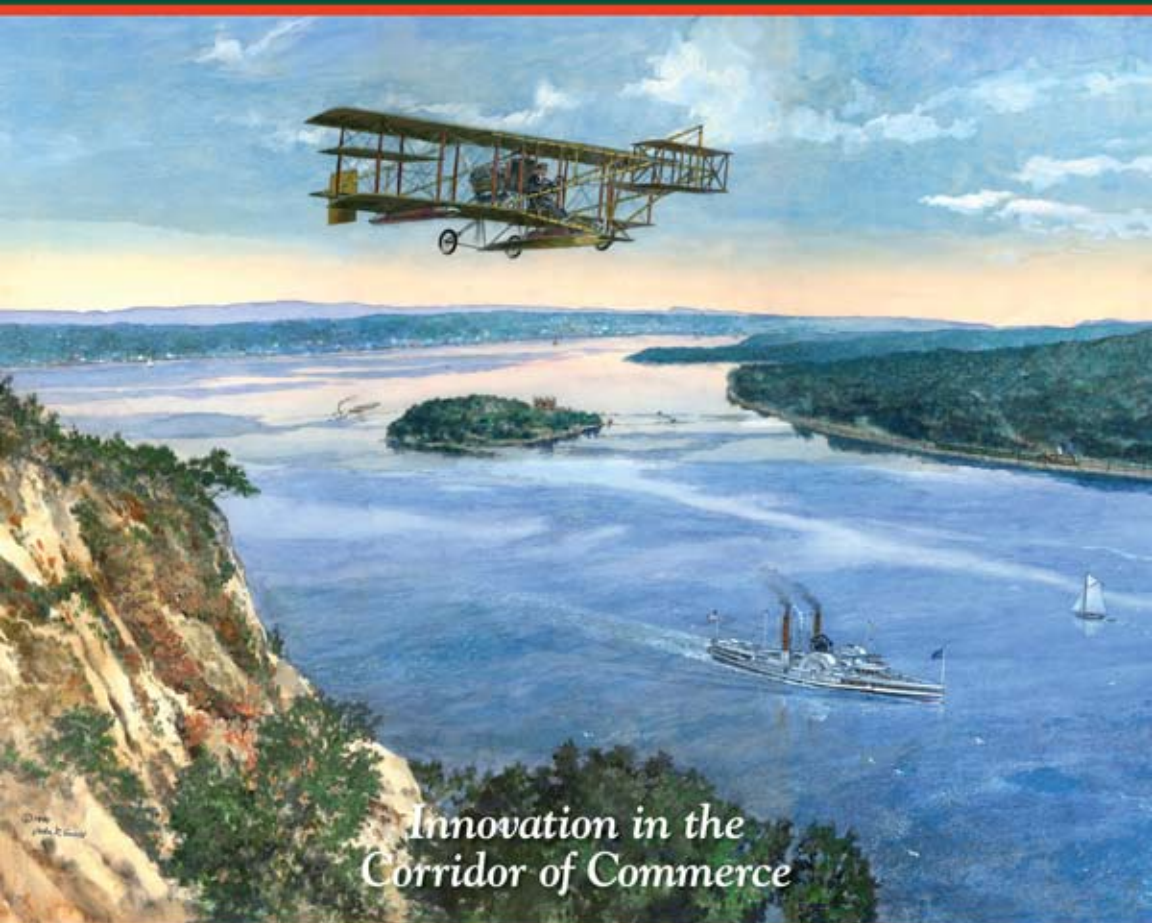


SPRING 2010

THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY REVIEW

A Journal of Regional Studies



*Innovation in the
Corridor of Commerce*

Published by the Hudson River Valley Institute

THE
HUDSON
RIVER
VALLEY
REVIEW

A Journal of Regional Studies

MARIST

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Publisher's Intro

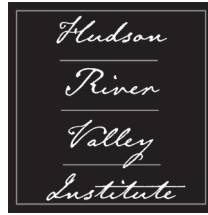
It is with great pleasure that I introduce two new members to the Editorial Board of our *Hudson River Valley Review*, as well as two new members to the Hudson River Valley Institute's Advisory Board. On the Editorial Board, Michael Groth joins us from Wells College where he is an Associate Professor in History and Kim Bridgford, Professor of English at Fairfield University, will act as our poetry editor for Regional Writing. Shirley Handel and Robert E. Tompkins, Sr. bring their experience and commitment to our region to the vision of the Institute.

—Thomas S. Wermuth

Editors' Intro

While the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area's "Corridor of Commerce" theme has not received the greatest amount of attention, it highlights an important aspect of the region's historic legacy. Time and again, commercial and industrial innovations developed in the Hudson Valley have placed the region firmly into the history books. Glenn Curtiss's 1910 flight from Albany to Manhattan established that air travel could be a practical means for moving people and goods, much as Robert Fulton's steamship proved the potential for that mode of transportation a century earlier. But the valley's commercial legacy really begins with Native Americans, such as Daniel Nimham, who traded goods and land with European settlers. While Nimham is most often remembered as a Patriot who fell at the battle of Kingsbridge, there is substantial evidence he also was one of the colonial era's great land barons. Over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the regional economy grew to include manufacturing—such as the bell foundries located in the upper valley—as well as substantial shipping and wholesale and retail operations. Finally, it was the valley's suitability for travel that made it a crucial point of defense by militia and regulars during the American Revolution, and later one of the ideal routes for establishing Post Roads enabling communication between the Northeast's major cities. The Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome, the Maybrook Historical Society, and the Danbury Rail Museum are each dedicated to preserving a different portion of this transportation legacy. We welcome you to another issue of the *Hudson River Valley Review*, which explores all of these fascinating topics.

—Christopher Pryslopski, Reed Sparling



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The mission of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Program is to recognize, preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant cultural and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley for the benefit of the Nation.

For more information visit www.hudsonrivervalley.com

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Call for Essays

The Hudson River Valley Review is anxious to consider essays on all aspects of the Hudson Valley—its intellectual, political, economic, social, and cultural history, its prehistory, architecture, literature, art, and music—as well as essays on the ideas and ideologies of regionalism itself. All articles in *The Hudson River Valley Review* undergo peer analysis.

Submission of Essays and Other Materials

HRVR prefers that essays and other written materials be submitted as two double-spaced typescripts, generally no more than thirty pages long with endnotes, along with a computer disk with a clear indication of the operating system, the name and version of the word-processing program, and the names of documents on the disk. Illustrations or photographs that are germane to the writing should accompany the hard copy. Otherwise, the submission of visual materials should be cleared with the editors beforehand. Illustrations and photographs are the responsibility of the authors. Scanned photos or digital art must be 300 pixels per inch (or greater) at 8 in. x 10 in. (between 7 and 20 mb). No responsibility is assumed for the loss of materials. An e-mail address should be included whenever possible.

HRVR will accept materials submitted as an e-mail attachment (*hrvi@marist.edu*) once they have been announced and cleared beforehand.

Since HRVR is interdisciplinary in its approach to the region and to regionalism, it will honor the forms of citation appropriate to a particular discipline, provided these are applied consistently and supply full information. Endnotes rather than footnotes are preferred. In matters of style and form, HRVR follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Contributors

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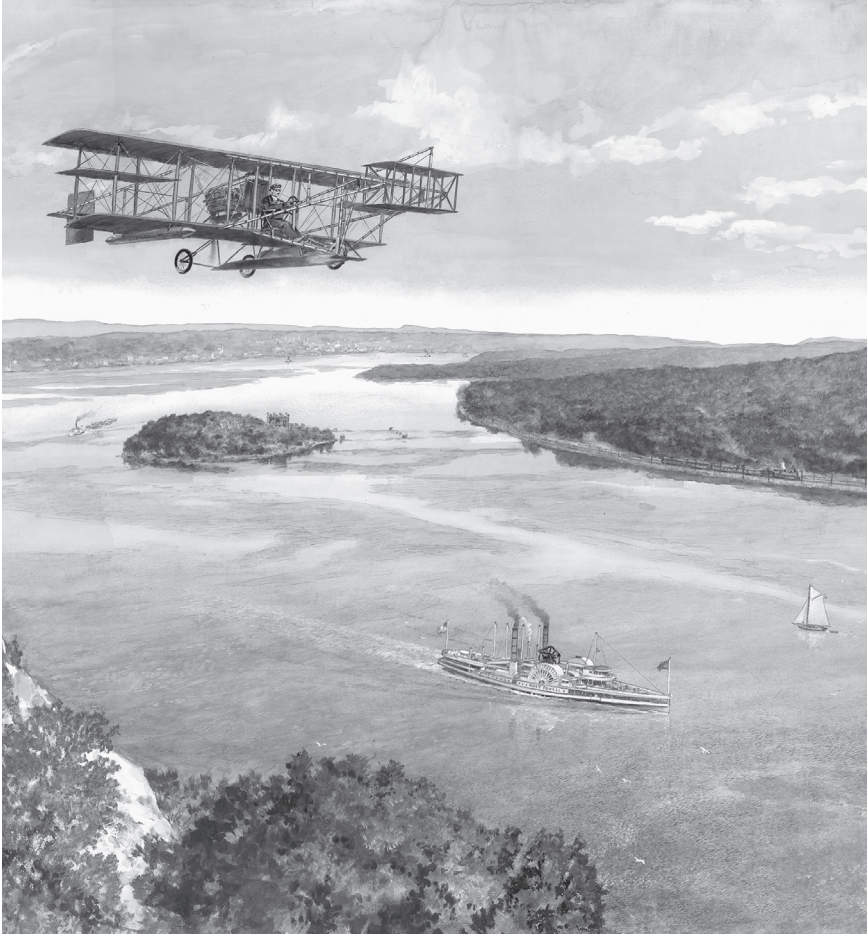
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On the Cover: *Albany Flyer*, by John Gould,
Photo courtesy of Bethlehem Art Gallery



Artist John Gould's depiction of Glenn Curtiss' 1910 flight in the *Albany Flyer*
from Albany to Manhattan

More than the Wright stuff: Glenn Curtiss' 1910 Hudson Flight

Reed Sparling

Glenn Curtiss secured the Hudson River Valley's place in aviation history a century ago this May. Just seven years after Orville Wright's inaugural flight—which lasted 12 seconds and spanned half the length of a 747—Curtiss revved his plane's 50-horsepower engine and took off from an Albany field. When he landed on Governors Island off the tip of Manhattan five hours later, he had set an American distance record and become a hero. Along the way, he ushered in a slew of flying firsts.

Curtiss had already earned his stripes as a daredevil. In 1907 he'd been dubbed “the fastest man on earth” for setting a land speed record (at 136.3 m.p.h.) aboard a motorcycle. A year later, he became the first pilot in the U.S. to fly one kilometer before a crowd. But the trip down the valley would take far more fortitude than those exploits.

The impetus for the flight was supplied by the *New York World*, which offered \$10,000 to any pilot who could complete a Manhattan-to-Albany journey—replicating Robert Fulton's initial steamboat passage—before October 10, 1910. Two stops would be allowed, and the 152-mile flight could be made in either direction.

The thirty-two-year old Curtiss quickly took up the challenge. Over the winter, he and his mechanics built the plane in his hometown of Hammondsport, in the Finger Lakes. It was a flimsy looking assemblage of wire, bamboo, and steel that the pilot likened to a “monster violin.” The double set of wings were covered with rubberized silk. In case he had to make a crash landing in the river, Curtiss crafted a variety of flotation devices. Beneath each wing he placed a sealed metal drum, while five inflated bags sewn out of balloon cloth stretched the length of the craft. It was the world's first seaplane.

