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THE BEEKMANS OF NEW YORK: MATERIAL POSSESSION AND SOCIAL PROGRESSION

by

Lauren L. Bresnan

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early American Culture

Spring 1996

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"If you don't know where you're going you're gonna end up somewhere else."
- Yogi Berra

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who offered their guidance and support when I did not know where I wanted to end up.

Deborah Johnson, my undergraduate advisor showed me a number of paths, and assured me that it was OK to study Art. Without her guidance I would surely have ended up somewhere else.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

James and Jane Beekman were eighteenth-century New Yorkers of Dutch descent. Success in the dry goods business enabled them to take part in the growing market for consumer goods, as both suppliers and consumers. They lived in several distinctive domestic settings including a Dutch working class neighborhood, the Dock Ward or commercial center of New York, and an secluded country seat. These architectural settings, along with purchases recorded in the family's "Household Account Books" serve as the documents that define their social position as it changed in tandem with their material surroundings.

In order to explore the Beekmans' social and material development, three distinct persona have been identified. Each corresponds to a particular architectural setting, and a chronological phase of the family's evolution. First we see their *provincial* persona, characterized by ties to ethnic identity and religious traditions. Next, we see the family's *urban* persona exhibited in their desire to play a part in the society of New York City's mercantile elite. Finally, we see the Beekmans' *cosmopolitan* persona, characterized by their emulation of the polite customs and fashions that had gained ascendancy among the wealthy elite of Britain, Europe and colonial America.

Documented objects have been attached to each of these persona as a means of relating a concrete moment in the family's redefinition of their image to a phase of their evolutionary process. Corresponding to the provincial persona is a Dutch *kas* or cupboard, two commemorative William and Mary plates and a bible in three languages.

Corresponding to the Beekmans' urban persona are a New York rococo card table, a tea table and a dining table. The final category of objects, which demonstrate the cosmopolitan persona, include a pair of globes, and a variety of instruments.

These objects each came into the Beekman household at definite moments as the family defined and redefined itself, and they tell us about how that process unfolded. In addition, the objects are observable in space, in this case the observable spaces are the domestic settings in which they were once located. It is in the exploration of the architectural settings that the Beekman family inhabited and the objects that punctuate these settings that one begins to understand the many facets of their public and private life.

INTRODUCTION

James and Jane Beekman lived on Manhattan in the eighteenth century; they were descended from Dutch settlers who came to the newly founded commercial colony of New Netherland, a region that stretched from the Connecticut River to the Delaware River. The generations that came before them had a profound impact on their lives, in that the patriarchs established their families economically, politically, and socially. For this reason, a brief examination of the Beekman family history in colonial New Amsterdam will create a backdrop for the story of James, Jane, and their children. An understanding of the role that the early generations of Beekmans and Keteltases played in New York City history is essential to the interpretation of the material life of James and Jane Beekman. Unfortunately, little is known about the early colonial history of the Keteltas family.

William Beekman, the founder of the family in New Amsterdam, arrived in America on May 11, 1647, either as a clerk in the West India Company or as a private trader.[1] He purchased part of a Manhattan lot near the Harlem River, but Indian threats convinced him to sell this "frontier" property and move closer to the fort. He and his Amsterdam-born wife, Catalina de Boogh, purchased a seventy-six acre plantation at Coralaer's Hook, nearer to the established community at the tip of Manhattan. The couple

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1 Philip L. White. The Beekmans of New York in Politics and Commerce, 1647-1877, (Baltimore: The Waverly Press, 1956), 22. Most biographical information in the introduction has been obtained from this publication.

Coralaer's Hook, nearer to the established community at the tip of Manhattan. The couple lived in New Amsterdam and other West India Company settlements, and had nine children during the course of their marriage.

William's early move to a property nearer to town may have been prompted by his desire to take part in colonial politics as well as his concerns about his family's safety. In 1648 he was chosen by Peter Stuyvesant, the appointed director of New Amsterdam, to be a town selectman. He moved through such offices as orphan master, company commander of the Delaware River colony, vice-director of the West India Company in charge of the Delaware River colony, and deputy mayor of Manhattan. Given William's comparatively modest estate, it is somewhat surprising that he held these political offices, because personal wealth was usually a prerequisite.[2]

Although he was not one of New Amsterdam's wealthiest inhabitants, William owned property and slaves. He was a brewer, the proprietor of a flour mill, and a militia leader. By age thirty-five he was involved in local politics and was assigned to a post outside of New Amsterdam. In 1671, after a period of service in the Delaware colony and in the Hudson River valley, William and his family moved to a Manhattan property that he had purchased during their absence. Through the English conquest and the Dutch recapture of Manhattan, William remained loyal to the Dutch West India Company. He was an active member of the Dutch Reformed Church, acting as one of the elders who sought and received an official charter for the church from the royal authorities. There is some evidence that he was able to take time from political office and lay leadership in the church to engage in trade and privateering. He owned at least one vessel that was put to

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[2]White, Beekmans of New York, 56.

these ends and may have had shares in others. Subsequent generations continued this business.

Throughout his life, William's name appears in city court records; he faced litigation involving charges that his wife was an adulteress and that he pilfered public funds to finance his gambling exploits.[3] In later years he was engaged in a dispute with the Common Council of the city over the title of waterfront properties upon which he had built wharves and made other improvements. All these disputes were resolved in his favor by the time he died in 1707 at the age of eighty-four.

Gerardus Beekman, the second son of William and Catalina, was born in Manhattan, was raised in the Delaware River area, and returned to New York to study medicine and apprentice with a local doctor. In 1677 he set up a practice in Flatbush, one of several Dutch towns at the western end of Long Island. He became a deacon and was eventually an elder in the Flatbush Dutch church. He also served as justice of the peace and was given the commission of militia captain.

Gerardus acted as military commander on Long Island and chief lieutenant to Jacob Leisler, who usurped control of New York when English monarchs William and Mary came to power. What had begun amid pro-Dutch, anti-Catholic, and pro-popular-representation sentiments turned into a struggle between the old ruling class and a group of middle-class agitators.[4] Opposition to Leisler and his government grew as financial burden on his supporters increased and the rebels realized that William of Orange was to be an English, not Dutch, king. Gerardus was convicted of treason and sentenced to death

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[3]White, Beekmans of New York, 31.
[4]White, Beekmans of New York, 129.

by hanging. He was freed after nineteen months in prison and became treasurer of King's County within two months of his release.

In 1709, due to a chance sequence of events, Gerardus was named governor of New York. As the senior council member, he acted as a replacement when the governor died and the lieutenant-governor was recalled. He was eventually replaced by an appointed official but remained involved in local political and religious issues. He invested in large tracts of land in New Jersey along the Hudson River and maintained holdings on Long Island and in Manhattan. A will, dated November 10, 1722, left to his wife the responsibility of dividing his estate equally among their eight children, except daughters who married. One of those children was William.

Like his father, William Beekman's education was medical. Throughout his life he is referred to as "doctor," but it seems that his principal interest was not medicine, but waterfront properties. By 1737 William had acquired impressive property holdings in Manhattan, well suited to serve as a base for commercial endeavors. The first record of mercantile ventures was in 1744, when William imported "sundry merchandize" from England. He traded with various markets and used the ships in which he owned shares as merchant and privateering vessels. He traded with the Dutch islands of Curacao and St. Eustatius in addition to the British West Indies and Danish holdings in the Virgin Islands. By the mid eighteenth century, competition and negligible profits curbed William's interest in privateering and the shipping business. He began to increase his importation of British and European goods, and became a dry goods merchant.

It was into this field of commerce that William launched James, his youngest son. Learning the trade as an agent for his father, James was eager to develop his own business. Bolstered by capital given by his father and the credit that resulted from an

established family name, James became a well-respected and successful dry goods merchant. His success provided the financial resources to purchase an impressive assortment of consumer goods and allowed the family to live in a series of increasingly costly and fashionable dwellings. These architectural spaces and the objects that filled them provide the evidence that enables an exploration of the Beekman family's private, domestic life.

Physical and documentary evidence would suggest that the (James) Beekman family is exemplary of several stereotypes used to characterize early New Yorkers. They would seem, on one hand, to embody the ethnocentric Dutch, characterized by insular marriages within the Dutch community and continued involvement in the Dutch Reformed Church. On the other, they are a textbook example of the "always emerging" middle class, having built a fortune out of the £1,000 with which James began his business. Finally, in later years, they are exemplary of the cosmopolitan, Anglicized merchant family that elevate themselves and their standard of living in correspondence with European fashion.

Confusion arises when one tries to reconcile all these characteristics within to one family at a specific time. They were not all things at all times nor did they progress in rigidly defined stages. They did not decide one day to move and become fashionable city dwellers. They did not consciously decide to appear more Dutch or more Anlgo--or did they? This paper will attempt to present the many faces of the Beekmans as they progressed through several domestic landscapes.

Chapter 1

Early Domestic Settings

The story of James and Jane Beekman is one of change and adaptation. As the family's financial circumstances fluctuated and their social aspirations grew, the material expression of their identity evolved. In the Beekman household, private maintenance of tradition coexisted with a public adherence to fashion. Even in their earliest domestic surroundings, the objects that the family owned tell us a great deal about the kind of private family life and public social life they were leading.

In 1752, three generations after William Beekman arrived in New Amsterdam, James Beekman married Jane Keteltas. Both families were characterized by business acumen, hard work, and familial dedication, values the couple passed on to their own family. However, they found themselves in the position to surpass their parents in financial achievement, and move beyond the colonial Dutch environment in which they were raised. The Seven Year's War in North America and relative European stability in the mid eighteenth century brought wealth to James's business that was not possible for his father, grandfather, or great grandfather to earn. A positive cash flow and a growing market for consumer goods resulted in specific changes to the Beekmans's surroundings. The things available to the Beekmans were beyond what their colonial predecessors could have hoped for. A modern architectural environment, goods reflecting English fashion, and considerably more of almost everything their parents had differentiated them from the generations that paved the way for their success.

This did not happen instantly, the process was gradual and the results were cumulative. The physical location of the Beekman family's dwelling changed in tandem with the economic and social position of its inhabitants. This progression can be understood by analyzing the domestic spaces in which James and Jane lived, and the material purchases they made, both of which defined their position in society. Various personas are suggested by the locations and types of dwelling the Beekmans chose at different stages in their lives. These architectural surroundings provide a framework for the interpretation of people and objects.

The city of New York inhabited by James and Jane Beekman was a complex urban landscape. In looking at the city as a whole, it is possible to discern smaller landscapes characterized by ethnic, religious, and financial diversity. Analysis of the Beekman's surroundings is based not on a contemporary standard, but on a relationship with the Beekmans.[5] Emphasis is placed not on what the landscape looked like as a whole, but the way in which it was experienced by a group of individuals. It is in their progression through these complex and nuanced landscapes that the Beekman's own identity begins to take shape. This multifaceted identity is expressed in their physical surroundings and will be discussed in terms of three persona: provincial, urban, and cosmopolitan. Each of these is exemplified by an architectural environment and a body of objects that were either inherited or acquired for use in particular surroundings.

These "distinct" stages represent both an evolutionary progression and a layering of one persona over another. As the family moved physically and socially, they did not completely abandon the customs or objects that were previously considered important. On the contrary, they incorporated new rituals and objects into an existing cultural

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[5]For a more complete discussion of this idea, see Dell Upton, Holy Things and Profane, (Cambridge: M. I. T. Press, 1986),101.

heritage. An accurate interpretation of the Beekman family's material surroundings and their social progression can only be achieved through an understanding of the way these persona were expressed individually and in conjunction with one another.

First we will investigate the Beekman family's provincial persona. For the purposes of this discussion, "provincial" will be understood as the part of the Beekman family's identity that was characterized by ties to ethnic identity and religious traditions. It is in the early stages of their life together that James and Jane are most visibly "Dutch." They lived in the North Ward, an area of the city that was predominantly inhabited by Dutch working-class citizens.[6] Like most New Yorkers whose families immigrated from Holland, James and Jane were members of the Dutch Reformed Church and probably attended services conducted in their ancestral tongue.[7] A group of objects that exemplify this period have been chosen from among the Beekman's belongings. A Dutch cupboard or *kas*, two commemorative William and Mary plates, and a bible written in French, English and Dutch, are part of a group of objects with Beekman family provenance from this period that remain in the custodial care of the New York Historical Society.[8]

Ownership of explicitly Dutch objects and continued support of the church demonstrates that the importance of the Beekman's national heritage never truly

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[6]Thomas J. Archdeacon, "The Age of Leisler--New York City, 1689-1710: A Social and Demographic Interpretation, in " Aspects of Early New York Society and Politics, ed. Jacob, Judd and I. H. Polishook. (Tarrytown, N.Y.: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1974).
[7]Numerous records of payment for pew rental and purchase as well as payment of a portion of the minister's salary are recorded in the James Beekman Household Expense Receipt Book, (1752-1802), New-York Historical Society.
[8]A series of account books that deal with the Beekman family's personal purchases are housed at the New-York Historical Society. Most of the information in this paper that refers to James, Jane, or the Beekman children came from these pages. James Beekman's business correspondence is housed in the same repository.

diminished. However, their national and religious identity was eventually overshadowed by the expression of an urban persona. In this second stage, household records illustrate the predominance of secular concerns. This urban persona is characterized by the position the Beekmans take in the polite society of New York City, which was dominated by the English, French, and Dutch mercantile elite. They acquired and renovated a house on Queen Street, an area that was considerably more fashionable than their previous neighborhood. The success of James' dry goods business provided the couple with the means to purchase objects that denoted increased social status and concern with appearances. These include carved rococo gaming tables, a pair of dining tables, and several tea tables with all the necessary accoutrements.

This second stage flows smoothly into the final phase of the Beekmans' progression, which is the expression of a cosmopolitan persona. This phase is characterized by emulation of the polite customs and fashions that had gained ascendancy among the well-to-do society of Britain, Europe, and colonial America. The Beekmans distinguished themselves by physically separating from the city and visible work, creating a manorial lifestyle at their country seat, Mount Pleasant. James purchased a pair of globes, an act that symbolically announced his position as an educated, worldly individual. In addition, the family acquired musical instruments, including a harpsichord and a German flute.

These groups of objects will tell us about the family's social progression in the eighteenth century, but first, they must be put back into their domestic landscape. How is that possible when we are obviously no longer in the eighteenth century and none of the physical buildings they once inhabited survive?

It is particularly instructive to look at these objects in an archaeological manner. Using an archaeological framework, each object can be defined as embedded in the

Beekmans' "life course," just as a ceramic tea cup might be embedded in a privy pit. In a sense, the object is a historical placemark that enables a modern viewer to glimpse the precise place and time in which the object was used. However, rather than starting with place and time in order to learn about the excavated object, we are able to look at the object in order to learn about the place and time from which it was metaphorically excavated. The kas, the card table, and the globes each came into the Beekman household at precise moments when the family defined and redefined itself--these objects tell us about how that process unfolded. In addition, we can place the objects in space, in this case the observable spaces are the domestic settings in which the objects were once located. This type of contextual analysis sets the Beekman family's landscape in motion by offering insight into how the objects and spaces were actually experienced. Finally, it is through the exploration of the objects that the Beekmans owned that we gain insight into the architectural settings the Beekman family inhabited, and the many facets of their public and private life.

