

# THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY REVIEW

*A Journal of Regional Studies*

**MARIST**



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## Call for Essays

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

## Submission of Essays and Other Materials

HRVR prefers that essays and other written materials be submitted as a double-spaced manuscript, generally no more than thirty pages long with endnotes, as an electronic file in Microsoft Word, Rich Text format (.rtf), or a compatible file type. Submissions should be sent to [HRVI@Marist.edu](mailto:HRVI@Marist.edu).

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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*.

## From the Editors

As editors of a journal of regional history, one of our greatest privileges is to discover and promote relatively unknown characters of historic significance. So it is with great pleasure that we introduce Tappan-born artist John Quidor and his little-known late works. The balance of this issue features articles adapted from *The Worlds of Andrew Jackson Downing: A Bicentennial Celebration*, hosted by The Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College on October 25, 2015. These articles by recognized authorities on Downing and his legacy begin with the nineteenth-century Newburgh context into which America's first great landscape designer was born and conclude with 200 years of perspective on what he accomplished and inspired. We want to recognize David Schuyler, our 2015 Barnabas McHenry Scholar in Residence, for his expertise on the subject and his great efforts in assembling such a distinguished gathering of scholars.

In closing, we're delighted to acknowledge the members of our Editorial Board, who make it possible for us to publish this journal. With this issue we extend our gratitude to departing members Kim Bridgford of West Chester University and Sarah Olson of the National Park Service and welcome Thomas Chambers, Professor of History, Niagara University.



*On the cover:*  
John Quidor, *The Return of Rip Van Winkle* (1849). Oil on canvas.  
National Gallery of Art. 39 3/4" x 49 13/16"

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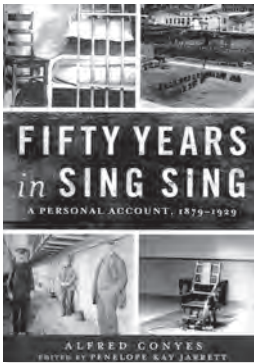
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# Book Reviews



*Fifty Years in Sing Sing: A Personal Account, 1879-1929*, Alfred Conyes, ed. Penelope Kay Jarrett. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015) 200 pp.

“Guards,” Ted Conover writes in the Foreword to *Fifty Years in Sing Sing*, “know the world of prison intimately, yet few have written books” (xi). Conover’s observation is quite correct. This makes the narrative of Alfred Conyes, who served as a guard at Sing Sing for fifty years, all the more worthwhile because it offers the reader a window into the workings of the prison. Reflecting on the changes that occurred in Sing Sing during his tenure, Conyes writes, “I

have seen many changes in prison administration and discipline. It is clear that modern methods are far more effective than those used in the era of the striped suits, ball and chain, lock-step, and physical torture” (xxiii). Although Conyes wrote his narrative in 1930, it was never published and remained in manuscript form until discovered by Penelope Kay Jarrett among her mother’s effects. Jarrett recognized the value of Conyes’ account and published it, along with some notes and a series of interesting images, in an accessible and affordable volume.

This account is a valuable primary source for several reasons. For one, as previously mentioned, it is one of the few written by a prison guard. Conyes was not a dissatisfied dilettante who only lasted a couple of months, but rather a grizzled veteran of fifty years. In addition, the very fact that Conyes served such a long time renders his account all the more useful because he witnessed important transformations in how prisons were administered and in how prisoners were supposed to be punished and rehabilitated. Finally, Conyes’ account blends the history of Sing Sing and the time he spent within its walls with his ruminations on prisons, prisoners, rehabilitation, and correction. He writes, “Prisons are not only places for punishment, but also for correction and training,” and “the main object of prisons is to make law-abiding men out of those who have previously broken the statutes. The task is not easy, but neither is it hopeless” (xxv). At times, Conyes seems to fluctuate between despondency and hopelessness. Thus, his account not only offers a detailed discussion of how a prison functioned, but also how prisons could impact the people who served as guards and administrators.