Because the winds seemed to favor a north-to-south flight, Curtiss opted to take off from Albany. In May, the plane was taken apart, crated up, and shipped to the capital, where a field on Rensselaer Island was rented from a German farmer for five dollars. It would become the city's first municipal airport.

While Curtiss's crew reassembled the plane, he took a boat trip downriver to scout out possible landing sites and get a feel for the valley's tricky air currents. He hoped to make just one stop; for it, he chose a field south of Poughkeepsie, which was the approximate midpoint of the trip.

Curtiss had tried to keep the flight a secret, to prevent other pilots from going after the prize. But it didn't take long for the public to catch on. Each day, hundreds of spectators thronged the makeshift airfield, hoping to catch a glimpse of the takeoff. A train chartered by the *New York Times* was kept in constant readiness across the river; it was given right of way on the tracks, so photographers and writers (as well as Curtiss's wife, Lena) could keep up with the plane.

For three straight days, the flight had to be scrubbed—first because the plane wasn't ready, and then due to bad weather. People were getting tired of watching the skies. "Curtiss gives us a pain in the neck," said one local newspaper.

Finally, on Sunday, May 29, the weather cooperated. Clad in a pair of fisherman's waders, a leather jacket, motorcycle goggles, and a cork life vest, Curtiss settled onto the plank that served as a seat. In his pocket was a letter of greeting from the mayor of Albany addressed to his counterpart in New York. It was the first piece of airmail.

The propeller was given a turn and the adventure began at 7:02 a.m. Ironically, fewer than 100 onlookers had turned up that morning. The next day, the *Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle* waxed poetic over the takeoff: "Over the level runway the aeroplane bustled on wheels, like a partridge running to get its wings, and like the beating of wings of a partridge was the roar of exhaust from the pulsating engine. With a little left she had taken the air and, as the ribbed wings of her planes spread brown and dusty against the sky, the suggestion of a partridge receded in the mind and one saw that in tenuity of gossamer surfaces and reedy anatomy this was a locust springing from the sands."

Curtiss flew up to 700 feet and leveled off above the middle of the river. At 7:33 he passed Hudson; as he flew over Catskill, the telegraph operator cabled downriver: "Curtiss just went by here and he is gone, going like H- -!" He had no controls: he used the flutter of his sleeve to gauge his speed and the drift of smoke from chimneys to assess wind direction. As he approached Poughkeepsie at 8:20, he debated whether he should fly above or below the railroad bridge—today's Walkway Over the Hudson. He stayed above it and landed minutes later.

Curtiss had arranged to have fuel waiting for him, but the supplier was a no-show. (Perhaps he had been humbled by the local pastor who chided Curtiss for choosing "the Lord's day to make his spectacular flight, thus robbing God of his day.") Fortunately a couple of New Jersey motorists who were passing by gave

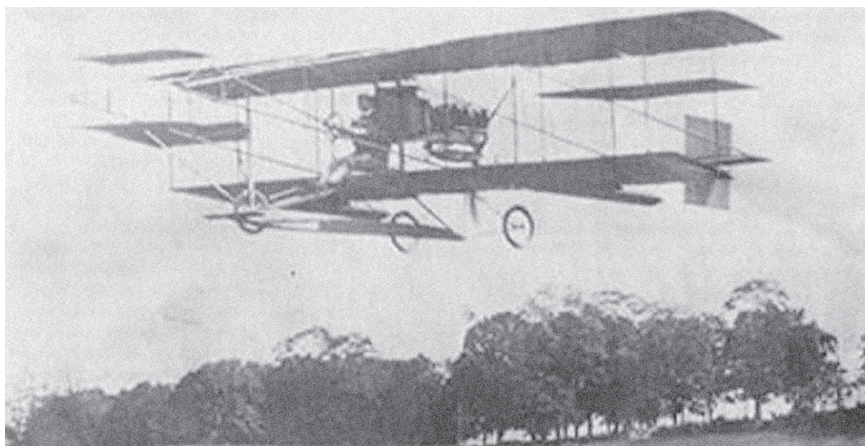


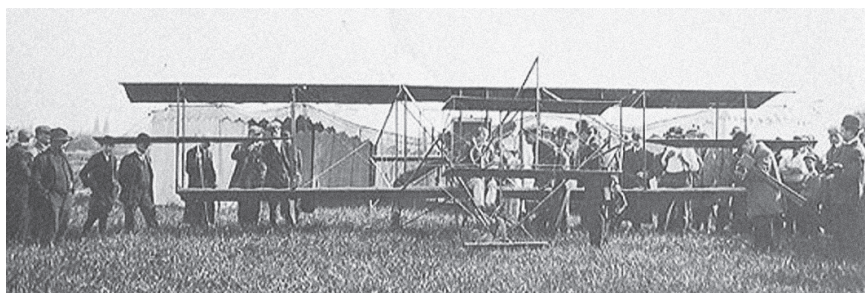
Photo of the *Albany Flyer*, circa 1910

him the eight gallons of gas needed to top off his ten-gallon tank. After laying over for an hour, just long enough for his mechanics to check out the plane (and for him to get a kiss from Lena), he took off once more, barely missing a couple of cows who were startled by the roar of the engine.

The most dangerous leg of the trip was at the northern entrance to the Hudson Highlands, where the mountains form a giant wind tunnel. Curtiss rose to 2,000 feet to try to avoid the worst of the gusts, but they jolted the plane mercilessly, at one point dropping it several hundred feet and nearly throwing the pilot out of his seat. "It was the worst plunge I ever got in an aeroplane," he later noted. "I thought it was all over." Curtiss decided to try a new tack: he reduced his altitude to forty feet. There, another blast of air nearly pitched the plane into the water. He managed to pull up just in time.

At West Point, cadets flocked on to the plain to salute Curtiss (and his thoughts turned to how easy it would be for a plane to drop bombs on them—the first suggestion of an aircraft's military capabilities). Then, as he soared above the Tappan Zee and Palisades, he discovered that he was running low on oil, the result of a leak. He would have to make an unscheduled stop.

Shortly after passing Spuyten Duyvil, Curtiss spotted a long, grassy lawn behind a house; he touched down on it at 10:25. The owner of the house was sitting on his front porch reading about the pending flight in the Sunday paper. When he heard the commotion, he rushed to his backyard, where he found the hero in the flesh. Oil and gas were procured and, as crowds turned the yard into what an author likened to a "fairgrounds," Curtiss took off on his final leg. (Since he'd already landed in Manhattan, he had technically won the prize).



COURTESY OF GLENN H. CURTISS MUSEUM,
HAMMONDSPORT, NY

Photograph of the *Albany Flyer*, circa 1910

Over those last miles he was hailed by the toots of tugs on the river and the waving masses who thronged Manhattan's rooftops. Over New York Harbor, he looped around the Statue of Liberty and dropped onto Governors Island at noon. He had been airborne for two hours and 51 minutes, for a speed of 52 mph. After a celebratory dinner, Curtiss decided to give his anonymous craft a name—the “Hudson Flyer.” (Later, it also became known as the “Albany Flyer.”)

The next March, *Scientific American* magazine awarded Curtiss a trophy for his heroic deeds. In making the presentation, publisher Charles Munn noted that “Three names will always remain associated with the history of the river—that of Hudson, the explorer; that of Robert Fulton, the introducer of the river navigation; and that of Glenn H. Curtiss, the birdman.”

How important was Curtiss's exploit? “The Albany-to-New York flight was the event, more than any other, which marked the birth of practical aviation in America,” writes C.R. Roseberry in his biography, *Glenn Curtiss: Pioneer of Flight*. “Up to then, flying had been more an experiment and a sport than an activity to be taken seriously. By achieving the first sustained flight between two major cities, Curtiss had pried off the lid. He had proved that an airplane might dependably start from here and go to there.... The excitement kicked up by his deed triggered an outbreak of distance flights which stretched ever longer until they marked out the continental airways.”

The Glenn H. Curtiss Museum, in Hammondsport, is dedicated to Curtiss's legacy as well as local history. Its collection of artifacts includes antique Curtiss bicycles, motorcycles, and airplanes, as well as reproductions that volunteers construct in the museum's working shop. They are constructing a replica of the Hudson Flyer that will reenact this historic flight this fall. www.glennhcurtissmuseum.org

Regional History Forum

Each issue of The Hudson River Valley Review includes the Regional History Forum. This section highlights historic sites in the Valley, exploring their historical significance as well as information for visitors today. Although due attention is paid to sites of national visibility, HRVR also highlights sites of regional significance. Please write us with suggestions for future Forum sections.

Milestones of Dutchess County

James Spratt

The following article was adapted from a transcript of the lecture “Milestones of Dutchess County,” presented by Mr. James Spratt in 1995. Mr. Spratt was a civil engineer with the New York State Department of Transportation for nineteen years, the Dutchess County Commissioner of Public Works for nineteen years, and a Past President of the New York State County Highway Superintendents Association (1986). He and his wife, Marguerite, were instrumental in preserving those milestone markers remaining in Dutchess County in the 1970s. After James’ death, Marguerite Spratt generously allowed the Marist College Archives and Special Collections to digitize much of their research material and make it available online at: http://library.marist.edu/archives/online_exhibits.html. The recorded lecture was originally transcribed by Erin Kelly, Marist ’09.

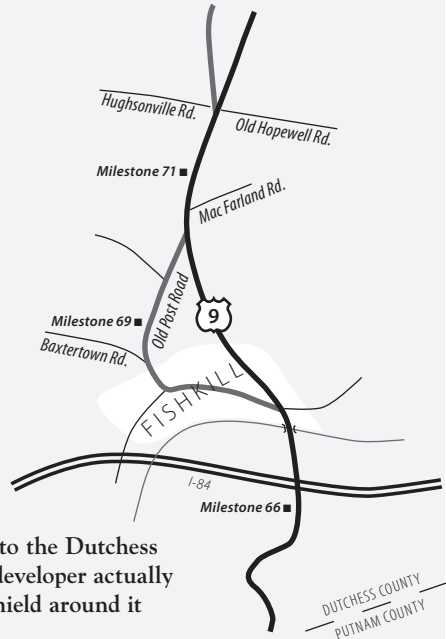
I find milestones a roadside treasure, both historical and functional.

Today, when we go on a trip, we have readily available roadmaps, and shortly we will have video readouts in our car to show where we are and how we get to our destinations. Supporting all of this is our very elaborate and costly highway signage system. Milestones were the beginning of this system, stone markers that now stand silently along our highways. Along New York State Route 9 and the various Old Post Roads throughout Dutchess County, they resemble gravestones, made from sandstone quarried as far west as Indiana that was chosen for its smoothness and softness. The carving or tooling of text on the stone face required the use of a soft stone. Today, erosion has left many milestones faceless.

My interest in milestones began with my wife’s question about the markers. She noticed a broken milestone along the road and inquired as to who restores them. It was just prior to our country’s bicentennial celebration, and I am a highway engineer, so a project was suggested—to find as many milestones as possible



Milestone sixty-six is at the entrance to the Dutchess Mall, south of Route I-84. The mall developer actually saved it by putting a new protective shield around it



Milestone seventy-nine, recovered by Constance Smith, the former Supervisor and Historian of the Town of Wappinger





Milestone eighty-two is located on the edge of Pulaski Park in Poughkeepsie, on Washington Street

between Poughkeepsie and Columbia County to the north. In Dutchess County, we are blessed with a concentration of milestones still in existence. This was not by chance: when governor, Franklin Roosevelt had a law passed that gave responsibility for the maintenance and preservation of these milestones to the State Highway Department, now called the Department of Transportation.

