several lines destroyed.

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[October? 1683]

[ ]<sup>284</sup>

I ] with the [ship] de [Bever?]. This will serve [to let you know] that this year I can not send over [the inventory of the] cattle as I had [hoped], for the reason that it is not complete, because [they count the] increase in the [winter], when the cattle are in the stable. [My son] Kieliaen is at present in New York, to see what is going on in the high Court of Assembly, which concerns the whole country. What will be decided there is apt to stay forever.

The honorable governor, [who recently came over from England], has been up here at my house with my brother [Steven van] Cortlant. We spoke to him about the colony and he promised us to make an end of the matter and to give us a patent. I doubt not but he will keep his word and my brother Cortlant will send you a copy of it.

Mr Cornelis van Dyck and Dirk Wesselse have been chosen from Albany,<sup>285</sup> but no one from the colony, about which I have written to my brother. [They are] two men who are very much against the colony, but not godless.<sup>286</sup>

Mr Livingston called on me and we had some discussion about brother's letter and about the portion which Domine, deceased, is supposed to have had in the colony. [He says] that you alone can not act therein and appraise the farm. He therefore intends

<sup>284</sup> Several lines destroyed. A few words have been supplied from a fragmentary copy in the handwriting of Jacob Sanderson Glen, which in general follows the draft of the present letter, but which also contains one or two paragraphs from other letters which may have been repeated in the letter that was actually sent.

<sup>285</sup> See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1680-85, 3:400. The first session of the General Assembly held at New York began on October 17, 1683.

<sup>286</sup> *twee mannen die de Colonie seer hart tegen sijn, doch niet sonder Godt.*

to write to the co-participants and will see to it that they make an end of it. He can not be induced to stop, but desires that all the debts of brother, the Domine, deceased, may be brought to light and [wonders] why they delay so long. He will not let the matter rest, but insists on seeing it through, even if he should lose by it, and the farm at any rate he will not relinquish. He regrets that he has not more in his hands.

[

]<sup>287</sup>

regain health and strength. I understand that [

] wish to buy a share in the colony. [Adriaen] Ger-  
rits, Dirck Wesselse and Pieter Schuyler [wish] to buy the island  
and the farm of [Papskne, as I] understand. I think that these  
persons think that the participants wish to sell their interest [in  
the colony], so that one should take that into consideration and  
that brother should have timely knowledge thereof.

Jacop Scher [merhorn] likewise intends to write to you [about]  
the farm, as I have heard. I can not understand why the people  
are so eager to buy the land. I heard from Theunis de Metselaer  
that Phlip Schuyler is reported to have said: "Now is the time  
to buy land. Reygart needs money," and other statements  
which I shall not repeat. Now that Phlip is dead, his wife wants  
to carry out what was begun by her husband, but she thinks as  
little of God's word and law as is written in Exodus, ch. 22,  
where God speaks of the widows and orphans, but where there  
is money, there is power. But God, who will take care of the  
widows and orphans, will not desert me and my six children. I  
therefore ask you to let me have the land about which I have  
written. You can realize yourself that if I have no land of my  
own, I must leave and try to do something else. At least, your  
brother Jeremias' children [are nearer to you] than others and  
[should have the preference] over strangers. I have heard that  
Phlip's [widow] wants to have [the land], it cost what it may,  
above everything else and will do everything . . .<sup>288</sup>

<sup>287</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>288</sup> Here the draft of the letter ends abruptly.

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[October? 1683]

[]<sup>289</sup>

[ ] to grant it [for the reason] that already in the time of brother Jan Batist, deceased, I asked for it and [instead of] selling it to some one else, it seems to me that I am most entitled to it, paying for it the aforesaid sum. [Enclosed herewith], therefore, is an order of my father for the sum on [ ]. My request, therefore, is that you be pleased to convey to N.N. the aforesaid land, to wit, from the old house of Broer Cornelis to the land of Thunis and from the said Tunis upward as he possesses it to the bridge of the Vlackte, together with the island of Barent, the miller, and also the free use of the woods jointly with the other farmers who pay the patroon's dues. I doubt not but brother will not refuse me this, but help me in the matter.<sup>290</sup> For brother knows that I already have possession of it and if I do not have the land and the mill, how am I to make a living with my six children, especially as I am such a feeble woman? I hope, therefore, that you will have some consideration for us. They are your brother's children and believe me, brother, that I also seek to keep up my deceased husband's reputation and with the help of God should like to pay the debts left by him here and in Holland, but as long as I have nothing that is my own, I sink deeper into debt and can not pay my creditors either, but must live by the grace of others.

You need not worry about the 150 beavers. I shall see to it that you receive them at the first opportunity.

[I would ask you?] also to let me have the foreland of [Broer Cornelis, unless you?] can get more money for it. Breaking off herewith, I shall expect [your answer] by the next opportunity.

Maria v[an] Renss[elaer]

<sup>289</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>290</sup> At this point two lines are canceled and in the margin is written: "others first and [ ] not even [ ]."

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

November 2/12, 1683

[ ]<sup>291</sup>

[ ] we are so busy with [the ship which is ha]stily to depart that I [have] no [time] to write and to answer your letter about the sale of the farm behind the island. In my opinion the price of fl.1750:-Holland [money is all right], so that I would approve it, but considering that the land lies next to the island and might perhaps be used as a pasture, in which case the cattle might swim across to the island and cause [us] annoyance and trouble, and considering further that yearly we have the sad experience of high water and severe ice flows, whereby sometimes the buildings, yes, even people and animals, are in danger of being carried away by the ice, it might hereafter be resolved to keep the farm as a dwelling place for the farmer of the island, using the land as a pasture and using the entire island for cultivation, whether by one or two farmers. Therefore, I have thought it best to await the approval from Holland, the more so as Jan Caspersen's lease does not expire for some time<sup>292</sup> and we shall have an answer to this proposal by next June at the latest. The bill of exchange is enclosed herewith and when the approval arrives, [he] will no doubt make out another.

I had thought of sending some fish to Pieter Neeff,<sup>293</sup> but it has not come yet. Goods are now so dear here that I do not know what to send to make any profit. If it is convenient to you, I wish that you would have Albert Ryckman brew for me 10 half-barrels of good, tasty beer, for which you must deliver to him for my account the grain, hops and the barrels, letting him

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<sup>291</sup> One or two lines destroyed.

<sup>292</sup> March 29, 1683, Stephanus van Cortlandt leased to Jan Caspersen the farm behind the island which he had occupied for two years, on the same conditions as before, except that he was to pay five schepels of wheat a year less, the lease to begin on May 1, 1683, and to run for three or six years. *Leases and Contracts, 1666-1708.*

<sup>293</sup> Pieter Schuyler.

do only the brewing. When I come up the river I shall satisfy him.

Our sister Cornelia was last Thursday delivered of a son, who yesterday was baptized Philip.<sup>294</sup> She is reasonably well according [to the circumstances]

] <sup>295</sup>

if R. [van] Rensselaer or any one [in his name] is not ready then to enter into an agreement, the governor will do therein as he [sees fit].

The Assembly has [passed] several laws and [ ]<sup>296</sup> but thus far none to the prejudice [of the colony]. There was one law providing that no hogs might be allowed to run except in fenced-in lands and that all hogs which were found in any grain field or in any one's land might freely be shot dead, but I spoke against that and [caused] the colony to be excepted<sup>297</sup> until I come up the river to see what might best be done in the matter.

I should have sent Pieter Neef some fish and mackrel, but I am sorry to say they have not yet come. Further, everything here is all right, so that I break off and commend you to God, remaining after hearty greetings from all of us to you and all your children,

Your willing servant and brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

In N. York, 1683

We are now already 2 9b<sup>r</sup>

<sup>294</sup> According to the date of the letter, the child was baptized on November 1/11, 1683, which came on a Thursday. In the record of baptisms of the Reformed Dutch Church, New York (N. Y. Gen. and Biog. Soc., *Collections*, 2:160), the baptism of Philippus, son of Brandt Schuyler and Cornelia Van Courtlant, is entered under November 6, 1683.

<sup>295</sup> Two or more lines destroyed.

<sup>296</sup> The first of the "Dongan Laws," entitled "The Charter of Liberties," was passed on October 30, 1683, O.S.

<sup>297</sup> "An act to prevent damages done [by] Swine," passed November 1, 1683.

Here a present has been granted to the governor, throughout the province, of one penny in the pound,<sup>298</sup> which for [various] reasons I did not wish nor could oppose. Jacob Sanders and Mons<sup>r</sup>. Bleecker<sup>299</sup> are two of those who are to assess that money. When that is done you must do so too, without objection, as it is for the governor. I hope that everything will go well.

*Addressed:*

To the Worthy Widow Juff<sup>r</sup>.  
 Maria van Cortlandt  
 At Watervliet  
 Albany

TO OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[November] 1683

[ ] in the [ ]<sup>300</sup>. Father, I [have] written to Holland that I sold the farm opposite the island to [Myndert Harmense?] for 1750 gl., to be paid in Holland [money], as appears from the enclosed [bill of exchange]. Brother Steven wrote back to me that it was all right, but that we must await an answer from Rygart, because it lies beside the island and should be kept with the island as a place of refuge in case of high water. But as the island already has a place of refuge, on which Kees Wip<sup>301</sup> lived heretofore, with a house and barn on it which Marten Gerritse himself built there and in which his father-in-law lives at present, the land need not be kept with

<sup>298</sup> "A BILL ffor a ffree and Voluntary P'sent To The Govern'r," passed November 2, 1683. *The Colonial Laws of New York*, 1:137-41.

<sup>299</sup> Jan Jansen Bleecker, commissary.

<sup>300</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>301</sup> Apparently Cornelis Segersen van Voorhout, although in *Early Records of Albany*, 1:246, Seger Cornelissen van Voorhout is referred to as "Keesie Wyp." See *Minutes of the Court of Fort Orange and Beverwyck*, 2:35, and letter to Rychard van Rensselaer, of November 1683.

the island and whereas, between us, brother Reygart has written to me that he is in need [of money], on account of the [settlement of the] estate and to keep up the dignity [of the family] and [urged me] to send him some money, even if we had to sell more, I know that he will be well pleased, for it is poor land. The island of Broer Cornelis alone, about which we have written, is worth more than this entire land near the island, and if Reygart is as much in need of money as he informed me, it is necessary to send this bill of exchange, for otherwise I shall not get the land above, for Juffrou Schuyler has sent over more money in order that I shall not get it. Therefore, have the enclosed sent over by brother to satisfy Rygert. I did not think that brother would again send up the bill of exchange. I am very sorry about it, as it does not dispose S<sup>r</sup> Rygert favorably toward me.

*Endorsed:* 1683

Stef [anus] van Cortl [andt]

TO STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[November 1683]

Dear Brother: Yours of 29 September<sup>302</sup> I received in reasonable health, together with the enclosed bill of exchange. As to your writing that the land of Jan Kasperse ought to remain in connection with the island, that is not advisable, for the land is no good. Moreover, the island already has a refuge right opposite to it, where a new house and barn stand, and if he wants to use the land as a pasture he must fence it in on the river side. Furthermore, Jan Kasperse retains his lease and as Jacop Schermerhoorn has already sent over his order<sup>303</sup> and has also written to the others, it will seem very absurd [to hold up the sale]. Brother Reygart has asked me very earnestly to send him money and I know therefore that it will be agreeable to him.

<sup>302</sup> The original has 29 sep<sup>m</sup>, which is evidently a mistake for 2 9br, the date of Stephanus van Cortlandt's letter.

<sup>303</sup> ordere brieve.

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[November 1683?]

[ ]  
]<sup>304</sup>

] behind Claverack [

] for answer that if it were in our [power

] no one [rather

] than we, but if they [could] obtain their  
pa[tent], we could not prevent it, but I should rather give them  
a piece of land in addition than suffer any infraction to be made  
on our jurisdiction. I have no doubt but that we shall get a  
patent for the colony, but not such privileges as they had formerly.If it is possible, send me 200 or 300 boards as soon as you  
can, for I need them.I am in great haste, so that I break off and commend you to  
God, remaining

Your willing servant and [brother]

S. V. Cortlandt

I have some fish and mackerel. If  
*Mary Night*<sup>305</sup> thinks that she can sell  
them, let me know.*Addressed:* To Juffr. Maria van Rensselaer  
at Albany

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[November? 1683]

Mr Reygart van Rensslaer

Dear Brother: This serves only to let you know that I have  
sold the farm on which Piter Winne has heretofore resided,  
situated near the island, to Myndert Harmse,<sup>306</sup> for 2000<sup>307</sup> gl.<sup>304</sup> First part of letter destroyed.<sup>305</sup> Cousin Mary; probably Maria Verlet, or Verleth, the second wife  
of Willem Teller. See *Early Records of Albany*, 1:345-46.<sup>306</sup> Myndert Harmensen van den Bogaert.<sup>307</sup> Maria van Rensselaer first wrote 1750, but changed it to 2000.

