

THE  
HUDSON  
RIVER  
VALLEY  
REVIEW

*A Journal of Regional Studies*

**MARIST**

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*The Hudson River Valley Review*  
(ISSN 1546-3486) is published twice  
a year by the Hudson River Valley  
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Post: The Hudson River Valley Review  
c/o Hudson River Valley Institute  
Marist College, 3399 North Road,  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

Subscription: The annual subscription rate is \$20 a year (2 issues), \$35 for two years (4 issues). A one-year institutional subscription is \$30. Subscribers are urged to inform us promptly of a change of address.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Hudson River Valley Institute, Marist College, 3399 North Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

*The Hudson River Valley Review* was founded and published by Bard College, 1984-2002. Founding Editors, David C. Pierce and Richard C. Wiles

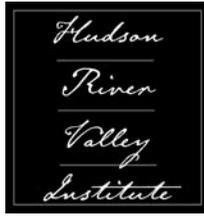
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## From the Editors

As always with our non-themed issues, this edition of *The Hudson River Valley Review* spans centuries and topics, ranging from an eye-opening treatment of the Leisler Rebellion (a seventeenth-century political firestorm) to a dramatic account of one of the first environmental battles in the region—the effort to halt the Hudson River Expressway—in the 1960s. In between, there are fascinating articles about the formation of the Black Rock Forest Preserve and the Valley’s charitable response to the Irish famine, as well as an in-depth look at the formation of incorporated villages and a travelogue from a perceptive Dutchman who sailed up the Hudson in the 1870s. There is also a Local History Forum on the New Netherland Museum and three book reviews. And we’ve added another feature—an annotated listing of New and Noteworthy books about our region—all of which means that this is one of the fattest *Reviews* to date. We hope you find it both informative and entertaining.

*Reed Sparling*  
*Christopher Pryslopski*

The *Hudson River Valley Review* is pleased to introduce its new editorial board. Beginning with the Autumn 2006 issue, this board will be assisting the editors in identifying new and noteworthy work in Hudson River Valley regional studies, selecting manuscripts for review and publication, and planning future issues of the journal. We are very excited to welcome a distinguished board of scholars who will assist in our effort to study and interpret America’s First River.



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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.

## 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. No materials will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided. No responsibility is assumed for their loss. 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*.

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**On the cover:** A hand-tinted engraving of the Catskill Mountain House,  
after W.H. Bartlett's *View from the Mountain House*, 1836. Private collection.

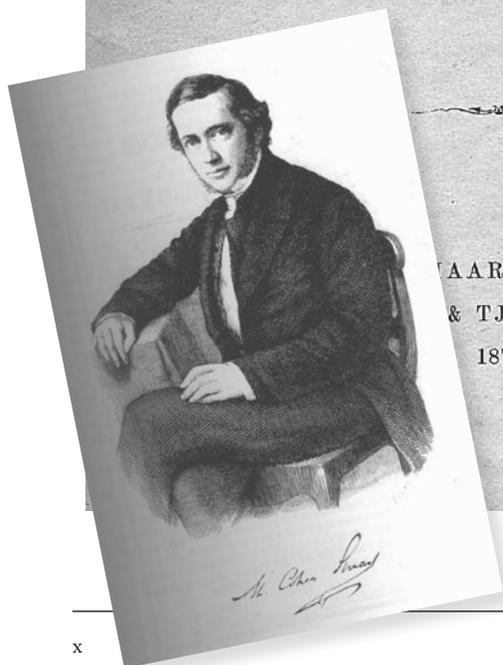
ZES MAANDEN  
IN  
A M E R I K A

DOOR  
Dr. M. COHEN STUART

MET PLATEN EN VIGNETTEN

EERSTE DEEL.

AARLEM  
& TJEENK WILLINK  
1875



# A Dutch View of the Hudson River Valley: The Travel Accounts of Martinus Cohen Stuart, 1873-1874

*Huib Leeuwenberg and Ronald Patkus*

## Introduction: Travel Accounts of the Hudson River Valley

Anyone who reads the literature of the Hudson River Valley knows that there is no shortage of travel accounts dealing with the region. From 1609—when Henry Hudson sailed up the river that would bear his name—until our own day, explorers, travelers, and others have been moved to record their thoughts and feelings as they journeyed on the Hudson and interacted with the people and places along its shores. Many accounts shed light on the historical periods during which they were written.<sup>1</sup>

An especially large number of travelogues date from the nineteenth century, and together, they document the great changes that took place during this time period. Examples from the early, middle, and late 1800s—written by both Americans and visitors from other countries, especially Europeans<sup>2</sup>—tell us about distinct eras of local history, eras dominated by a succession of new forms of transportation: the sloop, steamboat, and railroad. The last of these periods of nineteenth-century history, the age of the railroad, was ushered in with the opening of the Hudson River Railroad in 1851 and lasted for approximately fifty years. Despite the persistence of earlier habits and customs, life in the Valley was changing in significant ways. We see this in the spread of new rail lines throughout the region; in plans to build a new railroad bridge at Poughkeepsie; in the establishment and growth of institutions like Vassar College, which were operating in their infancy or youth; and in the spread of big resorts up and down the Hudson.<sup>3</sup>

There are several especially interesting accounts and descriptions of the Hudson River Valley from the 1860s and early 1870s, when the age of the railroad was in full bloom. They include local author and artist Benson Lossing's *The*

*Hudson, from the Wilderness to the Sea*, parts of which originally appeared in the *London Art Journal* in 1860 and 1861. Also of note are narratives by European travelers, such as the Frenchmen Jacques Offenbach (the musician and composer) and Emile De Damseaux. These are particularly valuable for their views of American life during an industrial age.<sup>4</sup>

Another European account of travels in the Hudson River Valley from this period is included in Martinus Cohen Stuart's two-volume *Zes Maanden in Amerika*, or *Six Months in America*,<sup>5</sup> which chronicles Cohen Stuart's journeys in the United States during the end of 1873 and the beginning of 1874. The author viewed the work as a kind of diary, or summary of his "most valuable memories strung together in various chapters."<sup>6</sup> Written in Dutch and dedicated to Sophia Frederika Mathilda, the Queen of the Netherlands, the work is obviously intended for a Dutch audience. It was published in 1875 in Haarlem, but no part of this book has heretofore been translated into English. For this reason, the accounts have gone unnoticed by both casual readers and scholars.

Cohen Stuart's accounts of the Hudson River Valley are useful for several reasons. His comments and descriptions touch upon a variety of subjects: the landscape and environment, schools and education, religion, language, the economy, transportation, and social habits. There is also depth to portions of his narrative; for instance, there are detailed descriptions of several religious, educational, and military institutions. Moreover, it provides an opportunity to observe a Dutch view of the Valley, which is interesting given the region's historical connections to Holland.<sup>7</sup>

## Martinus Cohen Stuart (1824-1878)

Who was Martinus Cohen Stuart, and why did he visit the United States and write a book about his experiences here? Cohen Stuart was born in The Hague in 1824, the son of James Cohen, a Jewish merchant who had converted at an early age to the Christian faith. His mother, Petronella Stuart, was the daughter of a well-known Remonstrant minister in Amsterdam, Martinus Stuart. Like his brothers and sisters, Martinus took the combined names of both parents. He followed his grandfather's footsteps and studied theology at the Remonstrant Seminarium at Amsterdam. There he felt the influence of his uncle, Abraham des Amorie van der Hoeven, head of the Seminarium, who was averse to the modernism that had become the mainstream in the Reformed (*Hervormde*) Church as well as in the Remonstrant Fraternity. But he also imbued his nephew with a deeply felt desire for fraternization and unity among Christians, especially the Protestant denominations.

Cohen Stuart was called by the congregations of Zevenhuizen, Alkmaar, Utrecht and Rotterdam, respectively. In Rotterdam, the most important Remonstrant congregation in Holland, he served as minister for twelve years, but not altogether to his satisfaction. His parishioners didn't appear to appreciate his anti-modernistic ideas; when he mounted the pulpit, a great many of them left. On the other hand, his sermons were very much appreciated by members of the Reformed Church (from which the Remonstrants had seceded in the early seventeenth century), who in turn found it hard to stomach the latitudinarian modernism of their own ministers. He therefore applied for early retirement (partly because of his hardness of hearing), which was granted in 1873. From that point on, he was in a position to dedicate himself fully to his activities on behalf of ecumenism, philanthropy, and mission until his death on December 12, 1878, at the age of fifty-four.

Cohen Stuart was one of the few Remonstrant ministers in the Netherlands who may be called a supporter of the so-called *Réveil*, the revival movement originating in Switzerland in the first decade of the nineteenth century. (In America, this movement is known as the Second Awakening.) The partisans of the *Réveil* wanted to restore the church to its state before the French Revolution. Influenced by romanticism, they opposed the rationalism of the Enlightenment. In the Netherlands, its adherents were primarily members of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches who refused to acquiesce in their denominations' growing liberalism. Furthermore, the manner in which the centuries-old Reformed Church (*Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk*) was put under the direct control of King William I (1815-1840) conflicted utterly with the presbyterian-synodal church organization, whose foundations were laid by the famous Synod of Dordrecht (1618/19). By the introduction of state-controlled regulations, the king could mold the church and its government (though not its dogmas) to his own mind. To the common Calvinists, this "royal church," with its top-down hierarchical structure, bore a likeness to the despised institution of Roman Catholicism.

Ordinary churchgoers who had great problems with a religious practice corroded by the ideas of the Enlightenment felt themselves let down. The *Afscheiding* (Secession) of 1834 originated in congregations headed by ministers who themselves thought the official church too much stained with liberalism. Out of this secession and later ones would come the Reformed Churches (*Gereformeerde Kerken*).<sup>8</sup> Under pressure of persecution (because the secessionists refused to bow to the demands of king and government to give up the name "Reformed"), many of them decided to seek refuge in the United States, where all were free to express their beliefs in whatever form they chose. Although split up in various modalities,

the Dutch Reformed Church is still extant, especially among Americans of Dutch extraction.<sup>9</sup>

In his heart, Cohen Stuart associated himself with the brethren of the *Réveil*. He kept up a correspondence with the Dutch leader of the *Réveil* Da Costa. He began to translate tracts by Vinet (*Etudes Evangéliques*) and Lavater. In his Utrecht period, he got involved in the typical *Réveil* philanthropic-missionary work “for the lifting up and correcting of repentant fallen women.” Yet he didn’t feel properly at home within the Remonstrant Fraternity, which in those days was shaping itself in a modernistic, ethical-irenical direction where orthodox dogmatism was in little demand.<sup>10</sup> During his ministry in Rotterdam, the alienation between Cohen Stuart and his parishioners became more and more clear. He must have felt greatly relieved by his early retirement. It also enabled him to prolong his trip to America into a six months’ stay, allowing him to cross the continent.

## Cohen Stuart Visits the United States

What brought this Dutch minister to the United States? The proximate reason for his trip was the Sixth General Meeting of Evangelical Alliance of America. The Evangelical Alliance was an interdenominational organization formed in London in 1846. It promoted Protestantism and Christianity based on scripture. At the founding conference, the basic principles to which the members of the alliance committed themselves were laid down in nine articles expressing the essential beliefs of faith, which can be seen as the organization’s constitution. It was stated that “the Alliance is not to be considered as an alliance of denominations or branches of the church, but of individual Christians.” Thus, delegates represented not their church or denomination but themselves, and as such formed a “confederation, on the basis of the great Evangelical principles held in common by them.”<sup>11</sup> By organizing in this manner, the alliance avoided the pitfall of sectarianism. It was hoped that in the end all or most Christian churches would be united in one Protestant church. This would be achieved by convening national and international meetings, seeking publicity in newspapers, and publishing tracts.

The organization took the form of a federation of national branches. During the nineteenth century, General Meetings of the alliance occurred periodically in various European cities. Slavery became a dividing issue at mid-century among many churches, and for a time the alliance floundered. But the end of the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery made it easier for the churches to reunite in new forms of collaboration. In 1867, a General Meeting was held in Amsterdam; that same year, a branch of the alliance was formed in the United States. The next General Meeting, which took place in 1873, was held in New

York City, which was generally seen as the seat of America's national organization.<sup>12</sup> Given Cohen Stuart's background, both religiously and ethnically it is easy to see why he desired to attend the New York meeting. Others felt this way too: New York would have the largest attendance of any of the meetings of the alliance.

Cohen Stuart arrived in New York Harbor on September 15, 1873, aboard the *Rotterdam* of the *Nederlandsch-Amerikaansche Stoomvaart-Maatschappij*.<sup>13</sup> The scene made a great impression on him:

In the late afternoon of the day before we had seen land looming up hardly visible to the naked eye. The following night we had come to an anchor in the Sound between Long Island and Staten-Island. When we came on deck early next morning we saw, shone upon by a splendid morning-sun, at our left the elevated coast of New Jersey, at the right the undulating hills of Long-Island with a series of country-houses framed by trees, and on the wide stream before us, behind which in the grey distance through haze and smoke little by little something of the big metropolis became visible, a great number of ships and steamers. Every quarter of an hour or so the scene changed and enlivened, as we slowly steamed up the river, came nearer to New York and Brooklyn, big Transatlantic steamers, numerous three-masters majestically coming up from sea under full press of sails, graceful pleasure yachts here and there cruising and occasionally changing their tack, steam-lighters and tugboats in the most fancy forms, the huge water-palaces of some riverboats, floating castles three storeys high, the hardly smaller steam-ferries continuously moving right and left, and there being mirrored in the wide harbour, New York at one side, Brooklyn at the other, and in between the East River, the rising pier of the 200 feet high bridge, which with an unequalled gigantic task will make both towns within a few years into one—this spectacle was supremely overpowering.<sup>14</sup>

Several chapters of *Zes Maanden* deal entirely or partly with New York, and many of Cohen Stuart's entries were written from Flatbush in Brooklyn. He visits many of the city's most famous sites and institutions, including the Historical Society, the Five Points House of Industry, and Columbia College. He also observes important social traditions in New York, particularly those associated with holidays, such as Christmas, New Year's Day, and St. Patrick's Day. Though Cohen Stuart travels to other parts of the country, he always returns to New York. In a very real way, therefore, New York City serves as his home base.

Cohen Stuart admired greatly the emerging United States, of which he saw a

great deal during his criss-cross tour after the conference in New York had ended. (It was his first and only visit to the New World.) His first trip outside the New York area was to Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. He later traveled to the Midwest and visited places like Niagara Falls; Holland, Michigan (where many Dutch emigrants had settled); Chicago; Iowa; and Minnesota. On another trip, he visited New England, while on his last journey outside the New York area he visited the South, including cities and outlying areas in Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia.

In his report on the sixth conference, Cohen Stuart gives a description of some characteristics of the Americans he encountered. These may be stereotypes of that time, but he had no doubt deduced them from his own observations. After traveling through so many states, he must have gotten a fair idea of the typical qualities of the American society. “ ‘Fast living’ makes its influence felt everywhere, especially in New York,” he writes. “The American lives fast, whatever he does he does it always fast, mostly happily. *Le grand secret de saisir l’occasion* (Vinet), the American has it: in his feeling of vitality, in his self-reliance, in his unbounded hope of the future, in the over-boldness of his youth, he doesn’t know nor recognize bounds.”<sup>15</sup> Despite being couched in nineteenth-century psychological terms, the perception is still recognizable and plausible.

When he speaks about the conference itself, Cohen Stuart notices the American urge to express the message loud and clear: “Unmistakable is a certain disposition to show, glitter and spectacle [—]. What makes a public appearance doesn’t do so without a big drum and blaring clarion.” The spiritual fervor of America is appreciated very much by Cohen Stuart, especially when compared with the lukewarm religiosity of the Modernists back home. “What set the tone here was Christianity [—]. For here the Bible is honoured, and Christendom, much more than in Europe, still has authority within society.” But it is possible that his observations, at least at the conference, were somewhat distorted. He heard Americans at the gathering say: “Even this country has never witnessed the like of it.”

Cohen Stuart showed great enthusiasm for America, but was not blind to its citizens’ peculiarities. In spite of their democratic instincts, they were not insensible to the effects of the fashionable world: “Americans may see themselves as democrats [—] a certain weakness for the aristocratic is too deeply rooted in human nature to be fully stamped out. [—] The democratic citizens of New York take delight in patrician descent. And for them nobility means—to spring from the early Dutch settlers, when New York still was called New Amsterdam.”

In the Netherlands, there was no such thing as a cultivated stereotype of

Americans and American society; that would come later, after America entered the field of European politics and wars. Only a few Dutchmen traveled to the United States, and most did so to stay. Written impressions by travelers of their experiences were rare, and there was little interchange in writing between both countries.

## Cohen Stuart in the Hudson River Valley

During his six months in the United States, Cohen Stuart traveled to the Hudson River Valley five times. Sometimes this was to see specific sites within the region; at other times, he was traveling through the Valley on his way to see other places. On his first foray outside New York City, undertaken in September 1873, he journeyed by steamboat to the Catskill Mountains. This three-day trip, a “long-nursed wish” of Cohen Stuart’s, included a stay at the Catskill Mountain House—the famous classical-style hotel that had been built in 1824—as well as a trip to Kaaterskill Falls. The return trip to New York was made via railroad. Not long after, in early October, Cohen Stuart made his second trip to the region via the railroad, spending part of a weekend visiting places like Washington Irving’s Sunnyside in Tarrytown.

The third visit took place in the middle of December, when Cohen Stuart spent a long weekend visiting Peekskill and other towns in the lower Hudson Valley. While in Peekskill, he stayed with another minister, John Bodine Thompson, who at that time was serving Reformed churches in both Peekskill and Cortlandtown. (Cohen Stuart preached in each of these.) At the end of this visit, Cohen Stuart went to West Point, where he was given a long tour of the United States Military Academy. The fourth visit occurred at the end of January 1874, while on his way to New England. During this trip, Cohen Stuart stopped in Tarrytown, Yonkers, and Poughkeepsie. He preached in a Tarrytown church and gave an address in Dutch at another church in Yonkers. While in Poughkeepsie, he visited Vassar College and compiled an especially long entry on this institution for his book. The last visit to the Valley took place in early February; after returning from New England, Cohen Stuart went to Albany, again traveling along the Hudson.

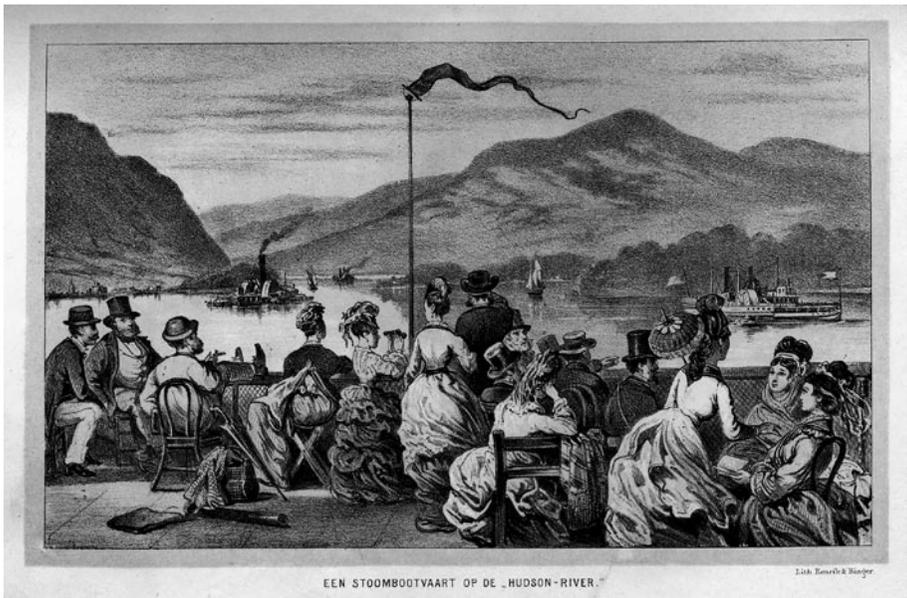
Even from this cursory review, we can see that in the course of his travels, Cohen Stuart was able to gain some familiarity with a sizeable portion of the Hudson Valley. As noted earlier, his written thoughts and observations touch on a number of important themes: the landscape and environment, especially the Catskill Mountains and individual cities and villages; education, particularly at West Point and Vassar College; religious practices of local Protestants; language

and culture of the Dutch living in America; the economy, including local trades and the Panic of 1873; transportation by rail and steamship; and finally the social habits of Americans.

The following is a translation of Cohen Stuart's first major journey to and through the Hudson River Valley. Numerals in parenthesis indicate the page numbers in the original.

## Endnotes

1. Roland Van Zandt's *Chronicles of the Hudson: Three Centuries of Travelers' Accounts* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1971) gathers together many interesting and illuminating primary sources dating from 1609 to 1905.
2. Van Zandt identifies these periods in *Chronicles of the Hudson* and provides several accounts from each.
3. There are a number of general histories that treat this time period. Jeffrey Simpson's *The Hudson River, 1850-1918: A Photographic Portrait* (Tarrytown, New York: Sleepy Hollow Press, 1981) provides one discussion, along with many fascinating images and an introductory bibliography.
4. The accounts by Offenbach and De Damseaux are included in *Chronicles of the Hudson*.
5. Martinus Cohen Stuart, *Zes Maanden in Amerika* (Haarlem: Kruseman & Tjeenk Willink), 1875.
6. *Zes Maanden*, 3-4 (preface). This and all succeeding translations of the text are our own.
7. In this article, we will focus on the Hudson River Valley. We will not consider New York City or Albany, though obviously these cities have close connections to the Hudson River.
8. In 2004, after a long period of preparation, the old *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk* and the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (together with the *Evangelisch-lutherse Kerken*) merged into the *Verenigde Protestantse Kerk*.
9. For those interested in the Reformed immigrants from the Netherlands in America, see L. Oostendorp, *H.P. Scholte—Leader of the Secession of 1834 and Founder of Pella* (Franeker, 1964). One of the leaders of the Secession, Scholte and 800 followers emigrated to the U.S.A. in 1847. He founded Pella, Iowa.
10. In 1872, the Remonstrant Fraternity officially decided to adhere to Modernism. The following year, the Seminarium, to Cohen Stuart's dismay, was transferred from Amsterdam to the University of Leiden, considered a breeding-ground of Modernism.
11. Philip D. Jordan, *The Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America*, 39-40.
12. A dated but still useful description of the Alliance is available in the 1909 edition of the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume V.
13. The *Nederlandsch-Amerikaansche Stoomvaart-Maatschappij* (NASM) had been founded half a year earlier. Because of the unpronounceability the company was renamed in 1896 into *Holland-Amerika Lijn* (HAL). This company still exists, but is now part of the Carnival Cruise Lines. The ships of the HAL are at present moored in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; its headquarters are located in Seattle, Washington.
14. Cohen Stuart, *Verslag*, 21-22.
15. This and the following quotations are taken from Cohen Stuart's Report on the Sixth Conference (*Gedenkboek van de zesde algemeene vergadering der Evangelische Alliantie*), 12 ff.



(81)

## Chapter III. A trip alongside the Hudson

*Flatbush, 26 September*

A journey to the Catskill-mountains on the Hudson... It would come true, a long nursed wish would be realized.

Already months before my host of today had written to me: “when you come to stay with us, I will take you up to Catskill-mountains [sic], and show you a more glorious scenery than your eyes, I dare say, have ever met.” No wonder, my expectations ran high. And my desire had not diminished since my arrival here. The words written by my dear host were a theme, on which he digressed time and again with fresh eloquence. He couldn’t stop talking about it; for him it was truly a passion, and a passion without a trace of fear or rivalry. On the contrary: he was but apprehensive that everybody would love and admire the object of his love and admiration in the way he did. The since long promised *excursion* for that reason was at the head of the program, which his kind hospitality (82) had drawn up for us, and with the greatest interest the thermometer and barometer were consulted daily, the first in the hope that the early night-frost in the high mountainous

district would have contributed to the weaving of the beautiful many-colored autumnal raiment, wherein our friend wished the admired mountain-goddess would show herself to our rapturous eyes. So strongly was our imagination tickled, that I hardly could suppress my fear of seeing the high-pitched expectation end in unavoidable disappointment. Later I understood why his answer to the expression of feelings of anxiety like that was merely a calm smile.

The jaunt was fixed for Tuesday the 23rd. Before daybreak we were stirring, and we had, still by gaslight, a hurried, but savory breakfast. Half past six was the time of departure of the steamer, which would take us up the river Hudson, but it would take us at least an hour driving to the port of call in New York. Soon we were, with some hand luggage for a few nights' absence, in a streetcar on our way to the ferry, which took us across the river, and we did reach in time the pier, where our steamer was waiting.

The riverboats, which sail the big streams of North America, are—surely not unjustly—the pride of the New World. Those of the Hudson are among the biggest and finest. So often have they already been praised that I may consider it needless to describe them here in detail. Suffice it to say that there is not a bit of boasting in calling them “floating palaces.” The Americans may—I don't quite know why—have left the transatlantic trade completely in the hands of the Europeans, their own river and coastal navigation are proof that this cannot stem from fear of competition. In efficiency and space, luxury of furnishing, and speed, they outrival anything of the sort we so far have known in (83) Europe. One should imagine floating castles, three hundred feet long and proportionally wide, with four stories above each other; seemingly almost immense drawing-rooms, tastefully and sumptuously adorned with large mirrors, rich gilding, costly carpets, and velvet sofas; further decent bed-rooms and large dining rooms, everything adapted to accommodate some hundreds of people with space and comfort; imagine those proud colossuses gliding over the water or shooting through it without the least drone or kick, traveling at a speed of twenty miles an hour, equal to that of a horse at full trot—and one must admit: spirit of enterprise and ship-building industry have scored here an unequalled triumph!

And then, one can imagine the day, no more than sixty years ago, since in September 1807 the engineer Fulton, on the very same Hudson, made his first, shabby trial with a small steamer. The whole town of Albany turned out to have a joke at the foolish venture of that “Claremont,” which should navigate without sails or oars, and as if they were red Indians did people stare in utter amazement after the incredible “fireship,” expecting at any moment that it would perish under their very eyes. The most long-sighted minds, the prominent authorities of the day,

after the first proof, declared it a bold venture, a successful joke, which however was not to be seen as of any material value or practical importance whatsoever. “Fulton’s Folly” they had named the steamer, and the whole enterprise was no more than a *folly*. That single historical reminiscence explains better than any reasoning or statistics how the world, how *this* world has changed and made progress during the last half century.

As a matter of fact *everything* is comparatively young. Slightly less (84) than two and a half centuries ago the whole river was still unknown and not to be found on any map. It was not till 1609 that the Hudson was *discovered*, discovered, I add with some pride... by Dutch navigators. Henry Hudson himself may have been an Englishman, as a captain he was employed by the East India Company on a Dutch ship manned by a Dutch crew and put to sea from a Dutch port. The *Halve Maan*, a yacht of hardly eighty tons, carrying a crew of twenty hands, was the first European ship that sailed these waters. Having made anchorage on the third of September 1609 at Sandy Hook and having sailed through the Narrows on the 10th Hudson proceeded slowly on his voyage of discovery, until he arrived on the 23rd at Albany of today, and understanding that it was impossible to find the passage to China he was looking for by this way he decided to return.—The natives knew the river under the name of *Mah-i-can-tuk*, “the backward and forward flowing water,” probably because of the stark rising and falling tide. Hudson himself called her “the river of the mountains,” a name initially adopted by the Spaniards and the Portuguese. After the discovery of the Delaware or South River, the first at times was called the *North River* or the *Manhattan* as well. Our Dutchmen christened her the *Mauritius* to honor Prince Maurice, and under that name the river still figures in a letter of 5 November 1625 to the Estates of Holland and West Frisia.—In the end, though, the name *Hudson* got the upper hand and the others were forgotten.

How much the world has changed here since the days of Hudson! In 1614 a Dutch factory with a small fortification was established on the spot, which was called always “Battery,” with a couple of wooden cottages, and not far from there (where it is still called the “Bowery”) stood the brick farmhouse of the well-known Governor (85) Pieter Stuyvesant.<sup>1</sup> And now?... one should look around, along the immense rows of wharfs, houses, ships on both sides!

Once—the legend says—one of those early Dutch colonists, a certain van Kortlandt, had a vision. Saint Nicolas, patron saint of Amsterdam, who as a godfather of New Amsterdam had promised that colony also his favor, appeared to him in a dream. The patron saint was coming riding over the tops of the trees—chimney tops weren’t there yet—: the truly American Saint Nicolas, not the venerable

mitred Bishop with beard and crozier, as he makes his appearance to our children, but as he is known and revered on the other side of the ocean: as a prosperous Dutch sailor with his woolly cap and jacket and his inseparable short pipe in his mouth. Puffing away to his content he sat down on a branch high in the tree, and Kortlandt saw the smoke from his pipe spreading in dense clouds over the region. But look: when he stares at them longer,... gradually the clouds belching out take on the forms and figures, like shadows of houses, and churches, and steeples, and masts, over a wide, wide vastness, on all sides of the water!—Kortlandt wakes up. He recognizes in that vision the promise of the patron saint, that once a big town will rise here!—If the old Dutchman would wake up again now and look around how much would he be amazed! His dream has become true in such a way that he might take reality almost for a dream.

But then our steam-palace gets moving. The huge paddlewheels begin to splash and to rotate, as if they are impatient to start the voyage, and a heavy, double cloud of smoke curls itself up from the two funnels, as if Kortlandt's Saint Nicolas himself was smoking. The hawsers (86) are cast off, the gangways hauled in. Between ships and steamers, rafts and lighters—to the right New York, to the left Hoboken and Jersey—we glide on, up the wide, splendid Hudson. Soon the spires of Trinity and St. Paul sink away in the haze. The hills of Bergen appear, and we pass the Harlem River, which borders to the north the island Manhattan and connects the Hudson with the East River. Up there is "Spuytenduvil," as the small promontory is called now, wherefrom one of the earliest colonists once "spijt den duivel"<sup>2</sup> threw himself during a heavy storm in the whirling water in order to cross it swimming, but paying for his recklessness and foolhardy swearing with his life.—After some more few moments we have lost sight of the town completely and find ourselves already in the middle of a beautiful scenery: on one side a chain of cliffs about 600 feet high, steeply rising upwards from the river, on the other side a charmingly undulating border with houses and villages, grouped picturesquely along the bank.

The Hudson has often been called "the American Rhine." That is no surprise. Unwillingly one is reminded here of the well-known river views from Bonn up to Mainz. The comparison is logical, not inaccurate as far as the general character of the scenery is concerned; but it turns out in the advantage of the Hudson. There can be no question, I believe, of equalization. I don't want to belittle the well-deserved fame of the river, celebrated by our Borger<sup>3</sup>—"in a fit of Russophilia," says Potgieter<sup>4</sup>—as the "Grand-duke of Europe's streams,"—but already because of its grandiose majesty the Hudson is far ahead. Whereas the Rhine-views with the exception of three eminent [hervorragende] points suffer by a certain monotony

and the banks have in fact more of a highland than of a chain of hills, and the endless vineyards (87) with their terraced, regular slopes detract from the beauty of the whole, there is here on the Hudson more grandiosity as well as more variety.

Frankly,—let justice be done to truth—here one sees no ancient remains with gray mossy walls—so old and weather-beaten, as if they have grown into one with the rocks, in which they are rooted,—crowning the elevations, at the feet of which small, still half-medieval hamlets in drowsy tranquility seem to dream of days long past. All this *has* its own poetry, I have to admit. But still I wonder if the open-minded vision, even that of the painter and the artist, should not be more pleased by a scene like this. Nature here no doubt is bolder and richer, and there is unquestionably more unity and harmony. Here no great, but somewhat strident contrast between the gray ruins and the little green steamboat or the tugboat with its tail of Rhine barges. Banks and stream, land and river, *everything* speaks of health, development, prosperity, vigor, in the midst of a nature of everlasting youth and affluence.

The proud steamers and the heavily rigged sailing vessels are fully integrated with the towns and buildings, which one hasn't to see from a distance to admire them, and the splendid country houses and castles, which with humble pride are called "cottages," here at the river-banks, reflected in the water, yonder high on the top of the hill or on the slope of the mountain, encircled by dense trees, surely can be compared with the ruins of the Rhine, especially in the eyes of those who don't suffer of the mania of antiquities.

Or would the *poet*, where the eye of the painter is enchanted, nevertheless miss what he will find in other places, where the old ruins are haunted by the ghosts of the past? It is true: the Hudson-naïad doesn't necessarily sing of nuns, languishing from love under their spiritual vestment, of harnessed (88) crusaders, afterwards hiding in their pious monk's habit, or of Christian virgins sacrificed to heathen dragons. But might the Muse of history and poetry for that reason not be able to tune her lyre?—Well, mankind is always looking for history and legend and he finds them everywhere. He wants to relive the past, and he wishes always to shroud it in the misty veil of magic, which goes with every perspective!—You see over there, downhill, a small country house half hidden behind the trees? It is "Sunnyside," formerly the residence of Washington Irving, the father of American literature, the Walter Scott of New York's highlands, the Herodotus of New England's Nile. Nearby, in the deep ravine, the small spire of the old Dutch chapel with its red brick front can be seen; it is the church of "Sleepy Hollow," the scene of the idyll of Ichabod Crane, the hollow schoolmaster, and the rich farmer's daughter Katharina van Tassel. Is there anything which poetry doesn't recreate

and glorify, if only it truly uses the magic wand, which by its sheer touch changes rocks into gold? Besides, old age is relative. For youthful America a past, dating back two hundred years, reaches back almost to the poetical era of mythology.

Sure, the banks of the Hudson too have their legends from the ancient heroic period, when Indians and colonists were still struggling for the predominance, and—this must rejoice the Dutch heart,—the brave heroic figures, the Titans of those ancient, prehistoric days, are .... our forbears. What kind of men they were, those settlers and seafarers, sons of the Beggars still pure, who left such a deep, imperishable memory, wherever they set their somewhat heavy and clumsy but strong feet; men, square-built and brawny, of rough looks, but brave in action! True, they weren't exemplary heroes of romance at all, (89) and not nearly all reminiscences left by them do them credit. The goblet they handled with equal ease as the musket and the pick-axe, and one tells that the Indians, seeing what effect the liquor had on the reeling walk of their white-skinned brethren, came to the conclusion that the winding course of the river must be attributed to the fact the river itself had gotten drunk, whereupon they, alas, egged on by the enticing juice, set out with great assiduity to search for the "source of the fire-water," from which the river had drunk. Certainly, not everything that seems to us to glitter from the so-called "good old days" is of gold. But they had bravery and vigor, spirit of enterprise and perseverance, these forebears with all their shortcomings and failures, and even if modern America at times mocks the old "Knickerbockers," it can't forget them. And so: although they sounded harsh to the ear, abused by a foreign accent at that; and though much less melodious and of poetical meaning than the Indian names which have come down to us—they were still very sweet to me, all those Dutch names: Bierstad, Haverstroo, Verplank's Punt, Donderberg, Staatsburg, Krom-Elboog, Jonker and many others, which preserve the memory of our fathers on the banks of the Hudson!

But let us not dwell upon those memories any longer. In America there is anyway more concern with the present than with the past. And what pleasures reality has to offer to the eye during a trip on the Hudson on a clear autumnal day, when one is seated on the broad bows of the steamer, as can be seen on the illustration, hardly noticing the ship moving forward, and sees the banks of the river on both sides gliding by, suffices to make any giving way to one's imagination superfluous.

I'll not venture upon a full description of that splendid panorama. (90) This can be found in many a travelers guide, and more accurate and complete than I could do it. These guides have in a sense killed the proper itineraries. Of all the regions reached by travelers, everything has been said, and on the whole accu-

rately, by the *Bradshaw's*, *Murray's* and *Tschudi's* (here the *Osgood's*), so that there is nothing new to be told. Every mountain, every stream, every cascade has been characterized permanently—our Beets<sup>5</sup> has observed this quite correctly—by its peculiar adjective, from now on attached to it forever. American travelers' guides in this respect don't yield to the European ones. Americans for that matter are not afraid to use amply "epitheta ornantia."

I open my own travelers guide. I find the boat trip on the Hudson from New York to Catskill categorized systematically in five sections, every one stamped with its hallmark. 1: *The Palisades*—GRANDEUR. 2: *The Tappan Zee*—REPOSE. 3: *The Highlands*—SUBLIMITY. 4: *The Hillsides*—THE PICTURESQUE. 5: *The Catskills*—BEAUTY.—I have to admit: the choice of words is quite appropriate, and they give at least some idea of what is most characteristic of the successive river views when one ascends upstream.

First come, on the Western bank, the fifteen miles of rocky cliffs of the so called Palisades, a steep basalt wall five—six hundred feet high with its vertical, angular shafts, like a colossal brick-work which reminds of Scotland's famous Fingal's Cave.—Then the proud precipice suddenly ends, while the river all at once broadens into what seems a friendly lake surrounded by graceful hills.—After that, where the riverbanks, still at close distance from each other, seem to narrow further down, suddenly a passage opens before the eye between the steep cliffs, which forms so to speak the gateway to the so-called Hudson Highlands. (91) This is maybe the most beautiful part of the trip. The scene becomes wilder and bolder and is rich in variation. At one time one could imagine oneself in the Scottish Highlands on Loch Lomond or Loch Kathrine; then again it is the masses of rocks, like the Old Cro' Nest and Storm King, which remind unwittingly of the Lorelei or the Drachenfels, or the splendidly located West Point with its famous military academy, washed by the meandering river like a mountainous peninsula, presenting itself as another Ehrenbreitstein, but on a more grandiose and daring scale.—Once again the stream widens and the mountains fall in height.

