THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY REVIEW

A Journal of Regional Studies

MARIST

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From the Editors

Although no Civil War battles were fought in the Hudson River Valley, the conflict had a profound impact on the region. As the commemorative monuments that dot the downtowns of many communities attest, local men signed up in droves to fight for the Union, while the women they left behind kept home and hearth together and often furnished supplies for their "boys in blue." Many of those "boys" never returned, their bodies fodder for the rifles and cannons of the Confederacy in places like Port Hudson, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg.

This issue of *The Hudson River Valley Review* examines how the region responded to the nation's call to arms, and how its soldiers fared in the heat of battle. Through individual stories and regimental accounts, it offers a chilling, firsthand glimpse at America's deadliest war.

Reed Sparling
Christopher Pryslopski

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Call for Essays

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

Submission of Essays and Other Materials

HRVR prefers that essays and other written materials be submitted as two double-spaced typescripts, generally no more than thirty pages long, along with a computer disk with a clear indication of the operating system, the name and version of the word-processing program, and the names of documents on the disk. Illustrations or photographs that are germane to the writing should accompany the hard copy. Otherwise, the submission of visual materials should be cleared with the editors beforehand. Illustrations and photographs are the responsibility of the authors. No materials will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided. No responsibility is assumed for their loss. An e-mail address should be included whenever possible.

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

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

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Christopher Pryslopski is Program Director of the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College and co-editor of *The Hudson River Valley Review*.

PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION. HUGUENOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, NEW PALTZ

Photograph of Peter LeFevre, 1860s. Josiah P. LeFevre Photograph Album Photograph Collection. Huguenot Historical Society, New Paltz

Regional History Forum

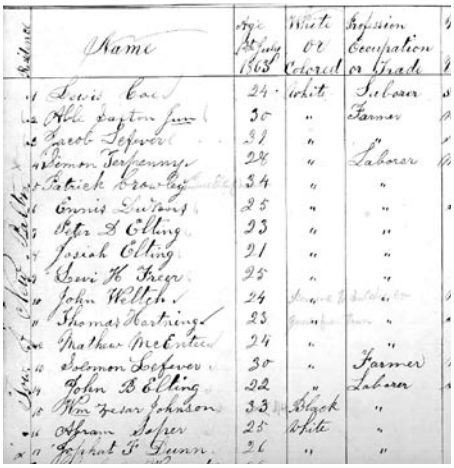
Each issue of The Hudson River Valley Review *includes the Regional History Forum, which highlights historic sites in the valley, exploring their historical significance as well as information for visitors today. Although due attention will be paid to sites of national visibility,* HRVR *will also highlight sites of regional significance. This issue features the Senate House State Historic Site and West Point Foundry Preserve. But we begin by reviewing the current exhibit on the Civil War at the Huguenot Historical Society. Please write us with suggestions for future Forum sections.*

"I'm Now in Rebeldom": New Paltz Soldiers in the Civil War

In May 2005, the Huguenot Historical Society in New Paltz introduced the exhibit ***"I'm Now in Rebeldom": New Paltz Soldiers in the Civil War***. Formally opened on May 28, during a symposium on the Civil War in New Paltz, the exhibit considers several aspects of the town's experiences during the nation's gravest crisis and reaches an emotional level that is characteristic of war-themed presentations.

Filling two rooms of the Howard Hasbrouck Grimm Gallery, the artifacts are drawn primarily from the Huguenot Historical Society's own archival collections, which include hundreds of wartime letters. Excerpts from several of these are on prominent display. (The exhibition title—a quotation from New Paltz soldier Lindsay Howell—refers to his regiment's assignment to occupation duty in Southern states during the latter years of the war.) A reading of these excerpts demonstrates that many soldiers were impressed with the landscapes around the Mississippi River, but the scenes only reminded them of another river: the Hudson. The homesickness of one soldier, Charles Ackert, is evident in his letter home, published in the *New Paltz Times* (and also excerpted in the exhibit): "Yet we long for the snows and frosts of our own dear Northern homes for the glad faces of those we love would lend its bleak scenes a beauty which no Southern clime can ever equal." Other artifacts on display include a recruitment poster for the 175th New York Regiment (from Kingston), reproductions of military enrollment lists and casualty reports, and photographic reproductions of several paintings from the Library of Congress and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans.