Holland money, 1000 gl. at once, according to the bill of exchange, and the other 1000 gl. next year. And whereas I had written to my brother Steeven about the sale of the said farm, whether it was advisable, he wrote back that the farm must be left before the island as a place of refuge, but as the island already has a place of refuge, it does not need the said farm, for Cornelis Segerse is dead and on the little place near the island Marten Gerritse has already had a house and barn built, in which he lets his father-in-law dwell, so that my brother's letter does not please me. To pay two thousand guilders, and that in Holland money, for such poor land is a good deal. The buildings are poor and will have to be repaired in the summer, and as there is much strange talk about the purchase of the island and other land, please be careful about the sale, and as you have asked me most urgently to send over something, I have done the best I could, and although my brother has sent back the bill of exchange and postponed the sale until we receive an answer from you, I have nevertheless sent the bill of exchange to you myself, not doubting but you would be pleased to have it. And whereas I understand that the son of Juff'r Schuyler has said that I shall not have the land, as he has my brother's help, I beg you to be my and my children's help and advocate. I have no doubt that my brother will write to you, as I have heard that Livingston has presented a petition to the governor and council, requesting that a division might be made of the colony, in order that he might know the late Domine's interest therein. Whereupon it was ordered that a copy of the petition should be sent to you and that answer to it must be made within 15 months.<sup>308</sup> I trust that the same will be delivered to you. The said Livingston is again held in as great regard as heretofore.<sup>309</sup> He will not write to you any

<sup>308</sup> The original petition with the order of council thereon, without date, was in *New York Colonial Manuscripts*, 31:90, but was destroyed in the Capitol fire of 1911. For Richard van Rensselaer's answer, see his letter to the governor and council, dated September 1/11, 1684.

<sup>309</sup> *Ditto Livingston is weer in soo groote aensi[e]n als van te voren,* meaning, perhaps, that Livingston was as much esteemed by Governor Dongan as he had been by his predecessor.

more, but will write only to the co-participants. I also understand that he would like to get his hands on something else, as I have been told by a person who heard it himself, namely, that they intended to let you have one-half of the money and then, when they had possession of the land above, Livingston would attach it. The rest, what there is to it, God knows. It is here at present so sad, one does not know whether one deals with friend or foe. Yes, one dares not trust one's own brother. The whole country must again furnish money and all merchandise is taxed again. God knows what this arrival of the governor may yet bring us. I hope that God will make everything turn out for the best.

I beg you, brother, if you write about the land and the island, etc., of Thunis de Metselaer, not to write about it to my brother Steeven, for the house of Schuyler knows that immediately and that is enough and all they are after. I shall break off here. Commending you all to the Lord, I remain with hearty greetings to yourself, your wife and your children,

Your faithful sister

Maria van Rensselaer

If you wish to sell any land, give full power of attorney to a [ ], or to my son.

Brother Jan Batist, deceased, still has a pasture lying here behind the fort. Jacob Kasperse<sup>810</sup> asks permission to buy it and brother Richard<sup>811</sup> also has a piece of land at Lubberts land. It would be best if it were sold; in that way it would at least bring in something.

---

<sup>810</sup> Jacob Caspersen Halenbeck, or Hollenbeck.

<sup>811</sup> Maria van Rensselaer first wrote *broeder salr*, then inserted above the line "Richard," without crossing out the word *saliger* (deceased). See letter from Richard van Rensselaer of September 1/11, 1684, and letter to Richard van Rensselaer of August? 1687.

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[December?] 1683

[ ] such still [ ]  
] he [ ] that [  
] Claes Lock [ ] same [  
] said, but only [to the] friends, who [  
] if you [ ] more [ ]  
must send [here] with. Be pleased at the first opportunity to send down my saddle, bridle and saddle-cloth, which were left at your place; you will thereby do me a favor. I have recently inquired about a quantity of oats for Pieter Teunisse, but can not get any before the winter. Be pleased to tell him so with my greetings. Further, everything here is all right. If you secure any wheat, send it down for the governor, as I do not doubt but we shall obtain a patent from him for the colony. Father and mother are still reasonably well. Breaking off here, I commend you to God and remain, after hearty greetings,

Your willing servant and brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To the Worthy Juffr. Maria van Rensselaer  
at Watervliett

*Endorsed:* 1683

TO STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[December? 1683]

Dear Brother: The oysters sent by Klaes Lock I duly received. I thank sister heartily for them. I am sorry that brother sent back the bill of exchange. I had not expected to get it back, as I had written, as you well know, to Sr Rygart that I would sell the said farm to Jurrejaen, but this purchaser being better I

<sup>812</sup> Several lines destroyed.

thought that it was very good. Schermerhoorn, not doubting but you would forward the bill of exchange, has already sent his order by Jan Gorter and I have also written to Sr Rygart. If brother had told me about it when I was at New York, it would have been all right, but now that this was not done it must go through as it is. Because the island already has a good refuge on Cornelis Segerse's place, where easily two dwellings can stand, the land is not needed in connection with the island, for it is not fenced in to raise any cattle. Piter Winne put his calves on the island because they died there and he may not pasture them there unless he fences in the land on the river side, so that it can be no detriment to the island. For it is too good a sum of money to pass it up. I have spoken to Albert Ryckman about brewing for you. He says that you gave him orders to brew one hogshead and he has already shipped that in Lock's [yacht], but if you wish to have more in the spring, be pleased to write. I had thought of sending some other things, but can not [do so] as the [ ]<sup>313</sup>

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[January] 1684

[ ]<sup>314</sup>  
 [ ] Dirck Siecken [ ]  
 men, very few women, but mostly children, the old [people] of [pain] in the side and fever and the young of colds and fever, so that hardly a day passes but some one is buried. Uncle Slichtenhorst died on the 9th of December, whithout any one having been present,<sup>315</sup> two days before his daughter was delivered of a son, who<sup>316</sup> also died the day before yesterday, so that one may well

<sup>313</sup> One or two lines destroyed.

<sup>314</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>315</sup> Jonathan Pearson, in his *Genealogies of the First Settlers of Albany*, states that Gerrit van Slichtenhorst died at Kingston, January 9, 1684.

<sup>316</sup> Apparently referring to the son, but perhaps to the mother, the daughter of van Slichtenhorst. Cf. letter of Jacob van Cortlandt, of about the same date.

prepare oneself now to depart this world, for who becomes sick may well consider that he must go hence. We are all in the hands of the Lord; His will be done.

I saw that the colony is assessed at £ 5500:-; whether that is as a whole, or without the farms of Volckert, Jan Thomasz, Schuyler and the Greene Bos, I do not know. If it is for the whole, the aforementioned farms must be deducted, for every one must pay for himself. Now the amount is reasonably fair; one half must be paid this year and the other half the next year. As to the [tax of] 300 schepels of wheat, it remains to be seen what will be done about it, for 14 days from now is the date set for the examination of the colony's papers. A patent I hope and believe we shall get, but the city of Albany I see no chance of getting. May God give that it will succeed. It will apparently cost quite a bit of money. Meanwhile, those who are to have deeds must wait until I come up the river. Mind the talk of others as little as possible and pay no attention to it, for it can not turn out as they think. This much I wish that [I] had [known] that father ordered the money [to be paid] in Holland [for the farm of] Broer Cornelis, as the same causes disagreement and on no one [can be laid the blame for?] the cause of it. But have patience, it has [ ] all my fault [ ] health, happiness and [prosperity in the New Year?] <sup>317</sup>

*Addressed:*

[The Worthy] Juffr. Maria [van Renss]elaer  
[att Water]vliett

*Endorsed:* 1684

FROM OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN CORTLANDT

[January 1684]

[ ]  
[ ] . Your very agreeable letter by [ ] I duly received, from which I learned that your

<sup>317</sup> The last seven lines are written in the margin.

condition is still reasonably good, [as is also that] of your father and mother, according to their circumstances. Here at the Ma[nhates the sickness rages] more than above. Several [persons] have already [died]. Gerrit Slechtenhost is dead,<sup>318</sup> and your sister has a young son.<sup>319</sup> We are sorry that it is so bad in the colony as to the grain. I wish that it were better, but we must resign ourselves to God's will. The governor should be apprized of the situation and we must hear what he has to say. And as to the taxation, I can not tell anything about that. It is bad policy to quarrel with one's superiors. Do not worry about temporal things, but cast your cares and troubles upon the Lord. He will help you and so direct [your steps] that some day you will be delivered of all controversy and have a quiet life. But we must abide the time when it shall please God to do so. I shall look around for 100 schepels of oats and, if you can, come down sometime in the spring. Nothing else for the present but hearty greetings to yourself and your children from father and mother, who commend you to the mercy of God.

Your affectionate father  
O. Steven v. Cortlant

*Addressed:*

Worthy, Virtuous  
Joff'r Maria v. Renselaer  
at Albania

Sealed with the van Cortlandt arms.

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<sup>318</sup> According to the preceding letter, Gerrit van Slichtenhorst died on December 9, 1683. On September 17, 1685, his widow applied for letters of administration. *N. Y. Col. MSS.*, 31:104. An abstract of his will, dated October 12, 1683, proved September 29, 1685, is in *N. Y. Hist. Soc., Collections*, 1892, 25:470-71.

<sup>319</sup> Philip, son of Brandt Schuyler and Cornelia van Cortlandt, born on October 25, 1683, O.S. See letter from Stephanus van Cortlandt, dated November 2/12, 1683.

FROM JACOBUS VAN CORTLANDT

[January 1684]

[ ]  
 [ ]  
 [ ] glad to hear [that you are well and  
 hope] that it will long continue. [ ] letter sent  
 [with the request?] to send it to Richard van Rensselaer by one  
 or the other of my acquaintances, [ ]  
 promised to send it himself to Amsterdam by the packet.

The price of wheat and pease here is 6 stivers a schepel. Oats  
 can be obtained here and I shall take care that you receive some  
 in the spring. As to maize, which you write you have not  
 received, you must console yourself, for it is bad everywhere.  
 And as to what you write about Mr Livenston, I can learn  
 nothing from brother, [as they] keep it mighty still. Therefore,  
 you must console yourself until the proper time, when everything  
 will be revealed.

There is little news. Here also are many sick people and they  
 die quickly. Hendrick Vande [ ]<sup>321</sup> is dead;  
 Slechtenors<sup>322</sup> is dead; his daughter was confined of a young son  
 and is already dead;<sup>323</sup> Mrs Graham<sup>324</sup> is mortally ill, and many  
 more, so that it would take too long to mention them all. I shall  
 therefore break off. I commend you and your entire family to  
 the protection of God and remain,

Your willing servant and brother  
 J. V. Cortlantt

<sup>320</sup> One or two lines destroyed.

<sup>321</sup> Probably Hendrick van de Water, a skipper, mentioned in *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 450, 451.

<sup>322</sup> Gerrit van Slichtenhorst.

<sup>323</sup> Cf. letter from Stephanus van Cortlandt of about the same date.

<sup>324</sup> Probably the first wife of James Graham, alderman and afterwards recorder of New York. See marriage license of James Graham and Elizabeth Windebank, July 18, 1684, in *New York Col. MSS.*, 33:32, and also abstract of Graham's will, dated June 12, 1700, in N. Y. Hist. Society, *Collections*, 1892, 25:100-1, which speaks of his "deceased wife."

*Addressed:*

To Juffr. Maria van Renselaer  
 at Waeter Vliet  
 at Albany  
 p<sup>r</sup> the post

*Endorsed:*

Various letters to be looked over.

168[4]

FROM GABRIEL MINVIELLE

[Juffr Van] Ren[selaer, Sa]lute

By Jan Hendicks Dou you may send 284 boards. I paid him for the freight. I beg you to send me the account of the hops and boards with the lowest price.

Nothing else except hearty greetings.

Your obedient servant  
 G. Minvielle

[New Y]ork, May 6, 1684

*Addressed:* To Juffr Van Renselaer  
 at Albany

*Endorsed:*

And God spake those words  
 Exodus, Chap. 22<sup>325</sup>

FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER TO OLOFF STEVENSEN VAN  
 CORTLANDT

[May 11?, 1684]

[Your letter of ] by the ship Ja[n Baptist and]  
 the other in October 1683, by the ship [of] Jan Gorter,

<sup>325</sup> See p. 128.

