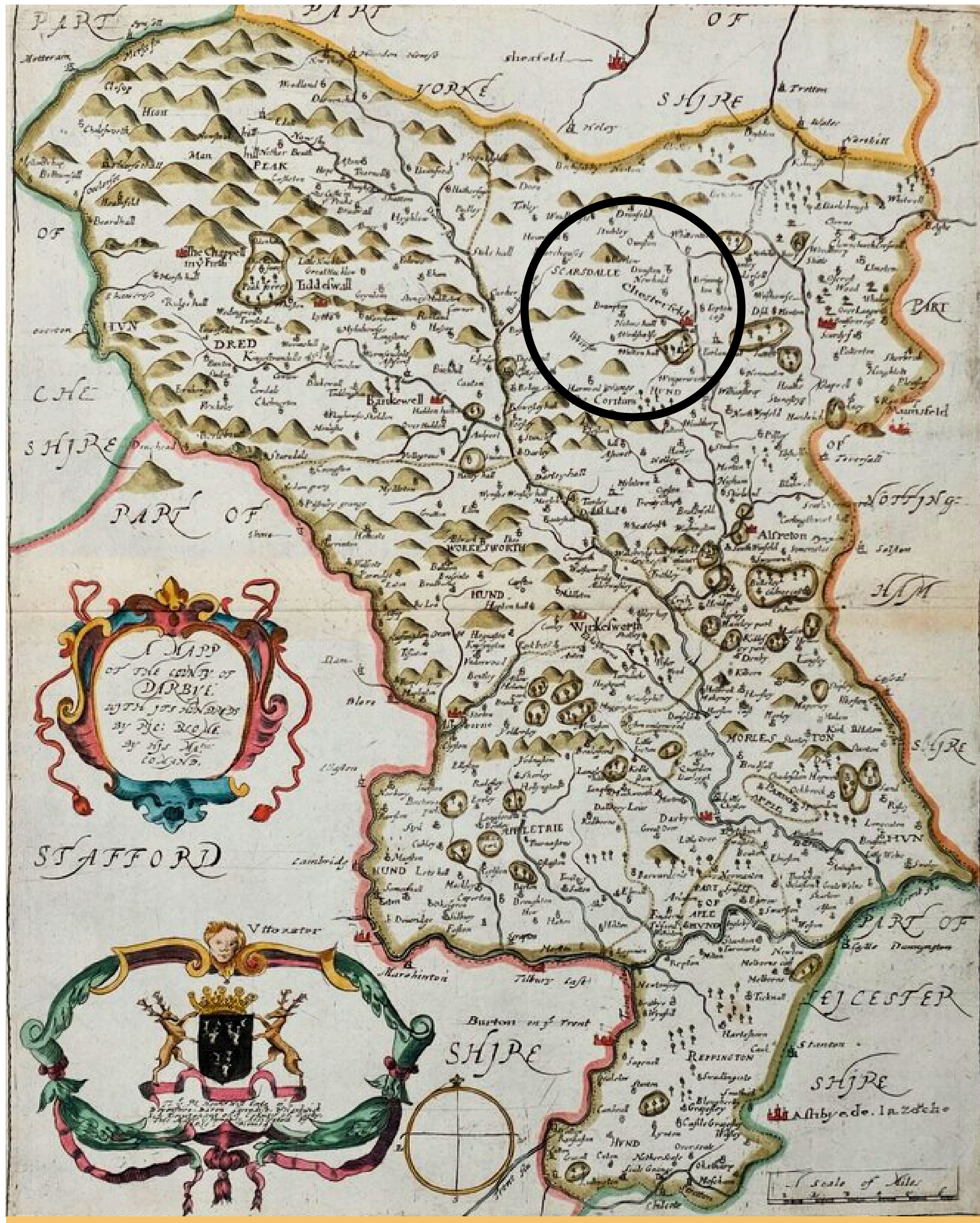


# Caleb Heathcote

*Sixth Son of the Mayor of Chesterfield*



Map of the County of Darbye. Richard Blome, 1673.



A New and Correct Map of England and Wales, Now Called South Britain, 1717.

