



Bergen County, Where America Begins

A ZABRISKIE INVENTORY: SHOPPING IN 1793

By Kevin Wright

Jan Zabriskie, Senior, miller and wily middle man, had that proverbial "thumb of gold." By quick study (and perhaps by nature), he became profitably conversant with back-country farmers, river boatmen, drovers, teamsters, ironmasters and the polished upper strata of city merchants. His twin children, Jan and Elizabeth, married into Manhattan's mercantile families. Elizabeth married Edmond Seaman, son of Judge Benjamin Seaman and his wife Elizabeth Mott, on Christmas Day, 1768. Judge Seaman was a successful New York merchant and politician. The young couple produced three sons, John, Benjamin and Edmond Seaman. Childbirth was risky in those times and Elizabeth Zabriskie Seaman, wife of the Clerk of the New York Assembly, died February 26, 1774, aged 30 years, one week after the birth of her youngest son, Edmond.



Jan Zabriskie, Junior, married Jane Goelet in November 1764. Certainly, local wags knew that her brother, Francis, had married the daughter of a respectable Perth Amboy family, set up business in his wife's hometown, only to fall into "unhappy circumstances," as bankruptcy was euphemistically called in those times. Jane's spinster sister, Mary, moved from New York to New Bridge, settling into the former academy, where she kept shop. This property, located on the high bluff above the river, opposite Zabriskie's Mills, was purchased by Edmond Seaman.

John Zabriskie, third generation of that name to inhabit the sandstone mansion at New Bridge, was born September 30, 1767, the son of John and Jane (Goelet) Zabriskie. When his grandfather, John the first, died in September 1774, he assumed the title of Junior. We can imagine the wide-eyes of this nine-year-old boy, face pressed against the pane, as he counted the ragtag garrison of Fort Lee, General Washington at their head, passing his threshold and vanishing southward in a cold drizzle. Continental troops used his home as a fort to defend their passage. We don't know what he overheard of his father's political whisperings, but on July 14, 1777, he may have watched approaching bateaux, loaded with soldiers under

command of Major Samuel Hayes, as they landed alongside the gristmill. They arrested his father as a "disaffected person" and imprisoned him at Morristown. Once on parole, John, Senior, abandoned the family homestead and trade, fleeing to New York City where his family found refuge with the Seamans. Whatever bitterness the Zabriskies felt at the British evacuation of Manhattan could only have been compounded by confiscation of their properties by the victorious revolutionary officers of the State of New Jersey.

The Zabriskies did not join the fleeing tide of Loyalists to Canada, but returned to New Bridge, leasing their home from its new owner, Baron von Steuben, and operating the mill landing in partnership with the Baron's aide-de-camp, Captain Benjamin Walker. John Zabriskie, Jr., was twenty-one years of age when, on December 12, 1788, he paid 1,200 Pounds to Baron von Steuben for purchase of the Zabriskies' New Bridge estate. On October 13, 1792, John married the girl-next-door, Caty Hoogland. Her father, Cornelius, had acquired the old stone tavern on the east side of New Bridge from Andrew Van Buskirk in 1771. John Zabriskie, Junior, died June 6, 1793, aged 25 years, and was buried in the Old French Burying Ground (New Milford). Tradition says that he died in a mill accident, but no proof has yet been found. His widow married Abraham Collins of New Bridge on February 1, 1795. She released her dower right in the Zabriskie mansion and mills to John, Benjamin and Edmond Seaman on April 21, 1795. Only four months later, Edmond Seaman of New York and New Barbadoes, merchant, sold the premises to John and Dirck Banta.

John Zabriskie's administrators, in preparing an inventory of his stock in trade, have bequeathed to posterity a valuable insight into the material culture of the late eighteenth century, carefully listing everything from mouse traps to fiddle strings. Of particular interest to our docent group, now studying the clothing of that era, is the variety of cloth mentioned. One looming perplexity, however, remains the location of this stock of merchandise. A few items of household furniture appear near the beginning of the inventory - was the store room located in the Steuben House? If so, where are the beds, andirons, personal clothing, et cetera, that would confirm occupancy? Were these few items of furniture used to warehouse bolts of cloth and other commodities? Perhaps cabinet-work (possibly imported from New York or England) was included in the Zabriskie's range of merchandise? Maybe the entire house was a store - but then where did the Zabriskies reside? If the store was kept in a separate building (or an appendage to the main house), then why didn't the appraisers include more of John Zabriskie's personal possessions in the inventory? They certainly visited his carriage house and barn, mentioning the family cow. Did his moveable estate perish with him - in a fire???

An Inventory of all and Singular the goods and Chattels, rights and Credits which were of John Zabriskie, Junior, deceased, at the time of his death, who died intestate, made the seventeenth day of July 1793 in the presence of Albert Zabriskie, Administrator, made by John Earle and Christian Zabriskie, appraisers.

