

THE
HUDSON
RIVER
VALLEY
REVIEW

A Journal of Regional Studies

MARIST



The Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College is supported
by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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The Hudson River Valley Review
 (ISSN 1546-3486) is published twice
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From the Editors

The diverse articles in this issue perfectly illustrate the pervasive and lasting influence of the Hudson River Valley in shaping America's destiny. The cover article, on a pivotal era at the United States Military Academy at West Point, is adapted from our 2013 Cunneen-Hackett Lecture in Hudson River Valley History. We continue our commemoration of the Civil War sesquicentennial with "Musket Balls Was Thicker Than any Hail....," which traces the heroic actions at Gettysburg of Green County soldiers in the 120th New York Regiment. The Scholarly Forum includes three reviews of David Schuyler's *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*, as well as the author's response to them. Our inaugural Pictorial Essay explores the nation's changing attitudes toward the environment by examining the landscape surrounding Palmer Falls in upstate Corinth—a tourist destination that became an industrial powerhouse. Teaching the Hudson River Valley is another new feature that will occasionally highlight local programs, strategies, and individuals leading the way in the practice of regional studies and place-based education; appropriately, it begins with an overview of the Teaching the Hudson Valley program and its summer teachers' institute.

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Tel: 845-575-3052

Fax: 845-575-3176

E-mail: hrvi@marist.edu

Web: www.hudsonrivervalley.org

Post: *The Hudson River Valley Review*

c/o Hudson River Valley Institute

Marist College, 3399 North Road,

Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

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

The Hudson River Valley Review does not assume responsibility for statements of fact or opinion made by the authors.

*This issue of The Hudson River Valley Review
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To contact the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area:

Mark Castiglione, Acting Director
Capitol Building, Room 254
Albany, NY 12224
Phone: 518-473-3835

THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY REVIEW

Vol. 29, No. 2, Spring 2013



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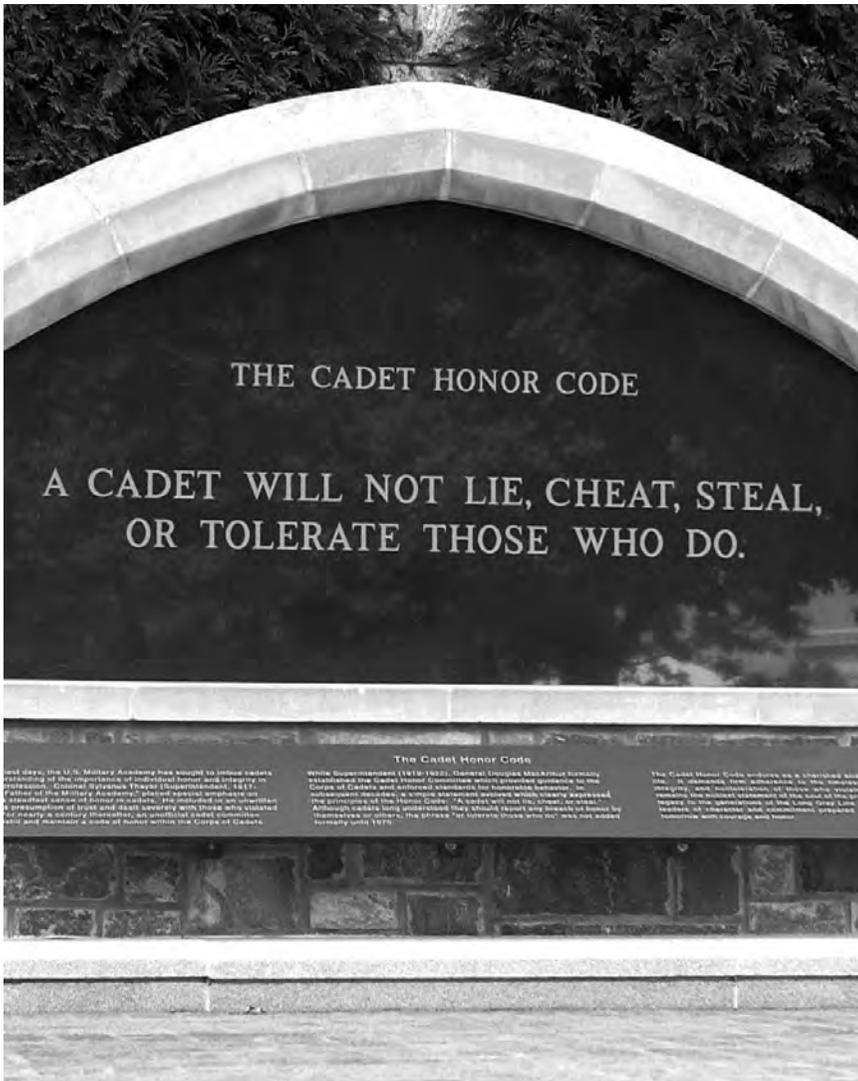
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The Honor Code Monument, located next to the most trafficked walkway at West Point, reminds cadets daily of the importance of living honorably.

Carved in Granite but Steeped In Change: West Point and the Making of Leaders¹

Lance Betros

The United States Military Academy, founded in 1802, is one of the nation's oldest and most revered institutions. Commanding a majestic view of the Hudson River at West Point, the academy occupies rockbound highlands central to the defense of the nation during the Revolutionary War. Its carved-from-granite exterior evokes a sense of permanence and strength—and, some would say, resistance to change. Institutional conservatism was, in fact, characteristic of the academy for more than a century after its founding. In recent years, however, the forces of change have been robust, and they have enabled the academy to better accomplish its mission of preparing young men—and, since 1976, young women—to be officers in the United States Army.²

The spring of 1976, the nation's bicentennial year, was busier than usual at West Point. A few months earlier, Congress had ordered the all-male institution to open its doors to women starting that summer.³ Despite the unpopularity of the decision at the academy, the superintendent (commanding officer), Lieutenant General Sidney Berry, worked hard to ensure the women's arrival would go as smoothly as possible. He ordered the dormitories modified to provide separate bathroom facilities. He oversaw the design of female uniforms that would blend in with those worn by male cadets but accommodate female body types. He adjusted physical education and fitness standards to account for physiological differences between the sexes.⁴ Most important, he began the task of mentally preparing the faculty, staff, and cadets to accept the women in a positive, professional manner.⁵

With so much already on his mind, Berry was blindsided by what would become one of the most serious crises in the history of the academy. In March, a major cheating incident surfaced in the Department of Electrical Engineering. Instructors in EE304—a mandatory course in electrical engineering for third-year cadets—discovered unmistakable signs of widespread cheating on a take-home exam. An initial review yielded evidence that 117 cadets in the class of 1977 had cheated; a second review, completed in May, implicated another 122 cadets. Over the next few months, academy officials conducted honor review boards that led to the expulsion of 152 cadets—over fifteen percent of the junior class. In some cadet companies, the purge left only a handful of



Aerial view of West Point looking south, 2012. With few exceptions, the Academy looked much the same at the time of the 1976 cheating incident.⁶

the rising seniors to assume leadership duties during the following academic year. This situation led to a redistribution of class members among the thirty-six companies of the cadet brigade so that each company would have enough seniors to conduct normal operations during the 1976-1977 academic year.

The EE304 cheating incident was the catalyst for the most far-reaching changes in the academy's history. It led to searching assessments, internal and external, that left no stone unturned. While West Point's mission of preparing cadets for service as army officers stayed the same, the methods of accomplishing that mission changed dramatically. Just as important, the assumptions upon which those methods rested also changed. The cheating incident transformed a paternal, attritional institution into one that promoted intellectual rigor and applied progressive theories of human development to prepare cadets for military service. Most significant, the changes enabled the academy to sharpen its focus on developing cadets' character and intellect—the two most important qualities for service as army officers.



Character is the amalgam of attributes that define the nature and values of an individual. In the context of developing leaders for military service, the most desired qualities of character include integrity, moral courage, and self-discipline. They are foundational in building effective military units and establishing the trust and respect upon which command authority rests. Congress recognized the importance of character by enjoining military officers "to show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, [and] patriotism."⁷ These ethical and legal imperatives are the reasons why officers face severe penalties when they violate standards of character, including some that would not be punishable in civilian life.⁸

Intellect empowers a person to think critically and make sound decisions in the face of uncertainty and chaos—conditions frequently encountered by military officers. It is a quality years in the making and always improvable. While officers rely heavily on their physical talents early in their careers, their contributions later on depend increasingly on their intellectual abilities. As the incubator of the army's strategic leaders, West Point celebrates the ideal of the soldier-scholar and embraces the dictum, "The nation that will insist on drawing a broad line of demarcation between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools and its thinking done by cowards."⁹

Character and intellect take long to develop, but are essential to strong leadership and effective military organizations. While other attributes such as physical fitness and tactical proficiency also are important for success in the military, they are trainable and remediable. In contrast, there are no easy solutions to lapses in character and intellect.¹⁰

Undergirding the focus on character and intellect were two assumptions that guided the academy's developmental program for most of its history. The first, paternalism, was the notion that academy leaders, as "parents," knew best how to structure the developmental experience of cadets, their "children." Every aspect of the cadets' existence was modulated, supervised, and measured, and cadets themselves had little say in the matter. All cadets took the same courses, ate the same food, and dressed in the same uniforms. They trained, played, and worshipped together. They lived in a carefully contrived Spartan environment that gave cadets a sense of shared sacrifice and hardship. The geographical isolation of West Point intensified the paternal environment by insulating cadets from the "impurities" of civilian life and focusing them on their daily tasks. The enforced sameness of experience aligned with the idea that West Point had perfected the principles of leader development. Provided the cadets did what they were told and did it well, they supposedly would graduate ready for the demands of officership.¹¹

The flip side of paternalism was attrition—the assumption that the academy must be uncompromising in weeding out cadets of weak character or intellect prior to graduation. Attrition remained high for most of West Point's history, largely because entrance standards, set by Congress, were lax compared to the high graduation standards set by the academy. Many cadets were unprepared for the relentless rigor of the academic program and regimented lifestyle and were soon overwhelmed. Academy officials took no delight expelling so many cadets, but they refused to lower their standards. In their eyes, maintaining high standards—and thus protecting the quality of the officer corps and the reputation of the institution—was of utmost importance.¹²

Paternalism and attrition were complementary assumptions. Provided a cadet met all the expectations of his paternal guardians, he would leave West Point with an officer's commission. If not, he would be cast out for the good of the school and the army. Charles Larned, the professor of drawing from 1876 to 1911, was a strong proponent of the academy's methods and a defender of the quality of its graduates. He typified the

belief that the West Point diploma was a “comprehensive guaranty of character, and of all around actual accomplishment . . . having but few parallels on earth.”¹³

As we will see, the 1976 cheating incident refocused West Point on the developmental goals of character and intellect. Concurrently, it led to a dramatic decline in paternal and attritional assumptions. The manifestations of these changes were felt in many aspects of the cadet experience, but most illustratively in the academic and character-building programs.

Academic Program

Prior to 1976, cadets took a heavy academic load that included, on average, six courses per semester. Of the forty-eight courses required to graduate, forty-two (eighty-eight percent) were mandatory “core courses.” Cadets labored through mathematics, science, and engineering on the one hand, and humanities and social sciences on the other.¹⁴ In addition, they took physical education and military science courses throughout the four years and engaged in many after-school activities—intramurals, drill and ceremonies, military training, etc. The class days, including Saturday morning, were packed tightly, and cadets could boast that they worked harder than virtually any other student body in the nation. Maybe so, but the quantity of their work did not necessarily equate to the quality of the education. As noted by educators inside and outside the academy, the over-scheduling of academic requirements had a negative effect on cadet learning.¹⁵

Cadets moved from classroom to classroom, from activity to activity, on a rigid schedule. They had little time to reflect on the content of their lessons or to engage in the after-class discussions with peers and instructors that characterize quality undergraduate programs. Most cadets were too busy for such things. They devoted their limited time to learning only what was required for the next day’s lesson and preparing for daily quizzes in virtually every subject. The more talented cadets tested well; all others, to varying degrees, resigned themselves to mediocrity.

In 1975, Superintendent Berry ordered a curriculum review to address the issue of overcrowding in the core curriculum.¹⁶ The Academic Board, West Point’s preeminent governance body consisting of key military and academic leaders, eventually decided to cut the number of courses required for graduation to forty-two—a reduction of 12.5 percent. The change never went into effect, however, because the EE304 cheating incident intervened. Senior army leaders deferred a decision on the academic program until completion of the external reviews that West Point would undergo in late 1976 and the first half of 1977.

Secretary of the Army Martin Hoffmann commissioned the first review panel in September 1976. To lead the panel, Hoffmann chose Frank Borman, a 1950 West Point graduate who had achieved fame as an astronaut and as chairman of the board of Eastern Airlines. Borman and his colleagues focused their efforts on the causes of the cheating incident. They were sharply critical of the over-scheduling of cadet time, which not



First-year cadets receive instruction in planetary science, circa 1970. The four-year curriculum consisted of forty-eight courses, the large majority of which were prescribed.

only detracted from the quality of the education, but also tempted some cadets to find less-than-honorable ways to cope with their academic load. They described the West Point environment as “an atmosphere of nonstop running and meeting deadlines” where “conformity and mere adequacy march to the forefront hand-in-hand.”¹⁷ The panel concluded that the distractions and over-scheduling had to stop: “We are convinced that the acquisition of a college education . . . must, during the academic year, have first call on the time and energies of each cadet.”¹⁸

A second review panel, commissioned by Army Chief of Staff Bernard Rogers, began its work in January 1977. Known as the West Point Study Group, this panel scrutinized every aspect of the academy’s developmental programs for cadets.¹⁹ The final report, completed in July, was the most comprehensive review of the academy ever conducted. It endorsed the Borman report by characterizing the academic program as the “fundamental building block” of the cadet experience and advising the academy to give it the “highest priority” during the academic year.²⁰ It called on academy leaders to protect study time, eliminate distractions, and emphasize intellectual creativity in place of requiring single solutions to problems. Additionally, it noted the salutary benefits of studying subjects in both breadth and depth and understanding the social, political, economic, and historical context of a given situation.

The reforms directed by the Borman panel and West Point Study Group gathered

strength over time and pushed the academy to the forefront of collegiate education in America. The changes aligned with the best practices of higher education, and they benefited from West Point's ability to implement the reforms with military efficiency. Perhaps the most jarring change was the reduction—from forty-eight to forty—in the number of courses required to graduate, starting in the 1978-1979 academic year. Of these forty courses, thirty were part of the core curriculum and therefore devoted to study in breadth; ten were elective courses designed for study in depth.²¹ Even with the reduction in the number of courses, the cadets still carried an academic load twenty-five percent greater than most of their civilian counterparts, but they had significantly more time than before for study and reflection.²²

Starting in the 1983-1984 academic year, West Point moved closer to a civilian educational model by formally adopting academic majors. This development marked a shift from the long-held assumption that cadets should avoid specialization in favor of a general approach to education. It was an acknowledgment that the domains of knowledge were expanding in every direction, and cadets needed an appreciation of the complexity of the world around them. The traditionalists found solace in the fact that seventy-five percent of the curriculum still consisted of core courses, but they feared a continued migration toward specialization. To date, their fears have been unfounded, as the academy continues to have a robust core curriculum across many disciplines.²³

Although cadets would take fewer courses, they would be expected to grapple with “theoretical and conceptual problems that have no set solutions.”²⁴ This was a subtle yet important change, as cadets were accustomed to receiving from their instructors an “approved solution” for each assigned problem. One way of encouraging cadets to think contextually was to offer more elective courses, which provided time for in-depth discussions of relevant theories and concepts. Another way was to finally embrace psychology as a discipline worthy of study despite lingering bugaboos about the inexactness of measuring human motivation and behavior.²⁵ Toward that end, the academy established the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership in 1977 and added psychology and leadership courses to the core curriculum. Finally, West Point expanded its visiting professor program—one visiting professor per academic department—to add intellectual depth to the faculty and new perspectives to an otherwise insular institution.

The arrival of visiting professors presaged another significant advance in the quality of the academic program. In the early 1990s, following the Gulf War and the consequent drawdown of military forces, Congress mandated the appointment of civilians in large numbers to the faculties of the service academies.²⁶ Before then, the faculty consisted mostly of military officers on three-year rotational assignments; prior to arriving at West Point, they would attend graduate school to earn a master's degree in their assigned disciplines. These military instructors were known for their enthusiasm, energy, and empathy for cadets, but less so for their mastery of the disciplines they taught. At a higher level were permanently assigned military faculty, most of whom held doctoral

degrees, but they were few in number. The large-scale infusion of civilian professors mitigated these problems. They elevated the level of intellectual discourse, enabled the growth of new disciplinary programs, and provided intellectual mentors for cadets and junior faculty members. The rise of West Point as an elite undergraduate institution is largely the result of the contributions of the civilian faculty.²⁷

Other developments since 1976 contributed to the improvement of academics. To keep pace with peer institutions, West Point tapped the generosity of its alumni and other supporters to fund an impressive array of activities that enriched the educational experience. The money paid for conferences, internships, lectures, scholarly research, specialized scientific equipment, and visits to cultural and historic sites. It allowed cadets to travel to many countries of the world, where they honed their language skills, conducted research, studied great battles, sampled foreign cultures, and mingled with the locals. Donor funds also contributed to the creation of “centers of excellence,” organizations with specialized missions related to cadet education. The Operations Research Center, Center for Oral History, Combating Terrorism Center, and Center for the Rule of Law are just a few of the many centers contributing to cadet intellectual development. The proliferation of these enrichment activities and centers enabled cadets to receive an education as good as or better than that offered at other prestigious institutions of higher learning.²⁸

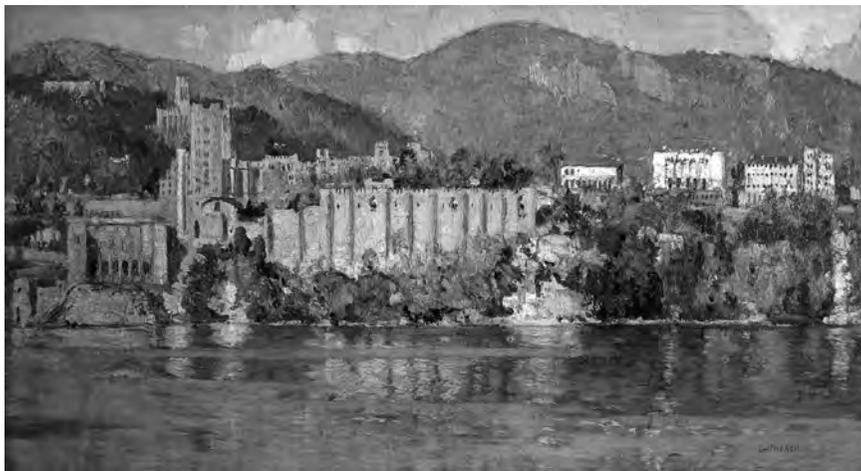
The academic reforms of the period since 1976 had a salutary effect on graduation rates. During the 1970s, only about sixty-three percent of cadets graduated—little changed from preceding decades. The pattern changed in subsequent years, however, as academy leaders refocused their attention on the best practices of higher education following the 19304 cheating incident. In 1995, the West Point graduation rate peaked at eighty-one percent and has remained near there ever since.²⁹

The reforms mentioned above had much to do with the higher graduation rates, but just as important was the weakening of the attritional mindset. Prior to 1976, West Point had little tolerance for academic deficiency, and a cadet who failed even one course was likely to be discharged. Afterward, academy leaders implemented policies that were at once more forgiving and cognizant of the human capacity for improvement. Starting in 1977, for example, a cadet who failed a course could retake it during a new summer term and thus rejoin his or her class in the fall. A cadet with multiple course failures might also be retained if he or she demonstrated redeeming qualities in other developmental areas and could eventually pass the courses prior to graduation; in such cases, the academy might “turn back” a cadet to the next class and thus offer another opportunity to succeed. For those cadets most in need, the Center for Enhanced Performance, established in 1992, honed learning skills, arranged remedial instruction, and provided academic counseling. These and other policies proved highly effective in raising graduation rates.³⁰ Moreover, they reflected the waning of attritional attitudes that had characterized West Point since its founding.

Character Development

“A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do.”³¹ These words, or words like them, have defined the cadet Honor Code for generations.³² Violations of the code, prior to 1976, virtually always brought the same punishment—expulsion from the academy regardless of the severity of the offense or the remorse of the offender. The uncompromising sanction reflected an underlying assumption that cadets arrived at West Point with their characters formed. Good character could be refined within a narrow band, but bad character was irremediable. The Honor Code, then, was not the character-building tool touted by the academy; rather, it was a means of identifying and discharging less-than-honorable cadets. General Maxwell Taylor, superintendent from 1945 to 1949, underscored this point in a letter to Lieutenant General Garrison Davidson, superintendent from 1956 to 1960. “The overriding purpose of the honor system,” he told Davidson, “is to eliminate cadets who by their conduct have created... doubt as to their integrity and honor.”³³

The stringency of the Honor Code was never more evident than during a 1951 cheating incident involving the vaunted football team. Having won national championships in 1944 and 1945, the team had enjoyed a momentous rise in prestige and priority.³⁴ The head coach, Earl Blaik, was fanatical about winning and very good at it; unfortunately, his success on the gridiron blurred the academy’s focus on more important developmental goals. Playing football for Blaik came with many privileges, formal and informal, and the prolonged success was intoxicating.³⁵ Under these circumstances, many players considered themselves exempt from the standards of character and intellect that applied to all other cadets. For several years leading up to 1951, scores of football



‘West Point,’ by Gifford Beal (1879-1956). 1910, oil on canvas. West Point Museum, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York.

players, as well as other cadets associated with the team, had operated a cheating ring that helped the players pass their exams. The cheating finally surfaced in April, just a few months prior to a football season full of promise for another national championship. Instead, the outcome was mass expulsion of the violators. A total of eighty-three cadets, including two All Americans, the captain-elect of the team, and the starting quarterback—Blaik’s son—were expelled. The incident dominated national news and brought intense scrutiny to West Point and its Honor Code.³⁶

Blaik was outspoken in defending his players and criticizing the academy. While he did not condone the cheating, he argued that the guilty cadets were, at heart, men of strong character. He blamed the institution for setting unreasonable expectations about human nature and then setting conditions that posed excessive temptation.³⁷ Moreover, he ridiculed the “black-or-white” advocates of the Honor Code who saw expulsion as the only remedy. Academy officials, argued Blaik, placed “far too much emphasis on the consequences of breaking the code and too little on an abiding commitment to the moral principle involved.”³⁸

In making these arguments, Blaik forced academy leaders to confront the most pressing issue relating to the Honor Code—that is, whether human character is improvable. If Blaik’s players were, in fact, honorable young men who could learn from their mistakes, then should not the academy treat each honor case individually and apply variable punishments rather than the single sanction of expulsion? Most academy and army leaders, including Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, disagreed. Pace declared that the “great value of West Point to the Army and to the nation rests on the unwavering integrity of its graduates.” Accordingly, he could allow “no compromise in the maintenance of the high standards of conduct on which West Point was founded.”³⁹ For the time being, at least, West Point would continue to expel any cadet guilty of an honor violation.

Blaik was also highly critical of the concept of non-toleration—the expectation that a cadet would turn in another cadet suspected of an Honor Code violation. Non-toleration, he believed, imposed a “ritualistic and unreal” expectation on young men who were groomed to be loyal as well as honest.⁴⁰ In making this argument, Blaik overlooked—or perhaps did not understand—a key element of the professional military ethic. The Honor Code included non-toleration not only because of the imperative of integrity in the military, but also in recognition of the standards of a profession. Military professionals—like doctors, jurists, and academicians—were expected to place the interests of society above their own; consequently, they were ethically bound to enforce professional standards and to discipline those who violated them.⁴¹ Although Blaik had graduated from West Point, he served only two years in the army before resigning his commission and starting his coaching career. He never internalized the ethos of the military profession and therefore viewed non-toleration as the “weakness of the code.”⁴² Not surprising, army leaders dismissed Blaik’s objections and retained non-toleration as an essential part of the honor code.

