

THE ADRIANCE, MARTENSE AND RYERSS FAMILIES

FIRST GENERATION

500. ADRIAEN REYERSZ, REYERSZEN OR RYERSS (modern Ryerson) as his name was variously written, emigrated to America from Amsterdam in the year 1646. He came with his brother, Martin, who, it appears, was a minor, and they settled in Flatbush, on Long Island, (Rikers' "Annals," Stiles' "History of Brooklyn," Bergen's "Kings County"). Adriaen, therefore, became the first progenitor of the Adriaensen (since Adriaense or Adriance) family in America, also of the Martense family, (now extinct), of Flatbush, L. I., and the Ryers, or Ryerss, family of Staten Island, a branch of the Ryerson family. The descendants of his brother Martin's family are all known by the name of Ryerson and Ryerse. The peculiar Dutch custom of changing the names has been explained in the previous part of this work. While the name of Reyersz is of considerable antiquity in Holland and belongs to the privileged classes, they retained their Dutch family name until coming to America. In all probability the spirit of liberty and democracy which prevailed in the colonies led Adriaen to permit his children to follow the local American custom. Hence his two older sons, Elbert and Martin, became the ancestors of the Adriaence and the Martense families; Gosen, the younger son, removed to Staten Island, but retained the original family name in its Dutch spelling and became the ancestor of the Ryerss family of Staten Island.

On April 2, 1680, the name of "Adrien Reyerse" appears on a list of owners of the "New Lotts" at "Midwout" made by Joseph Hegeman and Stoffel Probasco, (overseers of said town) by order of Gov. Andros. Adriaen Reyersz was a man of affairs and during his life in Flatbush, L. I., was identified with the town as one of its leading citizens. He died in Flatbush, Nov. 24, 1710. He married July 29, 1659, Annetje, dau. of Roelof Martense Schenck, and sister of Roelof (Ralph) and Jan (John) Schenck, of Flatlands, L. I. The name of Schenck is of considerable antiquity and was identified with the nobility in the early history of Holland.