

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

The Academic Arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

Furtive Maneuvers: Pine's Bridge Battle Reenactment

The northern banks of the Croton River marked the southern outpost line of the Continental Army in Westchester County. At sunrise on May 14, 1781, "about sixty Horse and two hundred foot" of Colonel James Delancey's Loyalist Westchester Refugees crossed the Croton River at Oblenis Ford and attacked some 50 men of Colonel Christopher Greene's 1st Rhode Island Regiment at his headquarters in the Davenport House in Westchester County.

Most of the soldiers of the regiment were former African-American slaves recruited when the Rhode Island legislature had voted in February that "every able-bodied negro, mulatto, or Indian man-slave in this State may enlist into either of the said two battalions, to serve during the continuance of the present war with Great Britain."

Dr. James Thacher reported in his journal that Delancey's troops "first attacked Colonel Greene's and Major Flagg's quarters, and killed the major while in bed. The colonel being badly wounded in the house, was carried into



Reenactment in 2005

www.northcountynews.com/archives/2005/5-25-05/news5.htm

the woods and barbarously murdered. Two subalterns and twenty-seven privates were also killed, and a lieutenant and surgeon, with about twenty men, taken prisoners." He also explained why the Loyalists had gained such complete surprise: Greene "had taken post in a situation to guard a certain fording-place at Croton river, and had practised the greatest vigilance in the night time, calling off his guards at sunrise, on the idea that the enemy would not presume to cross in the day-time; but the enemy having learned his mode of performing duty, effected their purpose by crossing the ford immediately after the guard had been withdrawn, and the surprise was so complete that no practicable defence could avail

them."

General Washington reported Greene's losses at Pine's Bridge as forty-four killed, wounded, and missing. He wrote that "The loss of these two Officers is to be regretted, especially the former, who had upon several occasions distinguished himself, particularly in the defence of the post of

Red Bank [opposite Philadelphia] in 1777, when he defeated Count Donop [and his Hessians]."

The enlisted soldiers of Greene's headquarters detachment had distinguished themselves as well, many choosing to fight to the death rather than lose their new-found freedom. Partisan warfare or *petit guerre* would remain a staple of the Neutral Ground for the rest of the war.

Peter Pratt's Inn will host the 225th anniversary of the battle of Pine's Bridge on June 11, 2006. For details see <http://www.prattsinn.com/>.

~ Professor Colonel James Johnson (U.S. Army, ret.),
PhD Executive Director,
Hudson River Valley Institute

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Special points of interest:

- Please be sure to consult the HRVI website, as we are constantly updating our content.
- "The Below Stairs: In Service to the Great Estates" Symposium reviewed on Page 3.
- Marist Summer Writing Institute pre-viewed on Page 4.

Featured Historic Town—Monroe

The picturesque town and village of Monroe, New York is located in Orange County, in the lower Hudson Valley. Only 15 minutes away from the United States Military Academy at West Point and within an hour of New York City, Monroe sits in an exceptional location.

In 1707, a group of settlers acquired the territory that would ultimately become Monroe through the “Cheesecock Patent.” Nearly a century later, in 1799, the town of Cheesecock was incorporated. In 1808, the area became the town of Monroe, named in honor of the fifth president of the United States, James Monroe, who was then a statesman.

The American Indians who inhabited the town of Monroe prior to its incorporation were part of the Lenni-Lenape Indian Nation. Though the first settlers to the area were Dutch, the English quickly moved up from Long Island, ultimately causing the Native Americans to move over the Appalachian Mountains and settle in the Ohio Valley.

During the American Revolution, Sterling Iron Works in Monroe, which housed the oldest furnace works in the country, made a critical contribution to the colonies’ war effort. This facility created the



<http://www.monroeny.org/Forms&Pubs/history.pdf>

iron chain that was to stretch from the banks of the west side of the Hudson River to the banks of the east. This chain was successful in stopping the British from advancing up the Valley via the Hudson River.

With the beginning of the Civil War, the Greenwood Iron Works, in Monroe, made weapons for Union soldiers. Robert Parrott, an owner of the Works, is credited with creating the Parrott rifle. Since, the Parrott rifle was more effective and cheaper than other weapons, its creation was a substantial military advancement. Besides creating munitions, Monroe also hosted Underground Railroad sites. In

particular, John Milton Bull opened his home to the Underground Railroad.