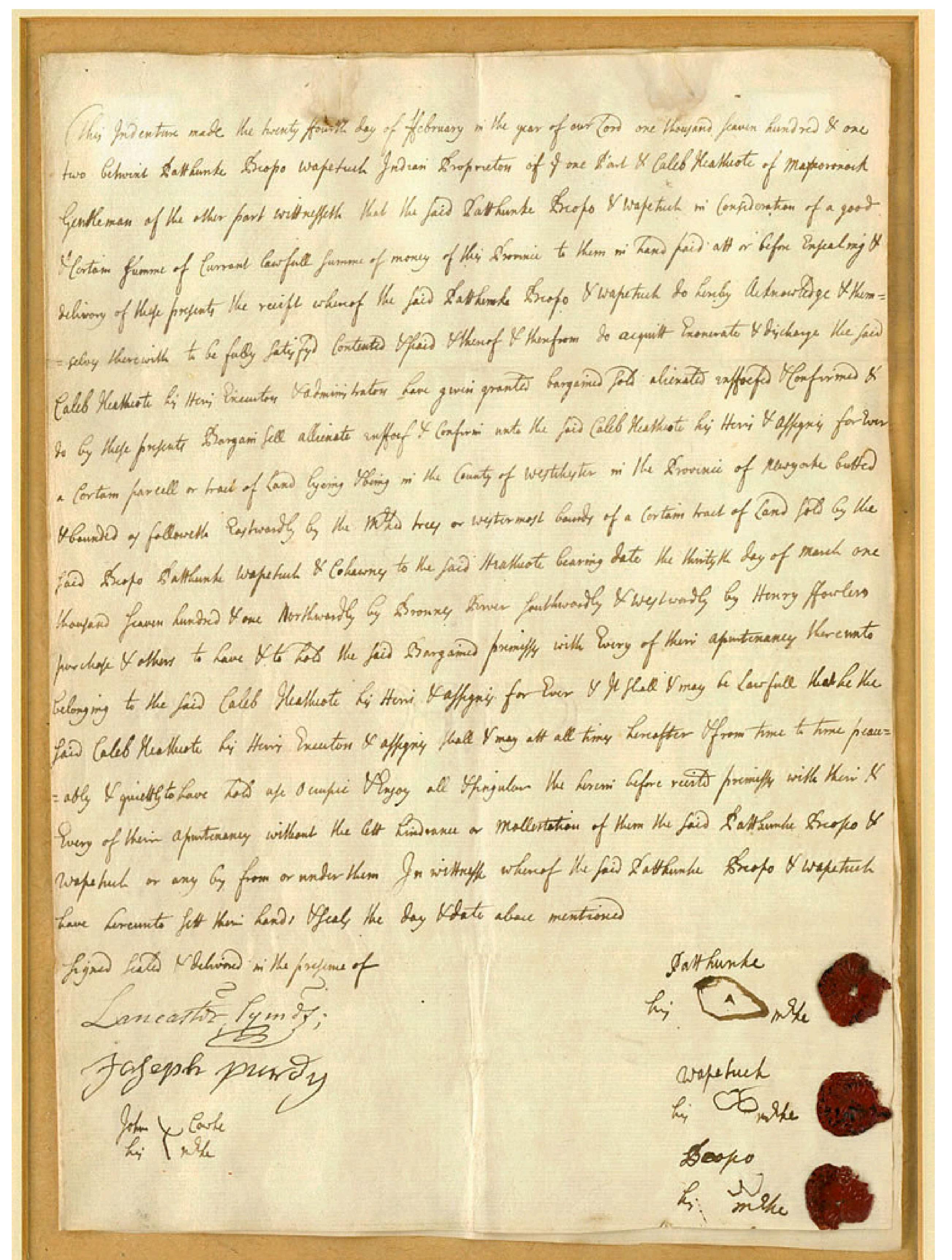
## Introduction

In 1665 during Charles the Second's reign, a sixth son Caleb was born in the family of Mayor Gilbert Heathcote of Chesterfield in the Hundred of Scarsdale, Derbyshire, England. Some twenty-six years later, after his intended wife had transferred her affections to one of his older brothers, a disappointed Caleb Heathcote took his patrimony and set sail for New York. Prospering in trade, he soon became one of the leading men of the colony and began to buy up land in Westchester. At the end of the century he purchased from Ann Richbell the claims her husband had established to land running nine miles back from Long Island Sound to the Bronx River and averaging two miles in width. Shortly thereafter he purchased the Fox Meadow from the Siwanoy, and then acquired a bit more land to the south



Caleb Heathcote Oil on Canvas, c. 1710

along the Bronx River, rounding out his holdings to the town line in Eastchester. In 1701 Caleb, who had become influential in the government of the province, had these lands elevated into a royal manor. He named the area Scarsdale after his ancestral home. Since the English name meant "dale of scars or rocks," it was appropriate here as it was there. Scarsdale was one of nine royal manors of New York, six of which were in Westchester County. The first population count taken in 1712 listed 12 people, seven of whom were slaves. After Caleb's death in 1721, the land was inherited by his two daughters. In 1774 the manor was broken up, and the tenants became the proprietors. Scarsdale became a town by the law of March 7, 1788.