Five months in the making, the exhibit focuses not just on soldiers, but also the families they left behind. Displayed text explains that most of the residents of New Paltz supported the Union cause during the Civil War, though as a heav-



Name	Age	White or Colored	Profession Occupation or Trade
Lewis Cae	24	White	Laborer
Abr. Dayton Jun.	30	"	Farmer
Jacob Lefever	31	"	"
Solomon Terpenning	24	"	Laborer
Patrick Crawley	34	"	"
Enos Lucas	25	"	"
Peter A Elting	23	"	"
Josiah Elting	21	"	"
Levi H Frey	25	"	"
John Welch	24	"	"
Thomas Hartwig	23	"	"
Nathan McEntee	24	"	"
Solomon Lefever	30	"	Farmer
John B Elting	22	"	Laborer
Wm Oscar Johnson	33	Black	"
Abram Lefer	25	White	"
Josphat S Gunn	26	"	"

Page from Military enrollment list, 1863 New Paltz Town Records (1677-1932)

ily Democratic area (as was much of New York State), it was often critical of Republican President Abraham Lincoln. Residents filled the void of departed soldiers and contributed to the war effort as best they could. Among the homespun supplies they furnished for the troops were mittens, quilts, socks, pillows and pillowcases, medicine, jellies, and food. Maria DuBois, at age 83, was also willing to lend a hand making clothes, vowing in one excerpt to "keep her needle at work as long as her eyesight is spared and a soldier is in need." (Drawings of instructions on how to sew these supplies surround the quotation.) Eliza Ackert took over the editorship of the *New Paltz Times* in her husband's stead and published many of his letters for the community. Her picture, a photograph of her printing office, and an advertisement for the *Times* are all on exhibit. Unfortunately, grief was a constant companion of several residents' families. On view is the Thanksgiving Day, 1864, diary entry of Jane LeFevre, who laments the loss of her brother Johannes, who had died at Winchester, Virginia, four days earlier.

Also shown are the instruments of war—a rifled musket, a musketoon (a smaller-length firearm), cavalry saber, an infantry sword, and a presentation sword given to officers in the Union Army. Camp life is also an important aspect of the exhibit. Remnants displayed from the field gear of Lieutenant Johannes LeFevre, who served with the 175th Regiment, include a cloth and paper chess set, a stencil, and a small Bible. In the many hours of stand-down time between battles, these were valuable possessions. Another wall section shows how those who went to serve the Union did not always do so in combat. Three New Paltz surgeons—Solomon Hasbrouck, Abraham Eltinge Crispell, and John Miller—were based in Washington, D.C., serving in hospitals for the wounded. Photographs of one of these hospitals are on display.

The exhibit was curated by Eric Roth, Huguenot Historical Society's librarian and archivist, and Ian Stewart, head of Physical Maintenance. Additional assistance was provided by Leslie LeFevre Stratton, curator of Collections, and Laurence M. Hauptman, Distinguished Professor of History, State University of New York at New Paltz. Funding was made possible by the New York State Council for the Humanities.

—Neil Bhatiya

CHRIS PRYSLOPSKI

Rear of the Senate House with gardens, showing the original portion—now with brick facing—and the addition on the left

Senate House State Historic Site

The Senate House State Historic Site is located in the uptown Stockade District of Kingston, on a corner lot that once belonged to Pieter Stuyvesant. The house was originally constructed in 1676 by Wessele Ten Broeck and was preserved by New York State as its second State Historic Site in 1887. It remains today as a heritage site, museum, and community resource.

The house as built in 1676 was a traditional Dutch dwelling, one story with a steep roof. Living, cooking, and sleeping took place in one room, with a basement and an attic garret for additional sleeping or storage space. Additions to the north and south were made to the house in the mid-eighteenth century, and the original interior was lost when the British burned Kingston in October 1777. What stands today was rebuilt in 1778. (You have to look at the stonework and other details to trace its earlier evolution.) The interior is typical of an English-style colonial dwelling, which the original house was converted to over time.