In the quarter-century between the 1951 and 1976 cheating incidents, the academy hewed to its traditional view of honor in the face of seismic societal changes. The civil rights movement, New Left, counterculture, and feminism undermined confidence in traditional sources of authority and polarized American society. On the one hand, conservatives defended against the erosion of middle-class values; on the other, liberals celebrated individualism, secularism, and tolerance of alternative lifestyles. Meanwhile, the Vietnam War, Watergate scandal, and prolonged economic disruptions weakened Americans' faith in the military and government.⁴³

West Point felt the effects of all these influences and more. The Vietnam War had provoked in the army a host of destructive forces—racism, drug use, “fragging” of unpopular leaders, careerism—that damaged morale inside and public support outside the institution. The 1968 My Lai massacre tarnished the reputation of the army and, two years later, led to the removal and demotion of the popular superintendent, Major General Samuel Koster, who had commanded the division involved in the atrocity.⁴⁴ The officers who served on the faculty and staff were influenced by these forces to varying degrees, and many left the service as a result.⁴⁵ Another disruptive influence was the expansion of the Corps of Cadets by about seventy-five percent—from 2,500 to 4,417 cadets.⁴⁶ Congress passed the expansion legislation in 1964, when Americans enjoyed a surfeit of national confidence and optimism that made military service—and the service academies, in particular—highly popular. Within a few years, however, social and political upheavals conspired to make recruiting very difficult. By the end of the 1960s, West Point had fewer qualified applicants than available spaces, and the young men who filled those spaces reflected the attitudes of a changing and distressed society.⁴⁷

West Point was slow to adapt to internal and external pressures, as demonstrated by its policy on spiritual development—an important component of the character-building program. Since the academy's earliest years, all cadets were required to attend religious services. Every weekend they marched in formation to Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish services, regardless of the denomination or inclination of individual cadets. After World War II, however, such practices came under fierce legal challenge across the nation. In the landmark case of *Everson v. Board of Education of Ewing Township* (1947), the Supreme Court deemed unconstitutional any government effort to favor one religion over another or “influence a person to go to or to remain away from church against his will.”⁴⁸ Despite the unequivocal language, mandatory religious services continued at West Point. Academy leaders tried to sidestep the principle of religious freedom by arguing that attending services was part of the cadets' military training as future officers. That is, cadets needed to understand the role of religion in military culture and appreciate its benefit to the soldiers they would lead. This gambit did not withstand judicial review. A class-action suit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of cadets and midshipmen at three service academies ended the forced religion policy in 1972.⁴⁹

The 1976 cheating incident reopened issues that had been resolved twenty-five



Cadets march to Protestant chapel on Sunday morning, circa 1965. Mandatory chapel was an important part of the character-building program until ruled unconstitutional in 1972.

years earlier in accordance with the conservative attitudes of the time. The scope and drama of the current crisis placed those solutions under scrutiny as academy leaders had to defend anew their uncompromising policy of expelling all cadets guilty of honor violations. It was hard enough to do in 1951, when many of those expelled were football players, and American society had great faith in its institutions. It was even harder now, with a larger number of cadets implicated and a social milieu far different than before. In an era of individualism, moral relativism, litigiousness, and intrusive journalism, there was little chance the academy could expel all the guilty cadets as Superintendent Berry proposed. He argued that since the academy demanded integrity and individual responsibility, the large number of cadets implicated in the cheating incident “should not have made one bit of difference.”⁵⁰ Regardless, many of them sought legal counsel; others took their stories to the press; still others sought the help of sympathetic members of Congress. These entreaties intensified scrutiny on the academy and turned an ethical dilemma into a political one.⁵¹

Secretary Hoffmann came under increasing pressure to intervene in the crisis. In August, he received a letter signed by 173 members of Congress suggesting that the punishments meted out to the guilty cadets “should be something short of expulsion.”⁵² Hoffmann was sensitive to the political pressure and intended to follow the advice of Congress, despite Berry's opposition. After heated exchanges, the two men

compromised: All guilty cadets would be expelled in accordance with academy policy, but they could apply for readmission later on. Of the 152 cadets expelled for cheating, ninety-eight eventually graduated over the next few years.⁵³

With the readmission decision behind him, Hoffmann addressed other perceived problems relating to the character-building program at West Point. In particular, he focused on the findings of the Borman report, which placed much of the blame for the cheating incident on the institution. Academy leaders had allegedly failed to discern and respond to the “cool-on-honor” subculture that had flourished in many cadet subgroups.⁵⁴ Moreover, honor education was “inadequate” and honor enforcement “inconsistent.”⁵⁵ Even worse was the discovery of “board fixing” on the part of some members of the cadet honor committee and the consequent acquittal of many guilty cadets over several years.⁵⁶ Far from being isolated to the junior class, these and other problems were systemic to the institution and could not be solved simply by expelling the cheaters. The Borman report therefore recommended giving the superintendent flexibility to punish guilty cadets with “sanctions other than dismissal.”⁵⁷

Hoffmann moved quickly to implement the Borman recommendations. In January 1977, he changed academy regulations so that cadets no longer faced mandatory separation for violations of honor.⁵⁸ The superintendent now had the authority to levy lesser forms of punishment in cases where the offense did not warrant expulsion, and the guilty cadet seemed willing to learn from the mistake.⁵⁹ This was a dramatic departure from tradition: After 175 years and two major honor crises, West Point jettisoned its purely attritional honor system and, in so doing, acknowledged the improbability of human nature.

In the years ahead, the academy took important steps to strengthen the process of character building. Many of the reforms were in response to the recommendations of the West Point Study Group, which had examined the system of honor enforcement. At the top, the academy formally established the Superintendent’s Honor Review Committee to provide counsel and long-term perspective on trends and issues relating to the honor code. Also established was a high-level staff position—Special Assistant



Lieutenant General Sidney Berry confronted difficult issues during his tenure as superintendent (1974 to 1977). In addition to preparing the academy to admit women as cadets in 1976, he managed a crisis involving hundreds of cadets accused of violating the honor code.

to the Commandant for Honor Matters—to advise the cadet honor committee and oversee committee business.⁶⁰

One of the most important reforms was the academy’s new emphasis on an ethic of honorable living that would transcend the simple prohibition against lying, stealing, cheating, or tolerating those who do. “The Honor Code,” noted the Borman panel, “must be viewed as a goal toward which every honorable person aspires, and not as a minimum standard of behavior.”⁶¹ Similarly, the West Point Study Group called for a program of character building that “subsumes the Honor Code in a broader concept” and becomes the “central experience” for cadets during their four years at the academy.⁶² Toward that end, West Point added formal ethics instruction to the core curriculum and required instructors, tactical officers, staff members, coaches, and other academy officials to emphasize ethics in their interactions with cadets.

As already noted, about this time the academy created a new academic department to teach psychology and leadership—subjects full of problems having “no set solutions.”⁶³ These subjects complemented the new ethics course taught by philosophers in the Department of English starting in 1978. Other core courses, such as history, politics, and economics, also exposed cadets to ethical decision-making.

In addition to the formal instruction provided by the academic departments, the academy adopted a four-year honor-education program in 1981. Supervised by the honor committee’s vice-chair for education, the program targeted cadets primarily but also included the faculty and staff. Topics progressed from a basic understanding of honor (e.g., “Purpose, Brief History, and Basic Tenets of the Honor Code”), to applications at West Point (e.g., “Handling Ethical Problems during Summer Training”), to advanced concepts of honor (e.g., “The Honor Ethic and Other Religious-Philosophical Systems”).⁶⁴ Complementing the education program was the academy’s sponsorship of a yearly national honor conference starting in 1986. In attendance were representatives from military and civilian colleges with honor codes of their own; at issue was how “institutions develop ethical values in their students.”⁶⁵ Collectively, these activities represented the most comprehensive honor training program in the academy’s history; moreover, they focused on a holistic understanding of the importance of living honorably rather than on avoiding a small set of dishonorable acts.



To the casual observer, West Point looks much the same today as it did a half-century ago. The same granite structures dominate the landscape, and the familiar statues of great military leaders—Washington, Eisenhower, MacArthur, Patton—still cast their gaze on the parade field.⁶⁶ Cadets in gray uniforms move smartly to and from their classes and, as always, salute the officers in their paths. On the way, they pass the Honor Code Monument, with its timeless reminder to live honorably. With so many touchstones of the past, “old grads” are fond of quipping that their alma mater boasts “over two centuries of history unhampered by progress.”⁶⁷

Looks can be deceiving. Below the shiny surface, West Point has changed in fundamental ways. Some of the changes probably were inevitable, but their rapid implementation since 1976 was the result of the EE304 cheating incident. In the aftermath of that event, academy leaders, prompted by external reviews, scrutinized every aspect of cadet development. They realized that West Point's two dominant assumptions—paternalism and attrition—had proved counterproductive to developing cadets of high character and intellect. Academy leaders concluded that cadets developed best in an environment that promoted diversity in thought and experience and recognized the capacity of humans to learn from their mistakes. The programs that emerged from this new outlook allowed West Point to make good on its claim of being a leader *development* institution, as opposed to an unforgiving crucible in which to prove oneself fit for service.

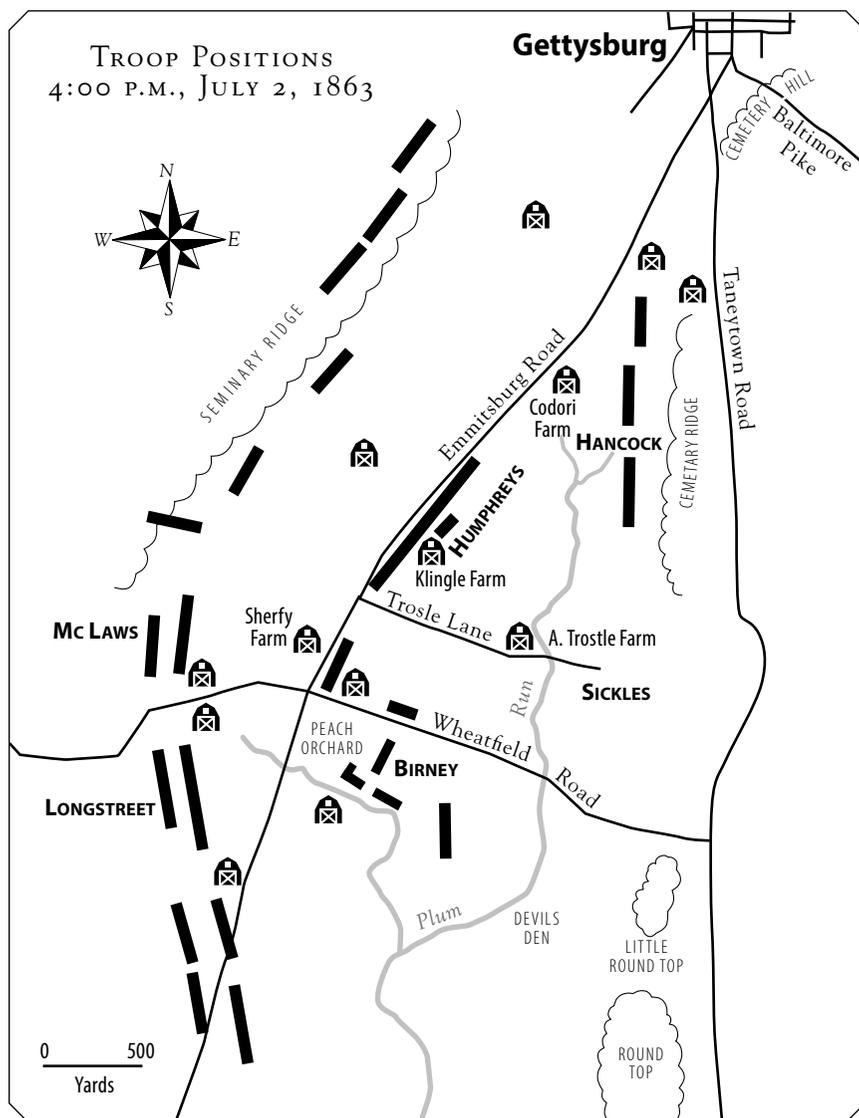
Academics and character building were not the only developmental programs to undergo major changes at West Point since 1976. Similar trends were evident in the admissions program, physical education, military training, and leader development. While all of them exhibited changes resulting from a decline in paternal and attritional assumptions, the effects were most obvious in the areas of character and intellect—the qualities most important for success as a military officer.

Lance Betros is provost of the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks. He is the author of Carved from Granite: West Point since 1902, published by Texas A&M University Press in 2012.

Endnotes

1. This article draws from chapters 1, 4, and 8 in Lance Betros, *Carved from Granite: West Point since 1902* (Texas A&M University Press, 2012).
2. For the most part, the terms “West Point” and “academy” are used interchangeably throughout this article, but there is a subtle distinction. West Point is the name of the military installation established in 1778 and occupied continuously ever since then by the United States Army. The United States Military Academy is the school established at West Point in 1802 for the purpose of preparing cadets to be commissioned Army officers. As West Point's sole purpose since 1802 has been to house the academy, the name of the place and the name of the school have become synonymous.
3. Public Law 94-106, 7 October 1975.
4. Ibid. The law called for making only the “minimum essential adjustments . . . required because of physiological differences between male and female individuals.”
5. A competent and balanced history of the admission of women to West Point is Lance Janda, *Stronger than Custom: West Point and the Admission of Women* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002).
6. All images courtesy of the USMA Archives
7. 10 USC, Section 3583.
8. As an example, the Uniform Code of Military Justice prohibits service members from adulterous relationships; in contrast, civilians outside government service have no such statutory prohibition.
9. Lieutenant General Sir William Francis Butler, *Charles George Gordon* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1901, first published 1889), 85. This quote, in slightly different form, is often attributed erroneously to Thucydides.
10. Army doctrine recognizes character and intellect as two of the three most important leader attributes. The third attribute is presence—“the leader's outward appearance, demeanor, actions and words.” Army Doctrinal Publication 6-22, *Army Leadership*, September 2012, 6.
11. *Carved from Granite*, 27-28.
12. Ibid.
13. Charles Larned, “West Point and Higher Education,” *Army and Navy Journal* 8, no. 12 (June 1906): 20.
14. US Military Academy, 1975/1976 Catalog, 32-33.
15. Cadets corroborated the educators' concerns about over-scheduling. For example, 60.6 percent of the class of 1969 indicated on a survey that they did not have enough time for study and homework. Virtually every member of the class (793 of 800 cadets) took the survey just prior to graduation. Joel Morgovsky, “Educational Aspirations and Academic Environment of the Graduating Class of 1969” (West Point: Office of Institutional Research, 1969), 33.
16. Academy leaders had conducted a curriculum review only two years earlier, but were unable to reach a decision on how to reduce the academic load—that is, they could not decide which courses to cut. As a compromise, they decided to cut all core courses by ten percent, thus allowing more time to master the remaining ninety percent of each course. This solution highlighted the difficulty of choosing which courses were more important than others. Since each academic department taught one or more core courses, the prospect of eliminating any of them led to fierce turf battles among department heads. U.S. Military Academy, *Annual Report of the Superintendent*, 1974, 10-11.
17. Frank Borman, et al., *Report to the Secretary of the Army by the Special Commission on the United States Military Academy*, 15 December 1976, 12. The quoted words belong to a young officer who had been an honor graduate at West Point shortly before the cheating incident.
18. Ibid., 11.
19. The West Point Study Group consisted of three separate committees, each led by a general officer. The final report represented the collective findings of the committees.
20. West Point Study Group, *Final Report of the West Point Study Group* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 27 July 1977), 4.
21. U.S. Military Academy, 1978/1979 Catalog, 39. Since academic year 1978-1979, the number of courses required for graduation, and the percentage of courses devoted to the core and elective programs, have undergone minor changes. In academic year 1983-1984, for example, the number of courses required to graduate rose to forty-four, of which thirty-two were in the core curriculum. The increase was due primarily to the growing demands placed on engineering majors by collegiate accrediting bodies. By academic year 1990-1991, the number of courses required to graduate returned to forty, of which thirty-one are in the core curriculum. While the current (academic year 2012-2013) academic program continues to require forty courses to graduate, thirty of them are in the core and ten are elective.
22. The standard academic load in a civilian liberal arts college is four courses per semester or thirty-two courses over a four-year undergraduate experience. Many civilian students exceed that load, just as many cadets take more than forty courses during their time at West Point.
23. U.S. Military Academy, *Prospectus 2012-2013*, 19, http://www.westpoint.edu/admissions/Shared%20Documents/wp_prospectus.pdf, accessed 20 January 2013.
24. *Final Report of the West Point Study Group*, 14.
25. For many decades the Academic Board resisted adding psychology to the academic curriculum because the discipline “abounds in abstractions and abstruse theories, and seldom dwells in such phases of practical application as would tend to make officers more efficient and inspiring leaders of men.” Memorandum from Army Inspector General Eli Helmick to Army Chief of Staff, 29 July 1927, file packet on “Instruction in Psychology and Leadership at the U.S. Military Academy,” Adjutant General's Office Central Files 1926-1939, Records Group 407, National Archives, College Park, MD. Following World War II, Army Chief of Staff Dwight Eisenhower required the academy to begin teaching applied psychology, but even then the discipline was relegated to time devoted to military training. Creation of the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership—an academic department under the Dean—represented the academy's commitment to the theoretical principles of human behavior and leadership.
26. An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1993 for military activities of the Department of Defense, 23 October 1992, P.L. 102-484, 106 Stat. 2410. Under this law, the Secretary of the Army could employ “as many civilians as professors, instructors, and lecturers” as necessary to accomplish the educational mission.
27. Personal reflection of the author, based on many years of experience as a West Point faculty member.

28. The money obtained for enrichment activities came through the fundraising efforts of the West Point Association of Graduates, a non-profit organization in support of the academy. The association gradually increased its support during the last three decades of the twentieth century, but it exceeded all expectations in a fundraising campaign leading up to the academy's bicentennial in 2002. With a goal of \$150 million, the campaign yielded over \$218 million, much of which underwrote cadet enrichment activities. Another capital campaign, with a goal of \$350 million, is now underway. J. Phoenix, "West Point and WPAOG Highlights," <http://www.westpointaog.org/document.doc?id=4281>, accessed 20 January 2013.
29. Graduation rates for all years since 1970 are available from the West Point Office of Institutional Research. See also U.S. General Accounting Office, *Service Academies*, GAO/NSIAD-92-90, 9.
30. A detailed discussion of West Point's academic remediation policies since 1976 is in *Carved from Granite*, 158-160.
31. The quote is the current version of the Cadet Honor Code. It is engraved in stone on the Honor Code Monument at West Point.
32. Although honorable behavior had always been expected of cadets, a single-sentence statement of the honor code did not appear until the tenure of Major General Maxwell Taylor, superintendent from 1945 to 1949. In 1948, he authored a pamphlet entitled "West Point Honor System: Its Objectives and Procedures" in which he distilled the essence of the honor code into a now familiar sentence: "A cadet will neither lie, cheat nor steal" (5). In lengthier passages, Taylor added a prohibition against tolerating those who would violate the code: "A cadet may be reported by one of his closest friends . . . because the men of the Corps feel that the Honor Code is bigger than any individual or any personal friendship." In 1970, the concept of non-toleration was formally added to the single-sentence statement of the honor code. See, for example, the introductory memorandum (1 June 1970) in "Camp Buckner Honor Instruction Presented to the Class of 1973" (West Point: U.S. Military Academy, 1970), 1.
33. Letter from Taylor to Davidson, 1 November 1957, no. 13, file 351.1 Honor (1957), Adjutant General's Files, West Point Archives. At the time, Taylor was the Army Chief of Staff.
34. According to some polls, Army was also the national champion in 1946; most polls, however, ranked Notre Dame ahead of Army that year.
35. *Carved from Granite*, 276-277, describes the privileges enjoyed by football players.
36. The best account of the 1951 cheating incident is Bill McWilliams, *A Return to Glory: The Untold Story of Honor, Dishonor, and Triumph at the United States Military Academy, 1950-53* (Lynchburg, VA: Warwick House Publishers, 2000).
37. As an example of excessive temptation, the academic departments routinely administered the same test to cadets over a two-day period. Cadets who took the test on the first day were honor bound not to discuss the test with cadets who would take it the following day. Academy leaders defended the practice because it ensured that all cadets would be tested equally; far more important, however, was the opportunity to exercise cadets in honorable behavior. Most cadets were up to the challenge, but some, to Blaik's chagrin, were not.
38. Earl Blaik, *The Red Blaik Story* (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1974), 449.
39. "Texts of Expulsion Statements," *New York Times*, 4 August 1951.
40. *The Red Blaik Story*, 467.
41. The classic explanation of military officers as members of a profession is Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957). According to Huntington, an officer is motivated by a "technical love for his craft and the sense of social obligation to utilize this craft for the benefit of society" (15).
42. *The Red Blaik Story*, 467. Blaik was a talented athlete who had played football at Miami (Ohio) University for three years prior to entering West Point in June 1918. He graduated in 1920, after two playing seasons and recognition as a third-team All-American. Blaik, like all cadets who entered in 1918, spent only two years at West Point because the War Department truncated the curriculum to produce more officers during World War I. After the war, the curriculum reverted to the four-year norm. In 1922, Blaik resigned his commission and, two years later, started his coaching career.
43. See *Carved from Granite*, 56-57, for elaboration on the external and internal forces contributing to the 1976 cheating incident.
44. Martin Arnold, "Cadets Give Resigning Chief an Ovation," *New York Times*, 18 March 1970, C1.
45. Between January 1971 and June 1972, thirty-three staff and faculty members—about four percent of the officers stationed at West Point—resigned their commissions. One of them, Capt. Paul Bucha, had received the Medal of Honor. Seymour M. Hersh, "33 Teachers at West Point Leave Army in 18 Months," *New York Times*, 25 June 1972, 1.
46. *Annual Report of the Superintendent*, 1964, 66.
47. "Comparison of Admissions Data: Classes of 1961 thru 1980," *Assembly* 35, no. 4 (March 1977): 44, West Point Archives.
48. *Everson v. Board of Education of Ewing Township*, 330 US 1 (1947).
49. *Anderson v. Laird*, 466 F.2d 283 (DC Cir. 1972).
50. Sidney B. Berry Jr., interview by Robert F. Broyles, 1983, bound transcript, 2 vols., Senior Officer Oral History Program, U.S. Army Military History Institute, 2: 1018.
51. In July, implicated cadets and their lawyers held a press conference at West Point to protest the alleged denial of their civil rights. James Feron, "Group of Cadets Accuses Academy," *New York Times*, 24 July 1976, 10. In August, Representative Thomas J. Downey (D, NY) led a public hearing that heightened public awareness of the cheating incident. Michael T. Rose, "Synopsis of What Was Said about the Current Honor Code Violation 'Scandal' at West Point during the *ad hoc* Public Forum on August 4, 1976," file labeled "Correspondence w/Michael T. Rose," box 25, Bernard W. Rogers papers, National Defense University, Washington, DC.
52. *Annual Report of the Superintendent*, 1977, 37.
53. *Annual Report of the Superintendent*, 1977, 43. Eighty-five of the returning cadets graduated with the class of 1978. The remainder graduated with later classes.
54. Borman, et al., *Report to the Secretary of the Army*, 65.
55. *Ibid.*, vi.
56. *Ibid.*, 45-48.
57. *Ibid.*, 19.
58. The prohibition against tolerating violations did not change.
59. *Annual Report of the Superintendent*, 1977, 42. The effective date of the policy change was 20 January 1977.
60. *Ibid.*, 137-138. The commandant, a one-star general, is the superintendent's principal deputy for the training and discipline of cadets.
61. Borman, et al., *Report to the Secretary of the Army*, 19.
62. *Final Report of the West Point Study Group*, 30.
63. The Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership, established in 1977.
64. *Annual Report of the Superintendent*, 1981, 38.
65. *Ibid.*, 49. The annual honor conference, now known as the National Conference on Ethics in America, was endowed by the West Point class of 1970. It is the preeminent conference of its type in the United States.
66. The most significant addition to the architectural landscape since 1976 is Jefferson Hall, an imposing granite structure completed in 2008 that houses the cadet library. Other buildings also have been erected, but they lie outside the main cadet area.
67. The quip is heard frequently by anyone familiar with West Point's alumni community.



Major General Daniel Sickles's two divisions, under Birney and Humphreys, were well in front of the rest of the Union position at the time of the Confederate attack on July 2, 1863. The 120th New York was located just east of Emmitsburg Road and north of Trostle Lane when it was attacked by Mississippians from Barksdale's Brigade, McLaws's Division. (Based on a map by Tom Fraser.)

"The Musket Balls was Thicker Than Any Hail":

The Greene County Men of the 120th at Gettysburg

Ted Hilscher

On June 27, 1863, Confederate General Robert E. Lee crossed from Maryland into Pennsylvania, putting him, for the first time in the Civil War, north of the Mason-Dixon Line. His supremely confident Army of Northern Virginia had dealt devastating blows to the largest Union army, the Army of the Potomac, in the last two engagements between the two, at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, despite the latter's superior numbers. Now, Lee and his men were loose in Pennsylvania, doing as they pleased, hoping to crush the North's resolve to continue this war. The Northern troops marching to catch up to them included the 120th New York Regiment, of Brewster's Brigade, Humphreys's Division, Sickles's (Third) Corps. The 120th consisted of three companies of Greene County men and seven companies of Ulster County men. The Greene County Companies were D, recruited mostly from Coxsackie, New Baltimore, and Prattsville; F from Catskill, Hunter, and Lexington; and K, from Cairo, Durham, Greenville, and Windham.¹

In the coming battle, these men would suffer heavy losses as a result of an act of insubordination by their corps commander, a political general.

Most of Lee's army had preceded him into Pennsylvania. His invasion force was 75,000 men or more in size, some 20,000 horses, and sixty miles of wagons if collected into one long line. The Confederates were spread out in the shape of a large arch, about sixty miles wide and thirty six miles into Pennsylvania at its northernmost point, just outside the state capital at Harrisburg. The Confederates lived off what they found in the farms and towns, sometimes paying for what they took with Confederate money, sometimes guaranteeing peaceful occupation only upon the filling of a list of demands presented to local officials. The town of Carlisle was set on fire. Farmers lost any livestock that could be eaten or ridden off. On June 26, Confederates passing through Gettysburg, a small crossroads town known for its two colleges and many carriage-making shops, confiscated three barrels of whiskey from the Globe Inn and then camped at night on nearby fields.²

Some 94,000 Northern troops and their supply trains of wagons under the direction of Major General Joseph Hooker were a two day's march to the south. The very day

Lee entered Pennsylvania, Hooker suddenly sent his resignation to President Lincoln in a squabble over troop allocation. Major General George Meade replaced him as commander of the Army of the Potomac.

Northerners everywhere were anxious for news. At the family farm just east of the Medway Four Corners in New Baltimore, Elizabeth Miller reported in her diary on June 30: "The Rebels invading Pennsylvania. Hooker removed. Meade appointed in his place and the climax tonight a telegram has come that McClellan is placed over Halleck. This really seems from bad to worse. I hope the last may be contradicted."³

Dozens of men from New Baltimore and neighboring towns had joined the 120th New York in August 1862. That summer, after a campaign to capture Richmond failed and Lincoln understood the war would not be over soon, he called for 300,000 more volunteers. The national government promised a bounty of \$100 to be paid to each recruit—\$25 in advance and \$75 at the war's end—to which the state of New York added another \$50. In Windham, pledges were taken from those willing to provide more funds to induce local men to enlist. On July 21, 1862, sixty-six signed the list; on August 19, another 112 made pledges. Samuel D. Miller pledged \$10 and added in the margin—"For fun, not for Niger."⁴

Certainly, most of the Greene County men in the 120th were farmers. Twenty-two years old at his enlistment in 1862, Lansing Hollister of Coxsackie, Captain of Company D, was a farmer. Isaac Cornell, fifty-four years old, and his son Leonard, seventeen years old, of Windham, were farmers. The 1860 census indicates the elder Cornell did not own real property; he must have made a modest living working someone else's farm. It is not hard to imagine that the bounty for signing up to fight was very significant for him. Also from Windham came twenty-year-old George Tibbals, whose occupation was apprentice millwright according to the 1860 census, where he was listed right below his father, Miner Tibbals, millwright.⁵

From outside of the tiny hamlet of Gayhead in the Town of Cairo came twenty-two-year-old Eseck G. Wilber, son of William and Clarissa, farmers. Eseck was the brother of ten-year-old Truman and six-year-old Julia Hettie.⁶

Early on the morning of July 1, 1863 (a Wednesday), a few units of Confederates collided with a few units of Union troops west of Gettysburg. As Lee and Meade both decided to concentrate forces there, the issue between the two was joined. The 120th New York reached the battlefield at around 2 a.m. on July 2, "thoroughly worn out and exhausted" from a march of twelve miles from Emmitsburg, Maryland.⁷

After the fighting of the first day, Meade arranged the Northern troops into the shape of an upside-down fishhook, south and east of the town. The northernmost units of the army occupied the high ground of Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill, in the curve of the fishhook. To the south ran Cemetery Ridge, where the terrain sloped downhill along the shank of the fishhook. At the far southern end of the Union line (the fishhook's eye) was Little Round Top, and south of that Big Round Top. These prominent hills, about 150 and 285 feet high, respectively, were located about two miles from the town.⁸

Lee established a line, parallel to that of Meade's, to the west. Between the two lines, south of the town, was Emmitsburg Road.

