

American Origin of the Probasco Family

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The beginnings in America of the Probasco Family not having been heretofore published (so far as we have noticed), the following brief but careful account of it is now given. The various spellings of the same names in the text are stated by the author to follow the actual reading of the records. - EDITOR.

AMONG THE EARLY settlers of Brazil were families named Post, Haff, Vroom, Clopper, Meyer, Barheit, de Groot, Nieukerck, de Clerk and Vander Lipp, and it is there that the earliest mention of the name Probasco is found in America, under the forms "Probatski" and "Probatssey." The family, like that of Zabriskie, is, judging from the surname ending, of Polish origin. On the early church records of Brazil we also find the names Rochewits and Artisckoffski. Apparently there was a group of families of Polish origin represented in this early Dutch settlement.

Holland had gained possession of Brazil from Spain late in the 16th century, and the Dutch West India Company, in 1636, or soon thereafter, sent the Rev. Johannes Theodorus Polhemus (b. 1598) to Olinda, Brazil, and, later, to Itamarca, an island on the Brazil coast, until the weakening of the Company's power in 1654, when Holland lost control of Brazil. He then went to New Netherland, where he ministered to the churches at Midwout (Flatbush), Amersfoort (Flatlands) and Breukelen. In the dispersion some of the Dutch settlers returned from Brazil to Holland and others accompanied their minister to this country, as was the case with the ancestor of the Probasco family - JURRIAEN, of whom particulars will now be given.

Jurriaen Probatski and his wife, Heyltien Aertss, had three children baptised in Brazil: Margariet, March 24, 1647; Christoffel, June 6, 1649; and Anneken, May 17, 1651. Bergen, in his "History of Kings County," refers to a certified copy of entries from records by the Rev. Dirk Pietersen Byl, as per paper owned by Christopher Lott, one of Jurriaen's descendants. This gives the baptisms of Christoffel, June 13, 1649, and Anne, May 13, 1651. The discrepancies in the dates may be due to the earlier dates being those of birth rather than baptism. Margariet probably died in infancy, as her name is not included in the Byl document. It is interesting to note that Dirck Pieterssen Bijl was one of the sponsors at the baptism of Anneken in 1651.

In 1687, when Christoffel Probasco took the oath of allegiance in Kings county, N.Y., he certified that he had been in this country 33 years; therefore he must have been brought to this country by his parents in 1654.

References to Jurriaen Probasco and his wife are meagre, possibly due to the fact that they were refugees. An undated fragment, evidently of about 1661, shows that he was witness in a case before the Court at Brooklyn. In June 26, 1661, he stood sponsor there at the baptism of Anna Maria, daughter of Matthys Boon (also called Capito),

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who came from Bonn, the fine university town on the Rhine in Rhenish Prussia, and m., in 1650, at New York City, Elsie Pieters, who was from Hamburg.

On May 26, 1663, "George Probatskin" (George being the anglicized form of Jurriaen) and other citizens of Brooklyn, petitioned the Council for leave to establish "a concentration" back of the Wallabout, or at Marcus's plantation. They had collected material for fencing and some had sowed and planted; hence they wanted to protect their property. The petition was granted. Bergen states that this was probably the commencement of the village of Bedford, L.I.

The list of catechumens of the Dutch Reformed Church of Brooklyn, Nov. 26, 1662, gives the names of Jeurie Probasco and Stoffel Probasco. The catechumens were students of the Dutch Catechism, and were a body corresponding somewhat to the modern Sunday School. Stoffel was about thirteen years old at this time, and, as neither of his sisters' names are listed, it is probable that they both had died before that date. One of the catechumens was Pieter Lambertsen. On Sept. 16, 1663, at Brooklyn, Jeurie Probasko and Heyltie Aertse, both on the part of the bridegroom, witnessed the marriage of Pieter Lambertsen de Heest, from Amsterdam, to Fytie Dircks, widow of Jan Martyn.