That evolution was a microcosm of the larger change happening in America's colonial society, a change that began when the English assumed control of the colony in 1664. The dwelling's one original room was eventually divided and added onto so that the house became a variation on the English tradition of a

CHRIS PRYSLOPSKI

The Colonial Revival Museum building built in the 1920s

CHRIS PRYSLOPSKI

Front entry to the Senate House on the corner of John and Fair Streets

decorated main hall flanked by parlors, one formal and one informal. This main hall served as an opportunity for the owner to display items that would immediately signify the host's importance. In addition to the creation of an entry hall and parlors, the "new" house featured separate bedrooms and a semi-detached kitchen.

This is the era that the staff of the Senate House interprets for visitors today. It has been refurnished with artifacts and replicas from the period that represent what any typical Kingston dwelling would have looked like in the late-eighteenth century. Assembled is a collection of furniture, kitchenware, bedroom items, and examples of what might have been found in the chamber occupied by the fledgling New York State Senate, including reproduction reading glasses, quill pens, a table, and chairs.

That is another story the house tells: In addition to being representative of daily life in Kingston circa 1778, it is where the New York State Senate took refuge (in exchange for daily rent) when it arrived in Kingston in September 1777. The owner then was Abraham Van Gaasbeek, a widower with an empty house whose business of shipping goods between Kingston and New York City had been disrupted by the same events that had driven the senate further and further north.

Following their Declaration of Independence in July 1776, the colonies began assembling committees to draft individual constitutions for each new state. The New York State Convention met in New York City to do this through December of that year, when they were forced to flee north as the British took control of Manhattan. They stopped briefly in White Plains, but had to leave again as the British advanced up the Hudson. They met briefly at the Dutch Reformed Church in Fishkill, but there was an epidemic of smallpox, so they continued north to Kingston, which had already acquired the reputation as a "nursery for every villainous rebel in the country."

At the time, Kingston was the third largest city in the state—after New York and Albany—with more than 100 houses and approximately 2,000 residents between its uptown and waterfront. The constitution was finished here, its draft adopted on April 20, 1777, on the steps of the courthouse on Wall Street.

That accomplished, the representatives set out to fill their new government, with the bicameral legislature and judicial branch that remain today. By September of that year, the state's fledgling judiciary was meeting in the courthouse, the assembly was convened at Bogardus Tavern, and seventeen of the twenty-four appointed representatives in the senate assembled at Van Gaasbeek's house. All of this activity was treasonous in the eyes of the British Empire; if any of the participants in this government were caught, they would be hanged as traitors.

And the British were getting closer to the capital every day. The 1777 Campaign was a three-pronged attack on the colonies, its intent to divide the northern and southern allies by taking control of the Hudson River. The British were winning battles and gaining ground as they descended from Canada, and were temporarily being held at bay to the south by the great chain and fortifications at Fort Montgomery, in the Hudson Highlands.

Fort Montgomery fell on October 6, 1777. The British sank the chain after taking the fort, then sailed north. On October 13, as Burgoyne was losing at Saratoga, Sir Henry Clinton passed Esopus and came in range of Ponchokie Heights—above the Rondout waterfront—where the Patriots opened fire from a small battery. The British logs do not record any damage received from these rounds, but they do explain that this provocation brought them ashore, and that additional shots fired once they had landed were license to destroy the village. They marched from Kingston Point to the Stockade, sacking and burning all but one house along the way. They continued this strategy as they sailed further north, getting as far as Robert Livingston's Clermont before news of Burgoyne's surrender reached them and they turned back (but not before burning the Livingston estate as well). Instead of dividing the colonies, the British operations on the Hudson wound up uniting the Patriots in their outrage over atrocities such as the burning of Kingston.

One hundred and ten years later, a local group of preservationists petitioned the state to purchase and preserve the house as a museum that would tell the story of life in eighteenth-century Kingston. The Senate House State Historic Site opened its doors for business in 1887, and the people of Kingston brought artifacts by the trunk-load; attics, basements, and barns were emptied of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century heirlooms that were donated to the museum to help tell the

building's story. By 1920, when a local collector offered to donate his manuscript collection, the little house was already full to the rafters. The collector also had concerns about fire safety, so he offered his collection with the caveat that New York build a fireproof building to house the 25,000 seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century manuscripts. The state accepted the terms and built a Colonial Revival museum that is today considered another of Kingston's historic treasures. The collection that inspired it is still housed there. (Known as the DeWitt Manuscript Collection, it includes signatures of presidents and famous Americans.)

