

# Texts and Documents

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GILES GAUDINEAU AND HIS MEDICINES

by

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GILES GAUDINEAU was one of the early French doctors to reside in New York City. On 26 August 1686 Giles, Susanna and Ellena Gaudineau were granted denization in New York, with liberty to trade and traffic<sup>1</sup> and on 8 October Giles was commissioned lieutenant of foot under Captain Minvielle.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Gaudineau, together with a number of other foreign-born Frenchmen, on 18 August 1687, sent to Governor Thomas Dongan a petition in which they desired to be naturalized.<sup>3</sup> His medical ability was clearly in high regard, for on the day when Governor Sloughter died, 23 July 1691, the Council appointed Doctors Thornhill, Karbyle, Brett, Gaudineau, Thienhoven and Lockhart to carry out a post-mortem examination to determine the cause of Sloughter's death.<sup>4</sup> It is recorded, also, that he suffered under the rule of Jacob Leisler, for in August 1692, he petitioned, with others, for redress of wrongs during the late disorders in Leisler's time.<sup>5</sup>

It is known that Dr. Gaudineau was witness to the wills of a number of New Yorkers, especially those of French background like himself, namely John Vincent, merchant (28 January 1696–7); Francis Bassett, sailor (29 January 1696–7); John Pelletreau (10 December 1697), and his widow Magdalena (2 June 1702); Claudius Bruges, merchant (24 September 1702); Jacob Rottier, mariner (23 November 1702); Lewis Rivard, ship's carpenter (31 August 1703); Peter Thauvet (26 September 1704); and Elizabeth Vignan, widow of John Vignan (28 May 1704).<sup>6</sup> He was, moreover, one of the two administrators of the estate of Dr. Peter Bassett and one of the guardians of Bassett's daughter Hester.<sup>7</sup>

Giles Gaudineau served as a vestryman of New York City in 1696 and 1697 (Transcript of the minutes of the Aldermen and Vestrymen of New York City, Part 2, pp. 8 and 21, ms. in the Manuscript Division of the New York Public Library).

One of Dr. Gaudineau's daughters, Helena (or Ellena), was married in New York by a licence granted 18 October 1703, to James Desbrosses.<sup>8</sup> Giles Gaudineau, of New York City, physician, by his will, dated 22 August 1694, and witnessed by M. Peiret (minister of the Eglise du Saint Esprit in New York City), Elie Boudinot,

<sup>1</sup> E. B. O'Callaghan, *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State, Albany, N.Y., Part II, English Manuscripts, 1664–1776*, p. 146. This work will henceforth be referred to as 'Eng. Mss.'

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>4</sup> E. B. O'Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York* III, p. 794, and *Calendar of Council Minutes, 1668–1783, New York State Library Bulletin* 58, pp. 66, 67; *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York, 1675–1776*, III, p. 794.

<sup>5</sup> E. B. O'Callaghan, *Eng. Mss.*, p. 227.

<sup>6</sup> *Abstracts of Wills (Collections of the New York Historical Society)*, I, pp. 95, 97, 337, 344, 354, 378, 399, 415; II, p. 28.

<sup>7</sup> *Abstracts of Wills* I, p. 392.

<sup>8</sup> *Abstracts of Wills* I, p. 377.

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Gabriel Le Raycourt and Jean Barbine, left all his estate to his daughter 'Ellen', with the proviso that, if his other daughter, Susannah, should come to New York to join her sister, Ellen was to pay for her passage. Dr. Gaudineau must have died late in 1715, for his will was proved on 24 November of that year.<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Gaudineau not only practised medicine himself but also, it appears, acted as an apothecary, supplying chests of medicines to others. At New York on 11 July 1691, a certain Jan Jansz Arbroot, otherwise unknown, obtained from Dr. Gaudineau a large surgeon's chest, costing one pound and four shillings, pots and bottles to the value of six shillings, and the following medicines:<sup>10,11</sup>

½ lb. Mitridatii	8s.
½ lb. Theriac Andromachi	8s.
½ lb. Diascordium	6s.
½ lb. Fol: Sennae	17s. 6d.
4 oz. Rad. jalapii	4s.
1 oz. Scamonii praepar	4s.
2 oz. Guttae gumbae	3s.
1 lb. Farinae foenugraecii	1s. 6d.
1 lb. Fabarum	1s. 6d.
1 oz. Croc Martis astring	2s.
½ oz. Mercurii precipit rub	1s. 6d.
½ oz. Sublimati	1s. 6d.
½ lb. Boli Armenae	2s.
1½ oz. Sanguin. Draconis	1s. 6d.
14 oz. ung Aegyptiacum	7s.
4 oz. EmplOxicroceum	6s.
½ oz. Spermaceti	3s.
1 oz. Olei Anisi	3s.
1 oz. Juniperi	3s.

Four ounces 'Rhabarbari' (costing £1) and two ounces 'Croc veri' (costing £1 4s.) were stricken and costs were deducted, so the document concludes with these words 'All cometh to deducting the Rhubarbe & Safron to the sum of £5 11s. 6d.'