<sup>326</sup> One or two lines destroyed. In the margin is written: "Copy of the letter to father, deceased."

deceased,<sup>327</sup> came duly to hand. I am glad that you received in good condition the little case with [                ], and that you liked it. You ask me for your account current, which I am sending you herewith. I made up the same to January 1, 1684. By balance of account there is coming to you the sum of 302:3 gl. You will please examine the account and if you find it correct enter it, as I did, thus in the books. If you wish me to send you the original receipt for the duty paid in England, you will please only command me [to do so].

According to your request, I am sending you again for your account a piece of good linen and 10 yards of Tours [gros-grain], together with a pair of black, knitted, silk stockings, amounting together to fl.86:5. I had them delivered to skipper Jan Mouris who, I hope, will, after a safe voyage, hand them to you.

I also see what you write about sister, your daughter, the widow of brother Jeremias, deceased, namely, that she would like to be relieved of the confused account and to have an honest means of support. God knows that I wish the same with all my heart. If I were there in the country, I should gladly offer her my services, but as I am the only one left here in this country, I can truly say that no small burden has fallen on my shoulders. You know that in the first place the settlement of the estate of brother Jan Baptist has devolved upon me [

]<sup>328</sup>

the difficulties on account of [the suit of Kiliaen van Rensselaer?] Then, all those requests of sister, [your daughter], have given me no little [trouble] to [attend to them] here to the best of my ability. An then, in addition to my private affairs and my official duties, which alone give me enough to do, there are my many

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<sup>327</sup> Jan Corter, mate of the ship *New York*, died at the house of Cornelia de Peyster, on October 30, 1683, after having been treated by Peter Sluyter, alias Dr Vorstman, one of the Labadist missionaries. *Ecclesiastical Records [of the] State of New York*, 2:869-71.

<sup>328</sup> Several lines destroyed.

disabilities due to sickness and [gout?], with which I am now troubled again.

As to the account of her husband, deceased, concerning the colony, I am not able to do anything about it, as it has already for a long time been in the custody of the young patroon, Kiliaen van Rensselaer, at Nyckerck, and as we have lately been in dispute regarding the above mentioned suit, which is not yet ended and will, I think, have to be settled by compromise, there is no familiar intercourse between us. I have heretofore sufficiently told my nephew my opinion about the aforesaid matter, but it seems that ill-will has the upper hand and the respect and deference which one ought to show to one's uncle is often ignored, whereby many [ ] may be obtained. However, when I get the account back, I shall with the nearest relatives and [heirs?] of father carefully examine the same, in order that we may for once be released from each other.

I also see what you write at length about the land of [Broer Cornelis, which the widow] of Philip Schuyler, deceased, would like to buy, as it lies next to her land [ ]

[<sup>329</sup>] not

being for me, but had the use of it, and while I [ ]

sister, I was troubled by the attorneys of Barent, the miller, at Albany, to pay what was due to him from the estate of [brother Jan Baptist], deceased, for which the money was needed, otherwise I should not have resolved to do so, as the widow of Philip Schuyler writes me that according to my demand she has decided to pay the 2500 guilders, Holland money, for the land, which money would have been very welcome to me, if sister, your daughter, had not objected to it. I wish that this had not happened, because an honest man likes to keep his word and I could have accommodated sister with some other land. Inasmuch as sister now strongly insists on getting the said land and if she can resolve to pay the fl.2500 which the widow Schuyler will gladly give, we may grant sister the land, to wit, the rear land of Broer Cornelys, the island

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<sup>329</sup> Several lines destroyed.

opposite it, and the land of Tuenys de Metselaer, and not, as sister writes, from where the old house of Broer Cornelis stood, which with his island is excluded. It seems to me that sister, your daughter, is a little too covetous. I shall then deduct the said fl.2500 from the account. I request that this may by you and by sister be kept still for another year, as I am writing to the widow Schuyler that, as Teunis de Metselaer objects and I do not want to have any trouble, [

]<sup>330</sup>

Ending herewith, after hearty greetings to yourself and your family, [I remain],

Your [obedient servant]  
R. V. R[ensselaer]

Be pleased to give my friendly  
greetings to your son Jacobus.  
I hope that the Lord will now bless  
the trading which he has undertaken.

FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER

[May 11, 1684]

[  
[ wish?] that this had been settled  
by your husband, deceased. I [  
]

to be delivered to the young patroon, Kiliaen van Rensselaer, and whereas we are still in litigation about the judgment rendered by the Court of Gelderland in favor of Brant van Slichtenhorst, of which I informed you before this, there is no familiar intercourse between us. But I shall do my best that that account be ventilated and examined and let you know the opinion of the friends, in order that the matter may be settled and you be released from it. I hope that the Lord God may let me live long enough to see everything straightened out for once.

<sup>330</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>331</sup> Several lines destroyed.

[I notice] that you see no chance of bringing back the colony to its former condition and that the citizens wish to have a king and that it is all in vain to spend more money on it now that the village<sup>832</sup> is withheld from us, and that it is bad to have to do with the great in trying to protect one's right when it is against their interest and opinion. I do not doubt, however, but your brother Stephanus van Cortland will be able to bring about this much through the present governor, Colonel Thomas Dongan, that the boundaries of the colony may be extended. I intend to take the liberty to write the honorable governor a short letter about that by the ship of Jan Gorter, deceased.

The 100 beavers for account of the colony I duly received by the ship of Jacob Mourits. They are in the custody of S<sup>r</sup> Cornelis Jacobse Moy, attorney for Barent Pieters, the miller, to sell them for our account and to retain the proceeds for what is due to Barent Pieters from the estate of brother Jan Baptist, deceased. I have paid him some money in addition, in order to satisfy him for a while.

[I have] noticed with no little sorrow that between you and the widow of Philip Schuyler, deceased, there is no harmony on account of the land which Philip Schuyler [wished] to buy in addition [to his land] in order not to get into trouble with his neighbors, [and to which you are entitled] as being the nearest [relative]. If I [can ] and that you [get] the same.

[ ]  
 the Lord [ ]  
 very hard [ ]  
 of Barent Pieterse [ ]  
 bound [ ]  
 writes me [that your husband], deceased, [ ]  
 ] lant to do you can [ ]  
 would have come [to] me if you [ ]  
 had had there and it is as the widow Schuyler [says], that it

<sup>832</sup> *de byeenwooning*; meaning Albany.

<sup>833</sup> Several lines destroyed.

is not for the public, but for you privately, because you enjoy the benefit of it. I wish that they had accommodated you with some other land and that I might have kept my word here. I have written about it to your honorable father and, if you are satisfied with it, I beg you to keep it still for another year, as if it remained in common, for I shall write to the widow Schuyler that because T[eunis] de Metselaer will not consent thereto and in order to keep out of trouble, I let the matter rest for the present and let it lie in common. But you must now above all see to it that some money be sent to me, whether from the sale of some farms or other [things], so as to get rid of Barent Pietersz. I told S<sup>r</sup> Moy that I would not furnish or pay all the money until he [paid] what he owes in New Netherland for the mill rights near Berent island<sup>334</sup> and what is due as per account, but this is only to gain time and would not hold good here before the court. However, you must press said Barent hard about the rent of the water power, as it [belongs to the jurisdiction] of the colony.

I had not expected that of Marten Gerrits, as it troubled him very much that he did not [take] the island when Governor Andros tried to [grant it] to him, according to what I hear. I had [not expected] from Governor Andros, the man who seemed to be so just, that he would try to give away another man's property, but [ ] makes up for it [ ]

[ ] he [renders] to the Duke of York [an account of] his administration [ ]

<sup>335</sup>

[ ] owed, which according [ ] would be, but I do not know whether [he] paid her or not. If it is not paid and you have any seawan, be pleased to pay it, in order that I may not be troubled about that any more, and kindly [charge] it to the colony's account, to which I shall credit it again.

Now, as to the island, Marten Gerritsz wrote me some time ago whether I would sell the island and how much I wanted for

<sup>334</sup> Intended for Beeren island, now Barren Island, near Coeymans.

<sup>335</sup> Several lines destroyed.

it. In reply I wrote him that the island was one of the most important farms and that it and a few others must produce the revenue of the patroon wherewith to pay the current expenses and that it was best that he should remain a tenant, but that he might write me sometime how much he cared to give for the island. Thus far I have received no answer to that, so that he lets it rest there.

As to your writing that the land is getting to be much in demand and brings big money, owing to the increase in population and the rapid falling off of the trade, and that there is no land, no matter how far from the place, but it is being bought, yes, that people go to live halfway down the Maquas land, so that you advise me to keep up the price of the land, I shall say that I am glad to hear that the land is getting to be in demand. I hope that thereby we may more easily obtain money. And as to your advise that we should keep a good share of the colony, it has never been my intention to sell all of it, but that you and your brother Stephanus van Cortlant should stake out and sell the outlying places which contribute the least to the revenue of the colony. But the island, the farm of Pieter de Vlamingh, the farm in the Greene Bos called Cralo, the farm of Teunis [ ] , that of ] Gerrit Teunis, and all the land lying above, we have no intention of selling, but for what [ ]

[ ]. As to the other [land], as being more desirable, [ ] to continue as [before] ] write[ ]

]<sup>336</sup>

As to the [ ]  
 the farm [ ]  
 of Teunis [ ]  
 [ ]  
 that if he [ ]  
 of which not he, but I [ ]  
 although I think that the only [ ]

336 Several lines destroyed.

] is that he has so quickly [ ] his money.  
Be pleased to tell Teunis, with my greetings, that I shall answer  
his letter.

You have written to me several times to have for yourself the ownership of the land of Broer Cornelis and the grist-mill. In my opinion, the mill must above all else remain part of the jurisdiction of the colony. The value of the mill, like that of all other mills, must be judged not according to the structure, which amounts to little, but according to the water rights, which likewise belong to the jurisdiction of the colony, on account of which such a mill, which stands so close to the village and which must grind the grain of all the inhabitants, is of no small value. In Flodder's time it was leased for fl.1200 to fl.1500 in seawan a year, when the seawan was worth more than in my time, or now, while since that time the number of the inhabitants has increased.

As to the foreland of [Broer] Cornelis, since you have the use of that, I do not believe that any one will seek to take that away from you and I trust that from the time your husband, deceased, sent over the account of the colony, no rent will be demanded from you. As for myself, I shall assist you therein as far as it is within my power and I doubt not but you and your children will retain possession of it. I wish that I could satisfy you in the matter, but it seems strange to me that you write that you hope that we shall never get into any [dispute] about that. God grant that you may have no fear of that, unless it should be on your part. I do not know what you could have against me [ ].

The land mentioned heretofore [ ],  
that therefore [is worth?] so much [ ]

]<sup>337</sup>

have kept during [the time of] Kleyn [ ]  
] knew that of [ ]

send [ ] legal [ ]  
] must do. I have [ ]

If your son Kiliaen should come over, [you can give] him the

<sup>337</sup> Several lines destroyed.

[account] and he can then collate it with that in brother's own handwriting and examine it, in order that [he] may be satisfied that everything is honest and correct. Be pleased to let me know your pleasure and I shall comply with it and if it had not been for the fact that the estate of mother, deceased, had diminished so through the long delay in sending over the ample power of attorney to sell among ourselves the respective portions of the real estate which came to us after her death, I would have sent Secretary Livingston the [settlement of the] entire estate [

]<sup>338</sup>

[                  ] of the farm [

] to put the same in her name, for since my departure it was put in my [name] ]  
strange to me, for I do not [know?] Jan Casperse.

As to sister Leonora, she still lives at Amsterdam and has the younger son of sister La Coert, deceased, living with her, who gives her trouble enough. He is growing toward manhood and learns the goldsmith's trade (*gaet op gout smede[n]*). The elder [son] is with his [father's] sisters, who likewise have much trouble with him. However, we shall hope for the best. Brother Joan Baptist's eldest son, named Kiliaen, is studying with me here at Vyanen. I hope that there is some good stuff in him and that he will follow in his father's footsteps and sooner or later relieve me somewhat. I am glad that with your children everything is still all right. As to your daughter Anna, although you do not write to me about her, I shall put all talk aside. To marry in haste is often [a matter of] repenting at leisure. May the Almighty preserve her and grant her what is honorable and what will tend to the salvation of her soul.

As far as my family are concerned, now they are well and then they are sick, so that meanwhile we take it easy. At present my dear wife is not feeling very well. In the late summer she will again be confined.<sup>339</sup> May the good Lord preserve her.