The other major collection housed in the 1920s museum pertains to Kingston native John Vanderlyn. A precursor of the Hudson River School artists, Vanderlyn was himself the second of three generations of painters in his family. He is regaled as the first American-born artist trained in Europe.

Vanderlyn learned by copying the works of "masters." One such work he painted was a version of Gilbert Stuart's portrait of Aaron Burr, which Major Peter Van Gaasbeek purchased from the young artist and brought to the attention of its subject. Taken with the likeness, Burr invited Vanderlyn into his home in 1795 to paint more portraits; later that year, he recommended Vanderlyn to Stuart for formal education. Stuart soon returned the artist to Burr, claiming that he had nothing left to teach him, and suggesting he be sent to Paris. Vanderlyn sailed for France in 1796 under Burr's continued patronage. He spent four years there, studying with Francois Andre Vincent and painting among such great artists as Jean-Auguste Ingres and Jacques-Louis David.

As the collection on display suggests, this was a time of quick maturity for the artist. Within a few years, his work underwent a transition from budding talent to an experienced precision. Paris seemed as agreeable to Vanderlyn as he was to it; his work was well received by the public and his painting of Caius Marius (1807) received a gold star from Napoleon in 1808.

When he returned to America, the artist had every reason to expect similar acclaim at home. His hopes high, Vanderlyn set out to paint scenes from classical mythology and young America's history—narratives emphasizing important events. In 1812, he presented the public with *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos*. But he had underestimated the American public's prudish ways. The gallery displaying it so feared the repercussions of a man and woman standing together before the languid nakedness of the despoiled Ariadne that viewing hours were split between male and female audiences. Even the redemption of this particular work was tinged with Puritanical insult: a steamboat captain offered to buy it, but only if the artist cloaked his model. Vanderlyn took the commission and repro-

duced the painting, but this time with Ariadne under a sheet of gauze. This version was hung in the captain's extravagant floating den. (The original is in the collection of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia.)


CHRIS PRYSLOPSKI

Kitchen of the Senate House


CHRIS PRYSLOPSKI

Hearth in front bedroom

Sadly, *Ariadne* was not the only artistic misadventure to befall the artist upon his return home. With the eye of an engineer, Vanderlyn had produced studies of the landscape at Versailles. These studies can be seen at the Senate House and show how he laid a grid over his subject that would help him to render it flat and then bend it to form a panorama. The panorama depicted a scene from the early nineteenth century populated with historical figures. The artist included himself drawing a viewer's attention to Czar Alexander I and the King of Prussia standing in the gardens. Opening in 1817, the finished painting measured twelve feet high by 168 feet long, mounted around the inside of a rotunda that the artist had built near the present-day site of City Hall in Manhattan. At the time, panoramas were a great attraction throughout Europe, a sort of "virtual reality" of the early nineteenth century.

However, this proved another error in translation. Vanderlyn had financed the project by selling shares in it ahead of time, and the concept was well enough received to execute the project. But when the financiers entered the rotunda and looked around to find themselves in a foreign place with foreign people, the exotic nature of the experience was lost. Critics slammed the work as being off-topic (not American) and were not impressed by the panoramic experience. The panorama followed Vanderlyn to his indebted grave—he reassembled it time and again across the country, but it never covered its own expense or began to see any profit. Fortunately, the huge painting was preserved and can be viewed in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

There were some commissions, most notably *The Landing of Columbus at the Island of Guanahani, West Indies, October 12th, 1492*, which hangs in the U.S. Capitol. But most of the money Vanderlyn made came from portraiture. No would-be patrons were interested in grand stories of Greek myth or American origins, but many wanted to see themselves or their families immortalized by the artist's

