

CHAPTER II.

TOMYS SWARTWOUT, SCHEPEN OF MIDWOUT.

1607-1662.

THE baptismal registers of the Reformed Church (*doopregisters der Gereformeerde-kerk*), in nine volumes, preserved in the Old Archive of Groningen, contain the names of the persons baptized by its ministers, and those of the sponsors, and the dates of the administration of the sacrament, from the year 1640 to August, 1811. The bann and marriage-registers (*proclamatie en trouwregisters*), in thirty-five volumes, date from the year 1595 to that of 1812. Information relating to people residing in Groningen prior to the close of the sixteenth century is now only obtainable from a few rare histories and ancient manuscripts, and the early records of the city. As has been remarked, two of the precious parchments treasured in the Old Archive are the original record in Latin of the awards made in 1338 by the Arbitration Commission of which Otto Swartewold was a member, and the certificate given in 1459 by the burgomaster and council of Groningen, in which Willem Zwartewolt is titled the warden of a city-tower. Earlier than the dates with which the records of baptisms and proclamations of marriage-banns in Groningen begin there are no existing sources there of genealogical information.

The impossibility of accurately tracing to an earlier period the lineage of the representatives of the Swartwout family, living in Groningen at the beginning of the seventeenth century, necessitates the recognition of Rolef¹ Swartwolt as the progenitor historically of the persons differently named Swartwout, Swarthout, Swartout, and Swartwood, who were numbered among the settlers of New Netherland and those who by residence and by birth became subsequently inhabitants of the United States of America. Rolef Swartwolt and his wife Catryna, with their children, were on September 21, 1616, residing in Groningen, on the Straight Passage (*het Rechte Jath*), now identified by the sculptured face of a bearded man, embellishing the front wall of a brick house stand-

¹English, *Ralph*; written anciently in Dutch, *Rolf*; in the fifteenth century, *Relof*; in the seventeenth century, *Rolef*, *Roleff*, *Roelof*, *Roeloff*; and later *Rolf* and *Roelof*.