<sup>338</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>339</sup> *met de neus in het [vet vallen]*; literally, fall with the nose in the fat, or the butter.

The result and whatever I may have forgotten, I shall write to you in my next letter. I wish you grace and peace and after hearty greetings to yourself and the children remain,

Your [faithful] brother

Richard van Rensselaer

I beg you, please see to it that I  
get rid of Barent, the miller, and do  
not give him any peace and make him  
pay rent. Your brother must help you.  
After you have read the enclosed [letter],  
please seal it and deliver it to him.

NICOLAES VAN BEECK TO REV. GODEFRIDUS DELLIUS

[ ]<sup>340</sup>  
[I duly re]ceived [your letter of the ] and was pleased to see what [you had done in the matter of the colony of] Rentselaerswyck, of which one piece [of land] or farm after another is sold for cash and which, if this continues, will soon be entirely lost to us or become of little value, so that [ ]

[ ]. So I was also informed by Mr Robbert Livingston, who married the widow of Nicolaes van Rensselaer, and who requests to be advised as to what the situation is in regard to the [ownership of the] colony and would like to have a division made of the shares.

This colony consisted of 5 shares, of which Kilian van Rensselaer owned two  $1/5$  shares, Jan de Laet  $1/5$  share, Toussain Muyssart  $1/5$  share, and Samuel Blommart and Adam Bessels  $1/5$  share. And whereas, owing to the length of time and numerous children, this matter [of looking after the interests of the respective shares] has not been well attended to, the Rensselaers have for 50 years lived on [the income from the colony] without giving the participants any revenue from it or rendering any account, which, however, by judgment of their High

<sup>340</sup> One or two lines destroyed.

Mightinesses, dated June 14, 1650,<sup>341</sup> they were well expressly ordered to do, but have failed to do, having by force remained in possession until one of the heirs of Jan de Laet, at the time when Commander Binckes was there, for her portion took possession of some farms and thus paid herself.<sup>342</sup> And whereas we could not well bring together the owners of Muyssart's share, which was divided, we have thought it best to look out for our own share, being held by the families of Blommaert and Bessels. Having investigated what might best serve for our benefit, we have decided to execute a blank power of attorney and to send it to Mr. Cornelis Steenwyck, with the request that it may please his honor to look after our interests, or to employ thereto such person as he may think most advisable, since we did not know whether we might burden [your reverence] therewith, for the division will necessarily have to take place.

[

] saving all his [

to have means at hand to [

].

Thanking your reverence meanwhile for [your exertions in the matter, we] beg you to continue therein, and [if there is anything] in which we can be of service to you in return, be pleased [to command us].

After hearty greetings, I remain,

Your humble [servant]

Nicolaes van B[eeck]<sup>343</sup>

In Amsterdam, May 29, 1684

<sup>341</sup> See *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 1:406-7.

<sup>342</sup> See Contract between Jeremias van Rensselaer and Johanna de Laet, dated June 21, 1674, in *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 458-59.

<sup>343</sup> On April 2, 1674, Nicolaes van Beeck and other directors of the Dutch West India Companay, in view of the efforts which were then being made by the proprietors of the colony of Rensselaerswyck to obtain a patent from the Duke of York, signed a declaration that the patroon and his co-partners were the true owners of the village of Beverwyck and that the Company had no right, title or claim thereto. See *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 2:558.

*Addressed:*

The Reverend and Highly Learned  
Domine Godefridus Dellius,  
Minister of the Divine Word  
in  
New Albany

FROM KILIAEN VAN RENSSELAER

[June?] 1684

[  
[                  ] understood from it [  
] of Cornelis [  
] at first [  
] have not yet received any answer.

Hendrick van Nes' wife<sup>345</sup> is still very sick. We have not yet been to Hoosick,<sup>346</sup> but expect to go this week to take a look. I am sending herewith by Provoost 100 boards. They are from Spytsenbergh.<sup>347</sup> He could not take any more of them on board. Uncle Andries<sup>348</sup> has done so much talking here about uncle Steven not being able to make an agreement<sup>349</sup> that the whole Veyck<sup>350</sup> knows about it. Mother will please look sometime for my saddle. At the first opportunity I shall send the rest of the

<sup>344</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>345</sup> Annetje Everts, the first wife of Hendrick Cornelissen van Nes. Nov. 25, 1688, he married Catarina van Dam, of New Albany. Holland Society, *Year Book*, 1904, 17:23.

<sup>346</sup> March 6, 1684, Maria van Rensselaer, Hendrick van Nes, Egbert Teunissen and Jacobus van Cortlandt petitioned the governor and council for a license to purchase a small tract of land above Albany, on both sides of a creek called Hoosick, praying that the same might be confirmed by patent. *Land Papers*, 2:29; *Council Minutes*, 5:54.

<sup>347</sup> Teunis Cornelissen van der Poel.

<sup>348</sup> Andries Teller.

<sup>349</sup> Meaning apparently that Stephanus van Cortlandt had not been able to come to an agreement with Governor Dongan about a patent for the colony.

<sup>350</sup> The Fuyck, or Albany.

boards. I received my suit. Jeremias is still well. No more for the present.

Your obedient son  
K. V. Rensselaer

Anno 1684

*Addressed:*

To the Widow Maria van Rensselaer  
at New York

FROM JACOBUS VAN CORTLANDT

New York, July 16, 1684

Maria van Renselaer

Dear Sister: I received your letter and learned from it your safe arrival and also that in the yacht of Abram Schuyler you had shipped for your account 150 boards, of which according to your orders I disposed as follows: to brother Cortlandt 50 boards and to Jan Dervall 100 boards. There is little news here, so that I shall break off and refer to my arrival. Meanwhile, I remain,

Your very dutiful brother  
J. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To [Juff. Maria van Renselaer]  
[at Albany]

*Endorsed:* 1684

Jacobus

FROM JOHN DARVALL

[  
[  
] hope however [that the child]ren  
[and?] friends came home safely. This will serve to advise you  
that by the sloop *Pearl* I received for your account 150 boards,  
at 22 for one beaver, amounting to fl.54:5 in beavers, with which

<sup>351</sup> Several lines destroyed.

I have credited you on my books. I shall break off with hearty greetings from myself and my wife to you and all your dear children, together with brother Teller and his wife and children and all the friends. Commending you all to the protection of the Most High, I remain,

Your very affectionate brother  
John Darvall

N: Yorke ye 24 July 1684

*Addressed:*

To the worthy widow  
Juff<sup>r</sup> Jeremias V. Renslaer  
At Albany, on Watervliet  
Q: D: P:<sup>352</sup>

*Endorsed:* From Jan Darvall and sister

FROM JACOBUS VAN CORTLANDT

[August? 1684]

[ ] the enclosed [ ] bought [ ]

] 32 pounds, [which I] hope will please you. I doubt not but it is as good as can be bought for the money. I therefore beg sister to let me have some muddes [of wheat?] within two months to satisfy the sellers, for I had to execute a bond to pay in two months and all in money. Ending herewith, I commend you all to the protection of the Most High and hope that He will again restore your family to good health and so I remain,

Your obedient servant and brother  
J. V. Cortlandt

There is no news here. I do not know whether brother has forwarded your letters. I gave to the Negro a package

<sup>352</sup> *Quam Deus Preservet.*

<sup>353</sup> Several lines destroyed.

of deerskins which I found in a corner  
of my house. I do not know whether they  
belong to you.

*Addressed:*

To Juffrouw Maria van Renselaer  
at Albany

FROM RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER

[September 1/11, 1684]

[]<sup>354</sup>

[] payable to []  
[] in my last [letter I] had  
written further that out of consideration []  
[] self []  
[] be able [] having  
[] will then [receive] the remaining []  
[] have not been able to accommodate you as  
I wrote at large in my preceding letter.

I see further what you write about Secretary Livingston.<sup>355</sup> I  
do not [understand why] he stirs up so [much trouble]. I doubt  
not but he will find that the salt eats itself. I am writing about  
him to Mr Pieter de Lanoy and am sending him such documents  
as I think will be serviceable to him, as you can see from the  
enclosed which, after you have read it, you can forward to him.

I also see that there was to be a general assembly at New York  
and that two deputies were to be sent from Albany, but none  
from the colony, which in my opinion is very illogical, as we on  
the part of the colony are the oldest [in point of settlement] and  
ought to have the first seat. I shall write to brother Stephanus  
about it to know the cause of it. By this opportunity I am writing  
also to the honorable governor and I shall send the letter under  
cover of my letter to brother Stephanus van Cortlant. I hope

<sup>354</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>355</sup> See p. 127.

that it will have some effect. I am longing to hear how the gentleman behaves himself and what his conduct [toward us] is, whether we may expect anything from him.

As to the pasture of brother, deceased, on the hill, and the piece of land on Lubberden land, I would for the present leave the same unsold, but lease them at the highest [figure]. As to my land, I shall be pleased to know whether any revenue comes from it and, as it lies so near, I should like to keep it.

]<sup>356</sup>

[ ] on of [

] is left to [the decision of] two [impartial men?]. Whatever the result will be, it is recommended to you [

]. When that is finished, we shall [

]. I shall do as much in your favor as [I can], as I wrote at large by skipper Jacob Mourits. [I shall] break off, after recommending the affairs of the colony heartily to yourself and your son Kiliaen.

My wife's [ ] has lately caused her a good deal of discomfort. May the Lord grant a good outcome, to her salvation. I am, thank God, now again quite strong and well, which I hope may long continue.

When the farm<sup>357</sup> is conveyed to Myndert Harmense, he must remain bound to fence [in the land] if his cattle do any damage, and all that saving the lord's right. Let me know sometime whether the participants have written to [Livingston] in answer to his letter. He knocks at the wrong door. I shall break off. Commending you to the grace of God, I remain, after hearty greetings,

Your affectionate brother  
R. V. Rensselaer

As I fear that the letter  
to Mr Pieter de Lanoy would  
reach him somewhat late, I

<sup>356</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>357</sup> The farm of Pieter Winne. See letter from Maria van Rensselaer of November? 1683.

have not sent it to you. When  
you speak with him, he will  
tell you more about it.

*Addressed:*      Honorable, Virtuous Madam, the widow  
of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased,  
in his lifetime director of the colony  
of Rensselaerswyck  
in the Duchy of New Albany, in America

*Endorsed:*

[ ]  
Grant of the land for me and Myndert Harmense

RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER TO PIETER DE LANOY

[September 1/11], 1684

[ ]  
[ ] will do our best to collect as much as possible, on  
which I rely entirely. I [ ] authority, as I  
duly [ ] see no [ ].  
I [ ] send to you first a short account, from  
which you can see how much brother Domine Nicolaes van  
Rensselaer, deceased, owed to the estate of my brother Joan  
Baptist van Rensselaer, amounting in all to the sum of fl.3324:  
11:8, with the interest charged by brother, deceased, until May  
1, 1675, the complete account of which I have sent to the secre-  
tary<sup>358</sup> and which was sworn to by me as having been thus drawn  
up by the hand of my brother, deceased. Also, an authentic  
copy of the will of our mother, deceased, showing the bequest to  
Domine, deceased.<sup>359</sup> Also two authentic copies from the children

<sup>358</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>359</sup> Robert Livingston.

<sup>360</sup> According to a power of attorney from Richard van Rensselaer and others, dated July 5, 1689 (N. Y. State Library, *Annual Report*, 1909, 92:28), the will of Anna van Rensselaer was executed before Notary Anthony vande Ven on November 9, 1667. See also New York Public Library, *Bulletin* 1924, p. 529, where mention is made of the "Will of Madam Anna van Wealy dated 1669 in Dutch concerning Nicholas van Rensselaer," 1669 may be the date of a codicil.

of our mother, deceased, about the disposal of the estate of their father, deceased, to prove how large was the portion inherited by Domine Nicolaes in the colony, in which our father, deceased, had a 6/10 interest, and the nine children left by him, to wit, Joannes, who was a son of the first marriage, Joan Baptist, Maria, Jeremias, Hilgonda, Leonora, Nicolaes, Susanna and Richard, inherited nine parts, and our mother inherited one child's portion, so that each on account of the estate of our father, deceased, had in the colony 1/10 part of the above mentioned 6/10 interest. Of them, two died without issue and made the mother their heir.