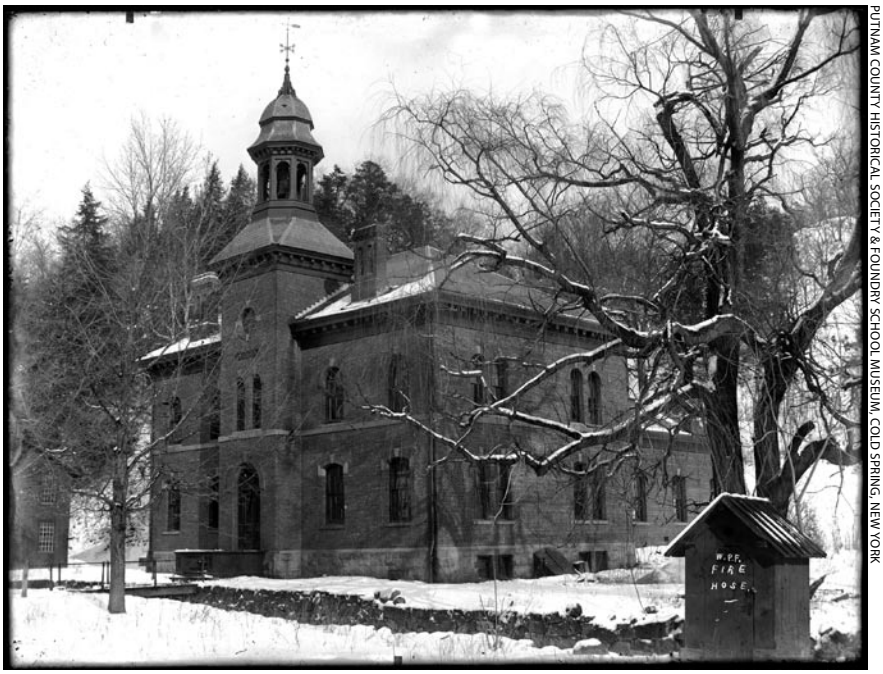
brush. John Vanderlyn died miserable and penniless in 1855. One evening he checked into the hotel that still stands across from the Senate House property in uptown Kingston and was found dead in his room the next morning.

But the defiant story of the Senate House and the melancholy epic of John Vanderlyn are not the only tales told here. The site also includes the Loughran House, used as an additional museum and office space, and the nearby Heritage Area Visitors' Center, which offers visitor information, brochures on area attractions, and temporary exhibits.

One thing the stories here share—which is a testament to both the size of eighteenth-century America and the talents of the storytellers on staff—is that all of the various strands are intertwined. You will see not only how local individuals and movements influenced one another, but how the inhabitants of historic Kingston affected national and international events as well.

—*Christopher Pryslopski*

The Senate House State Historic Site is located in Kingston at 296 Fair Street, online at: http://nysparks.state.ny.us/sites/info.asp?siteID=26, *and can be reached by phone at 845-338-2786. It is open from April 7 through Oct. 31 Mon., Wed., and Sat. 10 a.m.–5 p.m., and Sun. 11-5 p.m. Admission: $4 adults, $3 NYS senior citizens/groups, $1 children 5-12; children under 5 are admitted free. The site is also open year-round by appointment. Group tours are available year-round, and must be scheduled in advance. The Heritage Area Visitors' Center is located at 308 Clinton Avenue.*



PUTNAM COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & FOUNDRY SCHOOL MUSEUM, COLD SPRING, NEW YORK

The West Point Foundry Office Building circa 1890

Preserving an Icon of Prosperity: The Story of the West Point Foundry's 1865 Office Building

During the first few months of 1865, workers at the West Point Foundry were busy casting iron cannons and shot for use in the Civil War by the United States Army and Navy. As many as 1,500 men worked in dozens of buildings packed within a narrow, forty-acre valley located within the limits of what became the Village of Cold Spring. Yet today the only building that remains of this once bustling facility is the 1865 Office Building, constructed during the wave of prosperity that marked the war years. The site's current owner is Scenic Hudson, an environmental group that protects and enhances the Hudson River and its majestic landscape. The organization is leading an initiative to preserve and interpret the site, known as the West Point Foundry Preserve, for the public. Scenic Hudson is sponsoring historical and archaeological research to establish the factual parameters for historical interpretation, has contracted with an arborist and tree service to care for the now-forested landscape, and most recently has

acquired engineering and architectural services to stabilize the deteriorating 1865 Office Building. This article will describe the current efforts, with a focus on the Civil War-era office building.

