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THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY REVIEW

A Journal of Regional Studies

MARIST



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From the Editors

We are a “journal of regional studies,” so we should be familiar with the concept of “place”—in our case, the Hudson River Valley. But sometimes even we are surprised about how great an influence this region has had, both on the surrounding world and on its own residents. This issue highlights the interplay between “our place” and people from colonial times to the present.

It also answers some intriguing questions. For example, who developed the British strategy during the American Revolution, and how was that strategy implemented by field officers and affected by the “field” itself? Or how has a legendary commander profoundly impacted the U.S. Military Academy despite never setting foot on its grounds?

While both sides in the Revolution coveted the Hudson River Valley, at times it stood in their way, as when the French and American armies marched from Rhode Island to Yorktown. Their epic journey contributed immensely to America’s independence, so why did it take an equally epic effort to have the federal government establish the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route? Some fifty years after the Revolution, one British citizen relied on the New World to forge his own independence from the Old. Today, a scholarly debate rages as to how British or American Thomas Cole may have been. Our author maintains that the artist’s small-town life in Catskill is the key to understanding his identity. Community and identity also are essential to the history of the Rhinebeck Fire Department, which has maintained a reputation for selfless service and strong fraternal ties since its founding in 1834.

We hope this issue will inspire you to think about how we continue to inform and to be formed by the places we call home.



On the cover:

Detail of View on the Catskill – Early Autumn, Thomas Cole, 1836-37.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift in Memory of Jonathan Sturges by his children, 1895: 95.13.3

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Answering the Call: The Rhinebeck Fire Company and the FASNY Museum

Elijah Bender



Fireman's certificate surrounded by firefighting scenes. At the top, a fireman hands a rescued child back to its mother; at the bottom, a large firefighting crew battles a blaze in city row buildings.

New York: Published by Currier & Ives, c.1877.
Library of Congress

Fear of fire was a great concern in early America. Bucket brigades, night watches, and ordinance regulations were established early in the seventeenth century in burgeoning urban hubs such as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Organized volunteer companies were not as prevalent as unorganized bucket brigades comprised of neighbors and community watches. In these early years, insurance companies were created, most notably by Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia in 1752. Subscribers paid these companies, with the proceeds utilized for the purchase and maintenance of equipment. Each company employed its own fire brigade and provided marks to be affixed on dwellings and businesses for protection. Those who went without these fire shields were at the mercy of the neighborhood and were not guaranteed fire protection until the introduction of volunteer companies.

Eventually, these volunteer companies would take on the aura of a fraternal order, with

massive participation from men in the community, even offering death benefits for families and a social outlet for members. Many of these fraternal themes were advanced by the Victorian age and by printmakers like Currier & Ives, who created a series of lithographs pertaining to the volunteer firefighter.

The Village of Rhinebeck provides a typical case study of the evolution of fire companies in small-town America, while the FASNY Museum of Firefighting, located in Hudson, offers ample illustration of the technologies used in firefighting. In July 1834, the Rhinebeck

Fire Department was organized through “Ordinance Rules by the Village of Rhinebeck By-Laws in appointing a Fire Company.” With village incorporation, a rudimentary fire brigade was established consisting of an eighteen-man crew with fifteen regular men and three fire wardens. The group of fifteen was broken down into positions of captain, two fire engineers, four managers of the hooks and ladders, and eight persons “to take charge of property endangered by fires.”¹ Firemen would be distinguished at the scene by a white handkerchief tied around their hats.

In the formative years of the fire company, bucket brigades were the only form of strategy against the outbreak of fire. Bucket requirements were legislated for households and businesses and were proportional to the size of the building and number of fireplaces. Businesses with greater likelihood of fire, such as brew houses, distilleries, and bake shops, were required to secure additional buckets, and feature them conspicuously. Each bucket was mandated to contain two and a half gallons of water. They often were elaborately decorated with the name of the owner, a symbol, and the year. On display at the Fireman’s Museum is a horse-drawn bucket wagon originally from Jamaica, Long Island, dating to about 1840. This primitive vehicle is an example of the early methods of firefighting.



Bucket carriage of unknown make, c.1860, used by Jamaica, Long Island, Continental Bucket Company #1, carries 50 tarred canvas buckets, all of which are inscribed “Continental Company.”

The Firemen’s Association of the State of New York,
American Firefighting Museum

During this early stage of organized fire protection in Rhinebeck, a hand pumper was acquired and at least two others were purchased prior to 1859. On October 25, 1834, the taxable inhabitants of Rhinebeck voted to obtain \$600 through assessment for the purchase of a fire engine.² Unfortunately, there is no information as to the make or model purchased. These engines were likely large hose carts with hooks for numerous buckets as shown in an old picture of the “engine” of Relief No. 1. By June 1845, the company known as “Engine No. 6” of Rhinebeck transferred possession and use of that engine to “Company No. 2”

and likely disbanded. In the minutes for the following month, the board approved an expenditure of fifteen dollars to paint the engine and procure hose for it.³ This early fire brigade was known as the “Rhinebeck Flatts Fire Company” as evidenced by a certificate of 1838 issued to Edward Smith as a duly-elected member. Engine and hose companies were employed in extinguishing fires while hook and ladder companies usually served to ventilate structures and to perform search and rescue operations.

1 *Ordinance Rules by the Village of Rhinebeck in Appointing a Fire Company*, July 7, 1834.

2 *Rhinebeck Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes*, October 25, 1834.

3 *Rhinebeck Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes*, June 6, 1845.



Fire Engine, Relief Ladder, No. 1, 1898,
Rhinebeck Historical Society,
courtesy of the Consortium of Rhinebeck History

Technology advanced, and handtubs began to emerge as an effective means of fighting fire. Hand-pumped fire engines have long bars, running parallel to the body, that operate a pump. When activated, these pumping arms operate pistons in the engine that move water from the tub into a pressure chamber. The earliest form of these pumps required bucket brigades to feed water into a chamber reservoir, which

then sprayed water through a simple, hand-operated piston pump. These units were likely the earliest purchased by the Village of Rhinebeck. By the mid-nineteenth century more sophisticated pumps were able to draft water from sources like cisterns and streams, eliminating the need for a bucket brigade to operate it. Hose carts provided a system of storing lengths of hose that would be attached to the handtub for drafting water. These carts were often drawn by hand, along with the handtub, to the scene of a fire.

In 1859, the Village of Rhinebeck acquired a handtub from the Button Fire Engine Company that they named “Pocahontas,” and formed a fire company under the name “Pocahontas Engine Co. No. 2” to operate and maintain the pumper for fire protection. The design of Pocahontas is referred to as “piano-box” style, with the wood portion constructed of cherry and mahogany. The pumper has two ten-inch pistons and cylinders along with four clapper valves and a buffer dome, most of which are copper, brass, and bronze.⁴

Research into the minutes of the Pocahontas Engine Co. No. 2 reveals a conscientious group of men who sought to maintain their firehouse and keep the new apparatus in perfect order. Fines were imposed on members who failed to report to fire calls, attend meetings, or maintain equipment. At a monthly meeting held on September 17, 1860, a motion was carried “that on and after the next meeting night, a fine of 10 cents, be imposed on members for non-attendance at the roll call,”⁵



Pocahontas Fire Engine in front of Firemans Hall,
West Market Street, Rhinebeck Historical Society,
courtesy of the Consortium of Rhinebeck History

4 Companies like the American Fire Engine Company of Elmira, N.Y., and the Button and Blake Company of Waterford, N.Y., began manufacturing these fire apparatuses. Button started in Waterford in 1831 as John F. Rogers & Co., acknowledged as the founding of the great American LaFrance Company. In 1834 it was known as Wm. Platt & Co. The plant was acquired in 1841 by Lysander Button and went through several more name changes: Button & Blake (1858), Button Engine Works (1865), L. Button & Son (1868), and Button Fire Engine Co. (1882). In 1892, the company was merged with three other fire equipment makers (Ahrens, Silsby, Clapp & Jones) to form the American Fire Engine Company, which later merged with the LaFrance company.

5 *Minute Book of the Pocahontas Engine Company No. 2*, September 17, 1860.

suggesting a regimental commitment to the department and to the duties of early fire prevention. Committees were established to “clean the machine” and “see that firehouse is in strict order.” Social engagement and interaction with neighboring departments is evident, as are festivities within Rhinebeck, such as balls and parades.

Recruitment and applications were handled through a special committee comprised of three men. From the organization’s early days, a strong involvement by the Rhinebeck Village Board of Trustees suggests that the fire department remained under control of the village, which provided supplies and funds. Financing came through budgeted referendums by the village board, voted on each year by the village’s taxable freeholders. If necessary, special referendums were called to levy additional funds.