Deed from Patthunke, Beopo and Wapetuck, Indian Proprietors, to Caleb Heathcote, Feb. 24, 1702

# Caleb Heathcote

## *A Lover Spurned*



Portrait of Mary Dawsonne Heathcote (1670-1719/20) by Samuel Daudet



Portrait of Samuel Heathcote (1656-1708) by Samuel Daudet

### **The Patriarch**

Caleb Heathcote's father, Gilbert Heathcote, made his fortune as an ironmonger and fought as a Roundhead in the English civil wars. He also served as Mayor of Chesterfield. When he died circa 1689, he left a large sum to each of his seven sons.

### **Elder Brothers**

Gilbert, the first born, remained in London, becoming a powerful merchant, Lord Mayor of London, and eventually baronet. When he died he was the richest commoner in England. His brother Samuel set up in Danzig, where he made a fortune importing Virginia tobacco.

### **Betrayal**

Caleb, meanwhile, was betrothed to Mary Dawsonne, the daughter of a Hackney merchant, in 1689. When he introduced Mary to his elder brother Samuel, she soon transferred her affections. Caleb, having used his inheritance to set up in foreign trade, including in the Port of New York, fled England in the early months of 1792 for that great city. It is speculated that he wished to escape the humiliation of his recent heartbreak.

# Caleb Heathcote

## Merchant and Mayor



Captain Kidd in New York Harbor, in a c. 1920 painting by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

### Rampant Piracy

Heathcote arrived in New York during a period known for piracy and corruption. Under Governor Fletcher, New York welcomed the money that piracy brought into the city. Influential merchants such as Frederick Philipse, Stephanus Van Cortlandt, and Peter Schuyler were known to finance piracy themselves. Young Caleb soon found himself among these men.

### The Governor's Council

When he arrived in New York, Heathcote was recruited by Governor Fletcher onto New York's Executive Council, which functioned as the upper house of the colony's legislative body. Philipse, Van Cortlandt, and Schuyler were all on the Council, which was made up of wealthy landowners. It's very likely that Caleb was involved in financing some piracy, especially given his connections. However, he also took military supply contracts for such goods as bedding and blankets. He inherited the estate of his uncle George Heathcote, who had preceded him to America, and whose fortune was largely invested in shipping and foreign trade. Caleb continued the business and thus, along with his inheritance from his father, was very well off. When Fletcher was removed as Governor in 1698 over charges of piracy, Heathcote found himself briefly out of favor. It was only a few years before the reformists lost power and Caleb was back on the Council.



Thomas Tew relates his exploits to Governor Fletcher of New York, by Howard Pyle, Harper's Magazine, 1894

### Mayor of New York City

Later, from 1711 to 1713, he served as the 31st Mayor of New York City. During his term as mayor, the New York slave revolt of 1712 took place. Nine whites were killed in the riots. Heathcote was ruthless in putting down the rebellion. Of 40 brought to trial, 18 were acquitted and a few pardoned, while the rest were brutally executed. Heathcote owned slaves himself, and held no sympathy for their cause.