Conyes opens with a humorous account of how he had to “break in” to the prison. In other words, in a pre-civil service reform era, Conyes had to enlist the aid of several politicians to secure a patronage job as a prison guard. Before serving in Sing Sing, he worked for several years at Clinton Prison in upstate New York. Conyes admired the warden, but disliked Clinton, writing, “to this day, the worst convicts are sent to



Clinton. When a man shows signs of rebellion, all we have to do is mention sending him to Clinton. That is enough, for the men fear Clinton Prison more than anything else” (9). The reader cannot help but be stunned by Conyes’ terrifying description of Clinton. “We had to be stern, and at time, cruel,” he writes; “back then the main purpose of punishment was to break the men down physically and mentally. Many were unable to stand prison life and either went mad or committed suicide” (11). Conyes describes a world of terrible food (“how human beings could eat such stuff and live had remained a mystery to me” [11]); hard labor; extremely small cells (“the smallest area in which men have ever been imprisoned in this country” [12]); lack of indoor plumbing; and overcrowding. Conyes also discussed the ghastly (his word) punishments inflicted on prisoners. He concludes that the “horrific tales” of prison life he heard as a civilian “were not exaggerated in the slightest” (11).

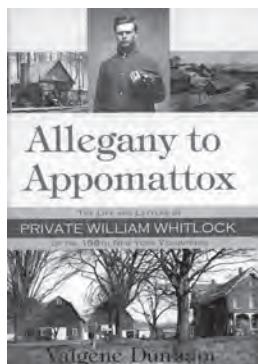
After two years at Clinton, Conyes made arrangements to transfer to Sing Sing. While he wanted to be nearer to his parents, he also admired the fact that “Sing Sing was considered the model penal institution” (18-19). Important to note is the fact that Conyes is not writing a sensationalistic “tell-all” account from the perspective of a disgruntled employee. Rather, he writes as a “company man” and often goes out of his way to praise the prison and its administrators. Sing Sing, writes Conyes, “is a model twentieth-century penal institution which takes the very dregs of society, purging and refining them with the result that it advances, rather than retards, the upward movement of humanity” (21). The daily lives of prisoners, while not extravagant, were certainly better than at Clinton. As one might imagine in a story about prisons, Conyes does not fail to discuss both successful and unsuccessful escape attempts. No doubt there are gaps and omissions in his account, but Conyes tells a series of fascinating stories about the prison, the people, and the travails and challenges of his job. At one point, he was in charge of the stone yard and the convict laborers declared they were on strike because they did not get enough food. Despite sympathizing with their point, Conyes ordered them back to work. When some of the men returned to work and others refused, a melee ensued. Conyes waded in with his baton and, in his words “it was a hot time for a few minutes” (56). Conyes later spoke to the stone contractor and induced him to pay the prisoners extra for overtime work. Afterwards, the prisoners thanked Conyes because they assumed he kept them from killing each other. It is hard not to be disappointed about Conyes’ spare language. How, after all, did one guard with a baton face down several dozen men armed with picks?

Conyes devotes much of his narrative to discussing capital punishment and witnessing people put to death. During his tenure at Sing Sing, New York abolished death by hanging in favor of electrocution. Conyes concludes that “capital punishment has been and, no doubt, will always be a source of the keenest argument” (74), but he argues that “the chair has set very little example because of the provision in the law that all executions must be practically private. One rarely even sees the chair until he is to be executed in it. The greatest majority of the people know nothing about it, and

because of that fact, little do they care” (75). Conyes also reveals the part he played in the execution of Martha M. Place, “the first woman in the world to die by the electric current” (109), whom he escorted to the chair. Conyes concludes ambiguously: While he asserts that “it has been my privilege to bear my share for over half a century in a procession of betterment, a march often halting and always difficult, but nevertheless, constantly upward year by year from the depths of a cold, cruel, and bloody barbarism” (164), he also admits he would not want to repeat his career as a prison guard, if given the choice.

