Chapter 10
Sweden in the Delaware Valley: Everyday Life and Material Culture in New Sweden

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The Colony of New Sweden

The colony of New Sweden was established in 1638 along the Delaware River, in the territory of the modern states of Delaware, south-eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey (Fig. 10.1). It was the first Swedish experiment in ascertaining presence and claiming territory outside of Europe. The idea of venturing to America was masterminded by Samuel Blommaert and Peter Minuit, former employees of the Dutch West India Company (WIC), together with leading members of the Swedish government, including Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna and Admiral Claes Fleming (Johnson 1911; Dahlgren 1988:3–6; Norman 1988:45–51; Fur 2006:89–92). In seeking royal approval and financial backing, several arguments in favour of the colony were presented. It was argued, for example, that a transatlantic venture would strengthen Swedish trade and help to develop shipping and long-distance seafaring; it would enrich the kingdom and the investors; it would, furthermore, open a door for land acquisition and create an

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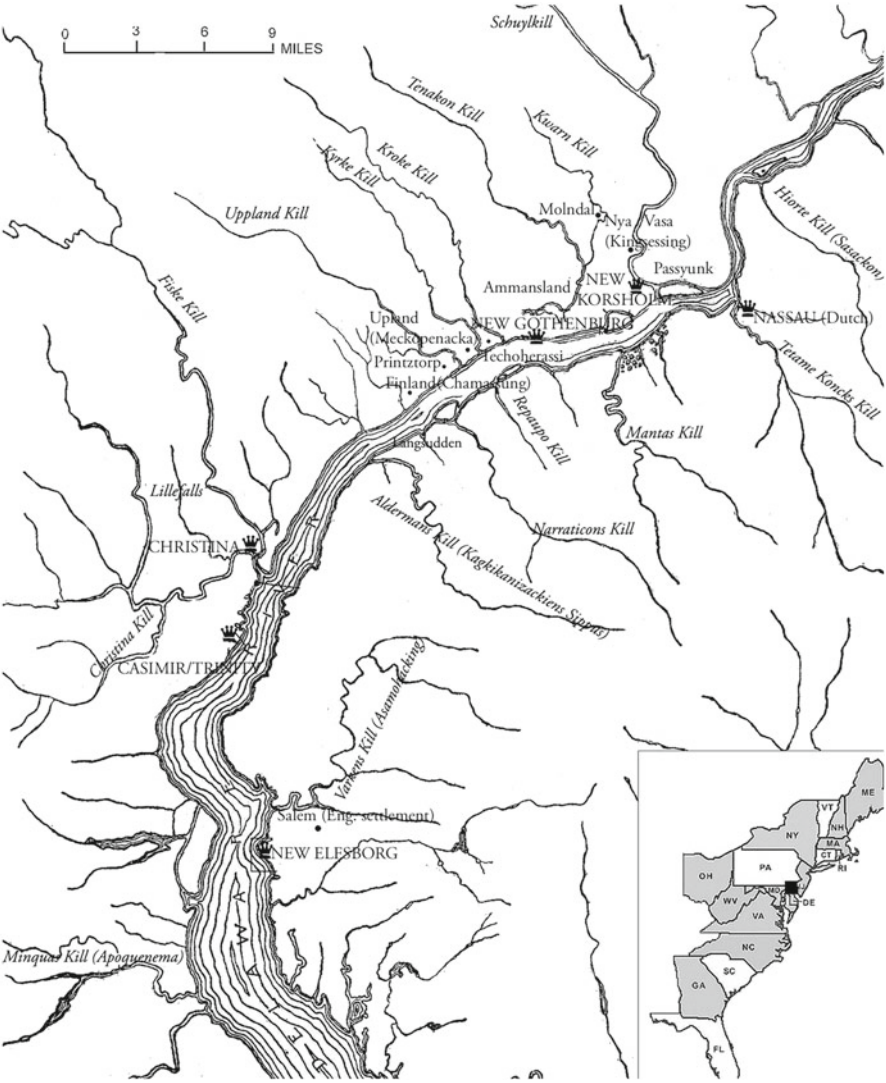

Fig. 10.1 Geography of New Sweden (Drawn by authors after Johnson 1911)

opportunity to spread Christianity and civilisation among the Native Americans (Campanius Holm 1834:63–64; Dahlgren 1988:12–16, 1995).