The only one of Meade's seven corps commanders that day without a West Point background was Major General Daniel E. Sickles. Sickles had risen through the ranks of the Tammany Hall Democratic political machine in New York City. Early in his political career, he once led a gang into a post office and supervised the theft of campaign literature of a political rival, which was then promptly burned on the floor of the building. This young man of action quickly advanced from the state Assembly to the post of secretary to the Ambassador to Great Britain, James Buchanan, and from there to the United States House of Representatives during Buchanan's presidency.⁹

While living in Washington, D.C., and serving in Congress—where he supported Buchanan's pro-Southern stance—Sickles learned of his wife's affair with Barton Key, U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia and son of Francis Scott Key. On February 27, 1859, Sickles looked out the window of his home and spotted Key across the street attempting to signal Mrs. Sickles by waving a handkerchief. Sickles put three pistols in his coat pocket and went outside. He shot Key twice, killing him almost instantly.¹⁰

For his defense, Sickles assembled a team of lawyers who settled on the theme of temporary insanity. Crucial to his case was their ability to convince the judge to prevent any witnesses from testifying to Sickles's acts of adultery contemporary to those of his wife's. The result of the country's first celebrity trial was an acquittal.¹¹

Sickles finished out his term in Congress, once advocating on the floor of the House for the secession of New York City. When the Confederates fired upon Fort Sumter, however, Sickles raised his own brigade in support of the Union. After failing to get appointed Brigadier General by the Senate, he won the commission on a second vote, nineteen to eighteen. He got himself invited to the White House, fawned all over Mrs. Lincoln, became one of her confidants, and gained the ear of her husband.¹²

It is little wonder that the titles of the two full-length biographies of Sickles give some sense of his place in American history: *Sickles the Incredible* and *American Scoundrel*.¹³

In January, 1863, Joseph Hooker was given command of the Army of the Potomac, and he gave his friend Dan Sickles command of the Third Corps, which had a size of about 11,000 men at Gettysburg. With Hooker replaced by Meade, Sickles now had a commanding officer who did not regard him well. Immediately, Meade found fault with Sickles, admonishing him in writing on June 30:

The commanding general noticed with regret the very slow movement of your corps yesterday ... considering the good condition of the road and the favorable state of weather, [12 miles] was far from meeting the expectation of the commanding general, and the Second Corps in the same space of time made a march nearly double your own ...¹⁴

Despite his low opinion of Sickles, Meade put the Third Corps at the southern end of the Union line, the Union's left side, on the morning of July 2. This was a critical

position for a number of reasons. One job of the troops holding the end of a line is to prevent the enemy from going around and getting into the rear. Secondly, occupation of Little Round Top on the Union left was critical. Whoever commanded these heights commanded this end of the battlefield. Some of Brigadier General John W. Geary's men of the Twelfth Corps had occupied Little Round Top the night of July 1 before being moved by Meade.¹⁵

As the day broke on July 2, Meade was satisfied that his line was a good defensive one, and he adopted a wait-and-see attitude to give his men rest and determine what Lee would do. The morning was "foggy, sultry and murky," a veteran later recalled. Professor Michael Jacobs of Pennsylvania College (now Gettysburg College) took note of the temperature, as he had regularly since 1839. By 7 a.m. it was already 74 degrees; at 2 p.m. the temperature had risen to 81 degrees, with a seventy percent cloud cover.¹⁶

At about 11 o'clock, Sickles rode up to Meade's headquarters. Sickles told Meade he was not clear where the commander wanted his corps.

Meade replied that he was to occupy the same position General Geary had held the previous night, connecting his right to Hancock's left and extending the line south along the ridge to Little Round Top, which Meade pointed out on the southern horizon.¹⁷

Before he left, Sickles asked Meade if he could post his men as he saw fit. "Certainly," Meade replied, "within the limits of the general instructions I have given to you; any ground within those limits you choose to occupy I leave to you."¹⁸

These orders were apparently given verbally, in person, and not in writing.

Sickles and Meade's chief of artillery, Brigadier General H. J. Hunt, rode back to Sickles's position. Sickles pointed to ground about one-half to three-quarters of a mile in his front that was about forty feet higher in elevation than his current position. Thinking it was vital to keep the higher ground away from the Confederates, Sickles asked Hunt if he could move his corps there. Hunt told him, "Not on my authority; I will report to General Meade for his instructions." He rode off to headquarters.¹⁹

Without waiting for any further orders, Sickles dispatched several hundred troops to reconnaissance the area he coveted, in and around a peach orchard on the Emmitsburg Road. He received a report that the area was unoccupied but that Confederates were in fact just to the west. Shortly after 2 o'clock, Sickles ordered the Third Corps forward. The men of Major General Winfield Hancock's corps to the north looked out to Sickles's two divisions advancing in formal battle order, "bugles blaring and flags aflutter, lines carefully dressed behind a swarm of skirmishers." "How splendidly they march," noted one observer. "It looks like a dress parade, a review," thought another. There was some concern that an order to advance had been missed. Hancock knew better. "Wait a moment and you'll see them tumbling back," he said to one of his officers.²⁰

The men of the 120th advanced through the Plum Run valley with the rest of Humphreys' division, across Plum Run, which was dry that July day, then up a slight elevation through the Trostle farm and orchards. The 120th halted parallel to Emmitsburg Road, in a secondary position east of the regiments right up on the road.²¹

Each man of the 120th that day carried a rifled .58 caliber Springfield weighing about nine pounds, and a cartridge box with forty rounds, hanging just below his waist on a strap slung over his shoulder. On his belt was a cap box and bayonet. He may have had a canteen, a haversack with personal belongings, and across his chest a bedroll. He wore a wool uniform. Northern soldiers had marched into Pennsylvania with a total of about fifty-seven pounds in rations and equipment, but certainly some shed weight before going into battle. He had money in his pocket, having been paid on June 30.²²

He was hungry. Eseck Wilber (Co. K) reported to his parents in a letter written later that at the time of the battle, he had not eaten in thirty-six hours, "but we did not grumble for we could not get to the wagons to get any rations."²³

The men waited. As they looked about, open farmland lay in all directions. To the south, on the east side of the Emmitsburg Road, was the peach orchard of Joseph and Mary Sherfy, whose house and barns were opposite on the west side. Directly in front of the 120th on the east side of the road was the orchard and farmhouse of Daniel Klinge. To the north, 300 yards up Emmitsburg Road, was the one-story log house and barns of Peter and Susan Rogers, and past that the Codori house and barns. Mrs. Rogers and her granddaughter gave fresh baked bread to Northern troops that afternoon. Cows grazed near the Rogers home.²⁴

Barns were the dominant feature of the southern Pennsylvania landscape, barns and fields creating "one bright panorama for miles," wrote one Southerner in a letter home just before the battle. "Such barns I never dreamt of," Confederate Major General Dorsey Pender, the son of North Carolina farmers, wrote to his wife. The farm boys of the 120th surely took note as well. As impressive as any was the Trostle barn, which the 120th had just passed as it advanced toward Emmitsburg Road from Plum Run. Still standing today, the barn is approximately sixty-seven by forty-nine feet in size, with a lower level of stone construction, brick construction above, and spaces in the brick in the patterns of diamonds and Xs (for hay ventilation). Characteristic of barns in the region is the forebay of the Trostle barn, an extension of the second floor over the lower floor on the back side. The Trostle barn also features double "outsheds" (or extensions) to the front of the bays on both sides of the main entrance. These were used as granaries. There were no barns like this back in Greene County.²⁵

The fields were high, filled with grass "ripe for the scythe" at the time of battle, a local farmer later remembered. Cherry trees "were in full bearing." In the idle moments, the Confederates west of Emmitsburg Road feasted on them. As the 120th advanced that day, it crossed through fields of grain, then the brush along Plum Run, then into Abraham Trostle's hayfield. The fields behind (east of) Klinge's barns and orchards were planted with corn, wheat, and rye.²⁶

In the quiet of the afternoon of July 2, the minds of a Greene County farm boy or two must have wandered as they looked at the barns and fields around them and waited for whatever was going to happen next. Haying back home was done, or just about done, if their fathers had found the help...



Lee's plan for July 2, 1863, was to launch forward Lt. General James Longstreet's corps, on the right of Lee's line facing the left of Meade's line, up the Emmitsburg Road (south to north) and into the Union line on Cemetery Ridge. Simultaneously, there would be an attack on the opposite end of the Union line, at Culp's Hill, the curve of the fishhook, placing Meade's army inside a pincer. The plan was kept even after the Confederates learned that the Union Third Corps had moved forward.²⁷

Sickles's men were now arranged in a line along Emmitsburg Road as far south as Sherfy's peach orchard, with two more stand-alone brigades east and south of the orchard. By moving his corps, Sickles created numerous problems. First, the Third Corps was unconnected on either its left or right to any other Union units. In effect, it was an island one-half mile in advance of the rest of the Union position. Second, Sickles's line was thin: It covered 1.5 miles of ground as opposed to the one mile of Union line it had occupied back on Cemetery Ridge. Finally, Sickles's advance also meant that no Union troops would be on Little Round Top, the high ground at the tip of the Union line.²⁸

At about 3 o'clock, Meade, unaware of Sickles's movement, summoned a meeting of all corps commanders at his headquarters. When Sickles did not arrive, a second order was sent to him. Cannon fire was now heard in the direction of the Third Corps, and it was reported to Meade that the corps had moved. When Sickles finally showed up, Meade told him not to dismount; together they rode back to inspect the new position of the Third Corps. Meade was furious when he learned what Sickles had done. Under Confederate artillery fire, he ordered reinforcements to fill the gap Sickles had opened in the Union line.²⁹

The Confederate attack opened with artillery fired into the Third Corps for about an hour. Sometime around 4 p.m., Confederate infantry on the far right end of the line advanced against the far left of Sickles—south of the position of the 120th. There was a desperate fight for Little Round Top, just barely kept in Union hands. The Confederates continued to pour heavy artillery fire into the northernmost units of the Third Corps, in the area of Emmitsburg Road. "The thunder of the artillery and the peals of the musketry fairly made you deaf," Eseck Wilber wrote his parents later. The men of the 120th responded to the barrage by lying flat on the ground. Captain Lansing Hollister, the young Cossackie farmer, was killed by artillery between 4 and 5 p.m., probably by batteries located about 250 yards west of the Sherfy barn. He was likely the victim of canister, a can filled with many small pieces of shot. First, a shot ripped off his haversack; then, "as he spoke to those around him while recovering his composure, a ball killed him."³⁰

An anxious Sickles was at this time on horseback in the Trostle barnyard. As Confederate artillery roared, he learned that the enemy was driving back his position from the south. Suddenly, a twelve-pound cannonball tore off his right leg below the knee. He toppled from his (uninjured) horse and, conscious throughout, ordered a

saddle strap to be fashioned on the spot into a tourniquet. Taking care to leave his men with an impression that all was well, he rode the stretcher to the rear while puffing on a lit cigar.³¹

The Confederates augmented their attack around 6 o'clock by sending fresh infantry troops to assault the apex of Sickles's position at the Peach Orchard. Three Mississippi regiments under Brigadier General William Barksdale hit the Emmitsburg Road north of the Peach Orchard, while Barksdale's 21st Mississippi and a brigade of Georgians attacked the Peach Orchard. Leading his three regiments was Barksdale, on horseback.³²

The Union line was pierced by Barksdale's three regiments at a point on the Emmitsburg Road north of the orchard at about 6:30 p.m. Next, Barksdale's troops "wheeled" to the north and advanced toward the 120th and the rest of Brigadier General Andrew A. Humphreys's division. (A wheel is a movement akin to the swinging of a door on a hinge.) Simultaneously, the 21st and the Georgians continued to the southeast. The outnumbered Northern troops on Sickles's coveted high ground began to give way and retreat, or risk death or capture. Some men ran.³³

In order to confront Barksdale, the 120th also changed fronts and was now almost perpendicular to Emmitsburg Road.

"The 120th was left stark alone," recalled Col. George Sharpe of Kingston years later. As Barksdale's line approached, the 120th New York lay in wait behind a stone wall, "invisible" to Barksdale's men until abruptly rising and firing and then holding their ground in the face of "murderous fire" from superior numbers. Division commander Humphreys, on horseback, rode back and forth behind his men, shouting encouragement.³⁴

Egbert Lewis of Kingston (Co. I) thought that the 120th stood firm for an hour, though this seems impossible according to Harry Pfanz, the foremost historian of the action on July 2 at Gettysburg. Regimental Commander Lt. Col. Cornelius Westbrook (Kingston) estimated that the Mississippians were brought to a halt for half an hour.³⁵

Eseck Wilber mentioned nothing about a stone wall. His account:

I offered a silent prayr to the preserver of all as I rose to take my musket: for myself and the loved ones at home and with stedy step and mutering a silent prayr for the preserrvation of my life I entered that battle field: with one wild yell we advanced on the enemy but they were coming to strong we no more then advanced before we were obliged to fall back at this time they had a cross fire on us and they were poreing in from three different ways the way the shells flew wasent slow and the musket balls was thicker then any hail I ever saw: My comrads were falling on evry side of me and I expected evry minut that it would be my turn next Captain Barker fell shot dead instantly the ball went through his head just back of his ears right through his brain I saw him fall he never groaned at all he had his sward raised over his head giving us orders: says he take it cool boys listen to the comand and every man stand to his post with these words he fell to the ground A Corpse I looked at him a moment and then went away.³⁶

Captain Ayres Barker was from Greenville, a carriage maker before the war. He was thirty years old and left a young widow and two stepsons.³⁷



Captain Ayres Barker of Greenville. He is buried at the far eastern end of the Greenville Town Cemetery. His gravestone reads “Capt. Ayers G. Barker 120th N.Y.S.V. Killed at the Battle of Gettysburgh July 2, 1863 aged 31 years 2 m’s 2 d’s.” A rededication of his gravesite is planned for this summer. Photograph of Barker from the collection of Curt Cunningham. Photograph of gravestone from Ted Hilscher.

Watching “with the anxiety of spectators so deeply interested in the result” were the men of the First Minnesota, back on Cemetery Ridge. They “could only judge of the direction of the fight by the sound” because smoke lay so thick over the field. “Sometimes [the smoke] formed a well-defined wall, following the lines of battle, and reaching from the ground straight up to the clouds. Through this the moving battalions—the forms of the combatants seeming gigantic in the haze—could be seen.”³⁸

In time, Humphreys’ division found itself in danger of being surrounded on three sides when more Confederates advanced toward Emmitsburg Road from the west and north. (Wilber noted he was being fired upon “three different ways.”) The Union troops, under enormous pressure, were then directed by Humphreys—on his second horse after the first was killed beneath him—to put up a fighting retreat: turning and firing and momentarily holding a line, then walking, reloading, turning, and firing again as they continued to the east. A terrific number of casualties were suffered during this fighting retreat.³⁹

By the time what was left of the 120th and Humphreys’s division fell back east of Plum Run, it was twilight—approaching 8 p.m. It was the twilight as well of the Confederate advance. By this time, Meade had been able to patch the Union line back together, thanks in part to a courageous charge by the First Minnesota that bought ten

more minutes necessary for the arrival of reinforcements. Barksdale’s Mississippians did not advance beyond Plum Run valley because of the advancing darkness and the deadly enemy fire, the latter resulting in wounds to Barksdale in the left leg and chest. He died the next morning behind Union lines.⁴⁰

Sensing the softening of the Confederate advance, “the brigade again rallied, and drove the enemy from the field at the point of the bayonet,” wrote Captain Abram Lockwood of Kingston (Co. A in the 120th) in his post-battle report to headquarters. “With one wild yell we rallied to our collors and drove them back like chalf before the wind,” wrote Eseck Wilber. Brigade commander Colonel William R. Brewster later reported that he led a countercharge, which included some men of the 120th, into the enemy and succeeded in recapturing three Northern cannons and a number of Confederate prisoners. The men participating in these countercharges crossed Plum Run valley three times that day, advancing, retreating, and advancing again.⁴¹

At the other end of the battlefield, the Confederate assault on Culp’s Hill also ran out of daylight and eventually petered out in the darkness.

Of 427 men engaged on July 2, the 120th New York suffered thirty killed and another 173 wounded or missing, a casualty rate of 47.5 percent.⁴²

Greene County men killed that afternoon near Emmitsburg Road included farmer Isaac Cornell (Co. K), apprentice millwright Corporal George Tibbals (Co. K), Captains Hollister and Barker (Co. D and Co. K, respectively), and seven others (with age at death):

Francis Dedrick (19)	Coxsackie	Co. D
Dennis McCloskey (31)	Durham	Co. K
William Abrams (41)	Greenville	Co. K
Stephen Hann (23)	Prattsville	Co. D
William Bell (22)	Catskill	Co. F
Orrin Hotchkiss (20)	Catskill	Co. F
William Rose (28)	Catskill	Co. F

The wounded from Greene County numbered at least forty-four.

Captain Theodore Overbaugh of Catskill (Co. F) and Truman Wheeler of Durham (Co. K) were wounded and died later in 1863. If we consider their wounds to have been mortal, that brings the number of Greene County fatalities from the battle to at least thirteen.⁴³

There is one more death to note, one hard for us today to believe, but which would not have been surprising at all to those who lived through the Civil War: a Greene County native mortally wounded in the service of the Confederacy. Edgar G. Baker was born in Greenville in 1833, the son of Luman and Hannah Palmer Baker. He went south for work in New Orleans and ended up in the 21st Mississippi Regiment for Lee’s invasion of the North. The 21st Mississippi was involved in the fight to the southeast of the 120th, so Baker was probably not in direct combat with men he may have known as a boy, two of whom (William Abrams and Ayres Barker) were killed that day.

Shot through the lungs, Baker died on July 11 at a makeshift hospital on “Mr. Crawford’s farm” about 4.5 miles south of Gettysburg. A chaplain who was the last to

speaking with Baker wrote his family a letter telling them that he was buried in the tenant garden on Crawford's farm.⁴⁴

At day's end, the Union and Confederate lines opposite Cemetery Ridge were in the same place they had been at the beginning except that the Union held the Round Tops and the Confederate line included the Peach Orchard and the foot of Little Round Top, called Devil's Den. The Peach Orchard provided no advantage to the South on the third day of battle. Sickles had been wrong that the occupation of the Peach Orchard by the Confederates would cause great problems for the Northerners. Longstreet's chief of artillery, Col. E. P. Alexander, wrote at length of the inadequacy of the position.

All the vicinity of the Peach Orchard, any how, was very unfavorable ground for us, generally sloping toward the enemy. This exposed all our movements to his view, & our horses, limbers, & caissons to his fire. If any who read this ever go over that ground, & then see the beautiful ridge positions from which the enemy could answer us, with more & bigger guns, & better ammunition, I know we will have their sympathies. I studied the ground carefully for every gun, to get the best cover that the gentle slopes, here & there, would permit, but it was generally poor at the best.... And from the enemy's position we could absolutely hide nothing.⁴⁵

The night of July 2 "was calm and beautiful"; Alexander remembered it as "a glorious moonlight night." Several men of the 120th went out with the doctors and stretcher bearers to search under the full moon for the wounded.⁴⁶

There was one more day of battle. The men of the 120th were given rations and live cartridges to refill their empty cartridge boxes, spent part of the day under artillery fire, but were otherwise resting observers. On July 4, 1863, the rain came, heavily, for about the entire day. Lee began to withdraw to the south. He was never again to bring war to Union soil.⁴⁷

As a result of the battle at Gettysburg, there were over 7,000 dead men on the field and more than half as many dead horses. Dozens of buildings in and around the little town of 2,500 became makeshift hospitals for the more than 20,000 wounded men left behind by their armies.

Immediately the place attracted many numbers of visitors: the curious from the local area, people from far away trying to find a brother or a friend, newspaper men, souvenir hunters collecting buttons off the clothes of the dead. Although burial parties went to work right away, there was just too much to do and not enough help. For many days after the battle, bodies and parts of bodies lay in the open decomposing. Many of the "buried" had merely been covered with a few shovelfuls of dirt. Visitors to the battlefield wrote about the swollen bodies and blackened faces of the dead, the litter of bedrolls and cartridges and knapsacks and canteens, the terrible smell that drove residents to keep their windows shut. Some witnessed hogs eating dead bodies.⁴⁸

Photographers, including Matthew Brady, arrived within days. On July 6, Timothy O'Sullivan made a picture showing many of the fifty artillery horses killed near the Trostle barn, itself forever scarred by a cannon ball that went through the south wall and out the north wall.⁴⁹



Trostle's Barnyard, July 6, 1863. The 120th passed to the north of this barn as it approached Emmitsburg Road, and then again as it fell back toward Cemetery Ridge. The barn is still extant. Photograph by Timothy O'Sullivan. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

At Medway, Lizzie Miller wrote on July 6: "There are glorious war news. A grand victory. Rebels routed and surrounded by our gallant troops and so the papers read." The first Catskill paper with any news of the battle was the *Examiner*. Its July 4 edition contained just a few lines on the events that had taken place two days earlier, including "The enemy were repulsed" and "our loss was quite large."⁵⁰

On July 9, the Catskill *Recorder-Democrat* provided the first lists of local men killed and wounded at Gettysburg. The exact same list appeared in the *Examiner* two days later. On July 18, a more comprehensive list was published in the *Examiner*; it had been provided by William Plimley (Co. F) of Catskill, Quartermaster-Sergeant for the 120th writing on July 7 from "camp near Middletown Maryland." Some of the people of Greene County heard firsthand accounts of the battle as Gilbert Pettit (Co. F) passed through Catskill (apparently on July 7) on his way home to Lexington, "his wounds not serious."⁵¹

On July 10, from a "camp in the mountains of Maryland," Eseck Wilber got a chance to write the letter from which we have quoted. "Dear Father and Mother I once more take the opportunity of writing a few lines to you to let you know that I am still in the land of the living," he wrote. His "few lines" amounted to about 1,200 words by the time he was finished. Wilber's parents could not have been comforted by his report that in battle a Confederate ball went between his foot and insole, another through his pants and drawers, and a third "glased" the top of his cap.

He closed with: "I am glad you used that money to buy your spoons and you will have something to remember me by if I never return... Kiss Trumy and Hettie for me and tell them I remember them and think of them often. Your affectionate son."

On October 10, Wilber and 114 other men from the 120th were captured near Madison Court House in Virginia. Wilber was taken to Libby Prison in Richmond, then Belle Island and finally to Andersonville. Wilber died at Andersonville on September 15, 1864. He was twenty-four years old. At least fifteen Greene County men from the 120th died while at Andersonville.⁵²

When President Lincoln traveled from Washington to Gettysburg in November to deliver his ten-sentence message at the dedication of the soldiers' cemetery and explain why men had died there, only about a third of those who would eventually be moved from their initial burial place on the battlefield had been reinterred. No doubt errors were made in identification. Markers indicating the presumed final resting places of two Greene County men from the 120th, William Bell and Orrin Hotchkiss, can be seen today in Section 17 in the New York portion of the cemetery—Bell in Row F, number 111; Hotchkiss Row G, number 56. Bell had originally been buried east of Daniel Klinge's farm, probably steps from where he had fallen. The markers of both Bell and Hotchkiss are placed next to markers that read simply "Unknown."⁵³

Almost from the moment he moved the Third Corps on July 2, Sickles began the defense of his decision and his criticism of Meade. In February 1864, when Congress held hearings on Meade's conduct at Gettysburg—he was heavily criticized for letting Lee's army escape the North intact—Sickles was the first to testify. He told the committee that he needed to take the high ground to the front of where Meade had placed him in order to deprive the enemy of it. Lee's hope was to drive the Northerners from Cemetery Ridge—the shank of the fishhook—but Lee's troops never even got to Cemetery Ridge because they had to go through the Third Corps first. The Confederate attack was stopped that day, and it was Sickles and his brave men who had prevented its success, Sickles testified.⁵⁴

Professional courtesy kept that ugly word "insubordination" from ever appearing in any official records. The sacrifice of his leg in combat, and the North's ultimate victory, may be what kept Sickles from being court-martialed. Meade graciously attributed Sickles's actions to "a misapprehension of orders, and not from any intention to act contrary to my wishes." Sickles characterized Meade's orders as vague and discretionary.⁵⁵

Ultimately, the best thing to happen to Sickles's reputation was Meade's early death, in 1872. Sickles tirelessly promoted his version of history for the rest of his life. Authors and researchers on Gettysburg were lobbied by Sickles, long after Meade's death. In 1890 Sickles became chairman of the New York State Monuments Commission, and in 1891 a member of the Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association, which owned and maintained the battlefield. With the weight of these positions he was further able to institutionalize his point of view.⁵⁶

Sickles's missing leg provided credibility. He was elected to Congress as an old man and awarded the Medal of Honor twenty-eight years after the events of July 2, 1863, for "gallantly" and "vigorously contesting the advance of the enemy." Mark Twain, who knew Sickles well, said "the general valued his lost leg a way above the one that is left.