Before embarking on an examination of the physical dwellings, it is appropriate to offer some description of the couple's early married life. This is the first manifestation of a public persona that James and Jane created as husband and wife, and records suggest that this is the period in which they owned the fewest durable goods.[9] In 1750, two years before the couple's marriage, James Beekman entered the dry goods business. With £1,000 advanced to him by his father and the contacts and family name that previous generations had established, James was able to start his business; he did not have to wait for the inheritance of land. When his father died in 1770, James received nothing in the

[9]Beekman Receipt Book.

will--the £1,000 he had received twenty years earlier, at the age of eighteen, was his only inheritance.[10]

On October 5, 1752, James Beekman and Jane Keteltas married.[11] James would become a successful merchant and Jane, in addition to giving birth to at least ten children, would play a significant role in her husband's dry goods business.[12] Their combined productivity provided the means and incentive for the numerous moves that punctuate the Beekman's early married life.

In 1753, James moved his store to the "Old Slip Market" (Hanover Square) near his father and brother, who advertised themselves as wholesale merchants. By 1754 James and Jane's first son, William, was born and the couple had settled into a North Ward house rented from John Leake for £40 per year.[13] In their move to this section of town James and Jane reveal their modest beginnings. Of all the wards, this was the least affluent and the least fashionable but the most heavily populated by working- or middle-class Dutch New Yorkers.[14] They found themselves in a community united by language, faith, and the desire to maintain autonomy in an increasingly ethnic city.[15]

From 1755 through the spring of 1760, the Beekmans lived in the Smith Street house of Abraham Lynsen, which they rented for £60 per year and which also served as James' place of business.[16] The family grew with the birth of three more children: Abraham in 1756, James in 1758, and Jane in 1760. It was from this location that James

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[10]Beekman Family Papers, Box 43.
[11]White, Beekmans of New York.
[12]This fact is attested to by Jane Beekman's name and signature on several receipts; Beekman Family Papers, Box 43.
[13]Beekman Family Papers, Ledger A.
[14]Archdeacon, "Age of Leisler",68.
[15]Gerald F. DeJong, The Dutch in America, 1609-1974. (Boston: Twayne Pub.1975),103.
[16]Beekman Family Papers, Ledger A.

managed a thriving drygoods business in an economy fueled by the Seven Years' War. His house, between Wall Street and Hanover Square close to the Dutch Church, was in one of the retail shopping districts of the city in those years.[17] The neighborhood was a noticeable shift from the more provincial and less affluent North Ward. This landscape was dominated by the English and French, either by birth or parentage, and a minority of established Dutch families.[18] Although more ethnically diverse than the North Ward, it is likely that the Beekmans were comfortable in these surroundings, as both James and Jane came from families that had been involved in international trade for several generations.

In 1760 the family moved the household and business to a Queen Street house purchased from the Keteltas family. There they embarked on a major renovation campaign, creating a stylish rococo town house out of what was probably a common dwelling house.[19] Queen Street contained other fashionable dwellings, including the DePeyster mansion, home to a Dutch family that was repeatedly connected to the Beekmans by marriage. These prominent merchant dwellings were scattered throughout the streets of Manhattan, interwoven with commercial properties. The juxtaposition of shops and houses was characteristic of New York and other provincial cities, and it was socially acceptable to live above or next to one's store.[20] (fig.1) Jane would give birth to

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[17]I. N. Phelps Stokes, The Iconography of Manhattan Island, IV. (New York: Arno Press, 1967).

[18]Archdeacon, "Age of Leisler," 68.

[19]New York Gazette and Weekly Post Boy, March 10, 1760.
In a transaction that was probably related to inheritance from his father-in-law, James paid £2,000 to the Rev. Abraham Keteltas (his wife's brother) "for the house in which he was living." This is recorded in the Beekman Family Papers, Ledger A, folio I; Journal B, 252-53.

[20]Virginia D. Harrington, The New York Merchant on the Eve of the Revolution. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935).

Figure 1
Upper Broad Street, 1797. George Holland.
Stokes Collection, New York Public Library

six more children between 1762 and 1779, but the enlargement of the family was not a cause for relocation. The Beekmans did not move from this residence, but records show that it required significant alterations to make it an acceptable "in town" dwelling. It seems that even before the family moved in they began to renovate and add to the existing structure.

The original configuration of this town house is unclear, but a series of account book entries that span the period 1758-1774 graphically illustrate its transition and final appearance.[21] James, a fastidious record keeper, preserved the entire process of enlarging and renovating his Queen Street town house in this account book. The complete document, which spans the period of 1758-1807, is divided into three parts. Information in the first and last sections falls under the heading "Household Furniture," with entries ranging in date from 1761-96. A group of pages in the middle of the account book is entitled, "Repairs to My Dwelling House." These entries actually span the period 1758-1807. In this section are a series of entries that delineate the materials and costs associated with the renovation and upkeep of the town house. Workers are often specified by name rather than trade, and although projects are not discussed specifically, an analysis of materials clearly illustrates the work that was done.

The renovation process, which commenced in 1759, began with the purchase of 801 feet of board to build a fence and finish the cellar floor. That same year they painted the exterior of the house, added a gutter, and installed a pump in what would become a cellar kitchen. Later that summer they attached more gutters, painted the interior of the house, paved the yard, and purchased three marble stones, probably to be used as front

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[21] James Beekman Household Expense Account Book, 1761-96. Unless otherwise noted, all information about the renovation of the Queen Street townhouse is taken from this account book.

steps. These first actions made the house more functional and literally gave a "fresh coat of paint" to their public image.

Having successfully completed some superficial alterations, the Beekmans began a dramatic restructuring of the exterior and interior of this architectural space. Entries for May 1759 outline the materials needed to build "the New Room" that would become the showcase of the Beekmans' modern, fashionable taste. James took delivery of 26,300 bricks, a load of stone, and a load of lime--the elements needed to build walls with a surface area of 775 square feet or wall with dimensions of approximately 27' by 27'.[22] The Beekmans then took delivery of "Pan tiles" (curved, interlocking tiles commonly used for roofing) and 1,500 shingles. These materials constitute the exterior shell of the addition, completed in anticipation of its ornamental interior.

It can be inferred that "the New Room" was intended to serve as the family's formal parlor because of the lavish treatment it received. It was plastered, fitted with a hearth that was soon altered, and eventually ornamented with decorative carving that may have been part of the fireplace, window or door decoration. Interior renovation began in earnest in November of 1760. John Delamontaine was paid for painting, and in June of 1761 Peter Marsilles was compensated for "wainscoting the Entry & Parlour." James continued his interior renovation in April of 1762 when he recorded "6 papers for hanging in my back stair."

Most intriguing is an entry on March 11, 1762, that records payment "to Stephen DiWhite for carving and flowers for my new room."[23] Elsewhere in James's accounts

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[22]This calculation is based on the modern standard of 120 bricks/square meter for an exterior wall (at least two bricks thick) according to Malcolm Williams, mason. Two hundred fifty square meters equals approximately 775 square feet.

[23]Due to variations is spelling, the same craftsman is recorded as Stephen Dwight, Stephen DiWhite and Stephen White.

there is a similar entry on the same date "to Stephen White for two frames for (myne and my wife's picture)."[24] James hired a single craftsman to carve the picture frames for his and his wife's portraits as well as the interior architectural carving for his new addition. The room was apparently conceived in terms of a unified aesthetic, and seems likely that the picture frames and the wall decorations were intended to match. Additionally, it was convenient to hire one carver to do both jobs. Apparently DiWhite's 1755 newspaper announcement was accurate in stating that "he carves all sorts of ship and house work: also tables, chairs, picture and looking glass frames."[25]

The identification of the individual who carved the decoration in the Beekman's parlor as the same person who carved their picture frames is an important one, made more so by the fact that these picture frames survive at the New-York Historical Society. Although simpler than imported examples, DiWhite's frames illustrate the beginnings of the rococo style in New York. Foliate vines creating C- and S-scrolls decorate the frame's surface.[26] Pierced leafage projects from the center and the corners of all four sides, creating a complex surface. It is likely that the same caliber carving was present in the Beekmans' new parlor. Like the picture frames, this type of interior decoration was stylish by colonial standards yet conservative by English standards.

James and Jane were among a growing number of mercantile elite throughout the colonies who chose to highlight their interiors with rococo-style ornament.[27] Foliate

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[24]James Beekman Household Expense Book 1761-1796, "Household Furniture."
[25]New York Mercury, July 21, 1755.
[26]Morrison Heckscher,"The Beekman Family Portraits and Their Eighteenth-Century New York Frames." Journal of the Furniture History Society, 26 (1990): 115.
[27]An exploration of this phenomenon is illustrated in, Fiske Kimball. Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and of the Early Republic (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922); Morrison Heckscher and L. Bowman, American Rococo, 1750-1775: Elegance in Ornament (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992).

swags and organic, idiosyncratic shapes are characteristic of the decorative motifs considered most fashionable in this period. The carved, papier-mache, and plaster decorations were limited, for the most part, to chimneys and staircases, while parlor and stairhall walls were treated with hand-painted wallpaper imported from London. The full flowering of the rococo style was not seen in American architecture until the 1760s and 1770s.[28]

After the completion of their new room, the Beekmans redirected their energy to the exterior of their home. Entries in 1762 make it clear that James, Jane, and their children were not alone on their Queen Street lot. In February James records over £6 for "my part of mending the fence between Duane & me damaged by fire." He also pays "my 1/4 part of the large gate at the front of the alley facing the stable." Apparently there were at least four dwellings that shared a common alley. James would pay almost £17 for "my proportion of a stone drane for my house," but only £5 for "paving my street."[29]

Later that year he ordered loads of red and yellow bricks as well as "Cornish" (cornice) stones and sixteen sash lights. A variety of hardware ordered for the house included hinges, a lock, a sash bolt, three "brass nockers," six brass nob locks, and a large front door knock. The addition of a cornice over the windows and/or entry, a brass door knock, and four-over-four sash windows created an impressive public facade. In order to complete the visual effect, they added a balcony in 1763. This balcony may have actually been the type of front porch or veranda commented upon by a traveler who recorded his

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[28]Heckshire, American Rococo.

[29] These entries were recorded on December 22,1767, and October 20, 1769, respectively.

impression of this vernacular building style while visiting New Netherland in 1749. He writes:

> Houses built of both wood and brick have only the wall towards the street made of the latter, all the other sides being boards. This peculiar kind of ostentation would easily lead a traveller who passes through town in haste to believe that most of the houses are built of brick. The houses are covered with shingles. Before each door is a veranda to which you ascend by steps from the street; it resembles a small balcony, and has benches on both sides on which the people sit in the evening to enjoy the fresh air and to watch the passers-by.[30]

Fourteen years after Peter Kalm made this observation, the Beekmans' Queen Street town house had been renovated in a similar fashion. Kalm observed a type of building that was popular in colonial times but continued to be built through the revolutionary war. The inveteracy of custom dissuaded builders and their patrons from making any radical departures from accepted style. However, like the Beekmans, other colonials were able to update an existing dwelling by creating rococo style interiors and a Georgian facade.

In the Beekmans' case it seems that it was not enough to improve the existing structure; the property was enlarged and enhanced as well. On January 6, 1763, James recorded a payment of more than 1300 under the heading "My lott of ground and small tenements." Cash was paid "to Abraham, Jacob and Cornelius Duane for said Lott & Tenements bought of them, adjoining & being at the east side of the lott on which I now dwell."[31] Within the next five years James expended an additional 351 on "repairs, a

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[30]Peter Kalm, Peter Kalm's Travels in North America, 2 vols., Adolph B. Benson (reprint; New York: Dover Publications, 1964) as quoted in R. H. Blackburn and Ruth Piwonka, Remembrance of Patria: Dutch Arts and Culture in Colonial America, 1609-1776 (Albany: Albany Institute of History and Art, 1988).
[31]Beekman Family Business Journal B 1758-67, folio 352.

cistern, and building a New British Stable."[32] These entries do not pertain to the Beekman family's dwelling but to the improvements made to the adjoining property. Once again, James had taken the profits of his successful dry goods business and invested them in a relatively stable commodity--land. This investment also provided a means for James to control his landscape. He could choose his tenants, hence, his neighbors. Ownership of the land surrounding his home provided a buffer zone or a means of insulating himself and his family from the confusion of the city.

This purchase was not the end of the Beekmans' reconfiguration of their surroundings. In the first part of 1764, James recorded paying more than £17 for "the timber for raising my house." He may have been adding a floor to the existing structure--perhaps a room over the new room that had been completed two years earlier. Subsequent mention of a nursery offers a possible designation for the addition. At this point the Beekmans had five children, ages one, three, five, seven, and nine. That same year, James recorded payment for "laying my kitchen heart[h], for the stone in my kitchen heart[h] and for laying my cellar kitchen floor & c.," and "mending my pumps." It would seem that he was updating the preexisting cellar kitchen.

This finished cellar kitchen is characteristic of gentile, upper class, urban dwellings in colonial New York. Limited space would have prevented most households from having a separate building in which to do the cooking, but new codes of room usage would have precluded using a space on the main floor for food preparation. Carpets, upholstered furniture, and wallpaper were likely to be damaged if they were in close proximity to an area where domestic work was undertaken. In the Beekmans' house, smoke, dirt, and food smells were relegated to the basement, probably ventilated by a

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[32]Beekman Family Business Ledger A 1752-67, folio 262.

trap-door entrance in the rear. The completion of their new room and cellar kitchen created an upstairs-downstairs environment in the town house. Certainly, formal visitors were received only in the rooms that were suited for polite functions; however, access to these spaces was highly nuanced and depended upon the individuals. The new room, when used as a formal parlor, created an architectural setting for gaming, dining, and other means of refined display. The cellar kitchen assured that service functions were carried out as discretely as possible.

In 1771 James paid two craftsmen more than £20 to alter his parlor. He purchased two iron plates (fire backs), two sets of marble chimney "piers" (possibly pieces or pilasters), and a marble slab suggesting that the alteration was focused on the fireplace. One year later the Beekmans continued their quest for fashionable heating apparatus by purchasing another marble chimney "piece" for the nursery. By 1774 the family seemed content with this dwelling, and entries ceased almost completely. As trade with England became more troubled James was not able to sustain the level of income that he had recorded in previous years. His personal account books confirm that domestic purchases also decreased in this time of political and economic uncertainty. One of the final entries, "for raising my chimney," speaks not of fashionable interiors, but of the constant care and alteration that has always been required of homeowners.

Before 1760, the Beekman family relocated at least four times. These rental spaces increased in price and presumably size in order to accommodate both a growing family and social ambition. In addition to demonstrating their economic standing, the purchase of their lot and Queen Street residence marked the beginning of the Beekmans' participation in a wider trend--the purchase of land as a reliable capital investment.[33]

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[33]Elizabeth Blackmar, Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1850 (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1989), 25.

Land was not always a stable investment, but unlike ships or cargo, it was not routinely lost or destroyed. Additionally, it was not subject to the fluctuations that characterized New York's shipping economy. This seems to be the first of James's real estate purchases, but it certainly was not the last. In the period following the American Revolution, James was able to buy quantities of land that later became rental properties.

Most significant to the discussion of the Beekman family, however, is the purchase and renovation of their own dwelling. The transformation of this town house illustrates the Beekman family's desire to create a modern and fashionable setting in which to live and entertain. Their location on Queen Street, which was not far from the docks, assured that they were in constant contact with the newest goods being brought off the ships. In addition, they were located close to other wealthy individuals, and could have used their house as a means of projecting their urban persona, asserting their association with polite New York society.