A colonial plan was approved in 1637 when the South (or New Sweden) Company was established. The materialisation of this endeavour was largely possible thanks to the Dutch involvement. The former employees of the WIC provided not only substantial capital injection but they were also able to con-

tribute with important know-how, including maps and charts, transatlantic sailing experience, insight into the conditions of the country and lists of wares sought after by indigenous groups. Strong Dutch involvement in the venture was also reflected in the initial character of the colony, which took the form of a fortified trading station focused on tobacco and beaver pelt trade (Norman 1988:47–59).

The first expeditions left Sweden in 1637 and 1639. Peter Minuit (the first governor of New Sweden) purchased an extensive area on the western side of the Delaware River and established a fort and a trading station in the vicinity of the shores of Delaware River and Minquas Kill. To honour the Swedish monarch, the fort was named Fort Christina.

Despite a promising prognosis, the New Sweden venture turned out to be rather disappointing in terms of commercial outcome. Dutch investors, unsatisfied with the results, withdrew from the company in 1640 (Johnson 1911:131–34; Dahlgren 1988). From now on the fate of New Sweden became the sole responsibility of the Swedish Crown and the reorganised New Sweden Company.

Reorganisation of the company required new staff and a programme for recruiting settlers willing to emigrate. Thus far the major posts in the colony were entrusted to the Dutch, who also constituted a large portion the settlers. This situation was partly remedied by an active strategy of enforcing relocation to America and by appointing Lieutenant Johan Printz as a new governor of the colony. Equipped with comprehensive instructions giving him executive power, instructing him to develop the colony and establish legal and religious institutions patterned on Swedish examples and urging him to establish tobacco plantations and other industries (salt works, fisheries, silk production, cattle and sheep husbandry), Printz arrived in America in 1642. His long governorship, which he gave up in December 1653, was a period of considerable economic and territorial growth for the colony. It was inhibited, however, by an insufficient commitment by the Crown to the project. In 1655, as a result of a Dutch attack and takeover, the Swedish colony ceased to exist. The last governor of the colony, Johan Risingh, most of the soldiers and some of the colonists returned to Sweden. Others stayed and prospered under the Dutch and from 1664 the English rule.

The colony has been studied by several historians over the years (e.g. Acrelius 1874; Johnson 1911, 1930; Dahlgren and Norman 1988; Fur 2006). In this chapter we would like to consider a number of issues that are important for understanding this colonial project and the experiences of those who took part in it. We focus on the strategies of recruitment employed by the Swedish Crown, the difficulties in adjusting to a life in America, interactions with Native American groups, as well as the ways in which the settlers domesticated new landscapes through the use of familiar technologies and practices. In our approach, material culture and its significance for coping with migration, organising the landscape, negotiating identities and social spaces, takes the centre stage.

Settling the Colony: Challenges, Homesickness and Desertion

One of the constant challenges in the history of New Sweden was the low interest in migrating to America among Sweden's population. As a result, settlement in the colony underwent stark fluctuations. At its lowest the number of settlers might have been less than 30 individuals (e.g. in 1640) to reach about 368 individuals, the highest number recorded, in 1654 (Johnson 1911:699–726; Carlsson 1995). Paradoxically, immigration from Sweden continued and even increased after the collapse of the colony. A few hundred settlers arrived in 1656 and in the 1660s and were allowed to stay by the Dutch and the English administrators of the province.

Migrating to America was a complex process. Some colonists, after initial setbacks, faired quite well. For others, adjusting to the life in the colony, away from family and friends, was much harder and even an unbearable challenge. Consequently, the stream of people crossing the Atlantic proceeded in two directions: from Sweden and back to Sweden.

Because of the initial lack of interest in migrating to New Sweden, the Crown had to use diverse strategies to promote the idea of settlement in the colony. One of them was imposing displacement on *problematic* segments of the society. Petty criminals convicted for adultery and encroachment of royal prerogatives were offered a reduction of their severe sentences to a few years of indentured labour as company workers, if they agreed to go to New Sweden (Handlingar 29:217–220; Stiernman 1747:55; Johnson 1911:239). Sending them to New Sweden was also perceived as a way of reforming them and breaking their indolent nature (Cook Myers 1959:161). A group of them, mostly of Finnish origins, was on board the *Charitas* and *Kalmar Nyckel* during the fourth transatlantic expedition, which arrived in New Sweden towards the end of 1641. Another contingent of convicts arrived in 1643 (Campanius Holm 1834:73; Carlsson 1995).