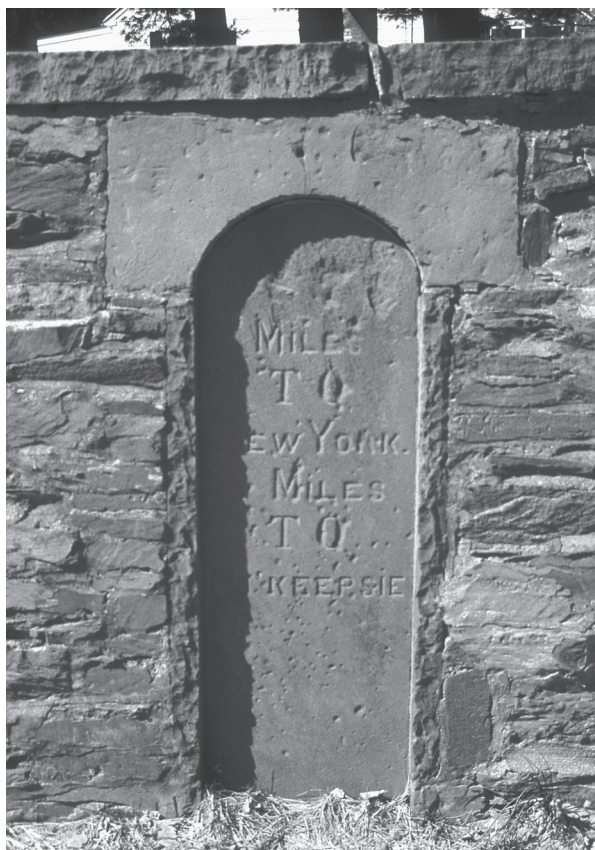
Roosevelt's interest in preserving the milestones extended into his presidency, when he had the Dutchess County Historical Society provide a protective stone masonry enclosure for each of the original sandstone markers. These efforts are obvious today. The milestones are of red sandstone and stand about three feet high by eighteen inches wide. The distance along the Old Post Road or Route 9 is oriented to New York City, giving the number of miles you are from City Hall. Milestone number one is on exhibit in the Museum of the City of New York.

Benjamin Franklin was the originator of the milestone system. When he was serving as Postmaster General and needed a basis for revenue to pay for the Post Office Department, he devised a rate system based on miles traveled and the number of sheets of paper a letter contained. Typical rates were six cents per sheet for less than thirty miles and twenty-five cents per sheet for over 400 miles. It is



Located near the west wall of the FDR estate, milestone eighty-six was hit by a car in 1965 and was reported as having been taken by a man in a station wagon. In spite of having a witness report the theft and license plate, the marker was never recovered from the alleged thief due to “lack of evidence.” This replica was installed by the Youth Corps in 1980 under the direction of Joe Ryan

reputed that Franklin placed some milestones himself. These were said to be on the Boston Post Road and in the Philadelphia area. In order to lay out these markers, a clacker system was used. A dowel was placed inside a wagon wheel of known circumference or tread length. Each time it made one revolution, it hit a clacker, making a sound that could be counted. If the wheel circumference was, say, thirteen feet, it would take 390 revolutions—or clacks—to measure a mile. We have no evidence that Franklin himself did the actual placement, but this is how it was accomplished. Having been established as postal route guides, these markers soon became transportation guides as well. Today, the average driver going fifty miles an hour might not notice them, but colonial travelers riding in uncomfortable stages over bumpy roads looked anxiously for each milestone to gauge the time



Milestone eighty-seven, built into the wall of Archibald Rogers' estate, indicates eighty-seven miles to New York and five miles to Poughkeepsie

before reaching the next coach stop. As our road system developed, the milestone has been replaced by signs and by our kids using McDonald's as a measuring guide.

The establishment of postal roads brought about the term "Post Road" in our transportation system. In 1703, then-Governor Viscount Cornbury established five "Great Roads" whose maintenance would be the responsibility of the colony. These routes, which included the Albany Post Road and Boston Post Road, radiated from New York City, with its hub on Lower Broadway at Wall Street. Funding to construct the new roads was to come from a lottery. When this was not well-received, private investors were asked to provide capital, bringing about the introduction of turnpikes in our transportation system. Originally, a turnpike was a toll road with markers placed at each mile and toll gates every ten miles; users



Milestone eighty-nine is located between the village of Hyde Park and the hamlet of Staatsburg on Route 9

paid a maximum of twenty-five cents, the highest fee charged to those riding in a fancy conveyance, such as a coach. In 1772, the Provincial Assembly established a weekly mail route between New York and Albany. It was to go up one side of the river and down the other. Hence, in the town of New Paltz, just west of the village, there is a road called Albany Post Road.

In Dutchess County, the milestones' preservation was undertaken jointly through the efforts of the Dutchess County Historical Society, the State Highway Department, and President Roosevelt. Of the 159 milestones placed between New York and Albany, forty were in Dutchess County. Of those, we have recorded twenty-eight as still existing.



The 1917 DR-1 Tri-plane is a replica. There are no flying originals

The Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome

Elizabeth Vielkind, Marist '10

Want to experience the thrill of historic flight in the Historic Hudson River Valley? Look no further than Red Hook. This is where the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome is located. This museum of World War I aircraft and antique automobiles celebrated its golden anniversary in 2009.

The aerodrome is the inspiration of Cole Palen, who was partially inspired by the existence of the Shuttleworth Collection in England. In 1959 Palen found a farm for sale near the quaint village of Rhinebeck, which included a small farmhouse. He was able to purchase the property by paying the back taxes that were owed on it. He cleared a runway and built makeshift hangars from scrapped materials with his bare hands—and the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome was born. Palen collected aircrafts spanning from 1900 up to the start of World War II. He restored and flew them regularly as his alter-ego “The Black Baron”. These air shows continue to this day from mid-June through mid-October. Biplane rides are available before and after the shows for visitors.

If early original aircrafts did not exist, accurate replicas powered by authentic engines were built at the aerodrome. A sizable collection of veteran and vintage

vehicles—nearly all in working order—also was collected, nearly all in working order. In 1960, the first air show took place to an assembled audience of approximately twenty-five people. Palen died on December 8, 1993. With his passing the aviation world and the early aircraft preservation movement in particular lost not only a unique pilot and collector, but also a great character and showman.

The simple early shows led to a philosophy of not only showing the aircraft in their natural environment, but also providing a fun and entertaining day out for the whole family. The aerodrome allows families to take self-guided tours and get up close to airplanes and artifacts in the collection. It does not look like a typical airport nor a typical museum. It is nestled in a grassy, wooded knoll with barns and makeshift buildings serving as hangars much as they did for the barnstormers in the 1920s.

The aerodrome starts the air show with an audience-participation fashion show with children getting dressed up to model period costumes and ride in the antique car parade. The ground show melodrama is built around a “Perils of Pauline” spoof that kids enjoy. The characters: Trudy Truelove, Sir Percy Goodfellow, Pierre Loop de Loop, and the evil Black Baron of Rhinebeck pose for pictures with youngsters (and adults). After the air show, the pilots, also in period costume, stand by the airplanes on the flight line to explain their plane and their relationship to the history of aviation.



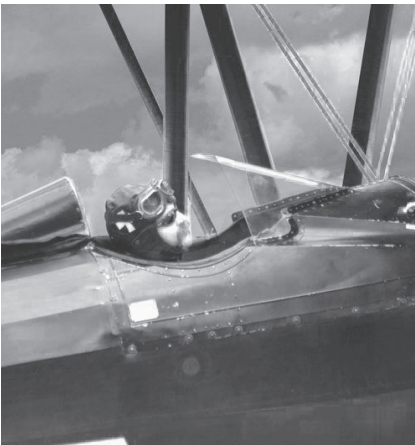
The aerodrome is a family-friendly museum featuring a melodrama with the characters Trudy Truelove, Sir Percy Goodfellow, Pierre Loop de Loop, and the evil Black Baron of Rhinebeck. After the air show the pilots, also in period costume, stand by the airplanes and explain their relationship to the history of aviation. Shows start with an audience-participation fashion show; children get dressed up to model period costumes and ride in the antique car parade



The 1918 Curtiss Jenny is one of three originals in the world still flying

Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome features many remarkable World War I and pre-World War I aircraft that can be seen nowhere else in the world today. For example, Palen built a Fokker Triplane that flew for many years. Carrying the American registration number N3221, it was one of his first reproduction aircraft projects to fly when the aerodrome opened. This aircraft and another replica were flown for nearly two decades.

The air shows simply provide the justification to get the antique airplanes into the sky. The aerodrome comes to life with the roar of rotary engines and the smell of burning castor oil used for lubrication. The dedicated aviation enthusiasts



Bill Gordon, flying the New Standard D-25, which could carry four passengers in addition to the pilot, such as this family

who carry on the legacy created by Cole Palen are proud of the fact that all of the airplanes are restored originals or built as accurate reproductions and powered by original rotary engines.

For the 2010 season, the Rhinebeck Aerodrome will launch new wonders. The Fokker D-VII that has been under restoration for two years should be flying. It has had a complete structural rebuild and will be recovered with a period paint scheme. The D-VII was considered by many to be the finest flying airplane in its era. Old Rhinebeck's Fokker D-VII wings were in need of recovering and some restoration. The lower wing leading edge plywood was repaired where there was some minor damage and the area was reinforced. The lower wings have been recovered and the meticulous work of recreating the original Lozenge camouflage paint scheme has been completed. The upper wing is now receiving the same attention and will be finished soon.

Another addition will be the Stampe, which has been out of service for a number of years. Finding parts for its original engine has proved a difficult task, but they now have been located and are being inspected by an engine rebuilder. The aerodrome plans on having the engine back together by season's opening and to have the biplane back in the air.

The Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome is located at 9 Norton Road, Red Hook, NY 12571. They are open mid-June to mid-October. You can learn more about the museum's collections, air shows, biplane rides, and events by calling 845-752-3200 or visiting them online at www.ldrhonebeck.org.



Bill Gordon working on an ORA flying antique. Gordon is both chief pilot and director of maintenance

The Industrial History of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge and the Central New England Railway's Maybrook Line

Gail Goldsmith '12

Introduction to the Development of Industry and Transportation in the Hudson River Valley

The history of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge spans a large part of the economic development of the Hudson River Valley, as it served as a focal point for economic development and strengthened railway-centered commerce by providing an east-west route across the Hudson River. The rallying of local entrepreneurs for the advancement of this structure solidified industrial energy. Lauded in the press as an engineering achievement, the bridge was a vital conduit for the transportation of people, products, and supplies as lopsided population growth and uneven resource distribution necessitated such exchanges. Prominent industrial cities developed along the East Coast (New York, Boston, Philadelphia) and the borders and outlying areas of the Great Lakes (Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, Detroit, Buffalo, St. Louis, Cincinnati), while regional centers across the rest of the country relied more on agriculture, lumber, and mining.¹

In his *Hudson: A History*, Tom Lewis links industrial advancements and transportation to the nineteenth-century zeitgeist of the Hudson River Valley:

Steamboats and sloops ply the water, while across the river, at the foot of mountain peaks, a small town nestles on the shore. Smoke rises from its red brick buildings, telling us of industry and prosperity within...

...the cities great and small that were strung along the east and west riverbanks between New York and Albany, all helped make the Hudson River into an icon of America's nineteenth century sensibilities.²

The "rising tide of population" in the Hudson Valley helped to spur the need for systems to transport people, goods, and supplies between urban centers and

rural areas, resulting in a gradual spread of opportunities. The Erie Canal served as the spine of a network of canals, including the Champlain and Delaware & Hudson canals, linking Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware. Nationwide railroad expansion, an effect of the Industrial Revolution, and fascination with symbols of “progress” served to increase the speed, reach, and efficiency of the flow of information, people, materials, goods, and culture.