I am perfectly sure that if he had to part with either of them he would part with the one that he has got."⁵⁷

Sickles became a close friend of Longstreet and wrote an introduction to the book written by Longstreet's widow after her husband's death. When asked once why there was no monument to him at Gettysburg, he said, "The whole damn battlefield is my monument." The last time Sickles was in the newspapers was over \$28,000 missing from Monuments Commission funds. He died in 1914 at the age of ninety-five, the last living corps commander from either side at Gettysburg.⁵⁸

What have the leading Civil War historians said about Sickles's insubordination, which resulted in the death of so many Greene County men?

By preventing Longstreet from moving up Emmitsburg Road as planned, James McPherson says, "Sickles's unilateral move may have unwittingly foiled Lee's hopes."⁵⁹ Shelby Foote makes the same point about Sickles impeding Lee's advance, but he believed Sickles's decision ultimately benefitted Lee: "[Sickles's move] helped to discourage Longstreet's men from attacking as Lee had ordered, straight up the Emmitsburg Road, which probably would have meant utter destruction for them if Sickles had stayed back on the ridge to tear their flank as they went by."⁶⁰

Edwin Coddington and Harry Pfanz have no tolerance for the "it was insubordination, but it was still a good idea" view of McPherson and others. "[Sickles] failed to notify headquarters or his neighbor General Hancock of what he was about to do when he moved his forces without reference to the [rest of the Union line]," writes Coddington. "Even if the position were the best in the world, Sickles put the safety of the whole army in jeopardy." Coddington further notes that the gain of the slightly higher ground at the Peach Orchard did not compensate for Sickles's failure to hold Little Round Top, the high spot overlooking that end of the Union line. Its near capture by the Confederates was a near disaster for the North.⁶¹

Pfanz says:

General Sickles increased the odds of Confederate success when he advanced his Third Corps from its important and relatively secure position on Cemetery Ridge. In doing so he had abandoned vital terrain, isolated his corps, and put the entire army at special risk. It was a grievous error mitigated only by the hard and costly fighting of his corps and by the assistance given it by (the Second and Fifth Corps).⁶²

Like Sickles, many men of the 120th lived the rest of their lives with the consequences of July 2, 1863. Moses Walters' wound resulted in the amputation of his foot. For his trouble, Walters (Co. K) was awarded the position of lighthouse keeper at the Four Mile Point Lighthouse on the Hudson River shoreline between Athens and Coxsackie, where his job involved climbing up and down the ladder that led to the lantern. For others, absence was a reminder. On Hollister Road in Coxsackie, Luther Hollister continued to farm, but without his son Lansing at his side. *Beers's History of Greene County* reported in 1884 that Miner Tibbals was still in the millwright business



Baxter Van Wie of Coxsackie, wounded at Gettysburg. In the early twentieth century, he was at the head of every parade and in the front row of every patriotic observance. Photograph from the collection of Stanley Whitbeck.

with one son, David, when surely there would have been two but for Gettysburg.⁶³

Many veterans of the 120th returned to the battlefield one more time, when a special train of cars took them from Kingston for the dedication of the 120th New York Monument on June 25, 1889. The monument stands today in the area held by the regiment just before the Confederate attack, right beside Sickles Avenue, a roadway created and named when the battlefield became a park after the war.⁶⁴

Frances Adams, who lived into the last decade of the twentieth century, remembered Baxter Van Wie (Co. D), wounded in the foot at Gettysburg, at the head of every parade and in the front row of every patriotic observance when she was a young girl in Coxsackie. A postcard was made of Van Wie waving the American flag in front of his Ely Street home, just north of the original Second Reformed Church. He was the last relic of the Civil War, the last of the Lansing Hollister GAR post, the last man to know the war—not from black and white photographs, but in the blues and greens and reds of his memory.⁶⁵

Ted Hilscher wrote “The Parking Lots of Main Street Catskill,” which appeared in the Spring 2008 issue of *The Hudson River Valley Review*. He is an assistant professor of History and Government at Columbia Greene Community College, the New Baltimore town historian, and trustee emeritus of the Greene County Historical Society. His son, Jack, had been to Gettysburg four times by the time he was two.

Endnotes

1. The best single volume on Lee’s Pennsylvania invasion is still *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* by Edwin B. Coddington, Charles Scribner’s Sons (1968). Lee enters Pennsylvania at p. 153. The regimental history is C. VanSantvoord *The One Hundred and Twentieth Regiment*, Hope Farm Press (1983).
2. William Frassanito, *Early Photography at Gettysburg*, Thomas Publications, (1995), p. 355 for Confederates at Gettysburg before the battle; pp. 2, 3, and 369 for a discussion of the town before the battle.
3. “The last” was, of course, incorrect. The diaries of Elizabeth Miller can be found at the Vedder Memorial Library, Coxsackie.
4. Subscription list, Town of Windham file, Vedder Research Library; Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals*, Simon and Schuster (2005), 449-450.
5. The 1860 census for Coxsackie gave Hollister’s age as 20; C. VanSantvoord lists him as 25 in 1863. A millwright erected and repaired the machinery as compared to the miller who operated the mill.
6. The census taker in 1860 transcribed Wilber’s first name as Essex, as he heard it, so his first name is probably not pronounced with a long e.
7. Richard A. Sauer, *Gettysburg: The Meade-Sickles Controversy*, Potomac Books (2003), 27; VanSantvoord, 72.
8. Little Round Top is 650 feet above sea level, Big Round Top 750 feet. Elevations from map in Coddington, 264. The Town of Gettysburg is about 500 feet above sea level (*Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Bureau of Topographic and Geologic Survey: Geology and the Gettysburg campaign*).
9. Thomas Keneally, *American Scoundrel*, Doubleday (2002), 17, 20, 30, 59.
10. *Ibid.*, 107-129.
11. *Ibid.*, 166-197.
12. *Ibid.*, 210, 220, 230, 239, 242; *The Second Day at Gettysburg*, edited by Gary W. Gallagher, Kent University Press, (1993), 38, 179 (endnote 5).
13. W.A. Swanberg, *Sickles the Incredible*, Stan Clark Military Books (1991).
14. William Robertson, “Daniel E. Sickles and the Third Corps” from *The Second Day at Gettysburg*, 43-44.
15. Coddington, 342.
16. Richard Moe, *The Last Full Measure*, Henry Holt and Company, (1993), 262; “Meteorology of the Battle, Notes by Rev. Dr. Jacobs”, Library and Research Center, Gettysburg National Military Park.
17. Sauer, 34. Sauer cites the Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War in his endnotes.
18. *Ibid.* Hunt’s Testimony.
19. *Ibid.*, 35; Coddington, 354.
20. Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative: Fredericksburg to Meridan*, Random House (1963), 495-496. Most accounts put Sickles’s advance at about 3 p.m. Robertson in *The Second Day at Gettysburg* puts it at 2 p.m. Col C. D. Westbrook of the 120th wrote in 1900 that the advance occurred at 4 p.m. See “The 120th New York’s Firm Stand on the Second Day at Gettysburg” by C. D. Westbrook, *The National Tribune*, September 20, 1900. Pfanz indicates that Humphreys’ division advanced to within 300 yards of Emmitsburg Road about 1 p.m. and moved up to the road later. Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The Second Day*, University of North Carolina Press (1987), 131-137, 145-147. It is very difficult to piece together one comprehensive narrative from the bits and pieces by witnesses. Reports made by officers and part of the official “record” also must be taken with a grain of salt because of the desire to put one’s conduct in the most favorable light. Judgments have to be made as to what information just doesn’t fit and must therefore be discredited.

The times reported by participants at Gettysburg are famously inconsistent. “The Statements of Time on July 1 at Gettysburg, Pa. 1863” by James Beale (1897) reports for instance that statements on the time of the firing of the opening shots of the battle differ from “a little after sunrise” to “a little past ten,” a variation of five hours.

21. Moe, 266 (dry creek bed). On the other hand, Pfanz (432) reports soldiers filling their canteens from Plum Run after the battle.
22. Coddington, 228 (57 lbs.); Pfanz, 433 (June 30 payday). Soldiers tossed aside equipment on a march, heading into battle, or in battle as each saw fit, and likewise picked up any equipment deemed desirable that was lying about after battle. In *Arms and Equipment of the Civil War*, Dover Publications (2004), Jack Coggins reports (16-17) that soldiers got rid of their knapsacks, and often even their haversacks and cartridge boxes, keeping only a canteen, and extra rounds and all their worldly goods in their blanket roll and pockets. We know what men carried into battle because we know what was found in the field after the battle. Found among the bodies where Pennsylvania men of the Third Corps had fought on July 2 were: “guns, bayonets, bayonet scabbards, cartridge boxes, cartridges, haversacks and canteens,” Frassanito, *Early Photography*, 328; Dean S. Thomas, *Ready Aim Fire: Small Arms Ammunition in the Battle of Gettysburg*, Osborn Printing Co. (1981), 59, for the weapon used by the 120th. A .58 caliber bullet is 58/100 of an inch wide. A dime is about 69/100 of an inch wide.
23. A transcript of Wilber’s letter dated July 10, 1863, is in the vertical file on the 120th at the Library and Research Center, Gettysburg National Military Park.
24. Wilber letter; Pfanz, 146; Tim Smith’s book, *Farms at Gettysburg*, Thomas Publications (2007) discusses briefly and depicts the Trostle, Sherfy, Klingle, Rodgers, and Codori farms. A battlefield monument to Battery K Fourth U.S. Artillery indicates that the brigade went into position at 4 p.m. on the right of Smith’s Log House on Emmitsburg Road. This is south of Klingle’s farm and north of Trostle Lane. Smith’s Log House appears on no maps, and is not mentioned by Tim Smith’s *Farms*.
25. The definitive work is Robert Ensminger, *The Pennsylvania Barn*, John Hopkins University Press (1992); Coddington 156.
26. *Early Photography*, 253; J. S. McNeily, “Barksdale’s Mississippi Brigade at Gettysburg,” *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society* 14 (1914), 235. A map of crop cover existing at the time of the battle is titled “Battlefield Map, Based on a Survey by E. B. Cope,” at the Library and Research Center, Gettysburg National Military Park. The summary of losses to his crop and livestock on a claim filed by Abraham Trostle is found at Gregory Cocco, *A Strange and Blighted Land: Gettysburg the Aftermath of Battle*, Thomas Publications (1995), 364-365.
27. For Lee’s strategy on the second day, Sauers, 39; Coddington 228.
28. Jeffrey C. Hall, *The Stand of the U.S. Army at Gettysburg*, Indiana University Press (2003), 97.
29. Sauers, 41-43.
30. Wilber letter; VanSantvoord, 75; Pfanz, 359-361.
31. Foote, 507.
32. Hall, 142-143; Coddington 405-406; Pfanz 321; Wm. F. Fox, *New York at Gettysburg*, New York Monuments Commission (1902), 53, 55; Hall on the time of Barksdale’s attack, 139.
33. *New York at Gettysburg*, 55; Westbrook, *The National Tribune*; Hall, 139-140. Longstreet’s chief of artillery, Col. E.P. Alexander, saw Barksdale break the Union line and thought “the battle was ours.” He told his men “we would finish the whole war this afternoon.” E.P. Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy*, University of North Carolina Press (1989), 240. Pfanz (348) cites a member of Humphreys’ staff remarking that Northern soldiers were fleeing, broken, and in disorder in Barksdale’s path. A wheel is hard enough to do on a parade ground, let alone under battle conditions. Historian Seward Osborne says the key for a successful wheel is for each soldier to touch elbows with the man to his left and his right.
34. Westbrook, *The National Tribune*; VanSantvoord, 225; Sharpe’s remarks were made at the dedication of the monument to the 120th at Gettysburg, June 25, 1889, *New York at Gettysburg*, 819. Sharpe was a member of Meade’s staff during the battle after serving as regimental commander of the 120th.
35. Westbrook, *The National Tribune*; VanSantvoord, 75; Pfanz, 349.
36. Wilber letter. Egbert Lewis also failed to mention a stone wall, referring instead to “the slope behind which we were lying.” VanSantvoord, 74.
37. Barker and his family are listed in the 1860 Federal census. He and his wife and stepsons are buried in

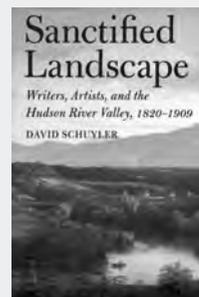
the Greenville Town Cemetery, to the rear of the Episcopal Church on Route 32. On his gravestone his name is spelled “Ayers”; on his wife’s stone it is spelled “Ayres.”

38. Moe (263) citing a letter written by one of the men of the 1st Minnesota.
39. Pfanz, 369-371; Kent Gramm, *Gettysburg: A Meditation on War and Values*, Indiana University Press (1994), 124-126, 132-134; Hall, 142-143; “Report of Lockwood,” *The War of the Rebellion*, Government Printing Office, vol. 27, part 1, 568.
40. Foote, 511; Pfanz 349. Moe’s book is on the 1st Minnesota, which suffered 65-70 percent casualties on July 2. Sunset on July 2 was 7:23 p.m. Almanac time. *New York at Gettysburg*, p 57. It was dark by 8 p.m. In an era before daylight savings, daylight had come that day not long after 4 a.m. Westbrook reported Barksdale as “dying in our lines.”
41. Hall, 144-146; “Report of Brewster,” *The War of the Rebellion*, Government Printing Office, vol. 27, part 1, 559; Wilber letter.
42. VanSantvoord, 326-327.
43. This is a composite list based on VanSantvoord and a list made by William Plimley of Catskill, dated July 7, 1863, and published in the *Catskill Examiner* on July 18. Some of these names were double-checked against the records made by the respective town clerks at the end of the war. The roster of soldiers killed in *New York at Gettysburg* (226) is consistent with VanSantvoord. Plimley reported to the anxious readers back home that McCloskey, Cornell, and Tibbals were wounded; VanSantvoord and *New York at Gettysburg* indicate they were killed in the battle. Perhaps they lingered for a while. *Beers* lists five additional men killed who are not listed in VanSantvoord, clerks’ records from the respective towns, or Plimley: William Hosford (Athens); Lewis Tucker (Coxsackie); and Dwight Hartwell, Robert Hilton, and John Langan (all New Baltimore). (We consider *Beers* to be misinformed as to those five.) The spelling, towns of residence, ages, and companies all come from VanSantvoord.
44. Ray Beecher, “Greene County Gleanings,” *The Greene County News*, January 4, 2001.
45. Alexander, 244-245.
46. VanSantvoord, 75; Alexander, 244.
47. “July 4th—It has been raining all day.” Transcription of Diary of James Krom of High Falls, Ulster Co., Co. C, vertical file of the 120th, Library and Research Center, Gettysburg National Military Park.
48. The most comprehensive source on what Gettysburg looked like following the battle is Gregory A. Cocco, *A Strange and Blighted Land*. References to hogs eating dead bodies are at pp. 73 and 82. According to Pfanz (433), in the moonlight on the evening of July 2 at least one wounded soldier in Devil’s Den saw hogs eating bodies; he forced himself to stay awake out of fear of being eaten alive. See also *Early Photography*, 340-341. Frassanito believes photographs taken after the battle depict corpses partially eaten by hogs.
49. The two photos made of the Trostle barnyard by O’Sullivan are found in William Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time* (1975), 148.
50. “Report of Brewster,” 559; Miller Diary, Vedder Memorial Library; Hall, 257.
51. *Catskill Examiner*, July 4, July 11, and July 18, 1863; *Catskill Recorder-Democrat*, July 9, July 16, 1863.
52. Wilber letter; VanSantvoord: see rosters of Greene County companies.
53. *Early Photography*, 167, 169; John W. Busey, *These Honored Dead*, Longstreet House (1996). The permanent granite markers in use today were installed in the summer of 1865. “The broad arcs formed by the rows of permanent grave markers do not in many instances correspond precisely with the site of each of the temporary wooden markers erected during the actual reburial operation.” *Early Photography*, 173.
54. Sauers, 52.
55. “Report of Meade,” *The War of the Rebellion*, Government Printing Office, vol. 27, part 1, 128.
56. Keneally, 341; James A. Hessler, *Sickles at Gettysburg*, Savas Beatie (2010), 347.
57. *Ibid.*, 344-348.
58. *Ibid.*, 350-353.
59. James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, Oxford University Press (1988), 657.
60. Foote, 507.
61. Coddington, 348, 354.
62. Pfanz, 425.

63. Beers, *History of Greene County*, Hope Farm Press (1983), 409, 460.
64. VanSantvoord, 216-217; Hessler, 327. In the field east of the 120th Monument are two small stone markers purporting by their inscriptions to show the location of the “Left Flank” of the 120th and the “Right Flank.” The markers stand about 1,000 feet apart, with the “Left Flank” marker west of the “Right Flank” marker. If the placement of these markers were accurate, the men of the 120th would have been facing north, with their backs towards Barksdale attacking from the south. Battlefield guide and historian Tim Smith offers this explanation: The 120th originally stood parallel to Emmitsburg Road as the markers originally indicated. When Barksdale’s men wheeled to the north, the 120th was also ordered to change fronts and now was almost perpendicular to Emmitsburg Road. What had been the left flank of the 120th, facing west, was now the right flank, facing south. Veterans of the 120th lobbied for the markers to be moved, to represent the unit’s position in combat against Barksdale. However, the “Left Flank” marker was left in the same location and now represents the “Right flank” location, and the “Right Flank” marker was moved to the “Left Flank” location. The stone wall behind which the 120th greeted Barksdale’s Mississippians is gone, its exact location unknown.
65. Conversations with the late Frances Adams (born 1905). She owned the Van Wie postcard. In records he is referred to as “John B. Van Wie”; Frances Adams called him Baxter. She was born in 1905.

The author would like to thank Tony Appa, Dave Dorpfeld, Seward Osborne, and the peer reviewer for reading drafts of the article and offering valuable comments. Also Lynn Erceg of the Interlibrary Loan Department at Columbia Greene Community College and Sylvia Hasenkopf for her help with Eseck Wilber. Eseck Wilber’s letter is excerpted courtesy of Woodson Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

Scholarly Forum: The Nineteenth-Century Hudson River and National Identity



***Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*, David Schuyler. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012. (206 pp.)**

Editor’s Note: The Hudson River Valley Review has invited authors who have written their own studies of the Hudson to consider and explore the key themes of David Schuyler’s recent work, Sanctified Landscape, particularly in the context of Hudson River Studies. The author’s response follows.

THE ROLE OF THE HUDSON IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY IDENTITY

Frances F. Dunwell

Everyone who has read the books of David Schuyler understands the love he brings to his subject, particularly his writing about Andrew Jackson Downing, the tastemaker of nineteenth-century landscape and architecture. The influence of Downing on American life, which Schuyler has chronicled in previous books and amplifies in his newest book, lasted long after his short, bright life ended in a tragic steamboat accident. As a practitioner of the art of “landscape gardening,” Downing drew inspiration from the beauty of the Hudson River Valley to define a new way of building homes and gardens in a setting that expressed close human relationships with the natural world. He urged Americans to declare their patriotism in making these domestic choices, and people across the country listened. He was a mentor for park designer Frederick Law Olmsted and a business partner of Calvert Vaux. Downing, who was born in Newburgh on the Hudson, left a deep imprint on his native city in homes that are visible today in the city’s historic districts. His memory is celebrated in Downing Park, designed after his death by Vaux and Olmsted. A century later, this legacy was discovered and enjoyed by another Newburgh native, David Schuyler, who has devoted his career to keeping Downing’s ideas alive, showing people how principles of design with nature are relevant today, and exploring the role of design in the development of cities.

In Schuyler’s latest book, *Sanctified Landscape*, the author expands his view to a broader and related topic: the role of writers, artists, and thought-leaders in celebrating

the Hudson River's natural and cultural landscape from 1820 to 1909. Schuyler discusses the role of Hudson River School painter Thomas Cole, Knickerbocker folklorist Washington Irving, as well as Downing and others, in shaping public opinion at a time when America was seeking an identity. He demonstrates that the historical events of the American Revolution in the Hudson River Valley combined with the beauty of the valley to form a sense of place that was memorialized in works of literature, art, landscaping, and architecture. He shows how the rise of international tourism, the invention of the steamboat, and the emergence of American art and literature combined to imprint the Hudson in the minds of Americans and Europeans alike as an idealized cultural landscape that represented the best of the New World and defined what it was to be an American. It was this combination of historical significance with representations of the Hudson in the imagery of landscape painting and in historical fiction that led the Hudson River Valley to become "sanctified" in the period Schuyler describes from 1820 to 1909.

The narrative of *Sanctified Landscape* also traces the thought processes of artists and writers as the expansion of canals and railroads changed the role of the Hudson Valley in the national marketplace at the same time that the region was being celebrated for its history and beauty. Cities of the Hudson Valley, which began as agricultural ports, where wheat was milled and shipped to markets in Manhattan, reinvented themselves in response to the transportation revolution, which connected the Hudson River and New York Harbor to the Midwest. Farm production in the hinterland of the river cities shifted from wheat to more specialized dairy and fruit production. Meanwhile, steam technology led to the growth of industrial facilities in river cities that benefited from the new transportation connections. In the process, the face of the river valley changed: Pollution now spewed into the river and its tributaries, while smoke filled the air. Schuyler observes these trends and explores how nature-loving writers and artists responded to the changes that so dramatically altered the river valley in the nineteenth century, showing how they dealt with conflict but also kept the river valley alive in the national consciousness as a place of natural beauty and historical reverence. Writers like nature essayist John Burroughs introduced legions of Americans to a new way of looking at the world around them, providing an intimate view of birds and flowers that could be experienced by all. His writings prompted deep friendships with President Theodore Roosevelt and industrialist Henry Ford. Roosevelt's conversations with Burroughs influenced his decisions to create national parks and wildlife preserves. All this and more is chronicled in *Sanctified Landscape*.

All good things come to an end, and Schuyler chronicles both the rise of the Hudson in American thought and the period of its decline. An elegy to Kingston painter Jervis McEntee, whose masterful and poetic Hudson River School landscapes dropped suddenly in value, and a chapter offering a sad commentary on the squandered potential of the 1909 Hudson-Fulton Celebration leave the reader wondering what happened. How could a river so beautiful and so steeped in history seemingly lose its sacred values?

The answer lies in the emergence later of an environmental movement that restored this history to American consciousness—a movement based on the legacy of Andrew Jackson Downing, Thomas Cole, and Washington Irving, and a desire to preserve what remained of the river's natural beauty and historical significance.

In *Sanctified Landscape*, Schuyler adds his own imprint to themes that are well established in the literature of the Hudson Valley. He is not the first to draw the connection of the art, literature, and economy of the valley to the emergence of an American identity. These connections were made by Carl Carmer in his 1939 work *The Hudson*. They have been further developed by Raymond O'Brien in *American Sublime*, Hans Huth in *Nature and the American*, and Roderick Nash in *Wilderness and the American Mind*, as well as in the very public records of the Storm King hearings about a power plant proposed for Cornwall on Hudson (which Schuyler quotes) and in more recent books about the river. Instead, Schuyler uses *Sanctified Landscape* to build on these themes and make the case for a renewed appreciation of the Hudson River Valley and its role in setting the course of a new nation.

Where Schuyler excels is in showcasing the importance of his native city. Better than most, he describes the drama of George Washington's speech, penned at the Hasbrouck house in Newburgh and delivered to near-mutinous troops at nearby Temple Hill as they waited for terms of settlement with the British. In his historic speech, Washington reaffirmed the role of the military in support of Congress and refused the idea of establishing a monarchy on American soil, setting our country firmly on the path of self-governance by confronting a moment of doubt. One wonders why every school child is not taught this story as Schuyler tells it. Class trips to Boston's Freedom Trail and the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia should equally include a visit to Washington's Headquarters in Newburgh.

What also makes *Sanctified Landscape* refreshing and new is the perspective Schuyler brings to the growth and change of river cities, his perspective on the way they celebrated their historical connections to the Revolutionary War, and the demographic changes that brought immigrant Irish and Germans into new neighborhoods separate from old Dutch and English ones. His intimate personal knowledge of the City of Newburgh and its history provides insight into the changes that affected all river cities. In discussions of Kingston and Poughkeepsie, he also shows how each city was unique. Schuyler's interest in cities, demographics, and design shines through in these chapters, bridging his interest in the river and its nineteenth-century luminaries with his contemporary interest in the urban environment.

This book leaves off in 1909, before the renewed interest in the history and beauty of the valley began. For example, in the 1990s the Hudson River Valley received designation as a National Heritage Area, and in the 1980s New York State adopted several laws protecting the river. One hopes that Schuyler will explore this in his next book. Meanwhile, he concludes *Sanctified Landscape* with words we would all do well to heed. The people of the nineteenth century "defined the responsibility their genera-

tion shared for protecting the landscape that was so significant in forging . . . a national identity.” This is a responsibility all of us share today, and Schuyler’s book reminds us that we should never forget.

Frances F. Dunwell, is the author of The Hudson: America’s River (2008) and The Hudson River Highlands (1991). She has been active in conservation of the Hudson River since 1975.

THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Roger Panetta

On July 4 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the American Revolution, in an extraordinary historical coincidence, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died at home. Their personal rapprochement in their later years and the rich series of letters it generated is in many ways the coda to the heroic age of the Revolution and the work of the Founding Fathers. Their deaths spoke to the special character of the young republic and mark a defining moment in our national history. The words and actions of the Revolutionary generation become part of our national memory.

In the same year, 1826, Thomas Cole completed *The Falls of the Kaaterskill* for his New York patron William Gracie. This painting built on the initial success of his earlier works and was inspired by his 1825 Hudson River trip and an extended stay in the Catskills. Cole’s star began to rise and his reputation expand just the as the Revolutionary generation and the war receded into national memory. The crises of cultural identity inherent in this moment of national transition engaged the Hudson Valley community of painters and writers who hoped to articulate a sense of identity rooted in the region as the exemplar of the American experience in the New World. In *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*, David Schuyler gives us a vivid and detailed account of the work of this informal community of Hudson River Valley apologists. Schuyler draws on Cole’s “Essay on American Scenery” and his notion that the markers of the revolution “sanctified many a spot.” Unlike John F. Sears’ 1989 work *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century*, which focuses on the national locations already marked as “sacred,” Schuyler explores the intellectual scaffolding that underpins the sanctified Hudson Valley landscape—places from Tarrytown to the Catskills that provide a moral and stylistic idiom of primary national importance.