Non-compliant soldiers, deserters and those who evaded army drafting were also forced to serve in New Sweden. A popular conception of America as a dreadful and feared place made military officials consider service in the colony as an appropriate form of punishment for stubborn and non-compliant soldiers (AOSB 1898, 1905:315–318; Handlingar 29:210–212; Johnson 1911:268).

The resentment and fears of serving in America were often only confirmed and deepened after arrival in New Sweden. In the correspondences sent from the colony, motifs of longing, homesickness and despair were constantly repeated (e.g. Johnson 1930; Craig and Williams 2006:6–8). Governor Printz mentioned the wish of the soldiers to go back to Sweden in both his reports dated to 1644 and 1647 and in his letters to Lord High Steward Per Brahe and Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna. Writing in 1650 and 1653 he confessed that:

> [---] officers as well as common soldiers, they long and yearn with great desire to be released and to come again to the fatherland, and this might indeed be the best, so that they by chance in the future might not undertake something else. But they all live in the hope that they with the first opportunity may be released and furloughed home (Johnson 1930:177–178).

Printz hinted at the soldiers' readiness to desert the colony, which endangered its already fragile existence. Escaping to the neighbouring colonies of Maryland and New Netherland became a repeated practice harshly dealt with by Governors Printz, Papegoja and Risingh (Cook Myers 1959:156–157; Risingh 1988:157, 221).

Difficulties in adjusting to life in the colony, longing and the wish for returning were also expressed by Governor Printz himself. Already in 1644, in the second report sent to Sweden, he uttered his will of return, a plea that became more urgent with the passing of time (Johnson 1930:113–114). In 1653, alarmed by the long overdue contact with Sweden, he wrote that he had lost all hope of ever being relieved from the position as governor and had become so sickly and so incapable of governing the colony that he was forced to assign the conduct of affairs to another. Once again he repeated his sincere desire to "be relieved and released from this place" (Johnson 1930:189). Finally, not receiving any news or letters from Sweden for 6 years, he decided to leave the colony.[1]

There were certainly various reasons why life in America was difficult to cope with. Many felt insecure and powerless in a fragile colony, the existence of which was largely at the mercy of the Native American groups, as well as the Dutch who never recognised Swedish rights to the Delaware Valley (Acrelius 1874:43–56; Johnson 1930; Dahlgren and Norman 1988:199; Craig and Williams 2006:6–8). Escalating feelings of indifference of the Crown and the company towards the colony, infrequent contact with Sweden, atop of a harsh government introduced by Printz, magnified a sense of hopelessness. Conditions in America appeared in a stark contrast to the life left behind, provoking the feeling of homesickness and longing (e.g. Cressy 1987:191–212; Moogk 1989; Wyman 2005; Matt 2011; Naum 2013).

Nostalgic feelings might have been further instigated by interactions with objects brought from home (e.g. Hofer 1934 [1688]; Hoskins 1998; Parkin 1999; Marcoux 2001; Tolia-Kelly 2004; Digby 2006; Miller 2008; Naum 2008). Soldiers and settlers arriving in the colony carried with them bundles of personal possessions. Johan Printz might have brought most of his valuables to America. An inventory made after the fire at his house in 1645 lists a number of personal things: a great number of books, clothes, personal accessories, curtains and fabrics for decorating the house, mugs, tableware, candle holders, household articles and silver and golden trinkets (Johnson 1930, see also Cook Myers 1959:28). Most of the carpentry fittings in his American house might have been made of Swedish timber he brought with him (Johnson 1911:348). During the excavations on Tinicum Island in modern-day Essington (PA), additional objects were unearthed and the site interpreted as Printz's estate, *Printzhof* (Becker 1979; Cotter et al. 1992:405–409; Johnson and Wennberg 2005; Becker 2011). These artefacts somewhat diverge from the written inventories and include, above all, everyday objects (pottery, pipes, metal tools) that were perhaps

[1] This decision was not taken lightly by Governor Printz. He deserted once before from a battlefield in Germany—a decision that resulted in imprisonment and a setback in his carrier (Johnson 1930).

too numerous and deemed as relatively worthless to be included in his compensation claim after the fire. Together the inventory and the excavated objects give an impression of Printz's uncompromised will to recreate the comforts of daily life in the colony.