Conyes is a fascinating figure. Anyone reading his account will come away with the sense that he was, by and large, a humane guard. Still, there were moments when his responses to prisoners seemed out of proportion to their offense. In addition, despite personal disinclination, Conyes nevertheless had to follow the rules and harshly discipline prisoners. The few times Conyes mentions African-American prisoners he has a tendency to employ dialect, but, on the whole, he does not seem to be interested in offering any sustained discussion of race or ethnicity. Conyes indicts public schools and social agencies for failing “to train our youth for adequate vocations” (162), and he considers this the true basis for delinquency and crime. It would have been nice to see some of these points framed within the historiography. It is also important to note that there are gaps in this account; it should not be regarded as a “tell-all” about the time Conyes spent in Sing Sing or even a complete picture of life in the prison. Conyes wrote about the areas he knew best, and even then he could not cover the totality of a fifty-year career. However, despite certain flaws and limitations, this is a useful and interesting book that will certainly appeal to anyone interested in the history of prisons, prison reform, and New York history more generally.

*Evan C. Rothera, The Pennsylvania State University*



***Allegany to Appomattox: The Life and Letters of Private William Whitlock of the 188<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteers***, Valgene Dunham, foreword by Bill Potter. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2013) 254 pp.

In 1978 the great-great-grandson of a Union veteran was exploring an old family farmhouse outside Allegany, in western New York, when he struck gold. He came upon thirty-nine letters by his forebear, Private William Whitlock, composed in late 1864 and early 1865 during his time as a member of the 188<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteers (xvii). Another of Whitlock’s great-great-grandsons, Valgene Dunham, Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Coastal Carolina University, has undertaken to contextualize and interpret this

valuable source in his first historical monograph, *Allegany to Appomattox*. A molecular biologist by trade, Dr. Dunham seeks to “tell the story of a thirty-five-year-old farmer-lumberman, husband, and father of four children” who enlisted in September 1864 and was killed the following February at the Battle of Hatcher’s Run, Virginia, “as a ‘travelogue’ so that the reader may see what Will saw or could have seen during his service to the country” (xviii).

In his brief but elegant foreword, Bill Potter of the American History Guild identifies one of Dunham’s key contributions: “He senses the disruption of the timeless rhythms of the agrarian life by the call to war to preserve the Union” (xvi). Indeed, this is a strength of the book: approaching the war through Whitlock’s letters reveals his intense, enduring interest in events back on the farm, concern over the well-being of his wife Lide and their family, and an understandable urgency to receive frequent updates from home (26). His letters provide insight into the nation’s transportation network (38) as well as life in the trenches, which Dunham aptly summarizes as “an ever-swinging pendulum between sheer boredom and sheer terror” (69). There is a sweetness in these letters—a charm in the misspellings and the mundane concerns of the writer, both revealing the humanity that can be forgotten when studying a war in which the fate of the union, the meaning of liberty, and the liberation of nearly four million slaves were at stake.

While this book will be of definite interest for Civil War specialists and hobbyists, it is not recommended for students for several reasons. A minor but persistent problem is confusing notations: sometimes embedded citations, sometimes footnotes—sometimes both on one page.

A more serious reservation relates to the book’s intense interpretive favoritism toward the very forces its main subject volunteered to fight. Dunham is candid on this point: “My life in the southern United States for more than a quarter of a century has influenced discussions that include both the Union and the Confederate sides of the conflict. Contextual information . . . certainly reflect my ‘southern exposure’” (xviii). Fair enough, but there are moments when the reader is left to question whether this “exposure” infected Dunham’s analysis. This includes consideration of the armies themselves: Union soldiers are portrayed as obscene, gambling drunkards with a penchant for prostitutes whose officers were either bloodthirsty or incompetent (e.g.: 124-126, 132-133); meanwhile, the Confederates are consistently portrayed as romantic heroes in the “Lost Cause” mold whose behavior was more dignified since “Southerners of the 1860s were church oriented in most aspects of their lives” (134). That particular conclusion seems to ignore the power of the Second Great Awakening in the North, including among those most appalled by antebellum Southern Society, perhaps those especially in upstate New York. Indeed, the antebellum history provided for context is at times troubling, especially in chapter two, where the Old South and the formation of the Confederacy are given nearly uncritical, almost celebratory treatment. This is

partially a reflection of secondary sources. While there is ample use of James McPherson and a passing reference to the work of David Donald, many of the classic and contemporary works on the antebellum period and the Civil War are neglected—no Blight, Craven, Faust, Fehrenbacher, Foner, Potter, or even Doris Kearns Goodwin, to name a few. In their place, a commendably wide reading of lesser-known works and a surfeit of internet sources—some valuable, some less so.