As in my preceding letter I wrote you at large my opinion and defense against the claim of the said Secretary Livingston, I consider it of no use to repeat it here, but recommend to you for the last time to prosecute the matter against him most diligently. I have also thought it well to write to the honorable governor and council about [the representation of the colony in the general Assembly, under cover of my letter to]<sup>361</sup> [Step]hanus van Cortlant. Ending herewith, I commend you to God and remain,

Your [willing servant and friend]  
R. V. Rensse[laer]

You must request that Secretary  
Livingston give security for the administration  
and for the reimbursement of the money and costs  
paid by me, for all he requires me to do, I am  
not bound to do, as shown by the affidavit sent  
heretofore.

*Addressed:*      Worthy, Discreet Mr Pieter de Lanoy  
                            Attorney before the Superior  
                            Court at New York

*Endorsed:*

From Mr Richard [van Rens]selaer 1684  
from Vyanen  
[To P. de la] Noy

<sup>361</sup> Several lines destroyed.

RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER TO GOVERNOR DONGAN AND  
COUNCIL

September 1/11, 1684

[ ]  
[ ] year [ ]<sup>362</sup>

division] of the colony [of Rensselaerswyck, in order to ascertain] what might be the portion of [Domine Nicolaes van Rensselaer], deceased, in order to pay therefrom the debts of our brother, [deceased], which may be left in Albany, whereupon your honors have been pleased to order that the aforesaid petition<sup>363</sup> should be sent to us to make answer thereto within 15 months. I have therefore concluded to present hereby my answer to your honors as best I could, in order that your honors in your honors' wisdom and counsel might do therein as according to law your honors might judge best.

First, then, with your honors' leave, I beg to say that as soon as I learned that our brother, Domine N. van Rensselaer, had died, I felt it my duty to send the widow by letter my condolences on account of the death of our brother, her husband, deceased, and to inform her at the same time that I hoped that before her marriage she had protected herself by marriage articles from having any community of property, so as to free herself from the debts which our brother, deceased, during his lifetime had made here in Holland and in England, as I noticed that there were many debts. This was by her and her friends not taken in very good part and instead of thanking me for the brotherly advice, they sent me a very sharp answer. Since the widow's remarriage, however, to Secretary Livingston, I have several times written at length about the matter and all that relates to it, first by letter dated July 12, 1680, then on May 14, 1682, and the last time

<sup>362</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>363</sup> Petition of Robert Livingston for a division of the colony of Rensselaerswyck. This petition was in *New York Colonial Manuscripts*, 31:90, but was destroyed in the Capitol fire of March 29, 1911.

on April 11/21, 1683, of which letters I should like to pray that they might be read to you, honorable gentlemen, in order that your honors might [

]<sup>364</sup>

that those debts [ ] might be paid  
from the portion [ ]  
and not those [ ]

all the participants, and as some are minors, this can not well be done. I have no objection to a division being made in order to find out how much the interest in the colony of our brother, the Domine, deceased, amounts to, but I would ask your honors that this, or the value thereof, together with what our brother has had there in the country, might be taken into account and that then a proper preference and ratio might be kept, both as to the debts there and those in this country, for he has not done right in paying the debts there and letting the creditors here look on, which is very unfair. But I doubt not but your honors will use discretion in the matter, on which I shall rely. Whatever may further be needed for the verification of my case will be produced by my attorney, Mr Pieter de la Moy.<sup>365</sup> Ending herewith, I commend your honors' administration to the protection of God and remain,

Your honors' obedient servant

R. V. Rensselaer

*Endorsed:* 1 Sept. 1684

Copy of a letter from R. V. Rensselaer  
to Coll. Thomas Dongan and Council

1684, 7b<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>366</sup>

<sup>364</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>365</sup> Pieter de Lanoy.

<sup>366</sup> The original of this letter and an English translation were in *New York Colonial Manuscripts*, 31:178-79. Another letter from Richard van Rensselaer, of the same date, to Governor Dongan, also accompanied by a translation, was in the same volume, p. 176-77. Both letters and the translations were destroyed in the Capitol fire of 1911.

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[September] 1684

[ ]  
 [ ] requested twice to excuse nephew van Rensselaer from accepting the] commissaryship, saying that [it was not possible for him to do so] as he wished in time to learn [ ] in order that he might become able to do great things. His youth, inexperience and other excuses, [however], could excuse neither him nor Marten Gerritsz, so that he will have to resign himself to it. I had nominated Theunis van der Poel and Theunis Slingerlant in their places and filed their names with the secretary in the fort, but it did not help.

I have presented a petition to the governor, in which I showed his honor the warrant from his Highness<sup>368</sup> and requested him to let us enjoy the benefit thereof; if not, that his honor would be pleased to grant us a patent for the land without Albany and to release us from the [tax of] 300 schepels of wheat, [stating] that, as to Albany and the other privileges, we referred the matter to the Duke. I expect to receive an answer one of these days. Fare you well, together with your children, and accept greetings from

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To

Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer  
at Watervliett  
Albany

<sup>367</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>368</sup> See Warrant from the Duke of York to Governor Andros to issue a patent for Rensselaerswyck, dated June 7, 1678, in *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:269-70.

*Endorsed:* 1684

[Teun]us de Metselaer  
 [Joh]anus Wendel  
 [Wille]m Teller  
 [ ] Jbes Smit  
 [Dav]it Schuyler  
 [He]ndrick Abel

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[September?] 1684

[ ]  
 [ ]  
 letter [ ]  
 ]<sup>369</sup> therefore shall answer [your]

] the O[ ]. The millstones ordered arrived in the ship *De Bever*. I shall send them to you as soon as they are unloaded.

The petition regarding the colony which I delivered to the honorable governor, he has sent to the Duke [of York] and he desires the colony to remain as it is until further order from the Duke.<sup>370</sup> Further, every one here is well, so that I shall break off. Commending you to God, I remain, after greetings to you and the children,

Your brother willing to serve  
 S. V. Cortlandt

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Renssel<sup>r</sup>  
 at Watervliett  
 Albany

*Endorsed:* 1684

<sup>369</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>370</sup> November 1, 1684, Sir John Werden wrote to Governor Dongan: "As to Renselaers-wicke Colony, the Comrs thinke you will doe well to make any agreemts wth them for the Dkes advantage, wch they will consent unto, but not to hurt their possessions and rights." *Doc. rel to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:351.

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[Beginning of October? 1684]

]<sup>371</sup>

[  
 [ ] that you [  
 [ ] which [  
 ]

] is not only difficult, but also detrimental  
 [to] you [on account] of the heavy assessment which has been  
 put upon you, which can not be remedied by the magistrates, who  
 can not demand of the assessors that they declare why it is that  
 a person is assessed so high, unless the party swears that he is not  
 worth so much as the assessors have assessed him.

On account of the outstanding accounts of father, deceased,  
 no butter has come in, except one tub, which sister Cornelia has  
 had. If any more comes in, we shall remember you.

The letters which came by *De Bever* I have already sent to  
 you. Richard van Rensselaer writes me that by the ship *Charles*  
 he will write to me.

In the boat of Cornelis I have shipped the two millstones. He  
 will agree with you about the freight. Sr Ebbinck writes me that  
 the best side of them must be recut and that they are the best of  
 that kind that are to be had. They will cost you here in seawan,  
 or the value thereof, fl.256:-:<sup>372</sup> I hope that they will render  
 you good service.

There has come from Holland for the account of father,  
 deceased, 11 yards of black silk, 1 piece of white linen of 16  
 stivers a yard, and 1 pair of black silk stockings of 8 gl.10st.,  
 amounting together in Holland money to fl.86:5:-. This is all  
 for the present. Breaking off, I commend you to God and after  
 greetings remain,

[Your faithful] brother  
 [S. V. Cortlandt]

<sup>371</sup> Several lines destroyed.<sup>372</sup> On October 25, 1661, the city of Amsterdam paid to Hendrick Reael for 2 millstones for the colony of New Amstel fl.82:10:00. *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 2:191.

The governor requests that the 300 schepels of wheat be sent down. Be pleased to notify the farmers that they thrash [the grain for the] tithes and send it at the [first opportunity].

TO STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

October 10, [1684]

Brother Cortlant:

I duly received the millstones. They are good, but as far as the price is concerned, we shall discuss that further. I ask you kindly to send me a copy of what Reygart wrote to father, deceased,<sup>373</sup> for he writes me that he wrote to father that if I am satisfied with it, everything is all right, so that I ought to know what I shall say to him. I wrote him about having the old mill. He makes many objections, as if it were worth thousands of guilders, whereas I fear that this winter it will fall down and Luycas will have to move into the new mill. I also wrote him a little harshly about my account of Rensel[aerswyck] and about the inheritance in Holland. It seems that he is not well pleased with that. He writes as if there was nothing due to me. If anything was coming to me it would have to come from the estate of Jan Battist, or I must send over money and then he would pay me in money, or, if I wish to have an account, he will send it to me. I do not know what to do about this. I thought that I would have at least enough there to pay the debts in Holland. Thus I sit in a sorrowful condition. I wish that my Kielejaen was able to go over; I would send him over, or brother Jacobus, in order to be rid of [it all]. There are now writings enough from the other participants [whether you know it, I do not know] to sell their shares, but this can not well be done either without the knowledge of Rygart, and Rygart will write by the ship *De* [ ] to Livingston, who now goes down. I ask brother to be pleased to look out a little for my interests, for I think that plenty of haste will be made, as I hear that [ ] Bar[entt, the miller] to the [ ]

<sup>373</sup> See letter of May 11?, 1684, on p. 142.

] very [

]<sup>874</sup>

is in the book and the said Barentt says that he will give security here to pay what he owes here, for he says that there is a counter account dating from the time of old Slechtenorst, and he wants to have that amount. He therefore wants to summon me before the court or to submit the matter to arbitrators, who are to examine the account and settle the question. It seems to me that it can do no harm to have him give security, for there will be much trouble about the old account, for Jan Batist would not accept it, nor would [Domine] Renselaer, deceased. Please let me know sometime what I had better do in the matter. I can not stand any trouble, for I am very feeble and can not walk very much yet, neither can Kieliejaen.

Further, I hope that you are all well and commend you to God's keeping.

At Watervliet Your sister ready to oblige

Maria van Cortlant

Kieliejaen asks whether brother  
cares to have the two mares of Jonge Jan.

Mr Pritt[y] wishes to buy them. He can get  
no horse for the governor.

*Addressed:*

Mr Stefenis van Cortlant  
Merchant at New York

FROM CATRINA DARVALL

[ ] at home [ ]  
[ ] in good health, giving [ ]  
Corne]lis a bag in which are [ ]

molasses cakes]. It is written on the molasses cakes  
for whom they are. I am also sending 2 large porcelain jars,  
costing the sum of fl.5:10, for which you must send money to

<sup>874</sup> Two or three lines destroyed.

<sup>875</sup> Several lines destroyed.

your daughter Maria, to buy a cape for her. Please do not forget to send down peas. I shall send the bags by the next sloop. I had to buy for Hendrick  $\frac{3}{4}$  yards more of blue cloth, as the material came short. I have not yet been able to buy a folding pocket-knife for Kiliaen. I shall look around once more thoroughly. No more for the present. I shall break off with the hearty greetings from myself and my husband to you and your children, commanding you all to the protection of the Most High, and I remain,

Your very affectionate sister  
Catrina Darvall

The 27th of October 1684  
In New York  
The molasses cake is sent  
to Andries Teller

*Addressed:*

To Maria van Renselaer  
at Albany

FROM CATRINA DARVALL

[ ]  
 [ ] with fur  
 [ and other ] goods [ ] small pillow case  
 [ ] 6 oranges from your son [Hendrick];  
 also a paper with lace for the Negress. I hope that you duly received the molasses cakes and the jars, for which your daughter Maria expects to get back her money. She began to go to school today, to a new master, who has just come from Holland.<sup>877</sup> I hope that she will learn much. I can get no knife for Kiliaen and should like to know what to send for his money. No more for the present. I shall break off, with the hearty greetings from myself and my husband to you and your children, commanding

<sup>876</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>877</sup> The name of this Dutch schoolmaster has not been ascertained.

you all to the protection of the Most High. May He preserve you and all of us together. I remain

Your very obliging sister  
Catrina Darvall

The 3d of November 1684  
in New York

*Addressed:*

To Maria van Renselaer  
at Albany

[ ] fl. 83

*Endorsed:* 1684

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

November 12, 1684

Dear Brother: Your letter of the 11th of May I duly received. This, then, will serve for answer. That you have not written to Livingston strengthens his position and I should have been pleased to hear that the account of my husband, deceased, had been settled. I therefore beg, no, not beg, but pray, that the matter of the account may come to an end. I am sorry that you are still in litigation with the young patroon, but from what I have heard I fear that you will get involved in even more serious litigation with the co-participants, since one Blommert and Bessels have sent a power of attorney to S<sup>r</sup> Steenwyck to take their share out of the colony and to sell it, and van Beeck and Musart have written to Livingston. What they wrote I do not know, but as to [the power of attorney] to S<sup>r</sup> Steenwyck, that is true. They write that they want to have an accounting from the year 1630, and that they have never received one stiver out of the colony from the sale of farms. All this writing is to the advantage of Livingston, who is also the cause of all the trouble that is impending, of which D<sup>e</sup> Dellius has some knowledge, so that we need not expect anything else but that the colony is at an end.