Chapter 2

Mount Pleasant

Five days after the purchase of his town house James recorded the purchase of a "farm, lying and being at Turtle Bay." He noted £738.13.6 "cash paid to Abraham Anderson and others, as also John Anderson for my said farm"[34] By December 31, 1764, James had paid an additional £1,976 for "utincels & creatures, materials, labor and victuals" associated with the building of his country seat, Mount Pleasant.(fig. 2) The purchase of this property established the Beekmans as part of an international mercantile elite. Through the act of building a country seat the Beekmans were linked to other prosperous merchants who used their material surroundings as an expression of status.

In the manner of prosperous British merchant families, the well-to-do merchants of colonial America had begun to establish genteel farms or country seats in addition to the town houses that served as their city dwellings. In England, the move to country houses was an attempt by the bourgeois to emulate the landed gentry by creating a lifestyle characterized by conspicuous consumption.[35] As a result, the demand for fashionable accoutrements was fueled by what were hitherto considered extravagant purchases with newly earned wealth. They engaged in the polite arts and pastimes that were deemed critical in the process of civilizing or gentrifying the nouveau riche.[36] In conjunction with the allure of a life of leisure at one's country seat, there were health

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[34]Beekman Journal B, 1758-67, folio 353.
[35]For a discussion of these ideas, see Peter Borsay, The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770 (Oxford, Clarendon Press. 1989).
[36]Borsay, English Urban Renaissance, 259.

Figure 2
Mount Pleasant
Courtesy of the New York Historical Society

concerns to consider. The threat of disease had grown steadily worse for city dwellers, and the habitation of country homes, especially in the summer and fall months, was an attempt to escape the waves of disease when they were most likely to strike.

In the American colonies, the same process was under way. As cities grew more densely populated, concerns about pollution, poor water quality, and disease increased. colonial merchants were growing wealthy on the same traded goods that allowed British merchants to prosper, and they displayed their means in a similarly conspicuous way. Like their European counterparts, American city dwellers who could afford to leave town in the summer months, did. James and Jane Beekman were among those whose financial resources allowed them to relocate to the countryside, thereby physically distancing themselves from the realities of urban life. Other prominent New Yorkers were engaged in the same pursuit, but the number of country estates built was relatively small. These invite comparison with the Beekman country seat, and in so doing suggest local acceptance of this international trend.

The Morris-Jumel Mansion in Washington Heights is Mount Pleasant's closest, surviving contemporary.(fig. 3) Built in 1765, the house was a summer retreat for Roger Morris, a lieutenant-colonel in the British army, and his wife, Mary Philipse. As the son of a British architect, he would certainly have been aware of the fashion for Palladian architecture in eighteenth-century England and was most likely instrumental in transferring the style to the colonies.[37] The two-story portico, monumental columns, and triangular pediment create an impressive facade. It reflects the design sources from which it was drawn, most notably Palladio and Adam. However, its deviation from a strict interpretation of any one source is a comment on the builder who interpreted what was

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[37]Borsay, English Urban Renaisance, 22.

becoming a standard style in the colonies. Like other country houses built outside New York in the eighteenth century, the Morris-Jumel mansion uses building style to convey status.

A majority of the New York country seats built in the last half of the eighteenth century, including Mount Pleasant, adapted the Georgian style, then popular in England. Another contemporary dwelling is the estate of Abraham Mortier. (fig. 4) Like Mount Pleasant, the exterior features a symmetrical facade with a triangular pediment supported by columns. The two-story five-bay house sat atop Richmond Hill with a commanding view of the Hudson River. This home was subsequently inhabited by Lord Amhurst after the French Canadian War, by George Washington in 1776, and by John Adams while serving as vice president.[38] It was an appropriate domicile for this impressive list of inhabitants, but was demolished in 1849 to make way for modern houses.[39]

In 1748-49, Frederick Van Cortlandt built a house on land acquired by his father, Jacobus, a Dutch merchant and two-term mayor of New York. Situated in the Bronx, this two-and-a-half story, five-bay fieldstone house is an exceptional example of the type of vernacular Georgian home being built by colonial New York's mercantile elite.[40] (fig. 5) Like the Beekmans, the Van Cortlandts possessed an appreciation for this popular dwelling type. In fact, the two families had much in common, including profession, cultural heritage, and religious affiliation. In addition, a daughter, Jane Beekman, married Stephen Van Cortlandt, cementing the families' social parity. They would have moved in the same polite circles and may have aspired to a similar level of wealth and status.

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[38]Ernest J. Brierly, The Streets of Old New York (New York: Hastings House,1953), 86.
[39] Brierly, Streets of Old New York, 86.
[40]Betsy Gotbaum, Historic Houses in New York City Parks. (New York: Historic House Trust of New York City and New York Parks and Recreation, 1989), 12.

Figure 3
The Morris-Jumel Mansion

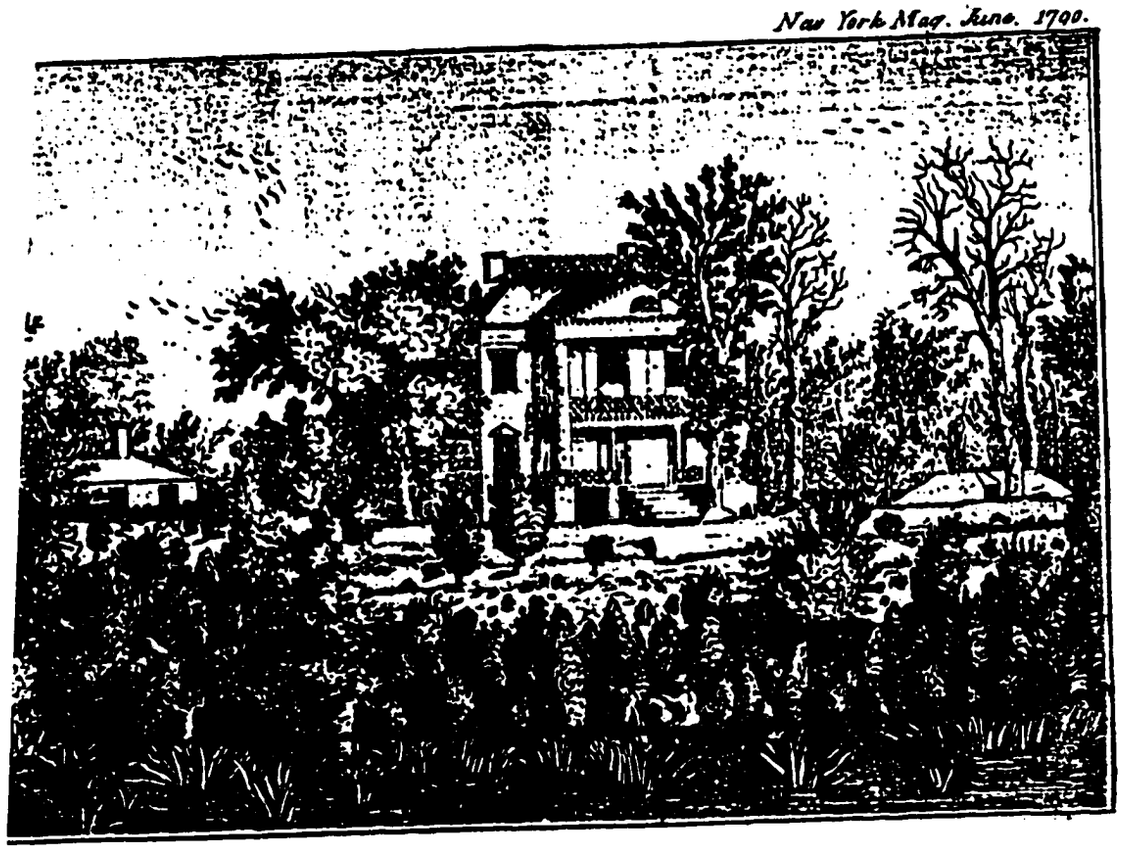

Figure 4
The Abraham Mortier Mansion, Richmond Hill

Figure 5
Van Cortlandt House

Outside New York this building trend continued. Houses similar to Mount Pleasant in style and proportion were being constructed from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to Charleston, South Carolina. Clearly, the builders and/or owners were drawing from a shared design vocabulary and were able to capitalize on the intrinsic meaning embodied by this particular style of architecture. In the building of such a house, the wealthy colonial was able to emulate the behavior of his or her English counterparts, thereby establishing him or herself as part of a cosmopolitan elite through the joint expression of taste and wealth.

Exterior form was one way to affect the genteel style of English and Continental contemporaries, interior ornament was another. Mount Pleasant and numerous houses throughout the Atlantic rim exhibit the type of carved and composition accents that grace the doors, walls, and fireplace mantels in eighteenth-century estates throughout Britain.[41] Evidence suggests that this type of rococo architectural ornament characterized the homes built by the elite merchant class throughout the colonies and established a stylistic bond with their English counterparts.[42] The ubiquitous appearance of these decorative elements and motifs characterized the landscape that the Beekman family inhabited at Mount Pleasant and placed them within a context larger than that of eighteenth-century New York. Like their English and American counterparts, the Beekmans were building and decorating with the intent of showcasing their wealth and social standing.

In addition to the style and decoration of Mount Pleasant, its relatively isolated site was integral to the way it was perceived by the Beekmans' contemporaries. Once construction was completed, Mount Pleasant became the manifestation of the Beekmans' cosmopolitan persona. By physically distancing themselves from the "lower sort" that

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[41]Fiske Kimball, The Domstic Architecture of the American Colonies.
[42]Heckscher, American Rococo, 22.

were inevitably on hand in the face-to-face society of the city, people of means, whether in Britain or America, were able to create boundaries that were not only physical but social. In a society where status was based on wealth and display, and to a lesser extent, kinship, it was imperative that those who had achieved social prominence distance themselves from those who had not. Since entry (as a social equal, not a servant or slave) into the landscape of a country estate was dictated by knowledge of social ritual, those who did not have the time or money to participate were excluded.

In this way, the landscape of the Mount Pleasant was one of individuation. This broad process, by which individual social identities become differentiated from one another, was occurring throughout England and the colonies in the latter part of the eighteenth century.[43] The means by which the Beekmans simultaneously set themselves apart from fellow New Yorkers and claimed membership to a larger, international elite was their life at Mount Pleasant. Its physical distance from New York City and other neighbors resulted in the creation of a buffer between the Beekmans and any undesirable visitors, while the architecture, ornament, and furnishing of the house provided an arena for display and for the entertainment of invited guests. In addition, the household account books chronicle the purchase of objects reflecting the Beekmans' newly acquired genteel lifestyle. In the years after Mount Pleasant was completed, James recorded extensive purchases of furniture, mirrors, silver, rugs and textiles, ceramics and tableware, pictures, and other objects, including a pair of globes, musical instruments, and a coach.[44] When encountered within the architectural settings of Mount Pleasant,

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[43]For a discussion of socioeconomic changes in eighteenth-century England, see Borsay, English Urban Renaissance.

[44]For an abridged list of household items purchased between 1752 and 1794 see App. B.

these objects proclaim who the Beekmans are, or more precisely, how they wish to be perceived.

Understanding the objects at Mount Pleasant is contingent upon an appreciation of the architectural setting in which they were used. This environment must be pieced together from graphic and verbal accounts because the 1874 demolition of the house leaves us with an evocative but limited sense of the building. In 1911, Gerard Beekman (James's great-grandson) wrote a letter to the New-York Historical Society sketching the interior layout and decoration of "the old homestead of the family on the East River...known as Mount Pleasant." Gerard further states,

> According to family tradition, in the oldest part of this house was a room lined with woodwork painted (blue). This room was in the extreme northeasterly corner of the building on the left hand side of a central hall. The plan of the house, as I recall it, consisted of a wide hallway running from east to west on the first floor with an entrance door at each end and a similar hall terminated by windows on the second floor connected by a platform staircase starting from the north side of the first floor at about the middle of the house. Bed rooms were arranged on either side of the second story central hall and there was a small room opening on the platform of the staircase about halfway between the first and second floors...On the left hand side of this central corridor were two smaller rooms, separated by the staircase, the northeast of these rooms was the blue room just mentioned...the first floor of the house on the right hand side of the main hallway consisted of a long parlor, the mantel of which was presented to the Historical Society...This parlor was on the southerly side of the house...[45]

In addition to this account, the family papers contain a partial plan of the interior and foundation of "the Mount," as it was referred to in a drawing that was done for "Mr. J. W. Beekman."[46] When combined with graphic evidence depicting the exterior, we can create an accurate layout of the Beekman country seat. (fig. 6) In addition, interior

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[45]New-York Historical Society Manuscript Collection, no.1874.8.
[46]Beekman Family Papers, Box 30. It was probably executed for James, the son of James and Jane Beekman, as it includes the octagonal parlor that he added in 1818.

woodwork from three of Mount Pleasant's rooms survives. Of these remnants, the most vivid example of the Beekman's desire to create stylish interiors is the elaborately carved mantel from the long parlor.(fig. 7) The letter from Gerard places the mantel in the middle of the longest wall in a long parlor on the first floor. The drawings confirm that this room was the largest and probably the most formal in the house, creating an impressive setting for the mantel.

At Mount Pleasant, the parlor was at the top of the decorative ladder, and it is likely that this space was the site for the family's more elaborate entertaining. Dining, tea, and musicales called for the most attention to polite detail and were therefore conducted in the most highly decorated venue.[47] Subsequently, it was most likely reserved for those social equals who would have appreciated it and was a room that would not have been entered without an invitation. This restriction was facilitated by the house's central passage, which allowed a visitor to pass through the front door without actually moving into this or any other room.

Somewhat less elaborate in decoration is the surviving woodwork from two additional rooms at Mount Pleasant. The New-York Historical Society possesses fireplace mantel, several sash windows with frames, under-window paneling, and various pieces of molding and a return taken from "the Blue Room," designated an upstairs chamber.[48] The simple fielded paneling that decorates the overmantel and walls is much less elaborate than the carved ornamentation found in the parlor. Because it seems to have been a private space, it is likely that only family and the most intimate guests would have

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[47]Richard L. Bushman, The Refinement of America (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 51.

[48]This is based on the 1911 letter from Gerard Beekman. NYHS Manuscript collection, (1874.8).