Despite some deficiencies, Dr. Dunham's work will be useful for Civil War enthusiasts, and his presentation of these letters is a valuable contribution to our understanding of soldiers' lives during the conflict. Indeed, this book and the letters from which it draws offer valuable insights from the unique perspective of a mature, family-oriented Northern volunteer whose priorities within the theater of battle very humanly reflect his particular world view: "Lide no one wants them to give up eny worse than I do for I tel you I want to come home and enjoy peace and quiet once more. but I shal have to wate and se what time will bring forth. if I had no family I could get along very well but Lide there is no place like home" (206).

*Robert Chiles, University of Maryland*



***Saratoga Springs: A Centennial History*,  
Field Horne, editor in chief.  
(Kiskatom Publishing, 2015). 404 pp.**

Saratoga Springs is both a renowned destination and an enduring community. The city is both special, in its identity as a resort since the turn of the nineteenth century, and typical, in experiencing the problems of urban centers, small and large, during the twentieth. Field Horne as editor in chief and a team of twenty-five expert authors produced *Saratoga Springs: A Centennial History* on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the city's incorporation. This book succeeds both as a local history and as an examination of some larger themes and issues in American urban life.

*Saratoga Springs* is clearly and logically organized. Nine chapters tell "The Saratoga Story" chronologically, from its origins as a mineral springs resort to the "modern" era of flawed urban renewal and community re-invention. Following chapters discuss particular topics—people, economy, community, schools and colleges, and the "place" itself (including village and city government). Most of the stories are brought up to the present, unlike so many other local histories. Chapters are generally concise, yet enhanced with personal observations or recollections. Archival records produced important new information (for example about land development and public schools) not available in published sources.

As in any collaborative work, some topics are slighted—was no author found? The omissions include banking and public safety during the twentieth century, also medical and hospital care in all periods, except for the remarkable story of how women founded the Saratoga Springs hospital. Offsetting such omissions are strong chapters on women “at home” and “at work,” and on Saratoga’s African-American and Jewish communities.

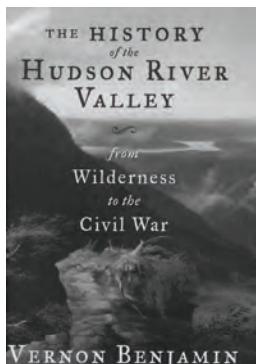
Despite its numerous authors, the book has unifying themes, always linked to the history of the city. Among them are the therapeutic allure of mineral waters; the glamor and transience of horse racing; the political tensions between vice (especially gambling interests) and virtue (civic pride and prestige); and the critical advantages of new transportation facilities (the railroads of the 1830s, the Northway of the 1960s). A major theme in the early twentieth century is the long decline of the hotel industry (the infrastructure was always overbuilt). That is followed by the remarkable stories of a revived city center and the transformation of the local economy in the late twentieth century into a year-round resort and cultural and educational center. The result is a new era of gentrification that is making housing in Saratoga Springs unaffordable for many long-time residents.

As this book tells it, the most successful promoters of Saratoga Springs have been land developers and resort proprietors in the nineteenth century, and civic leaders in the twentieth. Local government officials are less prominent and partisan politics is largely absent in the story as presented. The effectiveness of the city’s unusual commission form of government is not assessed. However, local government’s management of complex problems is analyzed revealingly in chapters on school consolidation in the 1950s and 1960s, and on the associated movements of urban renewal and historic preservation from the 1940s to the present.

*Saratoga Springs: A Centennial History* is capably edited and beautifully produced. Typographical and grammatical errors are practically non-existent. The notes, bibliography, and index complement the text. The book is elegantly designed in ample quarto format. It has superior illustrations and ten excellent maps by Martha Costello. The book prominently acknowledges the people and organizations whose support made its publication possible.

This excellent community history will of course interest Saratoga Springs residents. Substantial parts of it also will instruct those who are concerned about the past and future of American resorts and of smaller cities of the Hudson Valley and far beyond.

*James D. Folts, New York State Archives*



*The History of the Hudson River Valley: From the Civil War to Modern Times*, Vernon Benjamin. (New York: The Overlook Press, 2016) 625 pp.