Beginning with the work of Thomas Cole, who speaks for the artist’s river, we hear his lamentations over the desecration of the natural beauty of the valley’s landscape, the American birthright, under an onslaught of “improvements” that threaten to undermine the crucial role of nature as a moral teacher. The eradication of the sense

of place is not just a physical loss, but for Cole a profound moral dislocation as well. Tourists were seen as interlopers for whom nature was a commodity to be consumed and not a source of moral instruction to be closely followed. To counter this insatiable and rapacious appetite for development, Cole hoped to capture and preserve through his paintings the endangered natural elements of regional areas like the Catskills.

For Washington Irving and Nathaniel Parker Willis, the key publicists for the cause of the sanctified valley, the casualty here was history itself. As the Dutch moment slipped from view, buried under rapid rebuilding in New York City, Irving worried that we had been set adrift in the nineteenth century without a past. He shared with Willis a determination to populate the endangered landscape with historic markers, drawing on folklore and his imagination for inspiration.

A. J. Downing, whom Schuyler has more fully treated in *Apostle of Taste: Andrew Jackson Downing 1815-1852*, grafts Old World ideas on to the river valley and brings landscape gardening to the region. Here we see nature manipulated by human action, of course under Downing’s guiding hand, and providing a domesticated landscape, which helped nationalize the Hudson aesthetic and educate the public taste.

The sanctification of the Hudson River Valley lost its luster by the century’s end. The retreat is evident in the work of Jervis McEntee, who complained about the waning interest in the Hudson River School in the face of internationalism and cosmopolitanism migrating from Europe. McEntee’s modest, small-scale works lacked the panoramic reach of his predecessors and mimicked the shrinking market for his works. The natural world of John Burroughs also turned away from the lordly Hudson toward a more localized view that increasingly seemed inward-looking. McEntee and Burroughs marked the end of the effort to sanctify the river valley.

Schuyler’s portraits of those who sanctified the valley landscape yokes a group of artists and writers together in new and fresh ways and heightens our appreciation of the scope and force of their works. We come to see this as a collective and passionate undertaking. As Schuyler guides us through their arguments and inventories their accomplishment, we see an enterprise characterized by singleness of purpose, commitment to its audience, effective communication, skillful publicity, and a deep and abiding faith in their message.

Schuyler establishes the sanctified landscape as one of the primary discourses in American history. While we have acknowledged the importance of the river and the valley to our national history, Schuyler’s work compels us to see this argument as a central and formative body of ideas not just for the region and the nation, but an argument fundamental to the very process of historical change and its close ally: modernization. While we might at first reading see a vigorous debate over the future of the Hudson River Valley, what is at stake is the essential character and shape of modern civilization—its values and way of life. The language of so much of this discourse comes with an edge that hints at these high stakes.

The proverbial elephant in the *Sanctified Landscape* room is New York City. This

explosive growth machine embodies all the fears, seductions, and raw power of the new age. Coming to terms within new reality is the central preoccupying question of the groups of writers and partners. The desire to contain New York, to keep it off the Hudson and to exclude it from the discourse, treats the city as a postscript. The frame of the discourse Schuyler established extends from Tarrytown to the Catskills, a geographical boundary determined by the residences and the focus of the writers and the painters. Place matters, but the work of these men is in the shadow of the city. Schuyler gives us ample illustration of the important role New York played in their personal and professional lives. He reminds us that New York publishers and collectors provided the patrons and the audience for these sanctifying works. The emerging urban middle class that uses the new technology to explore the sanctified valley feeds the burgeoning tourism. Many of these writers and artists lived in the city, where they established a network of business and cultural associations that sustained the sanctification project. Whether it was paintings or grapes, they found a welcome market in Manhattan.

But they described the city as an unhealthy if not dangerous place. Burroughs calls Pittsburgh the “devil’s laboratory.” They depended on it for many things yet kept New York at arm’s length, offering up a valley landscape as the defining American place disconnected from its intimate urban connections. One wonders whether we are witnessing the proverbial debate between city and country, in which New York and the Hudson Valley serve as the standard bearers.

While the emphasis here is on the creation of an American landscape, the intellectual debt to Europe, especially to England and its capital, is profound. Irving draws heavily on his European travels and a library of continental folk tales in creating many of his Hudson valley characters. Cole, William Bartlett, and Calvert Vaux had English beginnings, while Willis and Downing were inspired by English landscape and aesthetic writings. John Burroughs was smitten with England and fascinated by London. These connections are such fundamental sources in creating the sacred landscape that we must begin to consider this an Anglo-American phenomena in which the heavy American borrowings challenge the notion of originality. Indeed, we might consider whether this constitutes a manufactured identity, a kind of culture graft onto the Hudson River valley in the service of an increasingly disaffected elite.

We hear the disaffection of these artists and writers in their language. One of the most contested words is “improvements”—it is the surrogate for modernization and the machine in the garden. It is the watchword for the new age of manufacturing in which change is the obsession and nature the casualty. They believe our groundlessness disrespects tradition, discards history, and threatens the very idea of civilization as we have come to know it. These repeated lamentations over “debased value,” “insensate multitude,” “sinfulness and soullessness,” “the absurd and the foolish,” according to Schuyler, set an apocalyptic tone, which becomes especially shrill with McEntee at century’s end.

We need to consider what the ideas reveal about the cultural moment and the

pressure it exerted on the writers and artists of the valley. It is not surprising that they felt called to educate the masses, which gave so much of their work a didactic quality. The task of uplifting the masses was urgent, for all around the forces of progress and profit were rewriting history. Burroughs complained that only a few could truly see nature. Downing was on a crusade to improve American taste. Schuyler reminds us of their hope to raise the level of social civilization by employing the Hudson River Valley as their laboratory.

The discourse of the sacred landscape is the centerpiece of a contested history. What should we remember of the past? How should we preserve and revere it? The passionate commitment of these writers and artist bears witness to the crucial nature of the discourse of sacred landscape.

Roger Panetta is a professor of History at Fordham University and coauthor of *The Hudson: An Illustrated Guide to the Living River*.



LANDSCAPE, HISTORY, AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY HUDSON RIVER

Thomas S. Wermuth

It was in the early nineteenth century that the Hudson River Valley emerged as a symbol of America’s national identity and potential destiny. A group of landscape painters led by Thomas Cole travelled up and down the valley painting its varied landscapes while authors James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving began connecting their fiction to the region’s history and folklore. Thousands of Americans and Europeans began viewing these paintings and reading these stories, which soon led to the Hudson becoming one of America’s first major tourist destinations, with many visiting the Highlands, the Catskills, and the Revolutionary “ruins” of forts and garrisons that lined the river.

How did this happen? How had the Hudson emerged, as Fran Dunwell has described, as the “focus of a quest for national identity”?* Further, why did it happen when it did? David Schuyler’s *Sanctified Landscape* employs an innovative interdisciplinary approach to explore the role the Hudson River Valley played in American history and, indeed, the unique role it played in helping to define American national identity in the nineteenth century. Both the seasoned scholar of the river and the interested “amateur” attempting to learn something about the Hudson’s history and culture will be impressed with the author’s achievement.

Schuyler’s novel approach is to investigate the valley from the vantage point of several disciplines—looking at authors, painters, and landscape architects, while also approaching the region thematically. As he points out, the young United States had relatively little history to speak of nor a distinctive cultural identity, and could not

*Fran Dunwell, *The Hudson: America’s River* (New York, 2008), p.69.

compete with Europe historically, culturally, or aesthetically. What the young nation did have in great abundance was nature: a beautiful landscape, with rivers, mountains, coves, and large stretches of land providing fuel for the creative imagination. The Hudson River offered each of these things and one more: what little history the young nation had, the Hudson contained some of its most important and significant parts. With its unique seventeenth- and eighteenth-century history, it stood apart from the other regions of the young United States. It was the only North American colony of the original thirteen not settled by the English, or by English speakers, and was dominated by a quasi-feudal system of land ownership. But more than this, as Schuyler makes clear, it was seen as a sacred place, “the sanctified landscape.” It contained the central battlegrounds of the American Revolution and the picturesque landscape that, for many, symbolized America’s identity.

Schuyler argues convincingly that during the nineteenth century, history and landscape became interconnected in the American consciousness, and it was the Hudson River that emerged as the iconic symbol. America’s leading painters and writers began to interpret the river as “a place of transcendent importance to regional and national cultural identity.” (3) From the 1820s to the 1850s, the Hudson had emerged as the symbol for American identity—an inspiring landscape celebrated in hundreds of works by the leading lights of American painting: Cole, Asher Durand, Sanford Robinson Gifford, Frederic Church, and many others. William Guy Wall’s *Portfolio* and Benjamin Lossing’s *The Hudson, From Wilderness to Sea* identified it as the place to visit, and no less than the New England-ophile Timothy Dwight, future president of Yale, said the Hudson was “unrivaled by anything of the same nature within my knowledge.” Thousands travelled up the river to visit its historic sites and hotels; thousands of others viewed the painters’ work at the New York Art Union and other exhibition halls, while those of greater means commissioned original works from the artists. Cooper and Irving, two of America’s leading pre-Civil War authors, situated their fiction there, using real events and people to support their fictional stories of war and folklore. They used the raw ingredients of the valley to create a history, a folklore, and an art form that transcended the region and took on complicated meanings for American culture, helping to exemplify the process of national self-definition.

Schuyler makes many contributions in this beautifully written and sensitively detailed study. Among the most important is his very first chapter, “The Tourists’ River,” where he delivers a convincing reading of the ways Americans in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries began to view the Hudson—as something more than a river or a landscape, but in fact a metaphor connoting the promise of America. Schuyler expands on his own previous work on Andrew Jackson Downing to connect him more fully to the artistic moment that was shaping the Hudson River Valley in the mid-nineteenth century. Who more than Downing epitomizes the valley’s emergence as an iconic “cultivated” landscape—a landscape architect who put his artistic vision to use in reshaping the landscape itself?

Schuyler’s treatment of the Hudson River artists is refreshing. He chooses to view them through the first and most famous, Thomas Cole, and by looking at one of the last recognized practitioners, Jervis McEntee, whose best work occurred as the Hudson River painters were declining in popularity. It is a novel approach, all the more so because Schuyler’s use of Cole is really more about the combination of his written work (especially his “Essay on America Scenery”) with his landscapes. Cole’s work was magisterial and shifted from the larger metaphorical studies revealed in the *Course of Empire* to his clearly political work seen in the Catskills. But in one of Schuyler’s most important contributions, it was clear that the majestic Hudson the painters were drawing and the tourists were visiting was under attack from “the ravages of the axe.” Indeed, in the excellent chapter on Cole, we see the painter (and writer) attempt to galvanize a defense of the Hudson from the multiple predators of tanneries, railroads, improvements, and even the tourists whose demands on the landscape were threatening its future. In this light, it is impossible to see the work of Cole and many of the other nineteenth-century painters outside of the political and economic developments of the period in which they lived and produced their work.

Schuyler balances his analysis of the environment and the aesthetic with a keen understanding of its relationship to the social and economic changes taking place. By exploring the aesthetic and literary developments, but doing so with a watchful eye on the social and economic developments that were transforming the economy, society, and, indeed, the environment of the valley, he gives meaning to the emergence of the cultural uses of the region as a symbol of something bigger than a mere collection of farms and villages. All of these changes were intertwined to the emerging artistic and travel developments that helped define the region. Indeed, Schuyler recognizes the symbiotic relationship between the new emerging market economy and the changing culture, language of description, and activities of the travellers. He eloquently describes how the heart of the nineteenth-century preservationist movement was in the valley, and that the writing, painting, and tourism can be viewed as a reaction to the threat of change represented by the major social and economic developments transforming the world of the nineteenth-century American.

Questions that the interested reader might fairly ask Schuyler include how wide and deep into the American population was this craving for a national identity and how much of the nation envisioned the Hudson Valley as a symbol of American identity? The “Old South” probably had a different view, and its cultural brokers tended to posit an alternate vision for America. Others were already promoting the American West (or “Old Northwest”) as America’s future. It is not clear how many of the landscape tourists or even the visitors to the New York art galleries exhibiting the Hudson River painters shared the view of this artistic elite.

These questions reveal the power of Schuyler’s interpretation, reorienting the reader to the way the Hudson emerged at the forefront as part of the process of national self-definition. Schuyler’s work introduces a new interpretive standard for the region

with which future students of the Hudson's art, literature, and history must contend. His rich interdisciplinary approach, his skilled use of the findings of recent social and economic historians, and his thoughtful interpretation of the way the Hudson's landscape and history became intertwined offer readers an innovative reinterpretation of this important region.

Thomas S. Wermuth is vice president of Academic Affairs at Marist College and coeditor of America's First River: The History and Culture of the Hudson River Valley (2009).

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SANCTIFIED LANDSCAPE:
RESPONSE FROM THE AUTHOR
David Schuyler

It is a privilege to have *Sanctified Landscape* be the subject of a forum in the *Hudson River Valley Review*, and especially to have scholars whose work I admire and have learned from take a fresh look at the book. I am grateful for this opportunity, and for the thought that Roger Panetta, Thomas Wermuth, and Frances Dunwell have given to my work.

Roger Panetta raises several interesting points. One is the relationship of the people in the mid-Hudson Valley who are the subjects of *Sanctified Landscape* to New York City, which was experiencing tremendous growth in population, largely as a result of immigration, and of course had by 1820 become the nation's dominant commercial metropolis. Yes, artists migrated from summer houses in the valley to the city during the winter and spring months, and hoped to sell their art to collectors who benefited from New York's expanding economy. So too did writers rely on New York City publishers to bring their works to a national audience. Even as they worried about the city's growth and power, and generally denounced urban life as being divorced from the healthful aspects of the country, the writers and artists were part of a metropolitan, really a cosmopolitan, culture. Downing may have believed that the only reason to live in a city was to make enough money to retire to the country, but, as was true of other artists and writers, his career depended on the metropolis to the south. This anti-urban strain is a fertile tension and one that continues to affect our national discourse: I recall that during New York City's fiscal crisis of the 1970s, when I was in graduate school on Morningside Heights, some members of Congress resisted the very idea of federal aid because the city was so un-American.

Panetta also raises the question of how deeply Europe in general and England in particular influenced the individuals who sanctified the Hudson River Valley and raises the possibility that this was a "manufactured identity." To be sure, Irving drew upon European folklore, but he situated his best-known stories in the local landscapes

of Tarrytown and the Catskills. Downing recognized that the United States could not develop a distinctive national style of architecture and landscape design out of whole cloth, and so he consciously "adapted" English designs to the climate and social structure of republican America. And while painter Thomas Cole and architect Calvert Vaux were born in England, this was hardly unusual in a nation of immigrants (though, as Tim Barringer pointed out in a recent essay, Cole's American works, and his appreciation of the landscape, were deeply influenced by the industrial landscapes of his native land).¹

Panetta also notes, with greater emphasis than I conveyed in *Sanctified Landscape*, the didactic quality of the language these cultural leaders employed, which was both a reflection of the urgency of their message and their fond hope for a higher level of civilization, which they expected would result in a greater respect for the landscape. That these writers and artists succeeded in creating a national discourse on the human relationship with the natural world was undoubtedly their greatest, though admittedly fleeting, accomplishment.

Thomas Wermuth raises the essential question of how much the Hudson Valley really was central to America's national identity, and points to the Old South and the Old Northwest as possible alternatives. William R. Taylor long ago posited the clear distinction between Northern and Southern cultures in the antebellum years,² and those distinctions were real. At the same time, many of New York City's merchants were engaged in a lucrative trade with the cotton-producing states, so much so that Frederick Law Olmsted and his friends referred to the city's leading business newspaper, the *Journal of Commerce*, as the "Journal of Cotton."³ Surely some of these wealthy merchants acquired Hudson River School paintings and read the works of Irving and Cooper. The same may be said for the Old Northwest: Frederic Church exhibited *Heart of the Andes* (1859) in St. Louis, as part of its national tour, where the young Mark Twain described it as "the most wonderfully beautiful painting which this city has ever seen."⁴ As the New York art market shifted away from the ascendancy of the Hudson River School in the 1870s and '80s, Church's former student, Jervis McEntee, shipped some of his paintings to several cities in the Midwest and South, though without much apparent success, at least in terms of sales. Downing's influence extended not only to the South—he designed the grounds of Joel R. Poinsett's estate in South Carolina and had a following in Georgia—but also as far west as Fort Dalles, Oregon, where Captain Thomas Jordan drew upon *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850) for the design of several buildings.⁵ The distribution of Hudson Valley scenes by the New York lithographers Nathaniel Currier and James Ives also undoubtedly spread what began as a regional aesthetic across the nation.

Still, Wermuth is right to question how deeply this aesthetic penetrated the national consciousness. As I concede in *Sanctified Landscape*, the phenomenon I analyzed was really the product of an educated elite, and while there are strong indications that their writings and paintings and designs for houses and gardens did indeed influence national taste, it may well be that this influence extended only to elites in far-flung places

who aspired to the taste of the valley and the metropolis. In any case, we simply don't know enough about how most visitors to exhibitions or readers of Irving and Cooper responded to what they encountered—whether they shared the interpretation I (and other scholars) have placed on their work or whether they simply followed the crowd, looked at a nice landscape, and read an interesting story.

Frances F. Dunwell, the author of two excellent books about the Hudson, points to the importance of the Revolutionary War and the beginnings of historic preservation in the valley. The depth and endurance of public memory in the Hudson Valley was the real surprise for me as I was researching *Sanctified Landscape*. I knew about Washington's Headquarters, the first building in the United States preserved for its historic significance (1850), and remember from my childhood the Fourth of July parades that marched down Broadway in Newburgh and ended with ceremonies at the old Hasbrouck house. But I confess that I always assumed that this was a local phenomenon rather than one of national import. The sheer number of paintings of the Hasbrouck house, by well-known Hudson River School painters as well as by long-forgotten amateurs, testifies to the degree to which nineteenth-century Americans valued this simple vernacular structure as a national icon. I recall teaching a summer seminar at the New York State Historical Association a number of years ago, and almost parenthetically I spoke about, and showed a slide of, the Hasbrouck house. As the students and I toured the Fenimore Museum just after the class we came upon three paintings of the house, with Storm King and the Hudson Highlands in the distance, on a single wall. One hundred and thirty years ago that building did indeed claim national significance as the place where, confronted with Louis Nicola's suggestion that the United States become a constitutional monarchy and the Newburgh letters, in which the officers threatened to march the army on Philadelphia to force the Continental Congress to issue their long overdue pay, Washington secured the nation's future as a republic. Although this simple stone house is largely forgotten today, Dunwell is absolutely correct: Washington's Headquarters should be promoted as one of the crown jewels among New York State's historic sites.

Dunwell, like Panetta, also points to the significance of the artists and writers as establishing the foundations for an environmental ethic that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. Although we have never discussed this, I suspect that the conclusion of *Sanctified Landscape*, together with her own longstanding interests, may have led Dunwell to point to the need to carry the narrative into the twentieth century and examine the key role the Hudson Valley played in the development of American environmental law and policy. That's exactly what I plan to do next—as soon as I finish my current project, editing the final chronological volume of *The Frederick Law Olmsted Papers, The Last Great Projects, 1890-1895*.

David Schuyler is Arthur and Katherine Shadek Professor of the Humanities and Professor of American Studies at Franklin & Marshall College.

Endnotes

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2. William R. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character* (New York, 1962).
3. Olmsted to Charles Loring Brace, Jan. 11, 1851, in *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, vol. 1: The Formative Years, 1822-1852*, ed. Charles Capen McLaughlin and Charles E. Beveridge (Baltimore, 1977), p. 367.
4. Mark Twain is quoted in John K. Howat, *Frederic Church* (New Haven, 2005), p. 86.
5. David Schuyler, *Apostle of Taste: Andrew Jackson Downing, 1815-1852* (Baltimore, 1996), pp. 78, 227-28; Catherine Howett, "Crying Taste in the Wilderness: Disciples of Andrew Jackson Downing in Georgia," *Landscape Journal* 1 (Spring 1982): 15-22.



Jacques Milbert, *Extremity of (H)Adley's Falls, Hadley Falls*, Plate No. 27

From Picturesque to Profane:

A Cultural History of the Hudson River's Palmer Falls

Stephen Cernek

In the nineteenth century, Palmer Falls was a much visited, painted, and photographed destination on the upper Hudson River, but its natural splendor was eventually lost to industrial expansion. The Hudson between New York City and Albany has been described in many travel narratives, tourist guides, and histories, however the upper Hudson, from Glens Falls north to the river's source in the Adirondacks, was less traveled and more obscure. Books like Timothy Dwight's *The Northern Traveler* (1825)¹ and *American Scenery: or, Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (1840)², documented the river, but only as far as Glens Falls before their authors described routes north to Lake George and Lake Champlain that skirted the Adirondacks on the east, missing the picturesque upper Hudson. Because of its remote location and lack of coverage by such authors, the story of Palmer Falls is virtually unknown.

Many narratives that described the upper Hudson confirmed that some of its most dramatic scenery was at Palmer Falls, just a few miles upriver from the commercial center of Glens Falls, whose many sawmills processed the Adirondacks logs that flowed



Jacques Milbert, *General View of the Hudson at (H)Adley's*, Plate No. 29

down the Hudson each spring. Located just inside the current Adirondack Park blue line and within the Town of Corinth, Palmer Falls was most commonly reached from the south by road from Saratoga Springs or Ballston Spa. Referred to as Hadley Falls, Jessup's Falls, and Great Falls at different times by writers, Palmer Falls was considered the Hudson River's "great falls" for much of the nineteenth century. In less than half a mile, the Hudson dropped over 100 feet and flowed past towering palisades, and through a rocky gorge, before making a final eighty-foot plunge over Palmer Falls, the highest natural drop on the entire river.

The first mention of the falls appeared in William Douglass's 1760 history of the British colonies, *A Summary, Historical and Political, of the First Planting, Progressive Improvements, and Present State of the British Settlements in North America*, where the author referred to it as both "great falls" and "elbow falls."³ Douglass did not provide a description of the falls, but other textual and oral accounts of the upper Hudson in subsequent decades had driven artists to the location by the 1810s. The first visual representations of the Palmer Falls section of the Hudson appeared in two richly illustrated chronicles of the river, William Guy Wall's *A Hudson River Portfolio* (1820)⁴ and Jacques Gérard Milbert's *Itinéraire pittoresque du fleuve Hudson* (1826)⁵. These portfolios, which visually documented sections of the upper Hudson River decades before it was fully transformed by industrial and hydroelectric development, serve as fixed points by which to gauge the transformation of the Adirondacks and the upper Hudson that occurred during the nineteenth century.

Milbert's lithographs are the earliest known visual images of what then was known as Hadley Falls. They date to 1816, prior to Beriah Palmer's purchase of the land on each side of the falls that resulted in their present name. Milbert's Plate No. 27, *Extremity of*

[H]Adley's Falls, depicts a primeval site being discovered by surrogate adventurers who appear as diminutive figures at left in the image.⁶ Strikingly different is Milbert's Plate No. 29, which renders the falls and its upriver cliffs, but then shows sawmills in operation at its lower margins.⁷ In the journal Milbert kept during his Hudson River journey, he wrote with equal interest about the lumbering operations at the base of



William Guy Wall, *Hadley's Falls*, Plate No. 5



William Guy Wall, *Rapids Above Hadley Falls*, Plate No. 4



Staffordshire Dessert Plate (ca. 1830)

the falls as he did the falls themselves.⁸ Altogether, Milbert included four lithographs of the Palmer Falls section of the Hudson in his portfolio.

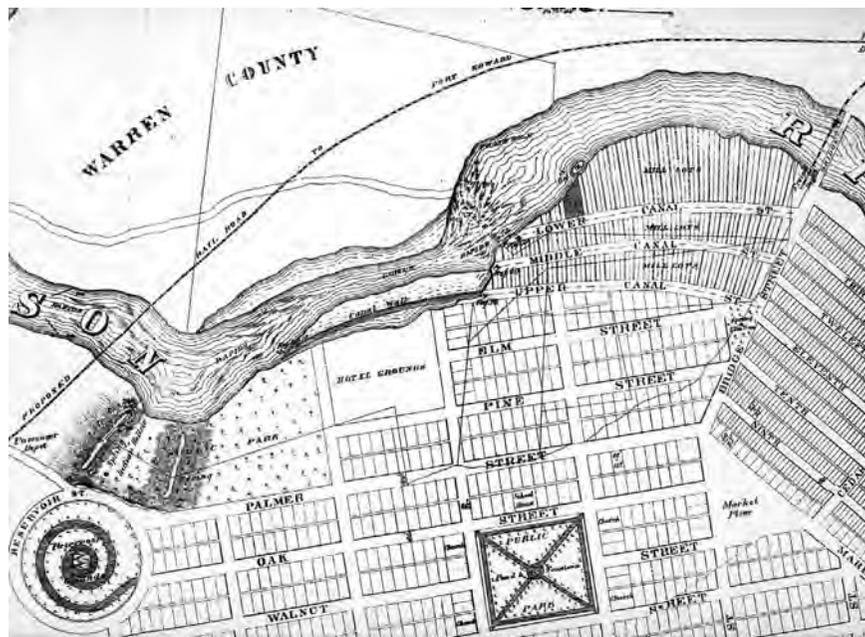
William Guy Wall's images of Palmer Falls that appear in his *Hudson River Portfolio* were made later than Milbert's, but were published first, in 1821, and are regarded as an influence on the Hudson River School of painters. By containing fewer figures and richer foliage in his images (particularly Plate No. 5, *Hadley Falls*), Wall rendered a distinctively more primeval Hudson River than Milbert.⁹ Several of Wall's lithographs from his *Portfolio*, including Plate No. 4, *Rapids Above Hadley's Falls*,¹⁰ would appear on Staffordshire pottery manufactured in England in the 1830s.