£..s d

1/2 Sloop 120.00..00

1 Riding Chair with a fixed top 30.00..00

1 Bay Horse with a white face 16.00..00

1 Ditto Ditto 16.00..00

1 Sorrel Colt 20.00..00

1 Cow 5.00..00

1 Wild Cherry Clothes Press 8.08..08

1 Desk 2.10..08

1 Cass [kas] 0.16..08

1 Iron bound Hogshead 0.10..08

2 Empty Barrels 0.06..00

1 Barrel of Herring 1.10..00

1 Saddle and Bridle 2.18..00

A quantity of logwood 0.10..00

A hogshead containing some Molasses 10.10..08

A barrel containing some West Indian Rum 3.05..08

A Keg with peach Brandy 3.10..00

A cask with some Cherry [brandy] 1.04..08

1 Hogshead containing York rum 13.15..08

A Bushel of Salt 1.12..08
A Quantity of Sand 0.08..00
3 Iron bound Hogsheads 1.04..00
6 Barrels 0.18..00
A Lot of Brooms 1.12..00
A Quantity of Indian Corn 12.10.00
18 half Gallon Stone[ware] pots and Jugs 0.12..00
9 Chamber pots 0.06..00
9 Gallon stone[ware] Jugs 0.11..00
3 Gallon earthen pots and jugs 0.04..00
9 Large earthen pots and jugs 0.18..00
6 Earthen pots 0.03..04
3 Earthen pipkins 0.06..00
Twenty large Earthen dishes 0.15..00
13 Small ditto ditto 0.06..00
28 Smaller ditto ditto 0.09..04
27 Smaller ditto ditto 0.06..09
41 Smaller ditto ditto 0.06..18
4 Iron pots 1.15..00
3 Iron tea kettles 1.18..00
A Quantity of Starch 1.12..00
A Quantity of Chalk 0.10..00
7 Syths 1.10..00

3 Iron Squares 0.06..00
4 Carpenters Adzes 0.18..00
5 Coopers Adzes 0.18..00
2 padlocks and brass rings 0.03..00
2 Mouse traps 0.01..06
2 Hetchels 1.00..00
1 oz. of Brass Ware 0.05..00
19 Awl Handles 0.01..06
3 Bellows 0.10..00
242 lbs. of nails 9.00..00
A box of window glass 3.00..00
1 Quarter of lb. of red wood 0.05..00
10 pairs of Smoothing Irons 1.18..06
2 Pairs of [fireplace] Shovels and tongs 0.12..00
4 hand saws 1.12..00
3 lanterns [lanterns] 0.10..00
6 frying pans 1.04..00
21 Iron Candlesticks 0.19..00
6 Slates 0.08..00
3 Castor [beaver] hats 1.16..00
13 wool hats 1.14..00
1/2 hundred wts. of patent Shot 1.10..00
12 Screw Augers 2.10..00

5 round bore Augers 0.08..00
13 pairs of Midling sized HL hinges 1.04..00
3 pairs of Large sized HL hinges 0.06..00
14 pairs of Small sized HL hinges 1.00..00
21 pairs of H hinges 1.01..00
6 pairs of other hinges 0.05..00
6 complete locks and some incomplete ones 0.12..00
6 rulers 0.06..00
4 flat files and 2 rasps 0.07..00
8 Saw files 0.05..04
5 hand-saw files 0.01..03
17 Chisels 1.02..00
4 Gouges 0.04..00
A Bundle of Sadlers' small buckles 0.02..08
A bundle of Gimbolts [gimlets] 0.01..06
10 Shoemakers' knives 0.06..00
7 Plane Chisels 0.05..00
A Bundle of Knitting needles 0.01..06
A plane and 2 Sand Stones [used as sand paper?] 0.02..00
Some Ginger 0.02..00
A Bundle of roll pigtail Tobacco 0.03..06
A Bundle of paste board 0.02..00
60 lbs. of hand Soap 1.15..00