This lengthy book covers a plethora of information and provides the reader with an easily readable overview of the Hudson River Valley from the Civil War era to the present. Vernon Benjamin defines the region of study as between various mountain ranges on the eastern and western edges of the river between Lake George and the Narrows. This incredibly diverse area includes cities, towns, suburbs, farmland, country estates, factories, docks, hills, dells, lakes, reservoirs and streams. The book's ambitious accomplishment is to incorporate so much information in a single volume, and with a fast-paced writing style. Its emphasis is largely cultural, with significant attention paid to artistic movements and important figures in American life. Key sites, events and trends are covered. The author tends to favor people of power, influence, and money, however, and we learn relatively little about the ordinary people of the Hudson River Valley, whether farmers, workers, middle-class suburbanites, immigrants, or ethnic groups. Benjamin has written an impressive work of historical synthesis yet presents only a partial history of the region.

The author divides the book into six roughly chronological sections, each with a witty heading meant to evoke the era under discussion and useful epigraphs atop each of the forty-six chapters. "The Age of Sheen" discusses Gilded Age developments, especially the construction of robber baron estates along the river. Other than an initial overview of agricultural production in the immediate postwar period, this section is really about the rich and famous. Institutional histories of regional colleges are included, as is the political rise of Theodore Roosevelt and transportation via steamboat and railroad. Readers learn very little about the industrial revolution or the environmental and human costs of factory production in this era.

Section II, "Twilight of the Gods," does a better job addressing the extractive industries—lumber, stone, and sand—that helped the valley to thrive during the late-nineteenth century. Sections on the development of reservoirs and municipal water supplies are particularly noteworthy, even if they occupy many more pages than does the discussion of industrial production in places such as Troy. (The important arsenal at Watervliet merits scant mention.) Politics and the social costs of World War I round out the section.

"Everything Gone Crazy" constitutes the book's third section and begins with a thorough discussion of naturalist John Burroughs, who also receives attention in several other parts of the book. Benjamin rightly connects transportation changes with the rise of tourism, and posits that increased interest in the region led to environmentalism and a flowering of intellectual movements based in the Hudson River Valley, such as

those influenced by meetings at Troutbeck. The artists' retreat at Yaddo keeps popping up in the book and may be given more attention than it deserves in terms of historical impact. Once again the author reminds us of the many colleges in the Hudson River Valley and discusses their role in reform movements.

Section IV, "The Age of Roosevelt," devotes almost all of its pages to the Delano and Roosevelt families and their two most famous members, Eleanor and Franklin. Certainly their influence on the region and nation is significant, but a more critical appraisal of their actions might be in order. This section seems to follow the "great man" theory of history and spends relatively little time discussing how the Great Depression affected valley residents other than the Roosevelts and their social whirl. Lowell Thomas is mentioned, but not factory workers in any of the dozens of river towns or hardscrabble farmers from the hills. Chapter 30, on World War II, does a fine job chronicling the home front and the role ordinary residents played in defeating fascism.

"The Postwar Years," Section V, finally brings readers to the broader social and economic changes that were shaping the valley. New suburban developments and highways coupled with massive commercial and industrial developments resulted in an economic boom. Relevant statistics and perceptive discussion of New York State's development of the Thruway make this among the book's best sections. Likewise, discussion of postwar radicalism, modern feminism, and "the heritage revolution" offer insightful discussions of important cultural developments in the Hudson River Valley.

Section VI is titled "Modern Times" and brings the book to its close. Nelson Rockefeller receives star treatment and is seen as the major force in late twentieth-century New York. This is a reasonable argument, but privileges a single individual over the broader forces of social and economic change that shaped the era. Woodstock, both the event and the artistic vibe around the village, seem to rise from the landscape rather than being part of radical transformations in American society. On page 485 the history of African-Americans finally merits extended treatment, although more pages are devoted to the career of Mike Tyson and the sensational Tawana Brawley episode than more mundane matters such as mass incarceration or the decline of factory work that drew the postwar wave of African-Americans to the valley in the first place. A more complex discussion of race in modern America would be useful, especially regarding the increasingly black and brown cities such as Albany and Poughkeepsie in contrast with the almost wholly white rural parts of the Hudson River Valley. Important events leading to the modern environmental movement, like Storm King and the *Clearwater*, appear in this section alongside the less important career of public radio impresario Alan Chartock. In the section's closing chapters Benjamin makes a compelling argument that by the early twenty-first century the Hudson River Valley had come to appreciate its natural setting and its residents became strong advocates of environmental protection, especially after the discovery of PCBs in the river. There are of course those who opposed the cleanup and favored economic development, yet their voices are largely absent from this section. Again, the working class, small city,