The publication of Wall's *Portfolio* generated both aesthetic and travel interest in the upper Hudson River Valley. A writer in *The New York Mirror and Literary Gazette* in 1824 described the rocks, rapids, and foliage in Wall's Palmer Falls prints as wild and sublime, conveying "the most effective idea of romantic loneliness."¹¹ Horatio Gates, writing in the *Gazetteer of the State of New York* in 1824, acknowledged that while mills were located around Palmer Falls, "these works of nature well deserve the notice of the curious." He suggested that visitors could travel to them easily from Ballston Spa, some eighteen miles away. The *Gazetteer* took specific notice of a narrow gorge just above the falls where the river was compressed into a space "hardly 12 feet wide, and about 20 inches length, through which, at low water, all the waters of the Hudson are forced to pass, with astonishing rapidity."¹² In *The Fashionable Tour: A Guide to Travelers Visiting the Middle and Northern States, and the Provinces of Canada*, published

in 1833, Gideon Davidson suggested that travelers take a carriage from Saratoga Springs to Palmer Falls, where “the whole scenery is highly romantic and picturesque.” The primary itinerary in Davidson’s guide, like most at the time, recommended traveling directly from Glens Falls north to Lake George. However, the book featured a two-page footnote that described Palmer Falls in detail and suggested travelers divert from the preferred route to enjoy the view.¹³

Travelers who visited Palmer Falls during late summer and fall were not likely to see much water, so they got an excellent view of the exposed, rocky ledges of the river bottom above the falls—including the twelve-foot-wide crevice first mentioned by Horatio Gates. In 1842, Ebenezer Emmons noted in his *Geology of New York; Part II Comprising the Survey of the Second Geological District* that one could cross the Hudson over a plank spanning the crevice; many people chose a more secure passage via upriver ferry.¹⁴ The crevice also receives mention in *A Geographical History of the State of New York*, published in 1848. Its authors describe it as a “remarkable sluice 120 yards above, twelve yards long and four wide, through which the great body of water flows with great velocity.” Visitors found the river above Palmer Falls visually appealing even during the low-water months because they could see the entire Hudson descend through this space.¹⁵

The exposed rock ledges above Palmer Falls figured prominently in at least one local folktale. According to legend, Edward Jessup—a committed Tory who with his two brothers owned thousands of acres along the upper Hudson—jumped across the crevice to escape arrest by the sheriff of Albany at the outbreak of the American Revolution.¹⁶



Palmer Falls Water Power Company Map, 1858 (detail)

The tale, which appears in several nineteenth-century texts, suggests that the crevice had become a well-known local landmark decades before the Hudson’s ledges above Palmer Falls were described in travel narratives. Interestingly, the earliest account of Jessup’s exploit positions the leap five miles upriver at Luzerne, where the family had built a house. The falls on the Hudson at Luzerne often was called Jessup’s Little Falls, with the larger one downriver known as Jessup’s Big Falls. Subsequent writers retelling the earliest account could have confused the two falls, or perhaps the tale was relocated to Palmer Falls when the site achieved increased notoriety.



View of the Palmer Falls-Hudson River. Prospectus of the Palmer Falls Water Power Company

The first potential threat to the natural landscape at Palmer Falls came in 1858 when the Palmer Falls Water Power Company was formed. Its plans called for building a canal to divert water from the Hudson above the falls to lots that would be leased to other companies. The canal was to be constructed atop the river bottom ledges that had long fascinated travelers, using the palisades on the south side of the river for one of the walls. In its *Prospectus* for the project, the company even sketched out a planned community that included public parks, a marketplace, a hotel, and lots designated for schools and churches, much in the spirit that drove the Amoskeag Company’s design for the city of Manchester, New Hampshire.¹⁷

The onset of the Civil War and the unlikely prospect that the Hudson could furnish power to the dozens of mill lots shown in the company’s plan during the river’s low-water months certainly contributed to the failure of the Palmer Falls Water Power Company to develop its industrial site and planned community, despite an image included in its *Prospectus* for potential investors that showed the Hudson raging over the falls. Not only did the image inaccurately depict the geologic structure of Palmer Falls, but the volume of water raging over it would only have been possible during the spring run-off in April and May. Photographs of Palmer Falls taken a decade later documented the reduced water level of the Hudson in summer and fall, exposing the enterprise’s misrepresentations.

The transformation of Palmer Falls that would affect how it was represented in images and written descriptions began in 1869 when the Hudson River Pulp Company leased land adjacent to the falls. Mills of one kind or another had been located at the base of the falls since 1804, but only the water from its lower margins had been used for power. An edge tool factory and woolen mill occupied the pulp mill site in 1859, but their limited use of the Hudson for power did not compromise the rocky ledges that defined the falls. The emerging pulp and paper industry, which would be built on a new technology for making paper pulp from mechanically ground wood, would demand much more from the river.

The transformation of the American paper industry after the Civil War resulted from the development of mechanically produced wood pulp. Albrecht, Alberto, and Rudolph Pagenstecher brought two German-made Keller-Voelter wood grinders to the United States in 1866. A year later, they began producing wood pulp near Curtisville, Massachusetts, powering their grinders with the water from a small river in the Berkshires. While local paper manufacturers initially were reluctant to transition from cotton rags to wood for paper pulp, the lower cost of softwood logs as a raw material soon won them over. The Pagenstechers and their business partners (who built a second mill at Curtisville) soon began to manufacture their own wood grinders and collect royalty payments by renting the machines to other pulp manufacturers. By 1868 they had constructed a third pulp mill at Luzerne on the Hudson River, about 100 miles from Curtisville.¹⁸

While the precise reason for the selection of the distant Luzerne site is not known, it is likely that the Pagenstechers wanted to experiment with a modified grinder design out of sight of their Berkshire competitors. The distant Adirondacks location might have been selected during a vacation trip to Lake Luzerne, a popular southern Adirondacks tourist destination with a distinctive European flair that would have appealed to the Pagenstechers' German heritage. In fact, the Rockwell Hotel, where the Pagenstechers might have stayed, overlooked the site where their small pulp mill eventually was constructed. This is conjecture, of course, but the idea that the Pagenstechers selected the Luzerne site to assure secrecy for their Keller-Voelter improvements is supported by a claim made by two historians. One asserts that the wood grinder constructed at Luzerne was the first American-made version. The other describes a highly competitive entrepreneurial environment in the Berkshires, where eleven patents for improvements to wood pulping technology were issued in the 1870s.¹⁹

Located on a small yet powerful stream that emptied out of Lake Luzerne into the Hudson River, the Luzerne pulp mill had limited development potential—which makes the enterprise even more probable. While the Pagenstechers might have used the Adirondacks site to experiment with the first American-made wood grinder, production of the pulp machines that would be rented out to other pulp manufacturers occurred at Curtisville.²⁰ Besides access to cheap raw materials that the Adirondacks would provide, the Pagenstechers understood that they needed greater waterpower if they were going to scale up production to meet the growing demand for wood pulp. They needed only to look five miles downriver to discover Palmer Falls.

By 1869, the Pagenstechers and their new business partner, New York's Senator Warner Miller, had founded the Hudson River Pulp Company and commenced operations at Palmer Falls by leasing a mill site from the Palmer Falls Water Power Company.²¹ Initially, limited waterpower was provided to the pulp mill by a crude wooden raceway; after adding paper machines a few years later, the demand for greater waterpower resulted in the construction of a wood and stone crib dam above Palmer Falls in 1877. The dam was angled upriver above the falls to channel water to the mill, located on the south



C.W. Woodward Stereograph. *Hudson River Above Palmer Falls*

bank of the river, preserving the ledges that made up the falls' eighty-foot drop. The dam was augmented by a tailrace in 1880 that increased the useable power from the falls.²² Crib dam construction meant that the upriver ledges were now underwater for more months of the year, but the rocks that defined Palmer Falls still remained intact and visible.

The commercial production of stereographs after the Civil War ensured that a photographic record of Palmer Falls and its upriver rapids would be preserved before the Hudson River at the site was fully transformed for industrial use. Several images of Palmer Falls appeared in stereograph series on the Adirondacks and Hudson River scenery that were created in the 1870s. A popular stereograph of the Hudson River above Palmer Falls made by C.W. Woodward appeared in no fewer than three different stereograph series. Taken during a low-water period, the image shows a man and child alongside a large log that remains lodged in the rocks from a spring logging drive. The ledge bottom of the Hudson lies exposed far into the background of the image, while the narrowing of the river in the foreground hints at—but does not show—the location

of the twelve-foot crevice across which Edward Jessup purportedly escaped from his pursuers. This photograph, perhaps more than any other, undercut the waterpower claims that had been made for the falls in the 1850s by the Palmer Falls Water Power Company.²³

The Glens Falls based photographers George Conkey and Seneca Ray Stoddard, both of whom produced commercial stereographs of the Hudson River and the Adirondacks, made images of Palmer Falls around 1870. Stoddard was the more lyrical of the two, using single surrogate figures to convey feelings of solitude and reflection. His *Up the River from Palmer Falls* was taken slightly downriver from the spot where C.W. Woodward made his photograph.



Seneca Ray Stoddard, *Up the River from Palmer's Falls*

Stoddard also took several photographs of the pulp and paper mill at the falls. They show the crude wooden raceway that powered the early pulp mill, as well as the stone building that housed production machinery. The stereographs of Woodward, Conkey, and Stoddard provide important historic documents of the upriver rocks and ledges of the Hudson at Palmer Falls, yet unaltered by industrial development.²⁴

People who wrote of their visits to Palmer Falls in the middle decades of the nineteenth century described the natural beauty of the cataract and its upriver rapids as well as the industrial operations at the site. Benson J. Lossing described his 1859 visit to Palmer Falls in an eleven-installment essay that first appeared in the *Art-Journal* in 1860 and then was published in book form in 1866 as *The Hudson, From the Wilderness to the Sea*. Lossing's restrained description of the site suggests that he



KAH-CHE-BON-COOK, OR JESUP'S GREAT FALLS.

Benson J. Lossing, *Kah-Che-Bon-Cook, or Jesup's Great Falls*

arrived during the summer or fall, when little water was going over the falls, but he acknowledged that the Palmer Falls Water Power Company was “preparing for industrial operations far greater than any point so far up the Hudson.” In Lossing's small, unimpressive drawing of the falls, featured in both his article and book, he used the Algonquin name for Palmer Falls—*Kah-Che-Bon-Cook*, which meant “great root place.” Oddly, only in Lossing's work was the Algonquin name used to identify the falls.²⁵

In the *History of Saratoga County*, published in 1878, Nathaniel Sylvester described Palmer Falls as picturesque, even though the crib dam (built a year earlier) had altered the natural flow of the river by submerging a portion of the rapids upriver from the falls. Sylvester provided exhaustive production details for the Hudson River Pulp and Paper Company, but then affirmed that “for beauty, and picturesque and grand effects, the scenery at Palmer Falls may well rank with any in the States.” Sylvester's willingness to reconcile the natural beauty of Palmer Falls with its exploitation by industry—a tendency also evident in Lossing's writing—exposes the conflicted values of nature and culture that were common in America's Victorian age.²⁶

Writers consistently described the picturesque qualities of Palmer Falls even when the industrial operations at the site had eliminated some of its natural features and threatened to obscure even more. The “industrial picturesque,” a visual aesthetic evident in the work of nineteenth-century illustrators, was a mode of representation that reconciled the opposing forces of nature and industry in the same scene. The nineteenth-century standard for this aesthetic view can be found in *Picturesque America*, a two-volume book edited by William Cullen Bryant and published in 1872. Rural industrial sites depicted in the oversize, two-volume book fit seamlessly into their natural environments, resulting

in picturesque images that suggest that nature and industrial culture are in harmony.²⁷

Industrial development was such a central component of the nineteenth-century faith in progress that most Americans believed the desecration of nature was necessary and inevitable. Few voices could be heard in opposition. The Hudson River School painter Thomas Cole, writing in his “Essay on Scenery” in 1836, reflected this ruling nineteenth-century belief when he lamented that the “ravages of the axe” were destroying the beauty of the natural landscape. However, he concluded that “such is the road that society has to travel.”²⁸ Not until the 1880s, when the idea of conservation began to emerge in America, was any thought broadly given to the protection of the nation's natural resources from uncontrolled commercial development.

The first, although rather oblique, critique of the industrial development of the upper Hudson in the vicinity of Palmer Falls appeared in an 1879 essay in the *National Repository*, a religious journal that contained essays on history, travel, literature, and art. Its author, Rev. E. Wentworth, admirably described the rapids above Palmer Falls, equating the Hudson's descent over it as “answering to the rapids above Niagara Falls.” He went on to assert that “civilization is rapidly destroying the romantic features of all these wild wonders of mountain and woodland nature.” Wentworth did not mention the paper mill at Palmer Falls in his critique, but he did note that sixteen sawmills operated in the section of the Hudson between Jessup's Landing (Corinth) and the downriver village of Fort Edward. The essay contained small sketches of the upper Hudson; the one used to depict Palmer Falls was Lossing's drawing.²⁹

There is scant evidence that anyone questioned or opposed the industrial development of Palmer Falls. This may have been due to the spirit of progress and the commitment to industrial development that ruled the Gilded Age, or to the fact that the Hudson River Pulp and Paper Company's crib dam still permitted much of the Hudson's natural flow over the falls. The scenic viability of the falls is evident in L.R. Burleigh's 1888 birds-eye view of Corinth, which shows the Hudson raging over the falls during high water. The lithograph also shows the tailrace added to the dam in 1880 to increase waterpower and drive the expansion of

the Hudson River Pulp and Paper Company. By 1888, it was one of the nation's largest newsprint mills.³⁰ Like the image of Palmer Falls that appeared in the *Prospectus* of the Palmer Falls Water Power Company, the scale of the falls is exaggerated in the lithograph. Yet the image visually dissipates the inherent tension of nature



L.R. Burleigh's, *Corinth, NY and Palmer Falls* (detail)

and industrial culture by suggesting that the Hudson is unaffected and unaltered by the adjacent pulp and paper mill.

The fact that the crib dam at Palmer Falls used only a small portion of the Hudson's potential power was not due to concerns that a larger dam would diminish the site's aesthetic appeal. Rather it was the result of the limits of nineteenth-century technology. The U.S. Department of the Interior's *Reports on the Water-Power of the United States* noted in 1885 that Palmer Falls was a "magnificent privilege" but that it "appears difficult and expensive to utilize completely" and that "the steep rocky sides between which the river flows above the principal falls render its improvement impracticable." It seems that the primary reason why Palmer Falls still remained in a relative natural state in the 1880s was due to the belief that fully damming the falls was neither feasible nor cost effective.³¹

The Interior Department report was issued just a few years before the American Fisheries Society cited the falls in one of its annual reports. Assessing a multi-year effort to stock salmon in the Hudson River for the benefit of sportsmen, and to foster the fish's natural propagation in a river where it had never been known to live, the society's 1889 report lamented the fact that there was no point in stocking salmon upriver of Palmer Falls. Citing a worker who fell to his death on the falls when the crib dam was built, the writer doubted that any fish could survive the plunge over Palmer Falls into the shallow pool below, as "it was a terrible place to think of going over, either for a salmon or a man." The writer noted the "wild mountain gorge" through which the Hudson flowed over the falls, but affirmed that he "could not see how a living thing could escape being battered to death on the many exposed rocks." While the report described the industrial pollution of the Hudson as potentially affecting salmon in downstream sections of the river, it was Palmer Falls as an upstream geological impedi-

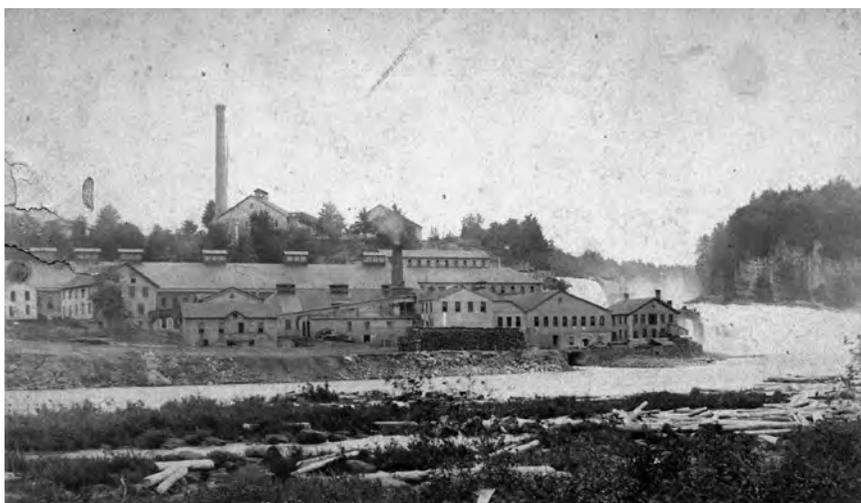


Hudson River Pulp and Paper Company

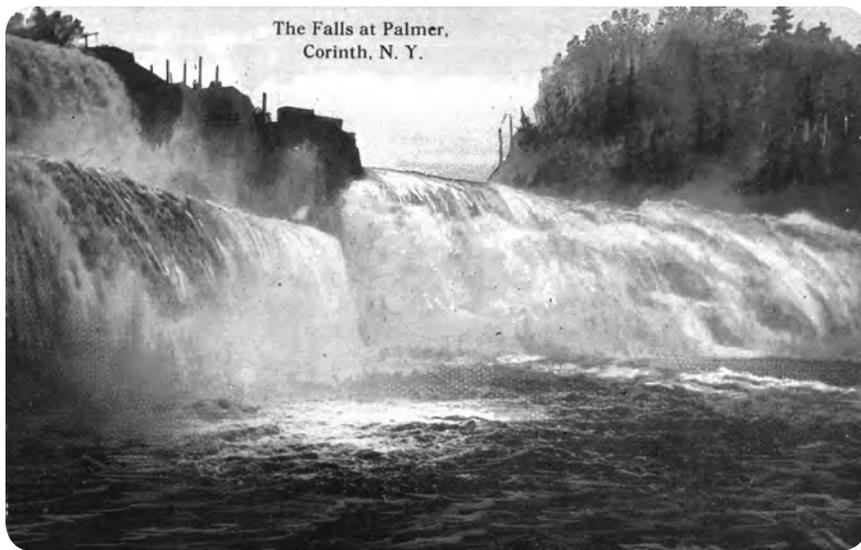
ment to salmon that prevented the stocking of the fish in the river's upper reaches.³²

The crib dam mentioned in the fisheries report is documented in photographs made of Palmer Falls between 1880 and 1914, when the dam and its tailrace served as the principal source of power for the pulp and paper mill. These photographs consisted of two types. One reflected the industrial picturesque aesthetic, evident in a photograph of the Hudson River Pulp and Paper Company made after its major expansion program was completed in 1888.³³ In this image and others like it, the mill appears in harmony with the river, embraced by Palmer Falls on the right and the Hudson River at the bottom as it flows out of the frame. Many similar images made in this period were intended to document the Hudson River Pulp and Paper Company as an industrial site, but most of the views inscribed an aesthetic that showed industry fitting comfortably into its natural surroundings.

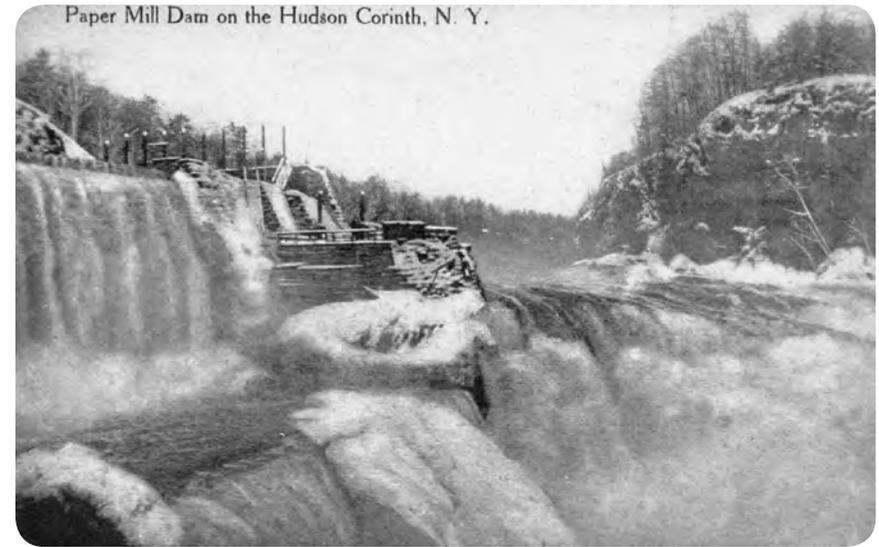
The persistence of the industrial picturesque in this period is most evident in a lithograph made of the mill, river, and falls in the mid-1890s. In this image, several mill buildings have been creatively repositioned to align parallel with each other and the river, and the horizontal axis of the landscape has been shifted forward so the uppermost mill structures are in full view in the image when they would not be if the mill were viewed in person from the lithograph's vantage point.³⁴ The crude retaining wall along the river seen in photographs from the period has been refined in the lithograph with nicely finished masonry, and logs that would routinely be left at the river's edge from the spring log drive have been cleared from view. Perhaps the most telling aesthetic elements in this lithograph include the increased height of the falls, the volume of water going over it, and the stylized smoke seen belching from the mill's taller-than-life smokestacks. (The latter is a recurring symbol of industrial progress that appears in numerous nineteenth-century lithographs of American factories.) The



Hudson River Pulp and Paper Company



The Falls at Palmer, Corinth, NY



Paper Mill Dam on the Hudson Corinth, NY



Adirondack Mts., International Paper Mills, Corinth, NY

height of the smokestack in the foreground of the lithograph has been increased from what may be seen in the similar photograph, creating a visual uniformity between it, the tall stack in the background, and the newly built, square-sided sulphite mill tower.

The second general view of the Hudson River at Palmer Falls that was evident in the period after 1880 elides the pulp and paper mill altogether to focus specifically on the water coming over the falls. Closely framed photographs of the falls were made in both winter and summer, with each including portions of the built dam or the stonework that held the river control gates. A colorized postcard from around 1910 even shows the water spilling over the built tailrace section of the dam.³⁵ The titles of commercial postcards that used the water of the Hudson as the subject employed the words “dam” and “falls” interchangeably, revealing uncertainty if not ambivalence that the falling water was the result of an industrial construction and not a part of the natural landscape.³⁶

The emergent environmental sensibility of the 1880s that resulted in the ascendance of a national conservation movement and the creation of the Adirondack Park in 1892 became increasingly evident in the aesthetic representation of the Hudson River at Palmer Falls. The industrial picturesque was less employed as a way of viewing the site, suggesting that fewer people were willing to believe that nature and industrial culture were reconcilable. This shift is evident in one of the most common postcards from this period, *Adirondack Mts. International Paper Mills, Corinth, NY*. The framing of the postcard, the bifurcation of Palmer Falls at the right margin, and its industrial title confirm that the primary subject was the pulp and paper mill, not the Hudson River or Palmer Falls.³⁷ The inclusion of “Adirondacks Mts.” in the title of the postcard, even though no mountains are visible in the scene, suggests that the pulp and

paper mill—which was often described as one of the largest of its kind in the United States—was at the time considered a site of regional importance.

It was increasingly difficult after 1900 to aesthetically reconcile nature and industry at Palmer Falls, even though nature and culture is conflated in the title of the 1910 postcard. This challenge was reflected in *Our County and Its People: A Descriptive and Biographical Record of Saratoga County*. In this 1899 book, George Baker Anderson noted

that “the scenery at Palmer Falls is probably unexcelled in New York State, except that the world of industry had laid its hand upon the waterpower there for manufacturing purposes.”³⁸ The decline of the river’s aesthetic appeal at Palmer Falls at the turn of the twentieth century—made implicit by notable changes in the framing of postcards of the site—was confirmed by New York’s Department of Health in its annual report for 1907.

In a section dedicated to a discussion of the growing pollution of the Hudson River, the report linked technological and industrial development to the river’s deterioration. The pollution was described as the consequence of a chemical-based wood pulping technology that had been developed in the 1870s and 1880s. The new sulphite pulping process, which was increasingly preferred over mechanical pulp, cooked wood chips in large, pressurized digesters that contained a heated sulfurous solution. In sulphite pulping, a chemical reaction extracts the lignin from the wood and leaves behind useable cellulose fiber, offering distinct advantages over mechanically produced pulp because more varieties of softwoods could be used in paper manufacture. In addition, the fibers left over from the process were both longer and stronger.³⁹

Sulphite pulping was first implemented at the Hudson River Mill at Palmer Falls in 1891; by 1898 five sulphite digesters were in operation, the largest of which processed forty cords of pulpwood at a time. The Department of Health’s 1907 report noted that the liquid wastes resulting from sulphite pulp production at the Corinth mill, which were emptied directly into the river, “unite to give to the river its first significant increment of industrial pollution,” and that “the appearance of the river just below the mill clearly shows the serious amount and character of this pollution.”⁴⁰ This account of



Concrete Dam Construction at Palmer Falls



Concrete Dam Construction at Palmer Falls

the pollution produced by the Hudson River Mill helps to explain why few descriptions of the river at Palmer Falls written after 1900 describe the site as picturesque, beautiful, or worth visiting.

An extraordinary raging of Hudson River in the spring of 1913 wiped out the crib dam above Palmer Falls and resulted in the construction a year later of a modern concrete dam.⁴¹ Situated slightly downriver from the crib dam and permanently joined to the prominent cliff face on the north side of the Hudson, this dam forever changed the character of Palmer Falls. By constructing the dam as it did, the International Paper Company (which had purchased the Hudson River Pulp and Paper Company in 1898) proved wrong the 1880 federal report that said a dam spanning the full width of the river at Palmer Falls was impractical. The new Palmer Falls dam was built by employing two modern technologies: reinforced concrete and an arched dam design that could resist the force of the Hudson’s downstream current. These two engineering methods permitted the dam to extend across the full width of the river directly over the highest ledges of Palmer Falls, increasing the useable head of the Hudson to eighty-four feet. The conversion of Palmer Falls to hydroelectric power generation, a process that had begun in 1902, now could be expanded. The larger dam eventually would power all of the mill’s necessary industrial operations.