For twenty miles the eye rests on the so-called Sloping Hills. Here the country once again is teeming with old Dutch names and legends. The elevation over there is still called *Duivel's danskamer*,<sup>6</sup> thus called by the Dutch sailors, when they watched there for the first time a fierce war dance being performed by the Indians. Somewhat further in that small bay is the anchorage ground of the *Stormschip*, the "Flying Dutchman" of the Hudson. Every time a storm burst in Haverstraw Bay or Tappan Zee, the eye, if it descries well, makes out against the black sky an old rigged ship always sailing up against the wind and the stream; and the carefully listening ear hears the captain of the phantom ship give his orders to the crew in

“good low Dutch.” One says: it is still the old “Halve Maen” with Hudson and his crew. And when the full moon, half-hidden behind the thick clouds, is shining in the sky, the denizens of the banks many a time still perceive the white topsails of the yacht, feebly shining against the dark sky.—What we now see in broad daylight is the friendly town of Poughkeepsie, with its Indian name meaning “safe haven,” and its green, undulating banks with cheerful houses and villages, moreover a great many boats on the water, mostly small ice-boats, which load the winter-harvest of the Hudson and Croton River, amassed in (92) the numerous storehouses on the waterfront, and bring it to New York.

Meanwhile we were drawing nearer to the destination of our boat trip. Already, in the distance, the high Catskill-hills rise on the right bank, and with a pair of good field glasses we descry as a white spot, as if it were a freshly fallen snowflake, almost on the highest point: the hotel, where accommodation for the night is awaiting us. Around two o’clock in the afternoon the boat, which will sail on up to Albany, drops us on the pier at Catskill Landing, nearly disappointed that we have to take our leave of a journey, which in a few hours had given us so much pleasure.

But there was no ground for us to complain; we would see things still bigger than these. In the meantime, while a couple of strong horses are put to a light carriage to bring us to the mountain hotel, we have time to see how the land lies. Apparently much further away than could be seen from the steamer lies the mountain range, about eight miles away, almost instantly rising from the level up to around four thousand feet. It is like a solitary promontory of the Appalachian Mountains, which, themselves just a ramification of the Alleghenies, stretch southward from the Adirondacks’ highlands, like a projecting bastion, which covers the plain of the Hudson. The form of that promontory can be visualized somehow by putting a fist on the palm of a hand, whereby the knuckles figure the more prominent mountaintops and the cleavages between the fingers the sloping fissures and valleys. The old Indian name of these mountains was *Antioras*, “mountain of Heaven”—the name Cats- or Catz-, Kaats- or Katers-, occasionally also Kauterskill mountains is from Dutch origin. The Indian tribe of the Mohegans had planted there its *totem* or escutcheon, the figure (93) of a wild cat, as its banner of war. The water or “kil” flowing down from the height was called the Katskil or the Katskillkreek. How the mountain itself came into being is told by the Indian mythology. In earlier times there lived an enormous giant, who without pity devoured the redskin children. Once, when he was going to the river to take a bath, he was touched by the powerful hand of the great Spirit of Sachem, and fell down convulsively. His disfigured corpse became the range of mountains

over there. Near the top of the highest mountain there are two small lakes. They are the eyes of the giant. In the autumn, when he goes into hibernation, they close up with a thick crust of ice; but he may be awake or asleep, always the tears are running along his cheeks out of grief of his fall, which form streamlets and cataracts. On the highest top the mountain spirit of an old *squaw* is living, who guards the storehouse of snow and storm. Day and night she keeps the winds locked in her “wigwam” or cottage and never lets out more than one at a time. It is her too, who every month forges a new moon and cuts up the old one to stars.

Let us turn from myth back to reality. For the moment there is no one else, apart from ourselves, going up to the hotel than a gentleman, for whom we willingly make room in our carriage. We don't have to regret our little compliance. He is a lively, jumpy, but nice and entertaining man, who won't let fall away the conversation for a moment. From the start we took him for a Frenchman and an artist. But he doesn't allow us time, not even to guess. That he is a musician, making an artistic trip in America; yea, his political convictions, his plans, everything is disclosed to us; we have been informed completely within the first quarter of an hour. It was a torrent of anecdotes—on Jenny Lind, on the Patis, on Louis Philippe, on Ary Scheffer<sup>7</sup>, on the Duchess of Orleans, at whose quarters he had given concerts, and on the (94) Count of Paris, whom he had given lessons; everything he presented with the ease of the “Weltmann” and the vivacity of the artist. How well the true Frenchman understands the higher art of conversation! And he is more than a good conversationalist; he is a most pleasant traveling companion, our good professor Geoffroy. What sort of person would be desirable as a friend or a guide on the long path of life is another question; as a traveling companion through a beautiful part of the country, however, I prefer a French artist to a philosophical German or a most steady Englishman, not to speak of my own fellow-countrymen.

At first our journey passed with little excitement. For about six miles the road leads over a hardly perceptible rising plateau with meadows and arable fields, mostly along the bank of the small Catskill stream, its water flowing down quietly towards the Hudson, as if it were tired of its journey through the mountains. The scenery is friendly, but monotonous, and we might almost forget that to us it is a mountain trip. But gradually the scene is changing. The horses, although accustomed to go up, took to a more sluggish, quieter pace. Slowly the broad, now winding road rises, and equally rises the picturesque beauty of the scenery. It is the beauty of a mountainous and forest panorama combined; it is the huge mountains, wrapped densely in a mantle of trees, now glittering in the most splendid autumnal tints; steep precipices crowned by heavy trees; colossal rocks, as if hurled on each other by Titans, overgrown with moss, ferns, and under wood, between which



RIP VAN WINKLE'S CABIN.

Illustration from Benson J. Lossing's *The Hudson: From Wilderness to Sea*

brooklets shoot down playfully. Sometimes the forest becomes so dense that the foliage forms the winding road to a dark arbor until all of a sudden, with another swing, a new surprising view on a scene, at every turn broader and more beautiful, opens up, at times along a precipice, at which occasion a shudder went through our nervous friend. (95) There is no real danger, though; it is no more than “pleasantly dangerous,” as a certain brave young female traveler once put it. The carriage is well made, the coachman competent, the horses trustworthy, and, in case of slipping down, a solid iron hook under the coach would prevent its further decline.

Later, halfway, we will pass the Rip van Winkle house, near the village where Washington Irving made to live his immortal hero. No character created by the pen of this very popular author is so well-known and popular as the good-natured, light-hearted Rip, a dreaded housewife as his tormentor, but looking for comfort in the friendship of the children of the neighborhood and of his faithful hound Wolf.—After a moment rest we get on with the ascent. It takes more time than we expected. “The *mountain grows upon you*, as you ascend,” we were told; and so we found out. It is as if our destination moves away from us as we get closer. Now

and then the horses have to stop to catch their breath, or we get off to walk quite a distance to lighten their burden and enhance our own pleasure. Already the evening has fallen, and rain, which has been threatening the whole day, likewise falls. At first the clouds, later the shadows of the twilight and the darkness of the night cast a dense blanket over the scenery. The end of our journey is fully hidden from our view.

That may have been a deprivation, on the other hand it was a surprising and no mean pleasure, when we arrived, suddenly coming out of the dark forest, at the front yard of the hotel so long looked out for, where the light from numerous windows was flashing at us so friendly and enticingly, and we saw ourselves moved from the dripping coach into the cozy dining room, where it did us good to find a crackling fire and an excellent supper. Maybe it is somewhat exaggerated to speak of a “Capua on the mountaintop;” but there is no mistake that the wealthy New Yorker seeking rest and fresh air here is not to miss much of his usual luxury (96) and comfort, and that the atmosphere in the drawing room and the friendly grinning faces of the many Negro waiters remind for the moment more of some tropical region than of a place three thousand feet above the Hudson in the center of the State of New York.

For the moment there are a few guests. But soon we made acquaintance with some of them. We had taken some newspapers with us of the world downhill. These were most useful for us as introduction and recommendation. It was more than curiosity; there was uneasiness and anguish in the agitation with which they were asked for, taken, skimmed through! Ah, they are anxious, alarming days today for the rich as well as for the poor, for the propertied and for the unpropertied, mostly for the former. Dark clouds have gathered not in the political, but in the financial sphere; an ominous atmosphere at this moment is that of the Stock Exchange of New York. Its barometer indicates since some days “storm and thunder.” Every day new bankruptcies are reported and new ones are to be feared or to be expected. The panic that has broken out is like an ever-increasing snowfall, which commits every now and then new ravages. No wonder that most of the guests have departed, because especially the men this time couldn’t leave behind their worries. There was for them no more taking a peaceful and careless breath, not even in the pure, fresh mountain air. No wonder that the white fingers of the ladies unfold with feverish urge the big newspapers, and many a beautiful eye anxiously reads over the market reports and the list of bankruptcies. These are days in which the wheel of fortune turns around with great speed and many a man, who believed himself to be a wealthy person in the morning, sees himself reduced to poverty in the evening!

Fortunately, here the market reports seemed reassuring, be it in a negative sense, so that way could be given to the merriment of pleasant chatting. Moreover I fall in with an older gentleman, proud of his Dutch ancestors, who eagerly (97) seizes the opportunity of telling me: “Main heer, ik kan spiek Duitsch,” and indeed he does so in such a manner that, with some effort, he almost can be understood, speaking his Dutch of the seventeenth century with a touch of English syntax.—But not for long we indulged in the pleasures of the companionship. Tired of everything we had seen and enjoyed, we sought our rooms, wishing ardently good weather the next day, with the peculiar, restless expectation of dawn, which only the tourist on the Rigi kulfm or Catzkill mountain knows from experience.

And this time no disappointment awaited us. No unnatural exertion was needed to be ahead of the rising sun. The hotel after all has been built towards the east, facing the still higher mountaintop, and the world-renowned panorama is extending to the other side. We are awakened by kind sunlight. It is a fair morning predicting a beautiful, be it clouded autumnal day. Thanks to the small number of guests, we occupy one the finest rooms of the hotel, giving on to the broad estrade under the Corinthian colonnade at the front side of the house. As soon as we can, we have reached the balcony and have soon descended the steps into the front yard, which lies in front of the hotel.

But how can I tell of the sensation by which we are overwhelmed there? Who could describe the undescribable? There are moments of high, I almost would say holy delight, when one’s feeling can only express itself by a cry of admiration, or better still with an adoring silence, but certainly not by words of our deficient language, unable to speak of such things at their true value. This I can assure: we didn’t complain anymore that we had ridden the day before on the last part of the road in the dark. Because of that we enjoyed now this (98) panorama with all suddenness and surprise of the unknown and the unexpected, in all its striking and stupendous beauty. Yet let me try to give some idea of it!

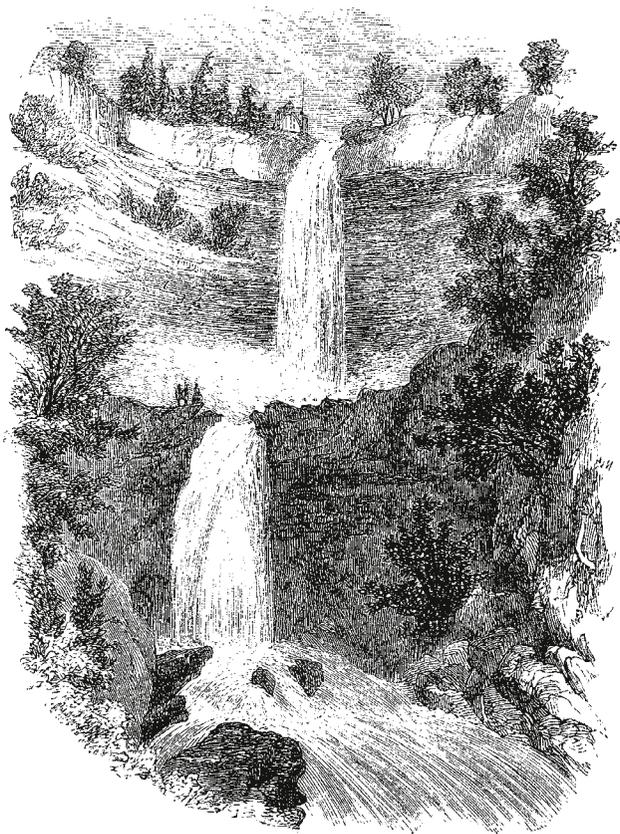
Just picture, some hundreds of feet below the summit of the mountain, a completely level, rocky table rock forming a large square, which projects over a precipice about six hundred meters deep, at the foot of which the undulating terrain descends further, allowing for a fully unobstructed view over a plateau beyond the reach of the eye, limited only in the far distance by the contours of remote mountains. This square is, so to speak, a terrace formed by the Creator himself and hanging high in the sky, as if to show a scene that no poet ever could depict nor landscapist paint. From behind, at the east side, but also at the north and south, the square is framed by still higher rising tree tops, densely grown over with timber, by this time splendid in colorful autumnal splendor, the

golden framework of Gods painting, colored, as our Vondel<sup>8</sup> would have said, with “nature’s brush, not paint, but rays of sunshine.” Only toward one side the view is free. But that just reinforces and raises the impression of the unique scene. Unique—I say so with emphasis. So far I couldn’t deny the mountain spirit of this place my homage; but—this homage hadn’t yet been rapt admiration. The winding, shady mountain road was splendid; but hereby I thought of other mountain views, of Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald; I recalled to memory Switzerland’s Alps, the charming Berner Oberland, and the memory of it made me ungrateful. But here!—No, this panorama of Catskill’s table rock is not to be found in the whole of Switzerland! The impression is sublime and overwhelming, the more so as we do *not* overlook from here highlands. The mountains are at the back and aside. In front, right at its foot, is the vast, nearly boundless (99) plain. Twenty thousand square miles, it is said, are taken in at a glance from here. What that means can be imagined considering that the whole of London with its suburbs covers only five hundred miles! The longer one stares downwards into the depth the more one’s astonishment increases. How small the world down there seems, and yet how grandiose the whole is! The hills enclosing the foot of the mountains seem smoothed down or lowered down to an undulating terrain; the villages and hamlets become white dots on the green carpet and the wide, princely Hudson a winding ribbon, on which the steam of a boat hurrying on seems to float like a hardly noticeable fluffy little flock. Oh, if one could look around with an eagle eye here in this high hanging eagle’s nest! And the whole scenery there presents itself to our eyes as if swimming in a rosy mist. For luckily there is no lack of the only thing that can still enhance and increase the unrivalled beauty of that panorama: the magical effect of sun and clouds, of shadow and light. On the whole the American scenery is beautiful. But generally it lacks one thing: mist and perspective. The lens of the air is here so fine, clear, transparent; outline and colors stand out so clearly and brightly that also what is far away seems nearby, and distances are almost indistinguishable for the eye. Here in the sky you’ll see rarely if ever: a receding prospect as with us, that blue stroke of the brush, which covers so picturesquely our backgrounds; the soft silver luster or violet color, which sometimes casts a sunny haze over European landscapes. But now, yes, there they are, at our feet, the drifting mists, in turn reflecting and transmitting the sun rays and casting wide shadows of the clouds over the plain, which by their ever-changing floating forms bring out well the slopes of the undulating land-sea in the depth, and tint and color the beautiful vista every moment differently, as (100) they wrap up the distant mountains of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Connecticut in a robe of purple and blue.

But I will not venture upon a further description.—“What do you see, when you get there on Catskill-height?” Cooper somewhere in his *Pioneers* has someone ask.—“Creation, all creation, lad!” is the answer. At least it is one of the most glorious pages of the book of Creation, and I can imagine now that the Americans speak of two unforgettable natural scenes in their Northern States, and extol both Catskill and Niagara.

There was more for us to admire than the terrace, which is beyond any comparison. Soon a carriage was ready to bring us to “Catskill fall.” Already the road thither was surprisingly pleasant, going up and down over the undulating mountains, amidst pine and beech, oak and elm, some still half-green, half-variegated with beautiful autumnal tones. And in the midst of all of that splendor glitters the scene of the cascade like a jewel mounted in gold.

Let me try to give some description of it. On one of the highest crowns there are two small lakes, picturesque and hidden behind dark pine trees and half-covered with the great leaves of water lilies. From that water a brook originates which flows on calmly, until suddenly the bottom slopes down sharply towards a deep precipice. Now the water rushes forward with greater speed, meandering between stone and rock, as if already restless for the bold header it will make in a short while. All of a sudden the bed narrows into a deep gully passing through a fissure, as of a cloven hoof. Immediately underneath is a steep drop of one hundred and forty feet. There a grandiose and splendid amphitheatre in the rocks displays itself. A vertical wall of horizontal strata of stone hanging over a deep cleft has been worn by the force of the dropping water in the form of a semicircle. Over this precipice the water rushes down with frenzied speed and splashes foaming (101) on a wide, inclining rocky slope, where it seethes between the stone blocks like a boiling pool to collect a new elan and, fed by the hurriedly propelled torrent of another fall in the vicinity, makes another bold header fifty feet downwards. The bottom of soft “pudding stone,” a kind of pumice stone, has been hollowed out by the water into a deep bowl or basin, as a result of which a kind of surround has been formed under the overhanging rock face that offers a safe path around and under the cascade. The best spot to have a look at it is there: at the foot of the upper and above the second fall. Then one sees before oneself the transparent silver gauze of the sparkling veil of water, on which the sun makes many-colored rainbows tremble and dance, at his feet the splashing, frothing, bubbling fluid plunging down with redoubled speed between rocks and trees in the deep fissure down there.—In summer, when the small river carries off less water, the sight of it cannot be as grandiose as now. But all the same, every season this fall certainly has its beauty, as has been expressed by Bryant in the following verses:



KATERS-KILL FALLS.

Illustration from Benson J. Lossing's *The Hudson: From Wilderness to Sea*

Midst green and shades the Catterskill leaps  
From cliffs where the wood-flower clings;  
All summer he moistens his verdant steeps  
With the sweet light spray of the mountain springs;  
And he shakes the woods on the mountain side,  
When they drip with the rains of autumn tide.

But, when in the forest, bare and old,  
The blast of December calls,  
He builds, in the starlight, clear and cold,  
A palace of ice where his torrent falls,  
With turret, and arch, and fretwork fair,  
And pillars blue as the summer air.

Then time had come to tear ourselves away from the grandiose (102) scenery of nature. By another route we returned to our hotel, through a still wilder and more desolate mountainous terrain. However, this region has lost its inhospitable wildness of former days. Once upon a time the great brown bear was “lord of the forest,” and up till 1840 there were still every year big hunts for bear; but the Nimrods of those days have exterminated the bears and the wildcats, and Brown Fur has seen his empire perish with that of the Redskin for good, surely not to the regret of the many deer and squirrels. Of the more dangerous animals only a rare rattlesnake here and there succeeded to survive in hiding, while occasionally some wolves show up. This reminds me of an anecdote, which I mention here as a characteristic contribution of the true American spirit. On the catching of wolves a premium has been put. A hunter had caught a young wolf and showed it to others. He was asked why hadn’t he claimed his premium. “I ain’t that stupid,” was his answer, “I’ll keep him until he’s grown up; then I will have a bigger premium.” It is a small example of what the Americans used to call “smartness” or “cuteness.”

After having returned to our hotel we recovered our strength for other expeditions. Who can stay close to the top of a mountain without wanting to climb it? We at least couldn’t resist the temptation. It will be remembered that the hotel is situated between two lofty mountain peaks. First the Northern Mountain, later, just before dark, the Southern Mountain was ascended. The road was difficult, unbeaten, just marked by white stripes painted at distances on the bark of the trees, but nevertheless quite pleasant. The *difficulté vaincue* is the triumph of the artist and the pleasure of the traveler. Over tree trunks, stumps, and sharp-edged rocks we find our way to the top. At none of the summits the view was like that of the (103) natural terrace described above. But grandiose it certainly was, and knowing already in some degree the character of the Americans, who always mention with a somewhat ingenuous pride the beauty and greatness of their country, as if *they* should be credited with it, I could understand the sort of self-complacency with which our host called out to me from the highest peak: “Well, Mr. Stuart, have we not got a great country?” in a tone, that couldn’t refrain me from replying: “To be sure, it gives *you* the greatest credit!”—My friend certainly was right to show us these mountain scenes on a day in fall. This again is one of the singular beauties of the American scenery, in its wooded regions, unrivalled elsewhere. An effect exactly of this delicate, pure atmosphere, which I mentioned above, is the incomparable beauty of the autumn leaves. We in Europe have no idea of this. When with us the leaves are tinted with the autumnal colors, they soon wither and fall on the ground, and the first autumnal winds shake the trees bare. Not so in America. “Our leaves are not *dead* in fall; they are *ripe*,” they say

over there, and rightly so. For weeks the trees and forests stay blanketed in an exuberant royal mantle, before which the royal purple pales. The forests become giant bouquets of flowers, and the wooded mountain slopes are wrapped in a multicolored robe so splendidly rich and warmly tinted that the painted imitation would seem an exaggeration. Glowing crimson alternates with gold-colored and fiery pink or deep violet, and when sunlight is shining on it, it is as if the royal mantle is embroidered with gold spangles and rubies.

It was already late in the evening when we returned from our trip. The proprietor of the hotel, Mr. Beach, whose wealth came from his business, did us honor—which he usually doesn't to all of his hundreds of guests—to invite us in his private apartments. That honor, however, applied less (104) to us than to our traveling companion, the virtuoso. The family had a passion for music, and an excellent violin was extant. Our artist didn't require to be asked twice. Even if he had not been asked, I believe, he would have reached out for the instrument, like Achilles would have done for sword and spear. A few moments to test the violin, and now he starts to improvise, to play extempore, to compose such sounds, as the hand of a true "maestro" is capable to elicit from that sweetest and richest of instruments, now meltingly soft, then again roaring and wild, until exhausted he drops the fiddle stick, but without having tired us of listening, even if he would have gone on for hours. I doubt if we would have recognized the themes of his improvisations, had he not announced them: *Un coucher de soleil à Cattesquille*; *La Cascade*; *Une tempête dans les montagnes*; but I do know, that he kept not only us captivated and spellbound with his performance, but all guests who had gathered in the hall around the open door. If the eye had been feasted the whole day, the ear also had enjoyed, as mine at least seldom will do.

What a pity our delightful trip would end so soon! One other night we would stay in our castle in the air. The next morning our journey back would go ahead. With wistful gratitude we took leave from the place where we had found in a few hours such a rich enjoyment. This short time had sufficed for us to agree with those who call a stay on these mountains "a tonic for senses and soul." Our host had made us converts of his worship. We had seen some views that have imprinted indelible images in our memory and which enrich it forever, and of which it is rightly (105) said: "they make a man's whole life better, to have seen."

And the return journey also was sublimely beautiful. The road winds down, now and then alarmingly steep, but by turns too rich not to be seized with admiration for it. Around us, in a scent of the penetrating balsamic odor of pine and cedar: old tree trunks, their strong, gnarled roots wrapped round the boulders, ivy-grown and decorated with tall festoons of flame-colored wild vines hanging over

the precipice; beneath us, in the depth, the map of the plain; the landscape itself as if it lies on the bottom of a transparent, pale-blue sea, above which a few fluffy clouds are floating at our feet; behind us the higher-and-higher rising mountain, on which occasionally, at the winding of the road, our mountain hotel shows itself again like a small white swallow's nest stuck against the rocky wall; later through a wild romantic part like "Rip van Winkle's glen," with its small wooden bridge over a deep gorge surrounded by steep mountains on all sides. But descending goes faster than ascending—alas in every sense—and in spite of a long detour in order to enjoy more of the "mountain-scenery," we were, after a five hours' drive, back again in the plain, with the mountain and everything we had passed through there behind us.

At full trot we rode again to the Hudson, along the Catskill, to the small town by that name. We would travel back not by steamship, but by the railway of the Hudson Railway Company. It was my first experience with the American railway. I hardly dare to speak of it with praise, such a bad name have the American railways nowadays in the Netherlands—and truly not without reason! But being a shareholder is something different from sitting as a passenger in one of the coaches. In the latter capacity, one shall rarely make complaints of the railways in America. There comes (1866) our train. A locomotive, twice as heavy as the European engines, with a funnel-shaped smokestack and the protruding iron "cowcatcher" to shove aside any possible hindrance, hauls a train of carriages, which are much larger than ours and incomparably better furnished, with easy seats, each coach adapted for about sixty people. In the middle of the carriage is a gangway and on both ends a doorway, by which one can, over a small platform, cross from one carriage to another. Each coach has a stove and an iron cask filled with clear ice water, and is fitted out with all necessary conveniences. In accordance with the democratic ideas in America there is only one class, at least it is said there is. But reality is also in this respect slightly more elastic than the inexorable theory. Some coaches, so-called "palace" or "parlour cars," where one can take his seat on extra pay of a relatively small sum, are luxuriously furnished with couches and armchairs. The whole makes a non-European impression, including the terminology used. The American-English is after all not always identical with the British-English. Here one speaks of a "car," not of a "wagon"; of a "conductor," not of a "guard"; of "baggage," not of "luggage"; of a "depot," not of a "station." Once again we travel along the banks of the beautiful Hudson, this time in another way and in the reverse direction, passing Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, Peekskill, Tarrytown, Irvington, Jonkers, on our way to the great "Empire City" with its busy bustle, to return late in the evening to quiet, rural Flatbush, still full of the unforgettable

memories of three delightful days, fully convinced that the discoverer of this part of the country had told the truth, when he had called it—they are Hudson’s own words—“such a beautiful country, as one can set foot on.”

One small, sad detail overshadowed, also to our mind, our sunny memories. Getting in the carriage we had lost sight of our dilettante. At the station in New York he spoke to us for another moment. The poor man! In his coach he had been told that the bank, which he had entrusted with all his money, had collapsed in the financial crisis, and that all his earnings of a year’s work were lost. We bade goodbye with a warm, sympathetic handshake and the wish in the heart that he might find consolation and strength in his art, and in something better and higher at that!

## Footnotes

1. Sometimes he was called, a bit disrespectfully: “*hardkoppige Piet*” [strongheaded Piet]. He had a wooden leg and, as his contemporaries said, an “iron head” at that.
2. [editor’s note] The meaning is something like “f... the devil,” though not literally.
3. [editor’s note] Elias Anne Borger (1784-1820), professor of theology in Leiden, wrote the famous poem *Ode aan den Rijn* (1820) after he lost his second wife in childbirth.
4. [editor’s note] Everhardus Johannes Potgieter (1808-1875), well-known Dutch author and poet, strived for a national revival of the Netherlands, culturally as well as politically.
5. [editor’s note] Nicolaas Beets (1814-1903), Dutch man of letters and clergyman, famous for his *Camera obscura*, a satirical description of everyday reality.
6. [Editor’s Note] “Devil’s Ballroom”
7. [editor’s note] Ary Scheffer (1795-1858), Dutch romantic painter.
8. [editor’s note] Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679), the most famous Dutch poet of the Golden Age.

# The Environmental is Political: The Story of the Ill-Fated Hudson River Expressway, 1965-1970

*Robert Lifset*

This is the story of the Hudson River Expressway, a highway that was never built. As such, it is part of a larger story of a series of intense land-use struggles that shook the Hudson River Valley in the 1960s. But this story teaches us an important lesson: the outcomes of environmental disputes are often lost in the morass and intrigues of politics and personality.

While there have been efforts tracing back to the beginning of the twentieth century to determine land-use issues on a scientific or factual basis, ultimately the decisions made are often political in nature. The 1960s saw a series of reforms that attempted to further rationalize environmental decision-making, including requiring agencies to undertake more careful and elaborate studies before approving projects, and enlarging public participation and increasing public access to documents and reports. Some reforms even sought to withdraw the planning and actual construction responsibilities from a single agency by creating new agencies expected to bring detachment and objectivity to the process.<sup>1</sup>

All of these reforms were in evidence in the fight over the Hudson River Expressway, but none of them had a significant effect on the outcome. The decision to build the expressway was made—with little attention and no debate—by a powerful governor. The expressway was killed by judicial fiat. The story of its conception and ultimate demise reminds us that behind all of the studies, task forces, commissions, and hearings that are part and parcel of environmental struggles, there are strong political forces at work.



## The Expressway

In early May 1965, Governor Nelson Rockefeller pushed through the New York legislature a little-read bill one paragraph in length. It called for the building of a state highway, the Hudson River Expressway, along the east bank of the Hudson River from Croton-on-Hudson south to New York City.<sup>2</sup>

As New York City increased in population, its suburbs reached ever further north into Westchester and Putnam counties, turning their towns into bedroom communities for the white-collar workers of the metropolis. While train service had provided reliable transportation for over a century, the automobile became the preferred method of transportation in the twentieth century. Cars required roads. The first major road building took place during the administration of Governor Al Smith (1918-1920, 1922-1928). His administration built Route 9 on the east bank and Route 9W on the west. These are north-south thoroughfares, often two lanes wide, that snake through the downtown business areas of the towns they traverse. In the 1930s, Robert Moses, an aide to Smith who acquired a tremendous amount of power while overseeing the construction (1925-1970) of much of the state's infrastructure, presided over the building of the Henry Hudson, Saw Mill River, and Taconic Parkways on the Hudson River's east bank. These were also north-south roads, but they were four to six lanes wide and avoided towns. They generally conform to what we think of today as highways. In the 1950s, the Palisades Interstate Park Commission built the Palisades Interstate Parkway, which runs (for most of its length) about a mile west of the west bank of the Hudson River from the George Washington Bridge to Bear Mountain. This road provided an important link from New York City to the commission's largest park. It also opened up Rockland County to suburban development. Finally, the 1950s also saw the completion of the New York State Thruway. Four to eight lanes wide, the Thruway begins in the Bronx and travels north to Tarrytown, where it heads west, crossing the Hudson River at the Tappan Zee Bridge, and then north, some miles west of the west bank of the Hudson, to Albany; from Albany, it heads west to Buffalo, the Canadian border, and on toward Erie, Pennsylvania, making it a heavily traversed road some 450 miles long. The Thruway quickly became—and still is—the road of choice for most long-distance north-south commercial and truck traffic.<sup>3</sup>

But the Thruway failed to relieve congestion. On Sunday nights in the summer, traffic heading south into New York City could be backed up on the Thruway all the way to the Catskills, about 100 miles north. Building more roads does not automatically relieve existing congestion; over the long run, it can serve to make

problems worse. But it would take another generation of highway development before such thinking gained popularity. The state's solution to the backups on the Thruway was to build another highway to handle commercial traffic on the east bank of the Hudson. State planners felt such a highway would not only reduce the number of cars on the Thruway, but would also alleviate congestion on Route 9, which by the late 1950s had become a pressing political issue in several towns through which it passed.

In 1957, Governor W. Averell Harriman, announced a new highway that would run north from the Cross Westchester Expressway (about two miles inland from the Hudson River) to northern Westchester. The path of the highway would slice through Pocantico Hills—the seat of the 3,000-acre Rockefeller estate. With Nelson Rockefeller's election in 1958, these plans were shelved. The project was revived in 1961 with important changes: The newly proposed road would run east of Pocantico Hills and follow a northeasterly alignment. J. Burch McMorrان, the state superintendent of public works, argued that the change was made so that southbound traffic wasn't dumped into the already overburdened stretch of the Thruway that ran between Tarrytown and the Bronx. But the change also meant that this road would not solve the corridor's traffic problems. An east-bank road would still be needed.

For this road, avoiding the Rockefeller-held lands would be impossible. Indeed, the family was eager to work with the state. Route 117 already crossed Pocantico Hills, connecting Route 9 west of their estate to the Taconic State Parkway. This crowded road had always been an annoyance to the family; in 1932, John D. Rockefeller Jr. even offered to pay for half the cost of relocating the road toward the northern end of the estate. He was turned down.

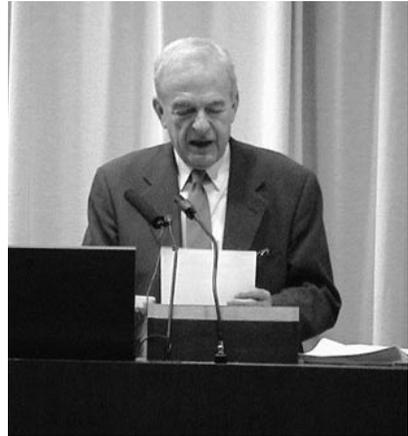
McMorrان planned a road that would run along the east bank of the Hudson River from Croton-on-Hudson south to New York City. Route 117 would be relocated to the northern edge of Pocantico Hills as an eastern spur of this new expressway, cutting through the former estate of William Rockefeller. With no public hearings, supporting memoranda, or assigned route numbers, legislation authorizing the road was passed via the one-paragraph law in May 1965. Opponents of the road would come to make much of the manner in which this legislation was passed.

That July, McMorrان met with local officials of the east-bank towns and villages to discuss the expressway. He explained that the road would require dredging and filling along the river as well as an extensive acquisition and clearance of waterfront property. While local officials were eager to solve the Route 9 traffic problem, losing taxable land and disrupting the lives of so many neighborhoods

seemed to be too high a price. In September, the governor attempted to compromise by dropping the southern part of the expressway. The road would now end in Tarrytown, where it would connect to the Thruway. While this certainly reduced the opposition, it would dump traffic on the Tarrytown-to-New York City section of the Thruway, the very section of that road whose congestion was supposed to be relieved by the Hudson River Expressway. What remained of the new highway was a ten-mile road running from Croton-on-Hudson to the Tappan Zee Bridge that would extend 1,300 feet into the water. The stage was set for another fight that would help determine the future character of the Hudson River Valley.

## The Opposition

Opposition to the road was led by the Citizens Committee For the Hudson Valley, which recruited local chapters in the river towns from Tarrytown north to Ossining. One of the tactics employed by opponents of the expressway was to attack the secrecy surrounding the planning of the road. In statements during his re-election campaign, Representative Richard Ottinger, a Democrat representing New York's 25th Congressional District, pointed out that not one local governing body in Westchester or Putnam County had



**Representative Richard Ottinger**

been consulted before the bill authorizing the expressway was passed by the legislature. Mayor Anthony Veteran of Tarrytown spoke about some of the concerns of those towns lying in the path of the expressway when he declared that the road would gut part of his village's residential, commercial, and urban renewal areas. According to one state assemblyman, members of the legislature were deluged with more protest letters against the expressway than the combined responses to laws establishing the sales tax, ending the death sentence, and liberalizing birth-control restrictions. In response to the governor's plans to build a park along the river that would be accessible from the highway, William Ewen, chairman of the Citizens Committee, told local reporters, "A park sandwiched alongside a commercial expressway insults the intelligence. No glossy presentation can convince us that Mr. McMorrان can do a better job on the Hudson River by filling it than God did in creating it."<sup>4</sup>

The Citizens Committee For the Hudson Valley represented a new front in a

broader effort to “save” the river. Since the proposed road would require land fill and potentially serve as another obstacle cutting people off from the water, this struggle can be viewed within the context of increasing concern for and interest in the Hudson. The evidence for this concern can be seen in the many new organizations that were then forming: the Scenic Hudson Preservation Conference (1963) was created to oppose the building of a pumped-storage hydroelectric plant on Storm King Mountain; the Hudson River Valley Commission (1965) was intended to be a voluntary regional-planning clearinghouse that would attempt to guide what might today be called “smart growth”; the Hudson River Fisherman’s Association (1966) was formed to track down polluters of the river; the mission of the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater (1967) was to help reconnect people with the river.

It should come as no surprise that the Citizens Committee relied on several people from the Storm King fight. Research, mailing lists, liaison with other groups, and the press and informational bulletins were outsourced to Scenic Hudson. Dave Sive, a Scenic Hudson board member and chairman of the Sierra Club’s Atlantic Chapter, handled its legal work.<sup>5</sup>

Sive had always been interested in politics. When he moved his family to Rockland County in the 1950s, he became active in the local Democratic Party, which handed him the nomination for the overwhelmingly Republican 28<sup>th</sup> Congressional District in 1958. (He lost to incumbent Katherine St. George.) As an active hiker and camper in the Catskills and Adirondacks, Sive drifted into memberships with the Appalachian and Adirondack Mountain Clubs. Then one weekend in 1961, he met Stewart Ogilvy at a small gathering near a forest preserve threatened by a highway. Ogilvy was chairman of the Sierra Club’s Atlantic Chapter. That weekend, he convinced Sive to join the club. By the late 1960s, Sive was the attorney for the Citizens Committee, the Sierra Club’s Atlantic Chapter, and the Hudson River Fisherman’s Association. When the field of environmental law formally emerged in 1969 with its own law school journals and courses, Sive’s work with these organizations made him one of the few identifiable practitioners of the new field.<sup>6</sup>

That may explain why Sive had earned a reputation among environmentalists in Washington, D.C. As the expressway controversy began to make news, these struggles on the Hudson (and the individuals leading them) were becoming better known within the larger national environmental movement. Perhaps one sign of this was that in early 1966 Sive invited Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas to speak at a scenic-beauty conference in Rockland County and lead a hike up the east bank of the Hudson to focus attention on the expressway fight.

(Sive credits his wife with the idea.)

Douglas was a well-known advocate for conservation issues and a maverick on the bench. In 1954, he led an eight-day, 185-mile hike up the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal in a successful attempt to prevent its destruction. The editors of the *Washington Post* had endorsed a planned highway along the old canal towpath that would destroy the wilderness corridor that hugged the route of the old waterway. Douglas challenged the editors to a hike along the canal's path. At the trek's conclusion in Georgetown, Interior Secretary Douglas McKay and 50,000 cheering people greeted the hikers.<sup>7</sup>

On his hike along the Hudson in early March 1966, the justice set a fierce pace, leading conservationists, schoolchildren, and politicians along the path of the Croton Aqueduct. Douglas walked so briskly that New York City Park Commissioner Thomas Hoving, who arrived late, did not catch up to the group until lunch. When he met up with them, he found more than a few out-of-shape politicians.<sup>8</sup>

"Wow!" said Mayor Sheldon Wagner of Hastings-on-Hudson between gasps for breath. "How did I ever get into this?"

"It looks a little like Coxey's army," said the weathered justice as he surveyed the group laboring to keep up.