and rural residents of the valley receive less attention than wealthier citizens with access to power and the media. The difference in perspective between Fort Edward and Peekskill is dramatic, and the author might have done a better job of representing these viewpoints throughout the book.

The book's conclusion—that “an ‘ecosystem-based approach’” and more regional planning with an emphasis on communities and the environment have come to pervade the valley—is a lovely sentiment but not one that emerges from the evidence presented or the reality of the Hudson River Valley, especially its northern and upcountry stretches. The book's basic flaw is that Benjamin presents a prodigious amount of research yet does relatively little to place the material in the broader context of historiographical trends and larger societal developments. Is the region distinctive or representative of the Northeast or the United States as a whole? Does what happened here matter in California or Oklahoma? Thematically, the book's overarching argument lacks clarity. The concept of *keekuten*, Dutch for peepholes that served as windows of opportunity in the valley, appears quite frequently (p. 4, *passim*). It might serve as an interesting theoretical framework but is not fully developed.

Benjamin also makes several interpretive lapses or perhaps omissions. For instance, on p. 390 he writes: “*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) was a defining moment in the Eisenhower decade, precipitating the rapid integration of schools and changes in educational thinking.” This gross oversimplification ignores shelves of academic research demonstrating that *Brown* was largely symbolic and required decades of vigorous and persistent federal engagement, even the use of force, to become reality. School integration is far from complete in 2017. The author admits in his Preface that he relies on “a vast body of secondary literature” (xi) but could do a better job of integrating that material into his argument.

Stylistically, this book is a pleasant read. In several sections Benjamin employs an imaginative and gifted writing style that moves the narrative along. He effectively dramatizes the scenes and has an eye for the telling detail. Too many of those details appear, perhaps, and at times the book reads as if every tidbit of research has been included. Some of the transitions are incredibly rough and strain the reader's ability to connect the topic of one paragraph to another:

Novelist Floyd Dell saw the changed sexual proclivities of the youth as emblematic of man's evolution as a species.

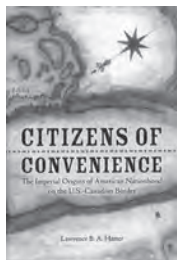
The growth of tourism that accompanied and interest in the Valley and the Catskills was a direct result of improvements in transportation. (238)

Yet even with these critiques, I found the book to be worthwhile reading and an important contribution to our understanding of the Hudson River Valley. The sheer volume of information, compiled in one place, makes this book an essential addition to any library—personal or institutional—that values the history of the Hudson River Valley.

Thomas A. Chambers, *Niagara University*



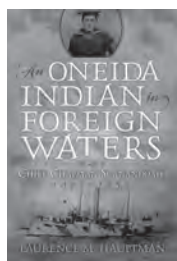
# New & Noteworthy Books



## **Citizens of Convenience: The Imperial Origins of American Nationhood on the U.S.-Canadian Border**

By Lawrence B.A. Hatter (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2016) 288 pp. \$39.50 (hardcover)  
[www.upress.virginia.edu](http://www.upress.virginia.edu)

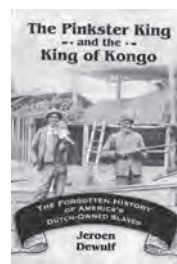
For the United States, the forty-year period immediately following the conclusion of the American Revolution was one of establishing identity and codifying operations. Nowhere was this truer or more necessary than along the northern border of the new nation, particularly among the Canadian merchants and traders, imperial agents, and policy-makers who occupied this area. Using the Treaty of Paris (1783), Jay Treaty (1794), and Treaty of Ghent (1814) as key components of transition, Hatter skillfully articulates the process of formalizing the United States as a separate nation from its former colonizer, Great Britain.