The second document,<sup>12</sup> dated 11 November 1691, is a receipt signed by Gerret Van Slightenhorst 'by ye councills order' for a chest of medicines which closely follow the pattern of those provided earlier in the year for Jan Jansz Arbroot. They are the following:

½ lb. Mitridatium	9s.
½ lb. Theriaca	9s.
½ lb. Diascordium	7s.
½ lb. fol: sennae optimaec	9s.
4 oz. Rad: Jalapii	5s.
1 oz. Scamonii praep.	4s.
2 oz. Gutta gummi	3s.
1 lb. farina foenugraeci	2s.
1 lb. far. fabarum	2s.
1 oz. Croc. martis astring	2s.

<sup>9</sup> *Abstracts of Wills II*, pp. 157–158.

<sup>10</sup> Original manuscripts in the New York State Library, Albany, New York Colonial Manuscripts 37, 190. The two lists are almost the same, with differences in spelling and capitalization.

<sup>11</sup> For further information on the drugs listed see: Nicholas Culpeper's translation of the *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis*, 1649; Kenneth Scott, 'New York doctors and London medicines, 1677', *Med. Hist.*, 1967, 11, 389–98; G. Watson, *Theriac and Mithridatium*, London, Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1966.

<sup>12</sup> Original manuscript at the New York State Library, Albany, vol. 38, p. 34.

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½ oz. Sublimati corrosivi	2s.
½ lb. Boli armenae	3s.
1½ oz. Sanguis Draconis	2s. 3d.
1 lb. Unguent. Argiptiacum	8s.
4 oz. Emplastrum Oxicroceum	7s.
½ oz. Spermacaeti	3s.
1 oz. Oleum Anisi	4s.
1 oz. Juniperi	4s.

To the above were added pots and bottles to the value of 6s., the chest, costing £1 16s., and 1 oz. of Oleum succini costing 4s., making a total of £6 11s. 3d.

It is apparent that the medicines in Van Slightenhorst's chest are the same in nature and quantity except that the ½ oz. Mercur precip. rub. is omitted in Van Slightenhorst's list, while the Oleum succini is included only in Van Slightenhorst's case. It is noteworthy that between July and November prices had risen by a shilling on Mithridatium, Theriac, Diascordium, Jalapi, Boli Armenae, Emplastrum Oxicroceum, Oleum Anisi and Juniperi, by a shilling and nine pence on Senna, ninepence on the Sanguis Draconis and sixpence on the Farina Foenugraeci, Farina Fabarum and Sublimate of Mercury, in all a considerable inflation.

One may surmise that Dr. Gaudineau added to his income by preparing a rather standard medicine chest for use outside of New York City and perhaps for ships' captains and travellers. The doctor's supplies almost certainly came from England.

There is a little information available concerning Gerrit or Gerret Van Slightenhorst. He was the grandson of Brant Arentsz Van Slichtenhorst, who was born in Holland in 1588, married Aeltje Van Wenckum in 1614, and at the age of about 60 accepted the directorship of the Colony of Rensselaerswyck. He arrived there in 1648 and returned to Holland in 1652. He had nine children, one of whom was Gerrit Sr.<sup>13</sup>

Gerrit Sr. accompanied his father to New Netherland, where he became proficient in the Indian tongue, so that upon occasion he served as interpreter.<sup>14</sup> In the summer of 1668 he returned briefly to Holland to settle the estate of his father who had died there.<sup>15</sup> In 1671 Gerrit Sr. was a magistrate of Rensselaerswyck<sup>16</sup> and was made a schepen of that colony under Governor Colve in 1673.<sup>17</sup> His will, dated 12 October 1683, was proved in the latter part of 1685, and in it he mentioned seven of his children, one of whom was Gerrit Jr.<sup>18</sup>

Gerrit Jr., son of Gerrit Sr. and his wife Aeltje Lansing, together with his sister Hillegonda (or Gouda) removed some time after his father's death to Surinam. There, on 18 October 1696, he married Anna Duyvelaers, widow of Abraham Schedin. Anna was dead by 1702, for on 10 June of that year Gerrit Jr., from Fort Orange in New Netherland, married at Parimaribo Joanna Lodesteyn, 'born at Dordregt' in Holland, the widow of Joannes Dinkels.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> William J. Hoffman, 'An Armory of American Families of Dutch Descent', *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, 64, pp. 244-45.

<sup>14</sup> *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York* III, p. 323; XIII, p. 510.

<sup>15</sup> A. J. F. Van Laer, *Minutes of the Court of Albany, Rensselaerswyck and Schenectady*, Albany, University of the State of New York, 1926, II, p. 204, note.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 279.

<sup>17</sup> *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York*, II, p. 627.

<sup>18</sup> A. J. F. Van Laer, *Minutes of the Court of Rensselaerswyck*, Albany, University of the State of New York, 1922, p. 148.

<sup>19</sup> F. Oudschans Dentz, 'Eenige Grafzerken uit den Hollandschen Tijd', *De Navorscher*, 1918, 67, 436-37.