The construction of the concrete dam did not end the aesthetic representations of Palmer Falls. Images made after 1914 continued either to focus narrowly on the water falling over the dam, or more broadly on a view of the pulp and paper mill. A soft-focused and closely cropped black and white image made by an unknown photographer in the 1920s, most likely taken in early spring of the year, shows the Hudson pouring over the concrete dam and mist being created by the water pounding on the rocks at the dam’s base. Few photographs made of the Hudson River coming over the concrete dam at Palmer Falls in the twentieth century tried to obscure the fact that the structure was man-made.

One of the most widely distributed postcards after 1930 was an aerial view of the Hudson River Mill that showed the facility in its entirety, including the



Palmer Falls Dam



Hudson River Mill – International Paper Company. Palmer, New York

concrete dam and what remained visible of Palmer Falls' ledges. While this postcard reveals residual influences of the industrial picturesque, its title and composition, which admits the entire mill complex into the frame, together confirm that it was intended as an industrial landscape. However, the image inadvertently reveals the collision of nature and culture at the point where the concrete dam is joined to the ledges of Palmer Falls, simultaneously exposing the Hudson's picturesque past and its profane present.

Similarly composed aerial views of the Hudson River Mill at Palmer Falls, like one made in 1959 during the low-water summer months, became the predominant view of the site between 1914 and 2002, the year International Paper shut down the mill.⁴² In the image, the foothills of the Adirondacks that appear in the right background of the 1959 photograph offer a striking aesthetic counterpoint to the ribbon of white effluent that can be seen in the foreground flowing from the mill into the Hudson. While some alternative images of the paper mill and the dam were produced in this period, there is little visual evidence that the Hudson River Mill was any longer celebrated as an element of the natural landscape.

Americans believed late into the nineteenth century that industry could be reconciled with the very nature that it displaced. The cultural history of Palmer Falls—its representation in both images and narratives from the early decades of the nineteenth century through the middle of the twentieth century—reveals the persistence of this belief and its eventual repudiation. Even after the picturesque elements of the Hudson River at Palmer Falls had been fully consumed by pulp and paper manufacturing and hydroelectric development, photographers continued to seek aesthetic meaning in the new industrialized landscape that had been created.

Stephen Cernek is professor of Arts and Sciences at Daniel Webster College and the Project Director for the Corinth Social History Project. He has taught widely in the



Hudson River Mill

fields of American history and American studies for over thirty years, and has a scholarly interest in the study of organized labor, technology and industrial development in the pulp and paper industry. His ongoing research in these areas led to the publication of Hudson River Mill Project in 2005.

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PHOTO BY BILL URBIN COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Participants interact during keynote address with Kim and Reggie Harris

Teaching the Hudson River Valley

Christina Ritter

They say, "Those who can't do, teach." "They" must have never been involved with Teaching the Hudson Valley. This organization is an incredible collaboration of "doers"—teachers and educators from all walks, sharing the common goal of promoting place-based education. The resources provided by Teaching the Hudson Valley encourage an appreciation of the region's natural, historical, and cultural assets, granting educators the power to inspire students with a sense of place.

Teaching the Hudson Valley aims to carry out the mission of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, "to recognize, preserve, protect, and interpret its nationally significant cultural, historic, and natural resources." Their place-based educational philosophy brings classrooms into the community, and communities into the classroom. Students reach educational goals through active engagement with local historic, heritage, and environmental sites and organizations, making connections that extend learning outside of the classroom.

Teaching the Hudson Valley offers online materials for teachers, grants and awards, and an active blog and online community. Online lesson plans are divided by content



Attendees in a workshop

area, grade level, county, and site, allowing educators to seamlessly integrate place-based lessons into preexisting curricula. Grants provided by Teaching the Hudson Valley include “Explore Awards,” which fund field experiences related to core curriculum and allow educators to inspire their students with experiential learning in the face of an ever-shifting educational landscape. Teaching the Hudson Valley does not limit experiential learning to students, however. Each summer, hosts a three-day institute for teachers, geared toward a specific topic in education. The Summer Institute allows educators from across the Hudson River Valley to come together in an entertaining and supportive environment, and discuss concerns in their field.

The July 2012 institute, titled “In Conflict & Crises: Teaching the Hudson Valley from the Civil War to Civil Rights and Beyond,” took place at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Museum and Presidential Library. The Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center hummed with activity. It was charged with the energy of a diverse group of educators eager to find new ways to communicate critical issues to students, and of lecturers ready to show them how. The hallway leading to the presentation rooms where workshops took place was lined with posters, booklets, flyers, and books about the Hudson River Valley, as well as information about local historic and environmental sites and opportunities with Teaching the Hudson Valley. This incredible amount of information represented only a small sample of the educational opportunities this region has to offer. Workshops focused on the role of conflict in the development of the Hudson River Valley, as well as how educators should approach teaching controversial subjects. The institute presented place-based education as more than a simple teaching strategy—it was shown to be a vital component of the educational process at all levels.

The keynote session offered by Kim and Reggie Harris, who have built their career

by inspiring audiences with stories and song, set the tone for the institute. Their keynote was a fully immersive experience, integrating historical interpretation and cultural advocacy with music and performance. The dynamic personalities of the presenters moved a room full of strangers to stand up and interact, singing songs of hope and conflict—bonded by the common purpose of motivating and energizing students to learn. The high-energy, informative, and incredibly engaging experience set the tone for the rest of the institute.

The programs offered were diverse and spanned areas from environmentalism to military history, women’s rights and religion—all with the common theme of conflict and controversy. Workshops included “Evaluating Scientific Claims: A Method for Exploring Controversial Environmental Questions; Listening to History: Podcasting the Local Experience of National Events”; “Romance v. Reality: The Common Soldier’s Civil War Experience”; and “Sue Lansing: Abolitionist, Religious Reformer, Maiden Aunt, or Women’s Rights Pioneer?”

Many workshops incorporated hands-on activities, primary documents, and multimedia presentations. During “Romance v. Reality,” video clips, book excerpts, and Civil War artifacts were used to stir conversation among the crowd related to how the Civil War is taught, and the depiction of the North and South in literary works. “Sing to Freedom: Teaching Music and the Underground Railroad” and another workshop on the Storm King Case and the environmental movement offered excellent presentations, lesson plans and resources, as well as engaging group activities. The variety provided by the institute opens the minds of educators to different ideas and interests, woven together by the common thread of educating and inspiring a sense of place.

Day two of the institute was dedicated to “field experiences.” These hands-on adventures took place all over the Hudson Valley, including the Columbia County Museum, Mount Gulian Historic Site, and the Katherine W. Davis Riverwalk Center. These excursions exemplify the benefits of field trips and out-of-class experiences for students. With such a variety of locations and themes, the opportunities for experiential learning in the Hudson River Valley are boundless. One of the programs, titled “A New Deal for Youth,” focused on Eleanor Roosevelt’s contributions to human rights and improving the quality of life for youth during the Depression. Workshop participants toured Val-Kill and the surrounding property while being given a history of Val-Kill industries—providing them with an intimate glimpse into Eleanor Roosevelt’s life. Group activities catered toward secondary-level education and activities illustrated that teachers need not omit controversial subjects from curriculum, but can utilize strategies like the ones offered to make the subject matter tangible and objectively factual.

After Val-Kill, the group returned to the Wallace Center to participate in a workshop demonstrating the use of visual arts in education. The presenter was spirited and able to make a group of adults feel comfortable enough to perform in front of one another—reading poetry, expressing ideas through movement, and working in groups to present an artistic interpretation of a conflicting idea. These are the types of activi-



Keynote address with Kim and Reggie Harris



ties that must be brought into a classroom. A group of individuals from different backgrounds, of all ages and experience levels, stepped out of their own self-consciousness to cooperate and experience something new, proving that when prejudices are dropped, and challenges embraced, conflict can create community.

Day three included an intense panel on the evolution of civil rights in the valley. Emotions of the seemingly docile crowd stirred as questions and comments popped up around the room, answered by distinguished presenters, including Myra Armstead, professor of History and Education at Bard College; La Tasha Brown, professor of Black Studies at SUNY New Paltz; and Delia Mellis, associate director of Writing and Academic Resources and staff manager of the Bard Prison Initiative, with moderator Daniel Wolff, author and activist. The audience listened to stories of the little-known impact of the civil rights movement in the Hudson Valley. Attention then shifted to a presentation on the Bard Prison Initiative; a program that gives prisoners in facilities across the state the opportunity to earn a liberal arts degree. Graduates of the program go on to be productive members of society and have dramatically decreased chances of facing repeat incarceration. This presentation conveyed the impact of education, regardless of age, race, or circumstances.

A powerful opening presentation led into the day's first session. One workshop, "Irrepressible Conflict: The Empire State and the Civil War," was headed by Robert Weible, state historian and chief curator of the New York State Museum, and Professor Jason Schaaf of Marist College. The presentation brought to light the stories of indi-

viduals from New York State, with emphasis on the Hudson River Valley during the Civil War. Mr. Weible posed a question to the group, asking what the New York State Museum could provide in terms of educational resources. The room full of educators was immediately energized, coming up with a host of ideas for field trips, projects, digital resources, and more, so that New York's role in the rebellion could be brought to life for students.

The second session included such workshops as "The Missing Chapter: Untold Stories of the African American Experience in the Hudson Valley," presented by Susan Stessin-Cohn, education director of Historic Huguenot Street, and "Exploring Environmental Risk: Using Conflict to Achieve Consensus," presented by Tom Shimalla, environmental educator for the state Department of Environmental Conservation, and Paul Adams, naturalist at the Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center. Both presentations incorporated multimedia tools and provided educators with lessons, materials, and a sense of how to approach critical topics, such as slavery and the environment, with students. The institute concluded with an opportunity for presenters and attendees to have a casual discussion surrounding the opportunities presented by Teaching the Hudson Valley.

To be a part of the experience, register for the 2013 Teaching the Hudson Valley Institute "Common Core & Place-Based Learning" which will take place July 30 through August 1. Visit www.teachingthehudsonvalley.org or call 845-229-9116, ext. 2035, for more information.

Christina Ritter is a history and education major at Marist College, and a 2013 winner of the Barnabas McHenry award from the Open Space Institute for her project “A Dutchess County Social Studies Toolkit for Educators.” She will present her results at the Teaching the Hudson Valley Institute this summer.

Regional History Forum

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



PHOTO BY TIM BOOKHOUT. COURTESY OF TAD RICHARDS

Opus 40

Opus 40: An Artistic and Historic Destination



Harvey Fite
(1903-1976)

In May 1938, sculptor Harvey Fite purchased a twelve-acre bluestone quarry in Saugerties, near Woodstock, with the intent of creating an outdoor gallery to exhibit a series of his sculptures. The project ultimately evolved into the earthwork known today as Opus 40. Now, Fite is internationally acclaimed and Opus 40 has become a prominent cultural destination as well as a national and local historic landmark.

Harvey Fite

Harvey Fite (1903-1976) came to the Hudson River Valley as a student of St. Stephen's College. After abandoning his aspirations to study for the ministry, he left St. Stephen's to pursue acting at the Maverick Theater in Woodstock. Fite slept under the stage and worked on set building, plumbing, electricity, and carpentry in the theater. He left the Maverick to pursue acting and eventually discovered his gift for sculpting



Home and studio

when he began whittling a seamstress's wooden spool backstage one night. Fite gained recognition as a wood and stone sculptor, showcasing his talents in New York, Paris, and Rome.

He returned to the Hudson River Valley in 1934 to accept a position at St. Stephen's (which had been renamed Bard College), where he taught drama and sculpture and organized the Fine Arts Department. Fite lived in on-campus housing and built a cabin in the Maverick artist's colony. He considered Hervey White, the founder of the Maverick, to be a close friend and mentor. Fite became a highly regarded member of the Woodstock Artists Association in the 1940s and developed close relationships with many artists in his community. He purchased the bluestone quarry in Saugerties' High Woods community in 1938, eventually building his house and studio on the eastern side of the property.

Fite's restoration work on ancient Mayan culture in Copan, Honduras, in the summer of 1938 prompted his interest in applying Mayan building techniques to Ulster County bluestone. He began working on the quarry with the plan to build a gallery to display a series of large stone pieces representing "a world at peace." These sculptures included "Flame," a female figure with her arms raised toward the sky; "Tomorrow," a seated African male; "Prayer," a child on her knees with her hands clasped in front; and "The Quarry Family," four figures representing Fite, his wife, and their two sons.



Flame



Quarry Family



Monolith

Building the Earthwork

Fite did all of his work by hand, relying solely on traditional quarryman tools like the hammer and chisel, winch and boom, and logs and chains to erect the sculptures. His laborious methods also included hand-laying stones that had been left behind by the previous quarrymen; he employed a technique called "dry keying," in which no mortar was used to hold the stones together. Fite worked alone with the occasional expertise of his neighbor, Berthel Wrolsen. He built walkways and stairs leading to each of the sculptures and pools of water, expanding the structure and developing its integrity as an earthwork.

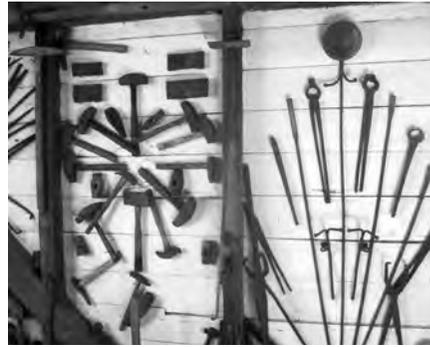


A dry-keyed stone wall

Eventually, Fite replaced the central figure, "Flame," with a nine-ton bluestone monolith that was better proportioned to the growing structure. He planned to carve the new monolith, but then, after twenty years of work, he decided to abandon his original idea of representational sculpture and adapt a more abstract vision. He realized that the earthwork created to display his sculptures had become a work of art on its own. He removed the other sculptures to the grounds nearby and named the stonework Opus 40, alluding to the Latin word for work, and the forty years that Fite expected to need to complete the project. Fite dedicated the last thirty-seven years of his life to realizing his vision for the sculpture park. He was tragically killed in an accidental fall in the quarry in 1976.



Museum



Quarryman's tools

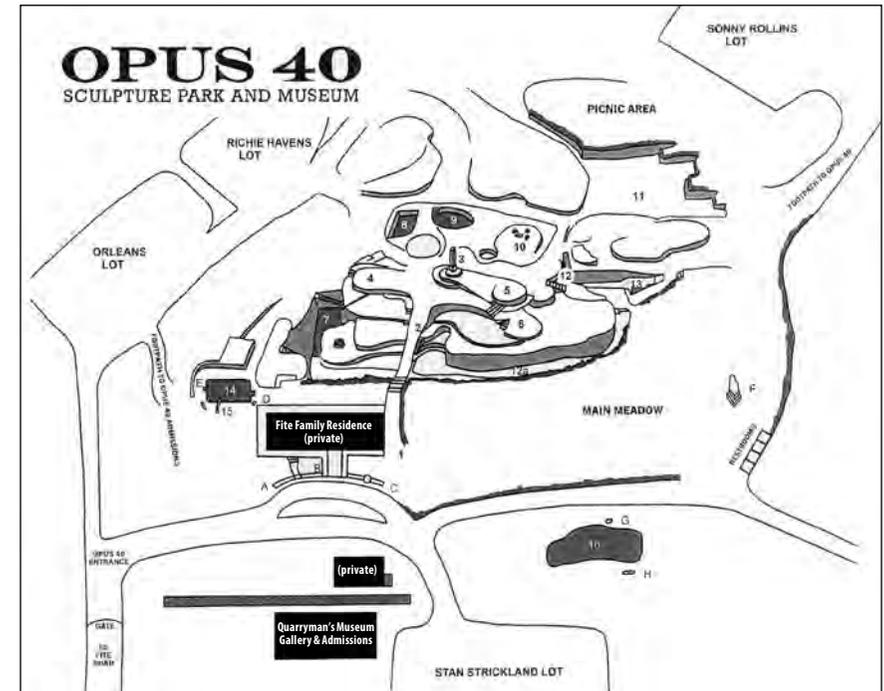
The Quarryman's Museum

Fite took the opportunity to commemorate the quarrymen of the area by constructing a museum to display his collection of quarryman's tools and artifacts. The museum holds a variety of hammers and chisels, drills, and crowbars, all arranged in patterns on the walls. Outside near one of the pools is a huge boom equipped with a hand-powered winch that had been used to move rocks. Fite also built his home on the edge of the quarry. A portion of the house was devoted to his studio, where he carved most of his early sculptures. By the mid-1950s, he had moved to a studio in the woods. Presently, Fite's stepson, Tad Richards, and his wife Pat live in the house.

Opus 40, Inc.

Following Fite's death, his wife Barbara opened the sculpture park to the public. In 1978, she created Opus 40, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to exhibiting Fite's remarkable work and developing Opus 40 as a cultural landmark. The organization is currently operated by Tad and Pat Richards.

In recent years, Opus 40, Inc., has been looking to relinquish ownership of the property. The Town of Saugerties had shown interest in purchasing it; however, the deal was not realized. Opus 40, Inc., continues to maintain the sculpture park while looking for a buyer to carry on the organization's commitment. Ultimately, Richards hopes to merge the property that his family owns with the Opus 40, Inc. not-for-profit. They also are in the process of developing archives that will be available to the public via their Website. Tad Richards currently is editing a series of memoirs written by Harvey Fite regarding his childhood; he expects to publish the records in the future. Richards' book *Opus 40: The First 20 Years*, as well as the *The Rocklins*, a children's book started by Fite in 1945 and recently completed by Richards, are both available for purchase in the gift shop at Opus 40 and on www.Lulu.com. They will soon be for sale via the Opus 40 Website.



The organization has hosted several public educational events, including the Saugerties Art Group Exhibition, an Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition, and a Stone Carving Workshop. The park also is the setting for numerous concerts, theatre and dance performances, lectures, and other community events throughout the season. Opus 40 celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the raising of the monolith in May 2012, an event that was postponed from the prior fall due to Hurricane Irene.

The earthwork sustained damage from a storm on September 18, 2012, and Opus 40 is still in the process of repairing a partially collapsed wall. It hopes to rebuild the wall using techniques similar to Fite's. Although the timeframe for repairs is still unclear, the sculpture park remains open to the public and continues to be a remarkable artistic and historic destination.

Opus 40 is located at 50 Fite Road, in Saugerties. It is open May through October from 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Thursday-Sunday and on holiday Mondays. The cost is \$10 for adults, \$7 for students and seniors, and \$3 for children ages 7-12. Opus 40 encourages picnicking on the premises; it also is available for weddings and private events. www.opus40.org; (845) 246-3400. Questions regarding background information and history may be directed to tad@opus40.org.

Taylor Mullaney, Marist '14



300 Years of Dutchess County Democracy

This year marks the 300th anniversary of democracy in Dutchess County. Within the span of three centuries, this tract of New Netherland wilderness, speckled with trading posts for exchanging furs, grew from a small, colonial farming settlement governed by nearby Ulster County into a modern, autonomous county. Anniversaries as remarkable as this one emphasize the need for scholarship to fill in the gaps in the county's early history. Uncovering these facts and making them accessible to the public is the goal of the 300th Anniversary Dutchess Heritage Days Committee.

When Dutchess County was first established, its population was so small that it had to be governed by cross-river Ulster County. Once Dutchess began to govern itself independently, the milestones in its development and growth sometimes occurred years apart. Likewise, the commemoration of Dutchess's "300 Years of Democracy" will span a number of years. Over the next eight years, newly instated Dutchess County Historian William P. Tatum III will be organizing commemorative events to document these milestones.

"The vision for the 300th anniversary is really to make people aware of how much our structure of government influences daily life throughout the county," says Tatum. "Here in 2013, we are actually commemorating the start of what was an eight-year-long process for the county between 1713 and 1721."

However, there are few history books that accurately convey the timeline of early Dutchess events. Most volumes were "assembled from oral interviews conducted prior to the advent of professional history, when people didn't really think to look at documents as sources," says Tatum.¹

Making research all the more tedious were the early Dutchess locals who typically enacted their own initiatives before seeking approval from the proper authorities; the "official" dates written in county records did not always corroborate other sources' versions of the same event. From the volumes of data and county records he has scoured during his tenure as historian, Tatum has pieced together a great deal of the county's early governmental history.

The history of Dutchess County officially begins in 1683, when it was established as one of the original twelve counties of New York in accordance with the Duke of York's orders. The British gained control of Dutch New Amsterdam, renamed it New York, and divided it into smaller counties.² In 1683, New York Governor Thomas Dongan relinquished the Wappingers Indians' title to the Hudson River's eastern shore, a fertile valley nestled against the backdrop of distinguished mountain ranges. Governor Dongan gave Francis Rombout, Guilian Verplanck, and later Stephanus Van Cortlandt an opportunity to purchase the property. These men received the title to the land, Rombout's Patent, on October 17, 1685.³ The new boundaries spanned from Putnam County to the south and extended as far north as Clermont and Germantown.

1713

Named for the Duchess of York in 1683, Dutchess County was an extension of Ulster County's government in its early years. Naturally, all legal and tax disputes had to be settled in Ulster courts. Because the Hudson River separated the two counties, the need for a local Dutchess government became clear. From his research, Tatum has deduced that on October 23, 1713, "Royal Governor Robert Hunter signed the bill into law from the colonial assembly allowing us to elect our first supervisor, treasurer, and tax officials." After receiving this permission, Dutchess County held its own elections in September 1714. Developing its own government was essential to Dutchess's recognition as a county distinct from Ulster.

1714

Newly elected Dutchess officials determined that the next logical step in creating a strong, democratic county would be to gather records of its citizens. In 1714, a census was conducted; it counted 416 free people and twenty-nine slaves among its population. A second census was not recorded until nine years later; by 1723, the county had

remarkably grown to 1,083.

1715

Just as the population continued to grow, Dutchess County's government saw several appointments, elections, and acts of legislation in its early years. In 1715, the first County Clerk was appointed to maintain the county's records. In July, the General Assembly approved the construction of a courthouse and prison for the county's use. The following year saw the appointment of the first County Treasurer; Judge Leonard Lewis was eventually elected to this position in 1718 and served until 1739.

1717

On January 17, 1717, the county's first taxes were recorded. Later that year, the colonial assembly passed a second act allowing for construction of the county courthouse and jail to begin. These government buildings were slated for completion within three years, but county records suggest that construction took as many as thirty years. Nonetheless, Captain Barendt Van Kleeck and Jacobus Van Der Bogart were selected as commissioners to oversee the construction.⁴ The deed to the land designated for the courthouse and prison was signed to Van Keeck and Van Der Bogart in 1718. This "County House" was designed to hold the county Supervisors' annual meeting and other county-related functions.

1719

The First Book of Supervisors shows that since 1717, Dutchess government operated under a three-ward structure. On June 24, 1719, the patents for Rhinebeck, Poughkeepsie, and Beacon were sold and Dutchess was officially recognized as having three distinct wards. The southernmost ward extended as far as Westchester County and included present-day Putnam County, while the northern-most ward touched Albany County near Clermont. The sale was carried out by the three partners who secured the original patents for Dutchess: Rombout, Verplanck, and Van Cortlandt.⁵ In the same year, the colonial assembly authorized the county to elect three supervisors (one for each ward) instead of the one previously allowed.

1721

On July 6, 1720, Governor William Burnet authorized the establishment for Dutchess County's own Court of Common Pleas and General Sessions of the Peace. Prior to this authorization, Dutchess county residents were subjected to the terms and opinions of Ulster County justices. Governor Burnet mandated that the Court of Common Pleas:

... with the Advice and Consent of his Majesties Council for the Province of *New York*, and by virtue of the Power and Authority unto me given and granted under the Great Seal of *Great Britain*, and do hereby Erect, Establish and Ordain, that from hence-forward there shall be held and kept at *Poghkeepson*, near the Center, of the said County, a General Sessions of the Peace, on the third *Tuesday* in *May*, and the thirds *Tuesday* in *October*, yearly and every year for ever, which General Sessions of the Peace, in every Sessions, possibly, in one Day, and that from henceforth there shall be held...

In its biannual meetings, the Court of Common Pleas typically heard cases that ranged from debtor lawsuits and master-apprentice relationships to liquor sales transacted without proper licensing.

Tatum reports that by 1721, "We finally had the full court structure in place. In particular, this is the Court of Common Sessions that allowed us to be fully self-sustaining." In October 1721, J. van de Voert was appointed the first sheriff of Dutchess County; his duties consisted mostly of formalities in the court, like reading announcements. Having its own sheriff and Court of Common Sessions meant that Dutchess residents would no longer have to travel to Ulster County to settle disputes.⁷

Commemorations

In October 2012, Dutchess County Legislator Michael Kelsey introduced a resolution before the county Legislature to sponsor the Dutchess County Heritage Days Committee to celebrate 300 years of county leadership. With the county's sponsorship, Kelsey's legislation proposed to create a "shared heritage as a county" by commemorating the 300th anniversary of Democracy in Dutchess. "As an elected official myself," says Kelsey, "we have a sacred position to represent the people and do it well and this year will recognize that."



The Dutchess County Heritage Days Committee has since put forth plans to enact an essay-writing contest in the county's school systems. Elementary, middle, and high school students will be challenged with the task of writing about historical events. "We've had movie stars, athletes, and a president from this area. We've also had many events of consequence that impact who we are," says Kelsey,⁸ imploring students to learn more about their county's history. Dutchess county students also have an opportunity to design a logo for the committee, allowing creative, young minds to contribute to the Dutchess County Heritage Days Committee.

In February 2013, Tatum, Kelsey, Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro, and several other county officials gathered to announce that from October 23 through November 1, 2013, a weeklong celebration will be held to commemorate the county's first election in 1713. "Now is the time, 300 years after the establishment of our government, to celebrate all that got us here and to make history for ourselves," declared Molinaro. "It's really about the pride that so many residents, businesses, families, and farmers have for a community they call home."