Pocahontas Engine Co. No. 2 was created after the May 30, 1859, village board meeting, when Smith Quick was called to create a fire department for the purchase of the new Button and Blake handtub. Shortly thereafter, the election of officers was held, including a chief foreman, first and second foremen, secretary, treasurer, and chief engineer.⁶ A steward was elected to provide refreshments and keep up the meeting room. The early engine house is believed to have been a frame building located on Center Street. In the early organizational meetings of the company, one committee was adopted to draft by-laws and another (on June 17, 1859) to “procure hats and belts.” These early minutes reflect practicality and regulation in fashioning a fire company. Cloth hose frequently had to be replaced for damage and long duration of use and were approved expenses paid for by the village.⁷

The Rhinebeck community felt the impact of national events when, in April 1861, the Civil War took volunteers off the fire roster as they volunteered to serve in the Union Army. Village Trustee William Van Wagenen made a motion on March 13, 1862, that “the names of firemen who volunteered for the army be placed on the record.”⁸ On the back cover of the minute book for Pocahontas Engine Co. No. 2 is scrawled “Cal Rikert March 31 62, J. Van Etten 10 June 1862, J. O’Keese 21 July 62, Frank Rikert 31 March 63.” It seems a reasonable guess that these dates refer to members’ enlistment. It is believed that all of these men were members of Company C, 128th Regiment, of which Francis S. Keese was captain. All survived the war and many returned to resume commercial business in Rhinebeck. They all returned to the fire department.

Pocahontas and the early group of firemen were tested at 2 a.m. on May 8, 1864, when a large fire broke out at the building of Stephen DuBois on South Street and the Post Road, and spread north to engulf buildings on the south side of East Market Street. Water was easily provided through the town pump located at the intersection of East Market Street and the Post Road. An account of the scene recorded in the minute book details that mutual aid was received in fighting the fire from the Lackawanna Engine Company

6 *Ibid.*, May 30, 1859.

7 *Ibid.*, June 17, 1859

8 *Ibid.*, March 18, 1862.

Number One of the Rondout by 5:30 a.m. The entry also provides an inventory of the dwellings and businesses damaged and the time—5:30 that evening—that the men “put out and retired to their house.”

Mobilization to rebuild the partially burned village is evident in entries following the fire. At its May 9 meeting, the village Board of Trustees ordered the printing of twenty-five broadsides to announce a meeting of freeholders and taxable inhabitants to be held at the Rhinebeck Hotel (Beekman Arms) on Saturday, May 14, to “vote upon the question of placing a sufficient amount of money to place the fire department in condition to extinguish fires breaking out in the village.” The objective was to purchase a new fire engine, alarm bell, hooks and ladders, and hose cart; build two cisterns; and provide 800 feet of hose. These expenses were approved within the month. It was agreed funds would be raised by tax and a loan payable in two installments. As for the purchase of a new engine, the minutes suggest that Pocahontas did not fare well during the May 8 fire. This is evidenced, in part, by a \$2.12 bill approved to a George Buckland to repair the engine.⁹

The early Pocahontas Hose Company was also very much a social fraternity as evidenced by parade participation and invitation. It had a close relationship with neighboring companies, both in Dutchess County and across the river in Kingston and the Rondout. An entry in the minute book for Oct. 8, 1860, reads: “Mr. Smith has appointed a committee to confer with the committee of Kingston Company.”¹⁰ This entry appears to be related to attendance at a parade; plans were agreed upon mutually regarding formations, bands, and travel expenses.

Social relationships within the fire company were balanced with discipline; routine disputes between members were brought to the attention of the village Board of Trustees. On April 21, 1866, Mr. Schryver reported that as assistant engineer he was disobeyed by the foreman of the rescue company at the recent fire. Additionally, at times cleaning of the equipment was not adhered to; in response, the trustees provided a sufficient sum to pay a man to clean the engines.¹¹

Technological advancement greatly impacted the fire service, and hand pumpers largely fell out of fashion by the 1870s. The advent of steam-powered fire engines quickly caught on in both urban and rural settings. Discussions for the purchase of a steamer began shortly after the May 8 fire. The minutes of May 25, 1864, state “the President stated to the Board that many inquiries were made concerning the purchase of a new fire engine. That some were in favor of purchasing a steamer.”¹² At a meeting held on October 12, 1864, it was agreed that no amount of tax should be levied for the purchase of a steam fire engine. Much of this concern centered around the idea that steam engines drew a great

9 *Ibid.*, May 9, 1864.

10 *Ibid.*, October 8, 1860.

11 *Rhinebeck Village Board Minutes*, April 21, 1866.

12 *Ibid.*, May 25, 1864

amount of water and that local waterbodies would not suffice in powering the machine.¹³ By May 10, 1865, \$1,077.50 had been paid to Mr. L. Button of Waterford for repairs to Pocahontas, and talk of purchasing a steam fire engine was suspended.¹⁴

By April 1868, plans were approved to build a new firehouse that would offer more luxurious accommodations. An ornate brick building on West Market Street was constructed ten years after organization of the Pocahontas Engine Company. It was characterized by a projecting cornice, large decorative brackets, and arched apertures with ornate cast iron lintels and sills. It was a fine example of the Bracketed Italianate style, with a belfry tower with brass bell that existed until the twentieth century. This tower served multiple purposes. Nineteenth-century fire hose was woven of cloth; once cleaned, it was hung up in the tower to dry. In addition, the tower held the bell that alerted men to respond.¹⁵ The earlier firehouse probably did not have a bell, as a motion on April 22, 1865, suggests: “motion to pay \$5.00 to the sexton of the first church who rings the church bell in any fire rescinded.”

By September 1871, the village Board of Trustees approved the purchase of a Button & Blake steam fire engine. On October 19, 1871, it agreed to pay \$3,350 to Mr. L. Button for the engine. The remaining \$350 was subsidized by William Sayre “for the principle of naming the steamer.” In acquiring this engine, Rhinebeck followed general trends in transitioning to quality equipment of the latest innovation.

By 1873, a new company was established. It was known as the “William M. Sayre Steamer Company,” after the first secretary (and later general cashier) of the Bank of Rhinebeck. (Interestingly, Sayre resided in Pine Plains throughout his life and was involved in the Rhinebeck area solely for commerce.) Festivities ensued after the apparatus’ purchase and a large group photograph was taken in front of the Rhinebeck Hotel with the steam fire engine centered on display.

Such an investment in the early years of the steam fire engine shows the commitment of the village trustees and populace to fire prevention and control. As the village expanded and equipment developed, Rhinebeck’s taxable inhabitants continued to respond with votes to expand the associated departments and purchase additional equipment, including hose carts, axes, and ladders. The steam engine lasted without repair until August 1896, when it was overhauled by the John McEntee Foundry of the Rondout. A *Rhinebeck Gazette* article noted that the steamer “is in first class shape, the sum of \$600 being necessary to replace the boiler.” At the time of its repair, the steamer had been in service for twenty-five years.¹⁶

Between 1873 and 1875, the Rapid Hose Company was formed to provide ancillary manpower to the Pocahontas Engine Company, Relief Hook and Ladder, and Sayre Steamer Company. This hose company would become the Walter W. Schell Hose Company in

13 *Ibid.*, October 12, 1864.

14 The Button and Blake Company of Waterford first began manufacturing the new and innovative steam fire engines in 1862.

15 *Rhinebeck Village Board Minutes*, April 22, 1865.

16 *Rhinebeck Gazette*, September 14, 1896.

1877. Schell was a trustee of the Rhinebeck Union School and an accomplished attorney. In addition, he served on the village board, board of assessors, and as justice of the peace.¹⁷ According to his 1933 obituary, “Mr. Schell was public spirited and liberal with his time and funds. He was active in firematic affairs and the H.S. Kip Co.. formerly the Schell Hose, bore his name. He conducted an extensive fancy poultry business at one time.” Around 1873, the Associated Fire Companies was created within Rhinebeck, possibly to share services and assist each other at fires.