On May 14, 1662, "It was resolved by the consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church at Brooklyn to give the two cows bought from Harme, the soldier, for 315 guilders, into the care of Carel de Beauvois, voorlezer and schoolmaster, and of Jeurie Probasco, one-half share for the benefit of the poor; but that the aforesaid Carel de Beauvois, on account of his faithful services, and as an encouragement, should be exempt from butter rent, and that the aforesaid Jeurie Probasco should pay ten pounds of butter during the first year, and sixteen pounds for the following years, or *seawant*,¹ as it had been granted him upon his request to pay this instead of butter. In case the animals should die, each man was to pay half the loss." This document was signed and deposited in the chest with the accounts of the deaconry. As the outcome of this agreement, we note: "March 11, 1663, a cow and bull calf, at Carel de Beauvois; one more at Mr. George Probasco's;" also, on March 26, 1664, "one cow and heifer at Mr. Jeurie Probasco's," and, on July 23, 1664 ... "that Heyltie Probasco complained very much that her cow gives no milk and that she suffers loss by the aforesaid cow, [and Jeurie] shall pay annually as for a heifer, until the aforesaid Heyltie Probasco shall have been provided with another cow." After March 26, 1664, we find no further reference to Jeurie Probasco and it is probable that he died between that date and July 23, 1664, when his wife had assumed charge of the cow.

The consistorial records also state that, on Dec. 13, 1662, Heyltie Probasco was paid 3 [guilders?] for sewing shirts. On Sept. 13, 1665, at New York City, Heyltie Aertszen and Nicolaes de Lapleine stood sponsors for Jacques, son of Jacques Creisson and Maria Reynard. A month later, Oct. 12, she joined the church at New York. On Oct. 10, 1666, at Brooklyn, Heyltie Aertse witnessed the baptism of Ryck and Jacob,

¹ Wampum.

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sons of Hyndrick Rycke and Sitie Jacobs. No further reference to her is found after this date.

Jurriaen Probatski and Heyltien Aertss had three children baptized in Brazil, viz:

1. Margariet, March 24, 1647; sponsors, Abraham van Stricht and Susanna Sweerts.
2. Christoffel, June 6, 1649; sponsors, Jan Reynierss and Rijckie Janss.
3. Anneken, May 17, 1651; sponsors, Jan Reynertsen Spits, Dirck Pieterssen Bijl, Geertien Adriaenssen and Margarita Paccen.

Stoffel Jurriansen Probasco, as above stated, only known male child of Juriaen, was baptized in Brazil, June 6, 1649, and was brought to this country in 1654. On Nov. 26, 1662, he was a member of the class for the study of the catechism connected with the Dutch Reformed Church of Brooklyn. At the age of twenty-two, Aug. 8, 1671, he bought from Tomas Lammersen and Tuenis Jonsen Coevers land in Flatbush, "north of Jan Stricker, south of Derck Jonsen van der Vlied, wide 26 rods, division line mutually west as well as southerly, long 450 rods, abutting on Welders Flats, large 19 morgens,² 360 rods; a parcel on Corlaers Flats, marked No. 10, wide 16 rods, division line mutually south-west, large 2 morgens, 300 rods; with the house, barn and sheds, as stand thereon at present, and lie with fences, with all that is earth and nailfast, payment, the sum of 1,600 guildens, in three installments, 400 guildens at Christmas 1671 and 600 guildens, each, at Christmas 1672 and 1673, all to be paid in seawan or wheat, rye or barley to be delivered at seawan price." Signed "Stoffel Probasky" (called in the deed Stoffel Juriaens Verbaske).

On June 2, 1676, he bought land in Flatbush (bill of sale dated Aug. 8, 1671) from Aucke Jansen (Van Nuyse), who had married Leysbeth Jansen, widow and heir of Jan Cloesz This land, except the valley lands which Aucke Jansen had already conveyed to Theunis Jansen and Thomas Lambertse, was in Flatbush, north of Jan Strycker, south of Derck Jansz van de Vliedt, 19 morgens, also 2 morgens and 3 morgens in various pieces of land.