Many of those present were in awe of the justice. Since Sive arranged for the Sierra Club to sponsor the event, Dave Brower, its executive director, was there talking to Douglas at the head of the hike. Richard Ottinger was alongside Douglas. It was Ottinger's first encounter with the justice: "I remember that day very well. My kids were in such awe, I became an instant hero, and Justice Douglas is just a marvelous person..."<sup>9</sup>

The aqueduct runs from the Croton Reservoir to the Bronx, and the ground above it used to be an unbroken walkway of valleys and streams. Douglas regularly hiked the path when he was a student, and later a teacher, at Columbia Law School in the 1920s. This hike found the pathway broken by roads, fences, and parking lots. After a lunch of fried chicken and beer, Douglas took a boat to the west side of the river and led another walk. At day's end, after hiking a total of about five miles, the justice said, "This is beautiful walking country that should be preserved." Asked if he was tired, Douglas replied that he was not because he normally took Sunday strolls of fifteen to twenty miles.

It would take more than publicity stunts to stop the expressway. Perhaps more significant than Justice Douglas's support, opponents of the expressway believed they could count on the support of the powerful Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall.<sup>10</sup>

## The Bureaucracy

Opponents of the project understood that it would be politically, if not legally, more difficult to build the expressway if they could convince elements of the state and federal bureaucracy also to oppose it. While there was little chance of persuading the New York State Department of Transportation that the road was



**Governor Nelson Rockefeller  
and Laurance Rockefeller**

a bad idea, there were agencies and commissions whose mandates suggested the possibility of a more open-minded and balanced assessment of the transportation and environmental needs of the Valley. The focus shifted to the Hudson River Valley Commission and the federal Department of the Interior.

Governor Rockefeller created the Hudson River Valley Commission in March 1965. This temporary commission, chaired by his brother Laurance, was an attempt to demonstrate that the state was serious about protecting natural resources in the Valley. After ten months of study, the commission released its findings with thirty-two recommendations. It reported that the aesthetic and scenic values of the Valley could be saved, but that there was a great deal of work to be done on zoning and scenic easements, pollution control, and waterfront renewal. It concluded that it was possible to have planned, orderly growth that would not destroy the beauty of the Valley, and recommended that the governor establish a permanent commission to act as a facilitator between local and state governments, a clearinghouse for planning information, and a helping hand for obtaining federal grants available to municipalities to tackle the problems associated with growth.<sup>11</sup>

It should not be surprising that the commission tried to avoid the hot-button issues that were partly responsible for its creation. (There was a lot that could be done for the Hudson Valley that wasn't controversial.) Yet while the commission successfully sidestepped the Storm King fight, it would find it much more difficult to avoid the Hudson River Expressway. Would the now permanent commission, chaired by Alexander Aldrich (Nelson Rockefeller's cousin), oppose a road the governor badly wanted? And how could a commission, mandated in part to balance scenic and aesthetic concerns, approve a large highway along the banks of the river on landfill?

While a preliminary report of the permanent commission lamented how transportation rights of way (i.e., the railroad) denied many access to the river, it stated that the expressway “would be an excellent means for providing much greater *visual* access to the river for motorists.” Additional landfill could create a park with a beach and boat anchorages. The commission promised hearings in the summer of 1967 and declined to speculate as to its recommendations. For those left aghast at the language of the preliminary report on the expressway and cynical that the commission would ever oppose the road, there was always Representative Ottinger to remind them of his Hudson River Compact Act.<sup>12</sup>

In early 1965, Ottinger introduced the Hudson Highland National Scenic Riverway Bill as a mechanism to handle controversial projects along the Hudson River. It required the Secretary of the Interior to approve all projects that might have a deleterious effect on the Hudson, and that required federal approval (i.e., a Federal Power Commission permit, an Army Corps of Engineers permit, etc.). A more cynical reading of the bill’s introduction was that it served as an opportunity for Congress to hold hearings and attract publicity to Consolidated Edison’s attempt to build the hydroelectric plant on Storm King Mountain (and perhaps even serve as an opportunity for Interior Secretary Stewart Udall to veto the Storm King project, which was exempted in the bill’s final version). Because it was a nearly unprecedented federal intrusion into the planning prerogatives of a powerful state governor—and one whose family was known for its conservationism—the act was drafted to require the assent of the governors of both New Jersey and New York to go into full effect. Passed by Congress, the newly named Hudson River Basin Compact Act was signed by President Johnson in the fall of 1966.<sup>13</sup>

The compact now awaited only the signature of Governor Rockefeller. While it was difficult to believe that he would ever okay it, Ottinger was happy to compare the equivocating of the Hudson River Valley Commission with the achievements of his compact. In a speech delivered to the annual meeting of Scenic Hudson during a boat ride from New York City to Bear Mountain in the fall of 1967, Ottinger revealed that the Interior Department had created a Hudson Compact staff to review the effects of federal projects on the river. Thirty-eight such projects had been reviewed, and a number of serious threats to the river had been blocked. In effect, the law was acting like a loose federal environmental impact statement for the Hudson River three years before passage of the National Environmental Policy Act. (It should be noted that these reviews were nowhere near as comprehensive as the requirement mandated by the latter act.) Ottinger noted that the compact staff was currently reviewing the plans for the Hudson River Expressway (which required an Army Corps of Engineers permit) and that

he believed that Secretary Udall was likely to oppose it.<sup>14</sup>

There were those who now hoped that the Hudson River Valley Commission would take a fresh look at the expressway proposal. They were sorely disappointed. Alexander Aldrich didn't even want to hold hearings on the issue. But according to one writer, other commission members felt that was a bit cavalier. And so the first public hearing on the expressway, chaired by Aldrich and an engineer from the New York State Department of Public Works, took place in June 1967 in the Ossining High School; 800 people attended. At the outset, Aldrich announced that the meeting had no official standing and was only an "information hearing." With the exception of the public officials presenting the plan, every speaker opposed the expressway.<sup>15</sup>

That December, Aldrich sent a memorandum to the governor informing him that the commission wanted to hold another public hearing. He suggested that it take place in late February or March, after the state Department of Transportation had held its own hearings. "I believe it is extremely unlikely that the Commission will disapprove the road in its Final Findings," Aldrich wrote. "The later public hearings will not affect the construction schedule at all. If this meets with your approval, I will pursue it from here."<sup>16</sup>

The Department of Transportation held two public hearings in February 1968. The first, which took place in Ossining, drew 900 people; virtually every speaker opposed the road. The second hearing, held in Tarrytown, drew 600; again virtually every speaker opposed the project. But there was little chance that the department would be swayed by the opposition. In fact, it applied for the required Army Corps of Engineers permit the day after the second hearing. With the state bureaucracy firmly in line, the governor now only needed that permit and Stewart Udall's approval to build the expressway.

An Army Corps permit is required whenever there is to be construction in a navigable river. Under normal circumstances, it would have been fairly easy to obtain. But the Hudson River Basin Compact stood in the way. Though Rockefeller had not signed it, it was still observed within the federal government. And Secretary Udall, thanks to Ottinger, had already taken a very public stand opposing the expressway.

Then one of the nation's best-known conservationists, Udall had been the youngest person to be named Secretary of the Interior when President Kennedy appointed him to the post in 1961. A Democratic Congressman from Arizona, Udall vacated his seat in the House to join the cabinet. He served as secretary for nine years, emphasizing the protection of water resources and the improvement of water quality. He advocated the expansion of national parks and recreation areas,

and called for a moratorium on the selling of public lands. As Secretary of the Interior, he oversaw the administration of a long list of new environmental laws enacted by Congress in the 1960s, including the Wilderness Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. In 1963, he published *The Quiet Crisis*, establishing himself as a leader and advocate of the emerging environmental movement.<sup>17</sup>

About a month after the highway was approved by the state legislature, Udall had written to Ottinger that the expressway “would destroy the very access that, wisely conserved and developed, could return the Hudson River to the people.” In October 1966, the Interior Department released “Focus on the Hudson,” a report originally designed to help Ottinger’s bill. It surveyed the competing land uses along the river’s shores and the different problems that needed to be addressed. Written by the Bureau of Recreation and a confirmation of Udall’s views, the report stated that “a high-speed expressway serving commercial and industrial traffic, as well as private passenger automobiles, *not* be constructed.”<sup>18</sup>

## Udall

Over the next couple of months, Stewart Udall was the focus of a campaign by the governor and the Rockefeller family to persuade him to change his mind on the expressway. To the road’s opponents, it was hard to believe that Udall—considered by conservationists the best Interior Secretary since Harold Ickes—would ever do this, since he had already taken public stands against it. But the memoranda going back and forth within the Department of the Interior suggest some willingness on Udall’s part to back away from his position. In late January 1968, Edward Crafts, director of the Bureau of Recreation, reported on a phone call he had with Henry Diamond (an aide to Governor Rockefeller) to prepare for a meeting in New York with the governor. Craft recommended that Udall back away from his earlier opposition and at the meeting inform Rockefeller that he neither favored nor opposed the project at the present time.<sup>19</sup>



Stewart Udall

Shortly after his meeting with the governor, Udall appointed an Interior Department task force to review the proposed expressway plans. The following memo from John Shanklin, the task force’s leader, to Edward Crafts revealed the extent to which the department would assess the impact of the road on the river. In the memorandum, Shanklin summarizes a meeting he had with the director of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife:

He [the director] does not intend to do any kind of a major investigation or field study. He will talk with his opposite number in the State Capital at Albany. He indicates that they should be able to process a report in 10 days to two weeks which will probably say in essence, first, that the immediate result will be bad, but in the long run the result should be favorable to aquatic life.<sup>20</sup>

The task force reported back at the end of May 1968. It noted that the state's plan for the expressway—which would add a park alongside the road, making space for boating, fishing, and swimming—should be an important consideration in view of the fact that the metropolitan region desperately needed additional recreational facilities. The park would “provide increased accessibility to both the waters and the shoreline of the Hudson River, and the opportunity to, perhaps, improve the quality of the scenery of the shoreline of the river,” its report stated. It also noted that there would be some unavoidable loss of fish habitat, but that this would be compensated for by increased access by fishermen to the river. It recommended that the department's position on the expressway be one of “non-opposition.”<sup>21</sup>

Udall would no longer oppose the expressway. Of course, the proposal was materially no different than when it was lambasted in “Focus on The Hudson” or personally attacked by the secretary himself in his letters to Ottinger. It was still bad enough so that Interior Department officials couldn't actually recommend that the secretary endorse the project, only that he not oppose it.<sup>22</sup>

In July 1968, Udall's assistant, Harry Rice, wrote a memo entitled “Benefits to Rockefeller Estate From the Expressway.” It was divided into two sections: political benefits and financial benefits. The memo concluded that considering the opposition to the road, it was unlikely that the governor would gain any political benefits from building it. But under financial concerns, the memo concluded that there would be considerable benefits to the Rockefeller estate. Drawing upon information that was then being played up in the newspapers, Rice noted that while the family planned on donating 165 acres of land for park purposes (worth six to eight million dollars), it also planned to develop seventy-five acres at the southwestern corner of this property, where Route 117 (then under construction) and the expressway would meet. While the expressway was not necessary to develop this land, it would increase its access to New York City, making it much more valuable.<sup>23</sup>

At about that time, Secretary Udall appointed a second Hudson River Task Force, this time led by Harry Rice. About a month after its creation this task

force reported, on August 2, 1968, that the Interior Department's position should be one of "non-opposition." The report found that the expressway would create new recreational opportunities and open up access to the Hudson. It noted that the New York State Department of Transportation had not investigated possible alternatives to the expressway, but found this was not an overriding consideration in recommending their approval. Finally, the report also noted Udall's previous opposition to an expressway. It found that the added recreational values could offset the secretary's concern. In the event that they did not, the report recommended that the expressway could be approved as a *parkway* and be limited to automobile traffic.<sup>24</sup>

A few weeks later, Laurance Rockefeller called a high-ranking official in the Bureau of Recreation. Rockefeller said he was with his brother, the governor, and wanted to find out the status of Interior's review of the state's application to the Army Corps for a permit. The conversation was recorded in a memorandum. "They wanted to be sure that Interior had not lost track of the application. He said that he understood the corps was ready to move but could not do so until receiving Interior's comments. He added that he understood Congressman Ottinger was putting great pressure on Secretary Udall to oppose the Expressway and implied that Governor Rockefeller was prepared to exert counter pressure if necessary." The official assured Laurance Rockefeller that the application had not fallen between the cracks at Interior, that Udall was aware of his responsibility, and that he would be making the decision personally.<sup>25</sup>

Later that fall, Harry Rice was asked to write a draft letter of Interior's non-opposition to the corps permit in advance of a meeting between Udall and Laurance Rockefeller. He was told that the letter should express that Udall's finding was made on the basis of the two groups that made on-site reviews of the project. Rice was instructed that Udall would not release the letter until some time after December 1 (meaning after election day), and that it would be accompanied by a press release.

Udall's letter formally reversing his position on the expressway was released on December 11, 1968. On January 6, the corps held a hearing in Ossining. One week later, R.H. Wuestfelt, the director of permits for the corps' New York Division, delivered a report recommending approval of the permit. He then personally flew the report to Washington, where it quickly worked its way through the corps' bureaucracy so that by the end of the month it was ready to be delivered to the state Highway Department.<sup>26</sup>

Before the corps was able to deliver the permit, Dave Sive sought to convince a federal court to grant a preliminary injunction barring the corps from doing so.

Sive had already lost legal actions in state court seeking to overturn the Hudson River Valley Commission's recommendation, and a district judge now ruled against him, finding that the corps had not overstepped its authority in issuing the permit. Sive was acting on behalf of the Sierra Club, the Citizens Committee for the Hudson Valley, and the Village of Tarrytown. He carried an appeal to the Second Circuit, which agreed with the lower court but ordered a trial anyway. A new district court judge elicited a promise from the state not to move forward with the project until the issues had been resolved at a trial, which was scheduled to begin in April 1969.

As part of the discovery process, Sive was granted access to the state's records, which, because of the litigation, were being held in the attorney general's office. In a common litigation practice, they took him to a room containing a number of large file cabinets and left it to him to find something relevant to the litigation. Heading straight for the correspondence files, Sive found a great deal of material politically damaging to Udall and the Rockefellers. These documents were quickly copied and sent to Washington.<sup>27</sup>

## The Congressional Hearing

While Sive was rifling through the state's correspondence and memoranda in June 1969, Representative John Dingell, a Democrat from Michigan, decided to hold a hearing on the impact of the expressway on the fish and wildlife resources of the Hudson. Mike Kitzmiller, an assistant to Ottinger, remembers approaching him with the Congressman. The idea was to use a Congressional hearing to expose the backroom maneuvering of the Rockefellers and Udall. For Dingell it was a chance to attack one of his favorite targets—the Army Corps of Engineers.<sup>28</sup>



Representative John Dingell

While most people were focused on the Hudson River Compact, Dingell was focused on the Fish and Wildlife Act (1956). This act, aimed at the Corps, essentially required it to consult the Fish and Wildlife Service and local state conservation departments as part of its permitting process. Dingell long felt that the corps had been hostile to the spirit of the law. He was intent on using his oversight powers to monitor its compliance.

The hearings took place in an unadorned room of a Capital Hill office build-

ing known for its fitful elevators and stifling heat. It was not a prestigious location, yet the room was packed with about seventy spectators and a contingent of press. One writer has ascribed the attention to the fact that these hearings represented an environmental insurrection led by Ottinger against Nelson Rockefeller.<sup>29</sup>

Among those called on to speak was Dr. John Clark, assistant director of the U.S. Marine Laboratory in the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fishery and Wildlife. He testified that the proposed location of the expressway consisted of shallow flats with a coarse bottom—the ideal habitat for young striped bass. The fish population of the Hudson River estuary is limited by the amount of healthy shallow-water habitat and the amount of suitable fish food it supports. Destroy this habitat, and the fish populations that depend on it will be reduced. These habitats, Dr. Clark noted, are most likely to be polluted by industrial wastes and fill.

The testimony of Dr. Clark and others pointed to the fact that the difficult work needed to determine the effect of the road on the river had simply not been done. The state Department of Conservation had prepared a report on the expressway that found that the road was to be built on a very productive stretch of estuary habitat, but that this habitat was small in relation to the total amount available. This was the commonsense argument. How affected can the fishery be if the road was only going to take 22,000 feet along one shoreline? How could that possibly have a significant impact? The response was that since no one knew how many habitats along the river's shoreline are as productive as the stretch to be taken by the road, there was no basis to conclude that the fish would not be significantly impacted.<sup>30</sup>

A contingent from the Department of the Interior had the difficult task of explaining its change of mind. They testified that no transportation controversy had been reviewed as extensively as the Hudson River Expressway; that the position of the department was consistent with the recommendations of the task forces that made in-depth studies of the project; and that the matter had been given careful consideration by Secretary Udall.<sup>31</sup>

Dingell read into the record the sections of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, which calls upon Interior to conduct investigations and make reports “for the purpose of determining the possible damage to wildlife resources and for the purpose of determining means and measures that should be adopted to prevent the loss of or damage to such wildlife resources.” He then proceeded to question whether Interior had had the time to carry out its responsibilities under the Coordination Act and attacked the Interior task forces for not considering alternatives to the proposed road.<sup>32</sup>

Then Dingell managed to draw out the most damaging piece of information:

**Mr. Dingell.** Gentlemen, can you tell us, if you please, when was the Secretary's change of position first communicated to the Department?

**Mr. [Harry] Rice.** Mr. Chairman, there was a tentative change in his position. It depends on which change.

**Mr. Dingell.** With regarding to removing his opposition.

**Mr. Rice.** On May 3, about that time, there was a meeting in Secretary Udall's office, and he had been briefed by Director Crafts of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation on a study that had been made of the Hudson River Expressway and at this meeting in the Secretary's office on May 3, and I happened to be present at the meeting, he asked the Secretary what his position was going to be on the Hudson River Expressway, and the Secretary hesitated for quite some time and then he said, "We will not oppose it."<sup>33</sup>

If Udall changed his mind on May 3, it wasn't based on the reports of the two Interior Department task forces. The first task force report was delivered May 31, the second in early August. Furthermore, there is evidence to show that both task force leaders were aware of the secretary's decision before they drew up their reports. (The leader of the second task force was Harry Rice.) In a letter to the committee that was inserted immediately after the testimony of the Interior officials, Ottinger claimed that testimony before the federal court trying the Sierra Club's suit revealed that the first draft of the state's Department of Conservation report—the same report that the Interior Department completely relied upon for all of its data—was not finished until May 9 and delivered to the department in mid-May. It was Ottinger's belief that Stewart Udall's change of position was not based on the task forces' reports, but on his personal commitment to the governor of New York.<sup>34</sup>

But why would Udall, the greatest friend the environmental movement had ever had in Interior, change his mind on an issue, without any facts supporting the change, and which would cause him such public embarrassment? There has been a great deal of speculation over the years. Walter Boardman, one of the founders of Scenic Hudson and then a director of the Nature Conservancy, wrote to Rod Vandivert soon after Udall's "non-opposition" became public in December 1968. He believed that Udall had simply bowed to the very great pressure he was under. "I seem to recall reading that the Rockefeller family fortune is deeply involved in this Hudson River Expressway. We are all well aware of the close tie between Udall and Laurance Rockefeller. I also believe that this new 'environmental foundation' which Udall hopes to head up will be strongly backed by the same fortune that will be enhanced by the expressway. This is the area for searching questions

and the mud that might be stirred up is thicker than that of the Hudson.” Mike Kitzmiller was even more straightforward:

I thought Udall would cave. I mean Udall depended on the Rockefellers. He was hip and thigh with the Rockefellers in the Caribbean and the Grand Tetons. And he really didn't, you know, the Secretary of the Interior without rich patrons really didn't have very much he could save, very much he could do. And Udall was a funny guy, I think he really wanted to be a good Secretary of the Interior, and the Rockefellers were a very important part of being that. So there was no, absolutely no f---ing way he was going to run into the Rockefellers.<sup>35</sup>

The following day, Ottinger took the stand and immediately attacked the testimony of the Interior officials. Ottinger and Kitzmiller read into the record testimony from the federal trial sent by Dave Sive revealing that the biologist who authored the state report had been given one month to complete it, made no independent studies of his own (he simply reviewed the existing literature), and admitted under oath that he lacked the qualifications for such a study. Ottinger called for an honest study of the impact that the expressway would have on the resources of the river, and urged that Udall's failure to fulfill his duties as mandated by the Fish and Wildlife Act not be allowed to stand.<sup>36</sup>

Ottinger suggested that an alternative existed: widening Route 9A. It would do no damage to fish and wildlife resources and would require the condemnation of far fewer homes. It was also less costly. Ottinger entered into the record a memorandum (sent to him by Dave Sive) from the Department of Transportation reluctantly acting on a request from Rice in the Bureau of Recreation for the cost estimates for the expressway and any alternatives. After much wrangling, the department finally provided some numbers. They showed that the Route 9A alternative would cost less than half as much as the expressway—\$60 million as compared to \$139 million.<sup>37</sup>

The most colorful witness at the hearing was Ritchie Garret, president of the Hudson River Fisherman's Association and superintendent of St. Augustine Cemetery in Ossining. Fellow association member Robert Boyle wrote a good deal of Garret's testimony, which was delivered in a raspy, New York blue-collar voice:

This expressway, from what I can find out, was put over in a quickie bill passed by the state legislature. Nobody knew what was up, or what was to be filled in. As word leaked out, people raised hell, and then the state said it would make a landfill park next to the road.

Park shmark. Who wants a park with fishing piers when there won't be any fish? The places where the fish live will be buried under concrete...

Garret went on to note that the state Conservation Department dragged its feet for quite some time on releasing a report on the road's impact on the river. (It did not appear until April 1968, nearly three years after the bill authorizing the expressway was passed.) When it was released, Garret added, the report recognized that the project would destroy 350 to 450 acres of prime fish habitat.

"But did the state Conservation Department oppose the highwaymen? No, siree. In line with its gutless policies of not offending highwaymen, power companies, or gravel operators...the phoney-baloney Conservation Department offered advice on how to "minimize" silting during construction of the expressway.

Governor Rockefeller's own State Hudson River Valley Commission, a sad joke on the public if there ever was one, then had the nerve to take this report of the Conservation Department and announce later in approving the expressway, that it found the report of the Conservation Department "most persuasive." Hoo-wee. How is that for a double shuffle?...

Striped bass, endangered and rare sturgeons, and people who love the Hudson were supposed to take the count. I say no, anything that Congress can do to stop New York from killing resources of the Hudson estuary will be like the Seventh Cavalry riding to the rescue on Saturday afternoon in the Victoria Theater in Ossining..."

Garrett's background and strong New York accent helped to, in the words of one writer, "fuse the issue of ecology with the issue of class." It played into an overall strategy for defeating the expressway that called for painting the governor as an oligarch, dictating a road that would personally benefit his family. Garrett's testimony left an impression: it signaled to Dingell's colleagues what he already knew, that environmentalism could win blue-collar voters. After the hearings, Dingell took Kitzmiller aside and asked, "Where'd you get that guy? He's the salt of the earth!"<sup>38</sup>

It is shocking to see how officials used each other's reports as evidence that they had fulfilled their obligations under the law. A voluminous paper trail was created determining that the road would have a minimal impact on the river, when in fact there had never been any biological study conducted by anyone that could possibly substantiate or disprove that conclusion. In this hearing, the weakness of the Coordination Act was made clear. Within months, Dingell ushered through the House of Representatives a new bill, the National Environmental

Policy Act, which would shape environmental policy for decades to come. His chief floor lieutenant was Richard Ottinger.

The expressway further eroded the political support of a governor who had now been in office for over ten years. Kitzmiller remembers that:

the road probably was really bad because whether it was fair or not you could make the point that the governor was doing something that benefited the governor and his family. And you think that the governor, as rich as he was, wouldn't have done that...<sup>39</sup>

While this hearing shined an uncomfortable spotlight on the governor and his expressway, it was not going to stop the road. Opponents of the expressway were already in federal court challenging the Army Corps permit. The decision in that case would be handed down later that summer and would shock nearly everyone involved.

## The Expressway Goes To Court

The trial in Second Circuit Court over the Army Corps of Engineers' permit allowing the expressway project to proceed began in mid-April before Judge Thomas F. Murphy and lasted for twenty-nine days. Sive argued that the powers of the state Department of Transportation were too broad, denying his clients due process and equal protection under the law.<sup>40</sup>

But what turned out to be his most powerful argument was essentially a legal technicality. Sive argued that the corps permit violated the 1899 Rivers and Harbors Act, which stated that "it shall not be lawful to construct or commence the construction of any bridge, dam, dike or causeway over or in any navigable river...of the United States until the consent of Congress to the building of such structures shall have been obtained." Sive argued that the expressway plans called for a dike; therefore the project required Congressional approval, not a corps permit. Subsequent legislation (such as the General Bridge Act of 1946 and the Transportation Act of 1966) had delegated the approval of certain projects, including bridges, to the corps and the federal Department of Transportation. But Congress had said nothing about dikes since 1899.<sup>41</sup>

As writer Allen Talbot noted, this issue reduced the case to an intense level of specificity. Experts were called to testify, dictionaries were consulted, and plans were subpoenaed, all in an effort to determine whether the project would actually require a dike. For the purposes of the Rivers and Harbors Act, a dike was a long wall or embankment built to confine the flow of a river. During the trial, the state argued that the project required a protective embankment or a bulkhead, but not

a dike. The walls built were designed to restrain landfill and not for confining the flow of the river. Additionally, the state maintained, the wall would not substantially affect navigation and should therefore not be defined as a dike. But the blueprints clearly labeled the walls “proposed stone dike.”<sup>42</sup>

When Judge Murphy handed down his decision in early July 1969, it was clear that he had run out of patience: “We hold, based on the evidence presented at trial, that ‘dikes,’ characterized as such by the defendants, are to be constructed along the western side of the fill and that Congress when it said ‘any dike’ over or in any navigable river meant exactly that.”

Judge Murphy ruled that the corps had exceeded its statutory authority in issuing the permit. Two weeks after the decision was handed down, the judge entered a permanent injunction enjoining the Army Corps of Engineers from issuing the permit until the requisite approvals were obtained.<sup>43</sup>

A spokesman for the governor lamented that it was unfortunate “that the technicalities upon which the court ruled will delay the highway and park and may ultimately lead to a substantially higher cost.” The state attorney general’s office was outraged. In an appeal of the decision to the Second Circuit, Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz argued that by “exalting form over substance, by relying on labels rather than reality, and by failing to critically examine the function to be performed by the so-called ‘dike,’ the district court has seriously undermined the authority of the Corps of Engineers to issue fill permits and has delayed the start of construction on a greatly needed roadway.” The state’s brief went on to attack the issue of legal standing, arguing that the Citizens Committee of the Hudson Valley and the Sierra Club had no ground to sue in federal court. It also questioned the court’s jurisdiction to review a decision by the Department of the Army.<sup>44</sup>

## The Issue of Standing

The Second Circuit Court of Appeals now had an opportunity to review the changes it wrought in federal jurisprudence on the issue of standing in the Scenic Hudson decision of 1965.<sup>45</sup> As private attorneys general seeking to protect the public interest, the Citizens Committee and the Sierra Club had to be “aggrieved” parties. The standing of these environmental groups would therefore hinge on 1) the nature of the interest they sought to protect (was there a connection between the official action challenged and the legally protected interest of the party challenging the action?) and 2) the appropriateness of their claim to represent the public in demanding that protection. The second issue was settled by noting the genesis of their concern: By demonstrating that they were willing to shoulder the burdensome and costly process of intervention in a vigorous effort to present their

views at every public hearing that had been conducted on the expressway. But did they have a legally protected interest?

By 1970, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals could point to three relevant federal statutes for which the plaintiffs (the environmental groups) could find a legally protected interest. First, amendments to the Transportation Act made it national policy that “special effort be made to preserve the natural beauty of the country side.” Changes in the regulations governing corps permits (made through the Fish & Wildlife Act of 1956) required the corps to take into account the effect of the work on “fish, wildlife, conservation, pollution, aesthetics, ecology, and the general public interest.” Finally, the Hudson River Basin Compact Act instructed all federal agencies to consider the historic, natural, scenic, and recreational values of the Hudson River Valley when planning or approving activities affecting the area. The court found “that the public interest in environmental resources—an interest created by statutes affecting the issuance of this permit—is a legally protected interest affording these plaintiffs, as responsible representatives of the public, standing to obtain judicial review of agency action alleged to be in contravention of that public interest.” By finding a public interest in environmental resources, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals was further strengthening environmentalists’ access to the federal courts.<sup>46</sup> The Scenic Hudson decision was upheld, in part, because one could find in the federal code of the late 1960s increasing efforts to protect the environment. The three statutes cited by the court could be directly traced to Congressmen Dingell and Ottinger.<sup>47</sup>

There was still the possibility of obtaining Congressional approval, thereby sidestepping Judge Murphy’s ruling. But the opponents of the road were prepared for that. In a congratulatory letter to Sive for winning the case, Kitzmiller revealed, “I have taken such steps as appeared possible to prevent the state’s obtaining Congressional approval of the Expressway. It is my feeling that there is practically no chance of such approval being granted in this session of Congress.” The expressway was dead.<sup>48</sup>

## Conclusion

By the late 1960s, a bureaucracy had evolved with the purpose of rationalizing environmental decision-making. Within the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife were tasked by the Fish and Wildlife Act and other laws with providing the Secretary of the Interior with information so that he or she could make informed recommendations to any branch of the federal government considering a permit request that would change or modify, divert or impound the waters of any stream

or river. The intent was to arm decision makers with information that would allow them to write into the permits conditions that would result in the effective mediation of whatever damage a project might pose to the natural environment. In cases where the damage would be egregious and where the secretary was otherwise authorized to do so (i.e., The Hudson River Basin Compact Act), he or she could block a permit. Yet in the case of the Hudson River Expressway, the Secretary of the Interior's position had nothing to do with the scanty evidence his department assembled.

On the state level, the Hudson River Valley Commission was created with the task of examining projects planned along the Hudson's banks; it could theoretically veto projects that it deemed unnecessary or overly destructive. The commission also engaged in a great deal of planning work in an effort to guide the economic development of the region in such a way that it would not unnecessarily harm the Valley's environment. Governor Rockefeller recruited an impressive board of directors that included former Governor Harriman, the presidents of Vassar College and IBM, and author William H. Whyte. The purpose of creating a commission outside the normal state bureaucracy and placing it in the hands of a high-profile board is usually part of a plan to demonstrate that its decisions would not be unduly influenced by politics, that it possessed integrity and independence. As many of the newspapers at the time noted, this commission's integrity was badly undermined when the governor appointed his cousin, Alexander Aldrich, to be the commission's first executive director, and his brother, Laurance, its chairman. As this article demonstrates, Aldrich had no intention of honestly gathering the information required to make an independent decision. Both the Interior Department and the Hudson River Valley Commission failed to discharge their responsibilities under the law, and were successfully subverted by a powerful and highly skilled Governor.

This is not to suggest that these organizations could only have demonstrated their independence or integrity by siding with opponents of the expressway. What is really striking is that they had no intention of making an informed decision. Perhaps the first person to recognize this was the legal scholar Joseph Sax, who wrote that the solution was not more studies, commissions, or public hearings. The citizen does not require a "bureaucratic middleman to identify, prosecute, and vindicate his interest in environmental quality. He is perfectly capable of fighting his own battles—if only he is given the tools with which to do the job." Sax believed those tools included enforceable legal rights backed by judicial power. The failures of the Interior Department and the Hudson River Valley Commission were used as evidence to argue for enlarging the adversarial process as an impor-

tant and normal part of environmental decision-making. Sax recognized that the creation of an environmental bureaucracy merely rearranges or renames the problem; it fails to shift the balance of power.<sup>49</sup>

The environmental historian Samuel Hays has questioned the persistent temptation to believe that economists and planners were “more objective and rational than the give-and-take of ‘politics.’” The quantitative nature of these disciplines cloaked their activities in the mantle of objectivity, yet their analyses were subject to personal, professional, and institutional value commitments. Furthermore, Hays sees administration as the political battleground that combatants move to after a law is passed. “Administration is a political context of technical detail, bureaucratic jungles, and professional experts, but it is no less one in which political demands are massive and the adjustment of conflicting interests is central.” The expressway case is one example of how a skilled combatant successfully bent an environmental bureaucracy to his will. To what extent has this been a common phenomenon? To what extent was the proliferation of litigation as a strategy of environmentalists in the 1970s a response to compromised bureaucracies? These questions can only be answered by a more ambitious study, but the expressway story highlights the dangers of a naive understanding of environmental administration.<sup>50</sup>

While we cannot really know what was in Judge Murphy’s mind when he ordered the permanent injunction against the Army Corps of Engineers, effectively killing the expressway, his ruling both infuriated the road’s supporters and provided its opponents with a new concern. For the decision was made on a legal technicality, not on the merits of the argument that the government failed to review adequately the project, or that the project would destroy irreplaceable fish habitat. The decision stopped the expressway, but the nature of the ruling meant that the case would not be available to future litigants seeking judicial relief in similar circumstances. While the decision may or may not be considered “political,” it can certainly be viewed as capricious and arbitrary as the governor’s decision to build the road.

The victory raised Dave Sive’s profile and helped establish him as one of the preeminent environmental lawyers on the East Coast. Curiously, Sive claims not to have come up with the argument that eventually crippled the expressway—the dike. That honor goes to a young Columbia University Law School student with an interest in environmental law who spent a summer working at Sive’s firm. That student was Larry Rockefeller, Laurance Rockefeller’s son and the governor’s nephew.

## Footnotes

1. These reforms are discussed by Joseph Sax in *Defending the Environment: A Strategy for Citizen Action*. (New York: Alfred K. Knopf, 1971).
2. A version of the bill can be found in Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, House of Representatives, 91st Congress, 1st Session on The Impact of the Hudson River Expressway Proposal On Fish and Wildlife Resources of the Hudson River and Atlantic Coastal Fisheries, June 24-25, 1969 U.S. Congress, 206. Hereafter citations to this hearing record will be Cong. Hearing. Critics charged that the bill was deliberately written in vague, non-descriptive language.
3. A good deal of this information and an excellent summary of the planning for the expressway can be found in Allen Talbot, *Power Along The Hudson* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1972), 164-169. A second summary of the expressway fight can be found in Sax, 63-82. An excellent description of Robert Moses' career and its impact on New York and the nation can be found in Robert Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).
4. *Daily News*, January 19, 1966. Even after it was announced that the expressway would not extend south to the Bronx and that a park would be built along it, there were still a number of Hudson River towns that faced the new road. Briarcliff Manor and Tarrytown were on record as being against the highway, North Tarrytown was lukewarm, and Ossining (over the objections of its mayor) favored the road. Talbot, 168-169; Citizens Committee For the Hudson Valley, Citizens Committee Bulletin, March 31, 1966, folder 1146, Box 84, Scenic Hudson Papers, Marist College, Poughkeepsie, New York. The Sleepy Hollow Valley Committee was formed to fight the re-building of Route 117. By September, the Sleepy Hollow Valley Committee had obtained a judicial injunction from any work being done on the road; *The Daily News*, Tarrytown, September 19, 1966; *The Independent Herald of Westchester*, August 4, 1966; William Rogers, *Rockefeller Follies* (New York: Stein & Day, 1966), 179.
5. Citizens Committee Bulletin, Bulletin #1, September 17, 1965, folder 1146, Box 84, Scenic Hudson Papers; Dave Sive, interview with author, August 13, 2002.
6. St. George had been an established figure in Orange County Republican circles since the early 1940s and had already spent a decade in Congress. Sive Interview with author, August 13, 2002; Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=S000764>; Ogilvy worked at *Fortune* magazine and nearly single-handedly organized the Atlantic Chapter of the Sierra Club in the mid-1950s. As a result, the chapter in those years was largely comprised of colleagues working in the Time Life publishing empire. By 1965, Sive was chairman of the Atlantic Chapter and had been involved in fights up and down the eastern seaboard. Some of these battles included a proposed highway through Crawford Notch in the White Mountains; another revolved around a proposal to build Route I-40 through Overton Park in Memphis, Tennessee; David Sive Interview with Albert Butzel, February 7, 1997 (videotape in possession of Albert Butzel).
7. Today, a bust of Douglas greets visitors to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historic Park. The park was established in the spring of 1977. Douglas (1898-1980) was the longest serving Supreme Court Justice (1939-1975). He had been a law professor at Columbia and Yale before becoming Securities and Exchange Commissioner in 1936. Douglas has been described by one biographer as the "most accomplished and most controversial" justice ever to serve on the court. See Bruce Allen Murphy, *Wild Bill: The Legend and Life of William O. Douglas* (New York: Random House, 2003). A description of the hike can be found on 330-335.
8. This account of the hike is largely taken from the *New York Times*, March 7, 1966.
9. Robert Boyle, interview with author, August 12, 2002; Richard Ottinger, interview with author, July 18, 2001.