The Foundry

After the War of 1812, the Madison administration recognized the need to expand ordnance production and stimulated the development of four foundries around the country: one in Pittsburgh; one in Richmond, Virginia; one in Georgetown, near Washington, D.C.; and one in the Hudson Valley, just upriver from the new United States Military Academy at West Point. The West Point Foundry Association, named after the most prominent geographical feature in the nearby landscape, was formed in 1817 by a group of investors led by Gouverneur Kemble. Construction and production began that year, with the first cast items available a year later. Start-up costs were supported by an advanced payment for an order of heavy artillery to be delivered to the federal government during the first few years. In addition to their ordnance products, the foundry also cast a range of other goods, including mill equipment, water systems, and a variety of domestic items. It produced numbers of steam engines, both for marine service and for use in locomotives, including the first locomotive manufactured in the United States, the *Best Friend*. Product lines included machinery for the sugar and cotton industries, portions of the Croton Aqueduct (to take water to New York City), the pumping engine for Philadelphia's Fairmount Waterworks, and a pumping engine for the Brooklyn Navy Yard dry dock.[1]

Cold Spring is located about fifty miles north of New York City on the Hudson River. This location provided the West Point Foundry with many advantages, including easy transportation up and down the river and access to local raw materials such as iron ore, casting sand, and wood for charcoal. The young military academy across the river afforded protection during times of conflict. Finally, the foundry sat in a valley through which flowed Foundry Brook. Dropping about 100 feet vertically over a distance of 1,400 feet, from the brook provided the needed waterpower for the facility with the aid of a series of dams.

During the early years, an experienced foundryman from Ireland named William Young served as superintendent. By 1837, Robert Parker Parrott was hired to run the operation and Gouveneur Kemble reduced his direct involvement. Between 1851 and 1867, Parrott leased the West Point Foundry. As a former Army inspector of ordnance assigned to the foundry, he was familiar with the challenges of ordnance production. During his management of the operations, he experimented with ordnance design; by 1860, he had developed a rifled cannon

LARRY MISHKAR, MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

The Office Building in 2005

commonly referred to as the Parrott gun—a cast-iron gun with a rifled bore and a wrought-iron reinforced breech. It spun its close-fitting projectiles as they exited the bore, resulting in greater range and accuracy than comparable smoothbore weapons of the time. The wrought-iron reinforcement of the cannon's breech allowed Parrott guns to withstand the increased pressure generated by the tight-fitting projectiles. This weapon was highly favored by the Union military.

The foundry manufactured 2,500 Parrott guns by 1865.[2] Just four years earlier, a reporter for *Harper's Weekly* estimated that foundry workers produced twenty-five cannons and 7,000 projectiles a week.[3] During the height of the Civil War, the U.S. Army and Navy each spent as much as $100,000 during some months on West Point Foundry guns, projectiles, and gun carriages. The Parrott gun not only brought the West Point Foundry fame during the war, but also generated significant profit and capital. The primary expression of that capital was in the form of a brick office building, constructed in 1865 on the eastern bank of Foundry Brook within the foundry complex. This new office building, which replaced a smaller office located in the heart of the complex, was a deliberate expression of the foundry's prosperity during the war.

The Office Building

The office building is labeled "OFFICE.1865" on a cast-iron sign mounted above the main entrance. Parrott decided on a brick construction and spared no expense, including a detailed plaster and wood interior that only survives in pieces today.

It was an elegant, "white collar" building on a "blue collar site." The Italianate-style brick structure is consistent with mid-nineteenth-century commercial and civic buildings like those illustrated in Samuel Sloan's 1851 pattern book, *The Model Architect*. The two-story building is composed of two wings, a symmetrical front with a central tower and a more utilitarian rear portion. The front (western) facade is finished in a higher grade of brickwork than the other three sides. The main entry, centered under the tower, is reached via stairs and a bridge over the stream. The tower housed a large cast-iron bell that used to call foundry employees to and from work. (It has since been removed to the local school.) The ground floor contains two parlors on the right and a large, grand room on the left. Existing flue penetrations indicate that these were likely heated by wood- or coal-burning stoves. The office building also contained a walk-in safe to store company and employee money. Surviving photographs from the late nineteenth century show fashionably dressed women sitting in one of the parlors, which was fitted out as a manager's office. The finishes in the room, and the surviving fragments, are similar to those of other high-end mid-nineteenth-century residences and commercial buildings throughout the Hudson Valley. In addition to managers and their assistants, occupants were likely accountants and cashiers (near the walk-in safe) and draftsmen laying out the patterns that would be fabricated in the pattern shops.