And as to my brother Steeven's [chance of] obtaining some-

thing from the governor with reference to the limits of the colony, brother says that the governor will write about it to the Duke, but what shall I say, it is not. . . .<sup>378</sup> So that you can see now how matters stand with us, for here we have no friends at New York, so that Livingston will have his way, for he has the governor on his side and the governor himself told me that he would not benefit the Rensselaers who are in Holland, as appears to be the case, for when recently he was up here he placed a quitrent on all the [houses] in the Fuyck and also imposed a quitrent on our colony and attached all [the grain?].

As to [ ]], when brother Steven requested that we might have a patent thereof, he asked in whose name it was to be put. He said in the name of the family van Renselaer, and if it could not be put in the name of a family, then in that of my son Kieliaen. No, said he, the Rensselaers have names enough, but if you like to have it, I shall do it. Think, therefore, how things stand. And here you are so embarrassed about the house of Schuyler. They are no longer our friends and you need not spare them; whatever they can do to stand in our way they will not fail to do.

As to your having written to my father, deceased, about the land, [namely,] that if I was satisfied with it, I should keep it still a while, I wrote to my brother Steven for a copy of father's letter, but did not get it, and although I do not know what you wrote to father, I shall, please God, keep the land. And as to your writing that if you had known that I wished to buy the land you would not have put a price on it, you would even then not have sold it to me, but to such an interloper (*onderkruyper*), who does not even pay tithes. It was on his advice that I had the land cleared. You write that Phlip offered you fl.2000, and that you leave it to him for fl.2500, but if he does not want to give that, you will let him have it for fl.2000. The *joffrou*<sup>379</sup> no sooner hears that I wish to keep the land but she says: I will give the fl.2500. I think that my father's money is as good as hers and

<sup>378</sup> The last eight words are canceled.

<sup>379</sup> Madam Margareta Schuyler, the widow of Philip Pietersen Schuyler.

that you would rather sell the land to me for fl.2000 than to her for fl.2500, because it takes that much off the debt due to father and also because it is for your brother's children. But it seems that you are in need [of money] to pay brother Batist's debts and to keep up his reputation and that he who is out of sight can not get anything for himself, but is passed by.

As to what you write about cultivating the land [

], that is only jealousy, for even if it should cost her fl.2000 more, she would still want to have it or do something else.

As you were in need of money, I sold the farm of Piter Winne to Myndert Harmense, for which at the first opportunity you were to receive fl.1000, but as in your letter you say nothing about this, I take it that the letter has not reached you. I therefore send you now the third bill of exchange on *Joff. Sybinck* and . . . . . , so that you may receive 2000 guilders. So that I took care that you would get money and I the land. As to what brother Steven writes about the land being detrimental to the island, that is not so, but they have something else in mind, namely, three or four of them to buy the island and then to take possession of the land with it.

Barent, the miller, has been to see me. He was very angry that you had withheld his money on account of the money which was said to be due [by him] here in this country. He gave me several accounts, about which we had harsh words and which he will send to you himself. As to the water rights, that [question] must remain until it is known under whose jurisdiction he resides. As to the account in the colony's book, he has a counter claim for boards delivered by him, so that we had to agree that if, after we had adjusted accounts, it turned out that he owed money, he would pay it at once, as you can see.

As to Lysbet Bankeren<sup>380</sup> having asked you for fl.100 in

<sup>380</sup> Lysbet, the wife of Gerrit Banker, Bankeren being an old possessive form of the husband's name. She was a daughter of Dirck van Eps, the first husband of Maria Damen, who married, secondly, Hendrick Andriessen van Doesburch, and, thirdly, in 1664, Cornelis van Nes. See *Early Records of Albany*, 1:442-43; 3:273-74.

seawan on account of old van Nes, that was paid long ago by Jacop Sanderse, who has a receipt for it.

That I have written several times that I should like to own the land and the grist-mill is true, but as you can not consent to it, I shall keep possession of them, for it might happen within a short time that you would not get a stiver for them and that some one else got hold of them. As to your thinking that because the mill stands so near the town it must yield much revenue, that is not so, for there are mills everywhere, so that there is no specially large amount of grinding. Moreover, those of Albany are not allowed to have their grain ground outside, so that it goes badly with us. The other mill stands idle. The old mill must be repaired and it needs two new millstones, for the stones are so old that they are broken and held together by an iron band. Neither I, nor my father and brother doubted but that you would have granted me the mill, as I have no other [means of support and] we can not [live] in Holland with our father's family. For this reason brother Steven has sent me a pair of stones, which are already up here for my personal use, but which now must be left lying around, for there is no need to repair the mill for a stranger. I must say one thing more, namely, that the governor and others have told me that my husband, deceased, had entered into Jacop Janse Flodder's contract,<sup>381</sup> for the grist-mill belonged to Flodder himself, as he had had it built, but as the patroon's mills, which stood on the strand, were carried away by the ice, he had to deliver another mill, which my husband did. I never knew that.

Therefore, I beg you, sell me the small grist-mill which stands next to Spitsenberg's mill, on appraisal by impartial persons. It is conveniently located; I only want it for a stiver on Sundays for the poor, for as you know I can do nothing and I am daily getting weaker. I could manage it with a Negro if there was anything to grind, for I must live and my children are growing up and father, deceased, founded the colony with that idea in mind.

As to your trusting that no one would try to overreach me with respect to the land of Broer Cornelis, I can not with the pen

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<sup>381</sup> See *Van Rensselaer Bowier MSS.*, p. 746-48.

express the falseness of the people, which at present is so great that it cries unto heaven. I shall therefore be on my guard. As soon as Livingston and the others begin, I shall look out for myself and see to it that I also get some security, for whatever belongs to the Rensselaers they will attach until the account is settled.

I have heard that Sr Steenwyck would first write back to Holland for further answer. You can therefore speak with them<sup>382</sup> yourself. I have also written [him] that the [participants]<sup>383</sup> had no power to sell any land if they wanted to have their share. What there is to it we must wait to see when the time comes.

Harmen, the brewer,<sup>384</sup> would like to buy the place of Jonge Jan for cash in Holland. It is a poor place and there is no barn on it and there is no income from it to erect one on it.

[As to] our inheritance from the estate of brother, deceased, I am much surprised that you take such care to settle his estate, for which even the money must come from the colony. Whence, then, is the other money to come? And if I am to send you a considerable sum of money to satisfy me, where, then, is the rest to come from? Therefore, I beg you to let me have what I have asked for; then the work of sending [money] back and forth will be avoided. You may be quite sure, dear brother, that I should like to see the estate of your brother, my deceased husband, settled just as much as your deceased brother Jan's estate. He left one son and your brother [Jeremias] six children<sup>385</sup> and a sorrowful widow, who with God's help and in honor seeks to bring up her children and tries to satisfy every one, which in the sorrowful state in which I am at present often makes me sigh.

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<sup>382</sup> Nicolaes van Beeck and other partners in the colony of Rensselaerswyck.

<sup>383</sup> Maria van Rensselaer first wrote "ve" (you), then changed it to "de Rensselaers," and finally crossed out the word "Rensselaers," without substituting any other noun or pronoun, although the word "particantanen" was apparently the word which she intended to use.

<sup>384</sup> Harmen Harmensen Gansevoort.

<sup>385</sup> See letter to Jan van Wely and Jan Baptist van Rensselaer of [November 1675?].

On the 5th of April it pleased God suddenly to take out of this world my dear father, while he was in his prayers and in good health, in the presence of myself and of my dear mother, who would have liked so much to keep me with her a while longer, but I had to go up the river. Having been home but a short time, I received a letter that I must come down again. I therefore went down again in all haste. God granted us a favorable wind, so that we arrived at New York the next day, but I found my dear mother in the place where my father's bier had stood. She had died on the 12th of May. You can imagine how I felt and still feel, being a widow with six children and having neither father nor mother, who were such a support to me in all things, but now I have no one. My father took care while he was alive that after his death I should have some property.<sup>386</sup> Should I now not take care to know how my affairs stand, I should be worse than a heathen, for now I have no one and every one looks out for himself. I never thought that my br[other Stev]en would have deserted us so. [According to] father's and mother's will no [accounting was to be demanded of] him whether he had carried out his father's will.

As it seems strange to you that I wrote that I feared that there might be some dispute, I shall [explain] this. As I had understood from my [brother] that his mother<sup>387</sup> wanted to have the land even if she had to give more for it than it was worth, I, thinking that you needed money and would pay more attention to the contract than to me (she will be satisfied with other land, as you write), was determined not to give it out of my hands, as my father advised me, for he was taking care that the innocent after his death would have some property and if the rear land is separated from the fore-land, the fore-land is worth nothing. Therefore, there would no doubt have arisen a dispute. That

<sup>386</sup> An "Extract from the Act of Partition and Division Between the Heirs of Oloff Stevensz," dated June 27, 1684, is in New York Historical Society, *Collections*, 1913, 46:84-85.

<sup>387</sup> Meaning his mother-in-law, Margareta Schuyler, the widow of Philip Pietersen Schuyler.

brother did not know that I had written to have the farm and the island is strange, unless the letters did not reach him.

As to your writing that what was still due to my husband, deceased, by inheritance from his father, deceased, his mother, deceased, and his sister, has diminished by the war, that is sad, but you can understand that one would like to have an account of it and to know what one has. Brother Jan Baptist and uncle, deceased, wrote to my husband, deceased, about the real estate and other things which mother had bequeathed to him and about what was further coming to him from the estate.<sup>388</sup> Furthermore, brother and uncle, deceased, wrote to me that what one had received more than another would be paid to the latter with the interest thereof; also, that the agates and loose pearls were still undivided, that the large house was sold for 18,500 gl., that brother, deceased, had taken over the small house for 7000 gl., and that Slangevelt was still unsold. That Kraloo was divided among the four brothers and two sisters I agreed to. That I wrote about the houses may well be, but you are mistaken that I advised you to have them sold. However, I shall not trouble you any more about that. What seems even stranger to me is that what is due to me from the estate of father and mother is to be paid out of the estate of brother Jan Baptist, deceased. What is the use of my sending over a considerable sum in order that the inheritance may be paid to me in cash. Truly it is a hard letter which I have from you. From such writing I can well see that where one desires to have no dispute [

]<sup>389</sup>

[ ] bad leg, was maid and man servant  
[ ] so that it has been a sad summer for me. I doubt not but God will again rejoice us with His spirit and grace, for

<sup>388</sup> This letter is not preserved. See letters from Jeremias van Rensselaer to Johan van Wely and Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, dated September 27 and November 15, 1671, and subsequent letters to Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, in *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 443-46, 338-49, 464, 471-72.

<sup>389</sup> The upper part of the last sheet is torn off.

the Lord chastises whom He loves and punishes every son whom He adopts. If this had not been my joy and strength, I should long ago have perished in my sorrow.

This 12 9b<sup>r</sup> 1684

REV. GODEFRIDUS DELLIUS TO NICOLAES VAN BEECK

[December 1684]

[Copy]

[]<sup>390</sup>  
 [I duly received] your letter dated the 25th of May,<sup>391</sup> [in which] you sent over a power of attorney to Mr Steenwyck to look after your interest in the colony. In reply I wish to say that as yet I can not advise you about this, as I do not know whether his honor will accept the power of attorney. In four or five days I shall write to you by a person who then sails from here for Holland. My intention was to depart from here myself before the winter and to repatriate, because the city of Heukelom<sup>392</sup> called me in October to become pastor there, but as this call had to be sent by the Reverend Classis, Mr de Wolff, merchant at Amsterdam, or at present at Harlem, and Mr Rensselaer requested the Reverend Classis not to let me repatriate, as they, having been empowered thereto by this city, had made a contract with me and engaged me for four years, which seems to have been granted to them. If they had not prevented it, I would have made an oral report of everything and how we, being the least interested therein, could, in my opinion, best take care of your affairs.