Figure 6
The Beekman Mansion, watercolor by C. M. Jenckes reproduced in "Old New York," New-York Historical Society

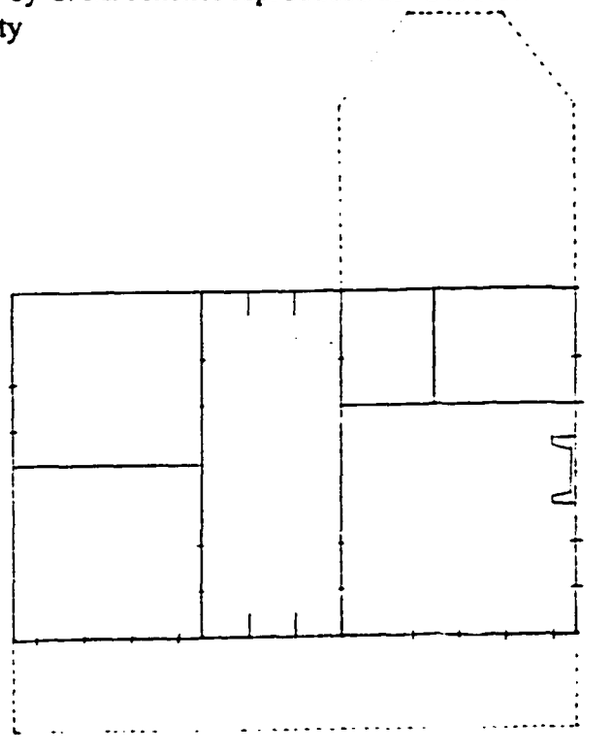

Figure 6a
First Floor Plan of Mount Pleasant

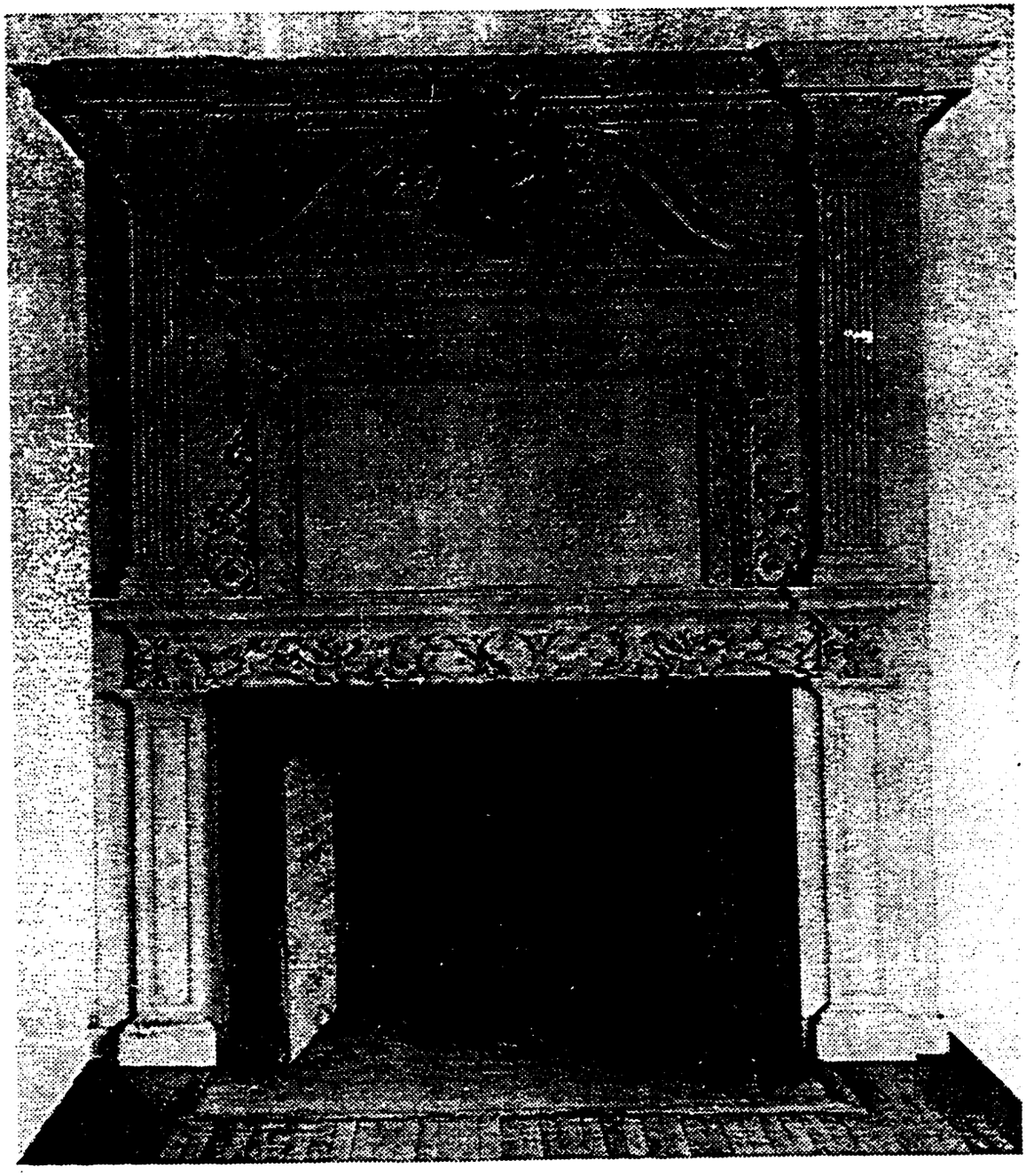

Figure 7
Parlor Mantel from Mount Pleasant
Courtesy of the New York Historical Society

seen the upstairs rooms, making it unnecessary to adorn them with impressive carving and moldings.

A similar mix of parts from "the Green Room" survives: two doors, four pilasters, two under-window fixtures, and one mantel. The degree of formality in decoration falls somewhere between the Blue Room and the parlor in that the Green Room fireplace is flanked by pilasters, as is the fireplace in the parlor; however, the walls are simply wainscoted and devoid of any decorative carving, as are those in the Blue Room. These remnants illustrate a hierarchy of rooms created through degrees of ornamentation and suggest a pattern of room usage and object display. The more distinguished the visitor the more highly ornamented room they were ushered into upon arriving at Mount Pleasant. Those who entered the long parlor would have encountered not only the most formal architectural setting but the finest furnishings and decorations. In contrast, the upstairs chambers were less readily accessible, hence, simpler in decoration. An individual not known to the family was likely to remain in the central passage while conducting business. In this way, the setting itself told those who entered how they were expected to act and how they were perceived in relation to the Beekmans.

The Beekman family occupied their two Manhattan residences until 1775 when Manhattan was captured in the Battle of Long Island and the family removed to Kingston to avoid British troops. The decision was no doubt influenced by the colonial government's relocation to this rural town. James was a member of the Provincial Congress, which was to become the colony's de facto government. He seems to have anticipated these events, as he purchased a "muskitt" and a silver hilted sword in the summer of 1775 and another two "muskitts" in November, shortly before the household

left Manhattan. In the fall of 1779, James paid £10.16 for "a man in the militia," thus excusing himself or one of his sons from military service.[49]

After the British capture of Manhattan, the Beekmans were unwilling hosts to a number of foreign guests throughout the revolutionary war.[50] These "guests" were not wholly unappreciative of their surroundings and seemed to feel quite at home. For the summer of 1780, General Clinton surrendered Mount Pleasant to the commander of the Hessian troops, Baron Riedesel, and his wife. The Baroness, a leading figure in New York society at the time, described this country residence as "magnificent, a most beautiful situation, orchard and meadows, and the Hudson [East] river running directly in front of the house, ...[There were] fruits of the most delicious flavor...more than we could eat. Our servants feasted on peaches even to satiety."[51]

By November 25, 1783, the evacuation of the British troops was completed, and the family moved back to their home. James and Jane returned to New York and shared Mount Pleasant with their children until James's death in 1807. In a deed of gift from James to his eldest son, William, the family seat changed hands:

> IN CONSIDERATION of the love and natural affection I bear to my eldest son WILLIAM BEEKMAN, and for his fidelity and duty to his parents, I do hereby give to my said son (after the decease of my wife) my family pictures, the box of painted hangings and my coach (as my other children refuse to use it on account of it not being fashionable) to him, his heirs and assigns, wishing that the family pictures should remain in the

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[49]Beekman Household Account Book, 1761-1796.

[50]According to a memo purported to have been given to John Hannah, the gardener, occupants of Mount Pleasant during the revolution included General Howe, Baron Riedesel, Comesary Loring, General Clinton, General Robison.

[51]William L. Stone, ed., Letters and Journals...by Mrs. General Riedesel. (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1867), 179-80.

male branch of the family - as witness the 9th May 1801 in the presence of my wife...[52]

Like many eighteenth-century houses built outside New York's city limits, Mount Pleasant was eventually enveloped by urban sprawl. When it was built in 1763, the only houses near it belonged to the Watts, the Marrays and the Keteltases on the river bank below Kip's Bay.[53] The house stood surrounded by orchards and farm land until it was moved in 1850 to make way for the streets of an increasingly modern New York. In 1874 the house was demolished by James W. Beekman, grandson of the original inhabitant. At that time it stood where one now finds a high-rise called Beekman Tower at Fifty-first Street and First Avenue in Manhattan.

William had been keeping James's accounts for a number of years before his father's death. He died the year after his father and never took possession of the mansion. Subsequent generations of Beekmans did care for this family icon until its demolition. It is readily apparent that they ascribed great importance to the house as a historic structure and a part of their heritage, but it had ceased to be the statement of modern fashionable living that it was to James and Jane.

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[52]Beekman Family Papers, Box 16, New York Historical Society.

[53]Eliza Greatorex, Old New York, from Battery to Bloomingdale (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1875), 107.

Chapter 3

The Provincial Persona

Each of the Beekman family's persona--provincial, urban and cosmopolitan--manifested itself in their material surroundings. Specific documented objects relate concrete moments in the family's journey of self-representation. Objects that the Beekmans owned in their early years tell us about the provincial persona, which was characterized by ties to family, church, and their Dutch ancestry. This part of their life was relatively private, but an examination of specific objects communicates the way it was maintained in their physical environment.

Corresponding to the provincial persona is a Dutch kas, or cupboard, owned by James and Jane that is consistent in materials, construction and carved decoration with others made in Holland circa1670.(fig. 8) More than seven feet high and six feet wide, this was a commanding element of their domestic landscape. The large overhanging molded cornice is punctuated by a central carved plaque composed of foliate scrolls, two blank shields, and a lion's head. Lion and cherub heads look out from the corners of a heavy molding that caps this massive structure. A thick band of applied floral carving that decorates a frieze below the cornice is echoed on the two bottom drawers and stiles that flank the doors. The raised panel doors are accentuated by broad expanses of veneer that fill the area between the central field and the perimeter door moldings. This type of cupboard probably made its appearance in Holland around 1660 and quickly became popular throughout the country.[54]

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[54]Reinier Baarsen, Dutch Furniture, 1600-1800 (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1993), 50.

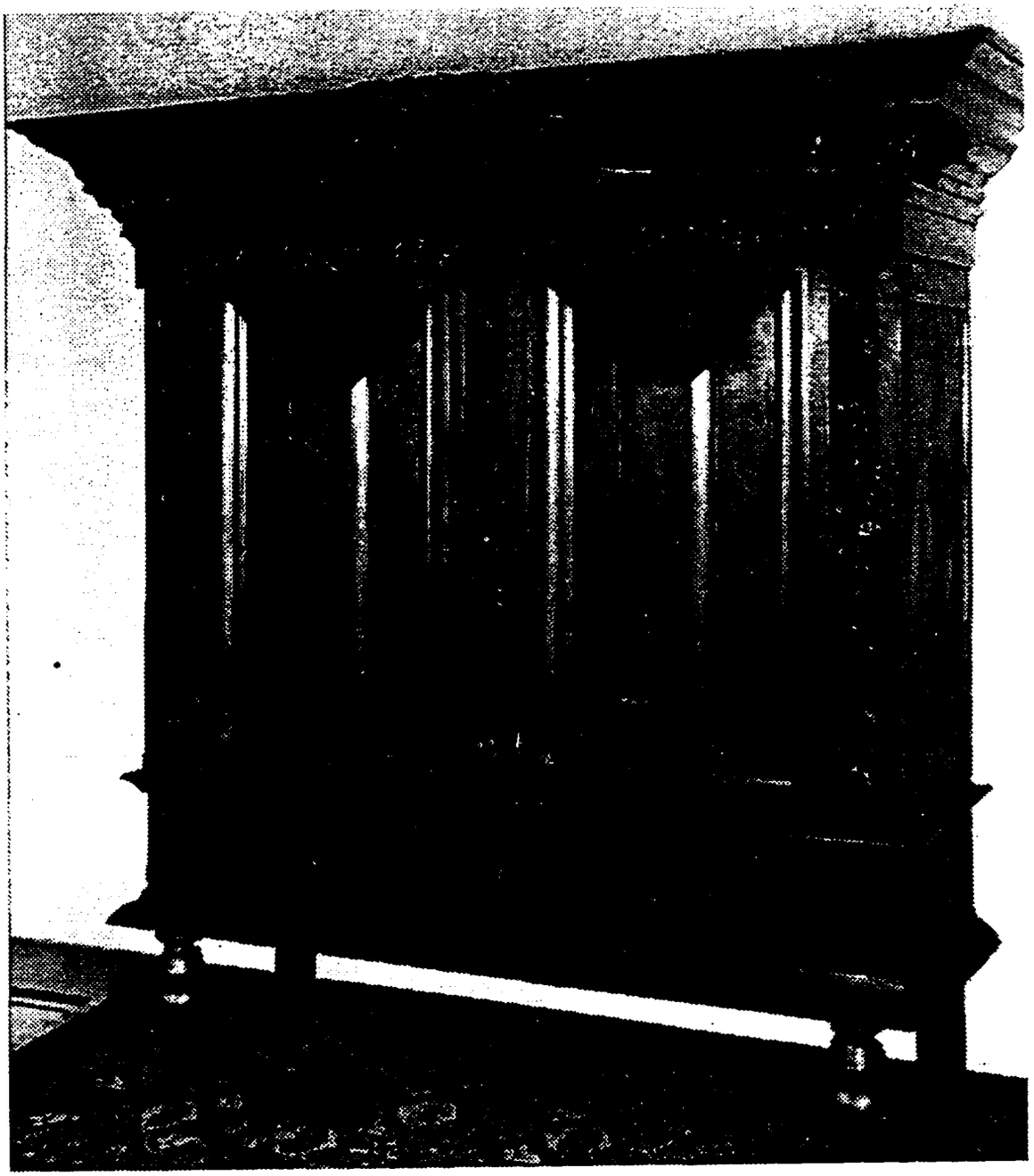

Figure 8
Beekman Family Kas
Courtesy of the New York Historical Society

By the time the Beekman family kas was acquired by James and Jane (at some point after their wedding in 1752), the predominance of the high chest and other English storage forms would certainly have rendered the kas out of fashion. It can be understood, however, as an heirloom, symbolic of the traditions and heritage shared by the young couple. It would be reasonable to assume that it descended in the Keteltas family and accompanied Jane when she married as part of her *uitzet*, or dowry.

As part of a dowry, or the property a woman brings into a marriage, the kas is a gendered object. This is one of the few objects not associated with housework that can be considered part the feminine domain, and as such it can provide rare information about the material lives of women. Textiles and other "movables" made up a woman's property, and their transfer between women is one of the few ways that we know about their owners' lives. Traditionally, Dutch women were able to inherit and bequeath property in their own right.[55] This practice persisted legally under the Dutch rule of New Amsterdam and continued among many Dutch families after English law was enacted in 1664. When her mother died, Jane was bequeathed "all [her] linnen and wearing apparrell."[56] These are some of the things that would have been stored in a kas.

When placed in the context of the Beekman family's domestic space, one is able to read the kas as both a manifestation of Dutch heritage and proof of the persistence of Dutch traditions in eighteenth-century New York. A visitor to the Beekman home would have recognized the kas as an old Dutch piece of furniture. In this way it told others about the family's past. At the same time, the kas was a private symbol for the family,

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[55]Simon Schama, The Embarrassment of Riches (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), 404.

[56]The Last Will and Testament of Jane Keteltas, Beekman Family Papers.

reminding them of their traditions and associations in a way an outsider would not have understood.