10. Sive Interview with author, August 13, 2002.
11. "The Hudson—Summary Report of the Hudson River Valley Commission," January 31, 1966. Scenic Hudson Papers.
12. *Ibid*, 9-10 (italics by the author); Preliminary Report of the Hudson River Valley Commission, February 1, 1966.
13. The Hudson River Compact Act (P.L. 89-605, 80 Stat. 847, 1966). The Act was never signed by Governor Rockefeller and expired in the 1970s. While Ottinger believes the law could have been a mechanism to deal with difficult and controversial projects along the Hudson River, its drafter, Ottinger aide Mike Kitzmiller, is far more cynical about its intent, maintaining that the bill was never intended to be passed by Congress and only did so to help a freshman Congressman (Ottinger) win reelection (1966) in what was a traditionally Republican district. Ottinger Interview with author, July 18, 2001; Kitzmiller interview with author, August 18, 2001.
14. *Poughkeepsie Evening News*, November 18, 1967. On that same boat ride, Senator Robert Kennedy called for a "regional air shed" that would have the federal government assign air quality criteria under the Air Quality Act of 1967. He expressed confidence that the compact, as outlined in Ottinger's bill, would soon go into effect and he praised the Hudson River Valley Commission for being "energetic and articulate," but said its efforts have been hampered because it lacked the power to implement its planning. *New York Times*, November 19, 1967. As an example of what the Interior Department staff had achieved, Ottinger noted that they were informed by the Army Corps of Engineers that Consolidated Edison's plant at Indian Point was going to discharge warm water into the river. They asked the Fish & Wildlife Service if there were any changes they could recommend to help reduce the thermal pollution. The Fish & Wildlife Service made four recommendations that the staff passed on to the Army Corps, which Con Ed subsequently endorsed.
15. Talbot, 171-172.
16. Memorandum from Alexander Aldrich to Governor Rockefeller, December 28, 1967; found in Cong. Hearings 196.
17. Mark Grossman, *The ABC-CLIO Companion To The Environmental Movement* (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 1994), 314.
18. "Focus on The Hudson," 12, Scenic Hudson Papers. The Bureau of Recreation (BOR) was created by recommendation of the Outdoor Recreation Resource Review Commission (ORRRC) in 1962. The ORRRC, created in 1958 and chaired by Laurance Rockefeller, was designed to assess the nation's recreational needs. For its House sponsor, Wayne Aspinall (D-Colorado), it was a strategy to delay consideration of wilderness legislation. The BOR was replaced in 1978 with the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, which was abolished shortly after President Reagan took office. See Robin Winks, *Laurance S. Rockefeller: Catalyst for Conservation* (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 1997), 137; and Steven Schulte, *Wayne Aspinall And The Shaping of the American West* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002), 120; correspondence from Stewart Udall to Richard Ottinger, June 17, 1965, found in Cong Hearing, 110-111; Members of the Hudson River Fisherman's Association commonly referred to the report as "F\_\_\_ Us On The Hudson."
19. Memorandum from Edward C. Crafts to Stewart Udall re: Our discussion on the Hudson and related matters this morning, January 2, 1968; found in Cong. Hearing, 112-113.
20. Memo from John Shanlin to Edward Crafts, March 5, 1968; found in Cong. Hearing, 132.
21. U.S. Dept of Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Memo from Task Force Leader John F. Shanklin to the Secretary, May 31, 1968; subject: Hudson River Expressway. Task Force Report found in Cong. Hearing, 55-56.
22. Meanwhile, that June (1968) the Hudson River Valley Commission held a hearing in North Tarrytown that lasted five and a half hours. All but two or three speakers opposed the expressway. Less than a month later, the commission released its findings, approving the expressway

- project. The commission reported that the road would provide greatly needed economic growth and access to the Hudson River. It found “most persuasive” the expert opinion of the state Department of Fish and Game, which had concluded that the expressway would not constitute a significant impairment of the natural resources of the river. *Poughkeepsie Evening News*, June 2, 1968. A month before the commission’s findings were made public, William Osborn, president of the Hudson River Conservation Society, announced the organization’s support for the road, angering the membership. A poll was ordered, and in a director’s meeting at the Princeton Club of New York, it was revealed that ninety-seven percent of the members had voted against the expressway. William Osborn immediately resigned as president and Carl Carmer, the society’s vice-president, became acting president. *New York Times*, July 19, 1968.
23. “Benefits to Rockefeller From The Expressway”; unsigned, undated. The authorship and date of this memo were revealed in testimony before Congress. Cong. Hearing, 114. At about that time, Secretary Udall appointed the second Hudson River Task Force, this time led by Harry Rice. On August 2, 1968, it reported that the department’s position should be one of “non-opposition.” The report found that the expressway would create new recreational opportunities and open up access to the Hudson. It did note that the New York State Highway Department had not investigated possible alternatives to the expressway, but found that this was not an overriding consideration in recommending their approval. The report also noted Udall’s June 1965 letter to Ottinger declaring his opposition to an expressway. It found that the added recreational values could offset the Secretary’s concern. Bureau of Recreation Outdoor Study Report, August 2, 1968; found in Cong. Hearing 52-55.
  24. Memorandum for the Record by Lawrence Stevens, Associate Director, Bureau of Recreation, August 21, 1968; Cong. Hearing, 113.
  25. Memorandum for the Record, Harry W. Rice, Assistant Director, Bureau of Recreation, re: Hudson River Expressway, November 14, 1968; Cong. Hearing, 115.
  26. Sive, interview with author, August 13, 2002.
  27. Kitzmiller, interview with author, September 15, 2002; Dingell was elected to Congress in 1955, at the age of twenty-nine, filling the seat left vacant by the death of his father. At six-foot-three and close to 200 pounds, “Big John” Dingell came to Congress an ardent hunter and dedicated conservationist. Over the years, he established a reputation as one who thrived on confrontations and as a skilled examiner of witnesses. By the 1990s, the *New York Times* had dubbed him the “Grand Inquisitor” of Congress, and his trophy wall was filled with the photographs of powerful people who had abused their office (this list included Michael K. Deaver, Admiral Hyman Rickover, and Anne Gorsuch). He still serves in Congress and is currently the longest serving member of the House of Representatives. *New York Times*, March 3, 1983; September 30, 1991.
  28. Samuel Freedman, *The Inheritance: How Three Families And America Moved From Roosevelt to Reagan And Beyond*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 244-245.
  29. Cong. Hearing, 7-26, 26-30.
  30. Cong. Hearing, 44.
  31. Dingell felt that the Coordination Act and Section 4(f) of the Transportation Act required the department to consider alternatives. Section 4(f) of the National Transportation Act reads: “The Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of the Interior developing plans and programs that include measures to maintain and enhance the natural beauty of the land traverse. After the effective date of this act the Secretary shall not approve any recreation area wildlife or waterfowl refuge or historical site unless there is no feasible or prudent alternative.” Essentially this was intended to forbid the use of parkland for federal highways. Dingell read a portion of the second task force’s August 2, 1968, recommendation into the record. It noted that the state Highway Department had informed the Interior Department of three possible alternatives, but that there were no cost estimates for any of the alternatives.
  32. Cong. Hearing, 86.

33. Letter from Richard Ottinger to John Dingell, July 7, 1969; in Cong. Hearing 89-93.
34. Letter from Walter Boardman to Rod Vandivert, Folder 111, Box 10, Scenic Hudson Papers; Kitzmiller interview with author, September 15, 2002.
35. Ottinger also attacked the necessity for the road. "I would just like to point out on the map the existence of north-south highways that we have through this particular area. There is the Route 9. There is the Taconic Parkway. There is the Saw Mill River Parkway. These are all north-south routes. There is the Bronx River Parkway. There is the Major Deegan, the New York Thruway. There is the Hutchinson River Parkway, and then the New England Thruway on the border of the Sound. This is all within a stretch of 10 miles." Cong. Hearing, 127.
36. When it was the Army Corps of Engineer's turn to testify, Dingell tried to pin them down on not having fully considered the effect of the fill on the river's natural resources. (The state application was technically for a landfill permit. The state wanted to build the road on landfill off the east bank of the river.) The witnesses from the corps effectively hid behind Interior's findings. If the Interior Department found the project wouldn't harm the resources of the river, then how could they be held liable for finding the same? Yet in their testimony before Dingell (which at times must have felt like a vicious cross-examination), they essentially admitted that while the effects of a project on fish and wildlife are legitimate concerns the corps should take into account, in the case of this project they felt that the recreational benefits outweighed the loss of fish habitats. Of course, this determination was based purely on the documents and records submitted by the state and Interior Department, along with the corps' own public hearing. Cong. Hearing, 147.
37. Cong. Hearing, 181-184.
38. Freedman, 245-247; Kitzmiller, interview with author, September 15, 2002.
39. Kitzmiller, interview with author, September 15, 2002.
40. See *Citizens Committee v. Volpe*, 297 F. Supp. 804 (S.D.N.Y.1969), and 297 F. Supp 814 (Second Circuit, 1969). The Second Circuit affirmed the denial but ordered a new trial on March 19, 1969.
41. The statute quoted is the Rivers and Harbors Act 33 U.S.C. 401 (1899); the subsequent legislative history can be found in Judge Murphy's decision, which is reported at 302 F. Supp. 283 (S.D.N.Y. 1969).
42. Talbot, 177-180.
43. *Citizens Committee v. Volpe* 302 F. Supp. 283 (S.D.N.Y. 1969), 26. Judge Murphy found that the approval of the Secretary of Transportation was also required because the plans called for the construction of a causeway. (All this for a road that would be using no federal funds.)
44. *New York Times*, July 12, 1969.
45. This decision essentially, for the first time, granted environmentalists (and those with no direct economic interest) standing to sue in federal court. See *Scenic Hudson Preservation Conference v. Federal Power Commission*, 354 F.2d 608 (Second Circuit, 1965).
46. *Citizens Committee v. Volpe* 425 F. 2d 97 (Second Circuit. 1970), 15.
47. The Transportation Act of 1966 82 Stat. 824, 49 USC 1653(f) was amended on August 23, 1968. The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934 16 USC 662 became the Fish & Wildlife Act of 1956 16 USC 742. The Hudson River Basin Compact Act was P.L. 89-605, 80 Stat. 847 (1966).
48. Mike Kitzmiller to Dave Sive, July 28, 1969; Box 4, Papers of David Sive, Pace University Law School, White Plains, New York.
49. Sax, 56, 82-83
50. Samuel P. Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 363-364; Samuel P. Hays, *Explorations in Environmental History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998), 419.

# Famine Relief From An Ancient Dutch City

*Harvey Strum*

“As Albany is my native place, I feel proud of the conduct of the ancient Dutch City,” wrote Myndert Van Schaick, chairman of the New York City General Irish Relief Committee, to the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends in Dublin in April 1847.<sup>1</sup> Van Schaick expressed pride that his hometown had just filled an Albany ship for Ireland. Actually, that year Albany sent two ships to Ireland and forwarded provisions for the famished Irish and Scots aboard at least five other vessels to relieve the distress created by the Great Famine and a smaller scale food shortage in the Highlands and islands of Scotland. Because of its location in the state capital, the Albany committee emerged as the State Irish and Scottish Relief Committee and channeled funds from the Capital District and parts of upstate New York via the New York City committee to Ireland and Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the 150th anniversary of the famine, historians published a large number of works evaluating the significance of the disaster in Irish history and its impact on immigration to the United States. Most research on famine relief evaluated the role of the British government. Historian Diane Hotten-Somers concluded, “the American response to the famine has received hardly any critical attention.”<sup>3</sup> In reality, historians of Irish communities in New York, including Albany, New York City, and Troy, paid little attention to the outpouring of Irish and non-Irish aid to Ireland and Scotland in 1847.<sup>4</sup> New Yorkers from Long Island to the North Country and the Niagara Frontier gave their pennies and their dollars to aid the starving in one of the greatest examples of voluntary philanthropy by the American people.<sup>5</sup> For a brief moment in 1846 and 1847, Americans put aside their political, social, religious, and ethnic differences to unite in the common cause of aid to the Irish and Scots—fellow human beings with shared Christian values who needed and merited their assistance.<sup>6</sup>

A potato blight hit Ireland and parts of the European continent in the mid-1840s. Over a million people died in Ireland, millions more remained at risk, and

millions fled to England, Canada, and the United States. Famine-induced immigration dramatically altered the ethnic and religious makeup of American cities, but especially of New York State in communities like New York City, Brooklyn, Albany, Troy, and Buffalo. By contrast, only a few thousand Scots a year fled to the United States, because voluntary organizations and the British government better managed the distress in the western Scottish Highlands and islands. At any given moment, about 150,000 people remained at risk of starvation in Scotland between 1845 and 1850, and the mortality rate from the famine remained quite low.<sup>7</sup> American press accounts focused attention on the famine in Ireland, but in the American mind the two issues came together, and many Irish relief committees, like the one in Albany, extended their mandate to cover both Irish and Scottish relief aid.

When the first news arrived of the potato blight, small-scale efforts to raise money for Ireland began in New York City and other major cities in the winter of 1845 to 1846. Hopes of a new harvest led to a quick decline in American efforts. By the fall of 1846, however, the situation appeared worse than expected, and famine-relief committees started soliciting funds in England, Scotland, and Ireland. The Society of Friends established the Central Relief Committee in Dublin, which sent copies of an appeal to the United States. Jacob Harvey, a Quaker and New York City merchant, solicited aid from Quakers in other cities and raised public awareness among non-Quakers. The press in New York City, New Jersey, and elsewhere reprinted letters from Harvey.<sup>8</sup> Americans established nonpartisan, nondenominational relief committees at the village, town, city, county, and state levels to channel relief aid to Ireland and Scotland. Whether in New York City, Albany, or the upstate village of Keeseville, the pattern remained consistent: citizens established voluntary committees organized on a temporary basis to solicit and forward contributions of money, food, and clothing.<sup>9</sup> Most of these contributions were sent to the Dublin Quakers for distribution.

New York emerged as the most important state for Irish relief because half of the supplies reaching Ireland went through the port of New York City. While most committees sent their contributions to the Dublin Quakers, some selected an intermediary—such as British consuls in American cities or American representatives in England.<sup>10</sup> A number of committees, like those in Boston and Providence, went through William Rathbone, a British merchant with Irish and Scottish connections.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the crisis, Irish immigrants helped out friends and family in Ireland. In Albany, the Irish members of the local Catholic churches “had anticipated this call upon them by early remittances.”<sup>12</sup> Catholic priests in

Albany encouraged the Irish to send funds to kin and friends in their hometowns. Members of St. John's Church alone sent \$2,800 to relatives in Ireland in early 1847. An Albany newspaper noted that "the extent of such remittances is little known to the public."<sup>13</sup> Jacob Harvey published accounts of remittances from Irish immigrants in New York City and Philadelphia to encourage the non-Irish to donate; newspaper elsewhere reprinted the figures to spur donations. No records remain of how much Irish immigrants in Albany, Troy, or other upstate communities sent to their families and friends in 1846 and 1847. However, this was an important part of the famine-relief effort. A Buffalo newspaper noted the liberality of the Irish in sending one million dollars "within the last few months," while an Albany paper complimented the Irish for sending "home their earnings with fidelity and devotedness."<sup>14</sup>

Funds not sent directly to kith and kin went via Catholic priests in Albany and other communities like Keeseville or Plattsburgh to Roman Catholic bishops, especially New York's John Hughes.<sup>15</sup> Hughes volunteered to forward remittances from upstate communities and Irish immigrants scattered elsewhere in the United States via Catholic parishes in Ireland. What made these remittances remarkable was that they came not from middle-class Irish-Americans. Instead, working-class laborers and domestics, whether in New York City or Albany, sent money from their limited earnings. In Troy, "individuals of the working classes" sent over \$2,000 to "their friends" in Ireland in February 1847.<sup>16</sup> This was representative of the behavior of poor and struggling Irish immigrants. As the Albany Irish Famine Relief Committee concluded, Irish immigrants "in donations privately transmitted which, regarding the limited pecuniary resources from which it is given, we believe to be unequaled in the charities of [the] world."<sup>17</sup>

News of the famine in Ireland appeared in the American press between mid-November 1846 and early January 1847. The New York City press reported that "the accounts of the state of the country continue to be most distressing," while another city paper told its readers that "the wail of famine rises louder and louder from unfortunate Ireland."<sup>18</sup> Upstate residents read similar accounts. In Ovid, the local newspaper cited a letter from Dungarvon reporting that "the condition of the people is truly heart-rending."<sup>19</sup> An Albany paper told its readers that there was "famine and starvation" in Ireland, and across the Hudson in Lansingburgh, a newspaper reminded its readers that "the poor of Ireland are famishing with hunger."<sup>20</sup> Unitarian minister Henry Colman, on a European tour, informed Albany editor Luther Tucker of "the utter failure of the potato crop in Ireland...and the consequences are frightful to contemplate."<sup>21</sup>

Initially, upstate localities did not respond to the crisis; in fact, most

American communities ignored the famine. Relief meetings were held in port cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, Jersey City, Baltimore, Savannah, New York, and Brooklyn.<sup>22</sup> Appeals to New York City's Irish to aid the starving in Ireland were not new; they started sending aid to "their famishing fellow countrymen" as early as 1842.<sup>23</sup> Most of the funds raised in New York, and the other ports between November 1846 and mid-January 1847 came from the Irish or the Society of Friends. Jacob Harvey forwarded copies of the Dublin Quakers' circulating addresses on the crisis and used his position in the New York meeting to promote famine relief and solicit donations, persuading New York City newspapers to publish the appeals by the Quakers. After reading these appeals, the Rose-Street Meeting of Friends in New York City decided "to throw their mite towards" famine relief and raised \$1,105 in early January 1847.<sup>24</sup>

Jacob Harvey, *Tribune* editor Horace Greeley, New York City Mayor Andrew Mickle, and several Democratic Irish-American political leaders called a meeting for Irish relief at Tammany Hall in late December 1846. Citizens elected Mayor Mickle as treasurer and created ward committees that would solicit donations over the next month. Their efforts were a success: Working men at the New York Gas Light Company gave \$155, police in the Fourth Ward donated \$72.80, and some of the "most eminent and philanthropic merchants" gave \$1,600.<sup>25</sup> Greeley volunteered his newspaper office as a collection point for donations, and this initial effort in New York City raised more than \$4,000. Meetings in Brooklyn in late December raised several hundred dollars.<sup>26</sup> Most Americans viewed these fundraising efforts as primarily an affair of the Irish and the Society of Friends; upstate communities did not attempt to emulate the good work.<sup>27</sup>

Some newspapers attempted to use the December meeting to create an ongoing famine-relief campaign. While the *New York Courier* praised the December effort, it noted that "it should have been held months ago," and urged New Yorkers to open their purses.<sup>28</sup> Greeley wanted the New York meeting to stimulate meetings in other cities and towns; "may we hope that this movement will be imitated, he wrote in the *Tribune*."<sup>29</sup> Thurlow Weed, in the *Albany Evening Journal*, noted that "The friends of humanity in the City of New York have set a ball rolling which will not stop, we hope, until...we send substantial relief to the starving people."<sup>30</sup> Weed published a detailed account of New York's meeting "In The Corner" to encourage action in Albany.<sup>31</sup> A similar appeal came from a paper in Lansingburgh: "Would it not be advisable for the citizens of Lansingburgh to respond in a like manner?"<sup>32</sup> James Gordon Bennett, editor of the *New York Herald*, argued that the press "did the public's business, outlining a public-service role for journalism." Newspaper editors in New York and other states promoted

famine relief, revealing the accuracy of Bennett's observation about the public-service role of journalists.<sup>33</sup>

In mid-January 1847, grim reports of the famines in Ireland and Scotland brought by the ships *Hibernia* and *Sarah Sands* were reprinted in newspapers across the country. Citing accounts that came aboard the *Sarah Sands*, William Cassidy's *Atlas* reported that "the poorer people are starving to death."<sup>34</sup> An Albany paper tied to the antirent movement also sympathized with the plight of the Irish and warned that "hundreds are daily dying of starvation."<sup>35</sup> The Liberty Party's *Patriot* informed its readers that famine "is spreading havoc among the Irish people."<sup>36</sup> In Troy, the *Northern Budget's* headline read: "The Starving Poor of Ireland."<sup>37</sup> A paper in Kinderhook, Columbia County, reprinted an account of "the dreadful condition of Ireland."<sup>38</sup> In Baldwinsville, Onondaga County, the local paper reminded its citizens of "the destitution which prevails throughout Ireland and Scotland."<sup>39</sup> People in Keeseville read that the famine "is daily carrying off its victims by the hundreds in Ireland."<sup>40</sup> Reports such as these changed the public mood, and in February Irish famine relief became a national crusade. Shaker Daniel Sizer, living at the Mount Lebanon community in Columbia County, recorded: "The famine increases in Ireland. Meetings held throughout the nation for their relief."<sup>41</sup>

In early February, citizens in various cities—including New York, Albany, Rochester, and Buffalo—began to mobilize. However, the first meeting to receive national attention took place in New Orleans, where former Whig presidential candidate Henry Clay gave an impassioned oration to help the Irish. Within a week, Democratic Vice President George Dallas chaired a meeting in Washington attended by members of the Supreme Court, House, and Senate that called for a national campaign of voluntary philanthropy. Daniel Dickinson, a Democratic Senator from New York, served as one of the vice presidents of the meeting; Whig Representative Washington Hunt from Lockport, Niagara County, was on the Committee on Resolutions, and Representative William B. Maclay of New York City delivered one of the speeches in favor of aiding the Irish. "Never let it be said...by the historian...that America was indifferent to the present sufferings of Ireland," he argued.<sup>42</sup> The meeting urged every community in the United States to establish committees to collect money, food, and clothing and ship it to committees in the major cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Baltimore, Washington, and Charleston, where responsibility for transporting the contributions to Ireland would be assumed.<sup>43</sup>

Efforts to involve the federal government in famine relief failed. A proposal in the House of Representatives from Washington Hunt to appropriate \$500,000

for aid (along with a similar proposal in the Senate) died because of opposition from Democratic President James K. Polk, who persuaded most Democrats (including New York's two senators) that federal aid to the Irish was unconstitutional. Although some famine relief meetings in New York State, as well as editorials in New York newspapers, endorsed federal assistance, it had no impact on Polk's constitutional objections.<sup>44</sup> Instead, in response to a suggestion from George DeKay of New Jersey and petitions from Boston, New York City, and several other cities, Congress in March authorized the loaning of two warships, the *Macedonian* and the *Jamestown*, to transport a load of relief supplies from New York City and Boston, respectively, to Ireland and Scotland.<sup>45</sup>

Simultaneous with the national meeting in Washington, newspapers in Albany began to plead for help for the Irish. Thurlow Weed announced in his paper on February 9 that a movement had begun in the state capital for "an effort to be made immediately to purchase a cargo of corn" for shipment to Ireland.<sup>46</sup> William Cassidy noted that the famine relief movement had begun in other cities, like New York, and he asked his readers: "Are not we here to have a share in this movement?"<sup>47</sup> A similar call came from the Liberty Party's newspaper. It used the relief meetings and the money donated by Irish immigrants to goad antislavery advocates to perform their duty: "there is a loud call upon the people here, to open their hearts in pity of the miserable sufferers."<sup>48</sup> What was happening in Albany was repeated in New York City, Rochester, Buffalo, Troy, and many other communities across the state as editors campaigned for famine relief and encouraged their towns and cities to create relief committees and join in the national campaign of voluntary philanthropy blessed by their leaders in Washington.

State and local leaders joined in encouraging the citizens of New York to organize famine relief committees. Albany Mayor William Parmalee, a Whig, led a group of citizens who called for a public meeting on famine relief at the State capitol on February 12. Among those who joined in the call were John Van Buren (son of former president Martin Van Buren), who, like Cassidy, belonged to the Barnburner faction of the Democratic Party; Amasa Parker, former Democratic assemblyman and congressman; Azariah Cutting Flagg, former state comptroller and a Democrat; Whig lawyer and politician Ira Harris; Edward C. Delevan, one of the leaders of the state's temperance movement; and Thomas W. Olcott, president of the city's Mechanics and Farmers Bank.<sup>49</sup> Mayor Parmalee presided over the meeting until he turned it over to Whig Governor John Young. The governor's presence gave the meeting the official blessing of the state political leadership. Governor Young recommended the organization of relief committees in each town in the state to collect money, food, and clothing to transmit to the Central

Executive Committee in Albany (which emerged as the State Committee) for shipment via New York City to Ireland. In his speech, the governor stressed some of the major themes repeated at other relief meetings—the magnitude of the crisis, common humanity, “the bond of common origin” with the Irish, and Americans as the people of plenty living in “the granary of the world.”<sup>50</sup>

John Van Buren, the other major speaker, stressed similar themes, but once again acknowledged “individual charity of the Irish working class” and used their remittances as a model of generosity that all Americans should emulate. Emphasizing America’s role as a beacon of liberty to the oppressed of the world, he noted that liberty required American benevolence, and that a free people should share their abundance with the Irish.<sup>51</sup> American liberty had responsibility, and freemen could show their acceptance of this burden through philanthropy. Whig political leaders like Governor Young and Democrats like Van Buren redefined American republicanism to include an obligation for voluntary national philanthropy. Of course, this became a people-to-people, not government-to-government, mission in voluntary assistance, which in the antebellum period reinforced American perceptions of republicanism and America’s role in the world as enlightened and humanitarian.<sup>52</sup>

Three days after the meeting at the capitol, members of the assembly and senate held a legislative relief meeting in the assembly chamber to raise funds and draft an address to the people of New York. Once again, this was a nonpartisan affair, with Whig Senator Ira Harris and freshman Democratic Assemblyman Daniel Sickles as participants. The legislators repeated the call of the State Committee to the people of New York to organize committees and forward contributions. They stressed the magnitude of the crisis, common humanity, Americans as a people of plenty, and the moral obligation to help.<sup>53</sup>

State legislators gave about \$380 from their own purses. While the governor, state officials, and state legislators actively endorsed the campaign to aid Ireland, the state took little official action to help. A proposal from Daniel Sickles for a direct public contribution from the state died, just as Washington Hunt’s proposal had in Congress. Support existed in the state legislature to waive tolls on contributions shipped for famine relief. The proposal passed the assembly, but ran into unexpected opposition from a minority of five senators who blocked the action on constitutional grounds.<sup>54</sup> At the local level, proposals in several cities (including Buffalo and Rochester) to contribute funds from common councils also failed because local lawmakers raised constitutional scruples. (The major exception to the unwillingness of state and local legislators to provide public funds came from New York City, where the Common Council voted \$5,000 of public money to buy

provisions for Ireland.)<sup>55</sup>

Meanwhile, the Albany Irish Relief Committee served simultaneously as the State Committee, raising donations in Albany and soliciting donations from upstate New York, which it forwarded through the General Irish Relief Committee of New York City (organized at the same time as the Albany committee) to Ireland and Scotland. Charles Jenkins, a Whig alderman from the Sixth Ward, chaired the Albany group, while transplanted Albanian Myndert Van Schaick headed the New York City Committee. The Albany Committee adopted most of Governor Young's address as part of its statewide appeal for aid. Members urged each town, city, and ward to create relief associations and forward money either to Theodore Olcott, treasurer of the State Committee, or John W. Ford, its secretary. Thomas James in Albany collected food and clothing as a chair of the Clothing and Provisions Subcommittee. Newspapers around the state aided the relief effort by publishing copies of either the appeal or the instructions from the committee, once again suggesting the public-service role of journalists in this campaign.<sup>56</sup>

Summing up the public mood, New York City's Finance Committee told the Dublin Quakers that "The committee would fail in discharging their duty, were they to omit to assure you of the deep and wide-spread sympathy felt throughout our city and State, for the sufferings" of the Irish.<sup>57</sup> Soon, committees were organized all around the state. Residents of Keeseville held a meeting and organized a committee of nine to solicit donations, while the local paper encouraged, "Let all who can give any, even a trifling sum."<sup>58</sup> In the village of Clintonville, residents met at the local school on February 20. They elected a secretary, a treasurer, and an executive committee of ten, and drafted an appeal to the villagers to "respond heartily and liberally."<sup>59</sup> Ignoring the extreme cold, Watertown residents met at the Universalist Church and urged "the people of this town and county to unite... for the relief of the starving poor of Ireland."<sup>60</sup> An initial subscription of \$375 was raised and forwarded to the State Committee in Albany. After the meeting, one of Watertown's newspapers pushed residents to contribute and expressed its gratitude that "the right spirit is being aroused among our citizens."<sup>61</sup> The Oswego Palladium told its citizens: "Let not the agonizing petitions of suffering humanity, then, be unheeded." (Oswego residents turned out to be the most generous in northern New York.<sup>62</sup> Within a few days of setting up a local committee, donations of more than \$1,000 were raised.<sup>63</sup>)

In western New York, the citizens of Buffalo held a mass meeting in mid-February for famine relief. Millard Fillmore, soon to become the Whig vice president (and then president), became a member of the executive committee. His

high-profile role in Irish famine relief contradicts his 1856 candidacy for president on the anti-Irish American Party. (Ironically, many of the most active leaders for Irish famine relief in 1847 later became nativists, members of Order of United American lodges, and supporters of the American Party.)

Buffalo is an ideal example of how Whigs and Democrats, Irish and Germans, Catholics, Unitarians, and Presbyterians all worked together for the common American cause of Irish relief. Middle-class citizens' groups like the Young Men's Association raised funds, as did the Irish Sons of St. Patrick. Ministers actively appealed to their congregations to contribute, and as one of the committee members observed at the St. Patrick's Day dinner, "The clergy of Buffalo of all denominations; their liberality and zeal in the relief of Ireland entitles them to the praise and gratitude of Irishmen."<sup>64</sup> The city's editors and publishers also played a major role in advocating and participating in the relief movement. The level of cooperation in Buffalo proves that famine relief emerged as a respectable, ecumenical movement—and an unusual example of cooperation.

Part of what makes the 1847 campaign an unusual example of international philanthropy by nineteenth-century Americans was how widespread active participation was and how it reached small communities throughout the state. Most contributions ranged from twenty-five cents to two dollars; in rural areas, residents contributed provisions. Larger donations tended to be twenty-five to fifty dollars, with a rare \$100 donation.<sup>65</sup> The largest single donation in upstate new York came from abolitionist Gerrit Smith, who contributed \$2,000.<sup>66</sup> More typical were the \$11.45 raised by Charity Lodge 207 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in Williamson and the one dollar donated by Michael Sheridan of Scottsville.<sup>67</sup>

The actions of committees in Ontario and Genesee counties suggested something that the accounts of the committee in Buffalo failed to mention—the role of women. While the formal committees were all-male, in some parts of the United States women organized relief activities, or male committees asked women to play an active role in this philanthropic endeavor. Women in Brooklyn organized a relief committee to aid in soliciting donations, acting independently of their male counterparts.<sup>68</sup> Women in Batavia suggested a public dinner at the Eagle Tavern; \$170 was raised.<sup>69</sup> In Canandaigua, a separate women's committee was established to collect clothing.<sup>70</sup> Women in Binghamton raised \$427, while those in Kingston contributed \$167.<sup>71</sup> These fund-raising efforts were organized by middle-class women, but working-class women also participated by sending in donations.<sup>72</sup> Whether it was widows who save "their sixpences and shillings," or Isabella McGuire, who donated a ham in Potsdam, women joined this national

cause. A few editorials and committee appeals explicitly asked women to participate. "We hope our ladies will take this matter in hand," suggested a Baldwinsville newspaper; another in Lowville asked women in the community to contribute clothing.<sup>73</sup>

With the exception of Brooklyn, the women who took an active role in fundraising in 1847 lived in smaller communities in upstate New York. In urban areas, most committees solicited women's donations but not their aid. One of the exceptions was Utica, where a Catholic order, Sisters of Charity, collected clothing; the Utica committee asked other women "to cooperate in this work of mercy."<sup>74</sup> Since charity for the poor in urban communities was "the province of bourgeois women," it is somewhat surprising that other upstate cities did not follow Utica's example.<sup>75</sup> Female participation followed in the pattern of social space allowed women in mid-nineteenth-century America. Famine relief appeared a natural extension to men of women's roles in the home. For women, it provided an opportunity to join in a community and national event. For some, it provided a chance to take a more public role. The common bond that Americans felt with the Irish in 1847 also linked Americans regardless of their status, whether they were former governor William Henry Seward, who chaired a famine meeting in Auburn, or the unknown female patient at the Lunatic Asylum in Utica who wrote a poetic tribute to the Irish.<sup>76</sup>

In the lower and mid-Hudson regions, most famine relief went to the New York Committee, while in the upper Hudson and Capital Region, most aid went via the State Committee. Officers and cadets at West Point sent \$360 to New York.<sup>77</sup> At a donation meeting in Newburgh, two small boys gave one dollar apiece out of their earnings from a local manufacturing plant. Members of the Lutheran Church in Valatie, Columbia County, collected forty-four dollars, while their neighbors at the Presbyterian Church donated sixty-three. Across the Hudson, people in Saugerties gathered 352 garments and \$405 and sent it to New York City.<sup>78</sup> New Lebanon Shakers supplied \$700 in rye, beans, and clothes; a second Shaker community at Watervliet sent \$300 in rye, beans, flour, peas, buckwheat, mittens, and socks to the State Committee.<sup>79</sup> After listening to a sermon on behalf of famine relief by Rev. B. Van Zandt at the Dutch Reformed Church in Kinderhook, residents gave \$131. All the churches in the village of Glens Falls set aside Sunday, February 14, for the gathering of collections.<sup>80</sup>

Residents of the Capital District also united behind aid to the Irish and Scots. "Old Watervliet, we have no doubt," argued a local editor, "will throw in her mite."<sup>81</sup> Citizens of the village met at Jefferson Hall on February 16 to pass resolutions and establish ward committees to solicit donations. Within three

weeks, \$475 had been raised and forwarded to Albany.<sup>82</sup> Both the Democratic and Whig newspaper editors in Lansingburgh encouraged the people of their village to contribute, asking, "Have we not enough and to spare?"<sup>83</sup> Dividing up the community by fire districts, committee members went to every house, raised \$575, and sent the funds to New York, with \$475 going for Ireland and \$100 for Scotland. (On average, eighty-five percent of the funds collected statewide went to Irish relief, and fifteen percent to the Scots.)<sup>84</sup>

An unusual element of Schenectady's relief movement was the active involvement of leaders of the Bible Society on its committee, and the committee's argument that citizens should support famine relief because of the contributions of Irish immigrants to the construction of public works projects such as canals, railroads, and bridges. Bible Society leaders were usually Baptists or Presbyterians, had a strong evangelical Protestant strain, and in the 1830s became increasingly vocal in expressing their concerns about Irish Catholic immigrants, especially during the Protestant-Catholic schoolhouse wars of the 1830s and 1840s.<sup>85</sup> Yet during the famine-relief campaign, even evangelical Protestants suspended their anti-Catholic concerns and viewed the Irish as fellow Christians. By articulating the contributions of Irish immigrants to America, the Schenectady committee also defined the Irish as part of American mosaic.

In Troy, all four newspapers and the city's influential merchants, businessmen, lawyers, and politicians rallied to the cause of Irish and Scottish relief.<sup>86</sup> As elsewhere, the twenty-five man committee included members of the Irish community along with Francis Mann, the Whig candidate for mayor; David L. Seymour, his Democratic opponent; and Father Peter Havermanns, the city's most prominent Catholic clergyman. Ironically, Troy politicians who became nativist in the 1850s, like Whig Alderman Russell Sage, served on the committee. Troy's committee served as a cross-section of the city's influential men, but confirmed the non-partisan and ecumenical nature of famine relief. By including Havermanns and Irish-Americans, the committee recognized the presence of the Irish in the community and their right to participate in leadership roles in this national charity. As the city's Whig Post argued, "Remember what Ireland has done for America." It went on to cite the role of Irishmen "in fighting our battles, in framing our laws, and in sustaining our independence!" By March, the people of Troy had donated \$3,000 for Ireland.<sup>87</sup>

Back in Albany, the State Committee needed to raise funds locally and coordinate the shipment of provisions, clothing, and money from upstate via the New York City Committee to Ireland and Scotland.<sup>88</sup> A dispute arose over how to ship food to Ireland and Scotland. Committees in New York City, New Jersey,



“Relief for Ireland”

Illustration from *The Pictorial Times*, January 30, 1847

Brooklyn, and Albany decided against using the federal warship *Macedonian* because they believed that private merchant vessels would get the food to the Irish more quickly. The *Macedonian's* captain, Commodore George DeKay, actively solicited cargoes of provisions from the State Committee, and he sent a representative, Robert Holmes, to Albany in late March to meet with Mayor William Parmelee because “I shall be most happy to have the honor of carrying across the Atlantic, the contributions of the great City of Albany.”<sup>89</sup> Assuming that the Albany Committee would send its contributions to him, DeKay also wrote to Charles Jenkins with instructions on shipping kiln-dried cornmeal.<sup>90</sup> A public fight broke out in the New York City press between the New York City Committee and DeKay over the wisdom of shipping provisions on private merchant ships or aboard the *Macedonian*.<sup>91</sup> A low-keyed and private disagreement emerged between the Albany group and DeKay. One of DeKay's partisans in New York City lobbied Jenkins to ignore the advice of the New York City Committee and use the *Macedonian* because “the position taken here by the New York Committee appear to me untenable, and will not be supported by public opinion.”<sup>92</sup> The Albany Committee did not agree, and decided to rely on the New York City Committee's advice to ship its contributions by merchant vessels. According to Thomas W. Olcott, “I am not aware of any decided encouragement had been given to Commodore DeKay.” The Albany Committee expressed their faith in the New York group, “composed as it is of gentlemen of business habits and of benevolent and honorable feelings.”<sup>93</sup>

A few weeks later, DeKay got into a public feud with Thurlow Weed, who had become the harshest media critic of using American warships.<sup>94</sup> Weed's criticism paralleled that of historian Timothy Sarbaugh, who concluded that President Polk and Congress "failed the starving Irish" by only contributing "two war-torn vessels."<sup>95</sup> Essentially, Weed followed the same line of reasoning in the *Albany Journal*: that the federal government could have done more to aid the Irish, and the use of warships appeared a costly distraction that actually reduced the amount of funds available to purchase food. "This appropriation of vessels of war to do what can be done at less cost without them, will excite contempt rather than commendation," the *Journal* informed its readers.<sup>96</sup>

By contrast, the warship *Jamestown*, commanded by Captain Robert Forbes, faced no political problems, and the New England Irish Relief Committee, based in Boston, filled it with donated provisions and food purchased by the committee with contributions raised throughout New England. Not all New Yorkers agreed with the Albany, Brooklyn, and New York City Committees. The New York City Common Council's donation of 1,018 barrels of cornmeal was sent aboard the *Macedonian*.<sup>97</sup> The Ladies Irish Relief Committee of Brooklyn strongly urged the use of the *Macedonian*; member Anna Heffernan expressed her contempt for the arrogance of all the-male Brooklyn Irish Relief Committee for ignoring the women's wishes.<sup>98</sup> Other communities upstate contributed cornmeal that was loaded on the warship. In the end, Robert Forbes formed a *Macedonian* Committee in Boston to complete the cargo before the ship sailed for Ireland and Scotland.<sup>99</sup>

The Albany Committee rejected DeKay's offer because it agreed with the criticisms of Weed and trusted the members of the New York City Committee (especially since the chair, Myndert Van Schaick, was a transplanted Albanian). Delays in the opening of navigation on the Erie Canal and Hudson River made the use of merchant vessels more practical since the Albany Committee needed to wait for shipments from the northern and western parts of the state, which might not arrive in the capital until after the planned departure of DeKay's vessel. A psychological factor also motivated the Albany Committee—the desire of local contributors to know that an "Albany Ship" went to Ireland, rather than having the donations lumped together aboard the *Macedonian*.

