

a long time ago had sold, given and ceded the whole piece of land and its dependencies to the former officers of the Honorable [West-India] Company, and had received according to the declaration of the late director and council satisfactory payment for it in goods.

“Nevertheless and notwithstanding it was improper and contrary to all reason and equity, we have agreed for the sake of preventing blame and new troubles to allow the said Jan Snediger to give or to promise secretly a gratification to the savages, and to make a report to us that in time we might refund it, but we never thought, much less absolutely directed [any one] to promise for so small a piece of land so large a sum at the expense of the company or of our own funds, especially not on such uncertain conditions and terms.

“To have in future a better defence before the aforesaid Lords-Directors [of the West-India Company], and to prevent any blame of negligence falling upon us, we refer this purchase to your Honors' knowledge and discretion that a proper resolution may be drawn up concerning it.”<sup>1</sup>

The jeopardy of the people at Midwout soon became a topic of conversation in the neighboring settlements on Long Island, and the general judgment of the colonists rightly burdened the despotic director-general with the authorship of it. In a summary of complaints and censures formulated in July, 1652, respecting the mal-administration of the affairs of the province, the following particulars regarding the inauspicious beginnings of Midwout were concisely detailed:

“The director began on his own authority to found a hamlet in the flat bush (*vlacke bos*), on Long Island, between Amersfoort and Breukelen, named by him *Middelwout*, where Jan Snediker, one of his commoners, settled. The *Wilden* complained that they were not compensated for that land, but no regard was paid to their claim. Discontented, they threatened Jan Snediker [with an intention] to burn his *bouwerij*, who complaining thereof to the director, arranged, with his approbation, with the Indians, on the second day of June last, about the payment for the land. The director should do the paying, but there comes nothing of it, so that the man remains imperilled, and the village (*dorp*) does not thrive. The director will not pay for the land nor suffer others to do it.”<sup>2</sup>

The occupation and cultivation of the wild land forming their farms necessitated irksome and prolonged labor. The tillage of grassy, vine-matted

<sup>1</sup> New York colonial manuscripts. New Netherland Council minutes, 1652-1654, vol. v., p. 43. Documents relating to the colonial history of the state of New York, 1883, vol. xiv., p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> “*De Directeur heeft op zijn eygen authoriteyt een huerschap beginnen te fonderen op 't Lange vj-land in't Vlacke bos, tusschen Amersfort ende Breukelen, by hem Middelwout genoomt, alwaar sich Jan Snediker, een van zijn gemeensmannen—heeft neergeset; de Wilden clagende, dat dat lant haer niet*