The notion that the Beekman kas descended in Jane's family and was part of her dowry is supported by an American-made kas made between1690 and 1720 presently at the Conference House on Staten Island. It has a history of ownership in the Keteltas family.(figure 9) This is the only extant American kas that invites close comparison to the Beekman *kas* or its Dutch counterparts.[57] On the basis of size, construction and the use of perimeter moldings on the two doors, it seems likely that the builder of the American kas took the Beekman kas (perhaps at one time Keteltas) as a design source. It would not have been unusual for an American craftsman to copy an available piece of furniture, adapting it to suit the taste of his client. When compared to Dutch kasten, the American kas is more austere in ornamentation, possibly because that is what the Keteltas family wanted or possibly because that is what the craftsman knew how to make. In any event, building the kas in America was less expensive than importing such a cumbersome piece from the Netherlands.

When Jane and Abraham Keteltas gave the kas to their daughter Jane to take with her as she set out to start her own family they gave her more than a family antique. Jane's parents presented her with a physical reminder of their Dutch heritage. As an heirloom in the Beekman family household, it was symbolic of the Dutch culture continued by James, Jane, and their family. In addition, it was a reminder of their continuing involvement in the consumer culture from which their bourgeois ancestors came. The kas, when it was built in the seventeenth century, was the manifestation of economic success. In its eighteenth-century surroundings, the kas must have reminded the

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[57]Peter M.Kenny, American Kasten: The Dutch Style Cupboards of New York and New Jersey, 1650-1850 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 17.

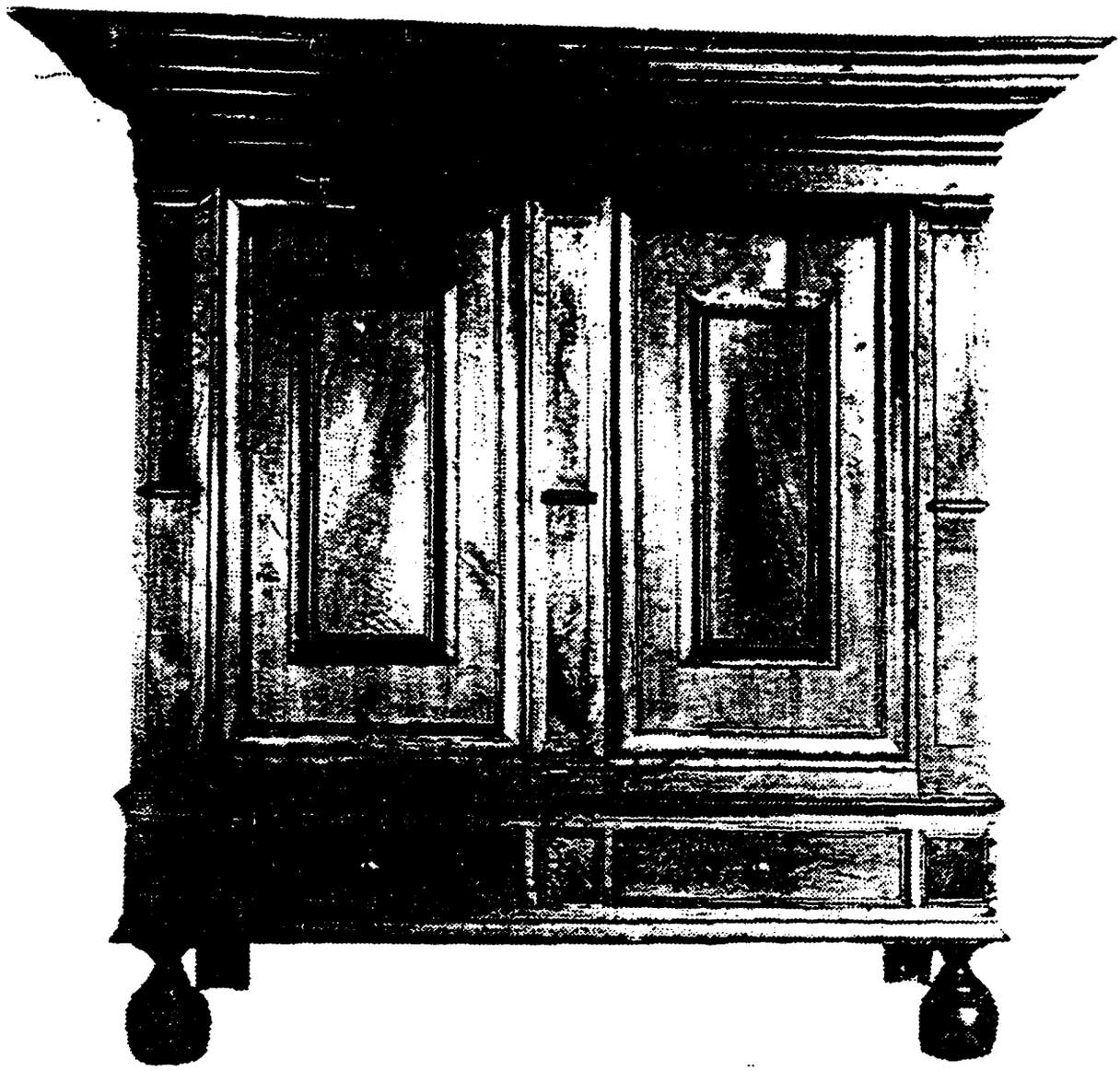

Figure 9
Keteltas Family Kas
Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society

Beekman family of the heritage to which they were tied and the material success to which they themselves aspired.

This furniture form was not rare or unusual, but it certainly retained cultural associations. It was a furniture type known to the Netherlander well before the seventeenth century, and, in various stylistic permutations, it was equally well known to the Dutch "New Netherlander." A seventeenth-century kasten in New York can be "read" in the same way as its counterparts in the Netherlands. Because textiles and their elaborate storage facility were the domain of the prosperous merchant-bourgeoisie, they act as visual confirmation of the owner's wealth. As the eighteenth century progressed, however, the kas ceased to be a fashionable piece of furniture. Lighter furniture in the French and English style came into use in the Netherlands, and the high chest or chest of drawers replaced the kas as the superlative form for the storage of textiles in New York.[58]

Contemporary taste demanded English furniture forms, and changes in architecture brought built-in cupboards and closets.[59] Additionally, changes in social dictates concerning privacy deemed that it was no longer appropriate to place a bed in the parlor, regardless of how elaborately draped it was. As beds were moved to higher or more private chambers, kasten went with them. In effect, one of the main purposes of the kas was storage for bedding, a function it could more conveniently serve if it was in the same room as the bed. As early as 1724, it was recorded that Gertruy Van Cortlandt had "1 old Holland case, 1 bedsteed, 1 feather bed, 1 bolster & 2 pillows, 1 suit old serge curtains" in the chamber over the back parlor. In the great garrett of the same house,

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[58]Blackburn and Piwonka, Remembrance of Patria, 261.
[59]Kenny, American Kasten, 9.

there were "1 old Holland casse, 1 bedsteed, 1 ozenbrigs bed & bolster, 2 trekin pillows, 1 pallet bed."[60]

These second-floor rooms are less likely to have been the rooms that Gertruy Van Cortlandt would have used for entertaining, but they are the rooms that she chose for her less-than-modern kasten. The kasten seem to have ceded their favored position in the downstairs public spaces to more fashionable furniture forms. The same inventory includes such parlor furnishings as a clock and case, a tea table and stand, a turkey carpet, brass andirons, nine pictures, eighteen chairs, and a black walnut scruptore. In this more public space, modern furniture forms greet the visitor.

In the Netherlands and the Dutch colonies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the kas was the symbol of prosperity, fashion and the organized household.[61] Dutch colonists brought their kasten and the tradition of their use to New Amsterdam and other colonies. By the mid eighteenth century, they had come to represent a heritage and old fashioned values that became less visible as English customs and different types of storage gained favor. This is by no means meant to imply that it was necessary to abandon one's cultural heritage in order to remain fashionable and succeed economically. Instead, one might consider that cultural heritage became more private as public standards of fashion deemed it necessary to constantly update and keep pace with English and Continental criteria.

While the Beekman kas was a vivid reminder of the family's heritage as well as past and continued success in commerce, they owned other, less sizable objects that exemplify the maintenance of strong ties to the Dutch community. Two ceramic plates

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[60]Ruth Piowanka, "New York Colonial Inventories: Dutch Interiors as a Measure of Cultural Change," in New World Dutch Studies: Dutch Arts and Culture in Colonial America, 1609-1776, (Albany: Albany Institute of History and Art), 74.
[61]Kenny, American Kasten, 10

Figure 10
William and Mary Commemorative Plates
Courtesy of the New York Historical Society

with a history of use at Mount Pleasant commemorate the coronation of William and Mary, the Dutch monarchs who took joint control of the British empire in 1689. (fig. 10) William and Mary's "Glorious Revolution" was anxiously awaited and much celebrated in England and the colonies. The English had captured New Amsterdam from the Dutch in 1664, forcing most Dutch into second-class citizenship. Twenty-five years later, the Prince of Orange ascended to the English throne, inspiring Dutch New Yorkers to reassert themselves. There was a brief period between 1689 and 1690 when a rebellion lead by Jacob Leisler tried to reestablish the social order set in place before British rule. The British and the Dutch elite were, for the most part, loyal to the throne. This was less a conspiracy to restore Dutch rule, than an explosion of resentment by those who felt displaced in the city founded by their fathers.[62]

These events illustrate the fact that William and Mary's ascension to the British throne was important to Dutch and English citizens in Europe and the colonies. It was a philosophical victory for all but a select few. These few, including Gerardus Beekman, James's grandfather, took the occasion of the Glorious Revolution as their call to action. Leisler lead a revolution that reclaimed control of New York for the Dutch. Gerardus was Long Island's chief lieutenant and military commander and a supporter of Leisler during his brief rule (1689-90).

Because of the family's personal involvement in the struggle, the William & Mary plates that James and Jane possessed had a special significance. Made in England and Holland, William and Mary commemorative tin-glazed earthenware plates and chargers are considered the most widely distributed ceramic depicting royalty. Very often, decorative ceramics were made to order and included the name of the purchaser.

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[62]Archdeacon, "Age of Leisler," 73.

However, the popularity of William and Mary and their Glorious Revolution was so great that commemorative pieces were made for general sale.

The particular plates considered here would have been purchased by James's father, Dr. Gerardus Beekman (1653-1723). He was economically successful and politically involved. As one who took part in Leisler's rebellion and lived through periods of both Dutch and English rule, Gerardus would have seen these plates as a celebration of his ancestry and a glorification of the House of Orange. The phrases that decorate medallions around the border of one plate are translated as follows:

As long as the sun and moon shall exist
The color Orange shall never perish
This scene in the afternoon
Exact in the signing of the alliance/treaty
I must praise God with glory
There I do say Orange forever.[63]

What was a life-changing event for Gerardus was a historical fact to James and Jane. As individuals of Dutch descent who were born in a colony under British rule, with neighbors and business associates from various cultures, the James and Jane were reminded by the plates of a time when the Dutch were New York's preeminent political and social force. William and Mary represented the conjoining of Dutch and English political and economic concerns. The Beekmans are representative of a generation of wealthy Dutch New Yorkers whose social and family life was increasingly a mix of Dutch and English traditions and customs.

In the same way that James and Jane had been born into a social and economic elite, they were born into a religion. James's great-great-grandfather was one of the Netherlands' best known orthodox Calvinist theologians, and his grandfather had actively

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[63]I Thank Jeroen van den Hurh for the translation of these lines.

fought against Anglican dominance in New York.[64] Jane grew up in a religious household as well. Her father, the Rev. Abraham Keteltas, instilled an enduring faith in his children, passing on his vocation as a minister to Jane's older brother, Abraham. When he died, Abraham Keteltas, Sr., left specific volumes from his library to each of his children. Jane received an assortment that contained, for the most part, collections of sermons and Christian teaching.[65] In addition to these, James recorded the purchase of several psalm books, and on November 20, 1766, he noted a payment of £2, "for a Testament with the three languages in the same."

A Dutch bible in three languages with a Beekman family history is housed in the library collections at the New-York Historical Society and may be the very "testament" to which James referred in 1766. The date represents a time of transition in the Dutch Reformed Church, when congregations were considering the possibility of church services conducted in English. American churches were dependent on authorities in Holland to choose ministers for colonial congregations, and worship services were conducted in Dutch until an official ruling in 1764 decreed that it was acceptable to preach in English.[66] It was previously declared that parents should take time to teach their ancestral language to their children, for, "the true doctrine of comfort in life and death is preached in the clearest and most powerful manner in the Dutch tongue."[67] It was not until 1762, nearly one hundred years after the English took control of New Amsterdam, that a plan calling for an English-speaking minister is recorded. Gerardus was among those church elders whose signatures endorsed the plan.

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[64]White, Beekmans of New York, 336.
[65]The Will of Rev.Abraham Keteltas, Beekman Family Papers, box 35, folder 8.
[66]Gerald F. DeJong, "The Tie That Binds: Church and Language," in The Dutch in America, 1609-1974 (Boston: Twayne Publ., 1975), 97.
[67]DeJong, "Tie That Binds,"103.

Shared religious beliefs and the community built around the institution of the church were essential to reinforcing cultural identity among New Yorkers of Dutch descent. Adherence to the Dutch Reformed faith and the use of the Dutch language whether reading scripture at home or listening to it at a service were two ways that Dutch families were able to retain traditional values in the face of such polyglot surroundings.

In 1759 The Rev. Andrew Burnaby described the religious community he found when he visited New York:

> "They are composed of people of different nations, different manners, different religions, and different languages. They have a mutual jealousy of each other, fomented by considerations of interest, power, and ascendancy. Religious zeal too, like a smothered fire, is secretly burning in the hearts of the different sectaries that inhabit them"[68]

It was within this landscape of diversity that James and Jane Beekman raised their family. The use of her "Testament with three languages" and psalm books at home is one way that Jane could have instructed her children in their faith and taught them some Dutch at the same time. Religious instruction was necessary not simply to instill values but to convey a sense of heritage. Life in colonial New York had reduced the formality of Dutch Calvinism to the point that New Yorkers were less interested in the tenants of faith than in faith itself.[69] Gathering as a community for Sunday services also reinforced a social hierarchy created by a proscribed seating order. Entries in James's receipt book illustrate continual involvement with his church and his position in the social order. In 1767 he records having paid to Adr. Baneker Tun.s, "the sum of twenty four pounds &

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[68]Rev. Andrew Burnaby. Travels through the Middle Settlements in North America. (London: 1776) as quoted in R. H. Blackburn and Ruth Piowanka, Remembrance of Patria, 48.

[69]Milton M. Klein, "The Cultural Tyros of New York," in The Politics of Diversity: Essays in the History of Colonial New York. (New York: National University Publications, 1974), 119.

sometime past twenty six pounds which are what he subscribes towards building a third Church for the Dutch Congregation."

Throughout the 1780s and 1790s, James paid for the repair and rental of pews in the North Church gallery at £2, and then bought "pew No. fifty one on the lower floor" for £19.[70] He also paid £9 to William G. Forbes as the family's contribution to the minister's salary.[71] The purchase of a ground-floor pew and the sizable donations he contributes to the church's foundation and maintenance established James as a significant member of the congregation.

The Dutch Reformed Church was the final bastion of Amsterdam's influence in New York, but by the eighteenth century, this was waning. Jane Beekman's "Testament in three languages" is a reminder that the community had changed. By the middle of the eighteenth century, religious education was conducted in Dutch and English. As fewer young people of Dutch descent were able to speak their ancestral language, the Church's place as a binding force in the community diminished. James's purchase of a pew illustrates the new position of the church in New York, as a forum for display and a means to create social identity. Membership in the Dutch Reformed Church was less about being a devout Calvinist than it was about simply being Dutch.