Citizens of Albany contributed \$10,374 for Ireland while money and shipments of provisions from other parts of upstate New York brought in \$13,214.<sup>100</sup> Most of the donations came in small amounts. Martin Van Buren gave fifty dollars, Governor Young twenty-five. Iron molders employed at Jagger, Treadwell, and Perry donated \$150; the executives at one of Albany's leading stove manufacturers gave twenty-five. Railroad executive Erastus Corning contributed fifty dollars.

Workers for Uri Burt's brewery pooled part of their wages and gave sixty-six dollars; domestics employed at the Delavan House Hotel dug into their pockets for forty-two. Thurlow Weed found twenty-five dollars to give, while "a little boy...scraped together thirty-seven cents."<sup>101</sup> Most Albanians gave between fifty cents and five dollars, with the largest single donation—\$200—coming from Reuben H. Walworth, who ran unsuccessfully for governor as a Democrat in 1848. To further the cause of famine relief, the city's political and business leaders joined together to sponsor a benefit at the Odeon Theater. Sponsors included Erastus Corning, Mayor Parmalee, John V. L. Pruyn (a lawyer and Corning's chief assistant on the New York Central Railroad), John Van Buren, and leading stove merchant Joel Rathbone. Tickets for the play and dance on March 18 sold for fifty cents and one dollar.<sup>102</sup> Similar benefits in Brooklyn, Buffalo, Troy, and New York City formed a pattern of common attempts by Irish relief committees to use entertainment as a vehicle to enlarge the pool of donors.

The Protestant establishment endorsed relief efforts in Albany. Reverend William Buell Sprague, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church and a leader of the Albany Bible Society and City Tract Society, encouraged citizens to attend a benefit temperance lecture. Methodists allowed the use of their church for the lecture, which was given by John B. Gough. Members of other families that were "pillars of Albany's Protestant establishment"—Pruyns, Townsends, and Van Rensselaers—all served on the Odeon benefit committee and contributed to the cause.<sup>103</sup> Reflecting the contributions of Protestant residents and the nondenominational thrust of famine relief, Charles Jenkins informed the Dublin Quakers that "these two thousand barrels are the equally mingled contributions of the Roman Catholic and Protestant citizens of the City of Albany."<sup>104</sup>

Half of Albany's contributions came from the city's Irish Catholics, who gave more proportionally than larger Catholic communities in Brooklyn and New York City. Over \$6,000 came from Catholics, primarily Irish. Members of the Hibernian Provident Society donated \$400 from their general funds and another \$200 in individual contributions. Originally organized in 1833 by James Maher and other members of the Irish-American elite of businessmen and middle-class professionals, it sought "to bolster the repute of Irish-Americans" and "enhance Irish prestige within Albany."<sup>105</sup> Elite and middle-class Irish-Americans used famine relief as a vehicle for identifying with Ireland, but also as a way of joining the Protestant establishment in Albany in a common philanthropic endeavor. Donations within the Irish community came from the elite like Maher, but also from individuals like David Mahony, a laborer on Albany's waterworks.<sup>106</sup> As elsewhere, political opponents in the city worked together in famine relief. Peter

Cagger, from one of “Albany’s prominent Catholic families,” became an influential member of the more radical Barnburner faction of the Democrats. He “challenged Erastus Corning, the Hunker patriarch” (the more conservative Democratic faction), but worked with Corning on the Odeon benefit committee, as well as with Whig Mayor William Parmalee.<sup>107</sup>

The reality was that most Irish residents of Albany were recent immigrants of modest means. St. Mary’s Church, the city’s oldest Catholic congregation, raised over \$2,300. Setting an example for his flock, Father Joseph A. Schneller, purchased fifty barrels of flour from Rochester worth \$350.<sup>108</sup> Members of his congregation who belonged to the Laborer’s Mutual Benefit Society pooled \$100. Michael Masterson, “a street paver and secretary of the Labor Mutual Benefit Society, and his brothers, Philip (also a paver), and Patrick (a machine tender), each gave \$1.”<sup>109</sup> Two dollars was donated by nurse Catherine Murphy, and five dollars from molder John Roche. Though small in numbers—and despite “how scanty their means”<sup>110</sup>—this congregation raised the largest amount of any Catholic church in New York. Other Catholic churches in the city gave almost as generously. Later, when it came time to transport the collected provisions to towboats, the city’s cartmen, mainly Irish, took them without charge. It’s no wonder one local Irish Catholic boasted that Albany’s Irish “have been among the foremost in this glorious work of charity.”<sup>111</sup>

Donations for Scotland also poured in. The State Committee collected \$411 in Albany and \$1,355 from other parts of upstate New York to palliate the suffering of the Scots.<sup>112</sup> In most communities in the state, the Irish relief committees extended their mandate to include Scottish relief, and they gave a share of their contributions—usually ten to fifteen percent—for Scotland. In larger communities such as New York, Albany, Troy, Schenectady, Rochester, and Buffalo, ad hoc committees began an additional round of fund-raising. Where there was an organized Scottish immigrant community, fund-raising developed through St. Andrew’s Societies, the Caledonian Society, or Presbyterian churches.

After the Irish campaign in Schenectady, members of the city’s executive committee held a separate meeting on March 30, 1847, for the “suffering condition of a large portion of the inhabitants of Scotland.”<sup>113</sup> Albany’s Scots, organized in the St. Andrew’s Society, started a second fund-raising movement for Scotland independent of the State Committee.<sup>114</sup> Contributions ranging from fifty cents to fifty dollars came from individuals, while churches also took up collections. In the end, \$1,000 was sent via the State Committee to the Highland Destitution Committee in Edinburgh. (Even before the collections of the St. Andrew’s Society, members of Albany’s State Street Baptist Church gave \$600, which was sent to Scotland

in February via the Sarah Sands.) The State Committee sent three shipments to the St. Andrew's Society in New York; President Richard Irvin used the donations to purchase cornmeal. In mid-April, the State Committee sent \$1,306. A month later, \$178 from the State Committee and \$1,000 from Albany's St. Andrew's Society purchased cornmeal in New York City that went aboard the barque Jane Morrison for Glasgow. A final shipment of \$300 in cornmeal went aboard the barque Eagle in September. The State Committee in Albany took responsibility to collect donations from local committees and St. Andrew's Societies in upstate New York, and arranged with the St. Andrew's Society in New York to forward the contributions to Scotland.<sup>115</sup> For Scottish immigrants in the United States, raising money for their afflicted homeland permitted them to identify with their origins, maintain ethnic identity, and (like the Irish) express their sense of republicanism with their fellow Americans.

Cold weather delayed the opening of navigation on the Erie Canal and upper Hudson River, leading the State Committee to convert 7,000 bushels of corn into money and cornmeal to send via the New York City Committee. That committee chartered the British brig *Minerva* to carry Albany's donations to Cork. Robert Minturn, a member of the New York Committee, visited Albany in mid-April to discuss with Charles Jenkins the forwarding of Albany's contributions, and Minturn used \$16,000 from the Albany group to purchase cornmeal.<sup>116</sup> Some of the cargo went out on the *Minerva*, while the rest was transported to Dublin on the "Albany" ship *Malabar*. Carrying 1,617 barrels of cornmeal purchased from Albany's funds and over 400 barrels of food and clothing sent from the capital, the *Minerva* left New York on May 13. Instructions from the Albany Committee requested that the Dublin Quakers distribute the provisions between the bishops of Cork, Dublin, Tuam, and Cashel.<sup>117</sup> The Quakers wound up forwarding the cargo to Waterford, because the poor in that part of Ireland most desperately needed it. (Albany's contributions were first the from the United States to reach the city.)<sup>118</sup> Later contributions reached the Catholic and Anglican bishops.

The dispatch of the *Minerva* led Myndert Van Schaick to write Bewley and Pim, two of the secretaries of the Dublin Committee, to express his pride in his fellow Albanians. According to Van Schaick, "the supply from this city is, for the present nearly exhausted," because New York had to cope with "unusually great numbers of poor people" who had fled the famine in Ireland.<sup>119</sup> Thus, the donations from Albany and elsewhere upstate filled a crucial vacuum at a time when the philanthropic resources of New York City were sorely taxed. This was just the beginning of the Irish influx into New York that would fundamentally alter the ethnic and religious mix of its cities. Within a few years, over forty percent of the

population of Albany and Troy would be Irish. Aid from Albany and New York alleviated the degree of distress in Ireland, but it did not reduce the flight of Irish to the United States.

With the opening of navigation on the Erie Canal, the State Committee forwarded to the New York Committee contributions from upstate communities. Additional cargoes marked “Relief for Ireland” arrived by railroad. Albany’s cartmen quickly transported the supplies from storehouses and depots to towboats.<sup>120</sup> Several towboat lines, such as the Swiftsure Line, agreed to carry the supplies to New York City without charge. The *Malabar* left New York on May 26 with a cargo of corn, cornmeal, beans, and clothing—in all, 2,584 barrels of food purchased from funds sent by the State Committee and more than 330 barrels of food shipped from Albany.<sup>121</sup> Another 1,500 barrels of cornmeal purchased from the Albany Committee’s funds went aboard the *Sidons* on April 29 to Liverpool. Smaller amounts of food were shipped aboard the *Anna Maria* (a “Brooklyn” ship) to Limerick on May 13; the *James*, also to Limerick, on June 22; the *Free Trader* to Cork on July 16; and the *Patrick Henry* to Liverpool on September 7.

The final significant shipment of 715 barrels of cornmeal went to Liverpool aboard the *Ashburton*, which left New York on November 29, 1847. The last donation of funds raised in Albany went to purchase food sent aboard the , which left for Liverpool on June 17, 1848. (It also carried the last shipments from the New York Committee.)<sup>122</sup> In the most specific contribution sent from Albany, fifty barrels of wheat flour went to Father Theobald Mathew, “the Cork Capuchin temperance leader,” who was a friend of Thurlow Weed’s. (Father Mathew visited New York State in 1851, campaigning for Catholic temperance, and signed up 10,000 in Albany, 4,000 in Troy, and 6,000 in Buffalo for the temperance pledge.)<sup>123</sup>

The State Committee articulated in its correspondence with the Dublin Quakers and the Irish clergy key themes of America’s aid. First, the Albany group left most of the distribution of food to the Dublin Quakers, because Americans assumed that they would fairly distribute the aid without using the crisis for evangelical purposes (unlike Protestant groups such as the Irish Baptist Society, which tried to sway the hungry Irish into conversion). Reflecting upon the wishes of their contributors, the State Committee requested that 2,000 barrels of cornmeal be set aside to be distributed equally between the Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops in Dublin, Cashel, Tuam, and Armagh as a symbol of ecumenicalism, because it was “the equally mingled contributions of Protestant and Roman Catholic, native and foreign born citizens of the City of Albany.”<sup>124</sup> Expressing their admiration of the Irish immigrants in Albany who contributed sums far beyond their means, the largely Protestant leaders of the State Committee acknowledged Irish immigrants

as fellow workers in this charity effort. For a brief moment, Americans—regardless of religious denomination or whether they were native-born or immigrants—worked together. Studying the Albany Committee is important because it was the most explicit in articulating this bond created by famine relief.

In 1847, the United States emerged as a leader in international philanthropy, as Americans raised over \$1.5 million for famine relief. What is remarkable about this effort is that it took place between two waves of anti-Catholic, anti-Irish nativism. Protestants, including those who participated in nativist movements in Buffalo in the 1850s, and members of the Protestant establishment in Albany, were able to put aside their anti-Catholicism and sectarian concerns because of shared values of Christian benevolence and common humanity that defined the Irish as a people in need and Irish immigrants as fellow workers in the common cause that became a shared national mission. Aid to the Irish and Scots fit into Protestant values of benevolence, morality, and responsibility but differed in two important aspects—it was not solely an upper- or middle-class movement since this philanthropic endeavor crossed class lines and solicited contributions from poor and working-class Americans and also involved the active cooperation and participation of Irish Catholics. For a brief moment, the United States became “universal America,” where class, ethnicity, and religious denomination did not matter.<sup>125</sup>

Famine relief emerged as an expression of American republicanism and voluntarism at its best, as the people of plenty shared their abundance with the less fortunate in Europe. For Whigs, Democrats, Antirenters, and abolitionists, international philanthropy became an obligation of a republican society. The creation of so many local famine relief committees emerged as a logical extension of the widespread spirit of voluntarism prevalent in American society in the 1840s. This organizational structure of aid to Ireland and Scotland mirrored how New Yorkers joined together for moral improvement, public safety, and civic and social betterment.

Historians ignored famine relief because it portrays Americans as saints rather than as sinners, as heroes rather than as villains. In the contemporary historiography of victimology, the United States is the Great Satan of exploitation. Studying famine relief reveals Americans as leaders in international benevolence, “but it also underscored America’s commitment and global volunteerism.”<sup>126</sup> When New York City’s Congregation Shearith Israel gathered in a special meeting for Irish relief in 1947, its rabbi observed: “Our fellow citizens have come forward with promptitude and generosity; contributions have poured in from all classes, from all sects.”<sup>127</sup> In that year, Jews, Quakers, Catholics, Baptists, and Presbyterians all over New York became one people with one goal.

## Notes

1. Myndert Van Schaick, Chairman, to Joseph Bewley and Jonathan Pim, Secretaries, Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, 15 April 1847, in General Irish Relief Committee, New York City, *Aid to Ireland: Report of the General Irish Relief Committee of the City of New York* (New York City: The Committee, 1848), 86. According to the New-York Historical Society the original manuscripts of the New York Committee are not in their collections, and I used the microfilm copy of the report at the New York State Library, Albany, New York.
2. A great deal has been published about the Irish famine, especially in light of the 150th commemoration. As an example, see Cormac O'Grada, *Black '47 and Beyond* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Christine Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine: The Great Hunger in Ireland* (London and Chicago: Pluto Press, 1997); Liam Kennedy, et. al., *Mapping The Great Irish Famine* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999). By contrast there is only one really detailed work on the Scottish famine: Tom Devine, *The Great Highland Famine* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988).
3. Diane Hotten-Somers, "Famine: American Relief Movement, (1846-1850)," in Michael Glazier, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Irish in America* (Notre Dame, IN.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 305.
4. For example, William Rowley, "The Irish Aristocracy of Albany, 1798-1878," *New York History* 52 (July 1971), 275-304; William Rowley, "Albany: A Tale of Two Cities, 1798-1889," (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1967); Ronald Bayor and Timothy Meagher, eds., *The New York Irish* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1996); Daniel Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town: Iron and Cotton Worker Protest in Troy and Cohoes, New York, 1855-1884* (Urbana, IL.: University of Illinois Press, 1978); WHMT, *Hard Days Are Gone* (video) (Albany: WHMT, 1999).
5. As an example of scholarship on British relief, Thomas P. O'Neill, "The Organization and Administration of Relief, 1845-1852," in R.D. Edwards and T.D. Williams, eds., *The Great Famine* (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1962), 205-59. For an overview of American reaction to the famine: Merle Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad: A History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 41-64; Helen Hatton, *The Largest Amount of Good: Quaker Relief in Ireland 1654-1921* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 108-26; Christine Kinealy, *A Death Dealing Famine*, 111-16; John Holt, "The Quakers in the Great Irish Famine," (M.L. thesis, Trinity College, University of Dublin, 1973), 110-22; Rob Goodbody, *A Suitable Channel: Quaker Relief in the Great Famine* (Bray, Ireland: Pale Publishing, 1995): 21-24; 78-82; Christine Kinealy, "Potatoes, providence and philanthropy: the role of private charity during the Irish Famine," in Patrick O'Sullivan, ed., *The Meaning of the Famine* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997): 158-163.
6. For local studies: John Ridge, "The Great Hunger in New York," *New York Irish History* 9 (1995): 5-12; This author's articles, "Famine Relief from Brooklyn," *New York Irish History* 12 (1998): 16-20; "Thirty Dollars From Little Becky: New York's Irish Famine Relief Efforts, 1846-1847," *Seaport* 35 (Fall 2000): 30-34. This popular history article covers famine efforts in New York City. For state studies, Henry Forbes and Henry Lee, *Massachusetts Help to Ireland During the Great Famine* (Milton, MA: Captain Forbes House, 1967). This was an extensive catalogue that went with an exhibition on the 120th anniversary of the Great Famine. Also, see this author's recent work: "Famine Relief from the Garden City to the Green Isle," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 93:4 (Winter 2000-2001), 388-414; "Not Forgotten in Their Affliction: Irish Famine Relief from Rhode Island, 1847," *Rhode Island History* 60:1 (Winter 2002); 27-36; and "South Carolina and Irish Famine Relief, 1846-47," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 103:2 (April 2002); 130-152.
7. There is no study of American efforts to aid Scotland, but this author is researching one. Devine, *Great Highland Famine*, 13-16, 111-116, briefly mentions American aid just as many historians of the Irish famine, like Cecil Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 241-45. On the relatively low death rates and emigration figures, see Devine, *Great Highland Famine*, 57-63; Cormac O'Grada, *Black '47*, 16, 105; Michael Flinn, ed., *Scottish Population History* (Cambridge, U.K. Cambridge University Press, 1977), 433.

8. For an account of Harvey's role, see my article in *Seaport*. "Little Becky" was Harvey's daughter. Also, see Hatton, *Largest Amount of Good*, 111-123, 257-58.
9. As an example, for the village of Keeseville, see *Essex County Republican*, 27 February 1847.
10. H.N. Fryatt, et. al., Jersey City Irish Relief Committee, to General Robert Armstrong, 5 January 1847, in *Jersey City Sentinel*, 6 January 1847; Robert Armstrong to H.N. Fryatt, et. al., 4 February 1847, in *New York Herald*, 11 March 1847.
11. For example, William Rathbone to Dr. Francis Wayland, 18 May 1847, Letterbook I, New England Relief Society, William Rathbone Papers, Sydney Jones Library, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, England.
12. *Albany Evening Atlas*, 8 March 1847. Also, *Albany Evening Journal*, 8 March 1847.
13. *Ibid*; also, *New York Freeman's Journal*, 27 February 1847 for Albany remittances; *Albany Argus*, March 1847.
14. *Buffalo Courier*, 12 February 1847; *Albany Evening Journal*, 27 February 1847. As another example, editorial by *Herkimer Journal* in *ibid*, 20 January 1847. Democratic and Whig papers commended the Irish.
15. Story taken from the *New York Freeman's Journal* soliciting contributors as remittances to be sent via Bishop Hughes reprinted in Keeseville *Essex County Republican*, 2 January 1847. Harvey's account of remittances was reprinted by newspapers across the state. As an example, *Plattsburgh Republican*, 30 January 1847. See *ibid*, 3 April 1847 for remittances sent via the local priest, J. Rooney, for forwarding to family and friends from Plattsburgh and Clinton County.
16. *Troy Daily Post*, 2 March 1847; *West Troy Advocate*, 13 January, 17, February; 10 March 1847. For Hughes' intermediary role in forwarding remittances, see *Albany Evening Journal*, 23 April 1847.
17. Central Executive Committee (Charles Jenkins, et. al.), Albany, New York, to Rev. Michael Slattery, Archbishop of Cashel, 27 April 1847, Albany Committee for the relief of Ireland Papers, McKinney Library, Albany Institute of History and Art (Albany Committee, AIHA). The Albany Institute contains the records of the Albany Committee, one of the few committees in the United States whose original records survived. A few committees, those in New York City, Newark (New Jersey), Philadelphia Quakers, and the Hibernian Society of Charleston, South Carolina, published reports of their activities in 1847. Newspapers remain the primary repository of the records of these famine relief committees.
18. *New York Evening Post*, 17 November 1846; *New York Herald*, 21 November 1846.
19. *Ovid Bee*, 25 November 1846.
20. *Albany Evening Journal*, 1 January 1847; *Lansingburgh Gazette*, 1 January 1847.
21. For details on New York City and Brooklyn between January–May 1847 see my articles cited above and for Boston, Forbes and Crosby, *Massachusetts Help to Ireland*; Henry Colman to Luther Tucker, 18 September 1846, [www.people.vipsima.edu](http://www.people.vipsima.edu).
22. *New York Freeman's Journal*, 30 July 1842.
23. For an original of one of Harvey's appeals, see Jacob Harvey to Jonathan Pim, 28 December 1846, *Transactions*, 218-19.
24. *Ibid*, George Trimble and Samuel Willetts to the Central Relief Committee, 16 January 1847, 233 (Rose Street Meeting).
25. *New York Tribune*, 28, 30 December 1846; *New York Evening Post*, 28, 31 December 1846; *New York Herald* 28, 30 December 1846, 9 January 1847; *New York Courier*, 19 January 1847 for a list of each contribution; *New York Freeman's Journal*, 23 January 1847.
26. *Brooklyn Eagle*, 19, 21, 22, 28 December 1846.
27. For a critical evaluation of the December meeting in New York, Ridge, "The Great Hunger in New York," 7.
28. *New York Courier*, 28 December 1846.

29. *New York Tribune*, 28 December 1846.
30. *Albany Evening Journal*, 1 January 1847.
31. *Ibid*; also, see *West Troy Advocate*, 13 January 1847.
32. *Lansingburgh Gazette*, 1 January 1847.
33. William Huntzicker, *The Popular Press, 1833–1865* (Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1999), 163. While Huntzicker extensively covers the New York City press, he does not mention famine relief.
34. *Albany Evening Atlas*, 11 February 1847.
35. *Albany Freeholder*, 24 February 1847.
36. *Albany Patriot*, 17 February 1847.
37. *Troy Northern Budget*, 30 January 1847.
38. *Kinderhook Sentinel*, 4 February 1847.
39. *Baldwinsville Onondaga Gazette*, 24 February 1847.
40. *Keeseville Essex County Republican*, 20 February 1847.
41. Journal of Daniel Sizer, 24 February 1847, Box 12, Shaker Historical Society Files, deposited in Manuscripts, NYSL.
42. *Washington National Intelligencer*, 12 February 1847; *New York Freeman's Journal*, 20 February 1847.
43. For the original draft of the resolutions adopted by the Washington meeting, see 9 February 1847 in the Daniel Webster Papers at Dartmouth College. I used the microfilm edition at Princeton University, reel 20, 027623-36.
44. Timothy Jerome Sarbaugh, "A Moral Spectacle: American Relief and the Famine, 1845-49," *Eire—Ireland* 15:4 (Winter 1980), 6-14, details the Congressional debate. Also, "A Trojan," possibly a resident of Troy, New York, sent a letter to the *Washington National Intelligencer*, 16 February 1847, suggesting the use of government vessels to deliver relief supplies.
45. For the original petitions from New York City, etc., and congressional resolutions, see National Archives, Records of the U.S. Senate, Petitions Laid Upon the Table (Sen. 29A–H7, Record Group 46 and Original Senate Bills and Resolutions, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (S. 184–Sen 29A–B4), S 184. For an account of the *Macedonian*, Phyllis DeKay Wheelock, "Commodore DeKay and the Voyage of the *Macedonian* to Ireland," *American Neptune* 13:4 (October 1953): 254-69; James DeKay, *Chronicles of the Frigate Macedonian, 1809-1922* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995); Forbes and Lee, *Massachusetts Help to Ireland During the Great Famine*, 26-63; Edward Laxton, *The Famine Ships: The Irish Exodus to America* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1996), 49-54. Laxton also briefly mentions the *Macedonian*; Captain Robert Forbes, *The Voyage of the Jamestown on her Errand of Mercy* (Boston: Eastburn Press, 1847).
46. *Albany Evening Journal*, 9 February 1847.
47. *Albany Evening Atlas*, 6 February 1847.
48. *Albany Patriot*, 10 February 1847. Rowley does not mention famine relief in his article and briefly mentions it in his dissertation, "Albany," 297-98.
49. *Albany Evening Journal*, 11 February 1847; "Relief To Ireland," *Broadside*, 2086, 15 February 1847, Manuscripts, NYSL. Olcott's house became the governor's mansion, William Kennedy, *O'Albany!* (New York: Viking Press, 1983), 101. Kennedy does not mention famine relief; *Albany Argus*, 12 February 1847.
50. *Albany Evening Journal*, 13 February 1847.
51. *Ibid*.
52. Neither Curti's overview of American philanthropy cited above nor Hatton's *Largest Amount of Good* emphasize the themes of American philanthropy during the Irish famine or how Americans articulated famine relief. Diane Hotten-Somers in her essay, "Famine: American Relief Movement," *Encyclopedia*, 305-08, briefly covers some themes from a different perspective and recommends the

work of Christine Kinealy, especially “Foreign Aid to Ireland during the Great Famine,” in *Ireland’s Famine: Commemoration and Awareness* (Dublin, 1997).

53. Legislative Relief Meeting, backside of “Relief to Ireland,” 15 February 1847, Broadside, 2086, Manuscripts, NYSL; *Albany Argus*, 16 February 1847.
54. Ansell Bascom, Chair, Legislative Committee to Charles Jenkins, 8 March 1847, Albany Committee, AIHA; *New York Freeman’s Journal*, “Subscriber, Albany,” 23 February 1847, in 6 March 1847; *Albany Argus*, 23 February 1847; *Albany Evening Atlas*, 20, 22 February 1847; *Albany Evening Journal*, 24 February 1847.
55. Unfortunately, the recent biography of Daniel Sickles doesn’t mention his role in famine relief, Thomas Keneally; *American Scoundrel* (New York: Nan Talese-Doubleday, Random House, 2002). For New York City, see James Stowall, et. al., Finance Committee, to Central Relief Committee, 31 May 1847, in *Transactions*, 244; Proceedings of the Board of Aldermen, Vol. XXII, 23 November 1845—10 May 1847 (New York: William C. Bryant, 1847), 351 (1 March), 618, 623 (30 April). For Buffalo, *Buffalo Courier*, 6 March 1847; For Rochester, *New York Freeman’s Journal*, “P,” Rochester, February 22, 1847, in 6 March 1847.
56. “To the Citizens of New York,” 15 February 1847 in the “Relief to Ireland,” Broadside, 2086, Manuscripts, NYSL; Minutes of the Proceedings of the Albany Famine Relief Committee, 15 February 1847, Albany Committee, AIHA.
57. James Stowall, et. al., Finance Committee for the Common Council of the City of New York to the Central Relief Committee, 31 May 1847, *Transactions*, 244.
58. *Keesville Essex County Republican*, 27 February 1847.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Watertown Spectator*, 9 March 1847.
61. *Watertown Jeffersonian*, 26 February 1847.
62. *Oswego Palladium*, 16 February 1847.
63. *Ibid.*, 23 February 1847.
64. *Buffalo Courier*, 17 February 1847. For roles in Irish organizations, 23 March 1847, and for backgrounds and nativist ties, Gerber, *Making of an American Pluralism*. Also, *Buffalo Express*, 13, 15, 16, 17 February 1847.
65. *Buffalo Courier*, 23 March 1847; *Buffalo Express*, 24 March 1847.
66. *Buffalo Courier*, 1 March 1847 (Clarence), 22 March 1847 (Lockport); and *Rochester Democrat*, 12 March 1847. Also, see letter from an “Episcopalian” in the Democrat discussing the best way to use the funds for famine relief.
67. Relief Committee, Aid to Ireland, 27; Neither Judith Bushnell, Reference Librarian at Geneseo College Libraries nor David W. Parish, historian for Geneseo, could track down a manuscript reference; Bushnell to author, 5 July 2002.
68. See the author’s articles on Brooklyn and Illinois cited above.
69. *Batavia Republican Advocate*, 16 February 1847.
70. *Canandaigua Ontario Repository*, 23 February 1847. Thirty-five women were on the committee.
71. *Albany Argus*, 16 February 1847; *Ovid Bee*, 3 March 1847; *Buffalo Courier*, 18 February 1847, *Binghamton Broome Republican*, 24 February 1847; Irish Relief Committee, Aid to Ireland, 37-38, 46; *New Orleans Delta*, 17 March 1847.
72. Studies of women in philanthropy do not mention famine relief. For example, Lori Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) or Nancy Hewitt, *Women’s Activism and Social Change; Rochester, New York, 1822-1872* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984); *Cooperstown Otsego Democrat*, 3 April 1847; *Little Falls Mohawk Courier*, 18 March 1847.
73. *Baldwinsville Onondaga Gazette*, 18 February 1847; *Lowville Northern Journal*, 11 March 1847.

74. *Utica Daily Gazette*, 6 March 1847.
75. Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 78.
76. *Utica Daily Gazette*, 20 February 1847.
77. *Ibid*, 22 February, 9 March 1847; *Cazenovia Madison County Whig*, 7 April 1847. For the record of an individual contribution, see contribution of \$25 received by Mayor Wetmore of Utica and given to Francis Kernan, treasurer of Utica Committee, 5 April 1847 in Kernan Family Papers, Rare Books and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.
78. Edmund Wetmore, et. al., Irish Relief Committee of Utica to the Central Committee, 8 May 1847, in *Transactions*, 241. Also, for donations from central New York that went via the Albany Committee, see item 72, undated list of groups that donated supplies and money; item 73, lists of supplies collected and shipped, 30 April 1847, and Account Book, Theodore Olcott, 15 February–8 September 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
79. Ann Buckingham Diary, 20 March, 23 March 1847, v:2; Box 5, Papers of the New Lebanon Shakers, Manuscripts, NYSL.
80. Irish Relief Committee, Aid to Ireland, 41, 45, *Kinderhook Sentinel*, 4 March 1847.
81. *Albany Daily Argus*, 25 March 1847; item 73, undated list of donations, Account Book of Theodore Olcott, 15 February–8 September 1847, AIHA.
82. *Ibid*, 24 February 1847; *Albany Evening Journal*, 25 March, 11 May 1847; Account Book of Theodore Olcott, 15 February–8 September 1847, AIHA.
83. *Lansingburgh Gazette*, 19 February 1847. Also, see the editorial in the *Lansingburgh Democrat*, 19 February 1847, on the need for Irish relief.
84. *Lansingburgh Democrat*, 19 February; *Lansingburgh Gazette*, 19, 26 February, 19 March 1847. Copies of these newspapers are available at the Troy Public Library. Most of the other newspapers cited in this article are from the microfilm collections of the NYSL. Rensselaer County Historical Society has no record.
85. Ray Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860: A Study in the Origins of American Nativism* (Gloucester, Ma.: Peter Smith, 1963), 143-58; Barbara Petrick, *Church and School in the Immigrant City: A Social History of Public Education in Jersey City, 1804-1930* (Metuchen, N.J.: Upland Press, 2000), 33, 120; Whitney Cross, *The Burned-Over District* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 127.
86. *Troy Post*, 12 February 1847; *Troy County Post*, 16 February 1847; *Troy Daily Whig*, 9, 10, 12, February 1847; *Troy Northern Budget*, 30 January, 8 February 1847; and *ibid*, 16 February citing *Troy Telegraph* editorial on Irish relief. Father Havermans was of Dutch or Flemish origin.
87. *Troy County Post*, 16 February 1847. For details on Dunnigan, see Pardons, Albany County, 1855, Myron Clark Papers, NYSL.
88. As an example, Charles Folger to John Ford, 4 May 1847, Albany Committee, AIHA.
89. George DeKay to William Parmalee, 24 March 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA. DeKay wrote a number of people in New York and New Jersey soliciting cargoes, and the correspondence in the Albany Institute appears to include some of few surviving letters of DeKay's.
90. George DeKay to Charles Jenkins, undated, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA. DeKay wrote a similar letter to Parmalee, 17 March 1847.
91. Publications touching the United States Frigate *Macedonian*, Appendix No. 7, *Aid to Ireland*, 165-175, and for example, *New York Sun*, 28 April 1847; *New York Express*, 29 May 1847.
92. Alfred Clarke to Charles Jenkins, 2 April 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
93. Thomas W. Olcott to Alfred Clarke, 2 April 1847. Also, see Clark's letter of 31 March 1847 to Olcott, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
94. *Ibid*, Clarke to Charles Jenkins, 2 April 1847; *Albany Evening Journal*, 27 April; George DeKay to the editors, 1 May 1847 in *Albany Evening Journal*, 3 May 1847.

95. Sarbaugh, "A Moral Spectacle," 14. For a more favorable view of the *Macedonian* and DeKay's role, see the works of Wheelock, "Commodore DeKay," 254-69; DeKay, *Chronicles*, 228-243; Laxton, *The Famine Ships*, 49-54.
96. *Albany Evening Journal*, 20 March 1847. Also, see *New York Courier*, 29 April 1847.
97. James Stowall, et. al., Finance Committee, Common Council of New York, to Central Relief Committee, 31 May 1847, in *Transactions*, 244.
98. Anna Heffernan, Secretary of the Ladies Irish Relief Committee to the editors, 8 April, 27 May 1847, in *New York Morning Express*, 29 May 1847.
99. Edmund Wetmore, et. al., Irish Relief Committee of Utica, to the Central Relief Committee, 8 May 1847, in *Transactions*, 241; Laxton, *The Famine Ships*, 52-54; DeKay, *Chronicles*, 232-237.
100. For details on the cargo loaded in Boston for *Macedonian* see, for example, David Henshaw to Davis Brooks and Co; 22 May 1847, item 11, Bills, Records of New England Committee for Relief of Ireland and Scotland in the Robert Bennet Forbes Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
101. Contributions, 8 September 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
102. Accounts of contributions are from *Albany Argus*, 26 February, 2, 4, 6, 15 March 1847; Account Book of Theodore Olcott, 15 February–8 September, 1847, AIHA. Unfortunately, the extensive papers of the Corning Family at the Albany Institute did not record Corning's contributions and work for famine relief. Similarly, Townsend Family Papers, Manuscripts Division, NYSL, contain no records of contributions made by members of another major family.
103. Edwin Crosswell to Charles Jenkins, 25 February 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA. Crosswell later sent another \$50.
104. *Albany Argus*, 18 March 1847; *Albany Evening Journal*, 27 February; 13, 16, 30 March 1847; *Albany Evening Atlas*, 16, 17 March 1847.
105. Brian Greenberg, *Worker and Community* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1985), 132. For the temperance lecture, *Albany Evening Atlas*, 1 March 1847.
106. Charles Jenkins, Chairman, Central Committee of the State of New York to the Central Relief Committee, 28 April 1847, *Transactions*, 239. Original copy of this letter is in Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
107. Citations from Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 135. Contributions from the *Albany Evening Atlas*, 16 March 1847; 8 March entry, Account Book of Theodore Olcott, AIHA.
108. Details on individuals from Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 134-35, 33.
109. Citations from Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 128; Rowley, "Irish Aristocracy," 294; *Albany Evening Journal*, 16 March 1847; John Dillon, *The Historic Story of St. Mary's, 1798-1932* (New York: P. J. Kennedy and Sons, 1933), 178-79.
110. *New York Freeman's Journal*, 6 March 1847; *Albany Evening Atlas*, 26 March 1847; J.A. Schneller to Charles Jenkins, 30 March 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA. Also, see Account Book of Theodore Olcott at AIHA; L.G. Hoffman, *Hoffman's Albany Directory* (Albany: L.G. Hoffman, 1847); 35, 68, 242, 270-76, 301.
111. Citation from Rowley, "Irish Aristocracy," 293.
112. *Albany Evening Journal*, 30 April 1847; *Albany Argus*, 9 March 1847; *Albany Evening Atlas*, 8 March 1847. Information on occupations from above and Rowley, Albany, 484. Rowley's occupational analysis coincides with contemporary newspaper accounts.
113. Contributions, 8 September 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
114. *Schenectady Reflector*, 2 April 1847 notice of Daniel McDougal, et. al., committee, "Relief to Scotland."
115. 13 May 1847 entry, in Peter Kinnear, compiler, 1802-1903, *Centennial Year Historical Sketch of the St. Andrew's Society of the City of Albany* (Albany: Weed Parsons, 1903), 15; *Albany Evening Journal*, 11, 23, 27 March; 8 April 1847; *Albany Argus*, 1 May 1847.