The Relief Hook and Ladder Company was organized in 1871 and its first officers included James Monfort as captain and Charles E. McCarty as secretary. By 1909, it included forty-six men on its roster and had earned a reputation for “its successful career.”¹⁸ This organization showcased the volunteer fire service as a fraternal organization. Relief Hook and Ladder took possession of the brick firehouse on West Market Street and filled the second-floor meeting room with games and amusements (including a billiard table), as well as superb furnishings. A committee was set up to regulate the playing of games, which seems to have proved profitable for the organization’s social aspects. Minutes of the Relief Hook and Ladder show routine purchases of cigars, goblets, and other fineries for the benefit of the membership as early as 1873.¹⁹ Such purchases highlight the taste and fashions of the Victorian age. Additionally, this company was unique in that it included members from all strata of the local community. Dr. Frank Latson, a prominent member and the company’s captain, was a druggist whose pharmacy was located in the north storefront of the old town hall. He resided in a stately Victorian home (still standing) on the corner of Livingston and Mulberry streets.

The 1880s and ’90s was a transitional era, with constant developments in technology and industrialization. Fire departments were introduced to mechanized vehicles by the turn of the century. While the steam fire engine was still being perfected, chemical wagons began to emerge. The horse-drawn chemical wagon was developed to carry tanks filled with bicarbonate of soda. When activated by mixing with sulfuric acid and water, the resulting chemical was shot at the fire through a small hose. By 1928, more sophisticated mechanized vehicles were purchased for the department, including a Sanford truck.

The Sanford Motor Truck Company of Syracuse first entered the fire apparatus market around 1925; Rhinebeck purchased at least two apparatus from this company. The July 14, 1928, issue of the *Rhinebeck Gazette* reported “the Mayor turned over the contract for the new Sanford Fire Pumper to the clerk to be placed on file.” Built that August, the truck was a 500-gallon-per-minute pumper on a Sanford Chassis with a “waterous model ‘SB’ Rotary Gear Pump,” Buda model DW6 engine, 34" by 7" tires, and a 161" wheel-base. Rear axles were manufactured by Eaton. Rhinebeck again followed trends in the purchase of innovative equipment; Staatsburgh (Dinsmore Hose Company) had purchased

17 Howard Morse. *Historic Old Rhinebeck: Echoes of Two Centuries*. (Rhinebeck, NY: Published by the Author, 1908), 105.

18 Pamphlet printed by the Relief Hook and Ladder Company, 1909.

19 *Minute Book of the Relief Hook and Ladder Company*, August 18, 1873.

similar trucks, as did Clermont, Pine Plains, Kingston, and numerous other neighboring departments. Staatsburg acquired a ladder truck before Rhinebeck, in October 1928, in consideration of the need to protect its many large riverfront mansions. Popularity of Sanford equipment can best be explained by its commitment to innovative technology as well as Sales Representative Charles F. Doty having an office on Albany Avenue in Kingston.²⁰



Fire truck with firemen, 1917-1952. Photo by Virgil Shafer, from the Clifford Gubler Collection at the Museum of Rhinebeck History, courtesy of the Consortium of Rhinebeck History

By January 1930, Rhinebeck purchased the only “quad” unit made by the Sanford Truck Company. It was built on an extended chassis to combine the functions of several pieces of fire apparatus and include pumping capability. It featured a water tank, hose-carrying capabilities, and the ground ladders of a truck company without an aerial device. Rhinebeck’s massive rig came equipped with a 500-gallon-per-minute pump and featured a high mounting of the booster tank and hose reel.²¹ It was rebuilt with new aluminum ladders (replacing wooden

ones) in 1953 by the Zabek Fire Apparatus Company of Palmer, Massachusetts, extending its service life until the early 1970s. It featured an open cab, which exposed drivers and firemen to the elements. Milton Moul, the oldest living member of the department by 1978, recalled a mutual aid call to a fire in Milan when thirty-below-zero temperatures made it impossible for him to drive the open-cab engine. Luckily, he met a friend on the side of the road who provided him with a knitted ski helmet. Moul later fondly recalled the wonderful feeling of gathering with fellow volunteers around the firehouse’s coal stove. The April 4, 1931, issue of the *Rhinebeck Gazette* reflects on the new purchases of equipment:

During the past few years Rhinebeck has taken great steps to provide fire protection for itself. The Hillside Association, which has distinguished itself several times recently, is equipped with new apparatus, the village has purchased a pumper and a hook and ladder truck, the town is in possession of a newly rejuvenated chemical truck, and many of the village firefighters have been trained in the Volunteer Firemen’s Training School at Poughkeepsie. What better protection has any town of the size of Rhinebeck?²²

20 Joseph Raymond, Jr. *Sanford Fire Apparatus: An Illustrated History*. (Middletown, NY: Engine House Press, 1986), 32.

21 *Ibid.*, 61.

22 *Rhinebeck Gazette*, April 4, 1931.

Numerous fires kept the Rhinebeck Fire Department busy in the early twentieth century. One of the more notable disasters was the burning of the Astor breeding stable on the Ferncliff estate, which broke out on April 7, 1912, a week before its owner, John Jacob Astor IV, perished aboard the *Titanic*. The frame building, valued at the time at \$10,000, was a complete loss, as were many items of equestrian paraphernalia.²³ Firemen arrived to find the building's second story fully engulfed, but the groundskeeper, a Mr. Werst, and the estate superintendent, Herbert Pinkham, had successfully evacuated the livestock and a few harnesses. In March 1924, Rhinebeck firemen responded to an alarm at the "Old Bowery House," known as Pultz's Tavern, on East Market Street. The town chemical truck and Pocahontas Hook and Ladder successfully countered the blaze.

By this era, the Reo "Speedwagon" chemical truck and other early fire equipment was inadequate in fire protection as noted in an April 16, 1927, *Rhinebeck Gazette* editorial entitled "Fire Apparatus in Bad Shape." It argued that "Rhinebeck needs adequate protection-and must have it. It is time a moderate priced pumper is purchased and other equipment put in shape."²⁴ By the 1930s, the Sanford ladder truck proved of much use both within the district and in providing mutual aid to neighboring departments that lacked a ladder truck. Other house fires ensued in the late 1930s, some being total losses.²⁵ In 1934, Thomas Geraghty, a fire department member, died in a house fire on Oak Street. His is the only line-of-duty death for the Rhinebeck Fire Department and he is memorialized in a marble plaque erected at the firehouse in 1976.

But the old methods continued to prove successful in rural areas, as seen in the case of the Hiram Cure house fire on Wurtemberg Road. In January 1939, approximately six neighbors gathered with buckets to quell the fire. It was noted in the *Rhinebeck Gazette* that these farmers had put out the blaze before the fire department's arrival. Delayed response would have been affected by the inefficient use of alarm boxes and bell systems to alert members to respond to a call.

By far, the largest fire to afflict Rhinebeck during these years was the burning of the old section of the high school in April 1939. Newspapers report that Clarence Rhynders and Carlton Sipperley discovered the blaze, which began in the boys' lavatory by 6:45 p.m. They summoned the fire department, which responded quickly with three pieces of apparatus. Sipperley, owner of the C.E. Sipperley plumbing firm that regularly serviced the school, was a member of the fire department. He immediately went to the basement and shut off the furnaces and electrical service. Within an hour, the building was fully enveloped, with heavy smoke conditions. Numerous firemen, including John Lattin, Jr., had to be carried out and revived by Dr. Howard Bulkeley, president of the local board of education at the time. Firemen delivered steady streams of water for over five hours, with small intermittent flames continuing. They battled the blaze well into the evening,

²³ *Rhinebeck Gazette*, April 8, 1912.

²⁴ *Rhinebeck Gazette*, April 16, 1927.

²⁵ *Rhinebeck Gazette*, May 20, 1934.

attracting many spectators. In all of the excitement, it was reported that a 1936 Plymouth owned by Deborah Dows, daughter of Tracy Dows, was stolen in front of Schermerhorn's Pharmacy on East Market Street.

The 1940s saw additional fires, mainly consisting of non-commercial buildings, with chimney fires increasingly prevalent. The next biggest fire was at the Morton estate in Rhinecliff in October 1950. Rhinebeck was called to the scene along with six other mutual aid companies to fight the blaze that engulfed the fifty-eight-room Ellerslie mansion, originally the home of former New York Governor and U.S. Vice President Levi Parsons Morton. At the time of the fire, the property was the Cardinal Farley Military Academy, home to 120 cadets. Reportedly, the blaze could be seen from ten miles away. The \$250,000 building was a complete loss. Rhinebeck Fire Department members James Whittaker and David Martinez were victims of smoke inhalation at the scene but were not seriously injured.