The objects that express the provincial persona of the Beekman family are more than a reminder of their Dutch ancestry. They tell us a great deal about the place and time in which they were used. The kas, for example, embodies Jane Beekman's place within the provincial persona of her family and the landscape of eighteenth-century New York as a whole. She is modern in her ownership of property and participation in the dry goods business but retains an interest in her family, religion, and ancestral tongue; ideas borne

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[70]Beekman Receipt Book, 1752-1802.
[71]Beekman Receipt Book,1752-1802.

out by her ownership of a kas and a Bible printed in Dutch, French, and English. This Bible connects the Beekman and Keteltas families to issues concerning language that were current in the Dutch Reformed Church, whereas the William and Mary plates remind them of the political struggles their ancestors dealt with and the present social changes that they were encountering.

The kas, the plates, and the Bible serve as the springboard to a discussion of the maintenance of traditional Dutch values that persisted in the Beekman family's domestic environment. By the same token, there are several objects that serve as a starting point for the examination of the Beekman family's public, urban persona. These include card tables, dining tables, tea tables, and other items used in the family's Queen Street town house.

Chapter 4

The Urban Persona

As James Beekman's dry goods business became more profitable, the family was able to rent progressively larger houses, and in 1760 they purchased their own home on Queen Street.[72] This move from the provincial North Ward to the retail center of New York allowed for the articulation of an urban persona. Familial and church associations became more private as precedence was given to participation in the multi-cultural society of Manhattan's mercantile elite. In their new surroundings, James and Jane were able to use their town house and its contents to project a metropolitan image while maintaining aspects of the provincial, Dutch identity that characterized their earliest domestic circumstances. With an increased cash flow and access to information about new styles that came with living in a commercial center, the Beekmans were able to mold their image by acquiring particular objects for use in their home.

Queen Street, which is called Pearl Street today, was located in the southeastern part of Manhattan and was inhabited by the wealthiest citizens of the city's five central districts. This area, known as the Dock Ward, was home to a majority of Anglo and French settlers and a minority of established Dutch families.[73] In the North Ward, which was the poorest section of town, four out of every five households were Dutch.[74] It was from this undesirable, uptown area that the Beekmans relocated, leaving, in a sense, their

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[72]This assumption is based on an analysis of the progressively increasing rents recorded in the Beekman Family Account Books with regard to the location of the residence.
[73]Archdeacon, "Age of Leisler," 68.
[74]Archdeacon, "Age of Leisler," 68.

cultural peers behind to join their economic equals in a more diverse neighborhood. It is important, however, to emphasize that the Beekmans did not abandon their heritage when they became economically successful and changed neighborhoods. They maintained strong ties to the Dutch Reformed Church and kept many Dutch objects in their home. The expression of this facet of their life, however, probably became increasingly private.

As the eighteenth century progressed, the ratio of nationalities in New York City underwent a marked alteration, with expanded immigration from the British Isles and a stagnation of Dutch newcomers slowly transforming New York from a Dutch to an English city.[75] In this fluid environment the Beekmans were able to present themselves as *urban*, not simply Dutch or Anglo. The objects they chose to furnish their Queen Street town house were modern, reflecting no single ethnicity, but the dominant culture in their surroundings which was one of diversity.

As we have already seen, they went to extravagant lengths to update their town house, creating a Georgian exterior and an interior that represented the height of rococo decoration, ornamented with paint, wallpaper, and carved moldings. In addition, they chose to furnish their home with objects that would enhance the public image of fashion and modernity that they wished to convey. An understanding of the Beekmans urban persona is achieved through the illustration of selected objects, owned and used by the family, that epitomize their participation in the society of New York's mercantile elite.[76]

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[75]Joyce D. Goodfriend, Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City, 1664-1730. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 155.

[76]For a complete listing of household objects purchased by the Beekmans, see Appendix B.

It is difficult to determine which objects were intended for the town house and which were destined for the farm. It is logical to assume that furnishings were transferred from house to house as the family moved and seasons changed.

On January 15, 1768, James recorded the following entry in the "Household Expenses" section of his account book, "To d[ebit] p[aid] Wm. Procter for a card table, a china ditto and four windsor chairs...11.4.0"[77] This same account book chronicles the purchase of twelve tables between 1752 and 1768, varying in price and function. Of these, several examples survive, including two card tables.(fig. 11) It is likely that one of them is this table made by William Proctor and that the second card table is a contemporary copy that was intended to be its mate. These particular tables are exceptional for their graceful form and carved decoration. Although it has been repeatedly asserted that New York furniture of the Queen Ann and Chippendale periods is "notoriously uninspired," the exception is the serpentine, five-leg, ball-and-claw foot card table.[78]

The Beekman card tables are part of a small group with relatively shallow serpentine skirts with gadrooned attached moldings. Cabriole legs with foliate C-scroll carving on the knees terminate in ball-and-claw feet distinguished by a high ball and graceful, pointed claws.[79] The maker's understanding of the rococo aesthetic is particularly evident in the rich carving on the knee, delicately executed legs, ankles and feet, and the deep serpentine curve of the skirt. The pronounced projection of square

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were destined for the farm. It is logical to assume that furnishings were transferred from house to house as the family moved and seasons changed.

[77]Beekman Account Book, 1761-91.

[78]Morrison Heckscher, "The New York Serpentine Card Table," Antiques 103, No. 5, (May 1973): 974-83.
Harold Sack, "New York Tables: Washington's Choice," Antiques 82, No. 2, (February 1962): 192-3.

[79]For further descriptions of New York card tables, see Frank Levy, "The Most Opulent Form: The Structural Analysis" (Master's Thesis, University of Delaware, 1991.); Heckscher, "New York Serpentine Card Table."

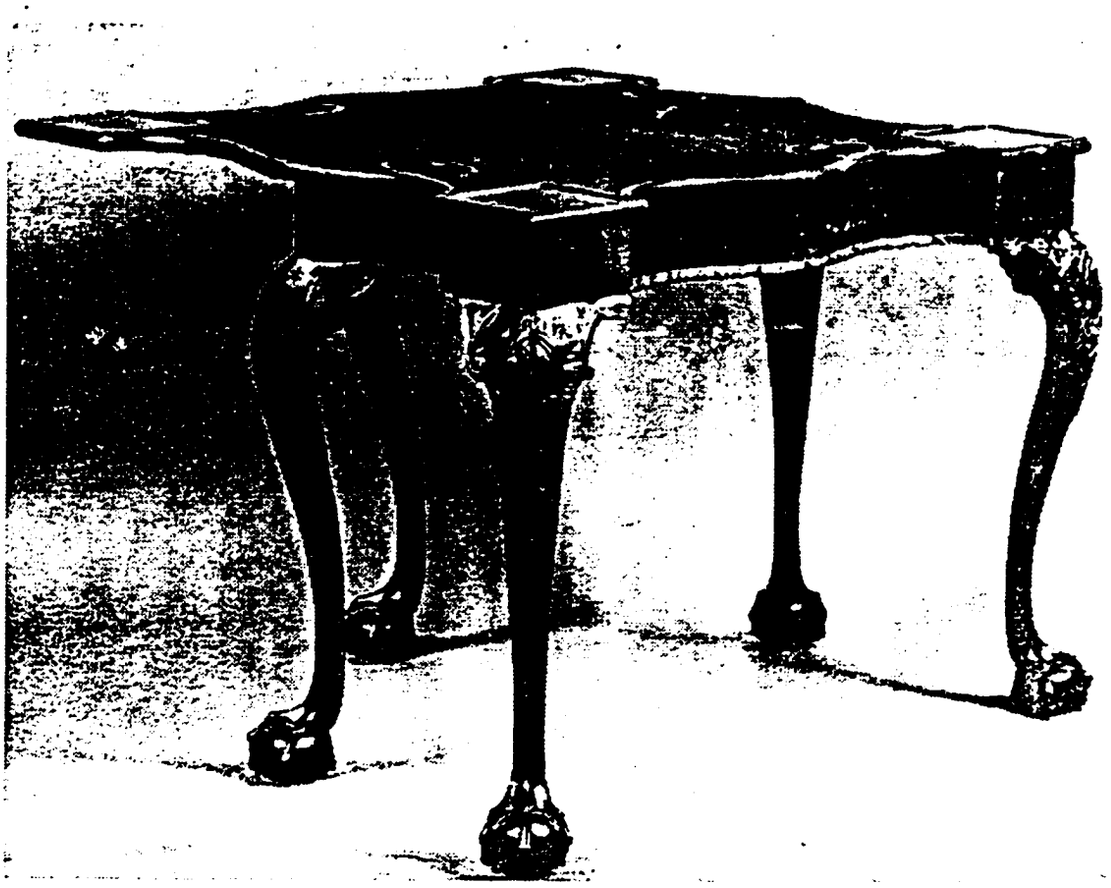

Figure 11
Beekman Family Card Table
Courtesy of the New York Historical Society

corners in conjunction with the figured mahogany of the table top create a sense of movement and vitality in these pieces that is absent in the card tables of other regions.

When opened, the top has a baise playing surface, interrupted by oval dishes meant to hold counters and square corners reserved for candlesticks. A fifth leg swings out to support the top when opened, revealing a drawer for cards, chips, and dice. When the hinged top is closed, the straight rear profile of the table allows it to be placed against a wall, out of the way. This was obviously the intention, as the back surface is relatively unadorned by moldings or carving. Ownership of one or a pair of card tables was not rare in the eighteenth-century household, given the ubiquity of card playing. However, possession of such an exquisite example was surely a mark of distinction.

No known tables of this type can be firmly attributed to a New York maker, but historical and physical evidence suggest New York origin for these, possibly based on English prototypes. Several examples have descended in other distinguished New York families, such as the VanCortlandts and VanRensselaers.[80]

It is possible that the individual from whom the Beekmans purchased the table, William Proctor, was simply acting as a middle man or auctioneer, for indeed, public auctions were held almost daily in New York. The Beekman account books record scores of items "bought at vendu." However, the entry for the card table makes no such reference. Preliminary evidence would suggest that Proctor was the craftsman whose workshop produced the Beekman table and hence, some of the finest rococo furniture made in America.[81]

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[80]David L. Barquist, American Tables and Looking Glasses (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1992), 169.

[81]There are two card tables at the New-York Historical Society with a (James) Beekman provenance, yet only one is recorded in the family account books. This is explained in a

What did William Proctor's card table signify to the Beekmans? Surely, they did not consider the purchase in terms of "the finest example of a five leg, serpentine, rococo card table we can find." If they wanted an impressive card table made in "the newest style," within a certain price range, that is what they received. The modern viewer is sure to appreciate the table's aesthetic and functional qualities, but it is also possible to view them as emblematic of the urban persona that the Beekmans intended to project from their Queen Street residence. Like the Beekmans, the table is the epitome of high-style urban New York in the mid-eighteenth century. They represent the pinnacle of fashion and a working person's ability to possess the best quality craftsmanship available. These tables are the ultimate presentation of a standard form, opulently executed and put to a nonessential use.

By the last quarter of the eighteenth century, card playing was a well-established pastime that cut cross economic and social boundaries.[82] The same entertainments that occupied farmers in a tavern--drinking, eating, and gaming--occupied the wealthiest urban citizens at gatherings in their carefully decorated parlors. There were, however, games that had "distinct social connotations."[83] Fast paced games of chance such as Faro

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study conducted by Frank Levy, "The Most Opulent Form" in which he asserts that the tables were not made concurrently. It is possible that one was made at a later time, as a mate to the first. This theory is based on construction methods that are incongruous. Bolstering the assertion that William Proctor was the cabinetmaker who produced these pieces is the purchase of a small dining table that the family made from him three years earlier.

[82]Gerald W. R. Ward, "Avarice and Conviviality: Card Playing in Federal America," in The Work of Many Hands (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1982), 15.
[83]Ward, "Avarice and Conviviality," 15.

and Vingtun, were common in taverns, while games such as Whist, Quadrille, and Loo, which combine chance and skill, were more popular in urban upper-class settings.[84] It was this type of social distinction that made card playing an acceptable genteel entertainment and a sanctioned forum for competition.

At the card table set out in the Beekman's parlor, women and men could compete against one another on common ground. Women could gamble and take pleasure in testing their skills against male opponents--actions not often endorsed beyond the gaming table. Because card games were not gender exclusive, they were also an acceptable means of courtship. Cards were played as afternoon entertainment in conjunction with tea or as a post-meal distraction. In 1781 a young woman from Philadelphia who was visiting New York wrote home to her sisters that, "few New York ladies know how to entertain company in their houses unless they introduce the card tables."[85]

The Beekmans and their guests could have gathered for a game of Whist around the dining table, the tea table, or any available flat surface, but they did not. Their decision to play cards at a table designed expressly for that purpose is emblematic of the need to specialize and beautify genteel social activities that were not essentially distinctive.[86] Whereas a 1788 law dictated that tavern keepers were subject to a fine or imprisonment if they permitted card playing or other sorts of gaming on their premises, private assemblies that were open to a select membership permitted card playing and the drinking and gambling that often accompanied it.[87]

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[84]Ward, "Avarice and Conviviality," 21.
[85]Rebecca Franks, "Letters of Rebecca Franks," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 23, no. 3 (1899): as quoted in The Work of Many Hands, 17.
[86]Bushman, Richard L. The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities, (New York: Random House, 1993), 51.
[87]Bushman, Refinement of America, 51.

These subtle distinctions and double standards made knowledge of the rules very important. Not the rules of Quadrille, but the rules of social behavior that distinguish the elite from everyone else. As part of an urban social group, the Beekmans and their guests would have expected certain codes of behavior to be upheld. These codes were spelled out in courtesy manuals that went into excruciating detail when delineating the way one should walk, eat, cough, spit, and address a superior.[88] Indeed, there were superiors, and in a sense, the card table was an arena for judging social rank. Did your neighbor know the rules of Whist? and did he know that it was not polite to wipe his nose on his sleeve? Gathering in a social setting, like a game of cards, allowed an individual to judge the decorum of their contemporaries and gauge their own skills.

A game of cards was not the only place that called for social dexterity. There were gatherings around other kinds of tables that called for an equal measure of attention to be paid to comportment. Of particular concern were dining and tea drinking parties. As was the case with card playing, these actions were not, in themselves distinctive. Everyone eats, and in eighteenth century America, even the most modest households seem to have drunk tea.[89] It was the mystique that grew up around the rituals of dining and tea drinking that differentiated them in polite society.