116. *Albany Evening Journal*, 19 February 1847; Richard Irvin to Charles Jenkins, 19 April, 26 May, 4 October 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA; Robert Forbes to Richard Irvin, 17 June 1847 acknowledging contributions for Scottish relief from New York City and Albany in *Albany Evening Journal*, 22 July 1847. For Irvin's role, see *New York Journal of Commerce*, 25 February 1847. Also, see individual Scottish contributions in Account Book of Theodore Olcott and Final Report (undated) of the Albany Irish Relief Committee in AIHA. The published reports of the Edinburgh and Glasgow sections of the Central Board of the Highland Destitution Relief Fund for 1847 mention some specific examples and general amounts from the United States but they do not specifically mention Albany. See First to Seventh Reports of Destitution in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland of the Destitution Committee at the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. Similarly, the Treasurer's Reports at the Scottish Record Office in Edinburgh make passing reference to American contributions from New York and Philadelphia, entries for 11, 15 February; 19 May 1847. Both the National Library and National Archives of Scotland kindly provided me with copies.
117. Charles Jenkins to Myndert VanSchaick, 3 April 1847; Robert Minturn to Charles Jenkins, 5 April 1847; Myndert VanSchaick to Charles Jenkins, 10 April 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
118. Myndert VanSchaick to Charles Jenkins, 10 April 1847; Myndert VanSchaick to Joseph Bewley and Jonathan Pim, 15, 29 April, 15 May 1847 in Relief Committee, Aid to Ireland, 86-89, 91, Appendix No. 3, 61-62; Robert Minturn to Charles Jenkins, 14, 17, 28, 29 April; 1, 8, 11 May 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
119. Joseph Bewley and Jonathan Pim to Charles Jenkins, 18 June 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
120. Myndert VanSchaick to Joseph Bewley and Jonathan Pim, 15 April 1847 in Relief Committee, Aid to Ireland, 86.
121. *Albany Evening Journal*, 29 April 1847; As an example, Edwin Thomas, Buffalo Committee to Charles Jenkins, 14 April 1847, or Charles Folger, Geneva Committee, Relief Committee, AIHA.
122. Robert Minturn to Charles Jenkins, 11 May 1847 and Memorandum of Investment of Albany funds by the New York Committee of Aid to Ireland, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
123. Ibid, Robert Minturn to Charles Jenkins, 11 December 1847, 3 February 1848; James Reyburn to Central Relief Committee, 30 November 1847 in *Transactions*, 249. Also, see Appendix VII, 342-43 for list of Albany donations.
124. Bayor and Meaher, *New York Irish*, 220 (citation); Rowley, *Albany*, 299; Gerber, *American Pluralism*, 149; Joseph Bewley to Charles Jenkins, 17 July 1847, Theobold Mathew to Joseph Bewley, 22 July 1847, Theobold Mathew to Charles Jenkins, 24 July 1847, Albany Relief Committee, AIHA.
125. The phrase "universal America" came from Father Charles O'Reilly of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, *Boston Pilot*, 6 March 1847.
126. Hotten-Somers, "Famine," 307.
127. "Meeting of the Jewish Population of New York in Aid of Ireland," *Occident* 5:1 (April 1847), 37.

# The Pro-Leislerian Farmers in Early New York: A “Mad Rabble” or “Gentlemen Standing Up for Their Rights?”

*Firth Haring Fabend*

“It is a singular and melancholy fact, and one from which we may learn wisdom, that in the heat of those days, Leisler’s connexions were his bitterest enemies. [Nicholas] Bayard and [Stephanus] van Cortland, who were of the Council that urged his execution, were his wife’s nephews.”<sup>1</sup>

So observed E.B. O’Callaghan, the nineteenth-century editor of documents relating to the extraordinary late seventeenth-century upheaval known as Leisler’s Rebellion. What wisdom was it that O’Callaghan thought we might learn from the “singular and melancholy fact” that Leisler’s own relatives condemned him to the gallows in 1691? What was so dangerous about Jacob Leisler, or his supporters, that his execution was necessary to satisfy his enemies?

The danger, I will suggest here, was that in Leisler’s uprising, a new elite that had begun to emerge after the second English takeover of New Netherland in the 1670s heard the rumblings of an egalitarianism that they foresaw would change their world. In the complex nexus of religious, political, and socioeconomic factors that underlay the uprising, it may have been the latter that generated the most heat and the most fear among those with the most to lose.

In Jacob Leisler’s mind, socioeconomic factors were hardly in the forefront. Leisler protested to his dying moments on the gallows that his “maine end, totall Intent & endeavors . . . [were only] to maintaine against popery or any Schism or heresy . . . the interest of our Sovereign[s] . . . and the reformed Protestant Churches in those parts.” What he had done, he insisted, “was for king William & Queen Mary, for the defence of the protestant religion & the Good of the Country.”<sup>2</sup>

This begs the question, however. Leisler’s enemies, for the most part, were

also Protestants with no fondness for Roman Catholicism. In fact, despite conflicts over points of doctrine and differing styles of worship, both factions were affiliated with the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, the French Reformed Church (Huguenot), or English Dissenting churches, all with common origins in Reformation Europe. And despite all the rhetoric and mutual name-calling, there is no doubt that both sides shared an allegiance to William and Mary, and valued their constitutional rights and liberties as English subjects. The Dutch also retained a clear memory of and appreciation for Dutch political institutions, Dutch historical models, Dutch tolerance, and Dutch liberties and rights going back to the fourteenth century at least. (The Huguenots, in their turn, remembered the Edict of Nantes, lately revoked.) Moreover, Nicholas Bayard, the main spokesman for those who opposed Jacob Leisler so strenuously, hardly ever referred to religion as the issue that divided them. Leisler was, in Bayard's words, a drunkard, the chief malefactor of the rebellion, a tyrant, a rough rascal, a traitor, a rebel, a usurper "Lording and domineering in all Causes"—epithets that have political and socioeconomic connotations, but not religious ones.<sup>3</sup>

Bayard's language became even more vitriolic when he focused on Leisler's followers—or rather on his "abettors" and "accomplices," his "crew" and his "creatures"—as this master of invective called them. Leisler's supporters were, in Bayard's terms, "all men of meane birth sordid educacon & desperate ffortunes." The "lesser & meaner part of the people," they were disorderly, malicious, of "mad and franticq humor," a "mad Rabble" of "byassed & Disaffected men" whose "Religion . . . was as unaccomptable & obscure as their birth & fortunes." Bayard also chose the language and imagery of economics, rather than of religion or politics, to characterize himself and his anti-Leislerian friends. They were the "strictest Protestants," to be sure, but they were also "men of sence, Reputation and Estate," "men of greatest probity & best figure amongst us." "Their majesties' most affectionate subjects," they were men of the "best sort," "some of the most Considerable persons of the Province," "gentlemen" all.

Yet it is—and was then—no secret that most of these elegant, proud, and wealthy anti-Leislerians were but a generation removed, if that, from the middling ranks of society. Nor was it a secret that some had attained their high estate in part through advantageous marriages to wealthy Dutch women, and in part by seeking the favor and patronage of English governors. That the anti-Leislerians attacked Leisler and his supporters with rhetoric so heavily laced with economic and class slurs suggests a vulnerability—as if those opposed to Leisler felt their newfound economic position was threatened in some way by his adherents. Just as Leisler, for whom the situation was "about" religion, almost always used religious

epithets to attack his opponents, so Bayard reviled Leisler's supporters with economic invective, suggesting that, for Bayard, the situation was "about" economic issues. Leisler thundered and fumed at Papist devils, Papist dogs, Papist murderers, false Protestants, Popish trumpets, false Priests of Baal, and false Popish grandees. Bayard and company cast stones of another type at "poor, ignorant, and senseless folk," a "hotheaded and meane sort of people," a "rude crew," the "meanest and most abject Common people" in the Province of New York.

Historians have sometimes taken this language at face value and assumed that the Leislerians really were the "meanest Sort" around. But were they of such "Desperate fortune" that they hoped "to make up their Wants by the ruin & Plunder of his Majesties' Loyal Subjects?" Was their Religion "as unaccomptable & obscure as their birth & fortunes?" Indeed, were their birth and fortunes unaccountable and obscure?

The public record is a rich source of information about any number of obscure Leislerians. We will look here at several who were linked to one another by family ties, Protestantism (Dutch, French, and English), economic position, political inclinations, and the intellectual underpinnings of those inclinations. Furthermore, all in this group were linked to Orange County, an area west of the Hudson River whose seventeenth-century history has received scant attention. Yet the religious and political proclivities of its residents in the seventeenth century, as well as their socioeconomic status, may provide a clue to the question asked above: What was so threatening about Jacob Leisler that even his relatives wanted him dead?

The men we will look at are Daniel De Clark, a member of the Committee of Safety that, on June 8, 1689, appointed Leisler captain of the fort in New York and on August 16 appointed him commander in chief of New York Province; De Clark's stepson, Peter Haring; Guiliam Bertholf, the Pietist *voorlezer* (lay reader) and then minister who was to organize in 1694 the Reformed Church where De Clark and Haring were members and officers in Tappan, New York; Teunis Roelofsen van Houten, also a member of the Committee of Safety; and Cornelius Cooper, captain of the Orange County militia company that occupied the New York fort from 1689 to 1691.

Daniel De Clark had emigrated from Oostburg in Zeeland, where, judging from his refined handwriting, he appears to have received an education beyond the ordinary. His last name, meaning scribe, clerk, or accountant, suggests that he may even have come from a line of educated men. In 1685, De Clark, a widower, married Margrietje Haring, *nee* Cosyns, daughter of Cosyn Gerritsen van Putten, a New Amsterdam farmer and wheelwright. When she married De Clark,

Margrietie was the widow of Jan Pietersen Haring, a *schepen* (magistrate) in New Amsterdam and the leader of a group of families who had obtained a grant in 1683 for 16,000 acres in the Hackensack Valley (known as the Tappan Patent).

Tax records for the last decades of the seventeenth century indicate that De Clark owned a house and land in the Out Ward in Manhattan; other records show that both he and Margrietie were members of the New York Reformed Dutch Church. De Clark was solvent enough to continue to maintain his New York property long after he became the leader, as Pietersen's widow's husband, of the enterprising settlers who had cooperatively purchased the Tappan Patent, 16,000 acres in today's Rockland County, New York, and Bergen County, New Jersey. Settled in Tappan, De Clark was licensed as a brewer and served as an elder in the church, as justice of the peace for Orange County, and as a captain in the militia. Of the forty-odd householders in Orange County in 1702, he was among the three best off, owning (besides his share of the patent lands) four slaves and a fine brick house, which is still standing.<sup>4</sup>

Peter Haring, De Clark's stepson, was also one of the original Tappan patentees, having become so by inheritance when his father died shortly before settlement. Both Haring and his wife, Margaret Bogert, had been born in the 1660s into prospering farming families. Like his stepfather, Haring continued to own his New York lands until his death in 1750; also like De Clark, he was appointed a justice of the peace in Orange County. Beginning in 1701, Haring (whose patent share entitled him to nearly 1,000 acres in Tappan) was the county's representative to the New York Provincial Assembly. Here he and his brother, Cornelius, served over the course of thirty-six years. A colonel in the Orange County militia, Peter Haring was for decades the largest contributor to the church in Tappan, a fact suggesting his relative economic standing in the community.<sup>5</sup>

Guiliam Bertholf also came to America from Zeeland, in his day the heartland of Dutch Pietism, where he had been in the thick of the religious controversies of that time and place and a disciple of the fiery Pietist preacher and writer Jacobus Koelman. By occupation a baker, Bertholf was employed soon after arriving in New York in 1684 as *voorlezer* in Harlem and then as *voorlezer* and schoolmaster for two communities, Hackensack and Acquackanonk (Passaic), in Bergen County, New Jersey. Records reveal that Bertholf was an ardent supporter of Leisler. Indeed, anti-Leislerian New York Domine Rudolfus Varick complained to the Classis of Amsterdam that Bertholf had "violently urged [Leisler] on." This adverb was an inappropriate one, as all other sources reveal Bertholf to have had a calm, irenic spirit. Varick's choice of the word "violently" underlines the anxiety felt by the ruling powers at the prospect of the opposition rising in their midst.

Two years after Leisler's Rebellion ended, Bertholf returned to the Netherlands to be examined and ordained in the Reformed Church, a step that suggests he was no violent instigator, but a man with a calling who must have had facility in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and training in Reformed theology, doctrine, church history, homiletics, and oratory. Back in America, Bertholf organized a dozen or more Pietist congregations in the hinterland and has been called the "itinerating apostle" of New Jersey.<sup>6</sup>

The backgrounds of De Clark, Haring, and Bertholf were similar to that of Teunis Roelofsen van Houten and Cornelius Cooper: Both born in New Netherland in the 1650s; they were landowners, solid citizens, and elders in the church. A merchant in Tappan, Roelofsen was elected to the Committee of Safety that elevated Leisler in 1689. For his support, Leisler named him that same year as justice of the peace in Orange County. In 1703, he became a justice of the Court of Common Pleas in the county.<sup>7</sup>

Born in Manhattan in 1659, Cooper was a shareholder in the Tappan Patent, which entitled him to about 1,000 acres of land. He also owned other lands, some inherited and some purchased, in Bergen County; in the Kakiat Patent in Orange County; in Haverstraw (the De Hart Patent); and in New Castle, Delaware. High sheriff of Orange County, he was also a justice of the peace, a judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and later a member of the New York General Assembly. In Leisler's Rebellion, Cornelius Cooper was captain of the troops that occupied the fort in 1689.

How representative were such men in the age of Leisler? They were far from unique. Hundreds of Leisler's supporters throughout New York and New Jersey shared a similar background, and as this brief glimpse indicates, such men were no abject mob. Some of them were by 1689 already third-generation Americans. They were landowners, their housing stock was excellent, their families large, their life expectancy long. They were prospering in America in a steady and satisfactory way, worshiping in churches they themselves had founded, serving as officers in their militias, and shouldering the main burden of administering their town and county governments. Some of them participated in a significant way in province-level political affairs. In a nutshell, they were respectable representatives of society's middling sort; they were, indeed, model citizens. In "Loyalty Vindicated," the anonymous pamphlet published in New York in 1698 (note 3), such men described themselves as having behaved in 1689 not as a mad rabble, but as "Gentlemen" standing up for "all bounds, and Laws of English Right and Government."<sup>8</sup>

If the harsh and defamatory language of Nicholas Bayard does not, then,

accurately describe the actual socioeconomic characteristics of the Leislerians, we might explore the idea that it reveals the anxiety of a small and recently established elite confronted by the political energy, intellectual ideas, and moral force of the numerous, discontented, and eager-to-advance class beneath it.

Historians with a social-class model in mind have attributed the Dutch farmers' motives in supporting Leisler in 1689 to a vague resentment at having been passed over in the new order that developed in New York after the English takeover. Randall Balmer has specifically attributed "class antagonisms" among the Dutch in the Leislerian period to the "emerging alliance" between upwardly mobile Dutch clergy and English merchants. But the internecine tension in the Dutch community at this time had little to do with New York politics *per se*. Rather, it was related to long-standing theological disputes that were in turn related to the Arminian controversies of the early decades of the seventeenth century in Reformation Europe. It also echoed the political situation in the Netherlands between the States Party and the Orange Party, and it was exacerbated by the differing worship styles of the strict Calvinists in the Netherlands and the more liberal Calvinists.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, if they were discontented in 1689, the Dutch farmers bore grievances that were real and particular—and they were not limited to the clergymen among them, or to the clergy's specific complaints. The important irritant was economic.

If economics was the battlefield, that field had real metes and bounds. We have only to recall how men acquired land in seventeenth-century New York and New Jersey to understand this. Good land was becoming expensive by 1680, and small-to-middling farmers had to pool their resources to acquire even relatively small parcels, like the Tappan Patent. The newly arriving Huguenots had to rely on Jacob Leisler, who himself purchased 6,000 acres in today's New Rochelle and sold them to the fairly penurious settlers. But these farmers had reason to suspect that others would receive huge grants of land from the royal governors, much in the way that King Charles in 1664 bestowed New Jersey on the Duke of York, with the duke in turn giving the land to his favorites, Sir George Carteret and Lord John Berkeley, a year later. When Governor Richard Nichols ruled that Dutch land claims be renewed under the so-called Duke's Laws in 1665, Dutch suspicions regarding the patterns of land tenure evolving around them were heightened. And time would prove their fears well grounded. In 1683, Robert Livingston—who had a talent for knowing what royal governors needed or wanted—paid \$600 in trade goods for 2,000 acres on the Hudson River in today's Columbia County. In 1685, he purchased an additional 600 acres twenty miles away, with Governor Thomas Dongan throwing in for no clear reason the intervening 160,000 acres. The van

Rensselaers' claims were confirmed in 1685 for what eventually grew to be the one million acres of Rensselaerswyck. In 1686, Philippe Philipse, a son of Frederick Philipse, received a patent for what is today all of Putnam County in the Hudson Valley. In the post-Leislerian period, Anglicizers received—often as outright gifts from British governors—tracts of valuable wilderness so vast as to stagger the imagination. These huge grants, basically political favors, were a cause for resentment among men who had to scrimp and save for their plot of earth, and had to band together in groups, at that, to acquire it. As one historian of colonial New York put it, the “tremendous concentration of landed estates in the hands of a few boded ill for the future of a society whose many yeomen had come to view these great landlords with grave suspicions.”<sup>10</sup>

Despite all of the name-calling, daily economic concerns, forming class interests, and social standing were not in themselves the final battlefield. The ultimate source of anxiety for Nicholas Bayard and the anti-Leislerians was a set of intellectual ideas undergirding the Leislerians' resentment at inequity and injustice. As Bayard put it in 1691, “many of the people of this province have been debauched with strange principles and tenetts Concerning government . . . [which] are not easily to be rooted out. [M]any here of Considerable fortune and knowne integrity to the Crown of england whose lives and fortunes have almost been Ship wracht ware uneasy thinking it [w]ill never afterwards be safe for them to live in this province [n]or can their lives or fortunes ever be secure if such men doe survive to head an ignorant Mobile.”<sup>11</sup>

The strange principles and tenets concerning government that bound the farmers of New York and New Jersey to Leisler's cause were not so strange after all. They were the very ideas circulating in Europe in the 1680s concerning liberty of conscience, power and prerogatives, and natural rights—including the right of property. It has long been known that Guiliam Bertholf and his fellow Pietists conveyed the religious basis for these ideas to the people of New Netherland. But since this paper was first published in 1990, research indicates that a number of prominent New York Leislerians were part of the hive of political activity known as the Protestant International in Rotterdam in the 1680s, when that port city was a Voetian-Orangist stronghold.<sup>12</sup> Among the men who met in the salon of Quaker merchant Benjamin Furley (along with John Locke) were none other than Jacob Milborne, Leisler's main supporter and future son in law, and Samuel Edsall, Milborne's father in law.

The Samuel Edsall connection provides food for thought in the context of the Orange County Leislerians discussed above, for they had long been associated with him. It is suggested here that he is the figure who links them with the politi-

cal events of 1689, just as Bertholf is the religious link. Born in 1633/4 in Reading, England, Edsall was a hatter. He became a burgher of New Amsterdam in 1657; rose to affluence as a trader, merchant, and landed proprietor; and enjoyed a long career as magistrate and adviser to a number of administrations both in New York and New Jersey. He owned vast tracts of land, among which were 2,000 choice acres between the Hudson and Hackensack rivers (just a few miles south of the Tappan Patent). In 1680, he accompanied Jan Pietersen Haring, his exact contemporary in age, into the wilderness as translator in the negotiations with the Tappan Indians; the following year, he was a signatory on the deed to the land the Tappan patentees acquired.<sup>13</sup> Also that year, while sitting on the council of East Jersey Proprietary Governor Philip Carteret, Edsall angered the delegates to the General Assembly by siding with the Governor's attempts to whittle away at their traditional rights and privileges under the Concessions of 1665.<sup>14</sup> Prudent after this experience, Edsall was not to be on the wrong side of popular will again.

Considered by one historian who investigated his career as having a "better acquaintance with matters of government than was possessed by any of his colleagues [at the time of Leisler's Rebellion] or by Leisler himself," Edsall exercised, according to this writer, a "leading influence in the affairs of the Colony during that period."<sup>15</sup> He was a member of the Committee of Safety that chose Leisler captain of the fort in New York on June 8, 1689—the same committee on which Daniel De Clark and Teunis Roelofsen van Houten sat. Also on this committee were Jean Demarest and William Laurence, both with Orange County connections. (Demarest, of a Huguenot family, was a Haring in-law.) These same five men were among the ten who signed a "Commission to Capt. Leisler to be Commander in Chief" on August 16, 1689. Abraham Gouverneur, later to marry Leisler's daughter, was clerk of the Committee of Safety, and had Orange County connections as well. Johannes Blauvelt, Teunis Talman, and Peter Bogert—all Dutch farmers related by ties of blood and marriage with the above Orange County families—were among those who captured the fort and served there under Leisler. All knew Edsall.

It has been assumed that these obscure men were isolated in their Orange County wilderness from the main intellectual ideas of the times. To the contrary, they were quite abreast of them. The farmers of Tappan, like hundreds of their fellow Leislerians all over New York and New Jersey who listened on Sundays to the views of Guiliam Bertholf and his Pietist colleagues, were, through this religious connection, privy to the ideas that anticipated the Glorious Revolution in England, when the Dutch stadtholder William took over the throne of James II. Now it appears that through their connection to Samuel Edsall and Jacob

Milborne (and perhaps to other New York Leislerian merchants with business in the port city of Rotterdam) they were part of a transatlantic community of ideas that demanded, in the New World as well as in the Old, the triumph of Protestantism over Papism (if not toleration over persecution) and their traditional rights and privileges over royal tyranny.

The Glorious Revolution's immediate outcome in New York was not so glorious for Leisler, who was hanged and then for good measure beheaded, his property confiscated, and his family left nearly destitute. But his cause did not end there. It was carried over into the New York Assembly, where for thirty years his supporters clamored for redress of his wrongs and theirs—as we might expect on economic, and not religious, grounds. Property was the basis of it. And in the matter of property, the Leislerians had the last word. Leisler's estate was restored to his heirs, and even the sore thumb of royal land grants was eventually salvaged, though it would take a century.<sup>16</sup>

The Leislerians have been discounted by some historians because they were not “for English liberties” per se. But many of them, like Samuel Edsall, were English and thoroughly acquainted with the liberties of the “ancient constitution.” The Dutch among them were men steeped in an understanding of Dutch liberties going back at least to the so-called “Joyous Entry of Brabant” in 1356, which established the right to overthrow a tyrant. And as mentioned, the Huguenots remembered all too well their recent liberties under the now-revoked Edict of Nantes. Further, through their connection to Bertholf and men like Edsall and Milborne, the farmers, artisans, and merchants of New York were acquainted, we know now, with the heady ideas circulating in Rotterdam in the 1680s, including the ideas of John Locke, who wrote his *Two Treatises of Government* in Holland during his expatriate years there (1683-1689), “to make good [King William's] title in the consent of the people . . . and to justify to the world the people of England, whose love of their just and natural rights . . . saved the nation when it was on the very brink of slavery and ruin.” In other words, they were conversant with the notions that all men are equal and independent, that government emanates from the people and must seek the popular welfare, and that revolution against a tyrant, especially in the case of religious oppression, *vide* James II, is justified.<sup>17</sup>

Locke's views on the natural right of property, which built on those of the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius, must also have been known to them. “I ask,” Locke mused as he theorized on the value added to land by labor, “whether in the wild woods and uncultivated waste of America, left to nature, without any improvement, tillage, or husbandry, a thousand acres yield the needy and wretched inhabitants as many conveniences of life as ten acres of equally fertile land do in

Devonshire, where they are well cultivated.”<sup>18</sup> The farmers of New York and New Jersey in 1690 already knew that it was only a matter of time and sweat before the question was an academic one. In such ways these Leislerian farmers were not merely backwoods hearers of ideas filtered down to them through men like Bertholf and Edsall. Rather, in their progressive hopefulness, they were already acting on them—and on a continuum with the more successful revolutionaries who would be informed by Locke’s ideas in later American history.

No wonder the ruling elite in New York feared the “strange principles and tenets Concerning government” of these troublesome men, and no wonder they wanted their leader dead, even if he was, for some, their relative.

## End Notes

1. E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., “Introductory,” *The Documentary History of the State of New York*, 4 vols. (Albany, N.Y., 1849-1851), 2: n.p.; hereafter *Docs. Rel. N.Y.*
2. *Ibid.*, 378, 379.
3. Attributed to Nicholas Bayard, “A Modest and Impartial Narrative of several Grievances and Great Oppressions That the Peaceable and most Considerable Inhabitants of . . . New-York . . . Lye Under, By the Extravagant and Arbitrary Proceedings of Jacob Leysler and his Accomplices,” in *Narratives of the Insurrections, 1675-1690*, ed. Charles M. Andrews (New York, 1915), pp. 319-354, *passim*. Andrews notes that the account was neither modest nor impartial. See also “A Letter from a Gentleman of the City of New York, 1698,” in *ibid.*, 360-372, a letter thought to have been written at the request of Bayard and other anti-Leislerian members of the Privy Council; and “Loyalty Vindicated, 1698,” *ibid.*, 375-401, where the other side of the issues dividing New York in the rebellion are clarified.
4. *Marriages from 1639 to 1801 in the Reformed Dutch Church: New Amsterdam, New York City*, Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 15 vols. (New York, 1940), vol. 9, 56. They married on February 7, 1685. A census of the New York Reformed Dutch Church membership in 1686 places them in the Out-ward for that year. George o. Zabriskie, “Daniel De Clark (De Klerck) of Tappan and His Descendants,” *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, 96:4 (October 1965), 195. In all, twenty-two men sat on the Committee of Safety, with seven constituting a quorum. Correspondence with David W. Voorhees, July 19, 1999.
5. Information about Peter Haring is found in the records of the New York Reformed Dutch Church and the Tappan Reformed Church; the “Notes and Proceedings of the New York Legislative Assembly”; the Orange County Census of 1702; the records of the Board of Supervisors of Orange County (located in the George Budke Collection, New York Public Library); and documents relating to the Tappan Patent. For a fuller discussion of the Leislerian farmers of Tappan, see Firth Haring Fabend, *A Dutch Family in the Middle Colonies, 1660-1800* (New Brunswick, 1991).
6. Primary source materials on Bertholf (also spelled Bartholf) are the *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York*, 7 vols., ed. E.T. Corwin (Albany, N.Y., 1901-1914). (See Volume 7, index, for page references.) See also Joseph Anthony Loux, trans. and ed., *Boel’s “Complaint” Against Frelinghuysen* (Rensselaer, N.Y., 1979). Secondary sources include James R. Tanis, *Dutch Calvinistic Pietism in the Middle Colonies: A Study in the Life and Theology of Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen* (The Hague, 1967); James R. Tanis, “Reformed Pietism in Colonial America,” in *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity*, ed. F. Ernest Stoeffler (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1976); James R. Tanis, “The American Dutch, Their Church, and the Revolution,” in *A Bilateral*

*Bicentennial: A History of Dutch-American Relations, 1782-1982*, J.W. Shulte Nordholt and Robert T. Swierenga, eds. (New York and Amsterdam, 1982); Howard G. Hageman, "William Bertholf: Pioneer Domine of New Jersey," *Reformed Review*, 29 (Winter 1976), 73-80; Howard G. Hageman, "Colonial New Jersey's First Domine: I and II," *de Halve Maen* (October 1969, January 1970); Adrian Leiby, *The United Churches of Hackensack and Schraalenburgh, New Jersey, 1686-1822* (River Edge, N.J., 1976); David Cole, *History of the Reformed Church of Tappan, New York* (New York, 1894), 7-20; and Fabend, *A Dutch Family in the Middle Colonies*, chap. 7.

George o. Zabriskie obtained transcripts and translations of some of Bertholf's correspondence with the Classis of Walcheren that adds new information about him and corrects some older accounts, including that he was a baker, not a cooper. These papers can be found in the Bertholf folders at the New Jersey Historical Society and in the archives of the Gardner A. Sage Library, New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

7. For Teunis R. van Houten and Cornelius Cooper, see the sources in note 5 above and George H. Budke, comp., *Patents Granted for Lands in the Present County of Rockland, New York, with Biographical Notices of the Patentees*, 1928 (BC-67 of the Budke Collection, New York Public Library).
8. One historian who has looked closely at Leislerians describes them as "well integrated into the structure and culture of New York's civic, community, and family life." Ruth Piwonka, "Old Pewter/Bright Brass: A Suggested Explanation for Conservatism in Dutch Colonial Culture," *de Halve Maen*, 68 (Summer 1995), 43. Leisler's active supporters in New York, she goes on, "were leading members of their own merchant or craftsmen classes" and were probably more prosperous than the 1695 tax rolls indicate. This is because much of their property had been attained in 1691, not to be restored until 1699 and after.
9. Randall H. Balmer, "The Social Roots of Dutch Pietism in the Middle Colonies," *Church History*, 53:2 (June 1984), 187, 188. See also Randall H. Balmer, "From Rebellion to Revivalism: The Fortunes of the Dutch Reformed Church in Colonial New York, 1689-1715," *de Halve Maen*, 56:2 (Fall 1981), and 57:2 (Winter 1982). For background on Pietism, Voetians, and Cocceians, see the sources in note 6 above.
10. Irving Mark, *Agrarian Conflicts in Colonial New York, 1711-1775* (New York, 1940), chap. 1, passim. Stephanus van Cortland received an 86,000-acre manor in northern Westchester in 1697. On the west side of the Hudson in Orange and Ulster counties were the huge Evans' Patent (800 square miles, secured for twenty shillings quitrent per year and 500 pounds sterling to Governor Fletcher), and the Hardenburg Patent (two million acres). As noted, even anti-Leislerian clergymen got into the act. The Reverend Godfriedus Dellius of the Reformed Dutch Church claimed 840 square miles on the Mohawk River with four partners in 1696.
11. O'Callaghan, *Docs. Rel. N.Y.*, 2:392-393.
12. David William Voorhees, "All Authority turned upside downe': The Ideological Origins of Leislerian Political Thought," paper presented at the regional meeting of the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Worcester, MA., June 1998. See also David William Voorhees, "The Milborne Family in the Seventeenth-Century Atlantic World," *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* 129:3 (July 1998). For Protestant International, also called International Calvinism and Protestant Capitalist International, see M. Prestwick, ed., *International Calvinism, 1541-1565* (Oxford, 1985).
13. For Samuel Edsall, see Thomas Henry Edsall, "Something about Fish, Fisheries, and Fishermen, in New York in the Seventeenth Century," *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* 13:4 (October 1882), 181-200; and George E. McCracken, "Samuel Edsall of Reading, Berk, and Some Early Descendants," *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* 89:3 (July 1958), 129-145; and 89:4 (October 1958), 216-220.
14. John E. Pomfret, *The Province of East New Jersey, 1609-1702, The Rebellious Proprietary* (Princeton, 1962), esp. chap. 6; and Richard P. McCormick, *New Jersey from Colony to State, 1609-1789*, rev. ed. (Newark, 1981), 28-29.

15. Thomas Henry Edsall, "Something about Fish, Fisheries, and Fishermen," 194.
16. In 1783, Cornelius Haring—Peter Haring's grandson and newly appointed Commissioner of Seized Estates in Bergen County—no doubt appreciated an historical irony when he confiscated for the state of New Jersey the extensive properties of William Bayard—a descendant of Nicholas Bayard. And in 1784, descendants of Leisler's Orange County supporters no doubt took satisfaction in seeing the Tappan lands of Frederick Philipse's descendants confiscated by the new government.
17. The role of ancient Dutch liberties is spelled out in Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt, 1555-1590* (Cambridge, 1992), where the author estimates that there are more than 2,000 extant political treatises and pamphlets dealing with the historical justification for the Revolt. John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government*, ed. Thomas P. Peardon (New York, 1952), x. See also Jonathan I. Israel, "William III and Toleration," in Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke, eds., *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England* (Oxford, 1991), chap. 6.
18. Pearden, ed., *Second Treatise*, 23. For a recent reassessment of the influence of Locke's ideas on the Declaration of Independence, see Michael P. Zuckert, *The Natural Rights Republic* (Notre Dame, 1996), *passim*.

# The Incorporated Villages of the Hudson River Region

*Edward T. Howe*

On September 24, 1994, a celebration was held to mark the bicentennial of the incorporation of the Village of Waterford, in Saratoga County.<sup>1</sup> The celebration was notable, as Waterford has the distinction of being the oldest continuously incorporated village in the nation. As it, and a few other incorporated villages, emerged around the turn of the nineteenth century in the Hudson River region, a unique experiment in local-government formation began to take shape—an experiment that would extend not only throughout New York State, but to other states across the nation.

An incorporated village is a municipal corporation, located wholly within a town or in part of two or more towns, that legally operates under the leadership of a mayor, board of trustees, and other elected and appointed officials. It currently provides a range of public services comparable to county, city, and town governments mainly through its taxing and borrowing powers. Since an incorporated village is part of a town (or towns), its residents pay taxes to both the village and the appropriate town government. Under the current Village Law of New York State, a territory that is not part of a city or incorporated village may incorporate if 1) it has 500 or more residents and not more than five square miles of land area; 2) its boundaries are coterminous with a special district, or districts (for example, school or fire districts), or an entire town; or 3) it contains parts of the boundaries of more than one special district, all of which are wholly within one town.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the initiative for village incorporation comes from its residents, not the state government. As of 2005, there were 553 incorporated villages in New York State.

Incorporated villages have long been—and remain—an integral part of the structure of local government in the state, and have often been the setting for part of its economic development. Given constraints on the scope of this article, the focus will be on the political and economic evolution of the incorporated villages within the fourteen counties outside New York City that border the Hudson River: Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Essex, Greene, Montgomery, Orange, Putnam,

Rensselaer, Saratoga, Ulster, Warren, Washington, and Westchester. Within the fourteen-county area as of 2005 there were 211 towns, twenty-one cities, and 117 incorporated villages (see Table 1). In addition to these “general purpose” municipal governments, numerous “special-purpose” units (authorities, agencies, and special districts) offer one or more specific services. Hamlets, or unincorporated places, exist only as geographical designations. They do not have legal powers and rely on town governments for municipal services.

Historically, four types of incorporated villages have been created in the state, and all can currently be found in the Hudson River region. The first, and oldest, type is the commercial/manufacturing village, located throughout the region; the second is the suburban or mainly residential village, usually found near a relatively large city; the third is the coterminous town-village entity; and the fourth is the village created for a special purpose, primarily located in Rockland County. Population sizes have varied considerably over time, both within and among the four types of villages, on a statewide and regional basis. Currently, about two-thirds of the villages in the Hudson River region have a population of fewer than 5,000 residents, while approximately one-quarter of the villages have fewer than 2,000 residents.

## Origins of Municipal Corporations

The origins of municipal corporations in New York State can be traced to Dutch, British, and American influences. During Dutch colonial rule (1614-1664), the Dutch West India Company issued a Charter of Freedoms and Exemptions in 1640 that allowed for the formation of town governments. English settlers from New England were the first to incorporate towns under this charter when they migrated to Long Island in 1642. Dutch settlers soon followed and established towns on Long Island and along the Hudson River (e.g., New Haerlem, Esopus, and Beverwyck—now Albany). These early towns had appointed magistrates who were granted judicial authority and the right to regulate schools, churches, roads, and bridges.<sup>3</sup> The establishment of English and Dutch towns continued until 1664, when the Dutch peacefully surrendered New Netherland to the British.

In 1665, Richard Nicolls, the first British colonial governor of New York, held a meeting at Hempstead, on Long Island, to approve a code of laws that became known as the Duke’s Laws. These provided for the establishment of the bound-

**TABLE 1**  
**Municipal Corporations**  
**in the Hudson River**  
**Region, 2005**

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| COUNTIES | 14  |
| TOWNS    | 211 |
| CITIES   | 21  |
| VILLAGES | 117 |

Source: New York State, Office of the State Comptroller, *Special Report on Municipal Affairs, 2005*.

aries of towns, a census of residents, and an assessment of the property of male freeholders. The towns could construct prisons, stores, an ammunition warehouse, pounds for stray animals, and courts. Eight overseers and a constable were to be elected. However, fence viewers (boundary judges), viewers of pipe staves (wooden barrel components), a sealer of weights and measures, a packer, a recorder of branded animals, and military officers were to be appointed.<sup>4</sup>

In 1683, the General Assembly of Freeholders, the provincial legislature, created twelve counties—Albany, Cornwall, Dukes, Dutchess, Kings, New York, Orange, Queens, Richmond, Suffolk, Ulster, and Westchester. (Cornwall and Dukes became part of Massachusetts in 1691.)<sup>5</sup> The counties served mainly as judicial districts. The first city charters were issued in 1686 to New York City and Albany.<sup>6</sup> When the first New York State Constitution was adopted in 1777, the only types of legally incorporated local governments were counties, towns, and cities.

As town settlement proceeded more rapidly in New York State after 1780, population growth tended to concentrate near an important waterway or road network. Soon the inhabitants of these population centers realized a need for special public services. In 1788, residents in a designated part of the town of Brooklyn received permission from the state legislature to select eight men to put out fires—the first instance of a special service sanctioned by governmental authority that was not offered on a town-wide basis.<sup>7</sup> However, this legislative act did not create a village government.

## Commercial/Manufacturing Villages

In 1790, the state legislature approved seven trustees “for the freeholders and inhabitants of that part of the town of Rensselaerwyck, commonly called Lansingburgh,” a growing settlement of Dutch farmers and New England merchants, manufacturers, and other businessmen located on the east bank of the Hudson River (and now part of the City of Troy in Rensselaer County).<sup>8</sup> These trustees could acquire lands for common use and appoint a common clerk and up to fifteen firemen. They were “empowered from time to time to make, ordain, constitute and establish, such prudential rules, orders, and regulations” as necessary for improving the common lands, and were also charged with compelling housekeepers to have fire buckets, tools, and implements to fight fires; keeping the common streets and highways in repair; and regulating law and order.<sup>9</sup>

Four years later, the legislature granted similar powers to seven trustees for “that part of the town of Halfmoon commonly called Waterford,” also situated near the confluence of the Mohawk and Hudson rivers and enjoying a brisk busi-

ness in mercantile activities.<sup>10</sup> In both laws, there was no specific mention of the word “village.” However, in the same 1794 law, a “village of Troy” was created, with seven trustees given the same powers accorded to those in Waterford.

In 1795, five trustees were approved for “part of the town of Watervliet” known as Colonie (Albany County), located just north of Albany on the west bank of the Hudson River. Although there was no mention of the word “village” in the law, the trustees were given powers similar to those granted to the aforementioned villages.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, in 1798, the state legislature formally recognized Lansingburgh and Troy as legally incorporated village governments “capable of suing and being sued, pleading and being impleaded, answering and being answered unto, defending and being defended in all courts and places whatsoever in all manner of actions, complaints, and causes whatsoever; and capable of purchasing, holding and conveying any estate real or personal for the public use of said village, and of erecting public buildings such as a fire engine house, schoolhouse, or market house.” The trustees could create bylaws, rules, and regulations for public markets, slaughterhouses, highways and streets, fire control and prevention, nuisances, a town watch, taverns and inns, street lighting, animal control, police, and improving common lands; but no bylaws could apply to fixing the prices of goods for sale. In addition to five trustees, other elected village officials were a collector (responsible for the collection of property tax obligations), treasurer, three assessors, and an unspecified number of fire wardens.<sup>12</sup>

This 1798 law is considered the first formal authorization by the state for the creation of a village government.<sup>13</sup> Thus the village, as a legally incorporated municipal government, emerged from the failure of a town government to meet the needs of people residing in a densely populated area. These and subsequent village governments were created either because a town government was unwilling to provide services, unable to finance them, or uncertain if it could legally offer them.