The West Point Foundry's 1865 Office Building is a symbol of the foundry's peak of production and the beginning of its demise. After the war, the foundry canceled the government's outstanding contracts, absorbing a substantial loss. Moreover, the rise of steel production in the late nineteenth century curtailed demand for cast-iron products in both the private and public sectors. Foundry operations gradually slowed during the late nineteenth century and ceased early in the twentieth century. A variety of tenants, including a silk-dying works, continued to use the building during the early twentieth century. However, by the 1940s it was abandoned.

The building fell into ruin over the next fifty years from neglect and deterioration. When Scenic Hudson purchased the eighty-seven-acre property in 1996, the structure was given immediate attention. To help arrest further deterioration, a temporary roof was installed and the distinctive bell tower was removed and covered. Scenic Hudson is committed to preserving the building, which serves as an icon for the West Point Foundry Preserve, and to transforming this former industrial landscape into a dynamic hands-on educational resource.

Research

To learn more about the history of the site, a long-term research program begun by Scenic Hudson engaged the Industrial Archaeology faculty at Michigan Technological University (MTU). Since 2001, archaeological research at the foundry has been directed toward two parallel, yet complementary objectives. MTU field school crews are excavating the site to recover technical details on foundry operations as well as to learn about everyday life among foundry workers. Drawing together diverse lines of evidence will help narrate the story of this early industrial workplace and contribute to a wide range of academic discussions in industrial and historical archaeology, the history of technology, and the cultural anthropology of industrial communities. Concurrent with these academic goals, Scenic Hudson is developing a strategy for the site's public interpretation, which will draw visitors who want to learn about the contributions the West Point Foundry made to local, national, and international events. MTU archaeological researchers form one part of this developing interpretive plan. Field staff and volunteers speak casually with visitors about site history and the research process, discuss interpretation with members of the local community, and contribute ideas about what and how the site's elements should be interpreted.

During the 2003 and 2004 field seasons, MTU archaeologists investigated the 1865 Office Building. Each summer, two excavation units exposed portions of the building's foundation and helped illuminate the construction and destruction history of the building. Excavation units contained evidence of drainage pipes, architectural elements such as multicolored roofing slate and window glass, and chemical bottles from the silk-dying factory. The building has settled over time, and archaeological evidence indicates that the foundation in the back of the building was more substantial than that of the front, which has caused the front to drop. By identifying a burned layer of soil in the back of the office, MTU students also confirmed the suspicion of a fire sometime in the twentieth century.

In 2003, Scenic Hudson contracted with the firm of Stephen Tilly, Architect, to prepare a condition-assessment report and an adaptive-reuse study for the building. From May through July 2003, a team from the Tilly office and a structural engineer from Robert Silman, Associates, reviewed materials collected and prepared by MTU, as well as the holdings of the Putnam County Historical Society & Foundry School Museum. They also examined the condition of the office building and some of the outlying masonry structures at the preserve.

The archives held little documentation of the office building itself—scant drawings and a few photographs, some in which the building is a tiny detail. The team has not been able to determine the name of the architect, if there was one.

The structure held forensic riches for the architects and engineer, however. Its advanced state of deterioration had the virtue of revealing to the team otherwise concealed aspects of the building's construction. Primarily, the building's state underlined the urgency of proceeding with a significant stabilization program.

The architectural team's approach to the ruin mimicked MTU's archaeological explorations of the site—a careful peeling back of material and testing of hypotheses as work proceeded. Ghosts of stair stringers and floor joists revealed the location of the rear wing's second floor. The action of vandals and weather helped the team discover that the builders employed plaster lathing for a structural purpose and incorporated bits of cast-iron scrap in the construction. Interwoven bricks at the junction of the two wings confirmed their contemporaneity. The structure shows some major fault lines, but surviving original crack patching in the interior plaster suggests that this settlement occurred early in the building's life and has not continued. The ten-inch tilt off vertical observed by the team at the northwest corner, therefore, is of long standing.