The rise of railroads also was fueled by the national fascination with this evidently efficient and imposing transportation option and helped by the ease of immigrant labor. Railroads facilitated the spread of communication by transporting daily newspapers and mail order catalogs as well as the materials and personnel to build and maintain telegraph and (later) telephone systems. In *Hopewell Junction: A Railroaders’ Town*, Central New England Railway historian Bernie Rudberg notes that rail systems facilitated a bi-directional flow between rural and urban spheres by bringing farm products to the cities and city culture to outlying farms. Rudberg also credits railroads with the rise of the vacation as a viable recreational opportunity by decreasing travel time, cost, and discomfort.³ He further writes that economic opportunity enticed businessmen: “When the idea of taking advantage of this economic potential took hold there were plenty of people with high hopes to join in and get rich. As in any new undertaking there were lessons to be learned and a dose of reality to cope with. Some actually did get rich. Most did not.”⁴

Many small-scale local railroads sprang up, coalesced, and spiraled down into bankruptcy. Dutchess County hosted several of these ventures as the Hudson River Valley emerged as a high-profile center of commerce due to its natural resources, available workforce, successful port and manufacturing industries, and banking establishments. The increase of transportation facilities and methods rose largely in tandem with the increase of industry, as industry manufactured useful components of construction. The valley was not only a supply route for grain and goods, but also a natural resource for building materials including stone, bricks, and cement.

A geographically strategic location, Dutchess County was a high-priority area for businessmen and developers interested in railroad planning. On a north-south axis, it is between New York City and the state capital in Albany. Most early railroads were arranged on this axis, and could serve a New York City, Albany, and Montreal route. East to west, however, Dutchess County links the western states and Pennsylvania coal fields to southern New England. Other modes of transport across the Hudson were more weather-dependent; steamboats could not travel when the river was frozen, and rail cars had to cross via the ferry at Newburgh.

Goods had to be unloaded and transferred to ferries or steamboats and then reloaded if headed farther than the port of call.

The inconveniences of these other transportation systems compared unfavorably with a more direct route across the Hudson. In combination with several other factors, this made Poughkeepsie a focal point for dynamic area entrepreneurs promoting the idea of building a bridge. The city's economic profile rose along with that of the region as industries in and near the city developed and expanded. Local businessmen Matthew Vassar and Harvey Eastman were energetic advocates of the bridge idea, realizing the economic and strategic advantage of such a structure.

Vassar—a brewer, owner of a whaling ship, and later founder of Vassar College—envied the success of Albany and New York. Steamboats chose Kingston and Newburgh as destinations instead of Poughkeepsie, which in winter often was isolated by ice. In 1842, Vassar hired engineers to report on the viability of a bridge; they found that building a span five feet above the water would be cheapest. These findings galvanized steamboat owners, whose influence on the state Legislature dissuaded it from granting bridge proponents a charter.

By 1871 the timing, economic conditions, and commercial climate of New York State favored Harvey Eastman's new bridge proposal. In February, Eastman—the head of Poughkeepsie's Eastman Business College—advocated for building the span in a public letter, writing: "If the reader will draw a line on the map from Boston to Pittsburg [sic] he will be surprised that Poughkeepsie is not only directly in the line...nearly so...are Springfield, Hartford and the Pennsylvania coal fields."

A month later, Eastman was in a better position to advocate for the bridge as the newly-elected mayor of Poughkeepsie. Together with Jonathan I. Platt, the editor of the *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, and Pomeroy P. Dickinson, he drafted a charter for the Poughkeepsie Bridge Company. They included concessions to gather local support, providing crossing space on the bridge for "foot passengers, teams, vehicles, cattle, horses, sheep, and swine."⁵

The Poughkeepsie Bridge Company

Building the bridge at Poughkeepsie appealed to many; the railroad tracks could easily connect to the Hudson River Railroad, the Poughkeepsie & Eastern Railroad (which was planned to expand to the Connecticut border), and other lines. The geographic features of the area also were opportune. The height of the surrounding bluffs would allow the construction of the bridge to facilitate river shipping. A visiting committee from Boston found reason to support this entre-

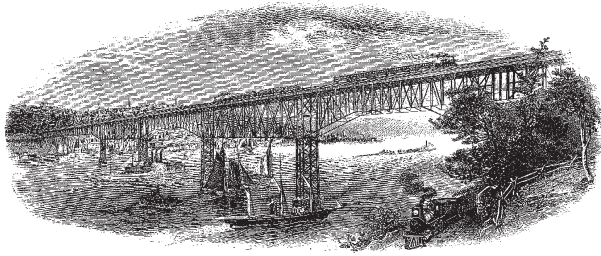


Illustration from a bond document for the Poughkeepsie Bridge Company

preneurial enthusiasm: “We have no hesitation in saying that it is in the interest of Boston and... and all of the southern Northeast to have this bridge built as speedily as possible.”⁶ In addition, the project was endorsed by an editorial in the *Boston American Union* stating that the span would bring “trade and profit, and honor and glory.”⁷

Vocal opposition came from Cornelius Vanderbilt’s New York Central Railroad, which did not relish the prospect of competition or diminished traffic for its bridge at Albany. Other towns, of which Newburgh was the most vocal, feared their economic clout would wane. Other entrepreneurs were worried that the bridge would interfere with river navigation and reduce the need for shipping across or along the river.⁸

The first crib for the rectangular truss bridge was built in 1876 by the American Bridge Company. The crib’s ensuing collapse from construction difficulties exacerbated the financial weaknesses of a company still recovering from the Panic of 1873. The Poughkeepsie Bridge Company soon liquidated. Meanwhile, Eastman died of tuberculosis, and bridge-building efforts stalled without his energy and vision.

Interest in the proposed Poughkeepsie bridge was reinvigorated in 1886 by the increase in rail-car ferry crossings at Newburgh, proposals for a bridge to be built instead at Storm King, and an influx of funds from William W. Gibbs, a utilities executive from Philadelphia who bought stock in the Poughkeepsie Bridge Company. By August 1886, it had contracted with the Union Bridge Company. Union’s president, Thomas Curtis Clarke, and partner Charles MacDonald were most involved with the design and construction of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge.

From the 1840s to the 1870s, most railroad work was done by Irish immigrants, but by the 1880s construction laborers were more likely to be Italian, as most working on the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge were. In a debate paralleling the contemporary controversy, *The Poughkeepsie News-Telegraph* defended this hiring practice as not taking jobs away from Americans, but hiring out the “mean”

and “hard work” no one else “could or would do.”⁹

In a lecture at Cornell University, Thomas Curtis Clarke called the bridge a “considerable piece of engineering,” though he qualified his remarks on the bridge’s appearance, saying that in American engineering “aesthetic considerations are little regarded. Utility alone governs design.”¹⁰ The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge was completed in December 1888 at a height of 212 feet so ships could easily pass under.¹¹ Promoters had been calling it the longest bridge of its kind in the world, but in 1890 they conceded that title to the cantilever bridge across the Firth of Forth in Scotland.¹²

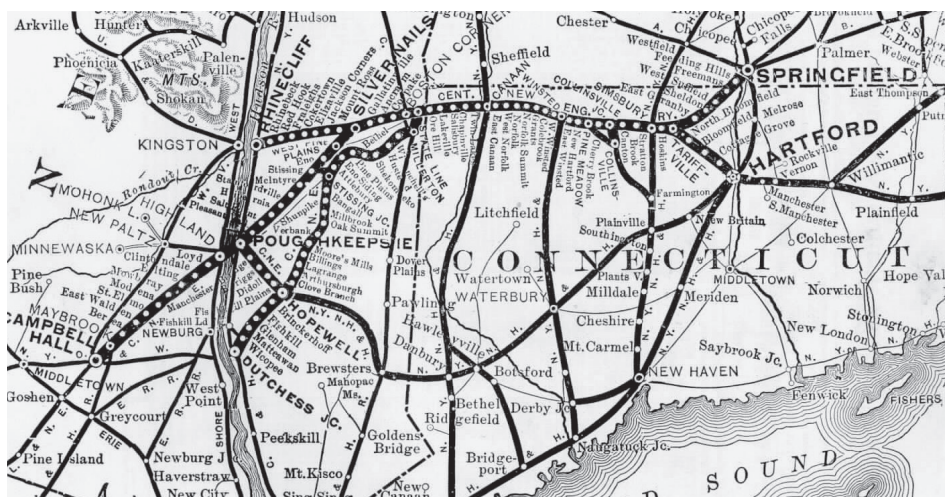
The Smith Street Yard in Poughkeepsie connected bridge traffic to the Poughkeepsie & Eastern Railroad and the Poughkeepsie & Connecticut Railroad.¹³ The bridge line was also connected to Hopewell Junction. The bridge also provided a valuable short-distance connection by enabling people to commute from Orange and Ulster counties to Poughkeepsie.¹⁴ Soon after the bridge’s completion, construction began on the Hudson Connecting Railroad from Highland to Orange Junction. This later became the Maybrook Switching Yard.¹⁵

Evolution of Routes, Infrastructure, and Commerce Along the Maybrook-Danbury Line

The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge had been planned when the Hudson Valley’s railroad system was mostly composed of small companies serving the local area. However, the bridge was at the height of its efficacy and prominence during the Central Northeastern Railway years, as the line on top of the bridge—commonly known as the Maybrook-Danbury Line—served as the crucial link across the valley to Northeastern states.

In 1889, a group of investors from Philadelphia consolidated several of the small railroads in Dutchess County into the Central Northeastern and Western Railroad. Under newly-chosen president Archibald MacLeod, the system was reorganized as the Philadelphia, Reading & New England Railroad. MacLeod now controlled both of the railroads connecting at Hopewell Junction to the Northern Dutchess & Columbia Railroad, the New York & New England Railroad, and the Philadelphia, Reading & New England Railroad. Feeling the threat of competition, J.P. Morgan used the New Haven Railroad to cut off access to the New York & New England Railroad. The Philadelphia, Reading, & New England Railroad system also had inherent faults that would limit its success. Often only single-tracked, it wound through a sparsely populated, mountainous area that necessitated steep grades and curves.¹⁶

The ensuing complications from Morgan’s move as well as financial strain



This map shows the maximum extent of the CNE between 1905 and 1916

and a stock market crash forced the Philadelphia, Reading & New England Railroad into receivership from August 1893 until 1899, when Arthur Brock and Henry O. Seixas purchased the company at a judicial sale and reorganized it into the Central New England Railroad.¹⁷ Brock and Seixas' company retained all Philadelphia, Reading & New England Railroad personnel and adopted all their orders, circulars, rules, and regulations to ensure a smooth transition.¹⁸

To control the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge and the Maybrook-Danbury Line route, Morgan's New Haven Railroad bought the Central New England Railway in 1904, continuing operations under that name. New Haven's personnel also closed the Newburgh rail-car ferry, eliminating what was by this time paltry competition. In 1905, the New Haven Railroad also purchased the Newburgh, Dutchess & Connecticut Railroad and the Poughkeepsie & Eastern Railroad, merging both into the Central New England Railway, which operated under that name until it was formally merged with the New Haven Railroad in 1927. The Central New England Railway was able to improve its current holdings and expand as a result of its success. In 1907, the tracks on top of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge were rearranged into a gauntlet configuration, which meant that only one train could cross at a time.¹⁹

The Central New England Railway absorbed the Dutchess County Railroad and the Newburgh, Dutchess & Connecticut Railroad in 1910, also adding the Springfield branch in Massachusetts to solidify its presence in the Northeast beyond New York. By leasing track rights from Hopewell Junction to Danbury, Connecticut, in 1915, the Central New England Railway solidified its main east-

west route. The rails on top of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge would come to be known as the Maybrook line in recognition of the high traffic between the Maybrook Switching Yard and Danbury Station.²⁰