The malfunctioning of a new American LeFrance pumper owned by the Rhinecliff Fire Department at this fire led Rhinebeck to purchase an Oren truck in 1953. Incidentally, American LeFrance and Oren had both been priced by the department and village board, and this fire immediately preceded a board meeting to vote on a bid for the new apparatus. By the early 1950s, Rhinebeck's equipment consisted of a 1953 Oren pumper and the 1932 Sanford ladder truck, with the 1928 Sanford pumper traded in for the Oren. The Oren, purchased from the Oren-Roanoke Company of Roanoke, Virginia, was powered by a 216-horsepower Continental engine. It was equipped with a 750-gallon-per-minute Hale pump. The booster tank held 450 gallons.

All this time, Pocahontas remained at the old firehouse on West Market Street but had been mothballed in the back of one of the bays for years and had fallen into disrepair. Occasionally, it was taken out for parades in the 1930s and '40s, but its poor condition is evidenced by black and white pictures of parade processions. In the early 1950s, several of the younger men, including Max Trombini, took an interest in the antique apparatus and sought to restore it to working order. These men were all members of the Relief Hook and Ladder Company, by this time consisting of many younger men who were ambitious to participate in the fire service and appreciated the historical significance of the associated fire companies that preceded them. They made plans to ready Pocahontas to participate in a pumping competition at the Eastern States Exposition in Springfield, Massachusetts, in September 1953. They competed against twenty-six other departments in pumping for an allotted ten-minute interval.

Plans for Pocahontas' full restoration were made and the machine was taken to the Gazen and Janow blacksmith shop on North Parsonage Street for repairs to the arms and other metalwork, consisting of new handles, tightening the water box, and replacing brass where necessary. New wheels were fabricated out of hemlock by a wheelwright in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley. Carmine Tortorella, also a Relief Hook and Ladder member, did some repairs on Pocahontas to ready it for competition, while Gordon Ross of Ross Welding Service in Rhinebeck fabricated a tip for the nozzle. Unfortunately,



Pocahontas fire wagon on unpaved street in front of two-story building, Rhinebeck Historical Society, courtesy of the Consortium of Rhinebeck History

Max Trombini, chairman of the Pocahontas crew, died before competitions for “Old Pokie” materialized.

By September 1953, the Rhinebeck Fire Department had joined the New England Veteran Firemen’s League, the only department outside of New England to participate. In the ensuing decades, it regularly attended competitions numerous times every year. Vernon Sipperley, a

member of the Rhinebeck Fire Department for seventy years, served as the league’s president and was most active with Pocahontas. From 1972 until his death in 2017, he was foreman of the handtub. Use of Pocahontas in competitive musters was ended by the 1980s in consideration of its age and fragility.

Another monumental event in Rhinebeck Fire Department history was the creation in 1954 of the Rhinebeck Rescue Squad as an independent unit. Prior to this, ambulance service was provided by Northern Dutchess Hospital, with a hospital custodian operating the ambulance. Under this arrangement, a lengthy amount of time often transpired between the dispatch and arrival at the accident scene. Edgar W. Harvey, superintendent of the Rhinebeck Water Works, served as first rescue squad captain and was instrumental in the integration and mobilization of sixteen men to form it. First Rescue Lieutenant Donald Dapson, a local undertaker, recalled the thirteen-week Red Cross training program in which squad members participated. During these early years, the squad utilized the 1949 Cadillac ambulance that belonged to the Northern Dutchess Hospital, later purchasing another Cadillac model. In April 1970, the squad merged with the Rhinebeck Fire Department. The primary motive behind their integration was the impending loss of insurance coverage due to the squad’s financial insecurity. The timely merger was successful through the efforts of Rescue Captain Erwin Bathrick, Jr., proprietor of the Rhinebeck Hardware Company, and Chief Don S. (Sandy) Williams of Williams Lumber.

The 1960s was a transitional period for the fire department and provided stability to members during the turbulent years of the Vietnam War and counterculture movements. The firemen refrained from any participation in the latter and, luckily, the department lost no members to the war.

The old firehouse continued to serve the men’s needs. However, it had fallen into disrepair and structural instability by 1968. A full structural study was conducted to determine the building’s integrity. Finding the repair costs prohibitive and the space limited, discussions about a new, combined firehouse and village hall began. The site of the Williams Lumber property on East Market Street, formerly the Gibson Lumber building and the Frank Herrick Lumberyard, was chosen. This property was purchased by the village, and on March 18, 1969, Rhinebeck village residents voted 289 to 201 to spend \$350,000 on

the new facility. The building was designed in a utilitarian manner, in keeping with the functions of the former village hall and firehouse, albeit much larger. It was comprised of a four-bay firehouse, with two rooms on the ground floor for the radios and engineers. The upstairs accommodated several offices, a kitchen, television room for the firemen, and a village meeting room to hold eighty to 100 people. Much of the momentum for this accomplishment is owed to Mayors Robert Shackleton and Peter F. Sipperley.

Many fires would be tackled by the Rhinebeck Fire Department in the 1970s and 1980s. Some of the more notorious were the Wells barn on West Market Street, a house fire on Platt Avenue, and the gymnasium of the Rhinebeck High School in April 1978.

The early relationship of women with fire departments was of wives, mothers, and sisters preparing provisions for male relatives responding to calls, often in the middle of the night. This domestic support was solidified with the creation of the Rhinebeck Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary in 1957. In the department's 150th anniversary pamphlet, President Ruth Demarest claims "hot coffee, soup and sandwiches, ice water and juice in summer, and occasionally a good breakfast for the men after a night of firefighting, is what the auxiliary is all about."²⁶ The first female member of the Rhinebeck Fire Department, Nancy Brownell (daughter of Rescue Squad Captain Howard Brownell) was approved by the village Board of Trustees on March 13, 1984, during the sesquicentennial of the department's founding. The acceptance of the first woman in the department reflects a transitional moment in the volunteer fire service as times changed and old normalities were overturned.

The twenty-first century has posed new challenges for volunteer organizations in rural areas. Rhinebeck has shifted from an insular community comprised of local business owners and blue collar professionals to a bedroom and weekend community made up of families from southern New York. Training requirements and state laws have been enacted as a means of safety and quality control for rural fire companies but have had unintended consequences in creating demands for volunteers that require more time away from personal commitments. Some fire districts have been forced to forfeit the areas they cover due to a lack of membership, with many ultimately pursuing other options, such as paid services, for fire and rescue.

The Rhinebeck Fire Department has stood the test of time and is fortunate to have a very active and engaged membership, a high response rate, and the strong support of municipal agencies. These positive attributes have allowed the department to grow and engage in new technological innovations. In 2008, the department purchased a new Ferrara 1,000-gallon pumper and in 2017 replaced a 1988 E-One engine with a custom-built Rosenbauer unit equipped with a 1,500-gallon tank. The rescue squad is fortunate to have a versatile crew of chauffeurs and emergency medical technicians to respond to a growing number of calls. Recently, the department purchased a "Stryker" stretcher unit equipped to handle heavy patients. It is electronically powered to provide ease to the ambulance crew.

²⁶ Rhinebeck Fire Department Anniversary pamphlet, Anniversary pamphlet, 16.

The department is very active in parades and other events and maintains its excellent working relationship with ancillary departments within the Town of Rhinebeck, such as the Hillside and Rhinecliff Fire Companies.

Despite all of these changes and innovations, the Rhinebeck Fire Department has kept a reverence for the past, and members are very much in touch with their company's long and storied history. Recently, the department lost three key members: John McGuire, Henry Campbell, and P. Vernon "Vern" Sipperley. They served as a conduit between past and present and guided members in the tradition of the volunteer fire service.

The Rhinebeck Fire Department is an example of the evolution of volunteer firefighting as well as an opportunity to see changing technology and fashions. Sadly, it is unusual in its ongoing vibrancy, considering that many neighboring departments have suffered in recent years from declining membership and participation. This evolution of circumstances has necessitated advancements in the volunteer fire service and expanded the paid service as volunteerism wanes. In these changing times, exhibiting the history of the volunteer fire service helps people understand the complex and interesting history of firefighting in the United States.

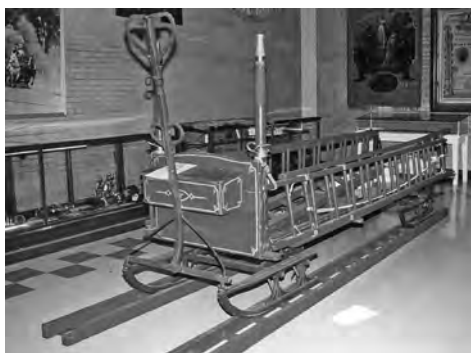


Parade carriage, built by New York Fire Apparatus Works (James Smith) in 1883 for Deluge Engine #1 of Jamestown, NY. The Firemen's Association of the State of New York, American Firefighting Museum

Located twenty-six miles north of Rhinebeck, the FASNY Museum of Firefighting was founded in 1923 by the Firemen's Association of the State of New York (FASNY) for "the purpose of housing the old relics of the New York volunteers... not alone for what they are, but what they stand for."²⁷ A building was dedicated in 1926 just a few hundred feet from an existing FASNY Firemen's Home.