On November 10, 1764, James Beekman noted the purchase of a dining table and black walnut chair frames. On January 19, 1765, he recorded a cash payment of £1.6 to Mr. Proctus (Proctor) for a small dining table.[90] Less than a month later, the same account book records the purchase of "2 Gilt Scenes, 1 pier glass, 2 walnut pier glass, 1

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[88]Eleazar Moody, The School of Good Manners (New London, 1715) as quoted in Bushman, Refinement of America, 31.
[89]Louise Conway Belden, The Festive Tradition: Table Decoration and Desserts in America, 1650-1900 (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983), 248.
[90]Beekman Household Account Book, 1761-1791.

silver plate glass, and two brass wine cages." These items come amidst a stream of purchases that are associated with dining including china, cream ware, plain earthenwares and stoneware. The Beekmans purchased knife boxes and ivory-handled knives and forks to fill them. They acquired silver serving dishes, including porringers; a chased silver bowl; and a silver chafing dish. They also obtained silver salts and a silver pepper box to hold seasonings on the table. A pair of six-leg, drop-leaf dining tables at the New-York Historical Society have a family history of ownership by James and Jane Beekman.(fig. 12) They could be any of the so-designated dining tables that the family purchased or one of the unspecified tables that James acquired at public auction.[91]

When displayed against the backdrop of the Beekmans' renovated interiors, the accoutrements of sophisticated dining give the impression that the couple were engaged in elaborate entertaining. Like card playing or tea drinking, dining with guests required an understanding of the rules dictating this type of assemblage. The diner's level of sophistication could be judged by the level of discipline they exhibited in comparison to "common folk." Certainly, an awareness of social codes was not confined to those of fantastic wealth. French and English courtesy books were distributed in the colonies, and as early as 1715, Boston schoolmaster Eleazar Moody published one of the earliest American courtesy manuals, *The School of Good Manners*.[92]

However, it was in the performance of proscribed actions that one either excelled in society or was shunned. Full participation was restricted to those who had the leisure time to acquire schooling and the means to practice. The Beekman account books suggest that the couple had both. In May of 1770, James paid Mr. Viany "Dansing master" more

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[91]Beekman Account Book, 1761-1791. Also see App. B.
Feb. 4, 1766, "to d paid for sundries bought at Mr. Nicholas Bayard's vendu...2 tables @ 5 &12..."

[92]Bushman, Refinement of America, 31.

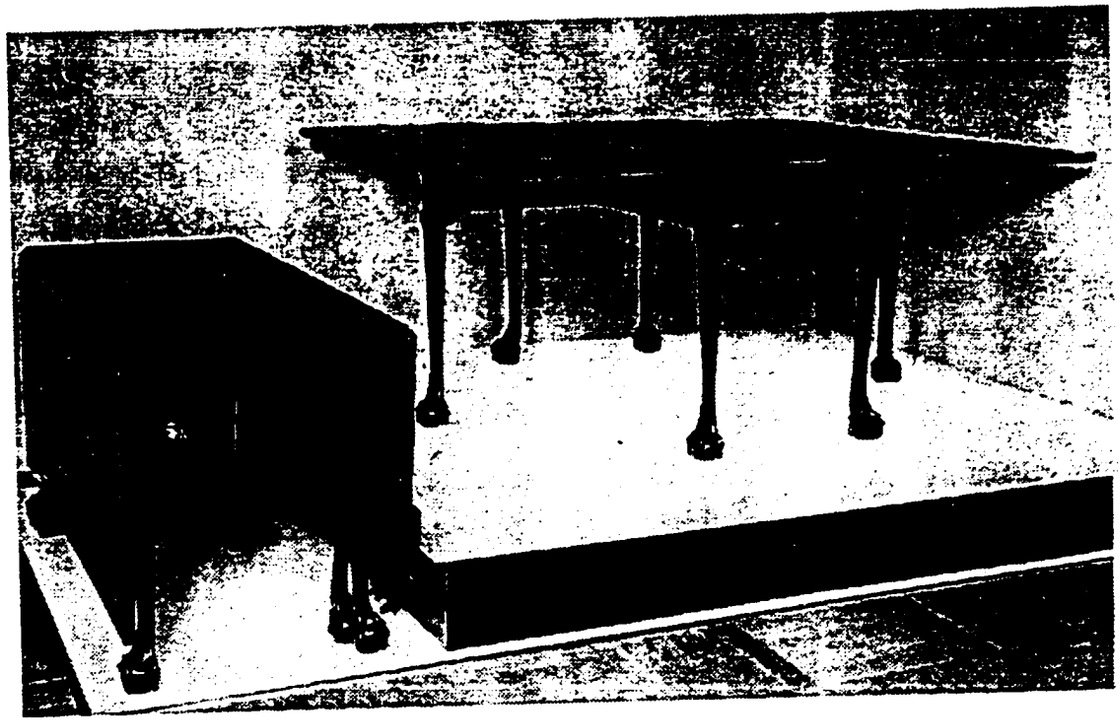

Figure 12
Beekman Family Dining Tables
Courtesy of the New York Historical Society

than £7.[93] This was remuneration for teaching the children proper posture and etiquette as well as dancing. The children's formal education did not end with such transitory pursuits. Each received academic tutoring at home when they were young and attended more specialized schools when they were older. The boys went on to "Prince Town Colledge," while Jane and Catherine attended the schools of Mrs. Ann Rogers and Lydia Belknap between 1770 and 1773.[94]

It was this kind of formal education that prepared the Beekman children for tea, parties, balls, and careers. Their preparation for polite society must have been adequate because several married into the most prominent families in the city--Van Cortlandt, Bedlow, Boudinot and Bayard, to name a few. The family was included in social gatherings at friends' and neighbors' homes where their accomplishments were appreciated by the standards of the day.

> June 6 we dined with Mr. Bridgen (Bridsen) at his country house three miles of New York on the East River--our party were General B and his lady, the four Priestleys, and two other gentlemen, besides the family...there was an addition to our party at tea--a Mrs. Beekman, the mother of twelve sons and daughters, and still appears capable of producing many more. Mr. Bridgen, our host is the father of eighteen...that is indeed the way to stock a new country with inhabitants. Three of the Miss Beekmans accompanied their mother, one of whom it was said, was well skilled in Greek and Latin--this, however, was not the whole of her accomplishments. She was handsom nor had her deep studies at all injured a very beautiful complexion[95]

Of course, the Beekmans did not have to go beyond their own home to enjoy social gatherings. From an early date, they were well equipped to serve tea in their own

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[93]Beekman Account Books 1761-91.
[94]White, Beekmans of New York, 483.
[95]"An Excursion to the United States, 1794" in Beekman Family Papers (New-York Historical Society Manuscript Collection, New York), 191.

home. On March 15, 1753, James Beekman's receipt book records the following: "Received from James Beekman twenty eight pounds seventeen shillings and six pense in full for one dozen black walnut chairs, one mahogany tea table and one mahogany dining table signed: Thoe. Brookman."[96] At various times they purchased china cups and saucers, three tea kettles and a stand, two tea pots, a tea waiter, silver tea tongs, cream pots, and tea spoons.[97] All these goods, in addition to coffee, chocolate, and teas, could be easily purchased in local shops or specially imported.

As a merchant, more specifically an importer of dry goods, James was in constant contact with his British associates. They furnished him with products "in the newest style" for his business and, most likely, his home. It is logical then, that James and Jane would be on the cutting edge of style and fashion. In addition, James' business was located in the Dock Ward, the vicinity of most public vendu. The Beekmans' awareness of fashions abroad and the products that were available to New Yorkers, was manifested in their purchasing power.

Access to information and cash allowed the family to create the urban persona so clearly illustrated by the objects in their Queen Street house. Primary among these was the five-leg, ball-and-claw card table. In addition to being an extravagant display of taste and wealth, it is indicative of the kind of amusements expected when polite New Yorkers entertained. In a general sense, a gathering at the dining table, tea table or card table was an arena for display and competition. The Beekman card table in particular demonstrates

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[96]Beekman Receipt Book, 1752-1802.
[97]Beekman Account Books, 1759-86.

the family's ability to use display and competition as a means to take part in the multicultural society of Manhattan's mercantile elite.

Section 5

The Cosmopolitan Persona

If the Beekmans' Queen Street town house and the objects that filled it were the epitome of all that was eighteenth-century New York for the mercantile elite, then Mount Pleasant and its furnishings were the embodiment of everything the cosmopolitan colonial merchant could hope for. Architecturally, it echoed the Georgian-style mansions being built by wealthy individuals in Britain and throughout the Atlantic basin, and in terms of its decoration, James and Jane spared no expense.

Several objects purchased by the Beekmans after the construction of Mount Pleasant was complete reflect the family's cosmopolitan persona; paramount among these are two globes that James purchased in February of 1771.[98] (fig. 13) He paid more than £4 for them, which is comparable to the price he paid for a mahogany table or a silver porringer. They were certainly imported from England or Holland because none are known to have been made in America until 1810, well after the American Revolution. In fact, there is no mention of the sale of globes in New York before 1799. Of course, one cannot assume that the globes were not available simply because they were not advertised, but limited mention would imply that they were not common.

In both New York and Philadelphia, books that dealt with the use of globes and mathematical instruments seem to have been available before the product itself. When globes did appear in the American market, they were invariably "just imported from

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[98]Beekman Account Book, 1761-91.

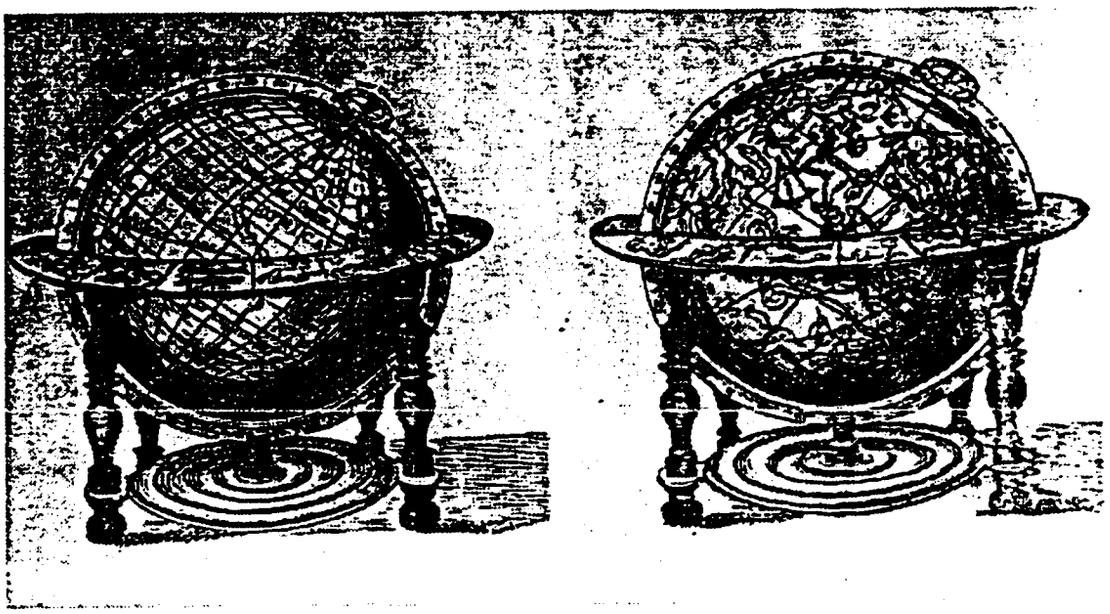

Figure 13
John Harris, *The Description and Use of the Globes and the Orrery*. London, 1738.
Courtesy of the Winterthur Museum

London."[99] James acquired his globes twenty-eight years before any others were advertised for sale in New York, and when they did appear, they were offered by one of the Beekmans' town house neighbors, "Peter Mesier, at the Ledger, No.107 Pearl Street."[100] Globes in colonial America and the early Republic were associated with the type of learning available only to the upper echelons of society. Kent County School, near Chestertown, Pennsylvania, advertised that, "young Gentlemen are boarded and taught the Greek and the Latin tongues, Arithmetick, Merchants Accounts, Surveying, Navigation and the use of globes by the largest and most accurate pair in America...Young Gentlemen may be instructed in Fencing and Dancing by very good masters."[101]

The Beekman globes may have been purchased with the children's education in mind. George Adams's 1800 "Essay on the Use of Celestial and Terrestrial Globes" emphasized the didactic nature of these objects by prefacing the book with the following words,

> "All concur to prove that the artificial representations of the earth and the heavens, on the terrestrial and celestial globes, are the instrument best adapted to convey natural and genuine ideas of astronomy and geography to young minds."[102]

Maps and globes were an important possession for any educated member of the international community, especially a merchant like James Beekman. He may have used his globes to follow the course of ships leaving port with his cargo, but it is not likely that this was their sole purpose. Few of the maps or globes consumed beyond the European

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[99]Pennsylvania Gazette, January 20, 1763;1764; 1768; 1774; 1778. Commercial Advertiser, New York, February 16, 1799.
[100]Commercial Advertiser, May 16, 1800.
[101]Pennsylvania Gazette, March 12, 1745.
[102]George Adams, An Essay on the Use of Celestial and Terrestrial Globes (Philadelphia: Printed for William Young,1800).

scientific community had the most current or accurate information, but mapmakers compensated with decoration.[103] (fig. 14) Coloring, fine engraving, ships, and flying fish were presented to customers in the absence of facts.[104] It is likely that a certain clientele disregarded their geographic and geometric merit, investing these decorative objects with symbolic content.

James Beekman possessed the earth in miniature. What better way to tell contemporaries that he "had the world in the palm of his hand?" This figurative ownership of planet and cosmos had nuanced meaning that changed depending upon where the globes were placed. When positioned in his office, they may have reminded him that he had financial control over what he saw before him. As a merchant, possession of these globes was an assertion of his personal knowledge of the products that various lands could offer. James may have used the globes to gain an appreciation of geography, latitude, and longitude, knowledge that would have made his understanding of shipping more complete.

When placed in his parlor, the globes took on a different symbolic meaning. They told visitors that the Beekmans were educated, (literally) worldly, and prosperous enough to afford this rather extravagant decoration. As an informed private consumer in 1771, displaying the globes indicated that he could make purchases from New York that would not have been available to the general public for years. Thus, the globes set James and Jane Beekman apart because they marked them as part of an elite group with access to information and goods that those outside the international community were denied.

In addition to the globes, there were other objects recorded in the household account books that connected the Beekmans to the cosmopolitan community throughout

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[103]Lloyd A. Brown, The Story of Maps (New York: Bonanza Books, 1949), 174.
[104]Brown, Story of Maps, 174.

Figure 14
Map of the Gulf Stream (1786) by James Poupard

urban America, England, and Europe. Worthy of some exploration is the family's rather large collection of musical instruments. Music was an important part of the social life of an educated, upper-class individual; an appreciation of music was a sign of refinement, and part of being "accomplished" in society meant that every lady and gentleman was expected to sing and play at least one instrument.[105] James and Jane Beekman had ten children, so their ownership of various instruments is understandable.

On the same day in 1771 that James purchased his pair of globes, he paid Anthony Bleecker more than £16 for a second-hand harpsichord.[106] The fact that it was previously owned is not surprising, given that harpsichords were played almost exclusively by young, unmarried women--a practice that was often abandoned when they married. Evidently, James wanted to assure that his daughters were skilled in the "necessary accomplishments" but doubted their long term commitment. The young ladies of the Beekman family were apparently not alone in their musical endeavors. The purchase of "a case of instruments," which was probably a set of recorders or another type of wind instrument, and the purchase of a "German flute" in 1767 were likely intended for the young gentlemen of the family.[107]

The appearance of a harpsichord and other musical instruments in the Beekman family household accounts is partially explained by the fact that the performance and enjoyment of music was thought to be one of the polite pastimes that played a critical roll

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[105]Carolyn Wehking, "The Pursuit of Happiness: Music and Society," in Music and the Pursuit of Happiness in the Eighteenth Century (Minneapolis: University Gallery, University of Minnesota, 1983), 9.

[106]Arthur Loesser, Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 428. In the 1760s, harpsichords sold abroad by Shudi ranged in price between £35 and £84. Freight, packing, and commissions would have raised the American price substantially.

