

PREFACE.

WHEN the author of these chronicles began searching for information relating to the ancestors of the Swartwout Family, none of its members had any knowledge of the place or places of residence in the Netherlands of the one who settled in New Netherland in the sixth decade of the seventeenth century. Accepting certain hearsays as true, some of his American offspring believed that they were respectively the descendants of two or more brothers who had come in that century from Holland with their households to occupy and cultivate tracts of bush-land bordering the river explored, in 1609, by Henry Hudson. An ensnaring fiction later induced others to receive the coat-of-arms of the Edinburgh Blackwoods as that of the Swartwout Family.

The descent of the members of the different American branches of the family, now writing the cognomen Swartwout, Swarthout, Swartout, and Swartwood, is distinctly traceable to Tomys Swartwout, who, in 1655, was appointed a *schepen* (magistrate) of the court of Midwout (Flatbush), on Long Island.

The object of Major William Merrill Swartwout in having these chronicles published in the attractive form in which they appear—there being only one hundred copies of them printed—is assuredly noteworthy. Believing that a memorial history of the Swartwout Family in Holland and America would more advantageously perpetuate a knowledge of the public services of its members than any other monument, he considerately leaves with the readers of this work the determination of the judiciousness of his choice of the means to accomplish that purpose.

In a sojourn of three months in the Netherlands, the author found many rare and valuable records in different depositories of church registers, municipal documents and state papers containing important information relating to the ancestors of the family. A visit to the site of "*het Zwartewoude*" (the Black Wood), originally diversifying the northern part of the Low Countries known first as Frisia, and later called Friesland, afforded him an enjoyable view of the extent of land once the manor from which the family derived its topographic name. There and in the vicinage of the Black Wood, the emblematic bearings