Preservation

There were two major threats to the building's survival: large, vulnerable trees on an adjoining hillside that were aimed directly at the front wing and large holes in both first- and second-floor assemblies that might not provide enough resistance to prevent the two stories of weakened masonry walls from falling in. A qualified contractor removed the trees, which were among sixty-five trees in various locations around the site that had been identified by an arborist as hazards. The architectural team prepared detailed drawings to guide the stabilization. Since the stabilization scope exceeded the available budget, the documents incorporated a triage system that allowed the contractor and design team to shift their emphasis to the highest priority items that emerged as the actual work proceeded from an extensive cleanup of debris from previous collapses to selective demolition, temporary shoring and scaffolding, and finally structural rehabilitation and restoration.

The contractor's scope included careful documentation, with drawings and photography, of conditions prior to, during, and after the stabilization process. All salvageable materials that were removed or uncovered in the debris sorting during the stabilization process (including timbers, bricks, and window casings) were stockpiled for future use when the building's future is determined. Though the site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the building is not. However, all work was carried out in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Those standards define rehabilitation as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values." The stabilization strategies were also designed to be consistent with three possible future "contemporary uses" for the building that the team presented to Scenic Hudson:

> **1. Stabilized Ruin–a three-dimensional landscape.** The building would be an unheated, open-air structure with only its ground floor accessible to the public. The rear wing would be a walled garden with stabilized walls and an earthen or paved floor. The building could be electrified for night lighting and exhibits, possibly including *son et lumiere*. Open to the elements, and without permanent occupants, the building in this case would require protection. While the site in this state would capture the romance of the ruin and evince the post-1865 battle between nature and the built environment, the stabilized ruin would also require a significant investment in interpretation to tell its story to visitors.
>
> **2. Hybrid—**a restored front wing and a stabilized walled-garden courtyard in the rear. The front wing would be enclosed and fully rehabilitated for public use on the ground floor and limited office use on the upper floor. The rear wing would be treated as a stabilized ruin. Preserving the ruined portion would help engage visitors in the processes that have been acting on the building and the site as a whole, in addition to being a significantly less costly option than the reconstruction of the rear wing. The rehabilitated and occupied front portion would convey the heady days of its original construction, and it could balance and protect the more poignant and vulnerable rear-wing ruin.
>
> **3. Full Restoration.** The front wing would be enclosed and restored, and the rear wing completely reconstructed. This is the most ambitious project, and in all likelihood the most expensive. A possible drawback is that a polished, complete building might dampen the imaginative connections and conjecture possible elsewhere on this intriguing site. It might sacrifice some of the compelling qualities of the ruin, evidence of the battle between man and nature that characterizes the site's history.

All three scenarios will include the reinstallation of the restored or reconstructed bell tower cupola and development of handicapped accessibility to the 1865 Office Building. Each option offers unique opportunities and challenges,

including how the building's use relates to the larger site and to a visitor's experience, and how the management and operations of each would be undertaken. At present, a chain-link fence to deter vandalism surrounds the building, and tours are offered periodically by Scenic Hudson. By virtue of its recent stabilization, the building has been strengthened, protected, and allowed to breathe. As archaeology on the site proceeds, and as a plan for public access is developed, the 1865 Office Building is positioned once again to play an instrumental role at this historic site. The building will draw visitors into a landscape that provides an immediate connection to our past and the West Point Foundry's role in shaping our nation.

—Patrick Martin, Elizabeth Norris, Rita Shaheen, Stephen Tilly, and Elizabeth Martin

Footnotes

1. Factual evidence included in this short essay stem from research done by Rutsch, Edward, et al. *The West Point Foundry Site Cold Spring, Putnam County, New York*. Newton, New Jersey: Cultural Resource Management Services, 1979.
2. Robert Parrott, *Heavy Ordnance. Reports of Committees of the United State Senate Second Session*, 38th Congress, Joint Committee on Conduct and Expenditures of War, 1865, Senate Report No. 142, Part 2, Serial I 213, p. 137.
3. *Harper's Weekly* Vol. 5, No. 246, September 14, 1861, p. 580

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