[107]Beekman Account Book 1761-91.

in civilizing the merchant class.[108] The appearance of these musical instruments announced the genteel education that the Beekman children had received and were an indication of the refined nature of the family.[109] Amateur musical performances were a popular type of social gathering, as were the professional concerts that occurred with increasing frequency in the second half of the eighteenth century. Musical taste in New York was expanded, as more of the European masterpieces were being performed on American soil, and in January of 1770, "an Extract" from Handel's *Messiah* was presented in George Burns's Music Room in the old City Tavern.[110] This seems to be the first time any part of the work was heard "west of the Atlantic," and points to the increased musical sophistication of the American public.[111]

James and Jane Beekman, like many of their contemporaries, used the ownership and performance of instruments as a means to enhance the appearance worldliness and refinement. Regardless of how well any of the family members played, the appearance of these objects in the Beekman household signified a level of knowledge. Musical instruments were prohibitively expensive in both Europe and America, and as such, they were associated with status when displayed in a genteel setting. The cosmopolitan domain of music was reserved for those individuals with the means and leisure time to pursue the refined arts.

In a sense, the Beekmans' life at Mount Pleasant was an acquiescence to the Anglicization of social custom that was taking place among colonial America's merchant

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[108]Borsay, English Urban Renaissance, 259.
[109]E. D. Garrett, At Home: The American Family, 1750-1870, (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc.), 52.
[110]George G. Raddin, Jr., "The Music of New York City, 1797-1804,"New-York Historical Society Quarterly. 38, (October 1954), 479.
[111]Raddin, "Music of New York City," 479.

class. The men and women of the mid and late eighteenth century were aware of the deluge of consumer goods entering the American market through England and took advantage of their ability to purchase competitively priced products. Combined with a level of wealth not previously associated with the middle class, these goods had the effect of disordering the traditional way society viewed itself and provided a vehicle through which self-fashioning could be carried out. Presented with a range of options, the Beekmans were able to choose items that would convey the desired persona and give them a way to fit into the new social order.[112] When determining rank, first-hand knowledge of the person was supplanted by appearance and performance. Status had become commodified.

The objects used at Mount Pleasant tell us about the kind of activities in which the family was engaged, and the image they hoped to create. Globes and musical instruments are not simply illustrations of the Beekmans' cosmopolitan persona, they are the documents that tell us it was a cosmopolitan persona that the Beekman family hoped to project at this particular moment. While the exploration of objects that characterize the three persona presented here is a means of perceiving the Beekmans' social progression, articles within these categories can be ambiguous, concurrently demonstrating elements of all the persona.

A receipt found among the family's documents emphasizes the fact that none of the persona put forward at any particular time create a comprehensive image of "who the Beekmans were." They were, perhaps more provincial, more urban, or more cosmopolitan in any given situation, but their social existence could never be completely characterized by any one classification. A silver tea set purchased from William G.

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[112]T. H. Breen, paper delivered at Winterthur Museum, February 20, 1996.

Forbes in 1801 is simultaneously a manifestation of all three persona because it was made by an artisan of Dutch descent who worked in New York creating silver in English and continental shapes.

Both the Beekmans and Forbes were members of the Dutch Reformed Church in New York. In fact, it seems likely that Forbes held some official position in the congregation because the following payments are recorded in James's receipt book:

> New York 13th January 1801
> Recd. from James Beekman nine pounds for one year's salary of the Dutch church due Dec. 1st last. Also two pounds sixteen shillings for one year's rent of two pews in the north church gallery due October last
>
> Wm. G. Forbes

Forbes was one of a family of silversmiths working in New York from the 1760s to the 1860s. Although his father was from Scotland, his mother and wife were of Dutch ancestry, which explains his baptism in the Dutch Reformed Church of New York. He learned silversmithing from his father, and the first New York City directory (1786) listed him as one of only ten distinguished members of the Gold and Silversmiths Society.

Forbes made silver modeled on English designs, but it was "heavy silver" which was a predominantly Dutch taste.[113] This suggests the conjoined influences of the local silversmithing community, international fashions, and of his patrons' Dutch heritage.[114] Forbes was able to give his clients fashionable merchandise that appealed, in some respects, to their traditional aesthetics. The Beekmans must have appreciated his talents because the following receipt enumerates a sizable tea service that they ordered from their fellow parishioner, including:

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[113]Rachael B. Crawford, "The Forbes Family of Silversmiths," Antiques. *vol*, no. (April 1975), 731.
[114]Crawford, "Forbes Family," 731.

1 Silver Teapott	*20.10.0*
1 Silver Sugar Dish	*15.11.6*
1 Silver Cream Pott	*7.11.0*
1 d. Stand	*4.2.0*
1 doz. Teaspoons	*4.12.0*
1 Sugar Tongs	*1.3.0*
6 pairs of spoons and tongs	*0.5.6*
Arms & Crests	*0.8.0*
	54.3.0[115] (fig. 15)

Through this transaction they maintained social ties with another member of the Dutch Reformed Church, patronized a New York craftsman, and acquired a valuable set of silver in the modern, neoclassical style--effectively illustrating characteristics of all three persona in one act.

[115]Beekman Family Documents. New-York Historical Society, handwritten receipt, Box 34.

Figure 15
Beekman Family Tea Service. Made by W.G. Forbes
Courtesy of the New York Historical Society

An understanding of the Beekman family's movement through the complex social strata of eighteenth-century New York is achieved through the analysis of three persona defined by objects used and displayed by the family. These persona are discernible not only through the examination objects that the Beekmans owned but also through the architectural spaces they inhabited. While the provincial, urban, and cosmopolitan personas seem to represent three distinct periods in the family's evolution, they are in fact an indication of the nuanced and dimensional layers of identity that were present at the same time. By looking at the Beekmans' objects as the central source of information, we are able to learn about the people who used them. An appreciation for their architectural surroundings also offers insights into the social landscapes the family inhabited.

In the early years of James and Jane's marriage, they were not particularly wealthy and did not possess the kinds of things that would have distinguished them from other working-class families of Dutch descent. Their material surroundings indicated that they were connected to their Dutch ancestry through tradition, inheritance, politics, and religion. If the modern observer were to look at this one phase of their life, they might consider the Beekmans an ordinary family that made little attempt to assimilate into the mainstream, British culture. Over time, however, the Beekmans proved to be an extraordinary couple.

When they moved to downtown Manhattan, they became part of the buying frenzy that characterized New York in the 1760s and 1770s--as both purchasers and suppliers. They used the income from their dry goods business to buy and renovate a town house; furnish it with silver, ceramics, furniture and textiles; educate their children; and participate in the society of New York's mercantile elite. They took tea with neighbors, played cards, and had many children. If one were to isolate this period, it would seem that their vision was turned inward, focused on their family and their own

their vision was turned inward, focused on their family and their own social advancement. In fact, they were looking beyond the boundaries of colonial America.

It was not long before the Beekmans established themselves on a genteel farm, far from work and the confusion of New York City. They learned how to dance, play flutes and harpsichords, and grow fruit in their orchards. James bought a miniature version of the earth and then looked across the Atlantic to learn how he should behave on America's shores. If this period were seen in isolation, it would be easy to assume that the Beekmans inherited money from their successful parents and established themselves on land that had been in the family for generations, as was the case for many descendants of the early "Patroon" families. James and Jane, however, were not directly related to any of the handful of families that received large land grants from the Dutch West India Company when New Netherland was founded. For them, financial success and social status came about as the result of valuable connections, hard work, and good timing.

Any one of these periods, or persona, provides an inadequate explanation of the Beekmans. The family played many roles as they evolved and recreated themselves. They meet the criteria for three stereotypes of the eighteenth-century New Yorker: the ethnocentric and parsimonious Dutch worker, the bourgeois merchant of the emerging middle class, and the nouveau riche landholder, inspired by England's landed gentry. Perhaps this signals a need to change the way we think about social classifications.

APPENDIX A

A partial listing of accounts from the Beekman Household Expense Book, 1761-1796. This section came under the heading, "Account of Repairs on My Dwelling House."

1758		
September 19	boards & labour	17.2.11
1759		
March 15	801 feet of 1/4 inch board	5.4.0
May 7	To making a fence	4.4.0
	boards	
	workers	
Jan. 18	for the cellar floor	4.18.6
	*	
	*	
August 16	for painting my house	2.19.3
Septem 10	a gutter	7.7
	to Van Zant for a pump for the cellar	1.5.0
	a cask of nails	7.10.0

* (names & accts paid in full)

May 15	45 load stone	7.16.0
	to Peter Keteltas for the bookcase in the small entry	1.5.0
	26 thousand 3 hundred bricks	67.16.6
	37 load lime	19.12.3
	to ...Bend for 1 Pan Tiles & 7&12 boards	8.4.0
	60 boards	-
	sundries	-
	15 hundred shingles	8.3.0

* (list of names of workers & accts paid in full)

July 5	d. paid for 47 D sheet lead @8	1.11.4
July 12	to 9 red seder posts, 20 boards	3.11.6
July 21	....gutters	1.3.8
July 28	for 24 boards	2.11.8

August 12	6 load paving stone	0.19.6
September 19	Evert Banckes for three marble stones	2.2.0
November	20 boards	1.16.6
1760		
Novem 13	...in full for paint and oil	10.18.7
	John de la Montani(J)e painter	32.16.0
	....more names....	
1761		
January 4	David Proovost black smith in full	1.13.0
Jan 24	2 iron sheets	1.6.0
June 11	Peter Marsilles for wainscoting the Entry & Parlour	6.3.1
Dec 11	for altering the New Room Heart (h?)	-.18.-
1762		
Jan 22	for making the new room and heart &....	1.12.6
	nails	
	sand , clay	
Feb. 24	My part of mending the fence between Duane &	
	me damaged by fire	3.6.4 1/2
	For my 1/4 part of the large gate at the front of the	
	alley facing the stable	3.5.5 1/2
March 11	to Stephen DiWhite for carving and flowers	
	for my new room	0.8.0
March 22	for Plaistering the new room	2.17.-
	7 bushells lime, 2 hundred shingles	
April 20	for 6 papers for hanging in my backstair	
April 23	repairing cellar	
	boards	
May 28	for Digging my new cistern & c.	1.8.0
	cistern	
	lime	
	celler	
1762		
Aug 19	5 m bricks	
	5 m yellow bricks	6.5.0
Aug 23	8 m red bricks	14.---

	for 10 m ditto	17.10
Sep 1	15 load lime	8.2.10
7	11.9 m bricks @35/	20.16.6
	40D 10 nails	2.-
Sept 14	to ---- for Cornish stones	6.8.0
October 1	for 32 Ceder bolts	3.6.0
4	for 2 Iron Backs	2.16.2
11	2 seder bolts	-.6.6
16	David Provoost-blacksmith (for kitchen & house)	19.19.-
19	to my father for nails	
Nov. 6	for 16 sash lights	-.8.-
	bricks	
Dec. 22	to Richard Sibley for turning 10 posts	1.0.0
1763		
January 13	John Delamontaje in full for painting my bellcony	1.10.9
20	...post & sedar & plank being for the bellcony	2.19.10
March 17	for 2 brass locks	2.6.-
	lime	
	nails	
April 30	lime, clay, & hair	1.6.6
May 17	boards	
June 10	gutters	-.6.8
Novem	for laying my kitchen heart	-.8.-
	for the stone in my kitchen heart	4.15.5
Dec 1	for laying my celler kitchen floor & c.	3.2.6
1764		
	for hinges, a lock, sash bolt	-.17.6
January 5	for the timber for raising my house	17.-.6
1765		
July 23	for mending my pumps	-.19.6
	18 boards	1.3.-
1766		
July 23	Thomas Broom for a heart stone for the Nursery	1.---
Aug 25	3 brass nockers, 6 brass nob locks	3.13.6

	entries for boards (@ 10 pounds)	
Nov 7	for work done at the house and board for new stable	5.10.-
Dec 26	for 7 sedar posts	-.16.-
1767		
Sept 13	1 dozen brass curtain pins	-.9.-
	for 5 step stones 13/ p...for painting	2.4.9
	nails, locks, glue	5.-
Dec 22	for my proportion of a stone drane for my House	16.9.6
1769		
October 20	for paving my street	5.-
1770		
August 9	15 cedar posts	1.11.-
1771		
May 11	2 setts iron plates	4.6.7
	2 setts of marble chimney (peirs)?	6.3.-
Aug 13	for a marble slab	4.10.3
Aug 19	to Winterton for altering my parlour	4.14.7
	to Stephen Tippelt for ditto	16.12.2
Sept 4.	for cast iron	-.17.6
	painting	
	white lead	
	boards	
1772		
Aug 3.	Marble chimney piers for the Nursery	1.16.-
Sept 17	Stephen Tippett for boarding up my house	15.3.-
	a cag white lead	2.3.6
Dec 29	a cag Spanish brown	-.14.-
1773		
Sept 7	for a large front door knock	1.5.-
1774		
May 7	for raising my chimney	2.9.3

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some random entries after 1783

APPENDIX B

Purcases of Household Objects 1752-1763

There is verry little we can know about wat was purchased in this period.
The above dates were choosen because tey represent te start of James Beekman's personal account books (1752) and the date at which Mount Pleasant is believed to have been constructed (1763). Objects whose purcase date falls within this range would have "lived" in the Queen Street town-house at one time.

From Receipt Book (1752-1802)

1752

7.0 pounnds	burreau
16.0 pound	chest of drawers

1753

0.2 shillings	copper pie pan
0.51 shil.	sundry silverware
8.17.6	one dozen black walnut cairs
	one mahogany tea table
	one mahogany dining table
11.13	one hundred pounds of feathers
0.54	one dozen seats for chairs
3.0	a bedstead

1754

4.0	eight chairs (bought at vendu)

Household Purchases 1760-)

1761
8 mahogany chairs and covers. altering chairs
fine sheeting, table cloth
1 doz. cordial cups and saucers

1762
carpet from London
carpet
dressing glass
wife & mine portraits
frames
gilding 14 pictures
painting base of chaise
cord bedstead
trmmel?
safe
fire screan
sette chair
3 burny china bowls
2 cildren's green cairs (windsors?)

1763
common red chairs
chintz window curtains
mahogany table
desk
fireplace equipment
2 rugs
spy glass
silver tea tong, 11 tea spoons, 1 silver pepper box, 8 silver spoons,
3 pairs branchs, 2 sauce pans, 2 chafing dishes, tea kettle

1764
9 pictures
shaving box
silver cream pot
floor cloth alteration (Benjamin Moore)
horsehair for chair seats, stuffing for seats
7 black walnut chair frames

6 matted chairs bought at vendu
dining table
bureau
knife box
2 walnut pier glass. 1 silverplate glass
2 brass wine cages

1765
set of blue cups & saucers
set of burnt cina cups & saucers
various teas
-small dining table
-silver porringer
-carpit
-stone and glass ware
-1/2 doz knives and forks
-2 table clothes
-silver pepper box
-5 carpets
-6 bowls
-set of cups and saucers

1767
turning a saucepan& kettle

1768
silver
chairs & chair brooms (rush bottoms)
papers for hanging

1769
exchanged a tea kettle
silk quilt
psalm book
silverware

1770
sheeting

1771

a coach & harness
arms painted onto coach
2 doz. cream colored plates
mending chairs
several yards of silk

1772
chinese earthenware
carpeting
silver

1773
pocket dictionary

1774
papering my house: large entry, sealing, parlour, staircase, sealing, binding
a small carpet
12 gilt hanging (frames?) 20.0 pounds

1775
for tinning tea kettles &c.

1786
mending 5 mahogany chairs
spyglass bought at vendu

1787
compass

1791
3 plated gobblets
1/2 doz. tea spoons

1794
marble & brown stone for fireplace at the farm

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James Beeekman Waste Book, 1767-84.
James Beekman, Waste Book C, 1760-65.
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