By equipping the house with familiar objects, Printz might have succeeded at domesticating the foreign environment, creating an illusion of stability and unchanged reality. By doing so he also unknowingly created stimuli for his longing. The contrast between the recreated home and the harshness of daily life outside his doorstep might have made living in New Sweden even more unbearable. Being surrounded by material objects constantly reminding of the past and realising that the ideas of home imbedded in those objects were so incompatible with the daily existence in the colony, Printz easily became a victim of nostalgic longing, fixated with the idea of return.

Carving Familiar Spaces in Unfamiliar Territories

A clearly expressed wish from the Swedish Crown was to literally create a *new* Sweden in America. Culturally significant traits such as the Lutheran faith, laws, language and traditions were meant to order daily life in the colony:

> The Swedish language should be kept, spoken and written, purely without any mixture of other languages. All rivers and streams as well as herbs and woods [should] be called with old Swedish names; abolish all expressions from the Dutch, which now seem to be somewhat ingrained. In fine, both in manners and customs, as far as possibly can be managed, everything should be conformed to old Swedish (*Instructions* §23 Johnson 1930:156–157).

This was urged by Per Brahe in one of his letters to Governor Printz. This confessional, linguistic and cultural unity was an important step in assuring a constant link with the homeland and reinforcing the identity and allegiance of the colonists as subjects of the Swedish Crown (Dahlgren 1995:61–62; Gustafsson 1998; Lindmark 1999:17–18; Haefeli 2006). To please the Crown, and more importantly to create recognisable reference points, the governor and the settlers quickly inscribed the landscape with familiar-sounding names. Hopokehocking became Fort Christina, Chamassung was known as Finland, Meckoponacka was christened Upland, Techoherassi was called Olof Stille's Land and Tenakong (Tinicum) Island hosted fort New Gothenburg (Acrelius 1874:67–69; Johnson 1930:112, 131). Other settlers chose to reside in places named Mölndal, New Vasa or New Korsholm (Fig. 10.1). These rituals of naming, with their spatial and temporal symbolism reflecting familiar geographies, were designed to produce "local subjects, actors who properly belong to a situated community of kin, neighbours, friends", soldiers and farmers (Appadurai 1996:179).

The Crown and the colonial administration made constant attempts to manage and domesticate the landscape of New Sweden as part of the plans to maximise the profits and to turn it into a *civilised* and recognisable space. This is evident in the

instructions given to the colonial Governors Johan Printz and Johan Risingh and in administrators' executive decisions and projects described in their reports sent to the Swedish government and the Board of Commerce (Sw: Kammarkollegiet) (Johnson 1930; Cook Myers 1959:136–165; Risingh 1988). Churches, water mills, farms, orchards and pastures dotted New Sweden's landscape.

However, the domestication of the landscape was not only a project directed by the Crown. The settlers in their day-to-day life made choices that to a large degree relied, perhaps unsurprisingly, on their habitual knowledge and practical know-how. In their lives disrupted by migration, this was an important act of emplacement, placemaking and production of locality meant to keep at bay an endemic sense of anxiety and instability caused by displacement (Tuan 1986; Appadurai 1996:179; Casey 1998; Turton 2005).

Turning foreign, hostile and unpredictable into recognisable and comfortable spaces was achieved through material means of housebuilding, homemaking and traditional means of sustenance. Early buildings, settlement patterns and the way of life seemed to a considerable degree reminiscent of practices back home. Extensive conservatism in house construction and lifestyle postdating the fall of the colony to the Dutch and the English is noted in several accounts dated to the seventeenth and early eighteenth century.

Jaspar Dankers and Peter Sluyter, who visited Delaware region in 1679–1980, commented on the architecture and multicultural characteristics of the area. The landscapes they passed were described very much through the accounts of the houses and farms they saw and stayed in, each one ascribed with clear ethnic signatures. The Swedish houses were described as rigidly traditional and unlike the English ones. They were made of logs split or shaped from whole tree trunks and attached by incisions at the corners without the use of nails. They were warmed by a fireplace in the corner, and although simple in their appearance, they were small and cosy (Dankers and Sluyter 1867:175). Passing through a Swedish settlement of Wicaco (south of Philadelphia), the travellers noticed another interesting feature: a drying house equipped with a stove (Dankers and Sluyter 1867:235). Perhaps this was an example of a *ria*, a drying house commonly constructed by the Forest Finns (see Ekengren 2013).