In addition to its military and political history, Monroe also has an interesting culinary past. More specifically, Velveeta Cheese was created in Monroe. Following the Civil War, in 1873, Julius Wettstein started Monroe’s first cheese factory. The company was sold several times and finally landed in the hands of Emil Frey, who experimented with creating new types of cheese. When he found a new type of cheese that would not easily spoil, Frey began producing this cheese, naming it Velveeta.

Monroe’s history ranges from military inventions to culinary innovations. The town continues to flourish, with its proximity to many renowned historical sites and fascinating location, attracting visitors from around the world.

~ Christine Caiazzi

Editor’s Note: This information was extracted from

<http://www.monroeny.org/Forms&Pubs/history.pdf> created by Christa Elise Bolen

Featured Website – Yorktown Historical Society

The Yorktown Historical Society’s website, www.yorktownhistory.org, offers visitors a legion of ways to become involved in local history, including information on how to become a member of the organization as well as access to a quarterly newsletter and events calendar. In addition to these features, the website’s most impressive component is its wealth of online primary sources.

Under the Archives link on the Yorktown Historical Society’s website, a visitor is able to peruse a plethora of transcribed sources, dating as far back as 1780. There are a variety of different types of primary sources within the digital archive, such as census records, newspaper articles, and oral histories. Moreover, there is also a multitude of photographs reflecting different historical moments under the Photo Archives link. Complementing these primary sources are excerpts of secondary sources. These secondary sources help place the

town within a historical context, illuminating the important role the area played in American history.

Besides the interesting sources available on the website, the Yorktown Historical Society has also compiled a list of Historic Landmarks in the Town of Yorktown. More than merely enumerating these sites, the website also provides information and pictures of the landmarks. Furthermore, the website also preserves the legacy of historic landmarks that have not withstood the test of time. Finally, in an effort to avoid the loss of more landmarks, the Society has created the “Endangered Treasures” category. These treasures are architecturally and/or historically important sites, meriting attention and preservation.

The Yorktown Historical Society’s website contains a wealth of valuable information covering topics and events rooted in and around Yorktown. This is a great site



Students circa 1900 in Yorktown

<http://www.yorktownhistory.org/photoarchive/Schools/index.htm>

for research and is an excellent tool for keeping up-to-date on events occurring in Yorktown. The website is also easily navigable for individuals of any age.

~Gemma Edwardo and Lauren Santangelo

Featured Historic Site—Constitution Island

Just a short ferry ride down the Hudson River, from West Point South Dock, lies Constitution Island. Constitution Island is part of the United States Military Academy at West Point. Originally called Martelaer's Rock, Constitution Island served as a home to the American army during the Revolutionary War, first becoming fortified with Fort Constitution in 1775.

Since it was strategically located on a sharp curve in the Hudson River, Constitution Island was a prime location for a fortification. This strategic curve also served as the site of the Great Chain, which is one of the island's most notable features. In 1778, an 80-ton metal chain was forged and stretched across the Hudson River from West Point to Constitution Island. For five years the Great Chain provided protection to the residents of the upper Hudson Valley by making it impossible for the British warships to transgress the colonialists' battle line.

Constitution Island is also famous for



Photo Credit: Jessica Campilango

Constitution Island is also famous for serving as a home to the Warner sisters, who lived on the island during the 19th century. Susan and Anna Warner were prominent literary figures. Anna was celebrated for her short hymn, *Jesus Loves Me*, and *Gardening by Myself*, a popular gardening book. Susan is renowned for her novels. *Wide, Wide World*, published in 1850, was considered to be the nation's original bestseller. Some of her other novels include *Queechy* and *The Hills of Shatemuc*. In addition to writing, both

sisters taught Bible classes to West Point cadets for more than forty years.

In order to preserve the island, upon Anna Warner's death in 1915, the Constitution Island Association was formed. Constitution Island is open seasonally (June 25th to September 25th) to the general public. In order to experience all that the island has to offer, designate at least a few hours to spend there. Guided tours leave West Point South Dock on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM. The tour focuses on the Warner sisters' house, which remains practically unchanged since their deaths; a replica of Anna's garden, which has been recreated by the Constitution Island Association; and numerous Revolutionary War fortifications.