Portrait of Frederick Philipse, first Lord of Philipsburg Manor, date unknown

# Caleb Heathcote

## Manor Lord

### The Last Manor of Westchester

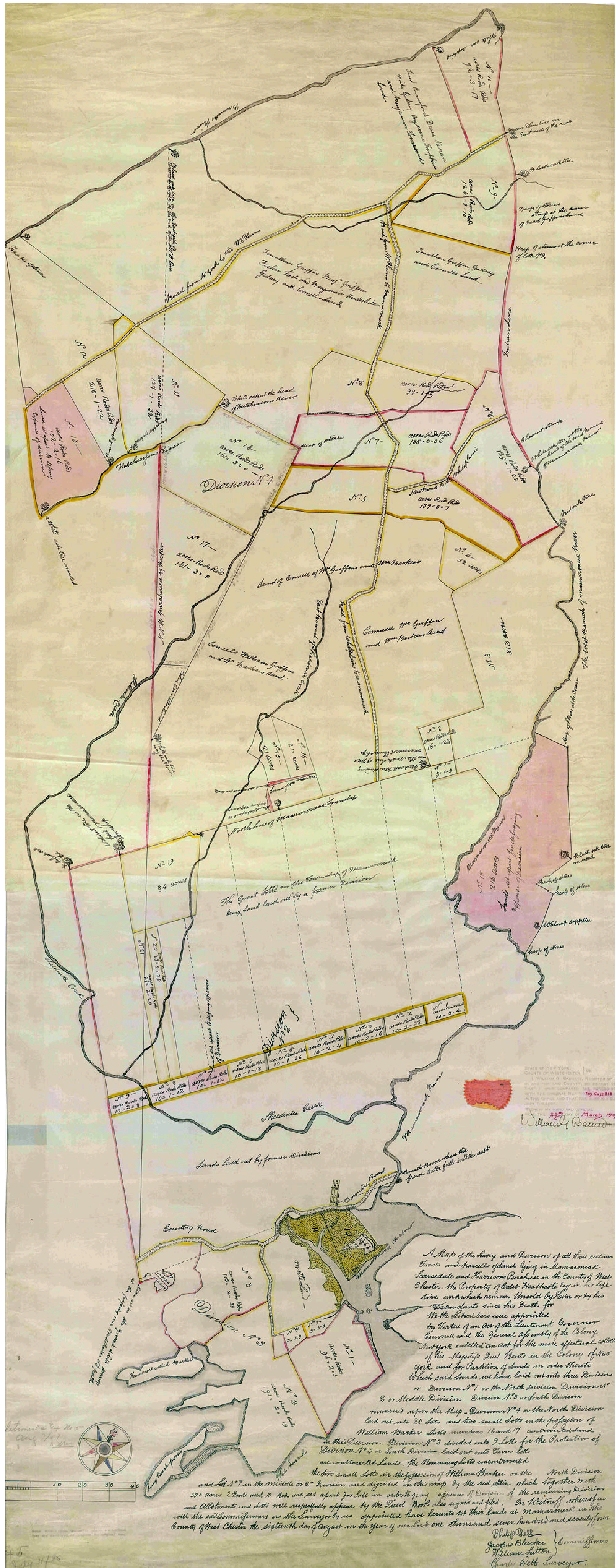
The Manor of Scarsdale was established in 1701, and was the last of six manors created by royal edict in Westchester. The others were Fordham, 1671; Pelham, 1687; Philipseburgh, 1693; Morrisania, 1697; and Cortlandt, 1697. Scarsdale was also the last manor granted anywhere in the colonies.

### Gathering the Land

Much of the Manor of Scarsdale was acquired from the widow Anne Richbell. From her he purchased land in Mamaroneck along the Long Island Sound, consisting of the neck of land known as Orienta, and the land running north. Due to the disputed ownership of some of this land, Heathcote took precautions by purchasing "the Fox Meadow" directly from the Native American Siwanoy chiefs Patthunke, Wapetuck, Cohawney and Beopo. The land he acquired from them was described as lying between Hutchinson's Creek and the Bronx River, and running to the northern boundary of Eastchester. Along with the land from Richbell, the Manor ran all the way from the Sound to the Bronx River, including parts of Mamaroneck, Harrison, North Castle, and all of Scarsdale.

### Heathcote Hill

Caleb constructed his manor house at the head of Mamaroneck harbor, overlooking the waters of the Sound, on what became known as Heathcote Hill. His daughter Anne inherited the house, which then passed to her son John Peter DeLancy. The original structure burned prior to the Revolution, but John built a new house on the site, where his daughter Susan married James Fenimore Cooper in 1811.



Copy of 1774 Heathcote Map by surveyor Charles Webb. Copy created in 1907 and certified by William G. Barrett.

# Caleb Heathcote

## Church Builder



Saint Peter's Church, Chapel, and Cemetery Complex, Westchester Square, Bronx, N. Y., circa 2017. Photograph by Hugo L. Gonzalez

### Three Westchester Churches

Caleb Heathcote's first home in Westchester was in the town of Westchester, which is now part of the Bronx. The town's center is now known as Westchester Square. There stands Saint Peter's Church, the descendant of the Church established by Heathcote circa 1702, when he was mayor of Westchester. The original church was built of wood, quadrangular in form, with a high, pyramidal roof surmounted by a bell-turret. There were very few Anglicans in



