

In the spring of 1655, the erection of the building was begun. For want of timber the construction of the edifice advanced slowly during the summer. In the month of December, the Reverend Dominie Polhemius complained, in a letter addressed to Director-General Stuyvesant, that the planks he had sent him with which to finish the parsonage had been used for other purposes before he had any knowledge of the boards being in the village. As particularized by him, "twenty-four were delivered to Jan Eversen Meyer, six were put down at the church for benches; of the remainder sixty-nine were taken away with the consent of Jan Snedeker and Jan Stryker, and seventeen carried to Tomys Swartwout and his brother Aldert Swartwout."¹ However, as soon as the purpose for which the boards were intended was known, they were taken to the parsonage and used in completing it.

It would seem that the provincial authorities deemed it conducive to their own and the West-India Company's interests to manifest a spirit of good-will toward such colonists of Dutch extraction as were men of intelligence and integrity, even when their sentiments regarding the administration of affairs of the province were diverse and opposite their own. Thereupon recognizing the qualifications of Tomys Swartwout and the high esteem in which he was held by the people of the settlement, Director-General Stuyvesant and the Council of New Netherland appointed him, on April 13, 1655, a *schepen* to serve with Jan Snedeker and Adriaen Hegeman, who with him composed the Court of Midwout until the withdrawal of Jan Snedeker, on October 16th, that year, who was succeeded by Jan Stryker. Unwilling to be burdened another term with the responsibilities of a local magistrate, Tomys Swartwout in the spring of the following year declined a proffered appointment to the same office.²

The well-founded fears of the colonists, which were so urgently set forth by the *Landdag* of 1653, that the Indians would at an early day inaugurate a war and attack the unguarded inhabitants, were suddenly verified on September 15, 1653, when a body of savages, estimated as numbering nineteen hundred, landed at daybreak at New Amsterdam and occupied the streets of the city.

The alarmed citizens prudently dissembled their terror in the presence of the insolent invaders. Having shot a citizen in the breast with an arrow and struck down another with an axe, they were fortunately driven to their canoes by the soldiers garrisoning the fort, leaving three of their number dead on the

¹ Aldert Swartwout is named as plaintiff in a trial in the City-hall, New Amsterdam, on October 31, 1656. *Ibid.*: Records of New Amsterdam. Edited by Berthold Fernow. 1897, vol. ii., p. 213.

² New York colonial manuscripts: New Netherland Council Minutes. 1656-1658, vol. viii., p. 96. Documents relating to the colonial history of the state of New York. vol. xiv., pp. 370, 371, 376; 314. The Register of New Netherland. O'Callaghan, p. 76.