Many of the artifacts are from antiquated New York City volunteer companies as well as areas of Long Island and upstate New York. The initial donations of several early pieces of apparatus were made by the Exempt Firemen's Association. These pieces include the oldest documented fire pumper in New York State—a 1731 Newsham pumper—as well as hose carts, steam fire engines, and leather buckets. The Newsham pumper was built in Cloths Fair, England, and operated by pumping the brakes. The machine held 170 gallons of water and was advanced for its time. Another notable piece of early equipment is the "Bucket Carriage of Unknown Make," dating to about 1860 and belonging to the Continental Bucket Company No. 1 of Jamaica, Long Island. This carriage, which carried fifty tarred canvas buckets, is a transitional piece of equipment—the advent of handtub and steam

²⁷ American Museum of Firefighting.



1904 sleigh built by village blacksmith Fred Rice in Oriskany, NY; it was used until 1923. The Firemen's Association of the State of New York, American Firefighting Museum

engines by the middle of the nineteenth century largely replaced bucket extinguishment. Today, the museum contains one of the most notable collections of American firefighting artifacts and is housed in a state-of-the-art facility containing more than 50,000 square feet.

Small artifacts include badges from the 1810s through the Civil War. Painted shields for leather Cairns-style helmets were ornately decorated with scenes of handtub pumps, Maltese crosses, or the numbers associated with a particular department. One of the more interesting artifacts is a homemade “make-do” pin, originally an 1857

Liberty half dollar that was ground smooth and engraved with the name and badge number of the fire company. Such artifacts showcase the ingenuity of the volunteer fire service as it grappled with limited resources and material. Also displayed are more practical small equipment, including early self-contained breathing masks from the Oceanic Hose, Hook, and Ladder of Staten Island. These are the precursors to the modern SCBA masks that attach to “Scott” packs for men entering smoke-filled buildings. Also featured is an early “Muffin Bell,” used by night watches to alarm communities of an emergency.

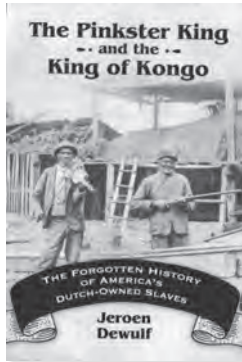
The FASNY Museum of Firefighting, at 117 Harry Howard Avenue in Hudson, is open daily (excluding holidays and severe weather) from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. www.fasnyfiremuseum.com.

Elijah Bender was recording secretary (2015-2018) of the Rhinebeck Fire Department. He would like to recognize those who aided his research on the history of the Rhinebeck Fire Department through material and oral history, including Scott Fisher, Peter Sipperley, William Vickery, Sandy Williams, Bob Ellsworth, John Lobotsky, David Regg, David Miller, John McGuire, and Donald McTernan. Deceased life member P. Vernon Sipperley provided a great deal of the foundation for the writing of this paper.

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Book Reviews



The Pinkster King and the King of the Kongo: The Forgotten History of America's Dutch-Owned Slaves, Jeroen Dewulf (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2017) 292 pp.

In *The Pinkster King and the King of the Kongo*, Jeroen Dewulf has taken on a formidable task. For years, scholars have struggled to decipher a fragmentary documentary record to understand the fascinating celebration of Pinkster, the Dutch religious holiday commemorating Pentecost that slaves in formerly Dutch North America appropriated as their own by the later colonial period. The paucity of sources on black festive culture in Early America has sparked ongoing scholarly debate. To what extent was Pinkster a Christian religious holiday? To what extent were black celebrations of Pinkster manifestations of transplanted African rituals? To what extent was the festival an “American” creation—i.e., a syncretization of different cultural forms? Did such expressions of black festive culture ultimately serve to undermine or strengthen the institution of bondage? Dewulf weighs in on different scholarly debates, but the real intent of *The Pinkster King and the King of the Kongo* is to reorient the scholarly discussion. By revisiting existing scholarship and imaginatively tapping into largely unexplored sources on different continents in multiple languages, Dewulf fundamentally recasts the historiographical debate.

There is far more to *The Pinkster King and the King of the Kongo* than its subtitle might suggest. New Netherland proper accounts for only a portion of the text. Dewulf is intimately familiar with the history of New Netherland and its black residents, but his scope is truly global. The author takes the reader on a discursive journey that includes not only Dutch New Netherland but also other parts of North America, Europe, West-Central Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America at different points in time.

After laying out his interpretive framework, Dewulf traces the roots of the Dutch celebration to the Middle Ages, when Christian commemorations of Pentecost fused with traditional pagan fertility rituals. The religious holiday became increasingly commercialized and boisterous over time, as revelers feasted, drank, sang, danced, and participated in rowdy entertainments. Attempts by civil and religious authorities to curtail such excesses in the wake of the Calvinist Reformation proved only partially successful. Dutch immigrants introduced the festival to seventeenth-century New Netherland, a settlement already notorious for its tawdry amusements. Neither civil authorities like Governor Peter Stuyvesant in the seventeenth century nor Pietist reformers in the later colonial period

managed to suppress the celebration, which persisted in some areas of New York well into the nineteenth century. Over time, however, the Pinkster festival was increasingly associated with New York's black residents; indeed, black engagement with the festival increased as interest waned among white descendants of Dutch settlers.

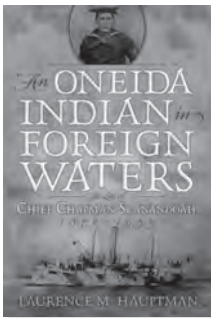
After exploring the origins of the Dutch religious festival and its evolution in Early America, Dewulf proceeds to "search for the Pinkster king," to discover how a religious festival that originated in the Low Countries of Europe during the medieval period was transformed into a powerful expression of black festive culture. Dewulf ultimately agrees with those scholars who argue for the African origins of the black celebrations of Pinkster, but he dates such celebrations not to the late colonial period but earlier, specifically to the "charter generations" of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Atlantic World. Moreover, Dewulf argues that the origins of Pinkster lay not in exclusively indigenous African beliefs and rituals but in the syncretized Afro-Iberian culture of West-Central Africa (notably Kongolese and Angolan kingdoms) and other parts of the black Atlantic that adapted Catholic Portuguese culture. Distinctive features of Pinkster celebrations in New York, notably the selection of a "Pinkster King" and ministers who provided assistance to needy members of the black community, very closely resembled the activities of Catholic brotherhoods and confraternities across the Afro-Iberian world.

Dewulf casts participants of Pinkster festivities as actors. Pinkster did not serve as a "safety valve" that served slaveowners' interests by releasing discontent, nor did it represent submission to dominant European culture. As Dewulf puts it, Kongolese rulers and slaves throughout the Dutch and Iberian colonial worlds negotiated Iberian and Christian culture on their own terms. Celebrants of Pinkster did not revel in carnivalesque misrule nor did they mimic whites. Pinkster and similar celebrations across the Americas represented a powerful exercise of autonomy, an expression of communal solidarity, and a means of "cooperative resistance."

The book's strengths are potentially its weakness. Dewulf casts such a wide interpretive net that some readers might find the narrative unwieldy; the author's comprehensive scope will disorient readers seeking tighter chronological or geographical organization. Dewulf's fascinating and detailed descriptions of black festive culture in Africa, the Caribbean, and other parts of the Americas place Pinkster in a valuable comparative context. Other parts of the narrative are less immediately relevant. For example, Dewulf's examination of Dutch Calvinism and his explorations into other forms of festive culture in Europe and Early America (muster days, civic parades, fantasticals, and minstrel shows) are germane but less useful in proving the Afro-Iberian origins of the celebration. Similarly, the book's final chapter on the demise of Pinkster and the construction of historical memory of the celebration might be more appropriate as an epilogue.

A reader looking for an introduction to the history of slavery in New Netherland should look elsewhere. However, *The Pinkster King and the King of the Kongo* has significance far beyond the study of Dutch New York. Given the fragmentary record, much of the author's argument remains unavoidably circumstantial. However, Dewulf has been so meticulous in his research and imaginative in his interpretation of a wide array of sources that the circumstantial evidence is voluminous and strong. By reexamining previous studies of Pinkster and black festive culture in Early America and directing attention to the syncretization of European and African culture before colonization, Dewulf makes an important contribution to the study of slavery and black life in the Atlantic world.

