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**LAUNCHING ITS FIRST DIGITIZATION PROJECT, CITY'S RECORDS
DEPARTMENT PUBLISHES ONLINE 17TH CENTURY 'NEW AMSTERDAM'
HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS**

Municipal Archives launches project to digitize collections, beginning with the New Amsterdam historical manuscripts

Access the New Amsterdam digitized collection at www.archives.NYC

NEW YORK—As the first step in its efforts to digitize and make available to the public the historical records of New York City government, the City's Department of Records and Information Services (DoRIS), announced today that it is releasing to the public its first online collection of 17th Century historical manuscripts showing the development of City's government: ordinances drawn from the Records of New Amsterdam for the period of 1647 to 1661, and their corresponding translations, maintained by the Municipal Archives and Municipal Library.

“As we celebrate Thanksgiving, it is appropriate to reflect on the development of New Amsterdam as an exuberant center of commerce, open to settlers of diverse backgrounds, in contrast to the Puritan colonies,” said **DoRIS Commissioner Pauline Toole**. “These ordinances show how New Amsterdam officials tried to maintain order in a fractious and rowdy City, and shed a light on our City's early development. It's one step in our efforts to make the Municipal Archives and its vast contents more accessible to all New Yorkers.”

The Dutch-language manuscripts, were translated at two junctures, first by E.B. O'Callaghan in the 1840's- and then from 1895-1898 by Berthold Fernow. Both O'Callaghan's handwritten and Fernow's typeset version are included on the website.

Images drawn from publications at the Municipal Library include maps and illustrations of the early Dutch settlement and the City's first seal, which incorporates a beaver with Amsterdam icons and was created upon the incorporation of New Amsterdam in 1654. The site also shows how the Archives preserved the Dutch documents.

The ordinances are a small portion of the collection of New Amsterdam and Common Council minutes for the period from 1647 -1834, and include the manuscripts of proceedings, resolutions, minutes, accounts, petitions, and correspondence from Dutch and English colonial governments and the English translations of the documents.

“The Archives will expand the galleries to include early documents granting land to settlers in Brooklyn and Queens, maps, and other primary resources,” said **Municipal Archivist Sylvia Kollar**. “During the next year, we plan to share more of the collections and finding aids online.”

The Municipal Archives, operated by DORIS, contains the records of New York City government, beginning with the Dutch records through the present. The Municipal Library makes government publications available both online and onsite, and the agency’s Visitor Center currently is showing an exhibit celebrating the centennial of Bronx County.

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