The state legislature incorporated twenty-six villages between 1790 and the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 (see Table 2). Although the powers bestowed by the legislature were similar, many villages were often given additional authority. For example, Poughkeepsie (Dutchess County) could regulate the price of bread as of 1799. Ballston Spa (Saratoga County) could regulate the purity of mineral waters and restrain tippling-houses and gambling activity as of 1807. Catskill (Greene County) in 1810 and Gibbonsville (Albany County) in 1825 were constituted as road districts independent of the town highway commissioners.<sup>14</sup>

All of the villages formed between 1790 and 1825 had a variety of com-

TABLE 2

**Earliest Incorporated Villages in the Hudson River Region, 1790-1825**

| <i>Name</i>                 | <i>County</i> | <i>Year</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| <b>1790-1799</b>            |               |             |
| Lansingburgh                | Rensselaer    | 1790        |
| Waterford                   | Saratoga      | 1794        |
| Troy                        | Rensselaer    | 1794        |
| Colonie                     | Albany        | 1795        |
| Poughkeepsie                | Dutchess      | 1799        |
| <b>1800-1809</b>            |               |             |
| Newburgh                    | Orange        | 1800        |
| Salem                       | Washington    | 1803        |
| Kingston                    | Ulster        | 1805        |
| Athens                      | Greene        | 1805        |
| Catskill                    | Greene        | 1806        |
| Whitehall                   | Washington    | 1806        |
| Ballston Spa                | Saratoga      | 1807        |
| Goshen                      | Orange        | 1809        |
| Union<br>(Greenwich)        | Washington    | 1809        |
| <b>1810-1819</b>            |               |             |
| Sandyhill<br>(Hudson Falls) | Washington    | 1810        |
| Montgomery                  | Orange        | 1810        |
| Columbiaville               | Columbia      | 1812        |
| Sing Sing                   | Westchester   | 1813        |
| Pleasant Valley             | Dutchess      | 1814        |
| Greenbush                   | Rensselaer    | 1815        |
| Peekskill                   | Westchester   | 1816        |
| Stillwater                  | Saratoga      | 1816        |
| Nassau                      | Rensselaer    | 1819        |
| Fort Ann                    | Washington    | 1820        |
| <b>1820-1825</b>            |               |             |
| Gibbonsville<br>(West Troy) | Albany        | 1823        |
| Saw Pits<br>(Port Chester)  | Westchester   | 1823        |

Sources: *Laws of New York; New York State Legislative Manual, 1989.*

mercial and manufacturing interests. For instance, the production of iron products (e.g., stoves and safes) began in Troy during this era. Union village (Washington County), now Greenwich, had the first cotton factory in the state. Poughkeepsie had paper mills, hatteries, cotton factories, and breweries. Whitehall and Fort Ann (both in Washington County), located at the northern terminus of the Champlain Canal, were commercial centers. Athens and Catskill (both in Greene County) relied on their hay and brick exports. The economy of some villages depended on specialized services. Salem (Washington County), Kingston (Ulster County), and Sing Sing (Westchester County) operated prisons, while Ballston Spa had its well-known mineral springs for tourists.<sup>15</sup>

Not all villages incorporated in this era continued in existence. Some disappeared through annexation, conversion to a city government, or dissolution (i.e., voting itself out of existence). In the Hudson River region, Colonie (Albany County) was annexed to the City of Albany in 1815; the village of Troy became a city in 1816; and Columbiaville (Columbia County) dissolved in 1833.

Canals and railroads spawned new village incorporations throughout the state between 1825 and 1860. Many commercial/manufacturing villages became strategically important along canals as bulk quantities of agricultural, manufactured, and raw material products were delivered to these places for local sale or shipment elsewhere. (The emerg-

ing railroad networks, in contrast, mainly transported passengers and light freight to and from these locations.)<sup>16</sup> Among the incorporated villages in the Hudson River region that benefited from these developments were Rondout (Ulster County) and Port Jervis (Orange County). They owed their existence to the Delaware and Hudson Canal, which opened in 1829 to transport anthracite coal from northeastern Pennsylvania. Another example was Fort Edward (Washington County), located near the junction of the Hudson River and the Champlain Canal, which had various paper-making operations. The villages of Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, and Yonkers (all in Westchester County) grew as residential communities largely from their railroad connections to New York City. Other villages, such as Middletown (Orange County) and Piermont (Rockland County), benefited as the site of railroad shipping centers.

Many other villages that incorporated in this era were, like the earliest, located on or near the Hudson River. Among them were Glens Falls (Warren County), known for its lumber, lime, and paper-making activities; Saugerties (Ulster County), a shipping center for bricks to New York City; Hoosick Falls (Rensselaer County), notable for its production of cotton goods and reapers; and

TABLE 3  
**Villages Incorporated in the Hudson River Region, 1825–1859.**

| Name                | County      | Year |
|---------------------|-------------|------|
| <b>1825–1829</b>    |             |      |
| Saratoga Springs    | Saratoga    | 1826 |
| Castleton-on-Hudson | Rensselaer  | 1827 |
| Hoosick Falls       | Rensselaer  | 1827 |
| <b>1830–1839</b>    |             |      |
| Schuylerville       | Saratoga    | 1831 |
| Saugerties          | Ulster      | 1831 |
| Rhinebeck           | Dutchess    | 1834 |
| Argyle              | Washington  | 1838 |
| Galway              | Saratoga    | 1838 |
| Kinderhook          | Columbia    | 1838 |
| Glens Falls         | Warren      | 1839 |
| <b>1840–1849</b>    |             |      |
| Cold Spring         | Putnam      | 1846 |
| Middletown          | Orange      | 1848 |
| Victory             | Saratoga    | 1848 |
| Fort Edward         | Washington  | 1849 |
| Rondout             | Ulster      | 1849 |
| <b>1850–1859</b>    |             |      |
| Piermont            | Rockland    | 1850 |
| Green Island        | Albany      | 1853 |
| Mount Vernon        | Westchester | 1853 |
| Port Jervis         | Orange      | 1853 |
| Haverstraw (Warren) | Rockland    | 1854 |
| Cohoes              | Albany      | 1855 |
| Nelsonville         | Putnam      | 1855 |
| Walden              | Orange      | 1855 |
| Yonkers             | Westchester | 1855 |
| Ellenville          | Ulster      | 1856 |
| Valatie             | Columbia    | 1856 |
| New Rochelle        | Westchester | 1857 |
| Mechanicville       | Saratoga    | 1859 |

Sources: *Laws of New York; New York State Legislative Manual, 1989.*

Mechanicville (Saratoga County), home to diverse industries. In all, twenty-eight villages were incorporated in this period (see Table 3). One village, Poughkeepsie, became a city in 1854 to enhance its status as an economic center.

Between 1790 and 1846, the state legislature issued only special charters for incorporated villages, but it tried a new approach with a general Village Law in 1847. Any part of a town, or towns, with at least 300 residents (or 300 people per square mile) could be incorporated after meeting certain requirements (i.e., mapping the area, taking a census, and providing notice); garnering majority support from town voters; and receiving county court approval. Substantive powers were limited to fire protection, public wells, stray animals, cemeteries, and repair of sidewalks. Approved expenditures were to be financed through property taxation. Elected officials included five trustees, three assessors, one tax collector, one treasurer, one clerk, one pound-master, not more than five fire wardens, and three street commissioners (if the village was a separate road district).<sup>17</sup> Provision was also made for village dissolution. Ellenville (Ulster County), Middletown, and Nelsonville (Putnam County) were incorporated under the Act of 1847. The statute sought to provide a uniform basis of village organization, but did not prohibit creation of villages by special legislation or alteration of previously enacted charters.<sup>18</sup>

Incorporated villages often amended their special charters between 1825 and 1860. For example, Lansingburgh received authority in 1831 to prevent river obstruction near wharves, docks, and ships; appoint measurers of wood and grain; and require butchers to get a license. Every incorporated village had the power to create a board of health as of 1832. Poughkeepsie voters had the right to elect a police justice in 1849. As of 1854, Saratoga Springs could regulate prostitution and Sing Sing could appoint a corporation attorney. Catskill and Middletown were granted permission to construct a gasworks for street lighting and residential purposes in 1858 and 1859, respectively. In 1859, Ballston Spa could appoint a commissioner of deeds.<sup>19</sup>

Responding to criticism that the limited powers in the general Village Law of 1847 frequently encouraged the enactment of ill-conceived provisions in the adoption or amendment of special charters, the state legislature enacted a new general Village Law in 1870. Among the major changes was that the residents of any part of any town or towns not in an incorporated village could initiate a referendum on creating a village if there were at least 500 residents per square mile or 300 within one square mile of a territory larger than that size. Elected officers included at least three trustees, a president (formerly selected by the trustees), a treasurer, and a collector. A clerk and street commissioner were to be appointed,

while other officers were optional appointments.

Under the 1870 law, the trustees could specifically provide for a police force and jail; the lighting of streets; and the construction of reservoirs, cisterns, sewers, culverts, drains, and bridges. The trustees also had more regulatory authority—specifically the power to apprehend prostitutes, vagrants, and disorderly persons; regulate amusements, swimming, and bathing in village waters, as well as immoderate riding and driving; restrain hawking and peddling in the streets; and prohibit or regulate exhibitions or performances for money.<sup>20</sup> There was no provision for village dissolution. Existing villages were not required to reorganize under the 1870 law.

In 1874, an amendment to the New York State Constitution prohibited the incorporation of villages by a special act of the state legislature. Since 1875, all villages have been incorporated under general statute with uniform powers.

Village powers were further extended under general statute in 1897 to include the regulation of poles, wires, and railroad crossings. The clarification of financial procedures and the establishment of tax and borrowing limits were established in the same law.<sup>21</sup> Villages incorporated under the 1847 and 1870 laws were subject to the 1897 provisions, while villages incorporated under special acts had the option to reincorporate or continue under their old charters. Catskill, Port Chester (Westchester County), and Waterford are the only villages in the Hudson River region that currently operate under their original charters. These villages remain subject to general law provisions as long as they do not conflict with their original charters.<sup>22</sup>

From 1860 to 1899, sixty-five villages were created in the Hudson River region, about one-third of them in Westchester County (see Table 4). Several of these villages, like most of their predecessors, were dependent on commercial/manufacturing activities. Villages directly located on the Hudson River—such as Coxsackie (Greene County), Fishkill Landing (Dutchess County), and Tarrytown (Westchester County)—benefited from river traffic. However, most of the villages prospered from their railroad affiliations as several large railroad companies extended their reach to virtually every village in the state.<sup>23</sup> Among the incorporated villages in the Hudson River region that gained from the arrival of the railroad was Keeseville (Essex County). Sales of nails, edge tools, and machinery rose significantly after rail service arrived in 1870. Other examples were Cambridge (Washington County) and New Paltz (Ulster County), which depended on railroads for transporting their agricultural products, and Chatham (Columbia County), a railroad junction with machine shops.

TABLE 4

## Villages Incorporated in the Hudson River region, 1860-1899

| Name               | County      | Year |
|--------------------|-------------|------|
| <b>1860-1869</b>   |             |      |
| Morrisania         | Westchester | 1864 |
| Fishkill Landing   | Dutchess    | 1864 |
| Cambridge          | Washington  | 1866 |
| White Plains       | Westchester | 1866 |
| Coxsackie          | Greene      | 1867 |
| Schaghticoke       | Rensselaer  | 1867 |
| Warwick            | Orange      | 1867 |
| Chatham            | Columbia    | 1869 |
| Central Mt. Vernon | Westchester | 1869 |
| Port Henry         | Essex       | 1869 |
| West Mt. Vernon    | Westchester | 1869 |
| <b>1870-1879</b>   |             |      |
| Tarrytown          | Westchester | 1870 |
| Unionville         | Orange      | 1871 |
| Wappingers Falls   | Dutchess    | 1871 |
| Irvington          | Westchester | 1872 |
| Tivoli             | Dutchess    | 1872 |
| Upper Nyack        | Rockland    | 1872 |
| Dobbs Ferry        | Westchester | 1873 |
| Bath-on-Hudson     | Rensselaer  | 1874 |
| Mount Kisco        | Westchester | 1874 |
| Millerton          | Dutchess    | 1875 |
| North Tarrytown    | Westchester | 1875 |
| Elizabethtown      | Essex       | 1875 |
| Keeseville         | Essex       | 1878 |
| South Nyack        | Rockland    | 1878 |
| Hastings-on-Hudson | Westchester | 1879 |
| <b>1880-1889</b>   |             |      |
| Nyack              | Rockland    | 1883 |
| Prattsville        | Greene      | 1883 |
| West Haverstraw    | Rockland    | 1883 |
| Cornwall-on-Hudson | Orange      | 1884 |
| Granville          | Washington  | 1885 |
| Corinth            | Saratoga    | 1886 |

| <b>1880-1889 cont'd</b> |             |      |
|-------------------------|-------------|------|
| Matteawan               | Dutchess    | 1886 |
| New Paltz               | Ulster      | 1887 |
| Williamsbridge          | Westchester | 1888 |
| Fishkill                | Dutchess    | 1889 |
| Ticonderoga             | Essex       | 1889 |
| Wakefield               | Westchester | 1889 |
| <b>1890-1899</b>        |             |      |
| Altamont                | Albany      | 1890 |
| Rosendale               | Ulster      | 1890 |
| Larchmont               | Westchester | 1891 |
| Pelham Manor            | Westchester | 1891 |
| Chester                 | Orange      | 1892 |
| Philmont                | Columbia    | 1892 |
| Saranac Lake            | Essex       | 1892 |
| Hillburn                | Rockland    | 1893 |
| Pawling                 | Dutchess    | 1893 |
| Brewster                | Putnam      | 1894 |
| Hunter                  | Greene      | 1894 |
| Monroe                  | Orange      | 1894 |
| Red Hook                | Dutchess    | 1894 |
| Eastchester             | Westchester | 1895 |
| Mamaroneck              | Westchester | 1895 |
| Pine Hill               | Ulster      | 1895 |
| South Glens Falls       | Saratoga    | 1895 |
| Tannersville            | Greene      | 1895 |
| Washingtonville         | Orange      | 1895 |
| Ardley                  | Westchester | 1896 |
| Millbrook               | Dutchess    | 1896 |
| North Pelham            | Westchester | 1896 |
| Pelham                  | Westchester | 1896 |
| Suffern                 | Rockland    | 1896 |
| Pleasantville           | Westchester | 1897 |
| Bronxville              | Westchester | 1898 |
| Croton-on-Hudson        | Westchester | 1898 |
| Voorheesville           | Albany      | 1899 |

Sources: *Laws of New York*; *New York State Legislative Manual*, 1989.

## The Suburban Villages

In addition to the impetus given to productive activities in various villages, the railroads were increasingly responsible for the growth of suburban residential villages in the late-nineteenth century. Following the incorporation of the suburban villages of Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, and Yonkers in the 1850s, the railroads subsequently contributed to the growth and development of other suburban villages in Westchester County that incorporated in the last decades of the nineteenth century. These villages included Irvington, Dobbs Ferry, Mount Kisco, North Tarrytown (later Sleepy Hollow), Hastings-on-Hudson, Pelham, Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Ardsley, Pleasantville, Bronxville, and Croton-on-Hudson. Outside of Westchester County, suburban villages that incorporated included Warwick (Orange County) and Upper Nyack and Suffern (both in Rockland County). Railroads also aided the economic growth of villages that depended on a particular service activity. For example, Hunter (Greene County), known for its health resorts, and Cornwall-on-Hudson (Orange County), the home of the New York Military Academy, prospered and eventually incorporated in this era.

Several villages in the Hudson River region amended their special charters during this period. For example, in 1871 Middletown received authorization to regulate the storage of crude petroleum or rock oil. Saratoga Springs gained the right in 1874 to sprinkle its streets to keep down dust. By 1885, Middletown could establish a public art gallery and museum. Peekskill (Westchester County) gained authorization to license plumbers in 1889. In 1893, Ellenville and Port Henry (Essex County) could issue bonds to build an electric light system, as could Green Island (Albany County) in 1895.<sup>24</sup>

Some incorporated villages in Westchester County were annexed to adjacent territory in the late-nineteenth century. Mount Vernon village expanded geographically when it annexed the incorporated villages of Central Mount Vernon and West Mount Vernon in 1878. The Bronx also enlarged its area through the annexation of the incorporated village of Morrisania in 1874 and the incorporated villages of Eastchester, Wakefield, and Williamsbridge in 1895.<sup>25</sup>

Several incorporated villages in the Hudson River region decided to adopt a city-government format in the late-nineteenth century. These villages included Newburgh, in 1865; Cohoes, 1869; Kingston (from the villages of Kingston and Rondout) and Yonkers, 1872; Middletown, 1888; Mount Vernon, 1892; Watervliet (from West Troy), 1896; Rensselaer (from Greenbush), 1897; and New Rochelle, 1899. The state legislature generally granted more powers to cities in this era, compared to other forms of local government, to meet the rapidly expanding service needs of a growing population.

The pace of village incorporations slowed somewhat statewide during the twentieth century. Thirty-nine village governments were created between 1900 and the end of the millennium in the Hudson River region, eighteen of them in Westchester and Rockland counties (see Table 5). East Nassau (Rensselaer County) became the latest incorporated village in 1997.<sup>26</sup>

TABLE 5  
Villages Incorporated in the  
Hudson River Region, 1900–Present

| Name                | Village     | Date |
|---------------------|-------------|------|
| <b>1900–1909</b>    |             |      |
| Lake Placid         | Essex       | 1900 |
| Rifton              | Ulster      | 1901 |
| Briarcliff Manor    | Westchester | 1902 |
| Spring Valley       | Rockland    | 1902 |
| Lake George         | Warren      | 1903 |
| Tuckakoe            | Westchester | 1903 |
| Valley Falls        | Rensselaer  | 1904 |
| Bloomingtondale     | Essex       | 1905 |
| Highland Falls      | Orange      | 1906 |
| Marlboro            | Ulster      | 1906 |
| Westport            | Essex       | 1907 |
| <b>1910–1919</b>    |             |      |
| Elmsford            | Westchester | 1910 |
| Harriman            | Orange      | 1914 |
| Ravena              | Albany      | 1914 |
| Scarsdale           | Westchester | 1917 |
| Grandview-on-Hudson | Westchester | 1918 |

|                     |             |      |
|---------------------|-------------|------|
| <b>1920–1939</b>    |             |      |
| Colonie             | Albany      | 1921 |
| Otisville           | Orange      | 1921 |
| Greenwood Lake      | Orange      | 1924 |
| Menands             | Albany      | 1924 |
| Maybrook            | Orange      | 1925 |
| Buchanan            | Westchester | 1928 |
| Sloatsburg          | Rockland    | 1929 |
| <b>1940–1969</b>    |             |      |
| Florida             | Orange      | 1946 |
| Tuxedo Park         | Orange      | 1952 |
| New Square          | Rockland    | 1961 |
| Amchir              | Orange      | 1964 |
| Pomona              | Rockland    | 1967 |
| Round Lake          | Saratoga    | 1969 |
| <b>1970–Present</b> |             |      |
| Harrison            | Westchester | 1975 |
| Kiryas Joel         | Orange      | 1977 |
| Wesley Hills        | Rockland    | 1982 |
| Rye Brook           | Westchester | 1982 |
| New Hempstead       | Rockland    | 1983 |
| Chestnut Ridge      | Rockland    | 1986 |
| Montebello          | Rockland    | 1986 |
| Kaser               | Rockland    | 1990 |
| Airmont             | Rockland    | 1991 |
| East Nassau         | Rensselaer  | 1997 |

Sources: *Laws of New York*; *New York State Legislative Manual*, 1989.

Railroads continued to provide the primary mode of transport to both commercial/manufacturing and suburban villages in the first decade of the twentieth century. Among the commercial/manufacturing villages that incorporated from 1900 to 1910 were Valley Falls (Rensselaer County) in 1904 and Westport (Essex County), 1907. The incorporation of suburban villages in Westchester County continued with Briarcliff Manor (1902), Tuckahoe (1903), and Elmsford (1910). In addition, the tourist destinations of Lake Placid (Essex County) and Lake George (Warren County) incorporated in 1900 and 1903, respectively.

Villages in the state and region were profoundly affected by the dramatic increase in motor-vehicle production from 1910 to 1950. Vastly improved roads, spurred by demands from vehicle owners, linked villages, towns, and cities to a much greater extent than the railroads, furthering the expansion of suburban and rural population growth.<sup>27</sup> This was especially notable in Westchester, Orange, and Albany counties. The incorporated villages that emerged in Westchester County included Scarsdale (in 1917), Grandview-on-Hudson (1918), and Buchanan (1928). Village formations in suburban and rural areas of Orange County included Harriman (1914), Otisville (1921), Greenwood Lake (1924), Maybrook (1925), and Florida (1946). In Albany County, three suburban villages were incorporated: Ravena (1914), Colonie (1921), and Menands (1924).

## Coterminous Town-Village

An incorporated village generally is located in part of a town or towns, but a unique situation arose in the second half of the nineteenth century. When Morrisania was incorporated in 1864, its boundaries coincided exactly with those of the town. Five other coterminous town-villages were subsequently formed in the state: Green Island, in 1896, East Rochester (Monroe County), 1981; Harrison (Westchester County), 1975; Mount Kisco (Westchester County), 1977; and Scarsdale (Westchester County), 1915.

The coterminous town-village may have separate town and village governing boards, as in Green Island. Alternatively, voters may decide through a referendum whether the governmental entity should be primarily a village or town government. After the choice is made, a single governing body operates with elected officials functioning as both town and village board members. East Rochester, Mount Kisco, and Scarsdale operate primarily as village governments. Harrison functions primarily as a town government.

## Special Purpose Villages

Twenty-six villages were incorporated statewide after 1940, sixteen of them in the Hudson River region. A major reason for the slowdown in village formations was the greater use of town “special improvement districts.” These districts began to appear in the late-nineteenth century. In 1892, town residents who lived outside an incorporated village area were authorized to create lighting districts. Additional authorization was extended for garbage districts in 1894, water districts also in 1900, sewer districts in 1901, sidewalk districts in 1916, and fire and park districts in 1916. Residents in these districts have financed their services through taxes and the issuance of bonds for costly construction projects.<sup>28</sup> Under current town law, the creation of a town improvement district may be initiated by the town board, a petition of property owners, or an act of the state legislature. Since these districts are not municipal corporations, they are generally administered by the town board. Population growth in suburban town areas has led to a proliferation of these entities over the last several decades. There were 1,350 town improvement districts for these and other purposes in the Hudson River region as of 2000.<sup>29</sup>

The sixteen villages incorporated after 1940 were generally created for special purposes, either to make use of zoning and planning powers or for religious purposes. Tuxedo Park (Orange County), an enclave of wealthy residents, was incorporated so that its zoning power could prevent commercial and industrial development. The use of the zoning power for planning and future-development purposes was also a major reason behind the incorporation of the villages of Airmont, Pomona, Wesley Hills, New Hempstead, Chestnut Ridge, and Montebello (all in Rockland County), and Rye Brook in Westchester County. East Nassau (Rensselaer County), a village formed from three hamlets, was incorporated so its residents could exercise greater control over the operations of a quarry and the size of housing subdivisions. New Square and Kaser in Rockland County and Kiryas Joel in Orange County were formed by Hasidic Jews.

Twenty-two villages in the region disappeared in the twentieth century for a variety of reasons. Nine became cities: Port Jervis (in 1907); Glens Falls (1908); Fishkill Landing and Mateawan, which became the City of Beacon (1913); Mechanicville and Saratoga Springs (1915); White Plains (1916); Peekskill (1940); and Rye (1942), the last incorporated city in the state. In 1902, Bath-on-Hudson was annexed to the City of Rensselaer, while Amchir (Orange County) was annexed to the City of Middletown in 1968. Two villages—Pelham and North Pelham, in Westchester County—consolidated into the Village of Pelham in

1975. Ten villages in the region dissolved: Prattsville (Greene County), in 1900; Rifton (Ulster County), 1919; Pleasant Valley (Dutchess County), 1926; Marlboro (Ulster County), 1928; Rosendale (Ulster County), 1977; Elizabethtown (Essex County), 1980; Bloomingdale (Essex County), 1985; Pine Hill (Ulster County), 1986; Westport (Essex County), 1992; and Ticonderoga (Essex County), 1993. Most of these villages had a relatively small, rural population (i.e., less than 1,500 residents) and often had difficulty in filling leadership positions. The major reason for their demise, in most cases, was the inability to offset a rising tax burden with sufficient revenues.

As various needs arose during the twentieth century, villages gained additional general powers from the state legislature. For instance, in 1913, cities and incorporated villages were authorized to appoint planning commissions. In 1923, villages gained the right to regulate land usage. Village managers were approved in 1927. By 1944, the apportionment of construction and operating costs of hospitals jointly run by certain cities, towns, and villages was authorized. Town and village boards could jointly acquire lands and operate parking garages as of 1956. Joint village and town police departments could be created as of 1959. In 1962, municipal urban renewal agencies were authorized. Town and village governments gained approval to establish a joint fire district in 1988.<sup>30</sup>

In the last half of the twentieth century, notable powers were given to some villages. For example, Goshen (Orange County) was authorized to create a housing authority in 1956. Ossining (Westchester County) was given authority to establish an industrial development agency in 1974. The Green Island Power Authority was created in 1986 to generate electrical energy. In 1997, Tarrytown obtained permission to set up a residential parking system.<sup>31</sup>

A major recodification of the Village Law of New York State occurred in 1972. An important achievement was the simplification of 102 amendments that had been added since the last recodification effort in 1909. Another important change expanded the administrative ability of the mayor to nominate appointees to various village boards. In addition, village trustees gained more power to pass local laws without the need for a prior amendment to the Village Law, as long there was no violation of the state constitution.<sup>32</sup>

## Survival of the Incorporated Villages

From 1790 to the present, 159 incorporated villages were created within the fourteen counties embracing the Hudson River region. Twenty-one of these villages eventually became cities, nine of them were annexed to cities, two consolidated into one village, and eleven dissolved. The remaining 117 incorporated villages

have sustained themselves through growth or renewal of their economic base, by financing their public services with a diverse revenue structure, and by using any special arrangements the state has authorized for providing certain services.

Suburban villages have survived as their residential and commercial property values have risen in response to population gains. This has been especially evident in parts of Westchester, Rockland, and Orange Counties, and, in recent decades, in Albany County. Other villages, mainly in rural areas, have experienced a relatively smooth transition from their commercial/ manufacturing roots to “bedroom” communities. For example, Valley Falls (Rensselaer County) once had a cigar manufacturing plant and a facility that made black powder for mining and sporting purposes, but its residents now primarily work in Albany, Troy, and Cohoes. Salem (Washington County) has also undergone this transformation. It was a thriving farming and mill village in the nineteenth century, but now is a popular place for commuters and others who want a second home.<sup>33</sup>

Other villages experienced adverse declines in their commercial/manufacturing bases in the past, but have managed to prosper in recent years by securing public and private investment. Waterford has received state funds in the last decade for new bridges, parks, sidewalks, curbs, streetlights, and a visitors center as part of the renovation of Lock 2 on the New York State Barge (Erie) Canal. Those improvements have drawn both tourists and new businesses (such as antiques shops and restaurants) to the village. Piermont (Rockland County) fell into economic decline when its paper and cardboard factories closed in 1982; in the 1990s, it revitalized itself as a shopping and dining destination with art galleries, antiques and specialty shops, and fine restaurants. The growth of factories, quarries, and shipbuilding in Nyack (Rockland County) slowed for several decades during the twentieth century, but, beginning in the 1980s, federal government subsidies and entrepreneurs helped to create a variety of antiques stores, clothing and crafts shops, restaurants, and galleries that turned the village around. Port Chester (Westchester County) lost its industrial base after World War II, but did not seek redevelopment funds from the federal government until 1980. After federal assistance was obtained, it was used to develop old factories into offices and corporate parks and to attract private developers, who built new condominiums and a marina. In recent years, the village has enjoyed a thriving retail and service economy.<sup>34</sup>

Unfortunately, some villages continue to cope with declines in their economic base. Brewster (Putnam County) has struggled to retain business activity for over twenty years. A current concern is that the Town of Southeast will relocate town offices outside the village, a move that could precipitate the loss

of more business activity. Catskill, which flirted with village dissolution in 1998, has long debated various strategies to reverse its slide in economic development. Preservationists have argued that the old Victorian buildings in the village should be the basis for a revived tourist trade, while others contend that razing some of these structures could lead to new office development and job growth.<sup>35</sup>

The financial viability of the incorporated villages has greatly benefited from a diversified revenue structure. Property tax receipts have historically been the largest source of revenue, but villages have made use to a varying extent of additional sources of funds. These have included a utilities gross receipts tax, state general purpose aid, federal aid, receipts from other local governments for services provided, shared tax receipts (e.g., sales tax revenue from county government and state mortgage tax receipts distributed by town government), and miscellaneous revenues (e.g., departmental revenue, interest on investments, licenses and permits, fines and forfeitures, rentals, user fees, and refunds).

In order to ensure that property tax and debt abuses do not occur, villages are subject to constitutional real estate tax limit and debt provisions. The real estate tax limit provisions specify that the maximum property taxes raised in a year is subject to two percent of the five-year average full valuation of taxable real property for operating purposes, plus budgeting appropriations for debt service and capital improvements. The debt limit is seven percent of the five-year average full valuation of taxable real property.<sup>36</sup>

The New York State Office of the Comptroller, Division of Municipal Affairs, has a unit that monitors the fiscal condition of all counties, cities, towns, and incorporated villages. Using database technology, this unit seeks to identify localities experiencing fiscal problems and alerts local officials before their fiscal position seriously deteriorates.

Villages also have another option in providing various services—Article 5-G of the General Municipal Law. It permits municipal corporations and districts to engage in a formal cooperative agreement, provided each government is authorized to perform the functional service. These efforts are intended to reduce service costs without any loss of political control. Formal intermunicipal agreements can involve public works projects, cooperative purchasing, sharing surplus facilities, recreational services, and police services. Tax revenues, user fees, and cost sharing have been used for financing purposes.

The creation of incorporated villages in the Hudson River region more than 200 years ago was a successful experiment in the provision of public goods and services by local governments. The accelerated formation of town improvement districts over the last several decades marked an important change in this histori-

cal process and resulted in a significant slowdown in new village incorporations. This trend is expected to continue. On the other hand, few villages in the state and region have vanished since 1900. It appears that the reluctance of village residents to dissolve their governments stems from a sense of participatory democracy that enables the community to exercise control over its most basic public wants (e.g., through public hearings and voter referendums). Thus, another trend for the foreseeable future seems likely—those villages with a solid economy, a mix of revenue sources, and a willingness to enter into intermunicipal agreements will continue to survive.

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# The Story of Black Rock

How An Early Sustainable Forest Spawned  
The American Environmental Movement and  
Gave Birth To a Unique Consortium That Links  
Science, Conservation, and Education

*Nicole A. Buzzetto-More*

*Black Rock Forest is a 3,785-acre wilderness area located in New York's Hudson River Valley. The modern environmental movement in America began in 1962, when residents of the area banded together after Black Rock was threatened with development by the utility company Consolidated Edison. The outcome of this seventeen-year crusade to stop the degradation of this forest was a landmark win for environmentalists that left an illustrious and inveterate legacy for future generations. The campaign set legal precedent but also resulted in watershed legislation in the form of the National Environmental Policy Act, the formation of several environmental advocacy groups, and the creation of the Council on Environmental Quality. Today, the forest is permanently protected and stewarded by the Black Rock Forest Consortium, a unique amalgamation of primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, and science and cultural centers that collaborate to enhance scientific research, environmental conservation, and education. This paper examines the history of Black Rock Forest with particular emphasis on its role in ecosystems preservation, examination, and edification.*



Black Rock is a densely forested landscape that reflects the ecological splendor of New York State. Located fifty miles north of New York City on the western side of the Hudson Highlands, it is sandwiched between the West Point Military Reservation—a 15,000-acre property that is home to the United States Military Academy—and Storm King Mountain—a 1,900-acre park managed by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

Rich in geological history, Black Rock is one of the finest examples of the Hudson Valley's eastern hardwood forests. Its landscape contains over 1,000 feet of varied elevation that includes lakes, streams, ponds, wetlands, and mountains. Because of the relief, varied landscape, and inconsistent soil quality, Black Rock

is a relatively unspoiled territory. The forest contains red and white oak, eastern hemlock, maple, birch, pine, beech, and chestnut oak, some of which are over 300 years of age.<sup>1</sup> Botanically, the forest contains over 700 taxa of plant life identified with more than twenty plant species categorized as rare.<sup>2</sup>

Anyone walking through this bucolic landscape and its miles of trails cannot help but hear the whirs and whispers of wildlife. Black Rock is home to species that are found only in diminished numbers in the surrounding region. Within the forest live eastern coyote; red and grey foxes; black bear; weasel; bobcat; river otter; several squirrel species (including the flying squirrel); beaver; muskrat; porcupine; opossum; numerous fish, frogs, and turtles; white tail deer; and various species of bat.<sup>3</sup>

The first permanent settlers arrived near Black Rock in 1684. In 1788, the Town of Cornwall (which surrounds the forest) was incorporated. Throughout the centuries, Black Rock has been witness to the growth of the Hudson River Valley and the unfolding of our national history. Over time, areas of the forest have been used for farming (prior to 1830); timber harvesting (1830-1850); converting wood to charcoal (1850-1880); tourism driven by the land's mineral springs (1850-1910); and homesteading.<sup>4</sup>

The banks of the Hudson River have yielded fertile farmlands. However, Black Rock's poor soil quality made it difficult to farm; as a result, throughout its history only 7.5 percent (270 acres) was ever cultivated. However, there is ample evidence of agriculture. According to Neil Maher, author of *Black Rock's Hidden Past: A History of Land Use Prior to the Creation of Black Rock Forest*:

Today much of Black Rock Forest's past remains hidden from view, its history covered by re-growth. Contemporary visitors must look carefully for the crumbling stone walls bordering former grain fields, the un-pruned apple, pear, and cherry trees standing conspicuously in a grove of oaks, or the sudden depression in the landscape that served as charcoal pits.<sup>5</sup>

The Hudson Valley has long been home to many of this country's financial elite—names such as Vanderbilt, Livingston, Rockefeller, Harriman, and Morgan—so it seems only reasonable that James Stillman, the successful financier and president of the National City Bank, would seek to build his estate along the river's banks. In 1885, Stillman began purchasing the land now known as Black Rock Forest. He started with a single tract, adding to his initial purchase over the next three decades. Throughout his ownership, Stillman allowed a portion of the land to be logged. His dream was to create a retreat for his family; however, his wishes never came to fruition.

In 1918, James Stillman died, leaving the undeveloped land to his son Ernest, a local medical doctor who shared his father's love of the Hudson Valley. Ernest Stillman was concerned with healing the forest and protecting it from future development. Although he did not discontinue the practice of woodcutting, his concerns for the environment made him adopt the young practice of sustainable forestry and forest science that had been growing in popularity within the scientific community.<sup>6</sup> Sustainable forestry is attributed to President Theodore Roosevelt, who was influenced by the ideas of such men as Gifford Pinchot, first chief of the United States Forest Service.<sup>7</sup>

While visiting the Stillman property in 1926, Richard Thornton Fisher, a former student of Pinchot's and director of the Harvard Forest in Petersham, Massachusetts, recommended that Ernest establish a sustainable experimental forest. With this in mind, Stillman expanded the acreage and started actively funding forestry research and scientific experiments, founding Black Rock in 1928. (He named it after one of the mountains located within the forest's boundary.)

Activities during the early years of Black Rock focused on ecological protection and restoration. Experiments and investigations in forestry, botany, geology, and soil science resulted in the publication of the first series of Black Rock Forest papers and bulletins. Richard Fisher remained interested in Black Rock, overseeing research and activities there. He noted in the first bulletin, published in 1930, that the forest would serve as an exemplar for effective forestry management in a geographic area where land use was becoming more important both socially and economically.<sup>8</sup> Concurrently, a series of plots were established for long-term investigations; these have been monitored for more than seventy years.

Having become an avid conservationist and a proponent of forestry studies, Ernest Stillman sent a letter to Dr. James B. Conant, then president of Harvard University, in 1940. In it, he outlined his desire to have Harvard, his alma mater, take over Black Rock upon his death. Also outlined was his intention to form an endowment to fund research in forestry studies:

The Black Rock Forest in its 12 years of life has already produced so much valuable scientific knowledge that it seemed a shame to have these experiments terminate at my death. Three alternatives presented themselves: (1) establish an individual foundation; (2) deed the property to the Bronx Botanical Park, Syracuse, or Cornell Universities; or (3) deed the property to Harvard University....

I naturally favored the last, as I believe the Black Rock Forest would be complementary to the Harvard Forest.<sup>9</sup>

Upon Stillman's death in 1949, he bequeathed the forest, along with \$1,154,861.57, to Harvard. The university accepted the bequest and agreed to maintain it.