Just like the houses, the Swedes they met during the journey were described as conservative and preserving their cultural identity to a surprising degree. "We drank very good beer here, brewed by the Swedes, who, although they have come to America, have not left behind their old customs", noted Dankers and Sluyter (1867:177). Similar observation of conservatism and cultural particularity of the Swedish and Finnish settlers is noted by Thomas Paschall, an Englishman, who arrived in Pennsylvania in 1682/83. Paschall noticed the simplicity and self-reliance of the Scandinavian settlers: their modest log cabin dwellings built with minimal use of tools; their reliance on traditional crops such as rye, turnips and barley ("they plant but little Indian corn, nor tobacco"); their home-based weaving and sewing (although he mentions also the English fashion of their clothes); and their particular liking of rye bread (Cook Myers 1959:250–54; see also Kalm 1771:397–9, 404–7). The unmistakable Swedishness of these settlers was also confirmed by Reverends

Fig. 10.2 Morton Homestead in Prospect Park, Pennsylvania. (Photo by Smallbones)

Eric Biörk and Anders Rudman who served as ministers in the colony in 1697–1714 (Campanius Holm 1834:90, 100, 102; Craig and Williams 2006:63–4).

Attachment to traditional ways of life notwithstanding, it would be wrong to assume that the complex mixture of people, traditions and material culture of Middle Atlantic America did not have an impact on the culture of Scandinavian settlers. Already in the early years of the colony, the shores of the Delaware River, besides diverse groups of Native Americans, were occupied by the Swedes, Finns, Dutch, Germans, English and single Africans. After the fall of New Sweden, and increasingly after English takeover, the whole area became a magnet for European settlers searching for religious freedom and economic opportunities. Their increased influx meant that previously isolated and scattered Finnish and Swedish farmsteads became gradually swallowed by new settlements and clearings. With this expansion came pressure to adopt English customs (Kalm 1771:404–407; Acrelius 1874:125–130, 157, 310). The generation shift and political and cultural developments of the eighteenth century meant further Americanisation and integration (Lindmark 1999, 2005). This ambiguity, the tensions between conservative elements and new cultural influences as well as colonial hybridity, is also manifest in archaeological and architectural material (Frens and Frens 1989; Jordan 1995; Ambrose 2002). One of the houses exemplifying colonial blending is Morton Homestead in Prospect Park, Pennsylvania (Fig. 10.2).

The house is connected with the history of the Mårtenson family. Mårten Mårtenson senior was born in Finland and migrated to America in 1654 to become a freeman (Johnson 1911:721). He settled in an area known as Ammansland that constituted a hub of Scandinavian settlement in the second half of the seventeenth

and in the eighteenth century (Craig and Williams 2007:49, 51, 92, 101, 264–266). His property rights were confirmed in 1672, when Governor Francis Lovelace issued a patent to him and two other landholders acknowledging their possession of more than 700 acres along Darby Creek. The property remained with the family until 1784 (Cotter et al. 1992:409–411).

The oldest structure documented at the Morton Homestead was a square foundation, found underneath one of the still-standing rooms. Interpreted as a possible dwelling room (so-called eldhus) or sauna, it was dated to 1660s (Frens and Frens 1989). The northern room in the still-standing house was possibly constructed as early as 1698 (the date carved on the back of the fireplace lintel), as a free-standing building. Built with white cedar logs, the approximately 4 by 6 m dwelling featured a fireplace in the room's corner and a staircase leading to the second floor. The southern unit was built later, probably in the middle of the eighteenth century, and it was meant as a separate two-storey dwelling, equipped with a fireplace. The two originally separate buildings were then joined by a stone middle room (Frens and Frens 1989).

The construction of the early building as well as the two units, which then were fixed into one large house, corresponds with the ownership of the property by different members of the Mårtenson family: Mårten Mårtenson senior, who died in 1709; his son Mathias; his grandson Andrew; and Jonas (great-grandson of Mårten senior). Although the original building was altered by a restoration in 1938, the remaining features carefully studied by Dale and Susan Frens (1989) reveal interesting technological choices made by the builders. Double notch corners in both rooms, the use of conifer timber in the older room as well as tightly fitting log walls and the lack of mud and clay chinking in both rooms show references to the Scandinavian tradition (Erixon 1982). However, on the other hand, the roof framing is Anglo-American in style, and the southern building is made of oak, a material preferred by the English. The fireplace in the southern (younger) room is English as well. The Morton Homestead shows thus an interesting blending of styles, technologies and influences. Neither Scandinavian nor English in terms of technological solutions, it is a good material illustration of the eighteenth-century American colonial culture.

