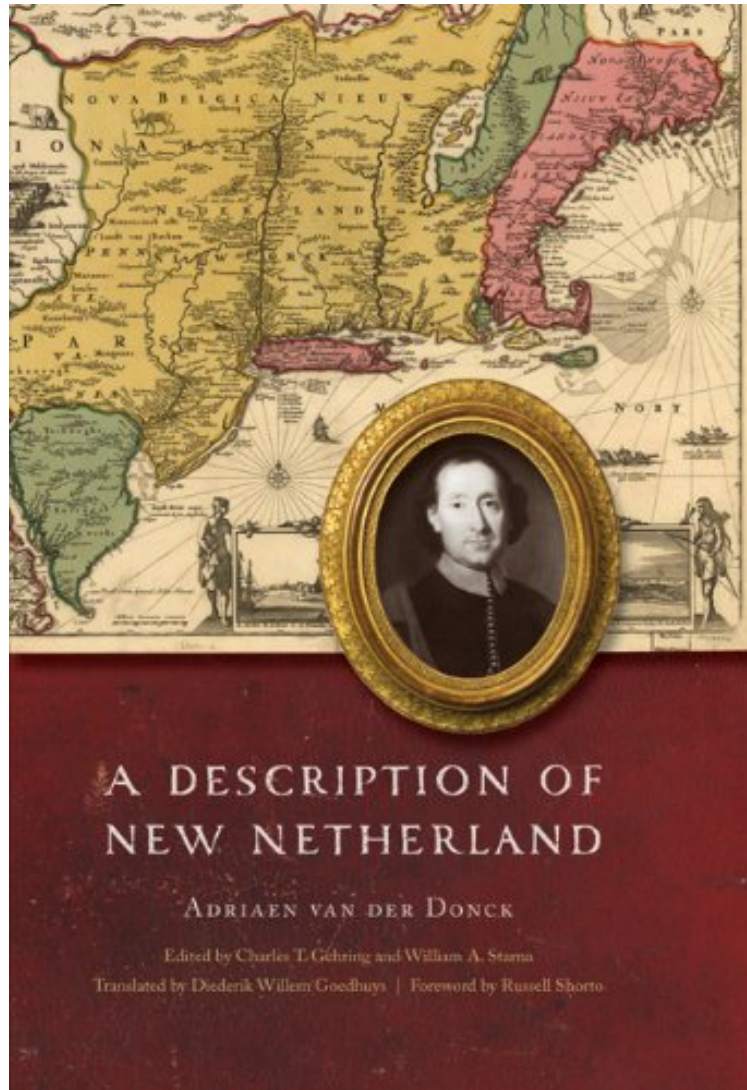


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A Description of New Netherland (The Iroquoians and Their World)

Adriaen van der Donck

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Adriaen van der Donck : A Description of New Netherland (The Iroquoians and Their World) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Description of New Netherland (The Iroquoians and Their World):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Must Have Book for Lovers of the History of New York City By Linda F. This is an enthralling book that goes back in time to the real founders of New York - the Dutch. The Dutch West India company to be exact. New Netherland as it was originally named was also settled for profit; however, the Dutch were far kinder to the Native Americans who lived there well before white men came - even though there were

some skirmishes. I lived for many decades of my life in the areas talked about in the book outside New York City. So, it was great to learn about the origins of the settlements and explains why there are SO many Dutch names that are sprinkled throughout the area. If you love history, and the history of New York specifically, your knowledge cannot be complete without this book. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Best Translation By Sylvia Hawley Van Der Donck's descriptions are among the earliest and fondest of Manhattan and the native peoples who traded with the Dutch settlers after Henry Hudson first found the harbor in 1609. A wonderful companion read is Russell Shorto's "The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and The Forgotten Colony That Shaped America." Together, they depict (in rich and readable form) how it all happened for better and worse. Van Der Donck was born in Breda, Dutch Republic, and trained in law at Leiden University. Leiden was the refuge of the Pilgrim Fathers whose puritanism made them unwelcome in England. Leiden was where they could print their philosophies freely and then sneak them into England. Leiden University was where Hugo Grotius was teaching and Van Der Donck was influenced. It was the 1600s and there was a tide in history away from church authority or at least Catholic hierarchy in favor of one's individual relationship with the divine. There was a tide for more social equality away from the rigidly top-down structures that more characterized the thinking of royal families and Popes . . . much of the change took place in Holland. There, people had to help one another and cooperate to preserve their land from the sea. The pilgrims who left Leiden for Plymouth Rock wanted to preserve their purity of being even from those open-minded Dutch whose free printing presses were so valued. The Dutch West India Company settled what we now call New York mostly to hold their claim on the fur trade. Van Der Donck's descriptions were written when he had a period of exile and was not allowed to return to "New Netherland." He writes beautifully and lovingly (in Dutch) of the land he later returned to. Shorto's view is more comprehensive and he tells the whole story, so to speak, and a wonderful story it is. Too long lost and so wonderfully written. Van Der Donck, in the 1600s, himself wrote beautifully. Prof. Gehring's excellent translation makes it especially accessible in English. Shorto's work is contemporary and masterfully told. Am highly recommending both works for the vital history and insights they offer. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ... of the Hudson River Valley then this is an excellent reference. It has information that could have easily ... By Ruthmarie G. Hicks If you are interested in the early history of the Hudson River Valley then this is an excellent reference. It has information that could have easily been lost. Having said that it's not a "fun" read, but has a tremendous amount of information that you probably won't find anywhere else.

This edition of *A Description of New Netherland* provides the first complete and accurate English-language translation of an essential first-hand account of the lives and world of Dutch colonists and northeastern Native communities in the seventeenth century. Adriaen van der Donck, a graduate of Leiden University in the 1640s, became the law enforcement officer for the Dutch patroonship of Rensselaerswijck, located along the upper Hudson River. His position enabled him to interact extensively with Dutch colonists and the local Algonquians and Iroquoians. An astute observer, detailed recorder, and accessible writer, Van der Donck was ideally situated to write about his experiences and the natural and cultural worlds around him.

If you've been waiting for centuries for a full translation of Adriaen van der Donck's 1655 work *A Description of New Netherland*, your wait is over. In this work, edited by Charles T. Gehring and William A. Starna, one of the colony's most astute observers ruminates on flora and fauna (his six-foot-long lobster sounds like the subject of a proverbial fish story), including meditations on the amazing ways of beavers and sightings of beached whales near Albany. . . . [Van der Donck] paints a generally positive picture of American Indians. His informative book is surprisingly accessible. Sam Roberts, *New York Times*.