I give and devise to the President and fellows of Harvard College, Cambridge Massachusetts, all of that tract or parcel of land situated in the Townships of Cornwall and Highland Falls, New York, known as the Black Rock Forest, which for many years has been operated by me as an experimental forest, together with all of the buildings situated on said tract and the contents of such buildings.<sup>10</sup>

That same year, Calvin Stillman, Ernest's son, suggested that Harvard focus less on issues of forestry and more on scientific study and experimentation, writing that "the forest should...devote its energies to the one factor most surely fixed—pure science."<sup>11</sup>

During Harvard's ownership, modest research studies were conducted at Black Rock that resulted in the publication of several bulletins; however, in the view of former forest manager Jack Karnig (who was employed both by Harvard and the Black Rock Forest Consortium, the subsequent owner), the university neglected Black Rock in favor of its Petersham forest, located closer to Cambridge.<sup>12</sup> Daniel Steiner, the university's former chief council, revealed, "[F]rom the point of view of our scientific community in biology, it does not offer anything unique in comparison to a forest much closer and where we have a large facility."<sup>13</sup> According to William Golden, founder of the Black Rock Forest Consortium, Harvard viewed Black Rock as an underutilized financial burden that cost them \$32,000 annually; however, he notes that at no time had the costs of maintaining the forest exceeded the income generated by the Stillman endowment.<sup>14</sup>

In 1962, things began to change. Black Rock became immersed in a bitter struggle that marks the forest's most important legacy to date—setting national precedent and sparking what experts from such groups as the Environmental Protection Agency, Scenic Hudson, and the National Resources Defense Council agree was the dawn of America's modern environmental movement.

The Black Rock Forest-Con Ed Controversy—also known as the Storm King Mountain Lawsuit—lasted from 1962 to 1980. The battle began when Consolidated Edison submitted plans to build a hydroelectric pumped-storage and electricity-generating station in the forest. The facility would pump water from the Hudson River to a reservoir holding station atop the Highlands; the water would remain there until its release through turbines located at the base of the mountain. The project entailed the expansion of the upper reservoir, the cutting of 240 acres

of the forest for flooding, and the addition of numerous roads. As a result of these permanent changes to the landscape, a vocal group of community members became deeply concerned.

Opponents charged Harvard with attempting to sell Black Rock and keeping the Stillman endowment. (University officials did toy with the idea of selling all or a portion of the property to the utility, but this would have

meant condemning a section of it.) Issues of pollution, seepage, water quality, and the project's impact on indigenous species fueled much debate. As one opponent claimed, "This instability of the ground was not recognized. Neither was the fact that the Hudson River is an estuary and not a one way stream."<sup>15</sup>

What began as a small intervention from within the local community quickly became a statewide campaign and sparked the formation of several environmental groups. Eventually, the conflict became a national concern. This battle became part of a legal action that yielded a transcript of 18,000 pages. The case was brought by Scenic Hudson and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), both of which were formed by area residents in response to the controversy and remain active today. Also involved in the Black Rock Forest struggle were pre-existing groups such as the Palisades Interstate Park Commission; the City of New York; the Sierra Club and its Atlantic Chapter; the Wilderness Society; the Izaak Walton League of America; Clearwater; the National Audubon Society; and the National Parks and Conservation Association.

Despite mounting opposition, Con Ed was determined to proceed, applying to the Federal Power Commission (FPC) for a license to operate a hydroelectric facility. After the FPC initially granted approval for the project, three years of hearings and appeals followed, resulting in the United States Court of Appeals' decision to order the FPC to rehear the case, this time allowing environmental-impact testimony. Although a battle such as this was inevitable, it was a precedent-setting decision. It marked the first time that the U.S. government acknowledged the importance of environmental-impact studies.

In 1966, a new round of FPC hearings began and went on for four years. Conservationists were not dissuaded after the FPC decided to grant a new license



Protest Sign used by Scenic Hudson

COURTESY OF SCENIC HUDSON

to Con Ed in 1970. They challenged the water-quality permits required for the project. Following a fishery study in 1974, the appeals court once again ordered more hearings, keeping the controversy alive for another six years.

This case helped to inspire the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Signed into law by President Nixon on January 1, 1970, the act formally declares environmental policy and goals for the protection and maintenance of the nation's natural resources. It requires all federal agencies to prepare environmental-impact statements when proposing actions that may affect the environment. NEPA also established the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) in the Executive Office of the President.

When the battle was finally resolved through mediation in 1980, the outcome was a historic victory for environmental advocates. Con Ed agreed to halt construction of the plant and establish an endowment (along with the other utility companies in the region) to fund independent research on the impact of power plants on the area's aquatic life.

The end of the controversy received a lot of notoriety in the popular press. The *New York Times* predicted that the agreement would serve as a model for future settlements around the country.<sup>16</sup> This prediction proved true: The outcome in the Storm King Mountain Lawsuit set a precedent for environmental activism, empowering and encouraging communities and environmental groups to battle and win cases against major corporations in order to protect their natural resources. According to the Environmental Protection Agency:

The modern environmental movement was born in the Hudson Valley, which established the precedent for the National Environmental Policy Act. It was on the Hudson that the idea of having a watchdog for environmental disturbance developed.<sup>17</sup>

As a result of the Con Ed struggle, Harvard reevaluated its role as owner of Black Rock Forest. While still engrossed in the controversy, Harvard administrators established a committee to study the proposed project and to make recommendations as to the future of the land. The committee was comprised of Alfred W. Crompton, professor of biology and director of Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology; William E. Reifsnyder, professor of forest meteorology and public health at Yale; and Richard Wilson, a professor of physics at Yale. Individuals who contributed to the committee's work included former New York City Mayor John Lindsay; Dr. Calvin Stillman, son of donor Ernest Stillman; and Chauncey Stillman, Ernest Stillman's nephew.

The committee released its report in January 1973, making in three recom-

mendations for the future of Black Rock Forest. The first suggestion was that Harvard sell the forest to a private buyer. The second was for Harvard to sell the land to Con Ed and ask them to donate much of it to the Palisades Interstate Park Commission. The third and most noteworthy suggestion—and the one that would decide the future of Black Rock—was that Harvard sell or lease the forest to a group of New York universities for the establishment of a biological field station.<sup>18</sup>

Following the release of the committee's report, Daniel Steiner contacted William Golden, his friend and neighbor, seeking suggestions for the future of the forest. After reviewing the Harvard committee report, Golden—who at the time was chairman of the board of the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) as well as corporate director and trustee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science—made a trip to Black Rock Forest and held meetings with several key community figures. Following his exploration, Golden made his suggestions in a letter to Steiner in 1973:

Conceivably the Forest could be operated by the American Museum of Natural History as a field station or by a consortium of local institutions including the AMNH, the New York Botanical Garden, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and the New York Zoological Society. Such a consortium, under the leadership of one manager, should be able to use the Forest relatively intensively for scientific and ecological purposes while preserving and improving its character and maintaining it as an enclave of nature in the growing community by which it is surrounded.<sup>19</sup>

Steiner took Golden's advice into account; however, Harvard made no moves toward such a sale. The future of Black Rock remained uncertain for several years as the Storm King controversy raged on. Discussions regarding a possible sale of Black Rock to a private party picked up again in the summer of 1981, following the resolution of the Con Ed dispute.

In the summer of 1981, William Golden dictated a memo in which he noted that the American Museum of Natural History could still purchase the land. However, he was concerned about the future operating costs, which he estimated would soon exceed the \$32,000 spent annually by Harvard. He concluded that it would be economically prudent for the forest to become part of a larger consortium of organizations.<sup>20</sup>

Aided by legal council Helene Kaplan, Golden developed a preliminary list of scientific and educational institutions that they thought would be interested in becoming part of the proposed consortium, acknowledging that it would be

difficult to get these institutions to commit financially. (At this point, Golden has admitted, he was already seeing himself as the future purchaser and benefactor of Black Rock.) To all of these potential members Golden sent out a letter of inquiry:

At the invitation of the Harvard administration, I have discussed with them the possible purchase of the Harvard Black Rock Forest at Cornwall, near West Point, New York, by a not-for-profit corporation to be established....

The basic question is whether, with the growing interest in forestry, ecology, animal behavior, orgasmic biology, and nature studies broadly defined, a consortium of universities, colleges, secondary schools, and other institutions, such as the American Museum of Natural History, would like to have the right to use this property from time to time. No one of them is likely to have enough need for it to justify the full operating expense or to undertake the responsibility for management; but it might be utilized effectively at all seasons by a consortium of associates. Management would be provided by the not-for-profit corporation, which could schedule the use by Associates in a manner comparable to the allocation of telescope time at major observatories.

If sufficient interest is displayed, not only would funds be available for the purchase of the property but also in addition operating funds would be provided for a trial period during which it would be determined whether usage by the educational institutions is sufficient to justify the expense and managerial attention. Should the arrangement prove sufficiently popular, it is contemplated that use charges would be established in amounts sufficient to make the organization self-supporting... As indicated, the purchase cost and fund of working capital would be donated.

The purpose of this letter is to explore in a preliminary, but practical and timely, way whether there is sufficient interest by a number of appropriate and congenial institutions to warrant the expenditure of time and treasure by the potential donor...<sup>21</sup>

In retrospect, Golden attributes the idea to form a consortium to the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR), which operates the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado. UCAR comprises a group of member universities that all have meteorology departments and have successfully agreed to share a valuable resource, in this instance a telescope. Golden recognized the advantage of a group of organizations with limited financial means cooperating to share a resource. "So these are groups of

educational institutions running laboratories or observatories, and I thought a comparable organization would be a good way to run the Black Rock Forest.”<sup>22</sup>

Most of the institutions contacted expressed interest in membership, and Golden was eager to move forward with his plan. Negotiations continued between Harvard and Golden with several important developments. It was agreed that the property would be sold to the Golden Family Foundation; that it would be leased to a consortium of universities, K-12 schools, and scientific and cultural institutions; and that the Golden Family Foundation would not be able to sell the land. It was also agreed that if the consortium failed financially, the forest would pass into the hands of another conservation organization. A figure of \$400,000—considerably lower than Harvard’s original asking price—was also agreed upon.<sup>23</sup>

In September 1983, Golden sent a letter to update all of the parties involved. He acknowledged the lethargy with which the negotiations with Harvard were progressing:

When I initiated this project, with the encouragement of Harvard University, neither I nor they had any idea how slowly it would progress. Factors beyond my control or influence have occasioned the delay... I believe that it would be beneficial educationally, scientifically, and ecologically. But I cannot be certain of the outcome, nor can I predict the timing.<sup>24</sup>

The factors that Golden referred to as beyond his control included approval from the Black Rock Forest Preservation Council—a group comprising state and local civic and business leaders.<sup>25</sup> “I thought it would be important that we be welcomed in the community, or at least not regarded with hostility as outsiders,” Golden later recalled.<sup>26</sup> He attributed the subsequent favorable reception he received from the community largely to several key local residents who attested to his good intentions and concern for the future of Black Rock. Among these was Stephen Duggan, who had led the struggle against Con Ed, and Jack Karnig.

The issue of the endowment became a topic of much heated debate. The 1.5 million-dollar endowment that Ernest Stillman bequeathed to Harvard had grown to approximately 2.5 million dollars by 1985. The university had spent seventy percent of the trust’s income on the Harvard Forest in Massachusetts, with 30 percent going to Black Rock.<sup>27</sup>

Harvard decided to keep the endowment after selling the property to the Golden Family Foundation. Harvard stated at the time—and still contends—that the endowment and the forest are separate, and that Ernest Stillman’s will did not stipulate that the money remain with the forest. “There was no legal restriction placed on either the endowment or the forest. Dr. Stillman’s trust was to benefit

both the Harvard Forest and the Black Rock Forest,” noted Harvard attorney Nancy D. Israel.<sup>28</sup> Individuals from the university explained that the endowment was meant to aid Harvard’s research in forestry, not to be used specifically for Black Rock.

On June 11, 1984, *The New Yorker* published a forty-page article titled “Annals of Discourse: The Harvard Black Rock Forest.” It criticized Harvard for what the author considered to be a lack of dedication to the pioneers of environmental conservation, and for failing Ernest Stillman.<sup>29</sup> The article questioned Harvard’s motives, intimating that its primary objective was to keep the Stillman endowment, relieve itself of the minor burden of maintaining Black Rock, and manage to make a profit off the forest’s sale.

To represent Harvard’s point of view, the author interviewed Daniel Steiner regarding his feelings toward the forest:

It is clear to us that Harvard is not a conservation organization. Dr. Stillman understood that. The bequest of the forest is absolute. To Harvard, without restriction. There is well known language to be used in wills if you want to restrict a bequest: alternative dispositions of property if the university does not carry out his wishes. He did not use any language of this kind... I think it would be wrong to make an assumption that Dr. Stillman had required, or even expected that Harvard hold on to it. If I were interested in preserving a forest, I wouldn’t give it to a university. At the same time, we’ve looked at the land, looked at the area, and it seems inappropriate to sell it for development. Although under the terms of the will, flat out, we legally could... My conscience is clear.<sup>30</sup>

On May 23, 1985, a certificate of approval was signed by New York’s Supreme Court and the office of the attorney general incorporating the Black Rock Forest Associates (otherwise to be known as the Black Rock Forest Consortium) under section 402 of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law. Discussions continued over the next two years between Harvard officials and William Golden, and in the spring of 1987, he prepared to move forward with the new consortium. A meeting was held, and among the organizations represented was a notable number of K-12 schools. The results of the meeting were auspicious, and Golden soon received more letters of intent from institutions interested in membership.

On September 14, 1989, the purchase took place in the offices of Patterson, Berknep, Webb and Tyler in New York City. Immediately afterward, the Golden Family Foundation placed the property in the hands of the Black Rock Forest Preserve. A lease agreement was established between the preserve and the Black

Rock Forest Consortium, which had to pay one dollar annually for the use of the premises.

In conjunction with the purchase, an endowment and research fund were established with contributions made by Harvard and the Golden Family Foundation. John S. Stillman, son of Dr Ernest G. Stillman, argued that the original endowment should have been transferred with the property. “I’m saddened at the way I consider Harvard has breached faith with my father and ignored the trust they accepted 40 years ago.” He added, “Black Rock has always been a stepchild to Petersham.”<sup>31</sup>



**William Golden at he the ground-breaking for the new Forest Lodge**

In response to John Stillman’s complaints, Daniel Steiner, representing Harvard, told the *New York Times*, “We believe what we are doing is consistent with Dr. Stillman’s gift.”<sup>32</sup> Harvard also retorted that Dr. Stillman’s will did not specify that the money remain with the forest, but that what was important was that the forest remain a wilderness area to be used for scientific research.

Sixteen years passed between William Golden’s initial talks with Daniel Steiner and the takeover by the consortium. The process was certainly arduous, and had it not been for the persistence of Golden, the sale of Black Rock and creation of the consortium may not have occurred.

Since the consortium’s takeover of the forest, Black Rock has maintained a healthy relationship with the surrounding community. The forest is open year-round to the general public during daylight hours, and visitors are welcome to take advantage of recreational activities such as hiking, sightseeing, and biking.

The current list of consortium members includes the American Museum of Natural History, Barnard College, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Browning School, Calhoun School, Columbia University, Cornwall Central School District, Dalton School, Friends Seminary, Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole-Ecosystems Center, New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, New York University, Newburgh Enlarged City School District, New York Public School PS311, New York Public School PS220, the School at Columbia University, and the Storm King School. According to Sibyl Golden, a preserve board member and the

daughter of William Golden:

The greatest strength of the Consortium is that it makes it possible for institutions that would not use the Forest full time, or have the resources to do so, to run field-based educational and research programs... Without this opportunity for institutions to share the operation and use of the Forest, thousands of students and scientists would not have access to this wonderful resource. Further, the importance of collaboration between K-12 educators and scientific researchers is increasingly recognized by funding organizations.<sup>33</sup>

## Notes

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COURTESY OF THE BLACK ROCK FOREST CONSORTIUM

**The Black Rock Forest new Forest Lodge**

## Regional History Forum

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

**Editor's note:** This is the first installment in what is planned to be a regular feature between now and 2009—the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson navigating the river that bears his name and of Samuel de Champlain discovering the lake upstate that bears his. Following the precedent set in 1909, we will also be exploring the 200th anniversary of Robert Fulton's successful development of the steamboat as a means of cargo and passenger transportation.

# The Replica Ship *The Half Moon*

*Christopher Pryslopski*

The directions were simple: drive north on The New York State Thruway to Albany, exit onto Route 787 toward the Empire State Plaza, and then take exit 4. Drive north along the Hudson until you see the Mayan temples; turn right into the courtyard. As I drove slowly across the cobbled yard, I got my first glimpse of the *De Halve Maen*, the rigging at least. Captain William “Chip” Reynolds and crew member Steve Weiss appeared a short time later to welcome me aboard.

Built in 1989 by Dr. Andrew Hendricks, The Replica Ship *The Half Moon* is a working, full-scale model of the vessel that brought Henry Hudson to North America nearly 400 years ago—with a small engine and other amenities hidden deep in what would have been its historic hold. Dr. Hendricks envisioned it as a physical tool for interpreting the history and legacy of the New Netherlands, and its captain and crew today are doing just that. As the New Netherland Museum (NNM), they divide their time between Albany, New York City, and excursions on the Hudson and other historic waters of New Netherland—from the Connecticut to the Delaware Rivers.

The New Netherland Museum interprets its history using a combination of techniques—tours; sails; living history reenactments; classroom visits; teacher workshops; and “history kits,” which teachers may borrow. They even plan on con-



**Rigging on the Replica Ship *The Half Moon***

structing a “ship’s boat” as a hands-on teachers’ workshop. Their annual Voyage of Discovery is a weeklong expedition from Manhattan to Albany manned by a crew of seventh and eighth graders. The lesson plans they’ve developed in this and other exercises are currently available for purchase on their Web site.

They have important allies in this work, too. The New Netherland Project, housed and sponsored by the New York State Museum, has steadily contributed to the understanding of New York’s Dutch Heritage since the 1980s. Together, they dream of a waterfront facility in Albany that could host living history reenactments, as well as house archives, research facilities, and *The Half Moon* itself. Such a facility could also further the crew’s efforts to convey the history of the Albany area—the Dutch Fort Orange and Beverwyck. Such a facility would be an alternative to Sturbridge Village and Jamestown, celebrating a different and contemporary history that is specific to our region.

But today I am visiting them at the Albany Water Treatment Plant; the “Mayan temples” conceal the works in their novel architecture. This has been the New Netherland Museum’s temporary home in the capital while they plan their permanent port. A crew of two volunteers is painting the new beak, which was rebuilt in 2003. Maintenance such as this is a constant necessity with the ship, and more major work takes place in dry dock over the winter.

Steve Weiss is a wonderful example of the power of the ship and its programming. After his daughter first sailed on it on a field trip, his wife began volunteering, and finally he became a volunteer educator on board and occasionally in the classroom.

There is no question you can ask Steve or any of the crew that doesn’t lead to a dozen more (and their answers, of course). We climb into the hold to escape a short shower and look at some of the replicas onboard, which include cooking pots and utensils, rhinish ware, a cannon (known as a falcon, which shoots a twenty-one pound ball about the size of a baseball), and more.

By the time we are done inspecting their traveling kits and cannon, my eyes had adjusted to the gloom of the “between decks,” or orlop deck. We stand above the hold, bent over to keep our heads from hitting the bottom of the deck above. The captain points aft. “This would have been the top deck in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.” But when the voyages began getting longer—rounding Cape Horn and exploring the Arctic—and the trade networks grew to include new territories in these remote locations, the ships required more storage. So they added the deck above, leaving the orlop deck with no more than five feet of headroom. Sailors would have bunked here or slept on deck; everything below was cargo space. It was during this same time that the fore and stern castles were added to

the top deck—each raised another five feet at either end of the ship.

These were where the armed crew would have assembled to ward off pirates, or alternately, would have assembled a boarding party as privateers—state-endorsed piracy practiced on vessels belonging to countries with which Holland was not on favorable terms. The galley of *De Haelve Maen* is in the forecastle, and the pilot house, with the captain’s quarters behind, is located in the stern castle, below the poop deck.

And way back in the gloom to the aft of the between decks is the “whipstaff.” At the original height, in the 1400s sailors would have stood here “manning” the helm, but once the upper decks were added, this original position was buried below. The “staff” was added as a simple modification that allowed the helmsman to steer from above—still 100 years before the use of block and tackle that allowed the “ship’s wheel.” Captain Reynolds’ eyes gleamed as he finished the lesson, and he grinned as he reminded me once again that the entire ship was a working replica and a teaching tool.

During the New Netherland Museum’s Voyage of Discovery, the students work with adults as the full crew of the ship—manning the watch, etc. In addition to performing scientific experiments and learning how the ship works, they use replica equipment to navigate the river, including a cross-staff and a quadrangle, chip line, lead line, and Travers Board. The New Netherland Museum’s curriculum also brings this experience into the schools. The Voyage of Discovery began keeping an online ship’s log in 2005. This allows children in classrooms—and adults—to follow the adventure. There are also travel trunks full of replicas that teachers may borrow.

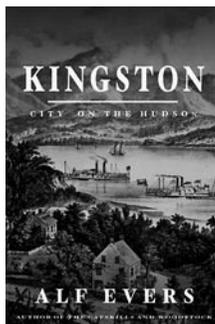
It is difficult to convey the experience of stepping aboard *The Half Moon* in a few pages, but suffice it to say that any opportunity to do so is well worth it. In addition to participants in their formal programming, they welcome visitors and volunteers. And work is underway to ensure that they can come to you, even if you are unable to come to them.

—Christopher Pryslopski

*For more info on the New Netherland Museum, visit them online at [www.halfmoon.mus.ny.us/index.html](http://www.halfmoon.mus.ny.us/index.html), or in person during May, June, and October in Albany. (It’s advisable to check their web site or call ahead before making the trip.) Additional information and samples of their curriculum is available at [www.halfmoon.mus.ny.us/curriculum.htm](http://www.halfmoon.mus.ny.us/curriculum.htm), while the 2005 Voyage of Discover is online at [www.halfmoon.mus.ny.us/2005sepvod/2005sepvodhome.htm](http://www.halfmoon.mus.ny.us/2005sepvod/2005sepvodhome.htm). For information on the New Netherland Project (whose work the crew of *The Half Moon* shares with the public), visit [www.nnp.org/index.shtml](http://www.nnp.org/index.shtml).*

# Book Review

Alf Evers. *Kingston: City on the Hudson*. The Overlook Press: Woodstock and New York (2005). 447 pp.; 40 pp. bibliography and source notes.



This book represents a twelve-year undertaking that consumed all of the author's ninth decade and with which he was still tinkering when he passed away in December 2004—a month shy of his 100th birthday. Certainly it is a flawed book, yet *Kingston: City on the Hudson* is also a remarkable tour de force and something that will stand for years as Evers' last, typically comprehensive testament to his life's interest in local history.

On one level, *Kingston* is a straightforward, narrative history of Evers' county seat, from the first Native Americans to modern City Hall; much of this material has not been available in narrative form before. On the other hand, this book is not a history at all. It is a prime document, the last work of one of our best regional historians who never lost his touch.

One discovers the difference between this historian and others early on in his explanation for the violence that gave rise to the First Esopus War (1658-59). He reaches deeply into nineteenth-century scholarship (even including an illustration) to demonstrate the correlation of the *katsbaan*—the Native American ball field near the Strand—with Munsee Delaware mythos, and how the intrusion of the Dutch and English settlers into that scene prompted the first attack. Only Alf Evers could have done that.

Evers had the intention of writing a history of Kingston ever since the appearance of his first fine history, *The Catskills: From Wilderness to Woodstock*, in 1972. The *Catskills* was thirteen years in the making. He then wrote a history of Woodstock (1987) and produced a collection of essays, and even as he wrote the *Kingston* story, he planned a follow-up book about Ralph Whitehead, the founder of the Byrdcliffe arts colony in Woodstock.

In his thirties and forties, Evers co-authored children's books with his wife before turning to regional history for the first time with *The Catskills*. He had a background as an insurance investigator, and a childhood on an Ulster County farm that charmed him for life. *The Catskills* was, in its time, a breakthrough treatment of regional history that showed it could be done in a friendly, and documented, way.

*Kingston* was not written without support. These are all his words, of course, scrupulously recorded, all of it entered, dictated, scrawled, rewritten, and told over the years to an amanuensis, Edward Sanders, author of a rigorous investigative work himself (*The Family: The Story of Charles Manson's Dune Buggy Attack Battalion*, 1971) and a noted beatnik poet. A noble supporting cast helped keep Evers' home and his health going along the way.

Evers did rely on some outside sources—friends tracked down what he needed after he could not leave the house himself—but this tapestry was largely fashioned from bits and pieces right at hand. (A library that Evers collected in his small home in Shady has since gone to Byrdcliffe, where it will one day be available to scholars.) The book does suffer as history in the choice of sources, since much of the scholarship of the last thirty years was not plumbed, but the reader is compensated for any lapses in Evers' style and, to some extent, in the old choices he makes. (And Evers was ahead of his time thirty years ago, anyway.)

The craft of the writer is clearly at work in some convoluted sentence structures in the early sections, where one sees the historian Evers consciously choosing his path through the maze of information to provide clarity for the reader. The writing becomes more self-assured as the conventional history unfolds, and one senses that, had he time, he might have edited the early sections more closely—but not the facts they related. Evers had a mature grasp of the material that allowed for variations and discordant themes in the story, and you can see that in the writing itself.

The documentation is also limited, much of it put together by Sanders in conversations with Evers as the project came to a conclusion. After all, he was eighty-nine when he started and ninety-nine and eleven months old when he finished. (The day Evers died he reminded Sanders of a change he wanted to make in the text.) The endnotes are in fact a kind of personal coda, an almost relaxed peregrination into the byways of the author's mind; there are not enough of them.

*Kingston* is neither mawkish nor sentimental, but it is a tribute to the city at the center of Evers' county. Some of the section titles—one runs fifty-five words in length—hearken to a nineteenth-century style, and at times Evers waxes overelocquent in characterizing how the people who lived it experienced their history. Yet this is all part of a piece, as much a story of Alf Evers as of the city of his special interest—a prime document, again.

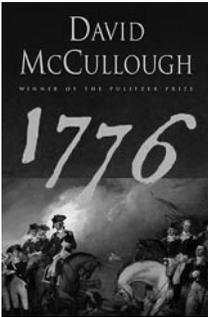
Kingston Mayor James Sottile hosted Peter Mayer of Overlook Press for the debut of the work at City Hall. Some press attended, as did several of those who helped Evers along the way, yet this was not a gala sendoff for the author. He had been there, done that already: three years earlier, the Senate House hosted a reti-

nue of local history glitterati in recognizing Evers' contributions over the years.

Fittingly, that event ended with Evers—I think he was ninety-six at the time—trumping the entire tent-full of friends in a clever trompe-l'oeil effect. A video of his life ended with the camera on Evers himself sitting in the front row. He was the first and only person in the crowded tent to see that the video had now become live. He waved to everybody and the crowd roared.

—Vernon Benjamin, *Bard College*

**David McCullough. 1776. New York: Simon & Schuster (2005). 386 pp.**



The Hudson River Valley is the place to live and visit to understand the American Revolution. Because of New York State's curriculum and the teacher institutes, map/brochures, and programs of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area and the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College, teachers, students, and an increasing number of residents and heritage tourists are discovering how complex that civil and imperial war was, particularly in New York.

When I met author David McCullough in Newport, Rhode Island, last July, during the celebration of the 225th anniversary of the arrival of the French *expedition particulière*, I thanked him for returning the subject of America's War for Independence back to the public discourse with his biography of John Adams and his newest book, *1776*. When McCullough decided to explore the American Revolution, he brought to bear a heavyweight reputation built on two Pulitzer Prizes (for *Truman* and *John Adams*) and two National Book Awards (for *The Path Between the Seas* and *Mornings on Horseback*). After weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list, *1776* has carved out its niche in popular literature as spectacularly as the events of 1776 set the tone for the colonies' struggle against their mother country, Great Britain.

McCullough chose as the topic of his book the year of the American Revolution to which even the casual student of American history could relate. Although the Declaration of Independence and the battle of Trenton, in New Jersey, were triumphs that year, McCullough found that 1776 "was for those who carried the fight for independence forward a year of all-to-few victories, of sustained suffering, disease, hunger, desertion, cowardice, disillusionment, defeat, terrible discouragement, and fear, that they would never forget, but also of phenomenal courage, and bedrock devotion to country, and that too, they would never forget." As McCullough has related in an interview, his approach allowed

him “to tell the military story of 1776, not the political.” And he tells the story of George Washington, Nathanael Greene, Henry Knox, the Continental Army, and the battles of New York and New Jersey as only he can. The glue for the war—and the book—is Washington, without whose “leadership and unrelenting perseverance, the revolution almost certainly would have failed.”

While 1776 is a national story, New York takes center stage on some 135 of the book’s 294 narrative pages. McCullough found that “The importance of New York was beyond question,” and he quotes John Adams’ assessment that New York was “a kind of key to the whole continent.” General Washington and his British counterparts also understood that the Hudson River was the nexus of population, industry, agriculture, commerce, communications, and logistics. As strategists, they recognized that the Hudson was at once an avenue and a barrier, particularly in the Hudson Highlands. It was an invasion route to and from Canada at the one end and the city of New York on the other. Command of the Hudson influenced the economy and affected the movement of manpower and supplies. Against this strategic backdrop, McCullough relates his tales of triumph and tragedy at or near the Hudson River.

One of the great triumphs of the whole war was the feat by Colonel Henry Knox—one which many observers thought impossible, writes McCullough—of floating and dragging the “noble train of artillery” of fifty-nine cannons, mortars, and howitzers from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston in the dead of winter. Once emplaced on Dorchester Heights and commanding the city and harbor, they added weight to General William Howe’s decision to abandon Boston for Halifax, Nova Scotia. Knox’s reputation was made: the former bookseller was named Washington’s artillery chief. His guns influenced the victory at Trenton, which was the climax of the year and is the climax of the book.

Howe’s next stop was Manhattan, where he and his troops landed in July 1776. Thereafter, New York was the key seat of the war until November 1783. Near-fatal tragedies took place in the battles around New York City. McCullough concludes that the battle of Brooklyn (also known as the battle of Long Island) on August 27, 1776, “had been a fiasco. Washington had proven indecisive and inept. In his first command on a large-scale field of battle, he and his general officers had not only failed, they had been made to look like fools.” Providence and John Glover’s Massachusetts sailors and fishermen saved the army on the night of August 29–30 by ferrying 9,000 men across the East River to Manhattan. After checking General Howe at Harlem Heights and White Plains, Washington and Greene once again exhibited poor judgment by trying to maintain Fort Washington (near the present-day George Washington Bridge). When it fell to British and Hessian

troops on November 16, the American army lost almost 3,000 men, who would be sorely missed in the coming days. The fall of Fort Lee and the retreat across the Jerseys set up Washington's first victory since Boston—at Trenton on Christmas Day. That triumph—and another at Princeton on January 3, 1777—saved the bid for liberty and blotted away some of the stains of previous failures. McCullough quotes Abigail Adams in a letter to her friend Mercy Otis Warren: "I am apt to think that our later misfortunes have called out the hidden excellencies of our commander-in-chief." Those "hidden excellencies" would sustain the cause—and the Continental Army—through the remaining six years of war, until the Treaty of Paris made the United States of America a reality.

In 1776, McCullough has written a book that proves the idea that well-written history rivals fiction. He is a master storyteller, and the popularity of his latest book is an encouraging sign that his readers understand that the power of historical drama and the trials of men and women struggling to be free transcend the ages. When they have turned the last page of 1776, they will have gained a greater perspective on the bids for democracy ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a heightened appreciation for the difficulties faced by the fledgling armies upon which those bids depend. As McCullough ends his tale, then as now the outcome may prove to be "little short of a miracle."

—James M. Johnson, Marist College

### Tom Lewis *The Hudson: A History*

Yale University Press, London and New Haven (2005). 340 pp.



Tom Lewis' "personal history," *The Hudson: A History*, is an elegantly written and accessible entry point to the larger and more famous episodes of the Hudson River's history and culture. The book is not an attempt to provide a synthetic, textbook account of the region, nor a new synthesis of recent scholarship. It is, however, a useful introduction for those who are new to the subject, and for those who live here and know a bit about the subject, it will provide new insights to a familiar story.

Much of Lewis' attention is devoted to the early period of the Valley's history. (Indeed, the first half of the book is focused on the pre-Revolutionary period.) There is one full chapter on the American Revolution. The twentieth century receives much less attention—only one chapter, the last—although this chapter evocatively tells the story of the "Storm King case" and the emerging environ-

mental movement. Chapter 7, “Definers of the Landscape,” takes an interesting approach to the “landscape that defined America.” It provides a nice introduction for those interested in the artistic rendering of the region, and the emergence of the Hudson River landscape painters and the authors who have forever shaped readers’ understanding of the Valley (Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, among others). The chapter weaves this story into the larger economic and technological developments that were forever transforming this landscape that authors and painters were now attempting to immortalize.

The last chapter, “Twentieth Century Waters,” is Lewis’ best. His account of the now famous battle between Consolidated Edison and a small group of preservationists over the plan to construct a storage reservoir at Storm King Mountain on the Hudson is thoughtful and moving. “A huge swath would have to be carved out of the northern portion of Storm King to make room for an eight hundred foot long generator plant,” he writes. A small group of Valley residents played, in Lewis’ telling, the proverbial “David v Goliath” role, and in the process of stopping the construction of the storage plant, also ushered in the modern environmental movement in the United States.

Lewis writes engagingly, and easily brings his reader into the larger unfolding story. From the historian’s perspectives, there are some drawbacks. Although Lewis uses recent published work on art and architecture, he relies very little on the enormous amount of recent scholarship on the social and political history of the region. The work of Martin Bruegel, Reeve Huston, and Thomas Humphrey, among many others, is simply not included in these pages. The last ten to fifteen years have witnessed a virtual renaissance in the historical study of the region, and save for Russell Shorto’s *Island at the Center of the World*, the works of these authors are not to be found in Lewis’ footnotes, nor are their important new insights on the American Revolution, social life, and the nineteenth-century tenant riots woven into his analysis. These authors have had great impact on refocusing many of the debates in New York history and would certainly have added a further layer of complexity to Lewis’ story.

Nevertheless, these concerns do not detract from what is a readable, engaging, and illuminating history of the Hudson River and the surrounding Valley. Lewis’ fine prose and keen insights offer his readers the richness of the Hudson River.

—Thomas S. Wermuth, *Hudson River Valley Institute, Marist College*

# New & Noteworthy Books Received

## **Hudson Valley Waterfall Guide**

Russell Dunn (Hensonville, N.Y.: Black Dome Press Corp., 2006).

344 pp. \$17.95 (paperback). [www.blackdomepress.com](http://www.blackdomepress.com)

A guide to 100 waterfalls in the Hudson River Valley; contains directions, maps, historical information, and illustrations.

## **The \$64 Tomato**

By William Alexander (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2006). Pp. 254. \$22.95 (paperback). [www.algonquin.com](http://www.algonquin.com)

The oft-hilarious story of one Hudson Valley resident's quest to grow the perfect garden. Alexander weaves a story about the trials as well as the triumphs of gardening and teaches valuable lessons—about agriculture and life—along the way.

## **Selected Letters of John Jay and Sarah Livingston Jay**

Compiled and edited by Landa M. Freeman, Louise V. North, and Janet M. Wedge (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005).

311 pp. \$75.00 (hardcover). [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com)

Correspondence between John Jay and his wife, Sarah Livingston Jay, during and after the American Revolution. Also includes essays on the Jay and Livingston families, a timeline of John Jay's life, and family trees.

## **Catskill Mountain House Trail Guide:**

### **In the Footsteps of the Hudson River School**

Robert A. Gildersleeve (Hensonville, N.Y.: Black Dome Press Corp., 2005). 224 pp. \$16.95 (paperback). [www.blackdomepress.com](http://www.blackdomepress.com)

A hiking guide to destinations in the Catskill Mountains that inspired the artists of the Hudson River School of art and were popular with trekkers in the nineteenth century. Includes GPS locations, maps, and modern trail descriptions, as well as reprints from two earlier guidebooks.

## **Historic Hudson: An Architectural Portrait**

By Byrne Fone (Hensonville, N.Y.: Black Dome Press Corp., 2005).

206 pp. \$24.95 (paperback). [www.blackdomepress.com](http://www.blackdomepress.com)

Examines the city of Hudson—its rise as a shipping and manufacturing center in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and its ultimate decline. Also discusses the current revitalization of the city and its architecture. Includes the never-before-published Historic Hudson/Rowles Studio Collection of historic photographs, which chronicle the city from the 1850s to the 1920s.

**Shawangunk Place Names: Indian, Dutch, and English Geographical Names of the Shawangunk Mountain Region: Their Origin, Interpretation, and Historical Evolution**

By Marc B. Fried (Gardiner, N.Y.: self-published, 2005).  
187 pp. \$18.95 (hardcover).

The history, geography, and culture of the Shawangunks region as told through its geographical names.

**Different Views In Hudson River School Painting**

By Judith Hansen O'Toole (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 2005). 160 pp. \$35.00 (hardcover).

A brilliant overview of the art of the Hudson River School. The book includes myriad color illustrations in addition to descriptions of the artists and their philosophies.

**The Other New York**

Edited by Joseph S. Tiedemann and Eugene R. Fingerhut (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2005). 246 pp. \$60.00 (hardcover).  
[www.sunypress.edu](http://www.sunypress.edu)

A county-by-county study of the rural areas of New York State during the American Revolution. The book also provides an in-depth look at the social conditions in each county prior to the war and examines the effects the conflict had afterward.

**Civil War Women: Their Roles and Legacies**

By Trish Chambers (Bloomington, I.N.: Author House, 2005)  
113pp. \$12.95 (paperback) [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com)

A two-part book which offers insight into the roles that women played both socially and economically during the Civil War. The first part describes their contributions and talks about the changing roles of women when the men were away. The second portion of the book offers 50 profiles of women who made an impact in that time period.

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# The Hudson River Valley Institute

The Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College is the academic arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. Its mission is to study and to promote the Hudson River Valley and to provide educational resources for heritage tourists, scholars, elementary school educators, environmental organizations, the business community, and the general public. Its many projects include publication of the *Hudson River Valley Review* and the management of a dynamic digital library and leading regional portal site.

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