Materialising the Middle Ground: Interactions Between the Settlers and Native American Groups

The relatively scarce population, the preference of scattered settlement and the considerable remoteness of many of the settlements had important consequences. These factors contributed not only to a close adherence to familiar norms that remained mostly unchanged and unchallenged until eighteenth century, but they influenced the development of a close relationship with the Native groups of Lenape and Susquehannocks, visible in material exchanges and appropriations (Kalm 1771; Campanius Holm 1834:98–103; Fur 2006:171–220, 240–246).

In their dealings with the Native groups, the Swedish Crown and the trading company applied a strategy of acknowledging Indian rightful ownership of land.

This land, which was bought by the representatives of the colonial company, formed a base of colonial foothold. Proofs of legal purchase and settlement were used to counter claims of other European empires, notably England, which asserted its rights based on the first documented discovery (Jennings 1988; Fur 2006:116–118). Furthermore, the Crown from the onset recognised the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the Native population. In the instructions to Governor Printz, he was commanded to treat the "wild nations, bordering upon all other sides, [---] with all humanity and respect" and:

> see thereto that the people of [Her] Roy[al] Maj[esty], or of the Company, who are engaged for the [Indian] trade in those parts, allow the wild people to obtain the necessary things they need for somewhat more moderate price than they are getting of the Hollanders from Fort Nassau, or the adjacent English, all [to the purpose] that said wild people may withdraw from them, and so much the more turn to our own [people] (Johnson 1930:78–80).

But the colony never received the homeland support crucial for a colonial enterprise of the magnitude envisioned by the Crown. Since it often lacked trade goods and supplies from Sweden, it could not compete in the American trade in ways the other colonies did. Instead, New Sweden took up an intermediary role in the trade between other Europeans and Indians, buying goods from the Dutch and English colonies, trading them with the Native Americans for furs and then reselling the furs for transport to Europe. Thus, the settlers who could capitalise on rudimentary knowledge of Algonquian and Native customs became an important link that connected the Europeans with the Native American trade networks in the interior of North America. Additionally, since the Swedish initially focused the majority of their agricultural efforts on tobacco cultivation, they were forced to obtain a large portion of their food supply (particularly maize) from their Native neighbours, the Lenape (Johnson 1930:111; cf. Kupperman 1995; Williams 1995; Fur 2006).

The New Sweden colony may, in some respects, be regarded as a *middle ground* or a *contact site* from the onset (cf. Galke 2004:92; Loren 2008:7–9; White 2009, 2011; see De Cunzo and Nordin 2013). It was a cultural and geographical space characterised by daily negotiations, translation and remaking of cultural schemes, rather than the single-sided enforcement of colonial dominance (Bhabha 2004; cf. Hall 1999; Fahlander 2007; Naum 2010). Engineered by European stakeholders and populated by a mix of Swedes, Finns, Dutch, Germans as well as Africans, it was pluralistic by nature (cf. Lightfoot 1995:200). And much to the alarm of the other European colonists, the Native Americans were no strangers to the Swedish settlements either. Governor Risingh remarked in his journal that when the English commissioner Mr. Ringold visited Fort Christina and "[---] saw the Indians come and go so freely here, he said that we ought not to allow this, as they could be murderous when they had the opportunity" (Risingh 1988:173).

It was not simply the allure of European culture, or the promise of trade, that attracted the Lenape and Susquehannock to the Swedish settlements. It was rather the Swedish colonists who gravitated towards the Native communities. Fort Christina was founded on the earliest known Lenape summer camps at the confluence of the Brandywine Creek and the Minquas Kill, later renamed Christina River. Fort New

Gothenburg on Tinicum Island, where Governor Johan Printz built his private residence, *Printzhof*, was a springtime station used for pelt trade by the Susquehannocks. Also, Fort New Korsholm was located at a site near the mouth of Schuylkill River where the Lenape cultivated some of the corn on which the colonists depended (e.g. Johnson 1911:182; Becker 1980:21; 1984:24; 1993a:64–66; 1993b:324; 1995:124–125; 2011:3). These annexations of Native settlements into the colony were intentional, since part of the strategy of the trading company was to intersect the trade routes to New Netherland and give the Swedes sole access to the indigenous cultural and economic networks along the Delaware River and its tributaries (Johnson 1911:331; Dahlgren and Norman 1988:71; Ordahl Kupperman 1995:95; cf. Johnson 1930:130–135, 165).