As a conduit for commerce, the stretch of railway between Maybrook and Danbury originated little of the line's high volume of tonnage traffic; it served primarily as a strategic connector. Especially in the early twentieth century, most of the freight rolling into New England was raw materials, predominantly coal. Significant amounts of oil, grain, lumber, beef, and farm produce also were shipped there. Shipments from the Northeast to western and mid-Atlantic states were comparatively lighter and consisted mostly of manufactured goods and (during the season) Atlantic fish, Maine potatoes, and Cape Cod cranberries.²¹

The Rise and Decline of Maybrook

Facilities at the Maybrook Switching Yard and Danbury Station were instrumental in easing the transfer of goods. The former hosted a workshop for repairing cars, a roundhouse with twenty-seven repair stalls, a turntable, expansive stockyard, coaling and watering facilities, an icing platform, and freight transfer mechanisms. The icing plant, built in 1910, allowed meat from Chicago, California fruit, and vegetables from the South to be shipped across the Northeast by replenishing ice in refrigerator cars.²²

The small village of Maybrook was home to many of the Switching Yard's employees; during the railway years, the population was about 1,400:

"The residents of Maybrook became accustomed to living with the snorting of engines, the hissing of air brakes, the crash of cars coupling, and smoke. They also got used to living with crusty railroad men, men who worked at all hours of the day and night, men who could be both fiercely protective of one another and fiercely competitive. They were also men who, living constantly on the edge of danger, were sometimes called to be heroic. Railroading, said President Theodore Roosevelt, demands heroic virtues."²³

Railroading was apparently not a job for the faint of heart. Workers risked getting snared by the many large, heavy machines. A Maybrook-based conductor was fond of telling his crew, "Eat your pie first, boys. You are liable to get killed any minute."²⁴ Small fires were common on the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge. Men would walk behind trains as they crossed, tracking the conditions by punching into three clocks along the span if there were no problems. Failure to punch in after the passage of a certain amount of time signaled that emergency service was necessary.²⁵



Workers near the eastern approach to the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge

As employees in high-risk jobs were often the first to unionize, these dangers inspired workers to engage in collective bargaining. The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen formed at Maybrook in 1904, early in the American labor movement. The union aimed to improve workers' wages and hours and increase vacation time. This gave workers a feeling of engagement in this enterprise, which boosted morale.²⁶

Employees who did not live in Maybrook could commute on "Scoot" or free Ontario & Western Railroad shuttle cars from Poughkeepsie and Middletown, respectively. Railroad crews based elsewhere were housed in Maybrook's YMCA or a boarding house. The men often amused themselves by boxing or playing pinochle. Saloons were a popular place to congregate and relax for residents and non-residents alike.²⁷

In the 1940s, the Central New England Railway and its key sites at Maybrook, Danbury, and Poughkeepsie contributed to the war effort, as did most American industries. The Maybrook-Danbury line was well-placed for shipping military rations, gasoline, and other supplies to ports at New London, Providence, and Boston.

In Carlton Mabee's *Bridging the Hudson: The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge and Its Connecting Rail Lines*, one employee remembers the striking image of cars coming through the Maybrook Switching Yard carrying naval fighter planes on

December 8, 1941—the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.²⁸ Both troop trains and trains carrying prisoners of war traveled the line. The former met with cheers from Switching Yard employees, the latter with more diverse—and predominantly negative—responses.

Mabee singles out this one incident:

“However, Frank Doolittle, Jr., then a yard clerk, remembers German soldiers giving him letters to mail—he mailed letters for some of them, watching that he didn’t get caught doing it.’²⁹

The Central New England Railway modernized after the war, replacing its paper waybill cargo tracking system with IBM punch-card devices that transmitted car numbers, destinations, and each car’s assigned cargo by Teletype to teleprinters, providing tracking information and delivery confirmation.³⁰

Despite this and other modifications, the Central New England Railway began to decline in the latter half of the twentieth century with the ascendancy of trucking and air freight industries.

Looking Back and Toward the Future

The Penn Central Railroad Company was formed in 1968 to combat the decline of the formerly prominent railroad companies of the Northeast: the New York Central Railroad, Pennsylvania Railroad, and the New Haven Railroad.

When the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge caught fire and burned in 1974, its tracks were deemed irreparable and fell into neglect. Sparks from the trains were a common cause for such fires, but the *Hudson Valley Hornet* alleged that Penn Central may have sponsored arson to wash their hands of the declining route.³¹ As trains could no longer cross the bridge, this rendered the Maybrook Switching Yard irrelevant. Traffic was instead redirected to the Livingston Avenue bridge in Albany, built in 1856.

“After the fire, Maybrook had to shut down as traffic slowed. You couldn’t get across the bridge. The route they found to solve the problem bypassed Maybrook. When you look at industrial history, so many places lived and died by one industry,” explained Susan Isaksen, historian for the Town of Montgomery and a volunteer with the Maybrook Historical Society.³²

The Penn Central Railroad proved to be an unsuccessful operation; in 1976, the federal government created the Consolidated Rail Corporation (known as Conrail) to save it from a sudden collapse. The Newburgh, Dutchess & Columbia Railroad was now owned by Conrail; the Maybrook line and the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge, in their industrial incarnations, were eliminated by Conrail after

the last run in 1982.

However, the three major components of the Maybrook-Danbury line still survive, albeit in different capacities. The Maybrook Switching Yard facilities are commemorated in a small museum and library that is moving from the village's public library to its municipal center.

"The move will not affect current resource holdings, but rather the larger space will hold expanded displays," said Susan Isaksen.

The library's resources include pictures of the switching terminal, employees, and trains; artifacts include badges, equipment, the lamp that lit the Switching Yard at night, and a model railroad mapping routes and facilities; documents, papers, and timetables.³³ Some documents have been digitized for the online archive on the Hudson River Valley Heritage Web site; volunteers are in the process of digitizing more.

In its current incarnation as Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park, the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge stands as a monument to the Industrial Revolution in the microcosm of the Hudson River Valley and northeastern United States.

The Danbury Station is commemorated at the Danbury Railroad Museum, located at 120 White Street in Danbury, Connecticut. It provides educational exhibits and guided tours as well as train rides from April to December. Call 203-778-8337 or visit www.danbury.org/drm for more information.

Maybrook Village Hall, which will house the museum dedicated to the Maybrook Switching Yard, is located at 109 Main Street. It can be contacted at 845-427-2717. The Maybrook Historical Society's collection may be seen online at www.hrvh.org/browse.

Bernard L. Rudberg, author of Twenty-Five Years on the ND&C: A History of the Newburgh, Dutchess & Connecticut Railroad, and historian of Central New England Railway, can be contacted at brudberg@optonline.net. Mr. Rudberg also conducts annual rail tours of the CN&E.

Access to Walkway over the Hudson is from Parker Avenue in Poughkeepsie and Haviland Road in Highland. For more information, call 845-454-9649 or visit www.walkway.org.

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**Poughkeepsie
in May, 7:00 p.m.**

Catching an early evening tide,
the Hudson ripples southward,
its slate-blue crested waters
a skein of liquid silk, a ruffling
of perfect, sheer-edged peaks
pouring through day's last light.
Nothing here worth staying for
the hurrying river admonishes,
except to watch
this spectacle of sleek departure.

—*Judith Saunders*

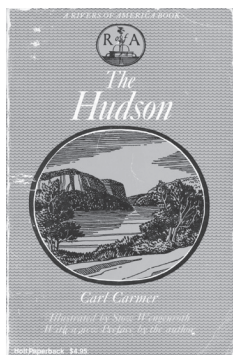
Writing the Hudson River Valley

Historical writing about America's rivers has followed as many different directions as do the waterways themselves. In what is arguably the greatest of books written by an American author about a river, Mark Twain begins *Life on the Mississippi* (1866) with an account of the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto, the first European who saw the river, in 1542. From there he briefly sketches its antiquity and history, which he establishes by comparison with events that occurred in Europe at the time of de Soto's "discovery." Twain devotes most of his prose to contemporary life along the Mississippi and describes it in a richness and vernacular that account for the book's enduring value as a literary document. Perhaps no other writer can match Twain's insight—his keen eye for detail, his ear for the nuances of an evolving language, his evocation of a sense of place—but that hasn't stopped a host of other writers from tackling the subject of an American river, perhaps none more so than the Hudson.

Rivers have long fascinated Americans and the European commentators who have traveled to the United States to study its physical characteristics as well as its social, cultural, and political institutions. To Native Americans, rivers were a source of rich food, while to early European settlers navigable waterways were the most efficient transportation arteries for getting crops to market or, at times, obstacles that impeded their journey to town or to distant places. But much as great rivers could separate communities and even states, so could they bring them together: the great conservationist Benton MacKaye considered rivers the lifeblood of geographical regions, bodies of waters that united far-flung places into an interdependent economic, social, and ecological whole. Over time, rivers have been considered utilitarian means of transport or places of great natural beauty and history, places to exploit or to cherish, and of course places to capture on canvas or film and in verse or prose.¹

One of the most remarkable publishing ventures of the twentieth century was the *Rivers of America* project, a series of 67 books edited by the novelist and poet Constance Lindsay Skinner (and by Carl Carmer after her death in 1939) and published by Rinehart and Farrar and its successor firms between 1937 and 1974. Skinner believed that rivers had a "powerful influence on the temperament and imagination of mankind," and the *Rivers of America* series as she envisioned it would combine landscape and history to evoke a sense of place in a nation

riven by the Great Depression and a process of modernization that, to Skinner, threatened to subvert the distinctive regional cultures that had evolved through the interactions of humans with their environment. Skinner considered local and regional cultures as bedrocks of Americans' sense of identity in place and time. Her ideas clearly resonated with authors, as she and Carmer attracted some of the best known regionalist writers of the day to the series, including James Branch Cabell, Paul Horgan, Edgar Lee Masters, Henry Beston, and Donald Davidson. Talented illustrators added to the appeal of each volume.²



Carl Carmer's *The Hudson* (1939), the last of the series published under Skinner's editorial aegis, was a *Publisher's Weekly* bestseller and remains one of the most enduring books about the river he celebrated. In *My Kind of Country* (1966) Carmer explained the approach that he used in much of his writing, most notably in *The Hudson*, which he described as a "deep commitment to literary creativity in the writing of history." As has been true of most books written about the river, he begins with geography and geology, describing the thrusts and collisions of land masses that shaped the eastern United States. Carmer then traces the Hudson from its origin in Lake Tear of the Clouds, on Mount Marcy (discovered by Verplanck Colvin in 1872), passing majestic scenery on its meandering journey south toward Manhattan and beyond, to the submerged channel of the prehistoric river that extends more than a hundred miles through the continental shelf until it reaches the depths of the ocean. Following this evocation of the forces that shaped the valley, Carmer turns to its native inhabitants, whom he describes as the "friendly, simple people of the river" who fished, raised crops, and "swam as well as the river otters." Save for cameo appearances during the Seven Years and Revolutionary wars, the native peoples then largely disappear from his narrative.³

Carmer's Hudson Valley is a special place defined by the interplay of residents and the natural environment over centuries. An experienced folklorist who had long collected stories of life in New York State, he sought out and interviewed people as diverse as witches, fishermen, folk musicians, even the sitting president of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, whose family had lived in Hyde Park, on the east bank, for generations. Carmer devotes chapters to the influential career of the mid-nineteenth-century landscape gardener and architectural tastemaker Andrew Jackson Downing and the paintings of Thomas Cole and other artists associated with the Hudson River School of landscape art, as well as to the design of sloops and steamboats that plied the river and the octagonal

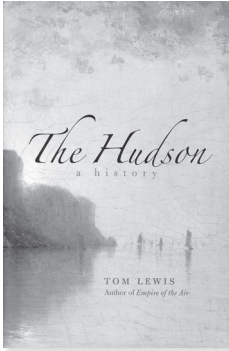
houses and barns inspired by phrenologist Orson Squire Fowler's *A Home for All* (1848). Carmer's interests were as catholic as the history of the people who have resided along the river. His conclusions, a number of which have been modified by subsequent scholars, brought the river to life for readers as defining a special place.