Christ's Church in Rye, N. Y., 2010

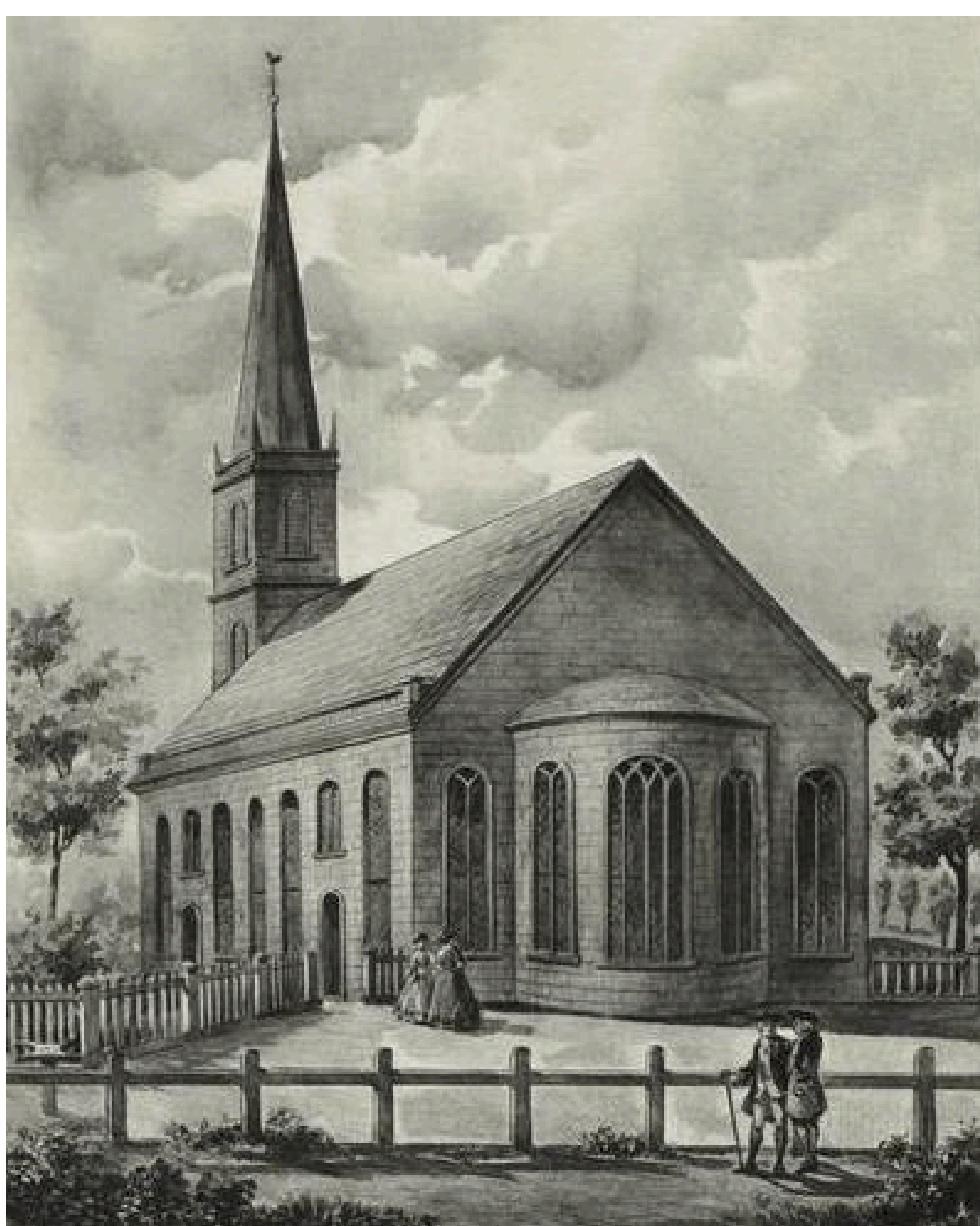
either the town or county of Westchester at the time, but through a combination of money and influence, Caleb was able to secure an Anglican minister, John Bartow. He exerted his influence to make sure churches in New Rochelle and Rye were also ministered by Anglican clergy. In Rye, he helped to establish the ancestor of the current Christ's Church. In New Rochelle he helped to build a church whose current iteration is Trinity Saint Paul's Episcopal Church.

### Trinity Church

Trinity Church in lower Manhattan was the project closest to Heathcote's heart. An active Vestryman, he was involved in the raising of money and the purchasing of land, as well as the acquisition of a charter in 1697. He obtained much of the materials for constructing the first Trinity Church. When it was completed, he must have been quite satisfied in his pew directly behind the rector. Today he rests in the Trinity Church Cemetery, and perhaps his spirit remains, pleased to be amidst the wealthy and powerful roaming the financial district.

### St. James the Less Episcopal Church

Scarsdale's oldest church, established in 1849, has ties to Heathcote, though he was long dead. Without Heathcote's efforts, the Anglican Church would not have flourished in Westchester, which was mostly Protestant when he first arrived. The building was consecrated in 1851 by Bishop William Heathcote DeLancey, great grandson of Caleb Heathcote.



First Trinity Church, NY, 1737 - From *A tour around New York and my summer acre : being the recreations of Mr. Felix Oldboy.* (New York : Harper, 1893) Mines, John Flavel, Author.