3/4 Quarter of lb. of Sugar 4.05..00

A parcel of Indigo 0.12..00

A Quantity of Buttons 6.18..00

A lot of Knives, Buckles, Snuff Boxes, Scissors and mustard 3.00..00

2-1/2 dozen of Enamel bowls 0.12..06

20 half-pint blue and white bowls 0.06..08

1 dozen pint blue and white bowls 0.07..00

9 bowls of quart [size] blue and white 0.09..00

29 bowls of pint [size] of cream color 0.07..06

21 bowls of 1/2 pint [size] cream color 0.04..04

5 Quart bowls 0.01..09

Some flints 0.01..00

16 green edge plates 0.06..04

31 of small blue edge plates 0.09..00

37 Cream color plates 0.09..00

7 dozen blue and white cups and saucers 0.14..00

7-1/2 dozen blue and white large cups and saucers 1.02..06

6 Red with white Cups and saucers 0.12..00

7 Tea pots 0.10..06

1 quart Mug 0.00..08

21 Milk pots and pepper casters 0.07..00

4 pint tumblers 0.14..00

9-1/2 pint tumblers 0.06..09

1/2 dozen of gill glasses 0.03..00

1 dozen of 1/2 gill glasses and 4 wine glasses 0.05..00

Needles, fish hooks and fiddle stings 0.10..00

1 Box of shirt needles 0.02..00

1 Lot of pencils, pens and tape 0.03..00

A aprt of a Bladder of Snuff 0.06..00

2 bundles of ink powder 0.07..06

1 Lot of white Thread 0.10..06

1 Lot of Colored Thread 0.12..00

1 Lot of Combs 0.12..00

1 Lot of pins 1.12..00

Apron and Cap Tape 0.02..00

1 Lot of Books 0.10..06

1 dozen of Cotton Caps 1.00..06

7 White Cotton Caps 0.02..00

5 Cilmarnick [i. e., Kilmarnock, Scotch serge] Caps 0.02..00

1 Box of White Chapple [?] needles 0.08..00

A Quantity of Binding 4.00..00

1 Lot of Ribbons and Sundries 7.10..00

1 Box of white and black lace and gimp 10.00..00

A Keg of Alum 0.10..00

A Keg with some Brimstone 0.02..00

A Keg with allspice 0.10..00

50 lbs. Bohea Tea 7.10..00

Shoufhong Tea 3.10..00

1 Drawer with Sundries 0.16..00

8,150 of Black Wampum 10.03..09

3 Green Rugs [used as bed covers] 5.08..00

1 Green Rug 1.05..00

5 Rose Blankets 3.10..10

2 Rose Blankets 1.08..00

18 Yards of Twill Cotton 7.04..00

2-1/4 Yards of Twill Cotton 0.18..00

3-1/2 Yards of Common Cotton 0.14..14

11-1/2 Yards of Blue Cotton 3.09..00

27-1/2 Yards of Green Cotton [?] 4.09..00

19-1/2 Yards of Green Nap 2.03..01

11-3/4 Yards of Yellow flannel 1.09..03

6-1/4 Yards of Red flannel 0.18..09

8-1/2 Yards of blue Broad Cloth 5.15..06

5-1/4 Yards of Brown Broad Cloth 3.12..06

5 Yards of Black Durant [durance, a thick, woolen fabric] 0.11..03

13-1/2 Yards of Shalloon 1.07..00

28-1/2 Yards of Shalloon 3.06..06

23-1/2 Yards of Brown Shalloon 2.14..10

11-1/2 Yards of Brown Shalloon 1.06..10

16 Yards of Green Shalloon 1.17..04
23-1/2 Yards of black Calliminck [probably Callamanco] 2.10..11
22-1/2 Yards of green Durant 2.12..06
19-1/2 Yards of blue Durant 2.08..09
26 Yards of blue Tabinet 3.02..10
10 Yards of black Moreen 1.10..00
12 Yards of pink Tammy 1.00..00
15-1/2 Yards of blue Tammy 1.11..00
15-3/4 Yards of Tow Linen 1.01..00
23-1/2 Yards of Brown Holland [linen] 2.07..00
7 Yards of White Buckram 0.14..00
2 Yards of Brown Buckram 0.30..00
24 Yards of Jane [jean] 3.16..00
9 Yards of Jane [jean] 1.09..03
1-3/4 Yards of Jane [jean] 0.05..08
4 Yards of Striped Nankeens 0.12..00
11-1/2 Yards of fustian 1.06..10
21 Yards of fustian 1.15..00
7 Yards of fustian 0.11..08
24 Yards of fustian 2.08..00
20 Yards of fustian 1.16..08
24 Yards of fustian 2.12..00
14 Yards of Velvet 4.04..00

14-1/2 Yards of Tick [ticking] 3.01..07

2-3/4 Yards of Tick 0.11..00

1-3/4 Yards of Corduroy 0.05..01

6 Yards of Worsted plush 1.08..06

13-1/2 Yards of blue plush 3.00..09

3 Yards of linen 0.05..00

4-1/4 Yards of linen 0.14..10

4-1/4 Yards of long Lawn [linen fabric named for Laon, France] 1.14..00

18-1/2 Yards of black Mode [alamode, lightweight silk fabric used for mourning scarves] 6.09..06