What gives Carmer's book power and thematic unity is his unflinching commitment to the common women and men who lived along the river. As he promised in the preface, his chapters include "more about tenants than landlords, more about privates than generals, more about workers than employers." In the following pages he describes the "country-boy soldiers from the Hudson valley," farmers and artisans who defeated Burgoyne's British regulars and Hessian mercenaries at the Battle of Saratoga and who rushed to the defense of the Highlands under the leadership of George Clinton and thereby kept the British from controlling the valley and separating New England from the rest of the colonies. He denounces the Van Rensselaers and Livingstons as greedy plunderers and writes evocatively of the farmers and tradesmen whose efforts to live independent lives were circumscribed by the manorial or patroon system, in which wealthy families accumulated immense political and legal power through a quasi-feudal landholding system that Carmer describes as the "greatest single instrument of injustice in the whole history of the Hudson valley."⁴

Carmer was much more interested in writing about the lives of people who tilled the soil or fished the waters than he was about wealthy landlords or powerful politicians or the plutocrats who built mansions along the river in the late nineteenth century. Throughout *The Hudson* he celebrated the workers who quarried granite or made cement and bricks, who harvested the ice or crewed on whalers or merchant vessels—people, in short, who made the Hudson Valley their home and whose efforts, he believed, built America. He also described the plight of residents who lived in "sociological islands," including the Jackson Whites, a mixed-race people who lived in the hills of western Rockland County, and the Eagles Nesters who lived west of Kingston and who, like the Jackson Whites, were the product of European, African American, and Native American intermarriage. This deeply personal concern for everyday people and their lives reflected the author's democratic proclivities as well as Skinner's belief that "folk," though neglected by academic historians, were the shapers of and the enduring strength of the nation.⁵

Carmer ends *The Hudson* on an optimistic note worthy of the residents who have struggled for economic justice over centuries. He observes that "in a strange way" the people have begun to win back the shoreline in the early twentieth century, as many of the great estates along the river were sold or given to schools, religious orders, or medical institutions. The very people he celebrated throughout

the book—ordinary working women and men who “have loved the big stream” over centuries—were cheered by the (slow) process of cleaning up the waterway, the end of quarrying that had scarred mountains, and by proposals for parks and parkways along its banks. “After three centuries of struggle and waiting,” he concludes, residents “will rejoice at last in a valley of happy reality served by a free and mighty river.”⁶



Tom Lewis's *The Hudson* (2005) covers much of the same terrain as Carmer's book, though with different emphasis and the advantage of generations of scholarship published since 1939. Like Carmer, save for discussions of the river's origins and the Revolutionary War Battle of Saratoga he devotes most of the text to the lower Hudson, the 150-mile stretch extending south toward the ocean from the Mohawk River and Albany. But whereas Carmer's text really concludes at the dawn of the twentieth century, Lewis's carries the story forward for another

century, though he attempts to convey the significance of the last hundred years in a single chapter.

Lewis, best known as author of *Divided Highways* (1997), an admirable account of the construction of the interstate highway system and its impact on American life, follows a roughly chronological format in presenting the history of the Hudson. He believes that the river is a key to the nation's past, “a thread that runs through the fabric of four centuries of American history, through the development of American civilization—its culture, its community, and its consciousness.” Throughout the book he examines four themes: utility, individuality, community, and symbol.⁷

Over nine gracefully written chapters, Lewis traces the history of the valley, beginning with a much more extended treatment of the river's geology and native inhabitants than Carmer provided. The same is true of the two chapters devoted to the colonial era and another to the Revolutionary War, though Lewis's explanation of the military struggle celebrates the generals rather than the farmers and artisans who were the heroes of Carmer's account. Three chapters examine the Hudson Valley in the nineteenth century. The first, devoted to the democratic river, discusses the development of steam travel, the successful struggle against the Livingston monopoly on the river, and the anti-rent wars that pitted farmers against the manorial system. A second analyzes the significance of “definers of the landscape”—Washington Irving, Thomas Cole and the artists of the Hudson River School, the influence of Andrew Jackson Downing, and tourist destina-

tions such as the Catskill Mountain House—but also the economic activities (especially tanning) that were despoiling the very scenery the artists celebrated and tourists traveled to visit. The third of the chapters devoted to the nineteenth century examines the emergence of extractive industries such as quarrying, brick-making, and ice-harvesting, but although entitled “river of fortunes” these pages pay remarkably little attention to the estates developed by wealthy New Yorkers along the river toward the end of the century.⁸

Like Carmer, Lewis neglects important figures, especially John Burroughs, the great naturalist and popular writer who after the Civil War built a stone house in West Park, above Highland on the west bank, and a cabin, Slabsides, as a retreat from the travails of his domestic life. Though largely forgotten today, Burroughs, known as John O’Birds, was considered an equal of his contemporary John Muir in teaching Americans to cherish their environmental heritage. Lewis is more favorably inclined toward Washington Irving than Carmer, who dismissed the *Knickerbocker History* (1809) for the “widespread misconception” that resulted from its caricature of the Dutch settlers (Irving eliminated or greatly softened the satire in subsequent editions of the book). Both authors could have paid greater attention to John Vanderlyn, the Kingston-born artist whose paintings were among the most ambitious and admired during the early republic, and the life of the painter and inventor Samuel F. B. Morse, whose Italianate house and gardens, Locust Grove, in Poughkeepsie, is a National Historic Landmark, as well as to popular nineteenth-century writers such as N.P. Willis and James Kirke Paulding. They might also have analyzed the continuing creativity of residents of the valley following the decline in popularity of the Hudson River School, particularly through arts and crafts havens such as Byrdcliffe, in Woodstock, and the colonies of painters that have flourished at various places and points in time.⁹

As Carmer had done, Lewis devotes the final chapter to the importance of environmentalism along the river. But whereas Carmer could only point optimistically to a future defined by clean water, parks, parkways, and other recreational amenities, and a people reconnected to their river, the reality was that for decades the river remained an open sewer, polluted by municipalities, individual residents, and corporations such as Ford and General Electric. But in the last four decades of the century, the Hudson entered a new phase in its history, and from the vantage of the early twenty-first century Lewis could look back at the enormous environmental progress made along the Hudson since the 1960s. One key to its emergence as the environmental river was the Storm King controversy, citizen opposition to Consolidated Edison’s proposal to build a pumped storage power plant at Storm King Mountain, one of the mountains at the northern gateway to

the Hudson Highlands. The Storm King case was litigated for almost a generation, and ultimately contributed to the adoption of the National Environmental Policy Act (1969), which for the first time established the requirement that such projects be evaluated for their impact on the environment, and the Clean Water Act (1970), which provided federal funding to municipalities to construct water treatment plants. Equally important, the publicity generated by opponents of the power plant at Storm King contributed to the emergence of a new “attitude toward the environment and aesthetics.” Lewis also points to the significance of the *Clearwater*, a replica of a nineteenth-century sloop that plies the waters of the Hudson teaching the gospel of environmentalism, and to the riverkeeper (which merits all of two sentences), a citizen activist who identifies polluters and serves as a protector of the public interest in the Hudson. Pointing to successful efforts to preserve Boscobel, a federal-era mansion (though removed to a different site) and Olana, the landscape painter Frederic E. Church’s spectacular, Moorish-inspired house atop Mount Merino, south of the east bank city of Hudson, the author argues that the future of the valley rests in its historic past.¹⁰

As the valley’s designation as one of the first National Heritage areas in 1996 affirms, a sense of the past is important, but this has long been an attribute of the Hudson and its environs. Yet the present is a fleeting moment between past and future, and time has not stood still. This is as true in the realm of culture as it is in the pattern of economic development. The arts continue to thrive in the cerebral abstractions of Alan Gussow and the poetic landscapes of Stephen Hannock, in the novels of William Kennedy and T. Coraghessan Boyle, among others, in Leila Philip’s *A Family Place* (2001), an elegantly crafted memoir of the upper Hudson Valley, in music festivals and live theater and craft shows that exhibit the work of skilled artists and artisans. In short, the river today inspires many artists and informs their work, much as it did the generations of Irving, Cole, and Church. Cultural institutions such as the Storm King Art Center, near Cornwall, one of the greatest outdoor collections of modern sculpture in the United States, and Dia:Beacon, another major collection devoted to modern art, attest to the continuing interplay of the arts and the Hudson Valley.

Yet for all the progress that has occurred over the last forty years, the Hudson and its residents face enduring challenges. The presence of polychlorinated biphenols (PCBs) in the river bottom and in the tissue of fish has destroyed the livelihood of fishermen on the river for decades to come. Suburban sprawl has resulted in the development of thousands of acres along the river, effectively creating a new barrier that limits the public’s access to its collective heritage, while traffic has increased to such proportions that the Tappan Zee Bridge at times seems like

an immense linear parking lot. Moreover, gentrification has begun to transform old industrial cities like Hudson and river towns like Catskill, as residents of metropolitan New York buy second homes and Albany's workers seek dwellings in quaint old places. How the Hudson Valley will endure such changes without rendering historic sites mere islands within an ocean of twentieth and twenty-first century development is one of the most difficult challenges residents have to confront. And, Carl Carmer would surely add, to honor the Hudson's rich history this must be accomplished in a way that protects the people whose families have lived along the river and loved it over generations.

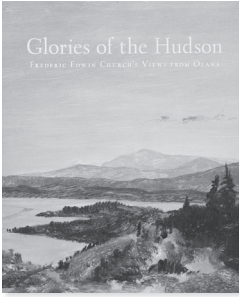
These important books provide windows on a special place, a beautiful river flowing through mountains and alongside gently rolling landscapes long devoted to farming. The scenery is spectacular, the landscape "sanctified," as Thomas Cole noted in 1836, because of its associations with critical events of the Revolutionary War. Prosperity resulted from the efforts of farmers who worked an exceptionally rich agricultural landscape as well as from the exploitation of natural resources. But the prosperity has been uneven: perhaps as a result of the manorial system, east bank towns and cities have long been richer than those across the river, and surely passenger service on the east bank railroad, which makes commuting to Manhattan much more convenient, has contributed to the uneven diffusion of wealth in recent decades. Moreover, deindustrialization, while it has contributed to environmental improvements along the river, has changed the nature of work and robbed many residents of traditional livelihoods.

