

## THE SUYDAM FAMILY.

The first in the group of three memorial windows on the south side of the church, representing the parable of the Prodigal Son, was placed there by Deacon James S. Suydam, in memory of the Suydam family, which has been identified with the Flatbush and Brooklyn Reformed Dutch churches for more than two hundred years. Loyalty and devotion to Church and State have characterized this family from its earliest history to the present time.

The Suydam family originally bore the name of Rycken, and resided in the lower part of Saxony, in Germany, removing thence to Holland. Hans Von Rycken and his cousin Melchior, Knights of the eleventh century, were both engaged in the crusade to the Holy Land, under Richard Cœur de Lion, A. D. 1096. Melchior, who alone survived, became the founder of the Holland branch of the family.

Hyndrick Rycken, the American ancestor of the family, emigrated from Suyt-dam, or Zuyt-dam (meaning south of the dam), Holland, to this country in 1663. His three sons, who were born at Suydam in Holland, adopted in 1710 the name of their birthplace as a surname. Hyndrick, the ancestor, settled first in New Amsterdam, and removed thence to Flatbush in 1679 where he acquired a large estate. He united with the Flatbush church. During the War of the Revolution the members of the Suydam family were conspicuous for their patriotism and their loyalty to the cause of American Independence.

Hendrick, the grandfather of Deacon James S. Suydam, of this church, was a descendant in the fifth generation of Hyndrick Suydam (or Rycken) the ancestor. He bought a farm of some two hundred acres at Bedford, midway between what is now Bedford avenue and East New York, where he lived and died. He attended this church, and the names of his children and grandchildren appear on the church records. His son Moses inherited the Bedford farm.

Moses Suydam, son of Hendrick, was born at the homestead in Bedford. He was a member of and a regular attendant at this church for some time. He sold his Bedford property and bought a farm at Newtown, but never lived to occupy it. He married Mary, daughter of Jacob Schoonmaker, a descendant of one of the early Holland settlers. He had among other children James Schoonmaker.

James Schoonmaker Suydam, son of Moses and Mary (Schoonmaker) Suydam, was born at the homestead in Bedford and was baptized in this church, where he was a regular attendant until the erection of the Reformed Dutch Church at East New York, where his uncle, Rev. Martin Schoonmaker, preached for a number of years. After his father's death Mr. Suydam took charge of the farm at Newtown and attended the Newtown church. He remained there for some twenty years, when he returned to Brooklyn and again attended the old church. After the death of his first wife he resided at Bay Ridge for two years. Before returning to South Brooklyn he married the second time. He resided in South Brooklyn for eight years, removing thence to his present residence on Lincoln Place. When the reorganization of the church took place at the beginning of Dr. Farrar's pastorate Mr. Suydam was elected a deacon and has since continued an active member of the Consistory.

Mr. Suydam was for many years engaged in the banking business with the old firm of Matthew Morgan & Son, and in October, 1887 he was elected Secretary of the Atlantic Trust Company, which position he still holds.

Mr. Suydam has been twice married. His first wife was the daughter of Peter Goslin. His present wife, Gertrude Howell Bennett, was the daughter of J. Remsen Bennett, a descendant of one of the old Bay Ridge families. Mrs. Suydam is one of the most active women in the church. She was one of the organizers of the Women's Aid Society and was its second President, still holding that position.