A DUTCHWOMAN'S FARM.

THE HON. JAMES W. GERARD ON THE ANNEKE JANS BOGARDUS CLAIMS.

At the meeting of the New-York Historical Society, in their rooms, at Second-avenue and Eleventh-street, last evening, the Hon. James W. Gerard read a very interesting paper on "Mrs. Anneke Jans Bogardus and Her Farm," the farm being the property so long held by Trinity Church, and which has caused so much litigation between that corporation and the numerous heirs of Anneke Jans. In the year 1630, a sturdy Dutchman named Roeloff Jansen, landed at New-Amsterdam with his wife. In 1636 he moved from Rensselaerswyck, on the Hudson, to New-Amsterdam, now New-York, having obtained from Director Van Twiller a ground brief, or patent, for the farm, or "bouwery," as it was called in those days, of about 62 acres, which has been for about 200 years a prominent bone of contention. Roeloff Jansen died in 1637, leaving behind him a buxom widow, in the person of Anneke Jans, and four children. Within a year of his death, Anneke dried her tears and married Dominie Everardus Bogardus, a clergyman of the Dutch Church. The primitive church building where he first exercised his functions in this country was a plain, barn-like structure on the river-side, situated on what is now known as Pearl-street, between Whitehall and Broad streets. Ten years after the marriage of Anneke Jans, her second husband was drowned in a shipwreck while on a voyage to Holland. Four children were the fruits of the marriage between the Dominie and Anneke.

Shortly after the death of Bogardus, Anneke Jans left New-Amsterdam, and went to reside at Beverswyck, on the Hudson, the site of the present City of Albany. Here she died in 1663, and here her remains were interred in the yard of the old Dutch Church in Hudson-street, where they still are. Her will, according to its recital, was made while she was on a bed of sickness, but while she was perfectly sensible, and in the full possession of her mental powers. By the provisions of this document, the four children of her first husband, Roeloff Jansen, were to divide among them 1.000 guilders, to be realized out of the proceeds of the farm on Manhattan Island. Several small legacies were then bequeathed, and the rest of her property was to be shared by her children and descendants.

The farm, called the "Dominie's Bouwery," when granted by Gov. Van Twiller to Roeloff Jansen and his wife, was in a very rough state and had never been cultivated. The grant was confirmed in 1654 by Director Stuyvesant, in the form of a patent to Mrs. Anneke Jans, as widow of Everardus Bogardus. The description of the farm as given in the patent would comprehend a tract between a line drawn near the north side of Warren-street, on the south, and Canal-street, or perhaps Desbrosses-street, on the north, bounded on the west by the Hudson River and on the east by a series of irregular lines west of Broadway. The southern boundary was the Company's, Duke's, Kings, or Queen's farm, as it was variously called, running from Fulton-street to Warren-street, and extending from the Hudson River to Broadway. In March, 1670, a deed signed by all the heirs of Anneke Jans, with the exception of Cornelius Bogardus, who was dead, conveyed to Col. Francis Lovelace the Dominie's Bouwery, of about 62 acres, as described in the deed from Stuyvesant. In 1672, the Dutch recovered possession of New-Amsterdam and held it for about a year. On its restoration to England, in 1674, Gov. Andros, representing the Duke of York, took possession of the farm in his behalf. From this time until 1700, the farm was leased to several parties, and in that year Trinity Church secured the lease. In 1705 the grant in fee was given. The Church was then in actual possession under a lease from Lord Cornbury. In this year the grant was made to Trinity under which they claim to hold adversely and in hostility to all other interests. It was a patent from Queen Anne, through the Colonial Governor, Cornbury, to the Corporation of Trinity Church, of the tract known as the Queen's Farm, bounded eastwardly partly by Broadway, partly by the Common, and partly by the Swamp, and westerly by the river. The quit-rent received for this grant was three shillings, but this was afterward commuted by a payment in gross to the State Government in 1786 in full extinguishment. The validity and effect of the patent by Queen Anne has been a frequent subject of discussion in the courts, and forms the principal feature in the claim of title by Trinity Church. The history of the various litigations in reference to this valuable territory is interesting both to the antiquarian and the jurist. The first attempt of the heirs of Anneke Jans to recover the property from Trinity was in 1760 when a suit was brought in the name of Cornelius Brouwer, a descendant of Mrs. Bogardus, to recover his share of the farm. After a trial which lasted two days and very nearly two nights, the jury brought in a verdict for the church. Another suit was brought by one Col. Malcolm, and was tried in the year 1807. Again the church was triumphant. In 1830, a suit was brought by Cornelius Bogardus, as heir of his ancestor, Cornelius Bogardus, who died in 1707. The court held that the church was not a tenant in common, but that it derived its title to the whole property from the Crown absolutely; that it made no difference whether the original title from Queen Anne was good or bad, that the church entered and enjoyed possession under it, and not under a deed from the heirs, and that consequently their adverse possession, which was proved in fact, was of the whole, barring all outstanding interests. In 1834, an action was begun by one Humbert and others, heirs in Chancery, against the church, and was decided on demurrer adversely to the complainants, the court holding that the Statute of Limitations, and adverse possession were a bar. This decision was affirmed by the Court of Errors.

In 1851, another system was tried. A suit was brought by a descendant of old Dr. Kierstedt, who married a daughter of Anneke Jans. In this action, the State of New-York was made a defendant. It was decided, in April, 1856, adversely to the plaintiff. The State of New-York has also brought suits against Trinity, but always with the same result: the church has come out of the contest victorious. "That respectable old institution, Trinity Church," said Mr. Gerard, in conclusion, "like a venerable hen in possession of her ancient barn-yard, has not been frightened from her domain by these various attacks, but still sets there, hatching out little Episcopal churches, and chuckling over her numerous victories."

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