Turning to archaeology, this coexistence seems to be supported by the finds from the Printzhof site. Here, excavations not only revealed what is considered to be the residence of the Swedish governor, but also the postmolds of two *wigwams*, the domed, circular type of shelters used by the Native population in the area (Becker 1988; 1993a; 2011). Native American artefacts, including worked bottle glass, a stone pipe and a stone axe along with the fragment of a large trade bead manufactured in the seventeenth-century Amsterdam or Venice, together with European goods are indications that the Printzhof served both as a Native American trading station as well as a private residence for the governor (Becker 1979:40; 1984:24; 1993a:64, 67–68, 70; 1999:83–88; 2011:16, 21; see Nordin this volume). Marshall J. Becker, one of the excavators at the site, views the presence of some of the Native objects in connection to the residence as an expression of Printz's interest in collecting Native American souvenirs, referring among other things to the Native wampum belt and stone tobacco pipe sent by him as a gift to Queen Christina and the wooden pipe and otter skin muff sent to Per Brahe (Becker 1999:84–85; 2011:17; cf. Johnson 1930:166–167). Objects like these represent the kind of encyclopaedic collection that fascinated the European elite of the time (cf. Becker 1990a; 1990b; Brunius 1995; Yaya 2008; Snickare 2011). This allure of *the others* and their material culture also corresponds with the ethnocentric musings over Native American life apparent in other contemporary writing and images (Fig. 10.3). There are several accounts of the daily interaction in New Sweden which focus on the physical appearance, moral character and material culture of the Natives, all in the style of Western ethnographic descriptions of the time (cf. Jacobsson 1922). For instance, in the correspondence of Governor Printz as well as in his official reports to the trading company, the Natives are characterised as strong and stout, wise in trade, skilled in hunting and crafts, as well as barbarously heathen, vindictive and ill-tempered (Johnson 1930:150, 153). This attitude is present in other sources as well, but we also get glimpses of the compromises and adoptions made by colonist and Native Americans as a result of living close to each other (cf. Jacobsson 1922; Fur 2006). For example, while authors like Peter Lindeström describe the Native Americans' fondness for European household utensils, textiles and clothing, Per Kalm (eighteenth-century Swedish botanist) provides a list of native medicinal, poisonous and edible plants, the proper use of which the Swedes learnt from the neighbouring Lenape (Kalm 1771; Lindeström 1962:150).

Fig. 10.3 Peter Lindeström's drawing of a Lenape family from his *Geographia Americae*. Manuscript from 1661. (Courtesy of De la Gardiegymnasiet, Lidköping, Sweden)

The multicultural environment in the colony led to ambiguous process of estrangement as well as dependencies, compromise and hybridisation. While the curiosities collected and sent home, as well as the starkly contrasting descriptions of the Native Americans helped to create and enforce the Swedes' view of themselves and their place in the world, the daily interaction blurred the line of difference between material practices.

Recasting Identities Beyond the Colonial Borders

The close cohabitation and trade networks meant that a stream of European trade goods flowed towards Native American settlements. There are a number of roughly contemporary Lenape sites in the Delaware Valley, many of them burial sites, that

include objects like glass vessels, beads of brass or glass, pipes, dress accessories, iron tools, gun parts, brass kettles and brass and iron arrowheads fashioned from recycled metal objects (Becker 1980; Forks of the Delaware 1980; Kraft 1986; Pietak 1998; Kraft 2001; cf. Grumet 1995).

This pattern is reinforced if we move further away from the colony into Susquehannock territory in the interior of modern-day Pennsylvania. Living along the Susquehanna River, they were the main fur traders in the region, controlling a large trading network that covered the entire mid-Atlantic region and beyond (Becker 2011:2). Therefore, the Swedes were actively pursuing a trade and military alliance with them (Kent 2001:37), and at times, the Susquehannocks seem to have preferred trade with the Swedes (Becker 2011:21). This was mostly a result of their constant feuding with the English in Maryland and the fact that the Swedish colony had cut off the trade access to New Netherland in the north. Thus, the Susquehannock sites may offer some of the best opportunity for archaeologically studying the interaction with New Sweden, even though the European objects found on the sites are not of discernibly Swedish manufacture.

