

LEONARD LISPENARD IN TRINITY VAULT

The Bones of a Man Who Died
Over 100 Years Ago Find a
New Resting Place.

FRIEND OF WASHINGTON

Descendants of Revolutionary Patriot
Found His Bones on New
Rochelle Estate.

For the first time in twenty-six years the Lispenard vault in old Trinity Church was opened yesterday and the remains of Leonard Lispenard, a member of one of the oldest families of New York, who died more than 100 years ago, were laid beside his relatives. When he died he was at his own request buried upon a favorite spot on his estate at New Rochelle, but the building up of that neighborhood disturbed his grave, and it was deemed fitting by the Lispenard descendants that his final resting place should be in the family vault.

Originally the vault was in Trinity graveyard, just behind the church, but when the chancel was enlarged it was built over the vault. A narrow passage gives access to it and other vaults, and down this yesterday afternoon the coffin of Leonard Lispenard was borne. Upon it was the inscription:

Leonard Lispenard, son of Leonard Lispenard and Alice Rutgers, his wife. Born in 1743 and died about 1800.

His remains were first interred in Mount Aetna, near Davenport's Neck, New Rochelle, and disinterred by others, were removed to Trinity Church in 1807 by the children of the late Lispenard Stewart.

William R. Stewart, Lispenard Stewart, and Frank S. Willoughby were present yesterday. On either side were the entrances to vaults of the Collisters, the Rogers, the Crugers, and other families well known in old New York. The bones were reverently inspected, and then the lid of the coffin was fastened down. It was placed among the coffins which for a century have held the other Lispenards, and the vault was securely sealed.

Workmen Found the Remains.

The remains of Leonard Lispenard were found on March 5 on the Fisher estate in New Rochelle at the corner of Siwanoy Avenue and Cedar Road. Some workmen as they cut away a rocky hill known to the children of the neighborhood as Mount Aetna came across a skull and bones and the rusted metal ornaments of a coffin. They lay in a cavity hewn in the rock, 20 inches deep, 7 feet long by 3 feet wide, and marked by a stone at its head and its foot.

It was evident that a regular burial had taken place there, and the discovery of the grave was mentioned in the newspapers. Careful inquiries were made by the children of Lispenard Stewart of this city, and it was established that the tomb contained all that was left of Leonard Lispenard, the brother of their great-great-grandfather. Arrangements were therefore made by them with the Trinity Church for the final deposit of the remains alongside those of the other members of the family.

The Lispenards are of Huguenot extraction. Antoine L'Espenard fled from Rochelle, France, in 1669 to escape the persecution of his faith. After an adventurous career in Northern New York he settled at New Rochelle in 1690 and built a manor house at Davenport's Neck, on what was afterward the old Iselin homestead.

Leonard Lispenard was his great-grandson. He was born in 1743, the eldest son of another Leonard Lispenard and Alice Rutgers. This older Leonard was a man of prominence in the colony. He owned the Rutgers farm, where now swarming thousands make Rutgers Street and East Broadway one of the most densely populated spots upon the globe, and a country house, then two miles from the city,

where to-day Desbrosses and Hudson Streets join. Leonard and Lispenard Streets cross the old Lispenard meadows from Broadway to the North River. Leonard is an old family name, and the streets were called after the two Leonard Lispenards, father and son.

At a critical moment of the Revolution Leonard Lispenard, the elder, took up a position which did much to confirm the wavering minds of the good citizens of New York. Washington was on his way to take command of the forces besieging Boston. Gov. Tryon was on the high seas bringing with him unknown instructions from England. It was by no means certain that New York would throw in its lot with Massachusetts, and the city Council knew not what to do.

Washington His Guest.

Revolutionary General and Royal Governor arrived the same day, and the perplexed city fathers decided to receive them both with equal honors. But old Leonard Lispenard knew no wavering. To Washington he threw open his home on the North River, and for a few days it was the most important centre in the whole of America.

The exact date when he died is not known, but it was probably about 100 years ago. Already many of his kin had been buried in New Rochelle; on the Iselin estate a tombstone marks the resting place of Elizabeth, wife of David Lispenard, and Elizabeth, their daughter, who both died in 1797. So it was natural that Leonard Lispenard should ask that he might not be taken to the family vault in Trinity graveyard, but be laid in the open country, at the very spot where he had spent so many happy days.

When the Lispenard descendants heard that the changes of a century had disturbed the body of their ancestor, they decided to bring it to join its kith and kin underneath the chancel of Old Trinity. By a curious coincidence it was only last Fall that a memorial window was erected by the same family in St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia University in memory of Anthony, brother of the Leonard whose remains have just been found and son of the Col. Leonard Lispenard, who played so distinguished a part at the crisis of the Revolutionary War.

Ahearn Case Continued.

The public hearing in connection with the investigation into the affairs of Borough President Ahearn's department, which was to have begun yesterday, was adjourned for a week at the request of Mr. Ahearn's counsel, Martin W. Littleton.