I expect to stay here two or three years longer, for my stipu-

<sup>390</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>391</sup> See Nicolaes van Beeck's letter, which is dated May 29, 1684.

<sup>392</sup> Heukelom, or Heukelum, a small city in the province of South Holland, 5 miles N.E. of Gorcum, or Gorinchem. See letter from the Classis of Amsterdam to Rev. Godfridus Dellijs, dated October 24, 1684, in *Ecclesiastical Records*, 2:885-86, in which the name of the city is erroneously given as "Henckelem." See also *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1680-85, 3:536-38.

lated term expires in the year 1686. If during that time I can do you any service, be pleased to command me and I shall show that in everything I am,

Sir,

Your very obedient servant  
 (was signed) Dell[ius]

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

[December 1684]

[ ]  
 [ ] to hinder [ ]<sup>393</sup>

] as is possible and then to let you [ ] as he does already with the account sent to him so many years ago, and now that you begin to write in earnest, he is dissatisfied and says that there is not much left. Which amounts to what I have said so often that they keep possession of what is yours and let you look [for support] to the colony, which does not belong to them alone, as already appears. But as to the power of attorney to Mr Steenwyck,<sup>394</sup> he has never spoken to me about it, nor have I spoken to him about it. I am of opinion that he will not trouble himself with it. And as to Barent, the miller, his account will go all right. If he cites you, bring the matter before the sessions. Meanwhile the river will be open and we shall send you an attorney who will answer him if he begins and if R. van Rensselaer keeps his money in Holland in his possession, let him sue him. I doubt not but S<sup>r</sup> Richard must pay him.

If you could get 5 or 6 strong mares and a large stallion in the colony toward the spring, at a low price, you would do me a favor, but they must be cheap. Now that our Assembly has dissolved [ ]<sup>395</sup>

The time is short, so that [I shall breaff off] and commend

<sup>393</sup> Several lines destroyed.

<sup>394</sup> See letter from Nicolaes van Beeck to Rev. Godefridus Dellius, May 29, 1684, and Dellius' reply, dated [December 1684].

<sup>395</sup> Several lines destroyed.

you to God. With hearty greetings [to you and] all your children, I remain, as always,

Your faithful brother  
S. V. Cort[landt]

I filled a small cask with French wine,  
but can not get it aboard. I hope that it  
may still get on board. It contains 18 gallons.

TO KILIAEN VAN RENSSLAER

Albany, the 7th of January [1685]

Dear Son:

I received your letter and was glad to learn that you were well. I hope that it may long continue. We are through God's mercy still well, but very sad. I can not get over it.<sup>396</sup> I hope that God will further give me strength.

I am extremely grateful to your uncle. According to his advice I have had the matter privately closely investigated and also what the people thought of it, but as every one considered it a wicked invention and a drunken man's rashness on the part of the speaker, to which they attached no credence whatever, I shall let the matter rest, the more so, as he denies having said it with the meaning which was given to it when afterwards related. Furthermore, there are no witnesses to be found, except those who heard it said by some one else.

As to the quitrent of Hosack, I am sending you the remainder from Mr Cuyler and I thank you heartily for what you sent up. I enjoyed eating them.<sup>397</sup> There is no news to write to you. Therefore, I remain,

Your loving and affectionate mother  
Marya V. Rensselaer

Sister Cornelia sends greetings to you and  
to the whole family. Greetings to every one.

<sup>396</sup> Apparently referring to the death of her father, Oloff Stevenson van Cortlandt, on April 5, 1684, and of her mother on May 12th of the same year.

<sup>397</sup> Oysters.

FROM ROELOF SWARTWOUT

[March 9], 1685

[] <sup>398</sup>  
 [I] having [married the widow of Anthony de Hooges, the executor of Jacob] Hap<sup>399</sup> has [presented to me] an open account against Anthony de Hooges, amounting to the sum of [      ], commencing in the year 1645, and a judgment has been given against me here in the court of [Kingston] to pay the aforesaid sum in beavers to Notary Jan Becker. Not having any books of my predecessor, I have not been able to find anything from which I could present a counter account, but as the said Anthony de Hooges until the year 1649 ruled in the honorable colony as patroon<sup>400</sup> [and the items] were undoubtedly used in the patroon's household, although Brant van Slechten-horst referred many things to my predecessor to pay, including private items (as well as proper house rent from the year 1649 to the year 1655) which his successors, Dr van Hamel and D. Scherluyne, have enjoyed, I shall leave this matter to your wise and prudent deliberation. He who wishes to die peacefully in the Lord leaves his just property to be inherited by his successor. Therefore, then, my dear Madam, my kindly request to you is that your honor, on my account, in order to stop the deliberate injustice which has been committed, may be pleased to examine the books of the colony from the year 1645 to the year 1650, to see whether Jacob Hap's account for his goods was settled either by de Hooges, or

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<sup>398</sup> About two lines destroyed.

<sup>399</sup> Jacob Jansen Stol, alias Hap, was killed by the Indians in the Esopus in 1659. See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 190, 205, 220.

<sup>400</sup> Anthony de Hooges was engaged by the patroon in 1641, as assistant to Arent van Curler. During van Curler's absence in Holland, from October 1644 to the spring of 1648, de Hooges acted as commies and had charge of the business management of the colony; thereafter until his death, in October 1655, he held the office of secretary, in which capacity he was succeeded by Dirck van Hamel. The latter died in 1660, and was in turn succeeded as secretary by Dirck van Schelluyne.

by Slechtenhorst, and that a copy thereof may be delivered to me, in order that I may write to the executor. Be pleased not to take it ill of me; I am not chasing iniquity.

I shall break off here for the present and commend you to the protection of the Most High.

Your willing servant  
Roelof Swartwout

A° 1685

In the margin is written:

If any account against Jacob Hap is to be found, I hope to receive a copy of it and shall look forward to receiving it. Thereby you will do me a favor.

*Addressed:*

Worthy, Virtuous Madam, the widow  
of Jeremias van Rensselaer, deceased  
residing in the colony of  
Rensselaers Wyck

*Endorsed:*

*die wil worden Ryck salig en gesont  
die stae vroech op jnde morgenstondt<sup>401</sup>*

TO ROELOFF SWARTWOUT

Albany, May 16, [1685]

Sr Swartwout

Dear Friend: Your letter of the 9th of March of this year to our son K: Renselaer was duly received by us while I was at New York. The account of the colony from the year 1645 to 1655, he has at your request examined together with Jacob Sand[erse] Glen, and when I returned from New York I also examined all the books of the colony myself and afterwards again in the presence of Notary Jan Becker, but to my sincere regret I have not been able to find anything that may tend to your

<sup>401</sup> He who wishes to become rich, blessed and healthy, must rise early in the morning.

profit or to the benefit of the heirs of Anthony de Hooges, yes, what is more, I have in all those books hardly found the name of Jacob Hap, so that I am very sorry that I can not help you.

Herewith, after greetings, I commend you with your wife and family to the Lord.

Your friend<sup>402</sup>

KILIAEN VAN RENSSLAER TO RICHARD VAN RENSSLAER

[May? 1687]

Dear Uncle van Rensselaer:

We received your letters here in good health and trust that you have already learned of the death of our cousin, the patroon.<sup>403</sup> By the next opportunity I shall send you a copy of his will, which is somewhat peculiarly drawn. I have the administration [of the colony] as before, but many expenses have been incurred here, as uncle will see from the account when it arrives by the next [ship].

I see from uncle's letters [that he would like] to know what the situation is as to the meadow (*vley*) behind the *vlaecten*<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>402</sup> *Ul vrintine*; evidently meaning Maria van Rensselaer, although the letter is not in her handwriting, but in that of Jacob Sanderson Glen.

<sup>403</sup> Kiliaen van Rensselaer, the son of the first patroon's eldest son, Johannes van Rensselaer. He came over from Holland in 1685, and soon after married his cousin Anna van Rensselaer, a daughter of Jeremias van Rensselaer. He is said to have died on February 22, 1686/7, apparently immediately after having made his will, which was executed before Notary Jan Becker at Watervliet, at about 12 o'clock at night of the same day. By this will, which was proved at a court of Sessions held in Albany on June 7, 1687, he appointed his wife his executrix, in which capacity she was confirmed on September 2, 1687. See abstract of the will and probate in N. Y. Hist. Soc., *Collections*, 1892, 25:145-47.

<sup>404</sup> Meaning the farm called the *Vlackte*, afterwards known as the Schuyler Flatts, about 4 miles above Albany, which was sold to Philip Pietersen Schuyler on June 22, 1672. See G. W. Schuyler, *Colonial New York*, 1:157-58, and *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 450.

and the land of Gerret Teunysse. The meadow is not included in the purchase of the *vlaecten*, but she<sup>405</sup> has been here to get a deed for the *vlacten* and I was willing to give it to her if she would pay the tithes, which did not suit her very well. She wished to buy off our right for a sum of money, but I would not listen to that, as others also have their eye on that. I trust that she will write to you about it, for if she bought it, it would be of great detriment to us.

The patroon, sometime before his death, was negotiating with Gerret Teunisse<sup>406</sup> to make a contract with him, but owing to his death the matter remained in abeyance, so that it was necessary for me to agree with him, as follows: Gerret Teunisse must pay tithes after the lapse of seven years, for the land was mostly woods when he occupied it. He also cleared the island called *Fransman ylandt* (Frenchman's island), for which he must likewise pay tithes as soon as he takes possession of it, but it is not worth much and I never knew that he had a patent for it.

The patroon also sold to [Melgert] Abrahamse the little place where heretofore Hen[drick van Nes] dwelt, situated at the north end [of the Greene Bosch],<sup>407</sup> where formerly Teunis Dirckse lived, [opposite Paep]sknee island, for the value of 160 beavers, to be paid in three years, the first payment in the year 1688, the second payment in the year 1689, and the third payment in the year 1690. He also gives the sowing of Kraelo<sup>408</sup> and the fence, together with a lot which lies next to the house

<sup>405</sup> Margareta, the widow of Philip Pietersen Schuyler.

<sup>406</sup> Gerrit Teunissen van Vechten. See his lease, dated September 28, 1678, to Jan Roose [Jean Rosie?], after whom Frenchman's island may have been named. *Early Records of Albany*, 3:457-59.

<sup>407</sup> On November 9, 1674, Stephanus van Cortlandt leased to Melgert Abrahamsen [van Deusen] the farm last occupied by Hendrick van Nes, in the Greene Bosch, the lease to begin on May 1, 1675, and to run for three or six years, at the option of either party.

<sup>408</sup> Melgert Abrahamsen seems to have occupied the farm called Crailo from May 1, 1678, to May 1, 1687, for which in the account books of the colony he is charged with a yearly rental of fl.500

which heretofore was occupied by Willem Boudt,<sup>409</sup> and the purchaser must each year pay 25 schepels of wheat by way of tithes.

Since uncle's departure<sup>410</sup> no new land has been cleared, except the land which is occupied by Andries, the baker,<sup>411</sup> lying on this side of Turkeyde.<sup>412</sup> The colony has this year a very poor crop, so that not much will come from the farmers. We have had high water this spring.<sup>413</sup>

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[August? 1687]

[ ]<sup>414</sup>  
and whereas my son is now at my house and attends to the affairs of the colony, I shall follow your further instructions to turn the books over to him. Whatever you may be pleased to write to him he will duly attend to. He is now 24 years of age.<sup>415</sup>

Kasper on the hill<sup>416</sup> requests [permission] to buy the pasture of brother Jan Batist. I have had a talk with him. He is will-

<sup>409</sup> See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 270.

<sup>410</sup> Richard van Rensselaer returned to Holland in September 1670.

<sup>411</sup> Andries Hanse, or Jansen. See letter to Stephanus van Cortlandt, dated Sept. 11, 1683.

<sup>412</sup> Intended for Turckeyen, the Dutch name of a tract of land near the Cohoes Falls, which was bought by Jeremias van Rensselaer from the Indians on Nov. 22, 1670. See *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80, 2:115.

<sup>413</sup> *de Colonie het dit jaer een heele slechte bou soo dat daer niet veel van de boere en sal Comme wey hebbe hoogh waeter van ditt voor jaer gehadt.* As the word *bou* may refer to spring planting as well as to harvest, and is also commonly used in the sense of crop, the date of the letter is uncertain. The use of the expression "this spring," however, seems to indicate that the letter was written sometime in May or June.

<sup>414</sup> The first part of the letter is missing.

<sup>415</sup> Kiliaen van Rensselaer was born on August 24, 1663. See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 326, 328.