~Jessica Campilango

Editor's Note: For more information visit

www.constitutionisland.org/index.htm

Great Estates Consortium Illuminates Laborers' Toils

When thinking of the Hudson River Valley's Great Estates, wealth, power and privilege all come to mind. Seldom is servitude brought to the forefront of the discussion. And rarely does it have the chance to overshadow the glitz and glamour that surrounds these Great Estates and the aristocratic families that resided in them. However, on April 1, 2006, the "Below Stairs: In Service to the Great Estates" symposium crossed boundaries and presented a collection of studies based solely on the lives of the servants of these Hudson River Valley Great Estates.

The morning opened with an optional tour of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's home, Springwood. This tour allowed symposium attendees to view the kitchen and the servants' quarters, the two places that servants spent most of their time. This tour helped set the tone for what would be discussed, more in depth, during the symposium.

Dr. Robin D. Campbell, provided an overview for the day by explaining the hierarchical structure of servitude. She focused on the many myths that surrounded servitude in the 19th century; particularly myths that portrayed servants as "loyal old retainers" or as a "mammy" figure.

The second speaker, Dr. Myra Young Armstead, discussed the role of African Americans in service to the Hudson Valley's Great Estates. Her study focused on the diary of John Brown, a servant to the Verplanck family who was associated with Mount Gulian.

Following Dr. Armstead, Dr. Margaret Lynch-Brennan, examined the lives of Irish immigrant women as domestic servants (Irish domestics). Dr. Lynch-Brennan highlighted the exchange of "American money" between Irish domestics and their families back home in Ireland.

The fourth speaker, Frank Futral, discussed the role of servants in the Vanderbilt mansion.

Furthermore, he revealed that architects considered the design of the servants' quarters when constructing the Vanderbilt estate.

Closing the day, J. Winthrop Aldrich spoke about his primary account of servitude while growing up on Rokeby, one of the Hudson Valley's Great Estates. Based on his first hand experience, Aldrich was able to provide the audience with illuminating photographs of servitude.

The "Below Stairs: In Service to the Great Estates" symposium provided a unique opportunity for professors, historians, and interested members of the public to uncover an essential, but generally overlooked, part of our region's and our nation's history.

~Jessica Campilango and Gemma Edwardo

Meet the Interns—Adrienne Harris



The Hudson River Valley Institute is pleased to introduce Adrienne Harris as the Fall 2006 Internship Coordinator. In this leadership position, Adrienne

will be responsible for ensuring the interns' successful completion of research as well as acting as the editor of the monthly newsletter. She looks forward to expanding her historical, educational, and leadership skill through this role.

Besides her previous participation with the HRVI, Adrienne is also an assiduous student and an active member of the Marist community. Pursuing a history/secondary education degree with double minors in psychology and women's studies, Adrienne will be completing her junior year at the end of this semester. She is interested in American social and cultural history, particularly the history of sexuality, women and other minority groups, and social movements.

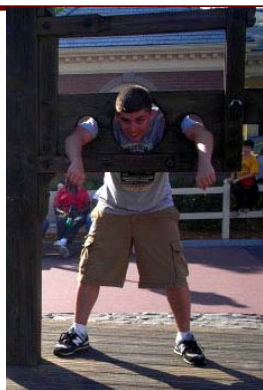
Although she hopes to eventually obtain her doctorate in women's history, Adrienne's main career aspiration is to

teach high school history in either her native Connecticut or the Hudson River Valley region. By both teaching at the high school level as well as pursuing a PhD, Adrienne hopes to gain the requisite experience to more fully engage and educate her students.

As a student at Marist College, Adrienne has been involved in several activities. She is very happily a member and officer of the Women's Rugby team at Marist College as well as an active member of the History Club.

~ Adrienne Harris

Meet the Interns — Matthew Hittenmark



the Albany Region, which will ultimately be placed on the HRVI's website, www.hudsonrivervalley.net/.

In the Marist community, Matthew has worked closely with all the clubs and organizations on campus, directed Unity day-Earth day celebrations, and organized a fundraiser that yielded over \$27,000 for the St. Jude Research Hospital.

Upon graduating in May with a B.A. in History, Matthew will be a third grade teacher in the south Bronx. In addition to his teaching, Matthew will pursue a Masters degree in Public Administration at night.

