

The Dutch Surrender New Netherland

By History.com, adapted by Newsela staff on 06.19.17

Word Count **661**

Level **850L**



Painting of Peter Stuyvesant in 1664. He is standing with residents of New Amsterdam as the British arrive to claim the territory. Photo from Library of Congress.

On September 8, 1664, the Dutch surrendered the colony of New Netherland to the English. The English renamed the area New York after the king's brother, the Duke of York. The Dutch have not ruled the area for over 350 years. However, their cultural influence continues to this day. Here are six things you may not know about the Dutch settlements.

Henry Hudson was an English explorer. Twice, he entered the Arctic Ocean in an attempt to find a passage to Asia across the northeast. Both times, he was blocked by sheets of sea ice. When England refused to pay for a third trip, Hudson got a Dutch company to pay for the voyage. In April 1609, Hudson set off a third time, but soon reached dangerous, icy waters. Instead of turning back in defeat, he crossed the Atlantic Ocean to what is now Canada. He then sailed south to North Carolina and then back up to what's now called the Hudson River in New York. In the end, shallow waters forced him to turn around and sail home. However, the Dutch were still able to claim parts of what is now New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Connecticut and Delaware. The area was named the colony of New Netherland. Hudson died in 1611.

Different groups in New Netherland are tolerant of each other

Fur-trading expeditions up the Hudson River got going almost immediately after Hudson's voyage, but the colony still grew very slowly. The first major group of European settlers did not arrive until 1624. Most were sent to the city of Albany. Others set up on the Delaware River, on the Connecticut River and on Governors Island in New York. The island quickly became too small for their needs. By 1626, the settlers had founded New Amsterdam. This was on the southern tip of nearby Manhattan Island.

As they settled Manhattan, the Dutch supposedly purchased the island from the Native Americans for trade goods worth \$24. However, historians say this figure is not accurate. The Native Americans needed the goods, which included things like kettles and axes. They were not able to produce these items themselves. Additionally, the Native Americans had different ideas about owning land. As a result, they almost certainly believed they were renting out Manhattan temporarily. They did not think they were giving it away forever.

Manhattan was a mix of different cultures even then.

From the very beginning, New Amsterdam was home to a varied population. In addition to the Dutch, many Africans (some free and some slaves), Scottish people, English, Germans, Muslims, Jews and Native Americans, among others, roamed the city's streets. One report says the settlers spoke 18 different languages. The various groups did not always get along. Yet compared to other European colonies, people were pretty tolerant of each other.

Dutch influence stayed long after they left

At its peak, only about 9,000 people lived in New Netherland. This left them open to attack from the English, who fought many wars against the Dutch. The breaking point came in March 1664. England's King Charles II gave the colony's land to his brother, the Duke of York. A few months later, four warships with several hundred soldiers onboard arrived in New Amsterdam's harbor. They demanded that the Dutch surrender. It took two tries but England finally took over the land in 1674.

In taking over New Netherland, the English did not force anyone to leave. As a result, the Dutch kept a cultural presence in the area. New York had some Dutch mayors. Their unique architectural style also lived on, as did place names, such as Brooklyn (Breuckelen) and Harlem (Haarlem). Even with all the new buildings in New York City, evidence of the Dutch remains. In Brooklyn, for example, the Wyckoff House still stands. It was built around 1652. As for their political legacy, some historians credit the Dutch with influencing the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights.

Quiz

- 1 Based on information in the article, which of these statements is TRUE?
- (A) New York was originally settled by the English.
 - (B) New York was named after an English king.
 - (C) Henry Hudson was an English explorer working for the Dutch.
 - (D) Henry Hudson was a Dutch explorer who wanted to reach Asia.
- 2 Which sentence from the section "Dutch influence stayed long after they left" shows the Dutch tried to stop the English from taking control of their land?
- (A) At its peak, only about 9,000 people lived in New Netherland.
 - (B) They demanded that the Dutch surrender.
 - (C) It took two tries but England finally took over the land in 1674.
 - (D) As a result, the Dutch kept a cultural presence in the area.
- 3 What effect did the Dutch settlement of New Netherland have on New York?
- (A) It gave New York unique buildings and culture.
 - (B) It made New York's citizens more difficult for the English to rule.
 - (C) It made New York's government different than the rest of the region.
 - (D) It gave New York a good relationship with Native Americans.
- 4 According to the article, how did Native Americans view land ownership?
- (A) They believed people could own land as long as trades had been made.
 - (B) They believed people could use land for a time but not own it permanently.
 - (C) They believed land was shared by everyone and no payment was needed to use it.
 - (D) They believed land was to be owned only by the most powerful leaders of a nation.