Other challenges remain. Many of the older river cities experienced a significant increase in the population of racial and ethnic minorities in the second half of the twentieth century, and the disparities between cities and suburbs in wealth, educational attainment, and other quantifiable measures are reflections of a modern apartheid that is the most troubling reality facing the nation in the twenty-first century. In so many ways the Hudson River is an exceptional landscape, a place where natural beauty and history coexist as perhaps nowhere else. But only if communities in the valley act decisively to protect public access to the river and preserve open space, only if the towns and cities that line its banks provide an economic and social environment that welcomes African American and Hispanic residents into the mainstream of American life, as they did for immigrants from settlement through the early twentieth century, will the Hudson Valley fulfill Carl Carmer's democratic vision.¹¹

—David Schuyler, *Franklin & Marshall College*

Notes

1. Benton MacKaye, *The New Exploration: A Philosophy of Regional Planning* (New York, 1928). Constance Lindsay Skinner believed that river valleys were the crucible that transformed settlers from different parts of Europe into Americans: "We began to be Americans on the rivers," she wrote in announcing the publication of the *Rivers of America* series. See Skinner, "Rivers and American Folk," in Carl Carmer, *The Hudson* (New York, 1939), unpaginated appendix.
2. Nicolaas Mink, "A Narrative for Nature's Nation: Constance Lindsay Skinner and the Making of *Rivers of America*," *Environmental History* 11 (Oct. 2006): 751-74 (quotation p. 751).
3. *Ibid.*, p. 766; Carmer, *My Kind of Country* (New York, 1977), p. 00; Carmer, *The Hudson*, pp. 3-15.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 115-19, 31. Carmer's discussion of the climax of the anti-rent wars, the chapter "Tin-Horn Rebellion," is surprisingly lacking in analytical (or even anecdotal) power, given the tenor of his account of resistance to the manorial system that precedes it. In recent years historians have presented richer, more nuanced assessments of society, politics, and cultural conflict in the upper Hudson Valley in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. See, for example, Thomas Wermuth's *Rip Van Winkle's Neighbors* (2001), Reeve Huston's *Land and Freedom and Freedom: Rural Society, Popular Protest, and Party Politics in Antebellum New York* (2000), and Charles W. McCurdy's *The Anti-Rent War in New York Law and Politics, 1839-1865* (2001).
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 378-97; Skinner, "Rivers and American Folk," in Carmer, *The Hudson*, n. p.
6. Carmer, *The Hudson*, pp. 402-6.
7. Tom Lewis, *The Hudson: A History* (New Haven and London, 2005), pp. 3-9.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 186-253.
9. Carmer, *The Hudson*, p. 33; Nancy E. Green, ed., *Byrdcliffe: An American Arts and Crafts Colony* (Ithaca, NY, 2004); Vassar College Art Gallery, *Woodstock: An American Art Colony* (Poughkeepsie, NY, 1977).
10. Lewis, *The Hudson*, pp. 254-82 (quotation p. 265).
11. Thomas Cole, "Essay on American Scenery," in John W. McCoubrey, ed., *American Art 1700-1960: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1965), p. 108. See also David Schuyler, "The Sanctified Landscape: The Hudson River Valley, 1820 to 1850," in George F. Thompson, ed., *Landscape in America* (Austin, TX, 1995), pp. 93-109.



***Glories of the Hudson: Frederic Church's Views From Olana*, Evelyn D. Trebilcock and Valerie Balint.**

Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009.

Foreward by John K. Howat. (95 pp.)

Over the past twenty years, major books have been written about the Hudson River School that attempt to explore the social, cultural, political, and economic forces that fostered its creative energies. This past year, 2009, witnessed the 400th anniversary of the European settlement of the Hudson, and with it, several new books on the Hudson River School painters. Included on this list is Evelyn Trebilcock and Valerie Balint's *Glories of the Hudson*, a study of Frederic Church and the inspiration he found at home.

In the nineteenth century, the Hudson River Valley emerged as a leader in American artistic and cultural life. The first recognized schools of American literature and art, the Hudson River writers and the Hudson River School of landscape painting defined the valley as a symbol of America's promise. Painters such as Thomas Cole, Asher Durand, and Sanford Robinson Gifford painted rich landscapes and imbued them with spiritual and mythical meanings, much like the Hudson Valley authors James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving did in their writings. As one literary scholar of the period has described, the nineteenth century landscape painters and authors highlighted the "manifold cultural meanings attached to the Hudson River Valley in the first half of the nineteenth century and exemplifie[d] the process of national self definition."

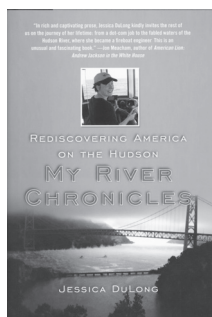
No one epitomized this more than Frederic Edwin Church. Arguably the most famous of the Hudson River School painters (vying with his own mentor, Thomas Cole, for that spot), he was certainly one of the most prolific and successful of the nineteenth-century landscape artists. The years that Church painted were particularly dynamic ones in American, and Hudson River, history. The United States was emerging as a major commercial power with the initial stirrings of industrialization and burgeoning population resulting from large-scale immigration. An important part of the economic growth of the nation was the result of the Hudson's farms, industries, and transportation networks. In turn, the Hudson served as a powerful symbol of emerging America.

Frederic Church was a student of Cole but soon stood beside his teacher and Asher Durand as among the most successful landscape painters of the yet-to-be named Hudson River School. Useful introductions to the life of Church and the School are made in opening chapters by John Howatt and Ken Myers. Myers pro-

vides a thoughtful analysis of Church's work along with that of Cole and Gifford. Myers notes that even though Church occasionally strayed from the region for his inspiration (some South American and Middle Eastern locales served as occasional subjects), his primary interest was the Hudson River Valley, which he continued to concentrate on even after virtually disabling arthritis made painting difficult. In these later years, Church focused on what has become his most famous project, his Moorish-style home high atop the hills overlooking the Hudson, Olana.

Evelyn Trebilcock and Valerie Balint provide the core of the book, a narrative of Church's work put into the context of his life and, of course, his home. The authors do a very good job in providing the background to Church's work and contextualizing it in the framework of his stylized home. Indeed, Trebilcock and Balint are able to provide the familial milieu that structured Church's life and work; the tragic death of his young children, the triumph of his spirit to overcome the limitations of his disease, and his life-long devotion to interpreting and rendering a spiritual Hudson River. This very handsome volume is enhanced by many of Church's paintings that are beautifully reproduced, most in color. The book serves well as either an introduction to Church's work, or as enlightening view of an under-studied subject of this painter's vision.

—Thomas S. Wermuth



***My River Chronicles: Rediscovering America on the Hudson*, Jessica DuLong. New York: Free Press 2009. (308pp; with b&w photographs)**

Sailors in the Navy who work the engine room have a saying that brims with swagger: *There are two types of people onboard ship—engineers and passengers.* But anyone who has ever worked below decks knows it's a humbling job, and certainly not one that many would enjoy, let alone dream of: there's the noise, the smell, the cramped spaces, and in summertime the stifling heat. For a select few, however, the engine room of a ship is where life makes sense; it's a gloriously loud laboratory where things can definitely go wrong. An engineer has to solve problems quickly or else an expensive piece of machinery might break, or even worse, a shipmate might get hurt. For some, a tiny porthole offers the best view of the water.

In her delightful book *My River Chronicles: Rediscovering America on the Hudson*, journalist and bona fide engineer Jessica DuLong delivers two coming-of-age stories: one is her own and the other is of the Hudson itself, a waterway that

has seen so many changes in the 400 years since its namesake Henry Hudson explored as far as what is now the bluffs of Kinderhook. Both are stories of redemption; DuLong is a young woman who ditches a safe desk job and plunges head-first into a male-dominated world of diesels and generators, while the Hudson is a river that is finally experiencing a cultural and environmental rebirth after years of dumping and neglect.

DuLong, the daughter of an auto mechanic, hints that her interest in becoming one of only a handful of the world's female fireboat engineers might have been part of an even larger quest; as the author writes, this interest "escalated to obsession, then swelled to encompass the history of the Hudson River, whose industries helped forge the nation. I've since fallen in love with workboats, with engineering, with the Hudson" (7).

The book is more than a simple memoir, however; it's structured more like a collection of linked essays than a singular narrative, and that flexibility allows DuLong to weave in exciting threads of nautical history, nature writing, mechanical engineering, and New York lore without distracting the reader from the heart of the book, which is the compelling story of a girl who gains the confidence to follow her blue-collar dream and is in turn humbled by that experience. She meets a lot of interesting people along the way—some helpful in her quest, some not—and the result is a rare look at an American subculture not at all used to outsiders.

DuLong's voice is endearing throughout, and her journalism background clearly helps pace the story with colorful details and good-natured humor. Along the way, the reader picks up enough knowledge on the commercial and nautical histories of the Hudson River to fill a college course, without feeling overburdened with an endless array of facts and statistics. It's a unique balance that makes the book a pleasure to read from beginning to end.

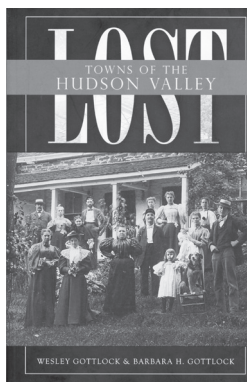
DuLong's journey may have started as a personal quest, but by the end of the book this grows into a wider admiration for both the history of the river and its future. The author comes to see herself not as an outsider but as an integral part of a long tradition of residents, workers, and river-keepers who have made the Hudson River what it is today. As she writes:

While I wait in the moonlight, my eyes adjusting to the dark, a convergence of Hudson River activity unfurls before me. I can make out the shape of a tugboat pushing a loaded barge north, the boat's deckhouse outlined in blue lights. Then the headlights of a passenger train appear, the engine speeding up the Hudson's eastern shore, pulling its cars full of people. A second tug materializes, heading south, its yellow deck lights lined up in a row. This second tug is towing an empty barge, and it passes the other tug port to port, on the one-whistle side. At

that moment, a clatter signals the approach of another train, this one on our side of the river, at the base of this mountain. A string of freight cars, the multiple colors of their shipping containers barely discernible in this light, shoots south down the Hudson's western shore. The scene before me embodies the mixed-use river of today—the tugs and barges, the trains hauling freight and people, the village of Cold Spring twinkling across the river, with its pleasure boats bobbing on moorings, and artists and spectators like us, who have come to watch the ever-busy river by the light of the moon (267-68).

Anyone interested in learning more about the complex commercial history of the Hudson River and its communities will undoubtedly treasure *My River Chronicles: Rediscovering America on the Hudson*. But more than that, Ms. DuLong's inspirational story should also be required reading for anyone who has ever pondered their own blue collar dreams. After reading her account of struggles and triumph, even the least mechanically inclined soul will be curious to see what the water looks like from inside the porthole.

—Tommy Zurhellen, *Marist College*



Lost Towns of the Hudson Valley,
Wesley Gottlock and Barbara H. Gottlock.
Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009. (159 pp.)

Lost Towns of the Hudson Valley, offers a rare glimpse into this New York region's history. The authors introduce the commonality among Hudson Valley's lost towns in their introduction, namely that each served some vital role, which many times included providing for New York City. Unlike other towns of the time that evolved with the passing years, many of the lost towns had a very specific purpose and once this purpose was served the towns disappeared with little, if anything, remaining of them today.

Roseton, is one example of this. In the late 1800s, John C. Rose expanded his Rose Brick Company from Haverstraw to include land on the Hudson River north of Newburgh in Orange County. In the same area, the Juan Jacinto Jova family also used Hudson Valley clay to make bricks. As Rose and Jova brickyard workers populated the area with over 1,300 people, Roseton emerged. Two generations later, as the brick industry began to decline, Roseton lost much of its citizens and today little remains. Sand and clay from Roseton brickyards can be found in Central Park and Yankee Stadium; bricks from Rose and Jova companies make

up many of the buildings dotting the New York City skyline. Amazing photos of the brickyard are included as well as scenes of the Roseton school, church, and homes. Maps, census documents, and even Juan Jacinto Jova's passport make up the chapter.