~Matthew Hittenmark

Matthew Blair Hittenmark, originally from New York City, has joined HRVI as an intern for his last semester at Marist College. The focus of Matthew's research is Robert Fulton's life and achievements. Besides his independent project, Matthew also composes guidebooks of

Marist Summer Writing Institute

From July 31 to August 3, Marist College will host the Summer Writing Institute, featuring workshops in fiction and poetry. The program invites writers from the Hudson River Valley and beyond to come together for an exciting week that will include workshops, informative panel discussions, and a Keynote Reading and Reception with New York State Poet Laureate Billy Collins. The aim of this exceptional program is to enable those with a passion for poetry and/or fiction to engage in their craft as well as hone their skills. Furthermore, it allows those interested in pursuing a writing career to become members of a true community of

writers.

For more specific information on this opportunity contact Professor Tommy Zurhellen, Director of the Marist College Summer Writing Institute by email at writing@marist.edu or by telephone at (845) 575-3000 extension 2381. More general information about the program can be found at the Hudson River Valley Institute's website, <http://www.hudsonrivervalley.net>



Congratulations to Our Departing Seniors

Class of 2006

The Hudson River Valley Institute would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our departing seniors. These individuals have all devoted their time to ensuring the HRVI's success in present and future endeavors.

The departing seniors' post-graduate plans vary from attending graduate school to pursuing a career in digital media. We deeply appreciate their commitment to the Institute, and wish them the best of luck in their future plans.

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Christine Caiazza

Daniel Calandro

Jessica Campilango

Matthew Hittenmark

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Megan Lavery

Rory O'Brien

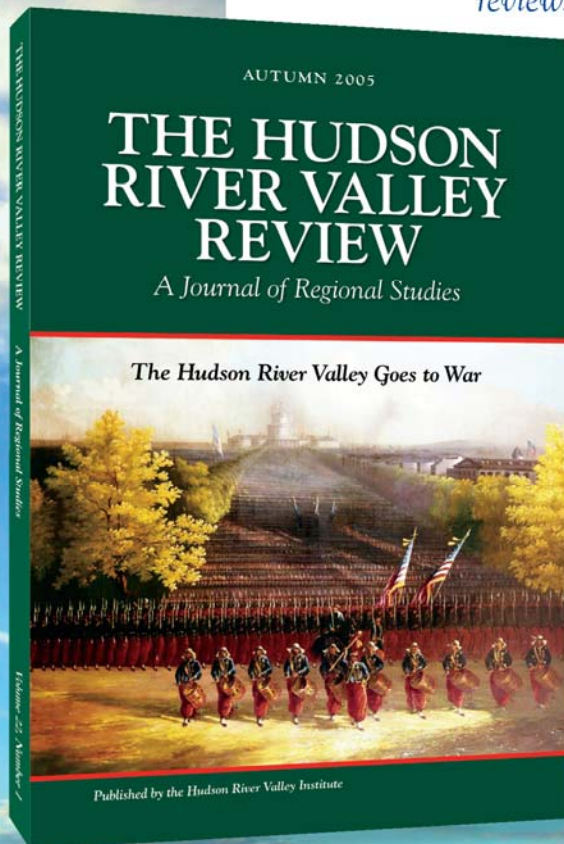
Lauren Santangelo

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Jennifer Webber

An interdisciplinary journal dedicated to our region

publishing essays, poems, photographs, paintings, documents, and book and art reviews, ready to consider all forms of intellectual achievement...



As the academic arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College is increasing public awareness about the significance of America's First River in the history of New York and the United States. Its mission is to study and to promote the Hudson River Valley.

To subscribe or learn more, visit www.hudsonrivervalley.org/hrvr.php or call 845-575-3052

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Contact Us

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 27 Congressionally designated National Heritage Areas in the United States. As one of the most important regions in the United States, it is the fountainhead of a truly American identity. Recognizing the area's national value, Congress formed the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area in 1996 to

recognize, to preserve, to protect, and to interpret the nationally-significant history and resources of the Valley for the benefit of the nation.

As the center for the study of the Hudson River Valley, the Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI) at Marist College is the central hub for information about

the region. HRVI serves heritage tourists, scholars, elementary and secondary school educators, environmental organizations, the business community, and the general public seeking to know more about the region that Congress called "the Landscape that defined America."

www.hudsonrivervalley.org

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