

The volume would have been well served by closer proofreading. “Henry of Navarre” coexists with “Henri de Navarre” in various combinations—sometimes in the very same sentence (26); quotes are inconsistently presented in the French original and in English translation in the body of the text. These are, however, minor criticisms. This monograph will take its place as an important contribution to our understanding of the French—and indeed European—nobility in the early modern period.

Francis J. Sypher, Jr., ed. and trans. *Liber A: 1628-1700 of the Collegiate Church of New York*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. lxxvii + 374 + 11 illus. \$49.00. Review by ALLAN J. JANSSEN, NEW BRUNSWICK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Students of American history, of the American church, and of the history of New Netherlands, as well as those interested in the history of Manhattan’s oldest church, owe Francis J. Sypher, Jr., a debt of gratitude. His transcription and translation of the folio-sized document entitled *Liber A* is not only a mine of vital information; it is a delight. This volume is a transcription of the original Dutch handwritten documents and a fine translation set out on facing pages. *Liber A* contains a variety of documents, including not incidentally the charter for that church, but also consisting of proclamations, negotiations concerning property, internal church matters, and so on. This volume does not include membership records, which have been available to the public in other venues. *Liber A* spans the period of time when Dominee Henricus Selijns was the pastor of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in New York (now known as the Collegiate Church), i.e., the years 1682-1702.

The Dutch church was the first church in Manhattan, established by the classis of Amsterdam and dates its beginnings to 1628 when the classis sent a “visitor of the sick,” Bastian Krol, to act in the stead of a minister. The church existed under the authority of the Dutch classis (a classis is a consortium of neighboring churches that functions under the Dutch church order much as a bishop does in a church governed by an episcopate). When Manhattan came under British rule

in 1664, the Dutch church was no longer established. However, since the populace remained largely Dutch, the Dutch church remained side by side with the now established Anglican church.

The documents presented in this volume offer several interesting glimpses into the life of the church within the colony. One such is of the relation between the church and the government. Since it was under the authority of Dutch church order, the church was perforce loyal to the Netherlands. However, it also had to pay proper homage to the English royals. This may have been made easier by the fact that a member of the house of Orange sat on the throne of England. A number of proclamations in this volume give reference to that fact.

Still other documents manifest the interaction between civil and ecclesiastical authorities. One such is an odd document that reads like a forensic coroner's report on the death of a sailor, questioning whether he had been properly treated. More importantly, perhaps, students of the era will compare the names of ecclesiastical office-bearers with civic leaders. Of signal importance are the initiatives for the construction of a new church building, this one on Garden Street. The original church in the fort had become unsuitable. However, part of the preparation for construction included the desire that the church become incorporated. Following several petitions, this led to the charter granted by William III. That charter is included in this volume along with Selijns' own English translation. Residents and historians of New York City will find documents around the legacy of the Fordham Manor in what is now the Bronx of interest. A governor of the colony left that large estate to the church for its use. The will was contested by local residents and a number of documents show the consistory considering how it will assure reception of the property. The property clearly was a burden and required the attention of the church masters. While living in an English colony, the consistory (its ruling body of elders and deacons) lived under the auspices of the classis. One can observe this relationship as the classis corresponds with the consistory. The church continued to have difficulty paying Selijns' salary and the classis strongly encouraged the consistory to remedy this matter.

Liber A allows a glimpse as well into more ecclesiastical matters. The afore-mentioned church masters played a significant role acting

as a sort of building committee. The church also employed *voorlezers*, those who read scripture (and in some instances could read sermons already printed and approved) and *voorzangers* who led the congregation in song. One set of documents outlines the hiring of a bell-ringer, who did more than ring the bell at appropriate times (and summon the minister when the service was about to begin) and so also dug graves, prepared the sanctuary for services, and acted as a sort of “head usher.” When the church needed a manse for Selijns, the deacons were engaged to pay for its building. The deacons held monies separate from the elders. So the new building was to be erected and the church would pay rent to the deacons. And they would have space in the parsonage for a deaconry as well. An odd set of documents note a theological matter. A certain Jacob Koelman is reported to have caused significant difficulty in the Netherlands. He was suspected of being Labidist, or of an experiential sect that among other things condemned church ceremonies. Apparently a couple recent immigrants were spreading Koelman’s ideas and so disturbing church folk.

Finally, I add a word of appreciation for Sypher’s attention to the Dutch text. His copious footnotes offer insight not only of translation, but of the various abbreviations used in the original. This work of scholarship is invaluable to those who work with texts, and adds to our fund of knowledge in the use of seventeenth-century Dutch. Sypher even had a special character designed for this volume to replicate one such abbreviation! His introduction gives the documents an appropriate historical context. *Liber A* is a noteworthy addition to the growing body of literature, original and otherwise, on the Dutch colony in New York, and so is central to our understanding of the history of the United States.

Rainer Decker. *Witchcraft & the Papacy: An Account Drawing on the Formerly Secret Records of the Roman Inquisition*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008. xv + 262 pp. \$45.00. Review by BRETT F. PARKER, ISOTHERMAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

One of the great values of Rainer Decker’s sweeping treatment of the papacy’s role in European witchcraft trials from the late middle