Another lost town, Rockland Lake, formed from the Knickerbocker Ice Company ice business on Rockland Lake and the crushed stone business at the nearby Hook Mountain quarry in the mid-1800s. In its heyday, numerous ice-houses dotted Rockland Lake, and the city thrived with locals and tourists drawn to its shores. Townsfolk worked the ice business in the winter and the quarry in the summer. In the early 1920s, the town was lost as refrigeration ended the need for ice and the quarry closed for environmental concerns. The authors show pictures of the town, including the icehouses in action, the post office, lighthouse, hotel, school, and windmill, among others. Some buildings including the hotel and post office, remained after the land was bought in the 1950s by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission through the efforts of John D. Rockefeller. Although Rockland Lake may be a lost town, Rockland Lake State Park continues to be a popular tourist attraction.

Unlike Rockland Lake, Camp Shanks may only be remembered through the efforts of those running the Camp Shanks Museum and other historians and by any remaining World War II veterans who departed from or came back to the United States through this port. As World War II began, the U.S. Army constructed the camp from land bought and leased from families in Orangeburg and surrounding area of Rockland County. The camp deployed and received over three million troops. Additionally, it served as a temporary holding camp for over 290,000 German and Italian prisoners of war as they arrived in the U.S. and were repatriated at the war's end. Camp Shanks, the thriving military base, quickly converted into Shanks Village following World War II. Shanks Village housed soldiers who attended Columbia University on the GI Bill and their families. This ended in the 1950s and also signaled the end of Camp Shanks and Shanks Village. Like so many lost towns, few reminders remain.

Roseton, Rockland Lake, Camp Shanks, and Shanks Village all served a community of people who worked for a common industry or effort. Each of these communities became lost once the industry or population that it served was no longer in place. Other lost towns, however, became lost to serve another purpose. For example, flooding of the Ashokan Reservoir towns in the early 1900s allowed water to be supplied to New York City. The Ashokan Reservoir, the largest in the Catskill system, took eleven villages in its construction. Additionally, 2,600 graves and eleven miles of railroad were relocated in the building process. This chapter

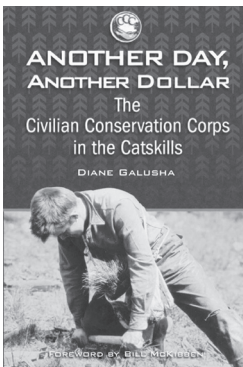
includes numerous pictures from the Ashokan Reservoir towns as well as a map of the reservoir and an auction flyer/brochure for a boarding house lost to the reservoir. Similar stories to this would continue to surface in the following years as towns throughout the U.S., including those in the jurisdiction of the Tennessee Valley Authority, were lost to reservoir/dam building.

Stories such as these presented in *Lost Towns of the Hudson Valley* are a reminder that with change often comes loss—even the loss of entire communities. The authors do a good job of presenting each lost town’s story through a short narrative, lots of pictures, and great photo captions. The reader gets a sense of the town’s infrastructure through maps and corresponding photographs.

This light work sparks the interest of the reader, but does not include a large amount of detailed information and lacks a bibliography or footnotes. Photograph contributors are cited in the photo caption and many individuals providing information for this book are mentioned by name. If a reader is looking for more in-depth information about the lost towns of the Hudson Valley, he or she might want to use this book as a resource to locate individuals, historical societies, and museums that could provide greater detail. Additionally, numerous books have been written on individual subjects mentioned in the book, including the brick and ice industries, creation of reservoirs in the early to mid 1900s, and homeland World War II studies such as the examination of the housing of prisoners of war in the United States.

I enjoyed reading and reviewing *Lost Towns of the Hudson Valley* and found it to provide the right amount of information for someone interested in the subject, but not wanting to get bogged down with heavy scholarly details. For those from the Hudson Valley, enough geography is provided so that you can imagine and possibly even visit the site where the lost towns once existed.

—Amy L. Thompson, Ph.D.



***Another Day, Another Dollar: The Civilian Conservation Corps in the Catskills*, Diane Galusha. Hensonville, NY: Black Dome Press, 2008. (224 pp., 100 illustrations)**

In 1933, in the depths of the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt took office and began to fulfill his promise of a New Deal for America. As part of his program, Congress soon approved the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC put young

unemployed men to work in the nation's parks and forests, paying them thirty dollars a month. By the time the program ended in January 1942, with the outbreak of World War II, three and a half million men had served at 4,500 CCC camps in every state as well as in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and on several Indian nations. The CCC played an important role in providing jobs and (indirectly) relief to millions of family members during a period of hard times. The men received five dollars of their pay each month, with the remainder being sent home to their families. In addition to providing jobs, the CCC resulted in major improvements to the nation's parks and forests.

The CCC in New York enrolled 210,000 men who lived at 161 camps scattered throughout the state, usually in remote areas. Run by the U.S. Army, the camps provided shelter, food, and basic services to upwards of 200 men each. The workers built public campgrounds; created hiking, skiing, and horseback riding trails; established game refuges; constructed dams to create swimming holes and waterfowl breeding sites; erected five Conservation Department Ranger Headquarters; conducted stream restoration and erosion-control work; and helped farmers implement soil conservation measures. They planted over 221 million trees and protected the seedlings by eradicating insects and disease-hosting plants. The men built nineteen fire lookout towers, 392 miles of access roads, and 1,207 ponds for fighting forest fires. The program led to the reforestation of vast areas of upstate New York and provided infrastructure to protect the new forests from pests, disease, and fire, while simultaneously enabling the public to enjoy the great outdoors through hiking, fishing, hunting, and other outdoor activities.

Diane Galusha, author of several books on New York history—including *Liquid Assets: The Story of the New York City's Water System* (1999), *Through A Woman's Eye: Pioneering Photographers of Rural Upstate* (1991), and *As the River Runs: A History of Halcottsville, NY* (1990)—is the founding president of the Historical Society of the Town of Middletown and a longtime resident of the Catskills. In *Another Day, Another Dollar: The Civilian Conservation Corps in the Catskills*, she provides an overview of the CCC in the 1930s that enables the reader to put the accounts of local CCC men in their proper context. The heart of the book is the seven chapters, each focusing on a particular CCC camp, which highlights the history of each camp through the eyes of fourteen camp veterans. Using oral history interviews and archival materials from regional libraries, historical societies, and special collections, the author provides a snapshot of what it was like in the camps, what the camps meant to the young men at the time, what work was accomplished, and how the camps contributed to the development of the region. The seven camps discussed are the Boiceville

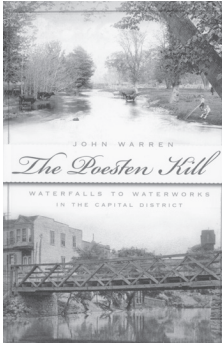
Camp (Ulster County), Davenport Camp (Delaware County), Tannersville Camp (Greene County), Deposit/McClure Camp (Broome County), Breakabeen Camp (Schoharie County), Margaretville Camp (Delaware County), and the Masonville Camp (Delaware County). The stars of the book aren't the camps, but rather the fourteen CCC veterans. The author successfully presents their stories, capturing what these men lived through, how they felt, and what they got out of their experiences. One can't help but want to meet these men and hear more.

The book provides a wealth of information and photographs on the CCC veterans, the seven camps and the contribution of the CCC to the development of the Catskill parks and forests. What the book is not is a comprehensive history of the CCC at the national or state level. It is a solid addition to the regional literature on the CCC and the history of the Catskills region.

Considered a jobs program by many, others appreciated the long-term benefits of reforesting thousands of acres of upstate land abandoned by lumber companies that had clear cut the timber and stopped paying property taxes or farmers forced off the land by the collapse of agricultural markets during the Great Depression. From those millions of seedlings planted in the 1930s, the great forests of upstate New York were reborn. This book is a reminder of how different the Catskills might be had the young men of the CCC not been tasked with restoring the forests. This book will be of interest to historians looking for regional studies of CCC camps, those interested in the history of the state's parks and forests, and most importantly, to those interested in the history of the Catskills/Hudson Valley region.

—Dr. Steve R. Waddell, *United States Military Academy at West Point*

New & Noteworthy Books Received

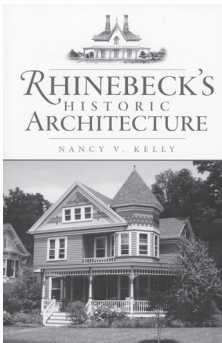


The Poesten Kill: Waterfalls to Waterworks in the Capital District

By John Warren
(Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009).
128 pp. \$19.99 (paperback). www.historypress.net

The Poesten Kill in Rensselaer County has been central to the area since before the arrival of Europeans. Since that time, the waterway has been key to the development of transportation, agriculture, and industry in the region.

John Warren captures the many ways that the Poesten Kill has been the lifeblood of the towns and communities that sprung up around it over the course of four centuries.

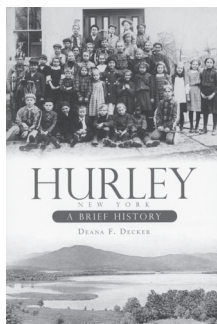


Rhinebeck's Historic Architecture

By Nancy V. Kelly
(Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009).
192 pp. \$19.99 (paperback). www.historypress.net

Divided into nine stylistic categories beginning in 1700, *Rhinebeck's Historic Architecture* displays the architectural diversity of the town's structures. Complete with dozens of accompanying photographs, the categories of architecture range from Colonial to Greek and Gothic Revival to Victorian. Many of the buildings and homes included

in this book are intact today, creating a truly unique combination of styles from some of the most influential architects throughout the history of the Hudson River Valley. In addition, it tells the complex story of Rhinebeck's history.

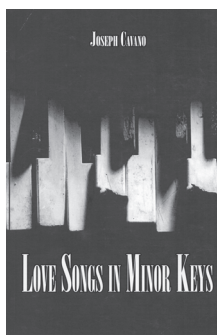


Hurley, New York: A Brief History

By Deana F. Decker
(Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009)
144 pp. \$19.99 (paperback). www.historypress.net

The Ulster County town of Hurley has a storied history dating back to the seventeenth century. This book, Hurley Town Historian Decker's second on the town, spans its history from European settlement by the Dutch and British and the impact of 19th-century industry to the present day.

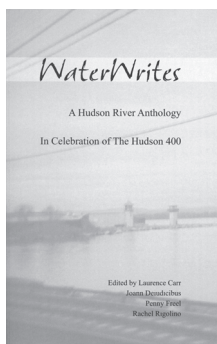
Particular attention is paid to the town's historic homes and residents. Decker also includes a large number of photographs and maps..



Love Songs in Minor Keys

By Joseph Cavano
(Charlotte, NC: Central Piedmont College Press, 2009)
166 pp. \$13.99 (paperback).
<http://www.cpcc.edu/servicescorp/products/cpcc-press-store>

A new collection of nine short stories from Hudson River Valley native Joseph Cavano. *Love Songs in Minor Keys* presents a variety of characters dealing with love and the complicated dimensions of human relationships. Cavano's stories leave the reader thinking about the situations and characters long after they have finished reading about them.



Water Writes: A Hudson River Anthology In Celebration of The Hudson 400

Edited by Laurence Carr, Joann Deiudicibus, Penny Freil,
and Rachel Rigolino (New Paltz, NY: Codhill Press, 2009)
124 pp. \$15.00 (paperback). www.codhill.com/

This collection of works from over sixty Hudson River Valley poets and authors, focuses on the significance of the Hudson River and its surrounding lands over the course of 400 years of history. *Water Writes* explores the diversity of perspectives and experiences that can be found across the

distance of the river through the varying seasons and periods of history. Divided into one section for poetry and another for essay and memoir, each contribution provides a unique glimpse into the different roles the Hudson River has played to all those who have experienced its wonder.

—Andrew Villani

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