<sup>416</sup> Casper Jacobsen Halenbeck. He was the lessee of the pasture, which lay behind the fort. See *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, p. 462.

ing to give 100 beavers. The pasture rents for 3 beavers and the old man can not manage it, so his son desires to take it over. Your lot is vacant; no one wants it. Brother's land at Lubbers land leases for 10 gl. in beavers, but produces nothing, so that it were better if it were sold, for it lies in the marsh (*in de plas*).

My daughter Anna will write to the friends and send over her will.<sup>417</sup> She is going down to have the will probated and will at York write to Holland for advice from the friends. I never thought that the patroon's sister<sup>418</sup> was such a vile woman (*soo een vuyl vrouw parsoon was*). May God forgive her. She need not count on what is to be paid out of the colony on account of Brant van Slechtenorst, for he has possession of the farm<sup>419</sup> and furthermore what he borrowed must first be deducted. Brother can tell her that if she wants to get it, she may come and get it here. Fie, she wrote to him as if he were the worst vagabond and grabber (*oleycks fagebont en op snapper*) in the whole country, so that I was ashamed to read the letter, since he was such a beloved one of the Lord. And even our mother, deceased, had to be dragged in. "Know whom you married," [she wrote,] "an Anna, but you forget that Anna caused our mother, deceased, so much pain and sorrow. But now one howls with the wolves with which one is in the woods," and other ugly words, which I can not and will not write for the sake of peace, but I hope that God will forgive her. If she will agree in love and friendship, there will on my daughter's part be no failure to do so.

I shall break off here and do my best that you may expect something before the winter. Commending you to the Lord, I remain, with hearty greetings to your dear wife and children and to sister Leonora and nephew Kieliaen,

[Maria van Rensselaer]

<sup>417</sup> Meaning the will of her husband, Kilian van Rensselaer, the third patroon, which was probated at New York on September 2, 1687.

<sup>418</sup> Nella Maria van Rensselaer, whose father, Johannes van Rensselaer, had been in litigation with Brant van Slichtenhorst.

<sup>419</sup> want *hy de bouy in besitting heeft*; apparently meaning that the late patroon died in possession of the Crailo farm.

KILIAEN VAN RENSSELAER TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[September? 1687]

In the manor of Rensselaers [wyck]

Dear Uncle:

My last letter to you was of the [blank]. I hope that uncle duly received it, as also that from mother.

There has come to hand a letter of March 7/17, 1687, which uncle had sent to the patroon, deceased, to sell some farms. I should already have sold some land here or there, but the people do not care to buy any, because the country here is in such a perilous condition on account of the French. Our governor has promised our Indians ammunition and assistance<sup>420</sup> and the F[rench] still have our people there and we expect them here every day. I hope that God will preserve us, for our country is in great peril. Our governor will this winter take up his quarters here himself, with one thousand men.<sup>421</sup> Already 200 have arrived up here and are quartered here and more arrive every day, which is a great burden to us. A tax has been laid by the governor and council on the entire province of New York of one stiver in the pound,<sup>422</sup> which will be a heavy tax on the colony. Furthermore, there is no crop in the colony.

As to the patent,<sup>423</sup> that is not well translated either, but at the next opportunity I shall write to you about it at length. I shall, if it please God, see to it that some land or other be sold [ ]<sup>424</sup>.

<sup>420</sup> See Governor Dongan's Propositions to the Five Nations, made at Albany on August 5, 1687, and Answer of the Five Nations made on August 6th, in *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:438-44.

<sup>421</sup> See next letter.

<sup>422</sup> A bill to raise one half penny in the pound was passed on September 2, 1687. *Council Minutes*, 5:200.

<sup>423</sup> The patent of the manor of Rensselaerswyck, granted by Governor Dongan on November 4, 1685.

<sup>424</sup> One or two lines destroyed.

TO RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER

[September 19?, 1688]

Mr Reygart van Rensslaer

Very worthy Brother: I duly received your two letters and shall answer them [as best I can] according to present circumstances, as I am not well. As to what you write about the patroon's account, he has with the advice of the friends done the best he could to come to a settlement. And regarding the coming over of my son Hendrick, it has been impossible this year, for we had neither time nor opportunity to get our accounts and letters ready, as Governor Dongan has been up here all winter and in the summer occupied my house in the country.<sup>425</sup> Now, again, Governor Andros has come up here,<sup>426</sup> so that it can not take place this year.

Further, as far as my son's administration is concerned, he will write to you himself. And since you are surprised that I wrote that [people] had written to Holland, it was only to make trouble between friends, for I see with great displeasure that you in that country have undertaken to sell the island of M. Gerse

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<sup>425</sup> Governor Thomas Dongan was at Albany between October 25, 1687, when Major Anthony Brockholls was empowered to sign warrants, passes, etc., during the governor's absence, and March 28, 1688, when the latter returned to New York. See *Council Minutes*, 5:210, 221. On February 19, 1687/8, Governor Dongan wrote from Albany to the Earl of Sunderland: "My Lord I have been here all this winter with foure hundred foote and fifty horse and Eight hundred Indians." *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:511. The house in the country which he occupied during the summer of 1688, was doubtless Maria van Rensselaer's house in Watervliet. At the time she herself probably occupied the house on Joncker street, which she bought on April 7, 1679, from Capt. Philip Schuyler. See *Early Records of Albany*, 2:36-37.

<sup>426</sup> Governor Andros was in Albany, September 19-21, 1688. *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. N. Y.*, 3:557, 561.

and Kees Oom's farm to Samuel Staats for 10,500 gl.,<sup>427</sup> to which I can not consent at all and which I can not deliver either. You must remember, brother, that here in this country there are persons who also have an interest therein and that large pieces can not be sold in that way. It is true you wrote about selling some poor places, but to keep the best, as your letters written to my brother Cortland and Marte Gerritse show,<sup>428</sup> and if everything were to be sold, the rightful heirs should have the first choice for their money. That those who have struggled so long in this country and the colony and who have preserved the colony must now see that strangers are to possess their father's estate [is very hard], as old Kiliaen van Rensselaer, deceased, did it all in order that his children and grandchildren might live of it. I have not dared to go into the place,<sup>429</sup> because people talk so and call it a shame that S<sup>r</sup> Rygart van Ren[sselaer] defrauds the children and the friends. It is true that [ ] of the

<sup>427</sup> On January 12, 1688, Richard van Rensselaer sold to Samuel Staats, for the behoof of himself and his brother Jochim Staats, the island near the Normans kill used by Marten Gerritsen, and to Samuel Staats personally the arable land and pasture land on "Paaps-kaneel" (Paps-canee) island, used by Cornelis Theunissen van Vechten. As the persons authorized to deliver the said lands failed to do so, Richard van Rensselaer, his sister Eleonora, and Kiliaen van Rensselaer van Wely (the son of Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, who on May 23, 1689, had purchased from Joan de Swart, the husband of Nella Maria van Rensselaer, the latter's interest in the colony) executed on July 5, 1689, at Amsterdam, before Notary David Stafmaker, a power of attorney whereby they delegated the said Kiliaen van Rensselaer van Wely to go to America and empowered him to deliver the lands in question. An authentic copy of this power of attorney, attested on Nov. 7, 1692, by three notaries of Amsterdam, was among the Townsend collection of Van Rensselaer Bowier MSS, of which a typewritten copy is in the New York State Library. See *Annual Report*, 1909, 92:28, no. 73.

<sup>428</sup> See letter from Richard van Rensselaer to Marten Gerritsen, April 12?, 1683.

<sup>429</sup> *Ick hebbe niet durve [in] de plaes koome;* meaning apparently that she did not dare go from Watervliet to visit her friends in Albany, or to occupy her house on Joncker street.

colony [is] too great a disappointment to me and my children, since all their lives they have seen nothing of their father's estate and they have now attained legal age and should like to settle on their father's estate. To have another run away with it, while the lawful heirs look on, can not be according to any law.

I am sorry, God knows, that this has happened, but I take it that it was mostly caused by Jan Swart,<sup>430</sup> who also wrote to me. I do not know Jan Swart and shall not write to him either. It will not go as easily as he thinks either. I do not trouble myself with my daughter's affairs. She has a husband, who will speak for her. She possesses the farm Craloo as the patroon in his lifetime had it and as the men whom the patroon engaged at his expense had it.<sup>431</sup>

As to your writing that you are obliged to sell the land to settle your affairs, I can not understand that, nor do I see from the accounts of father and mother, deceased, that have been sent over that the money is used for that. That you bought out the other participants, but bought them out for your private account, and that the debt of my father, deceased, belongs to brother Jan Baptist, for which mother was surety, and that you bought a house, all concerns yourself, so that I can not understand how it goes. And the [account] of Jan B[atis]t [shows that according to] the decision [there is due] from Holland [ ]], [so that I do not] see where it [ ] must write [ ].

But as I see that you intend to sell everything, it seems to me that the friends<sup>432</sup> are nearer than strangers, and, as you write, the best way is to keep the best farms among the friends.

<sup>430</sup> Joan de Swart, the husband of Nella Maria van Rensselaer, who was the surviving daughter of Johannes van Rensselaer and the sister of the third patroon who had recently died.

<sup>431</sup> Among them Dirck Teunissen van Vechten, to whom Jeremias van Rensselaer leased Cralo on January 10/20, 1667/8. Afterwards the farm was leased to Melgert Abrahamsen van Deusen.

<sup>432</sup> *de vrinde*; which in this connection means "the relatives."

The colony must now again pay a tax of £22½.<sup>433</sup> This is the third tax. Where is the money to come from? And still there is no end. This is in addition to the individual taxes of the farmers, and the other debts and expenses must be paid also. How can I send over anything, for which you write so [urgently], for you know very well what the situation is in the colony.

If the friends wish to dispose of Klaverack too, there is a person here who should like to buy the entire patent. We have agreed with Joff. Schuy[ler] about the tithes of both the farms, whether they have any crop or not, whether they pasture the land or let it lie idle, for 25 schepels of wheat annually, forever, for which Kiliaen will give her a deed.<sup>434</sup>

FROM STEPHANUS VAN CORTLANDT

N: Jorcke, 1689, the 21st of January

Dear Sister:

I am sorry to hear of your indisposition. I hope that by now you have been restored again to your former health.<sup>435</sup> We are still in reasonable health. Our sister Cornelia has been very sick, but is now well again. Brother-in-law Jan Darvall has not been very well for a long time and is not yet as he should be. Many persons are quickly taken out of this world. Since November more than fifty persons have died and not one was sick more than five days. Those who lie [ill] longer generally recover.

It is reliably reported that there is war between England and Holland, so that the friends in Holland had better not make

<sup>433</sup> At the rate of one penny in the pound this tax corresponds to an assessment of £5,400. According to Stephanus van Cortlandt's letter of January 1684, the colony was assessed at £5,500.

<sup>434</sup> Dated September —, 1689, recorded June 25, 1707. See G. W. Schuyler, *Colonial New York*, 1:158.

<sup>435</sup> According to the Bible record kept by her son Kiliaen, Maria van Rensselaer died on January 24, 1688/9, O.S. See *Genealogical Records*, ed. J. F-J. Robinson and H. C. Bartlett, p. 250. E. B. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland*, 2:552, and *Annals of Albany*, 2:52, give the date of her death as January 29, 1689, N.S.

much trouble about the colony, in order not to arouse sleeping wolves. Nephew Rensselaer writes me that he sold the land to Jonge Jan for 400 beavers. I hope that what is due to me for what I advanced in obtaining the patent<sup>436</sup> will now be paid.

The wheat or pease which you deliver to Mr. Sch[uyler?] and Luycas, the baker,<sup>437</sup> you must take a receipt for and charge against the tax which is paid for you to Mr Pretty<sup>438</sup> and in the spring, if it please God, I shall [see] whether you are to pay it all to the baker or here to [ ]. Meanwhile I shall break off. Commending you and your children to God, [I remain] with hearty greetings from [myself, my] wife and the children,

[Your] affec[tionate brother]  
[S. v. Cortlandt]

*Addressed:*

To Juff<sup>r</sup> Maria van Rensselaer  
at Albany

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<sup>436</sup> The patent of the manor of Rensselaerswyck, dated November 4, 1685.

<sup>437</sup> Luycas Gerritsen Wyngaert. May 2, 1676, he was granted permission to keep school, subject to approval by the governor, because he was unable to use one of his hands. April 17, 1677, he was appointed inspector of meal and wheat and grain measurer. *Minutes of the Court of Albany*, 1675-80, 2:98, 224, 231.

<sup>438</sup> Richard Pretty, sheriff of Albany county.



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