6 Yards of black Taffeta 3.09..00

21-1/2 Yards of Apron Check 3.04..09

20 Yards of Shirt Check 2.06..08

2-1/2 Dozen of black and white gauze handkerchiefs 3.00..00

44-1/2 Yards of plain black Gauze 4.09..00

2 Jacket pattrons [patterns] 0.11..00

6 Yards of Nankeens 0.10..00

11 Pairs of White Cotton Stockings 3.17..00

3 Pairs of Worsted Stockings 0.18..00

7 Pairs of Worsted Stockings 1.03..04

A Pair of White Cotton Stockings 1.12..00

13 Yards of Callico 2.05..06

4-3/4 Yards of Callico 0.11..18

5-1/2 Yards of Chintz 1.02..00
24-1/2 Yards of Chintz 4.09..10
7-3/4 Yards of Chintz 1.13..07
2-1/2 Yards of Chintz 0.10..00
3 Yards of Chintz 0.13..00
5-1/4 Yards of Chintz 1.02..09
2 Yards of Callico 0.06..00
11-1/4 Yards of Callico 1.10..11
13 Yards of Callico 1.16..10
8 Yards of Callico 1.08..00
4-1/2 Yards of Callico 0.15..09
7-1/2 Yards of Callico 1.04..04
1-1/2 Yards of callico 0.04..06
5-3/4 Yards of Callico 0.16..03
17-1/4 Yards of Callico 2.11..09
28 Yards of Callico 3.17..00
9 purple shawls 1.11..06
6 purple shawls 1.02..06
4 purple shawls 0.18..00
5-1/2 Yards of Cambricks [Cambric] 2.09..06
4 pocket handkerchiefs 0.07..00
12 Neck handkerchiefs 1.10..00
6 Checkered handkerchiefs 0.12..00

6 pocket Checkered handkerchiefs 0.12..00
10 pocket Checkered handkerchiefs 1.00..00
31 pocket Checkered handkerchiefs 3.20..00
6 Checkered handkerchiefs 0.09..06
7 Checkered handkerchiefs 0.17..06
9 pocket handkerchiefs 0.18..00
1 piece of Striped Camblet [camlet] 2.03..00
16 Yards of Silk Camblet [camlet] 1.12..00
25 Yards of double folded stiff [Camblet?] 2.14..02
26 Yards of Camblet [camlet] 1.16..10
1 piece of Camblet [camlet] 2.03..00
23-3/4 Yards of Camblet [camlet] 1.09..08
4 Yards of Camblet [camlet] 0.05..04
27 Yards of Brown Camblet 2.14..00
7-1/2 Yards of Wile Boar [wildbore, a coarse woolen dress fabric] 0.16..10
8 Yards of Crape Gauze 0.16..00
9 Pairs of Worsted Mits 0.16..06
2 Silk handkerchiefs 0.08..00
4 fans 0.01..00
1 lb. 2 oz. of Sewing Silk, different colors 2.10..00
13 oz. of Mohair Sewing Silk [thread] 1.12..00
11 Velvet Vest patrons [patterns] 3.17..00
3-1/2 Yards of Lawn 1.04..06

7-1/2 Yards of Lawn 2.05.00

1 Yard of Lawn 0.02..06

1 Lawn handkerchief 0.03..00

2-1/2 Yards of Sprigged [?] Lawn 0.10..00

2-1/2 Yards of book Muslin 0.15..00

5 Sprigged [?] Lawn aprons 2.00..00

1 Bundle of black beads 0.02..03

4 Volumes of Blackstone's Commentaries 1.08..00

1 Set of the New British Theatre 4.00..00

5 Vol. of Sterns Works 0.12..06

Bruins Travels 0.05..00

14 Latin Books 1.08..00

Baileys Dictionary 0.10..00

Guthrie's Geography 0.10..00

13 different Books 1.19..00

1 Silver watch 6.00..00

2 Case Bottles 0.01..00

2 pint Tumblers 0.02..00

Amount of debts due on Book 253.04.10

27,350 wampum in the hands of Abraham Van Buskirk 38.05.11

John Degrote's Note of hand dated 19 Jan 1793 with lawful interest from date
12.00..00

Wiert Banta's Note dated 12th of April 1792 with lawful interest from date 2.15..07

Israel Parsel's and Guilliam Demarest's Note dated 6th of May 1793 with lawful interest from date 6.08..10

Cash 11.00..00

Amount of debts due on Seaman & Zabriskie's Books assigned to Zabriskie
50.00..00

4 pairs of men's gloves 0.09..04

1 Dozen of Women's gloves 1.07..00

2 lbs. of yarn twine 0.05..00

Total 1,001.05.07

1 Set of Harness 1.10..00

1 Cutting Bench 0.10..00

1 Dressing Glass [mirror] 0.04..00

1 Set of China 1.00..00

1 pitcher 0.00..00

1 Dozen of Soup plates 0.04..00

3 Earthen dishes 0.02..00

1 Green Rug [bed cover] 1.06..00

1 Briar hook 0.04..00

1 lot of [fence] Post 0.08..00

1 lot of Timber 2.00..00

1 Cow 5.00..00

5 Bilstead [gumwood] Boards 0.08..00

Total 12.17..00