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***An Oneida in Foreign Waters: The Life of Chief Chapman Scanandoah, 1870–1953*, Laurence Hauptman
(Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2016) 240 pp.**

Laurence M. Hauptman's *An Oneida in Foreign Waters: The Life of Chief Chapman Scanandoah, 1870–1953* provides a detailed biography of a noteworthy Oneida leader and a vivid example of the diversity and efficacy of Native American responses to the social, legal, and political challenges of late-nineteenth through mid-twentieth century America.

The work follows Chapman Scanandoah's life as he became a public figure at the turn of the century—one of the few Native American naval veterans of the Spanish-American war, gaining renown as an engineer and inventor, and playing a vital role in the defense of tribal lands and rights into the early 1950s. Consciously echoing Philip Deloria's call to find "Indians in unexpected places," Hauptmann uses these conspicuous aspects of Scanandoah's life to describe the historical contexts in which Oneida relationships with the government emerged, how Native American attitudes towards modernization and Americanization policies evolved, and to describe how specific tribal responses to these pressures speak to broader tensions between indigenous independence and civil inclusion.

Born in Windfall, New York, in 1870, Chapman Scanandoah attended the Hampton Institute in Virginia from 1887 to 1894, one of nearly 1,500 Native Americans to receive an education and vocational training at the primarily black school between 1878 and 1923. The curriculum mixed industrial, mechanical, and agricultural skills with instruction in English, religion, hygiene, and other topics deemed necessary to groom its students for modern citizenship, the model on which many Indian boarding schools based their

instruction. There he learned the mechanic's trade and observed the modernization of the United States Navy in the early 1890s at Hampton Roads, Newport News, and Norfolk Naval Stations, encouraging him to enlist at a recruiting station in Chicago in 1897 after visiting fellow Oneida in Wisconsin. As Hauptman points out, Scanandoah would have viewed his enlistment in the context of joining a military alliance between the Oneida peoples and the United States government dating back to the Revolutionary War. This relationship was sustained by the tribe even through the World Wars, when Scanandoah and other Oneida protested conscription as a violation of tribal independence but willingly volunteered in large numbers, joining myriad other tribes in recognizing the power of military service to negotiate the terms and meanings of sovereignty and citizenship.

Scanandoah's naval service from 1897 to 1912, including his mostly uneventful participation in the Spanish-American War, was seized on by newspapers and the Navy for its value as a curiosity and recruiting tool, but was otherwise remarkable largely for his shipboard invention of a telescopic gunsight and a naval audiophone. His peacetime port calls also gave Scanandoah a firsthand view of American and European imperialism abroad at the turn of the century. This allowed him to develop a more cosmopolitan view of the United States' role in the world, but also to observe the treatment of indigenous peoples overseas, which he reflexively compared to the condition of Native Americans at home. During his visit to Pearl Harbor, for example, he empathized with Hawaiians as a people subjected to external control, who like the Oneida sought to reclaim greater control over their ancestral land and preserve traditional values against the encroaching threat of political, social, and economic incorporation into the United States. He recorded similar observations as he traversed the globe, mixing sympathy for indigenous peoples with awe at the scale and power of modern empire as he transited the Suez Canal in Egypt and visited Cuba, Honduras, Nicaragua, China, Brazil, the Virgin Islands, China, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Japan, and Argentina.

While much about his life was indeed exceptional, Scanandoah's efforts to hew a respectable path through tangled loyalties is representative of the tensions that pulled at Native communities in this era, both embracing contemporary pressures to modernize and Americanize while retaining close connections and commitments to Iroquois communities and traditions. Central to much of this struggle have been the efforts of Native Americans to retain control over their own land, whether defended in the form of collective ownership supported by treaty or tradition or within the framework of the post-Dawes Severalty Act as individually owned property. For the Oneida of New York, a series of treaties in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had relocated large portions of the tribe but guaranteed their rights to some ancestral lands, holdings threatened in the early twentieth century by the assertion of New York State jurisdiction over tribal affairs and patterns of

partition, sale, and legal dismemberment of individual plots. Indeed, Scanandoah cited the concern for his land and the need for reliable wages as the most important factors in his decision to enlist; he sent a significant portion of his pay home each month to ensure his family could pay the mortgage on their property. The only significant blemishes on his service record are two incidences of going absent without leave, once disappearing in Argentina and reappearing weeks later—and 8,000 miles away in New York—with the explanation that he had become worried that his mother would be dispossessed of their family farm in his absence.

After leaving the Navy, Scanandoah leveraged his education, service, and public standing to help lead the legal defense of Oneida territory, achieving a landmark victory in 1922 when the United States Court of Appeals awarded his family sole title to their thirty-two acres of land, setting a precedent for the return of land to Native Americans in New York and building a foundation for future land restorations. He also served as an advocate and exemplar of modernized education for the Oneida, remaining active as an engineer at General Electric and the Frankford Arsenal and contributing innovations in the fields of agriculture and chemistry. Of particular note was his invention of a binary powder-based explosive he christened “shanandite” that was stable and safe for shipping. He incorporated it into his later patent on a method of using explosive-driven rams to compress metals into a uniform hardness and consistency. Scanandoah was also issued a patent for his revival of a variety of Iroquoian maize, an innovation that illustrates his efforts to preserve and promote Haudenosaunee culture that culminated in the establishment of the Indian Village as a permanent feature of the New York State Fair.

Though the personal papers of Chapman Scanandoah at Cornell University form the documentary backbone of Hauptman’s biography, he builds context and continuity throughout his story with extensive research in federal, state, and local archives. Confirming his status as an experienced and well-regarded scholar of Native-American history, his research features a constellation of archives, libraries, historical societies, and tribal resources throughout Iroquoia, including dozens of Oneida interviews gathered over several decades. The second half of *An Oneida Indian in Foreign Waters* highlights the breadth and relevance of Hauptman’s research as he investigates the role of Scanandoah, his family, and contemporary Oneida activists in reclaiming tribal land and shaping federal and state policies on Indian citizenship, treaties, and reparations. Hauptman commendably puts his fascinating subject and sources to the fore in this project, but the slim volume could have benefitted from further exploration of themes that transform the story of Scanandoah’s life from simply an interesting biography into one that reveals important relationships with other contemporary developments. Scholars who study campaigns of modernization

and Americanization, the citizenship struggles of other tribes or racial groups, or Native American military service will nevertheless find *An Oneida Indian in Foreign Waters* a useful case study that reveals interesting and important historical connections.

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***A Spirit of Sacrifice: New York State in the First World War*, Aaron Noble, Keith Swaney, and Vicki Weiss (Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions of SUNY Press, 2017) 359 pp.**

It is always a delicate task when writing about war to present a holistic consideration balancing narration of military action with historical contextualization; transnational forces with local realities; and revolutionary geopolitical transformations with individual experiences. Aaron Noble, Keith Swaney, and Vicki Weiss have succeeded brilliantly at that important mission in their new book, *A Spirit of Sacrifice*, which illustrates New York’s fundamental place in World War I history—as well as the Great War’s profound influence on life in the Empire State.

Taking its title from a 1918 speech by Governor Charles S. Whitman, this catalog of the recent New York State Museum exhibit of the same name is analytically compelling and aesthetically masterful. The book was authored by a troika of scholars based in the Cultural Education Center—Noble, Swaney, and Weiss are senior figures at the State Museum, State Archives, and State Library, respectively—and in many ways this work stands as a monument to the spirit of collaboration that seems to flourish among those institutions. The authors skillfully exploit their project’s advantageous position at the crossroads of two fundamental contextual realities of World War I: that it occurred at a time when New York was the most prosperous, populous, and powerful state in the union, and that the war took place during the “golden age of poster illustration” (xv-xvi). As a result, the authors had plenty of materials from which to draw, most especially the State Library’s voluminous Benjamin W. Arnold World War I Poster Collection, which alone contains 3,600 pieces (xvi). Strategically, the authors chose to interpret “broadly . . . the significant role played by the Empire State and its citizens during the conflict . . . interweaving the story of New York in war and utilizing artifacts within the pictorial history shown by the posters of the era” to “present a comprehensive examination of how these issues were faced, and of the importance of the state’s contributions to America’s foray into the war” (xviii).