## **The Oneida Indian in Foreign Waters: The Life of Chief Chapman Scanandoah, 1870-1953**

By Laurence M. Hauptman (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2016) 232 pp. \$24.95 (softcover)  
[www.syracuseuniversitypress.syr.edu](http://www.syracuseuniversitypress.syr.edu)

The accomplishments of Chief Chapman Scanandoah demonstrate the ability of one person to make significant and long-lasting contributions through determination and perseverance. Formally educated and a decorated Navy veteran, Scanandoah influenced the fields of agronomy and mechanics, among others, while also making a number of inventions. Hauptman chronicles Scanandoah's key role as an advocate for the preservation of Oneida lands, even as he traveled to and lived in many other places. Complete with photos and a formidable bibliography, this narrative highlights the life of an extraordinary individual.

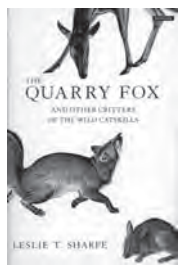


## **The Pinkster King and the King of Kongo: The Forgotten History of America's Dutch-Owned Slaves**

By Jeroen Dewulf (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2017) 320 pp. \$65.00 (hardcover) [www.upress.state.ms.us](http://www.upress.state.ms.us)

The celebration of Pinkster, most often associated with African-American culture in New Amsterdam and later in New York and New Jersey, comes from complicated and often misinterpreted origins. The Pinkster King and the King of Kongo sets out to establish

clarity and certainty about this cultural celebration. Dewulf frames Pinkster from the perspectives of both Dutch and African-American traditions, and creates continuity between the slave culture in New York/New Jersey and elsewhere in the Americas. By doing so, he also achieves a new understanding of the influence of European cultures on enslaved Africans who arrived in North America.

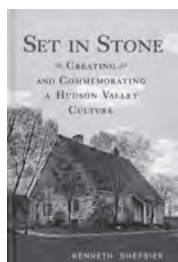


### **The Quarry Fox and Other Critters of the Wild Catskills**

By Leslie T. Sharpe (New York, NY: The Overlook Press, 2017)  
256 pp. \$25.00 (hardcover) [www.overlookpress.com](http://www.overlookpress.com)

The Catskill Mountains serve as a home for a wide variety of animals that occupy the land, water, and sky. In *The Quarry Fox*, Leslie T. Sharpe does more than just identify these inhabitants; she immerses the reader in their environs. Displaying a vast knowledge of the subject and a deep appreciation for the land and her naturalist predecessors, Sharpe brings life to both the seen and often unseen critters that

make up the Catskills, while also conveying the beauty and serenity of the region.

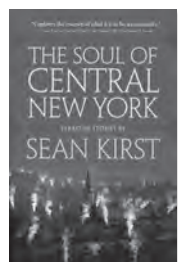


### **Set in Stone: Creating and Commemorating a Hudson Valley Culture**

By Kenneth Shefsiek (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2017)  
314 pp. \$90.00 (hardcover) [www.sunypress.edu](http://www.sunypress.edu)

*Set in Stone* is the story of the original New Paltz settlement, which grappled with emigration, immigration, and the establishing of cultural identity in a complex colonial landscape. As English culture supplanted Dutch, these Walloon settlers struggled to maintain their unique blend of traditions. Shefsiek demonstrates clear command

of this detailed history and presents it in a comprehensive and engaging format.



### **The Soul of Central New York: Syracuse Stories**

By Sean Kirst (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2016)  
352 pp. \$29.95 (softcover) [www.syracuseuniversitypress.syr.edu](http://www.syracuseuniversitypress.syr.edu)

In many ways, the residents of Syracuse exemplify what it means to be a part of “everyday America.” In this collection of twenty-five years’ worth of columns written for *The Syracuse Post-Standard*, Kirst recounts the extraordinary events and accomplishments that make the city and its residents remarkable. Divided into sections by characteristics such as “courage” and “loyalty,” the essays cover

everything from reunited friends and military legacies to community relations—and really does display the soul of this central New York city.

*Andrew Villani, Marist College*

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