

**NEW YORK AS AN
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
MUNICIPALITY,
1731-1776, PP. 213-405**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649210220

New York as an eighteenth century municipality, 1731-1776, pp. 213-405 by George William Edwards

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

GEORGE WILLIAM EDWARDS

**NEW YORK AS AN
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
MUNICIPALITY,
1731-1776, PP. 213-405**

NEW YORK AS AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MUNICIPALITY

1731-1776

BY

GEORGE WILLIAM EDWARDS, M. A.

*Instructor in History, Stuyvesant High School
New York City*

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN THE
FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK

1917

TO MY MOTHER
PAULINE E. EDWARDS



CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

	PAGE
ORGANIZATION OF GOVERNMENT UNDER MONTGOMERIE CHARTER	
Importance of the period between 1731 and 1776	13
Political, social and economic changes in England	14
Their effect upon New York	15
The Montgomerie Charter, 1731	17
The need of a new grant	17
Means to secure it from the governor	18
Validity of the charter questioned	20
The duties of mayor not extensive	22
Common Council attempts to deprive him of fees	23
Mayor fails to exercise powers as water bailiff	24
The position of deputy mayor	25
The recorder's functions mainly legal	25
His two-fold position	26
Common Council seeks to despoil him of certain powers and fees	27
The office of common clerk	28
Legislative powers of Common Council	29
Changes in judicial procedure after 1731	31
Popular hostility toward judiciary	33
Relations of city to province	34
Assembly at times hostile	35
Favorable attitude of executive	39
Examples of judicial interference	39

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL ASPECTS

Political importance of the city of New York	43
Qualifications of freeholders and freemen	43
Extent of the suffrage	45
Conduct of a municipal election	47
Political evils	48
Voters bribed, open ballot used	49
Elections managed by the aldermen	49
Reforms instituted by legislature in 1771	51

	PAGE
Economic divisions of the population	51
Importance of the merchants	51
Power of crown officers and of landowners insignificant.	52
Prominent position of lawyers.	52
Middle class composed of freemen and freeholders	53
The "mechanics"	54
Denominational groups	54
Centralized organization of Anglicanism	54
Its rival, the Presbyterian Church	55
Decline of the Reformed Dutch Church	55
Other denominations	57
Influence of these interests on the city government.	58

CHAPTER III

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Regulation of trade	61
Influence of mercantilism on governmental policies	61
Extent of commerce of New York.	62
Packing of meat	63
Province unwilling to enact legislation on bolting of flour	65
Prices of bread fixed by the city	67
Control of the liquor traffic	68
Markets of the city	70
Demolition and erection of markets	71
Terms of leasing	77
Causes of rising cost of living	79
Rural opposition to economic legislation of the city	81
Freemen of the city.	85
Meaning of freemanship.	86
Development of manufacturing	87
Growing importance of artisans	89
Dominant position of merchants.	91
Conflicting economic interests in New York.	93

CHAPTER IV

CARITIES AND CORRECTION

The administration of poor relief.	96
Problem increased by heavy immigration	96
Organization of the city vestry	97
Collection and distribution of the poor tax	97
Erection of a poorhouse	98

	PAGE
Duties of the keeper	99
Criticism of the administration	100
Private charities extensive	100
Protection of public health	100
Quarantine established on Bedloe's Island	101
House for persons with contagious diseases also erected	101
Municipal aid given to the New York Hospital	102
Administration of correction	102
Classes of prisoners	102
City Hall used as a prison until the erection of the New Gaol	103
Building of the bridewell	103
Duties of the keepers	104
Prison conditions unsatisfactory	106
Colonial punishments	107

CHAPTER V

KEEPING THE PEACE

Disorderly elements of the population	109
Military forces cause riots	109
Convicts transported	112
" Negro Conspiracy " of 1741	114
Extent of crime in the city	117
Police legislation	118
Organization of the " watch "	119
Duties of the constables	120
System of watching frequently changed	121
Paid standing force finally established	124
Provision for street illumination	124
Supplementary forces to keep the peace	127

CHAPTER VI

FIRE PROTECTION

Fire hazards in the city	128
Storage of combustibles	128
Legislation to prevent fire	130
City ordinances on chimney sweeping	130
Provincial laws on building material arouse opposition	131
Fire engines secured from England	132
Beginning of a volunteer force	135
Duties and privileges of members	136

	PAGE
Water supply	137
Regulation of wells and pumps.	138
Attempt made to establish a reservoir system.	139

CHAPTER VII

REGULATION OF PUBLIC LAND AND STREETS

Public land	142
Land rights defined in the Montgomerie Charter.	142
Boundaries of the city; ward divisions	143
Controversy over the Harlem line.	144
Leasing of municipal property	147
Disposal of water lots criticized	150
Decks	151
Great Dock improved after 1750	152
Albany Pier and Corporation Dock erected	152
Terms of the dock leases	154
Difficulties between the dockmasters and the city.	155
Regulation of dock rates	157
Building of bridges across the Harlem River	159
Monopoly of Philipse broken by erection of free bridge	159
Plans for a bridge at Morrisania	160
Maintenance of roadways	161
Provincial regulation of highways	162
Administration transferred from surveyors to Common Council	164
Municipal regulation of streets	166
Cleaning of streets	168
Bowling Green	171

CHAPTER VIII

FERRIES AROUND LOWER MANHATTAN ISLAND

Municipal ferry rights defined in the Montgomerie Charter and in the act of 1732	172
Opposition of Brooklyn	173
Case of Remsen <i>vs.</i> New York	175
The ferry across the East River	178
Terms of the ferry lease	178
Difficulties with the lessees	179
New ferry house built	181
Division of the ferry franchises	183
Ferries across the North River	185
Private ferries established	187
Dangers of traveling by water	188