On one level, the book serves as a potent reminder of the primacy of New York State in early twentieth-century America. The sheer scale of the state's contributions to the war effort is staggering: one in ten soldiers in the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) were New Yorkers; more than half a million New Yorkers served, and 13,956 were killed in the conflict; thirteen percent of the war's Medal of Honor winners were New Yorkers; seventy-five percent of all war materiel went through New York Harbor—along with about eighty percent of the AEF; all while a million or so New Yorkers toiled in war industries (xv, 2, 3, 47, 156). Chapter six, which explores New York's financial, industrial, and agricultural contributions, is the longest and perhaps the most edifying chapter. By the time of the Armistice, 38,000 New York firms were producing for the effort, making the Empire State the “undisputed leader” in wartime manufacturing (104-105). Numerous New York firms are profiled (106-115), and the authors note the rising presence of women in such industries (124). New York agriculture also rose to the challenge: grain crop acreage increased ten percent; oat production improved fifteen percent; thirty percent more hogs were being raised; New York dairymen were milking 33,000 cows a day; victory gardens were tilled statewide; and overall agricultural production boomed thirty percent (131-139).

While this is an impressive quantitative story, the heart of the book is the contextualization of war posters. The authors adeptly ground these artifacts in the unique circumstances of World War I, noting that while the Civil War had Fort Sumter and World War II would have Pearl Harbor, “the justifications for war in 1917 were far less tangible to the average citizen,” thus compelling an aggressive propaganda campaign under George Creel's Committee on Public Information and the hiring of noted illustrator Charles Dana Gibson to head a prolific “Division of Pictorial Publicity” (9-10). Once introduced, the posters take the starring role in much of the presentation, with a supporting cast of hundreds of photographs, prints, maps, weapons, uniforms, and other artifacts.

Chapter three provides a swift retelling of the roots of the European war, while chapter four describes the struggle between American pacifists and interventionists (47-53). Meanwhile, war raged with or without U.S. military involvement, and chapter four also includes a fascinating section on enlistment by New Yorkers in foreign armies. In the 1910s, the Empire State was home to over a million foreign-born men of fighting age (45), and the authors explore numerous examples of New Yorkers who fought for their beleaguered homelands (60-69).

Eventually, of course, the U.S. did join the fighting. Noting the particular financial, demographic, and logistical importance of the Empire State, chapter five reveals the outpouring of public enthusiasm for the effort and highlights state and local mobilization initiatives (75-78). Once again, propaganda posters are central, conveying appeals to diverse groups of New Yorkers, historical patriotic sensibilities, and outrage over atrocities

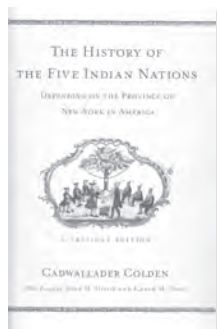
by “the Hun.” While chapter six demonstrates New York’s leadership on the home front, the equally fascinating seventh chapter continues this domestic focus by scrutinizing the reactions of diverse New Yorkers to the war—and to each other. The ethnic diversity of New York was key to this—a particularly revealing poster catalogs a Liberty Loan “honor roll,” with surnames ranging from O’Brien and Pappandrikopolous to Kowalski and Gonzales (186). Other materials are less affirmative but make the same point: “Are you 100% American? Prove it! Buy U.S. Government Bonds” (190). The chapter also documents the outburst of suspicion sweeping the nation during the war—scrutiny of German-Americans and “Enemy Aliens,” suspicion of radicals and pacifists, and fear of saboteurs and spies (190-209).

War buffs and military historians alike will appreciate chapter eight, which meticulously documents the experiences of New Yorkers serving in the AEF. It is lavishly illustrated with uniforms, insignias, weaponry, and supplies, as well as images from the front. The chapter does an excellent service in elevating the individual experiences of specific New York soldiers—some obscure, some celebrated, all receiving dignified consideration (212-213, 223-224, 235-239, 244, 250-254). Similarly, such legendary New York-centric units as the 27th “Empire” Division, the 42nd “Rainbow” Division, the 369th Infantry “Harlem Hellfighters” Regiment, and the 77th “Liberty” Division are profiled (214-216; 243-260; 262).

When New York’s soldiers returned home, they were welcomed by a grateful state, as shown in chapter nine. New York City constructed a temporary “Victory Arch,” a remarkable structure straddling Fifth Avenue at Madison Square. A number of images are offered of the “tens of thousands of doughboys” who “marched beneath the arch on their return from the battlefields of France” before it was ultimately dismantled (271, 279, 283). The chapter also includes photos and mementos of “welcome home” celebrations beyond the metropolis, in Batavia, Cohoes, Elmira, and elsewhere. Chapter ten, on postwar New York, explores important developments, including the rise of the American Legion, demobilization, and promises of benefits. In particular, the chapter makes excellent use of “the tragedy surrounding Henry Johnson,” the black war hero from Albany who returned in triumph but swiftly grew disenchanted both by pervasive racism and the lack of opportunities and support for veterans at large, and whose death, “impoverished and alone” in 1929, was made doubly tragic by the erroneous labeling of his Arlington grave. The authors note that Johnson’s sad demise “epitomized the widespread failure of the nation to adequately address veterans’ needs”: as the turgid encomiums of Armistice celebrations faded, politicians’ promises proved as ephemeral as the Victory Arch—especially for African-American vets (303). The final chapter explores global and local legacies of the war, with a useful overview of New York’s Red Scare experience, particularly the sedition investigations of the Lusk Committee (311-312).

In sum, this is a meticulously produced, well-researched, holistic, and sensitive account of New York's crucial role in World War I and the influence of that war on life in the Empire State. It is beautifully illustrated and insightfully narrated, and is a must-have for any school or public library in the state.

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***Embattled River: The Hudson and Modern American Environmentalism*, David Schuyler (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018) 266 pp.**

The beauty of the Hudson River has inspired generations of artists and activists. Through the landscapes of Hudson River School paintings and the prose of a voluminous nineteenth-century travel literature, the Hudson Highlands and the Catskill region in particular became the nation's landscape—an idealized wilderness within easy reach of the nation's largest city. That well-wooded, romantic landscape helped inspire a Progressive Era preservation movement that shaped the New York State Forest Preserve and numerous state parks up and down the river.

The Hudson also has inspired scholars of many stripes, including David Schuyler, a careful and accomplished historian. His many books have explored the history of the American landscape, including the classic *The New Urban Landscape: The Redefinition of City Form in Nineteenth-Century America* (1986) and, more relevantly, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820–1909* (2012). This later work reflects Schuyler's own attachment to the Hudson River, especially the Highlands, an attachment that has culminated in his latest work, *Embattled River*, which focuses on the struggles to protect the Hudson over the last fifty years.

Embattled River takes up a series of familiar and important topics, contributing to each new details and a comprehensive vision of the Hudson's beauty as an inspiration not just to the Progressive Era preservation movement, but to the modern environmental movement as well. Fittingly, Schuyler opens the book with the "Battle over Storm King," in which a small army of environmentalists—mostly working through a new organization, Scenic Hudson—outlasted Con Ed's proposal to build a power plant at one of the most scenic spots on the river. Scenic Hudson and its leaders, as it turns out, become central actors in many of the subsequent chapters, joined by other figures and organizations mobilized by Storm King, including the Hudson River Fishermen's Association and Robert Boyle, the sports writer turned activist whose lovely and powerful *The Hudson River: A Natural and*

Unnatural History (1969) was an early contribution to the developing field of environmental history and an effective defense of the river as both beautiful and ecologically important.

Schuyler dedicates an early chapter to the establishment and ineffective activities of the Hudson River Valley Commission, a creation of Governor Nelson Rockefeller that was seemingly designed to limit criticism of development rather than control development itself. Schuyler also takes up Pete Seeger's activism and the building of the *Clearwater*, the replica sailing vessel that continues to spread ecological understanding through a blend of art, science, and history as it stops at docks up and down the river. Here Schuyler describes how *Clearwater* linked historic preservation with ecological protection, as well as how it brought together counter-culture figures and old-money preservationists in a sometimes rocky alliance. Another chapter describing the creation of Riverkeeper, an organization that became a model for waterway protection around the world, makes good use of but expands upon John Cronin and Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s *The Riverkeepers* (1977).

Schuyler also recounts the troubling recent history of the General Electric PCB debacle, focusing on the company's efforts to avoid the large costs of river cleanup by hiding information and questioning the negative health consequences of PCB exposure. Since 1976, when the Department of Environmental Conservation banned fishing in the most polluted part of the river, ended commercial fishing everywhere on the Hudson, and warned that eating too much fish could be harmful, New Yorkers, sometimes working through organizations like Scenic Hudson, have worked to force a satisfactory solution. After a long battle, G.E. conducted some dredging, but, as Schuyler justifiably concludes, "The Hudson will long be a poisoned river" (208).

