

sides particularizing in it the causes influencing them to renounce their allegiance to them, they declared that they had recognized the imminent peril in which the Protestant residents of the city were placed by having papistical officers in charge of the fort and had resolved to obtain possession of it, which it was their good fortune to have accomplished, on the thirty-first of May, "without resistance and bloodshed."¹

On Sunday, the second of June, a rumor having become current in the city of an intention of the Roman Catholics to attack Fort James, and massacre the members of the congregation of the Reformed Church engaged there in divine worship, a large number of excited people hastened in a tumultuous manner to Captain Leisler's residence and urged him to take immediate command of the fort and garrison it with such men of his company as he regarded trustworthy Protestants. Complying with their earnest solicitations, he marched there that day with forty-nine members of his company and assumed the duties of a commandant of the fort.

Following the example of the people of Boston, the Protestant citizens of New York elected a committee of safety in order to preserve the peace and assure themselves of temporarily possessing the means for protecting life and property in the event of any insurrectionary disturbances. As soon as the committee was formally organized, its members committed the command of the garrison of the fort to Captain Leisler. This action of the committee greatly incensed Colonel Nicholas Bayard, commanding the five companies of city militia, who deeply felt the slight of having one of his subordinate officers preferred before himself for the important position. The mayor also, the Honorable Stephanus van Cortlandt, was greatly offended because the people deemed it disadvantageous to their interests to have him a member of the Committee of Safety and a counsellor during this turn in the affairs of the government.

The accounts contained in the London newspapers of the elevation of Prince William of Orange and the Princess Mary to the throne of England, on the thirteenth of February, and a proclamation calling for an acknowledgment of allegiance to them, caused the Committee of Safety to publish, on the eighth of June, its purpose in placing Captain Leisler in command of Fort James.

"There being a present necessity that a captain of y^e fort at New Yorke should be appointed to be constantly there attending, and to command and order y^e soldiers appointed by this Committee of Safety to serve [in] y^e fort in behalfe of their majesties till orders shall come, and to order all matters of y^e fortifications of said fort necessary at present, this committee therefore doe think fitt that Captain Jacob Leisler shall be captain of said fort as abovesaid

¹ Documentary history of the state of New York. 8vo ed., vol. ii., pp. 10-13; 10, 11.