Two Susquehannock sites are worth mentioning in this context. The first one is the Roberts site on the Conestoga Creek in Lancaster County, dating to ca 1630–1645. It appears to have been the major settlement for the Susquehannocks in this period, and based on its location, it has been suggested that this is in fact the settlement mentioned by Campanius Holm located some 12 Swedish miles from the colony (Kent 2001:36). It was visited by the Swedes ca 1645: "They went thither with cloth, kettles, axes, hatchets, knives, mirrors and coral beads, which they sold to them for beaver and other valuable skins" (Campanius Holm 1834:157). The burials associated with the site contained numerous objects of European manufacture such as metal tools, fragments and small objects of brass, metal parts of guns, fragments of glass bottles and glass beads (Kent 2001:339–342).

The Strickler Site in Lancaster County is a well-known, mid-seventeenth-century settlement dated to the height of Susquehannock power in the mid-Atlantic (Kent 2001:254). The burials on the site contained a large quantity of objects of European origin as well as Native American objects made of European materials (Fig. 10.4). European brass kettles were especially abundant and were used for depositing food in the graves. Several of them showed signs of local repairs, most likely made by Native artisans. Other objects included spoons, snuff box covers, thimbles and bells made of brass, pistols, rifle barrels and flint locks of iron, textiles (probably blankets), iron knives, as well as beads and vessels of glass (Cadzow 1936; Futer 1959; Kent 2001:292, Table 19, 348–367).

One simple but significant observation when studying the so-called European trade goods found on both Lenape and Susquehannock sites is that they are always integrated with indigenous material culture or refashioned to fit existing practices rather than supplanting them. Glass beads, for example, used in the funerary costume of both Native American groups, were fashioned into necklaces and headbands and sewn onto clothing together with traditional shell beads (cf. Pietak 1998:146–147, 151). Similar kinds of cultural choices and interpretations are seen

Fig. 10.4 European objects from the mid-seventeenth-century Susquehannock site at Strickler in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. (Courtesy of The State Museum of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission)

in the creative way European objects were adapted and transformed into new material forms. Glass from broken bottles was refashioned into scrapers, broken stems from European pipes were turned into beads, Dutch delftware was worked into ornamental discs, and ballast flints from European ships were knapped into gunflints using indigenous techniques (e.g. Becker 1980:22, 25; Kent 1983:28–29; Becker 1984:24; Kraft 1986:208–209; Kent 2001:249–250; Kraft 2001:382, Fig. 9.25). The list of examples is extensive, but the most cited practice of this nature is the use of brass sheets from dismantled kettles to fashion jewellery, such as pendants, bracelets and ear ornaments, as well as arrowheads (e.g. Kraft 1986:208). At the Strickler Site, triangular brass arrowheads outnumbered points made of stone, and some were fastened using fine cord, possibly made of European flax (Kent 2001:191, 204). The kettles were thus not only used for the cooking and storing of food, but broken into pieces and reworked to fit into the already existing material repertoire. Through these transformations, the European kettles and their metal came to be associated with a diverse range of cultural settings, practices and values (cf. Calvin 1975; van Dongen 1996:115; 139–141; Richter 2001:42–43; Immonen 2011:381).

All the examples above show the different ways in which the material world of the colonist became culturally embedded within the material and socio-cultural world of the Native Americans and vice versa. The Natives and the colonists of New Sweden performed their daily lives using material culture of various origins, blending the new and the familiar and thus shaping their world and their sense of self and the other.

Conclusions

New Sweden was a short-lived project and a place full of ambiguities. Dreamt as a colony bringing profits and glory to the Crown and the country, it turned out to be a financial and political fiasco. Styled as a new homeland full of opportunities, it proved to be desperately unbearable for some. Imagined as a charitable project of bringing Christianity and civilisation to the Native Americans, it would have failed much sooner if not for the help, trade and protection of the Native communities. Wished to be a mirror of customs and norms practised in the home country, it became a hybridised middle ground. In the processes of establishing and maintaining the colony, in shaping it as a *new* Sweden, in everyday conduct and in interactions with Native American groups, material culture played an important role. It helped to domesticate the landscape and to counter the estrangement caused by migration to America, it served as a tacit means for expressing identities, and it functioned as a means of transactions and communication. Material objects and their use encapsulated the colonial entanglement of the colonists and Native groups and their simultaneous attachments and embeddedness in the old and the new world.

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