This depressing conclusion contrasts dramatically with those related to historic and natural landscape preservation. Despite ongoing—and often intense—development pressures, the Hudson retains its beauty, unscarred by the massive power plants proposed but defeated by activists, and protected by well-funded programs of purchase and easement, the latter designed to preserve an agricultural landscape and economy in perpetuity. These two very different outcomes—success in the realm of aesthetics and failure in that of river ecology—may speak to the duality of the environmental movement. The old-line preservation movement, often backed by wealthy families (in this case most prominently by DeWitt and Lila Wallace) and fundamentally conservative in its ideology, has been especially successful in the Hudson Valley. On the other hand, the science-driven movement to protect ecological diversity and diminish environmental threats to human health has been less effective. Although investments in sewage treatment plants have paid dividends, the Hudson's waters are still troubled. The riverbanks have been largely protected, the river itself not so much.

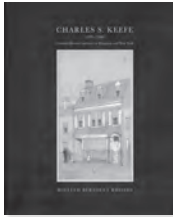
The literature on this collection of topics is extensive, and Schuyler makes good use of many of the most prominent books. These include Robert Lifset's fine *Power on the Hudson: Storm King Mountain and the Emergence of Modern American Environmentalism* (2014), which contains a much fuller account of the Storm King saga, although Schuyler's account is more lively and well-connected to subsequent environmental travails. In addition to the secondary sources, Schuyler also has mined several important manuscript collections, including the papers of Scenic Hudson and the Hudson River Valley Commission.

As is a common reaction to good books, readers may wish for more. Schuyler says very little about either end of the Hudson—New York City and its harbor get relatively little attention, and the Adirondack Mountains, perhaps more surprising, get hardly a mention. Because he spends little time in these areas, Schuyler misses an opportunity to connect the environmentalism that flowers in the 1960s with earlier efforts, some of them tremendously successful, including those that led to the creation of the Palisades Interstate Park and the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Similarly, Schuyler misses the opportunity to connect activism in the Highlands with the broader environmental movement, so the role of activism along the Hudson in national debates and policy formation is left to speculation. Perhaps most problematic, climate change—the most pressing environmental issue of our time—garners little more than a nod from Schuyler.

Of course, wanting more from a book is in many ways a sign of success. Anyone interested in the Hudson River Valley—even those who think themselves well-versed in these topics—will find something of value in this well-researched and nicely written book. Perhaps most valuable is Schuyler's reminder that rivers have the potential to bind together disparate places and diverse individuals in powerful environmental coalitions. And ultimately, he reminds us that activism matters.

David Stradling is the Zane L. Miller Professor of History at the University of Cincinnati.

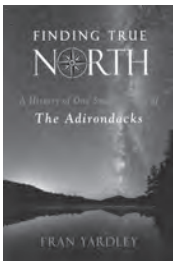
New & Noteworthy Books



Charles S. Keefe 1876–1946: Colonial Revival Architect in Kingston and New York

By William Bertolet Rhoads (Delmar, NY: Black Dome Press, 2018)
266 pp. \$25.95 (softcover) www.blackdomepress.com

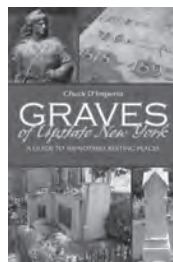
Kingston-born Keefe contributed significantly to American architecture's Colonial Revival movement. His work, however, has gone largely undocumented. Making amends for this oversight, Rhoads chronicles Keefe's early life, career in New York City, contributions to the building boom of the Roaring Twenties, impact of the Great Depression on his career, and his architectural legacy. Photographs, sketches, and architectural renderings supplement the text, while voluminous appendices document Keefe's clients, publication credits, even his will. All of this results in a detailed portrait of Keefe the man and the architect.



Finding True North: A History of One Small Corner of the Adirondacks

By Fran Yardley (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2018)
337 pp. \$24.95 (softcover) www.sunypress.edu

To anyone adventurous enough to explore it, the Adirondacks region offers a unique opportunity to interact with nature, history, and people. In *Finding True North*, Fran Yardley captures her interactions with all of these by sharing her own journey in the Saranac Lake area. Detailing the storied past of the Bartlett Carry Club and the enormous project she and her husband undertook to restore it to its former glory, she recounts the people and places in her Adirondack life with the genuine warmth of a master storyteller.



Graves of Upstate New York: A Guide to 100 Notable Resting Places

By Chuck D'Imperio (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2018)
392 pp. \$27.95 (softcover) www.syracuseuniversitypress.syr.edu/

It's no surprise that the Empire State has been home to a great many famous—and infamous—people. *Graves of Upstate New York* provides a unique take on the burial sites of 100 of them. For each, it offers a brief synopsis of their life and claim to fame, as well as detailed information (with a photo) about their graves. The profiled subjects, whose gravesites are organized by region, range from Lucille Ball and Harriet Tubman to Thomas Cole.



Hell Gate: A Nexus of New York City's East River

By Michael Nichols (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2018)

162 pp. \$19.95 (softcover) www.sunypress.edu

As a section of New York City's East River, Hell Gate has much more going for it than a unique name, which dates back to the Dutch. For Michael Nichols, this narrow, mile-long tidal strait separating the Borough of Queens from Ward's Island presents a fascinating combination of past and present, and of the ever-changing relationship between land and water.

Using his own observations as well as a wide array of documented sources, he unravels the layers of history in and around Hell Gate, as well as sheds light on modern-day individuals who continue to give the landscape its character.



Legends and Lore of the Hudson Highlands

By Jonathan Kruk (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2018)

176 pp. \$23.99 (softcover) www.arcadiapublishing.com/Home

Owing to its rugged terrain and strategic proximity to the Hudson River, the Hudson Highlands has featured prominently in American history for centuries. It also has long exuded an air of mystery. In *Legacy and Lore*, noted storyteller Jonathan Kruk combines documented facts, photos, illustrations, and a healthy bit of oral tradition into a compilation of tales

that capture the enchantment of the Highlands as well as vividly illustrate the innate value of folklore as an art form.



Life Along The Hudson: The Historic Country Estates of the Livingston Family

By Pieter Estersohn (New York, NY: Rizzoli New York, 2018)

336 pp. \$85.00 (hardcover) www.rizzoliusa.com

Significant Hudson Valley landowners since the seventeenth century, the Livingstons have had both the resources and time to construct some truly incredible estates along the river. In *Life Along the Hudson*, thirty-

five homes constructed by the family from 1730 through the 1940s are presented via 400 color photographs that vividly display their extraordinary variety of architecture and landscape. While some of the featured properties are publicly accessible, many remain private residences—meaning this book provides a rare opportunity to “visit” them.



Saving the Shawangunks: The Struggle to Protect One of Earth's Last Great Places

By Carleton Mabee (Delmar, NY: Black Dome Press, 2017)

168 pp. \$21.95 (softcover) www.blackdomepress.com

Since the 1950s, preserving the natural beauty of the Shawangunks has been a battle against residential, commercial, and industrial development.

In this chronological look at the mountain range, Mabee delves into its history and beauty and also presents it as a local example of the threats natural resources face on the state, national, and global levels. Over two dozen color photographs by Nora Scarlett provide a stunning visual companion to the narrative and underscore the importance of preservation efforts at every level.

Andrew Villani, Marist College

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.

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Illustrations or photographs that are germane to the writing should accompany the hard copy. Illustrations and photographs are the responsibility of the authors. Scanned photos or digital art must be 300 pixels per inch (or greater) at 8 in. x 10 in. (between 7 and 20 mb). No responsibility is assumed for the loss of materials. An e-mail address should be included whenever possible.

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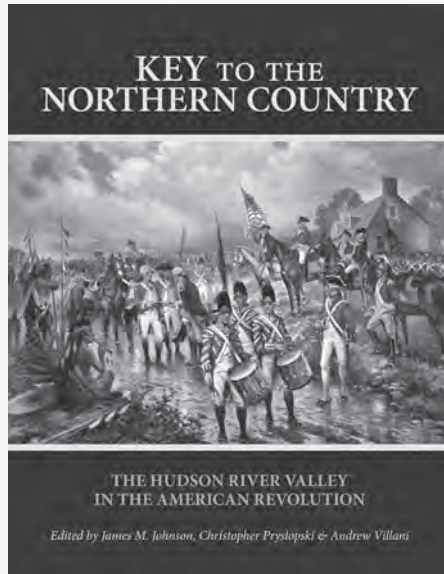
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