

NEW YORK STATE

immigration

1650-1950

Early immigrants

NEW YORK STATE is the epicenter of immigration history in America. New York has always had a diversity of people.

Nowhere else has the immigration story been so often told and so often experienced.

Before the first European immigrants arrived in what is now New York, there were several indigenous communities living there. These included the Lenape (Delaware) in New York City, the Shinnecock in Long Island, and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca) in Upstate New York.

In 1624, the Dutch West India Company established a colony called New Netherland on Manhattan Island. They tried to keep the colony "Dutch" with laws, but by 1650, a quarter of the population was non-Dutch. By 1664, the colony was the most heterogeneous in North America.

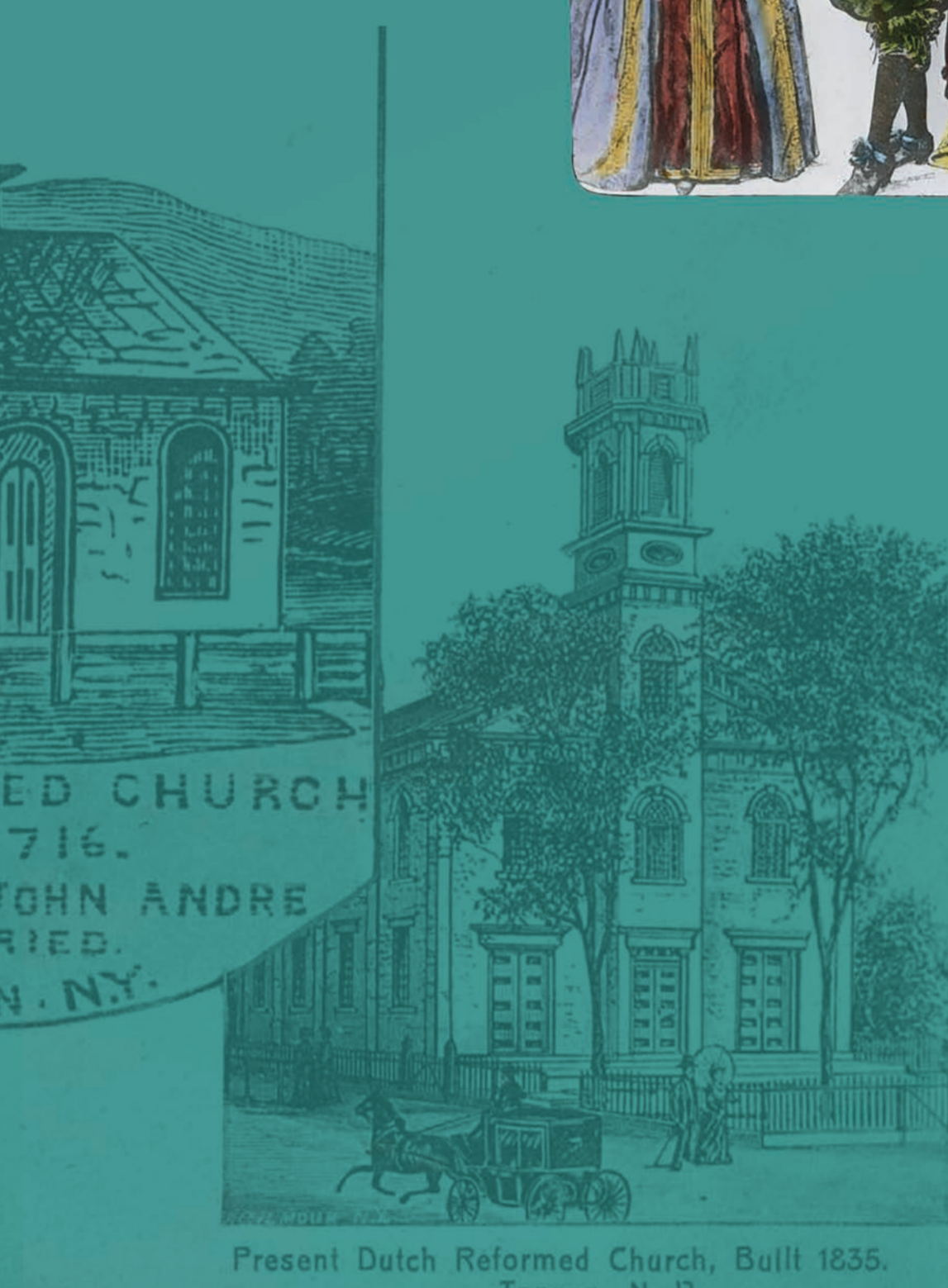
The Dutch lost control of their colony when the British seized it in 1665. The British renamed it New York and instituted new laws. Immigration increased and European settlers encroached on more and more Native American lands, worsening relations between the indigenous and immigrant populations. Before 1775, most European immigrants in New York had settled in the Hudson, Mohawk, Schoharie, and Delaware valleys. Following the American Revolution, settlers moved farther into the west and north. The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, encouraged and enabled further westward expansion.