"The worthy Stoffel Probasco," Feb. 4, 1680/1, sold to Bartel Claesz (van Ruynen) a farm in Flatbush adjoining on south side Jan Strycker, on the north side Dirck J. van der Vliet, and on the west side the common road, adjoining on the east side of Corlaers flat, containing 19 morgens, wide 26 roeden, long 450 roede; also parcel on the Wiltens flat, wide 16 roede, containing 2 morgen, marked No. 10. On March 1, 1676/7, Adrian Lambertse sold Stoffel Probasco a parcel of valley situate beyond the second hill, in the second lot east of the valley of Domine Polhemius, deceased; also lot of valley situate on the third hill in the fifth block, No. six, on the south side of Symon Hansze. He promises to pay the seller 520 gulden in good winter wheat and rye, in three payments, on Dec. 25 for three years. The grain to be delivered at the Ferry "and the seller hereby promises proper conveyance."

² An Amsterdam morgen is 2.069 acres.

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On March 27, 1677, Jan Jansze Fyn (Vien) sold Probasco a lot of woodland situate in the new allotment [New Lots]; also a valley between the second and third hill, marked No. 22, in common with Barteli Claesze, for 990 gulden in three payments in good winter wheat, rye, barley or peas, except a cow, the choice of three from the stall, "which shall be delivered immediately."

"Stoffel Probaskij" is enrolled in the assessment of property at Midwout, Aug. 22, 1675, the record being: 1 poll, 1 horse, 1 horse of 3 years, 3 cows, 1 cow of 3 years, 2 cows of 1 year, 1 hog; value 16l. Also 16 morgens "land and valley," £32; total, £93. Joseph Hegeman and Stoffel Probasco, as overseers of "New Lotts of Midwout," made a census of the inhabitants April 2, 1680. Probasco is listed with 2 lots. Three years later, the rate list of Flatbush shows that Probasco was taxed for 1 poll, 2 horses, 6 cows, four 2 years old, 3 yearlings, 60 acres; value £146.10. In Sept., 1687, he took the oath of allegiance in Kings county, N.Y., as an inhabitant "off fflackbush 33 Jeare" (that is, "of Flatbush 33 years"). At the town meeting in Flatbush, March 21, 1695-6, provisions regarding certain land and penalties for disregarding the same were made. Three men were appointed to stake the meadows; John van Ditmarse, Stoffel Probasco and Lefert Peterson. About 1698, in the Census of Kings county, as a freeholder from the Town of Flatbush, we find Stoffel Probasco, the record stating he had in his family "1 woman, 6 children and 2 slaves."

In 1701, five men from Long Island bought from John Harrison a tract of 10,000 acres in Franklin township, county, New Jersey. They consisted of Peter Cortelyou, Stoffel Probasco, Theodore Polhemus, Dennis Tunis and Cornelius Wyckoff. The tract extended from the Raritan lots on the north to a line running east and west near Six-Mile Run, and from the Millstone river on the west to the Indian Path on the east. It was later divided into eight parts and numbered. As a result, some of Stoffel Probasco's descendants came to settle in New Jersey, but this article will not trace them.³

About 1676 Stoffel Probasco married Eytje (Ida) Strycker, born in Ruinen, in the Province of Drenthe, Holland. She was a daughter of Jan Strycker and Lammertje Seubering, early settlers of Flatbush. The Dutch Reformed Church record of Flatbush shows old members found there in 1677, among them "Stoffel Probasko and wife Ida Stryckers." He was chosen magistrate 1678 and 1686, and Justice of the Peace 1693 and 1702. In 1690 he opposed the administration of Governor Leisler. In the church, in 1678 and 1690, he was appointed elder.

Stoffel Probasco and Iytie Strycker made a joint will July 29, 1687, in which they mention an eldest son Jurian (George) and a son Jan; also other children, but not by name. Jurian, because he was the first son, was to have in advance the sum of five

³ In the Franklin township Tax Lists for 1735 and 1745, a Jacob Probasco is taxed on 300 acres; Christoffel on 100 acres, and another Christoffel with only cattle and sheep; a Jan Probasko on 280 acres. The will of a Jan Probasko of Middlebush, Somerset county, was probated Jan. 27, 1752; of a Jacob Probasco, same county, Nov. 25, 1755; and of a Frederick Probasco, of Amwell township, Hunterdon county, in 1757. (See "Our Home" (1873), pp. 343, 344, 407; "N. J. Archives, Vol. XXXII, p. 260).

