

***Up the North River:
An Overview of Pre-1800 Hudson Valley
Ethnic Groups and Religions***

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The Hudson (North) River valley was an ethnic and religious melting pot long before the late nineteenth century immigrant influx. Find out who was in New York in the beginning. You will be surprised!

Time Line

Pre-European Lenni Lenape are on lower west bank of North River; Mahicans on east bank and upper west bank.

1524 Italian Giovanni Verrazano sailing for France explores New York Harbor.

1609 Englishman Henry Hudson sailing for Holland explores the North River. Flemings (from Flanders, Belgium) among his crew. German Hendrick Christiansen follows Hudson up the North River multiple times.

1613 Portuguese/African Juan Rodriguez lives among Native Americans on Manhattan.

1614 Fort Nassau on Castle Island, near Albany, is established for Dutch traders. First use of “New Netherland” in Dutch records.

1624 New Netherland becomes a province. Dutch West India Company settles Walloon families (from Belgium) on Governor’s Island and Fort Orange/Beverwijck. Dutch Reformed Church is official church. Dutch chase away French ship in New York Harbor.

1626 Peter Minuet buys Manhattan. Portuguese are among Daniel van Crieckenbeck’s militiamen in Mahican-Mohawk war at Fort Orange. Enslaved Africans arrive. Sarah Rapaljie is first European child born along the North River. Lutheran Scandinavians (Danes, Norwegians including Annetje Jans) and Germans and Calvinist French Huguenots arrive later.

1628 First Dutch Reformed minister arrives.

1630 Islamic Dutch/Moroccan Antoni van Salee arrives in New Amsterdam. Brother Abraham here too.

1633 Bohemian (Czech Republic) Protestant Augustijn Heerman arrives in New Amsterdam.

1638 Croatian Abraham Stevense the Croaet, a Catholic, first appears in Fort Orange Council Minutes.

1642 Anabaptist Englishman John Throckmorton receives grant of land in Bronx County. Antinomian Englishwoman Anne Hutchinson moves to Bronx County as well. Both came from Rhode Island.

1643 Jesuit priest, Father Isaac Jogues, visits New Amsterdam; writes of his experience in 1646. Venetian sailor owns property in Manhattan. Poles and Irish are in New Amsterdam, also Scottish Presbyterians. Anne Hutchinson and family massacred in Bronx County. Separatist (Mayflower Pilgrim) Isaac Allerton is on the Council of Eight.

1647 Peter Stuyvesant becomes director of DWIC.

1649 Dutch Lutheran Church is organized for both New Amsterdam and Fort Orange.

1652 Esopus is settled, renamed Wiltwijck, then Kingston, Ulster County.

1654 Sephardic (Spanish and Portuguese) Jews from Brazil arrive in New Amsterdam. Ashkenazi (German and Eastern European) Asser Levy, born in Lithuania, arrives shortly after.

1657 English Quakers arrive in New Amsterdam, eventually settling in Flushing, Queens County.

1658 Lutheran Swedes and Finns are reported in New Amsterdam.

1662 Pole Albert Saboroweski settles in Bergen County, NJ.

1664 British take control of New Netherland, is renamed New York. English Anglicans (Church of England) are in New York.

1673 Dutch retake control of New York for about a year. New York is renamed New Orange temporarily.

1674 Scottish Presbyterian Robert Livingston arrives in New York, later is granted lands that become Livingston Manor in Columbia County.

1677 Walloons and some Huguenots settle New Paltz, Ulster County.

1679 Frisian (Friesland) Labadist missionaries are in New York.

1682 Jewish cemetery is established at Chatham Square, Manhattan.

1683 Irish Roman Catholic Thomas Dongan is appointed provincial governor. General Assembly drafts Charter of Liberties and Privileges establishing religious liberty for Christians in New York. First Catholic mass is held in Manhattan.

1688 Huguenots settle New Rochelle in Westchester County, New York City, and Staten Island.

1689 Protestants William and Mary of Orange placed on the English throne, enact severe penalties for practicing Catholicism.

1697 Frisian Frederick Flypsen/Philipse from Friesland is granted land that becomes Philipsburg Manor, Westchester County. Anglican Trinity Church is chartered on Manhattan.

1705 Sephardic Jew Luis Moses Gomez is granted English citizenship.

1708 First wave of Palatine Germans settle at Newburgh, Orange County.

1710 German Palatines settle on 6,000 acres given them by Robert Livingston, Ulster and Columbia counties.

1714 Luis Moses Gomez establishes trading post at Marlboro, Ulster County. Oldest Jewish home in the U.S.

1720s Presbyterians arrive in Orange County.

1740 Moravian (Czech Republic) Hussites convert Mahicans, Dutchess County.

Mid-1700s English Baptists from New England settle Putnam County (then Dutchess). Late 1700s settle in Columbia County.

1760 Irish Methodists arrive, including Barbara Heck and Philip Embury whose parents were Palatine Germans in Ireland.

1766 Philip Embury begins holding Methodist services in his Manhattan home.

1768 Methodist Church on John Street, Manhattan, built. Capt. Thomas Webb at Fort Orange begins preaching. Slave Peter Williams later begins Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Manhattan.

1767 Purchase Monthly Meeting (Quakers), Westchester County, sends minute against slavery to Flushing Monthly Meeting. They begin manumitting slaves and settling them in Harrison and Bedford, Westchester County.

1774 Mother Ann Lee and Shakers arrive in Colonie, Albany County. Also settle Mount Lebanon, Columbia County.

1784 First Roman Catholic Church in New York City.

ca 1797 Slave Isabella, later known as Sojourner Truth, born near Rifton, Ulster County.

1799 Slave births recorded.