RIGHT
N.Y.C. - Dutch Cottages: Beaver St. 1679. Tinted engraving depicting a street scene in New York City, 1679, with characteristic Dutch cottages. Palisades Interstate Park Commission, NY Heritage

BELOW
Dutch Reformed Church, Tappan, NY. The Dutch Reformed Church was the only church allowed to openly worship under the rule of Peter Stuyvesant. Nyack Library, NY Heritage

BOTTOM RIGHT
Dutch Patriot and his lady. Tinted engraving of two men and two women of Dutch style clothing in the colonial era. Palisades Interstate Park Commission, NY Heritage



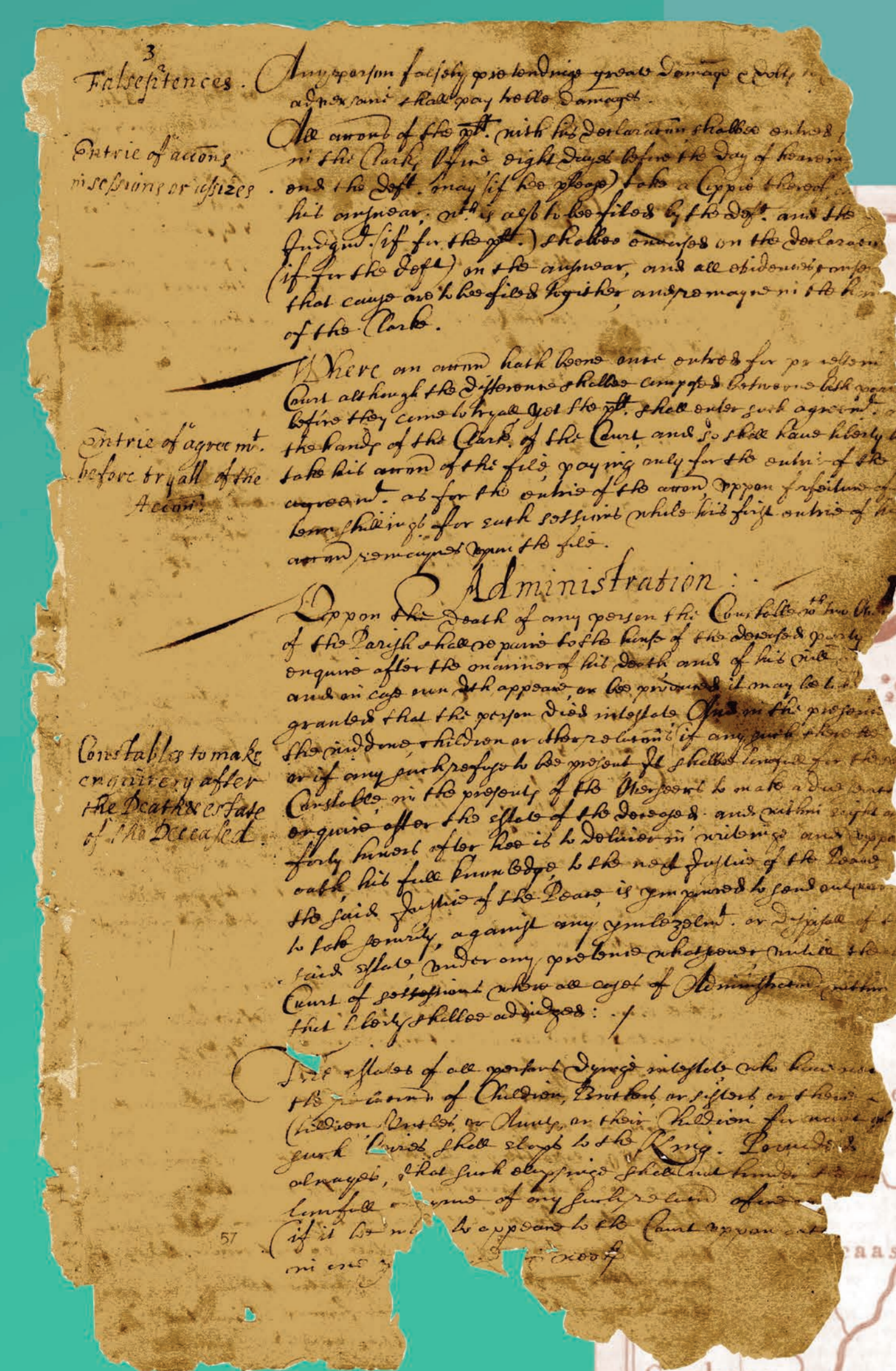
Dutch Reformed Church, 1785. Tappan, N. Y.

Present Dutch Reformed Church, built 1835. Tappan, N. Y.

PORTRAIT

Edmond-Charles Genêt

Many immigrants fled to North America because of political oppression in Europe. One example is Edmond-Charles Genêt. In 1792, while Genêt was in the United States serving as France's ambassador, the new Revolutionary government of France issued a warrant for his arrest. Facing execution if he returned to France, Genêt was awarded asylum. He married Cornelia Clinton, daughter of New York Governor George Clinton, and settled on a farm in East Greenbush until his death in 1834.



ABOVE Law p. 89. Laws and code established in 1665 by the new British government, applying to Manhattan, Staten Island and Long Island. Huntington Town Clerk's Archives, NY Heritage

RIGHT Map of New England & New York. John Speed, London, 1676. One of the earliest maps of the Northeast, which fully registers the dramatic shift from Dutch to English dominance in the region in the latter part of the seventeenth century. It is one of the first printed maps to use the term "New York" for both Manhattan (formerly New Amsterdam) and New York State. East Hampton Library, NY Heritage



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