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pounds in money and a musket; also, the second son, John, was to have in preference the sum of three pounds in money and a musket. The two sons, together with the other brothers and sisters, when they arrive at the age of twenty years, were each to have a good milch-cow. The guardians of the children were Abraham Jorissen and Peter Strycker. The witnesses to the will were Henrikus Hegeman and Jacobus Hegeman. Bergen mentions an unrecorded will, dated Oct. 3, 1724, but gives no particulars.

It is not known when Stoffel and his wife died. They had at least the following children

1. Heyltie, b. about 1677; m. Sept. 26, 1698, Jeremias Remsen, who was b. Sept. 10, 1675, and was the son of Rem Jansen Vanderbeeck and Jannetie Rapalie. She died Sept. 27, 1727, aged 50 years. He m. second, Jannetie Voorhees, who d. April 17, 1758, aged 76 years. He d. July 3, 1757, in his 82nd year. He had eight children by his first wife.
2. Jurrian, b. about 1678, eldest son; d. before Oct. 30, 1695.
3. Jan, b. about 1680, second son; m. about 1702, Adriantje, daughter of Reinier Arendz and Jannetie Aukes (Van Nuyse), who was bapt. March 12, 1682, at Flatbush. Jan (John) Probasco was of Jamaica, L.I., and made his will Nov. 27, 1744; proved May 1, 1749. He mentions his eldest son Stoeffel and, as children, John, Abraham, Reynier, Yanitie, Idagh, Sarah and Ariantie. They were baptized at Jamaica as follows: Jan, Oct. 18, 1705; Abraham, Oct. 9, 1710; Ida, Oct. 12, 1714; Abraham, Jan. 2, 1717; -----, Dec. 25, 1718; Saara, Nov. 19, 1721; Areaantie, Aug. 18, 1723, and Lammetie, Sept. 26, 1725.
4. Jakob, bapt. July 9, 1682, at Brooklyn (also on Flatbush Church Records). The sponsors were Jakop Strycker, Cornelis Jansen (Berrien), Jofvrow Potters (Swaantje Strykers). He married Mary Van Loew. Dinah Hendricksen Van Loew, of Jamaica, widow of Frederick Hendricksen Van Loew, made her will Jan. 4, 1736, proved Dec. 30, 1740, in which she mentions her daughter, Mary, wife of Jacob Probasco of New York.
5. Abraham, bapt. Feb. 22, 1685, at Flatbush. The sponsors were Joris Hanz Bergen, Joris Abransz and Annetje Barends. He married (according to Bergen) Geertje Lubbertse, but this I have been unable to verify.
6. Aeltje, bapt. June 26, 1687, at Brooklyn. The sponsors were Gerrit Jakopsen Stryker and Teuntje Strykers.
7. Sara, b. at New Lotts about 1693; m. 1713, at Flatbush (banns Oct. 29) Samuel Groenendyk, who was b. on South River and resided at Flatbush. He m. second, Mayke (Mary) VerKerk, widow of Nicholas

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Van Brunt.

8. Jurian, bapt. Oct 30, 1695, at Flatbush. The sponsors were Joris Abrouse and Tryntie. He m. Catalyntie Remsen. He belonged to a Regiment of soldiers in Kings county in 1715. Jurian, at Flatbush, made his will Feb. 25, 1730; proved Oct. 20, 1732. He mentions his wife Catalyntie, and children, Christopher and Jannettie; his father-in-law, Jeremiah Remsen, and his brother, John Probasco.
9. Lammertje, who married Jan Simonse Van Arsdalen, of Flatbush, son of Symon Janse Van Arsdalen and Pietertje Claesen Wyckoff. Jan is supposed to have had four wives, Lammetje being the second. (See "Som. Co. Hist. Quar.," Vol. 8, p. 100).
10. Christoffel, who m. Catelina Schenck. She was born May 7, 1705, and was the daughter of Marten Roelofs Schenck and Jannetie Lucasse Voorhees. She m. second, Jan Barentse Jansen, of Jamaica.

The Flatbush church records shows that Stoffel Probasco lost five members of his family. On Aug. 12, 1681, he paid for the use of the shroud 4 guilders; in 1688, for the use of the shroud, 4 guilders; on Jan. 8, 1693, for the use of the shroud, 8 guilders; in 1688-9, for a grave in the church with a small bier, 12 guilders, and in 1688-9, for a child without bier, 8 guilders.