To help spread awareness of the 300th anniversary of democracy in Dutchess, Tatum enlisted the help of Dutchess County Tourism Executive Director Mary Kay Vrba. She projects that Tatum's eight-year plan "will help us continue to focus on the rich heritage of Dutchess County and the Hudson Valley and provide reason for people to return visit after visit." To learn more about Dutchess County history, tourists and students of the Hudson River Valley will be eager to return for the parades, books, and speaker series that will commemorate the 300th anniversary of democracy in Dutchess.

Vrba plans to implement “a full marketing effort using print, digital, and TV to support promoting these activities.” Civil War re-enactments, parades showcasing antique automobiles, and other commemorative celebrations will be held. “There is really no reason to go anywhere else on your vacation,” Vrba comments.

Dutchess’s towns have been encouraged to host their own events; for example, 2013 is also Beacon’s 100th anniversary. The city will be hosting its own speakers, concerts and other events.

“Our goal for the 300th anniversary cycle is to increase awareness of and appreciation for the ways in which our form of government has influenced the shape of daily life in the county,” says Tatum. “We additionally hope that this series of celebrations will lead to more detailed studies of county government, which has hitherto escaped most scholarly attention.” Tatum anticipates that local historians and historical societies also will come together in a collaborative effort to assist the Dutchess County Heritage Days Committee in commemorating the milestones of the 300th anniversary of democracy in Dutchess.

“2013 is an exciting year for Dutchess County as we celebrate the County’s 300th anniversary of democracy. Our Heritage Day celebrations will reflect back on our history and celebrate the county we are today,” said Dutchess County Executive Molinaro. “It is a wonderful opportunity for residents and visitors alike to visit our historical treasures, shop at our shops, dine in our restaurants, and truly enjoy all that Dutchess County has to offer.”

Samantha Dutchess Halliday, Marist '13

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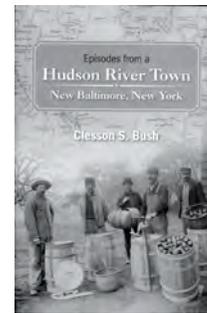
1. Personal correspondence
2. Frank Hasbrouck, *The History of Dutchess County, New York* (Poughkeepsie: S. A. Matthieu, 1909), 34.
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River of Riches

The Hudson flows like a long, surreal limousine, rides low in the deep passage of its emotion, the vehicle's tarnished silver surface reflecting a continuous transfer to and from, now and then. But that's only the beginning. Under the hood of its metaphor, the river serves the rich. Elegant mansions pose above its banks; old oaks recall footmen and chauffeurs; containers move imports and exports. For it is the flow of money to which the river is harnessed, the increase of industry, freight and pleasure boating as the valley fills with new buildings. The river has no patience with the poor. Sometimes their dreams arrive by barge. But more often, they wash up, and wait to be found by some kid in the debris along the river bank.

Allen C. Fischer

Book Reviews



Episodes from a Hudson River Town: New Baltimore, New York, Clesson S. Bush. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2011. (268 pp.)

In 1999, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the White House Millennium Council set up the Millennium Project, known as My History Is America's History. It aimed to provide a place online for the collection of personal narratives that others could read and reflect upon. Although the project was abandoned within a few years, its intention was clear: to show the American public that local history matters.

New Baltimore's Town Historian, Clesson S. Bush, must think so too. His unambiguously local history book, *Episodes from a Hudson River Town: New Baltimore, New York*, succeeds in portraying the nature and character of townspeople in New York State. In his introduction, Bush admits that New Baltimore does not have a claim to fame, and that no famous people dwelled there. Yet, its history deserves to be preserved precisely to remember the daily lives of the common people, and to document the impact that state, national, and international events had on a small river community.

Bush's attention for the lives of common people can be explained by his academic background in public administration and urban studies, which shines through in this abundantly researched and well-written book about the people of New Baltimore throughout the centuries. Bush never loses himself in heavy scholarly details.

In ten chapters, he illustrates many episodes in the history of New Baltimore, from the time of the Paleo-Indians, the Mohicans, and the European settlers to the twentieth century, with its two World Wars and the opening of the New York State Thruway. A picture arises of what could be perceived as any small town on the Hudson. Yet, the distinctive character of New Baltimore is evident. From the Broncks and the Vanderzees to the Shermans and the Houghtalings, the lives of many local characters who made the town unique are highlighted in the book.

The birth of New Baltimore was a direct consequence of the state-enacted splitting up of the Town of Coxsackie in April 1811. That division came on the heels of changes in landownership after the American Revolution, when New Englanders discovered the tax advantages in New York State. Not only did they buy up land and establish themselves in the area around Albany, they also organized local governments, thus undoing the supremacy of the original landowners.

In the introduction, the author notes that the original board minutes are still not accessible. This may be the reason that the origin of New Baltimore's name remains unclear. However, there seems to have been "a marked visual similarity between the

terrain of early Baltimore, Maryland, and the little New York river hamlet.”

Chapter 6, “Life on the River,” stands out as it describes probably the most important era for New Baltimore. From the early nineteenth century through the 1860s, new industries were needed to replace the agriculture New Baltimore had been dependent on until then. Several plans for a canal failed, the shipbuilding industry came and went, and so did the ice industry. New Baltimore’s story of the ice houses is reminiscent of the chapter on Rockland Lake in *Lost Towns of the Hudson Valley* by Wesley and Barbara Gottlock (2009).

Of course, New Baltimore deserves more than one chapter in a book. Its history, as shown in *Episodes from a Hudson River Town*, is not that of a lost town. It is an account of how a small river town has survived to this day through several periods of economic adversity. The book shows how and why the town continues to exist. Today, New Baltimore is best known by travelers going north along the New York State Thruway as the last travel plaza before Albany.

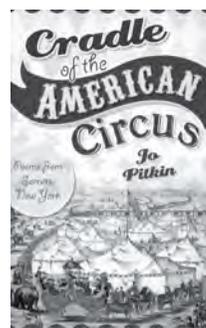
The Hudson River Valley has seen profound changes between 1609 and today, and Clesson Bush’s *Episodes from a Hudson River Town: New Baltimore, New York* is a strong contribution to the growing collection of local histories. His book allows the reader to understand how the inhabitants of this small town worked hard and utilized the economic and social factors that were beyond the town’s control to build an enduring community.

Robert A. Naborn, *University of Pennsylvania*

Laurence Carr. *Pancake Hollow Primer: A Hudson Valley Story*. New Paltz, New York: Codhill Press, 2011. (170 pp.)

Jo Pitkin. *Cradle of the American Circus: Poems from Somers, New York*. Charleston, North Carolina and London: The History Press, 2012. (143 pp.)

In their most recent books, local writers Laurence Carr and Jo Pitkin delve into Hudson River Valley history for creative purposes. Both books are generic hybrids, embedding prose narrative and poetry in historical facts and contexts. Carr offers readers an unusually structured novel, frequently interrupting the action of its plot to interpolate archival records (chiefly property titles and inventories), prose poems, and haiku. Pitkin offers a collection of poems, each printed alongside excerpts from the historical documents inspiring it—a medley of materials including letters, diaries, newspaper ads, bills of sale, tombstone epitaphs, lithographs, paintings, posters, and related memorabilia. Both authors take readers more than a century into the past, exploring economic and social forces that influenced the Mid-Hudson region during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Both books also highlight rural landscapes and experiences: Carr’s story is situated on the western bank of the Hudson River, near Plattekill; Pitkin’s poems are set on the eastern side, in Somers and the surrounding countryside.

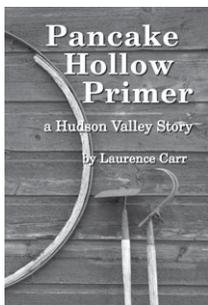


As its title indicates, Jo Pitkin’s book celebrates the heritage of Somers as the “cradle of the American circus.” Aply researched and scrupulously documented, the project successfully integrates artistic and historicist impulses. Pitkin begins by introducing readers to Hachaliah Bailey (1775-1845), who bought an elephant “for a song” early in the 1800s, intending to exploit its brute strength in working his stony farm: “she’ll sure haul my weighted crop and more” (3). He shipped her “up the churning Hudson on [his] sloop” and soon discovered that exhibiting this exotic beast to an astonished public was more profitable than hiding her away in his fields (33). She proved to be “worth her weight in stares,” yielding “rumor, gossip, cash” (33). Bailey’s entrepreneurial spirit launched the menagerie business: He was “the first keeper of the rare and the wild” (34). Gradually, he added more animals to his show, and his success attracted others to “the fledgling yet lucrative traveling menagerie business” (52). In addition to elephants, exhibits featured tigers, monkeys, and bears, side by side with trained horses and dogs. Exhibitors competed to acquire ever more unusual beasts: a giraffe, a cheetah, a rhinoceros. In a poem called “Safari,” Pitkin creates a memorable image of this ever-growing “pageant” of involuntary immigrants: “bearded gnus \ stream across a marbled continent \ like a river that constantly flows, \ like the lymphatic Hudson River” (62).

Electing to compose most of her poems in the form of dramatic monologues, Pitkin brings her characters vividly to life, lending immediacy to historical events. In this way, too, she is able to reveal the economic motivations that fueled the circus business (which left abundant relics in the form of “yellowed receipts,” “bills of sale,” and “ticket stubs”) without imposing twentieth-century notions of global ecology on nineteenth-century sensibilities (100). Thus the “Flatfoots” (members of a “powerful syndicate of showmen”) put forward their views, unmediated by explicit judgments on the part of the poet: “We import, sell, and lease beasts / from Asia, Africa, South America,” they declare (81). “We manage control, and promote / menageries”; “we front cash to foot the bills”; “we buy in, sell out, loan, and deal, / capitalize on Darwin’s infinite supply” (81). The long list of money-oriented verbs employed by these financiers to characterize their activities sufficiently indicates that profit motive, rather than zoological passion, explains their interest in exotic animals. Unabashedly pursuing “the main chance” they “split \ stock shares / in hyenas, zebras, polar bears” (79, 81).

Poems focusing on individual captive animals suggest how their living conditions were constrained by ignorance or indifference. Pitkin addresses the tiger “Nero,” for example, noting how he bares his teeth in “ivory rage,” pacing a cage constructed of “thick bars above and below / With a compulsive’s repetitious steps” (37). “Elegy” mourns all the animals who were “packed like gold bars in a box,” who would “never again smell Africa,” who were forced to endure miserable and unhygienic conditions: “all alone / with their shit, scabies, acrid straw” (63). At the same time that the poems castigate

early zoo-masters for greed or callousness, however, they communicate the wonder these “never-before-seen” creatures excited in American spectators (79). In an era without photography or air travel, an ostrich or a jaguar truly was an amazing sight. Traveling circuses offered ordinary, small-town people a chance to observe living representatives of a distant and alien world. Pitkin’s poems help readers marvel again at an elephant munching potato peelings in a Somers barn or cattle drovers taking zebras and giraffes from town to town. Incongruously, the Hudson River Valley became home to a host of displaced animals, to the unlikely and “heavy ark” of the first American menageries (56).



Less obviously exotic in subject matter than Pitkin’s book, Laurence Carr’s *Pancake Hollow Primer* introduces readers to Frank, who has inherited “a Hudson Valley house” (19). Frank’s back-story is sketched out only cryptically: He has served in the army and suffered “stress disorder,” endured therapy, and drifted (19). Inheriting his great-uncle’s house gives him a place to go and a reason to be there. More important than the house itself are its contents. As Frank discovers, the place is a reservoir of the accumulated possessions of generations of packrats. Every room, not excepting attic, cellar, and barn, is filled with the detritus of a hundred years or more.

The narrative is interrupted more than once by long lists of the things Frank finds and inventories, much of it outdated, useless, broken, or quixotic: “eighty-four rotting tires,” “one divination wand,” “one box, spent cartridges,” “two headboards without a bed,” “four plastic Mr. Peanut mugs,” “one postcard, dated August 9, 1951: ‘Am having a wonderful time. . .’” (14, 15, 16, 17, 53). The central problem the novel presents concerns the fate and significance of this colorful, variegated legacy: Frank must decide what to do with it and consider what, if anything, all this “ephemera so close to dust” might mean to him (4).

Initially he plans to empty the house; he announces a yard sale of gigantic proportions. When the first customer arrives, however, he finds himself in the grip of a “top-notch anxiety attack,” and inexplicably reluctant to sell anything (51). He cancels the sale, his anxiety recedes, and he begins thinking of the house’s contents as a “collection” rather than junk (49). His great-uncle, he recognizes, was not just an “accumulator” but a “curator” and “caretaker,” one who “knew what each piece was and how it fit together with another piece and what it was used for and what had come along, through progress, the Grim Reaper of Technology, to make it obsolete” (47, 49). Great-uncle Funtz “had seen the value in it all,” and now Frank, too, begins to redefine his legacy as “treasure” (53). He perceives himself, comfortingly, as “another object among objects and the newest that the house would perhaps accept for safekeeping” (53). Gradually he sheds his past, “his disposable life,” and begins to think of himself as part of the history of this place (35). For all its apparently random character, the conglomeration of things in the house represents a microcosmic historical record. Frank, in his turn, begins accumulating apparently useless objects, preserving them as a “time capsule”

for some future tenant of the house “to decode” (190).

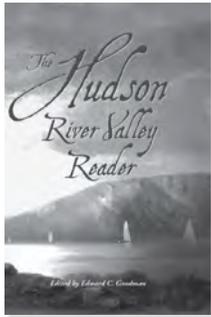
If the house and its contents connect Frank to human history and human community, the land around the house serves as a link to the natural environment. “Surrounded by trees, nearly seven acres’ worth,” he enjoys a view that extends from “the foot of the Catskills” to the Shawangunks (105, 106). He has become the proprietor of a forest of “green-jeweled crowns,” a never-ending abundance of uncultivated grasses, flowers, and shrubs. The non-human population (including foxes, skunks, and turkey vultures) provides other sources of interest. Watching “the resident skunk,” for instance, “a bizarre creature all white from head to tail,” Frank decides it looks like “the animated wig of George Washington, ambling across the yard” (124). Subtly, inexorably, the place lays a spell upon him. “The land surrounding Frank had acquired a richness layer by layer over the decades, dark and deep, with a hint of a Tintern Abbey ramble and bowered by faerie rings” (107). He responds with restoration efforts, reopening paths, repairing a dry stone hearth. He discovers that “there was a lot to be done,” and the work lends healthful purpose to his days (160).

Setting provides the stuff of the plot, and it fuels character development as well. It also appears to influence the book’s anomalous structure. The inventories, conveyances, deeds, and poems inserted at intervals cause the book to resemble the heterogeneous collection of things its protagonist inherits. The non-narrative elements lend texture to the whole but cannot be wholly absorbed into it; they function like raisins and nuts in a bowl of oatmeal, providing small, indissoluble nuggets of flavor. Carr’s poems often muse on topics relevant to his narrative, but they do not carry it forward. For instance, a haiku comments indirectly on the metamorphosis Frank is undergoing:

Braking ground like breaking bread.
Hands shape the brown dough.
A recipe as old as earth. (147)

Original in conception and design, the book has won a Next Generation Indie Book Award. Its subtitle, “A Hudson Valley Story,” indicates that evocation of place is central to its purposes. Readers familiar with the region are bound to derive extra pleasure from its local references and particulars.

Judith Saunders, Marist College



The Hudson River Valley Reader, Edward C. Goodman.
Kennebunkport, ME: Cider Mill Press, 2008. (415 pp.)

The Hudson River Valley Reader, edited by Edward C. Goodman, is a Quadricentennial tribute to the history, literature, and lore of the Hudson Valley and the Catskills drawn from several classic works of regional scholarship. Its first section surveys iconic geographical features of the region (Spuyuten Duyvil Creek, the Pallasades, Lake George, Kaaterskill Falls), followed by prominent historical themes: Robert Juet's log of Hudson's voyage, the patent system of land distribution, battles of the Revolution, Benedict Arnold's betrayal, and Major John Andre's execution. The historical summary ends with the age of tourism ushered in by the launch of Robert Fulton's steamboat, along with a guidebook to the most popular tourist destination on the river: West Point.

This first section is a series of excerpts from histories like Wallace Bruce's *The Hudson*. Goodman neither introduces nor documents these, and one feels a twinge of vertigo as narrative voices shift but are not identified. The purchase of Manhattan by the Dutch, the manners and mores of the early townspeople, and the governorship of Peter Stuyvesant are conveyed in chapters from Washington Irving's wildly satirical *History of New York*. Since these are not identified, either, reading them for the history of New Amsterdam can be like tuning in to *The Daily Show*, not knowing it is a fake news program.

This book, in other words, is not designed for the scholar. It aims to be "diverse" and "entertaining," and it largely succeeds. The excerpts are well edited for conciseness and readability, and they comprehensively represent the main threads of Hudson Valley history.

Legends—Native American, Dutch, Colonial, and Revolutionary War—compiled in the second section come from Charles Skinner's *Myths and Legends of our Own Land*. These would benefit from contextualization. Still, they are varied and diverting. Some of them also figure in work by the region's writers, as tales of the Dunderberg Imp and Murderer's Creek do, for example, in T.C. Boyle's *World's End*.

The poems and fiction in a final section chronicle an accomplishment for which the Hudson Valley is justly famous: the beginnings of a national literature. "A Culprit Fay," by Knickerbocker poet Joseph Rodman Drake, is recognized in the *Cambridge History of American Literature* for its early ("before Bryant") description of native plants, birds, and insects. In a second poem, "To a Friend," Drake exhorts his contemporaries to write about American scenery and subject matter. "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and a long excerpt from *The Last of the Mohicans* show Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper doing just that.

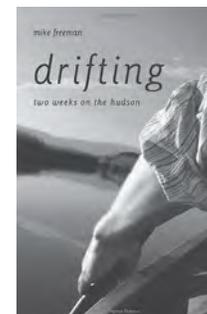
With the exception of four-line chapter epigraphs by Susan Warner and Minna Irving, women writers go unmentioned. Sarah Kemble Knight's *Journal* (1704), with

its seminal descriptions of Dutch culture and architecture in New York, and of the city's religious landscape, would have enriched the History section, as would Anne MacVicar Grant's *Memoirs of an American Lady*. MacVicar accompanied her father, a British military officer, to New York during the French and Indian War and lived for a decade with the distinguished Schuyler family in Albany. Recorded years after her return to Scotland, her memories of slavery in New York, sledding and sleigh-riding in Albany, and Dutch young people's fondness for committing extreme pranks find their way—sometimes almost verbatim—into Cooper's *Satanstoe*. A notable omission from the Literature section is Edith Wharton, whose *The House of Mirth* (1905) unfolds at Bellomont, a country estate in Rhinebeck with a classic Hudson Valley Romantic landscape.

Landscape design, of course, is but one of the sister arts that flourished alongside literature in the thirty or so fertile years ushered in by the 1819 publication of Irving's *Sketch Book*. Hudson River School images are among the many striking reproductions in Goodman's physically attractive volume, but *writing* about landscape painting, as about rural architecture, landscape design, and tourism, is mostly absent. It would afford the reader a more complete picture of the American cultural identity that was being crafted, collaboratively, in the region in the mid-nineteenth century to read Thomas Cole's defense of the wilderness landscape of the Catskills in "American Scenery," to read the principles of picturesque landscape design being promulgated by A.J. Downing, to read travel writing by such tourists on the Hudson and in the Catskills as James Kirke Paulding and Englishwomen Harriet Martineau and Frances Trollope.

For the literature of these companion arts, one can turn to Bonnie Marranca's 1992 *Hudson Valley Lives*, an anthology aimed, like Goodman's, at the general reader. This book has the further advantage of thoughtful introductions by the editor that make the selections accessible. Goodman's volume provides enough geology, history, literature, and folklore not represented in Marranca to make it a welcome supplement to her anthology, but not a replacement for it.

Beth Kolp, SUNY Dutchess



Drifting: Two Weeks on the Hudson, Mike Freeman.
Albany, New York: State University of New York Press,
2011. (256 pp.)

The pen and the paddle frequently join forces in writing about river journeys, and the Hudson River offers a tempting palimpsest for authors inclined to wield both. Stroking through waters navigated by Susan Fox Rogers in *My Reach: A Hudson River Memoir* (reviewed in *The Hudson Valley Review's* autumn 2012 issue) and Peter Lourie in *River of Mountains: A Canoe Journey Down the Hudson* comes Mike Freeman with this recent work.

While the title *Drifting* suggests floating on a river, one soon realizes that the verb applies less to the passage of Freeman's canoe down the Hudson than it does to the state of his life in middle age and, what's more, to the condition of his—our—country early in the twenty-first century. Especially on a river that flows both ways, drifting is an apt metaphor for Freeman's take on each of these topics, but his voyage is a far cry from the languorous trip the title suggests. Canoeing from Lake Henderson in the Adirondacks to Manhattan in two weeks requires real exertion, and Freeman tackles his ambitious range of subject matter with similar vigor.

His topics include a whitewater run of vexing contemporary issues: agriculture, race relations, gender roles, wars of choice, religion, environmentalism, and more. If one should wonder what gives an author license to take on such a huge swath of American social and political concerns during a mere canoe trip, remember that the Hudson is America's River—or so many writers would have us believe. Freeman himself doesn't quite buy it. Yet, calling the Hudson "an emblematic register of our past, present, and future," he goes on to describe the many ways in which it has played a major role in American history and culture, and concludes: "The river, then, is a place to sift the American experience, and to do it by canoe was more luck than I could ask."

Freeman needed a bit of luck. At forty, after ten years as a fisheries technician in the wilds of Alaska, he traveled to New England for a short visit in the land of his youth and met a woman with whom he "agreed to try and conceive." Both thought it would take time, but "Not so. A week after returning to Yakutat, Alaska, I received the news, and back I went, to a place I no longer considered home, a month before Lehman Brothers collapsed in 2008." In a time of deep recession, with credentials ill-suited to work in the urban Northeast, at least not in well-paying jobs that would allow the mother-to-be to leave work to care for their child, Freeman was "now at home with a baby girl while my partner earned our bread. We only pretend we don't care what people think. I was supposed to be working, and wasn't."

It's thus not surprising that, when he begins his trip on Henderson Lake and finds evidence of past logging, Freeman's thoughts turn to conceptions of manhood. Listing some of the "best parts—competition, restlessness, motion, physicality"—he explores to what extent the nineteenth century lumberjacks and river drivers fulfilled definitions of manliness. In the process Freeman colorfully illuminates the rugged history of Adirondacks logging and plumbs his own reactions to leaving behind the Alaskan bush and roaming of his youth to become a middle-aged, stay-at-home dad.

This is a formula that Freeman employs throughout *Drifting*. Landscapes, wildlife, monuments, environmental insults—even fresh farmstand fruit—cue accounts of local history, culture, economics, or ecology that morph into riffs on relevant social, moral, and political issues, which swell to encompass drama on the national scale, and finally swirl and dissipate in eddies of self-examination. Passing over the PCB hotspots near Fort Edward, he recounts the sordid story that led to designation of the Hudson as a Superfund site and duly aims a few arrows at General Electric. A few strokes later, he

points out how Americans' urge to consume, to possess comfort and a plethora of goods at the lowest price possible, is in part responsible for such degradation, and contemplates his own complicity in creating the mess.

To some, Freeman's forays into so many current controversies may seem to be over-reaching. Camping across from Germantown, noting the presence of Palatines in the region, he calls them as "one of the hundred thousand splinters making up the American timber" and abruptly leaps from that metaphor into an extensive discussion of race in America and the history of slavery in the Hudson Valley. Disembarking in the city of Hudson and going for a run past farmstands in Columbia County, he courses into a discussion of sustainable agriculture in the region. In the Highlands, looking up at the walls of West Point, he wonders what the cadets think about wars of choice, and tries to understand what he calls "warfare's spiritual pull." Also in the Highlands, Freeman discerns creation as the Hudson River School artists saw it and then delves into the place of religion in the nation.

While Freeman ranges more widely than most, this sort of discourse is standard fare from authors returned from solo odysseys. From various tributaries of awareness flow descriptions of natural history, soul-searching about personal beliefs and choices past, present, and future, and ruminations on the state of the world. What sets this book apart from others of the genre is the way Freeman joins these streams in a twisting torrent of ideas akin to the Hudson rushing through its gorge above North Creek. It's an often bumpy and challenging ride for the reader, one with quick changes of course and dousings of cold water to be endured, but also one that is lively and at times exhilarating. His chapter on GE and PCBs starts with lessons from the "aqueduct scene" in the Monty Python movie *Life of Brian* and segues to the Puritans' stamp on our national consciousness. In their wildly different forms, both have something valid to say about responsibilities of government and ourselves in creating environmental problems and solving them.

In comparison to long passages about the state of the nation, Freeman—intentionally or not—devotes relatively few pages to the relationship that brought him back to the Northeast; this book is not a memoir. Thoughts about the relationship's present and future bubble to the surface as he paddles, but his partner, Karen, does not come into focus; there are only scattered hints of her nature. His reflections on their life together are wary. "We never said it, but knew our greatest angst was mutual. Relationships are built on memories, experiences, not the need to have kids. Throughout her pregnancy, we both knew that if one of us died, the other would tremble at an uncertain future rather than mourn a shared, hard-earned past." One wishes for more balance—abundant in weighing issues elsewhere in the book—to know more about the currents that pull them together.

Freeman's freewheeling style sometimes takes him overboard, literally as well as figuratively. In a section about New York's canal system, he writes: "DeWitt Clinton. Here's your man. He did what George Washington couldn't. Any bozo can run an army,

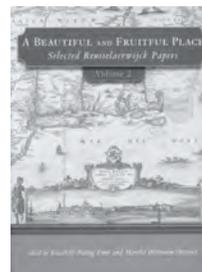
but punching a waterway through the Appalachians, joining West to East...takes pluck." Freeman quickly follows up with praise for Washington's intelligence, and his foresight in seeing the need for a water route west, but the "bozo" comment seems gratuitous.

In the context of a conversation with Bill McKibben ("...mostly science, nose-gays of facts for every occasion, the type that drives me nuts") and John Elder ("an English prof, a poetry man, and therefore my kind of guy") Freeman allows that "Together, these two make up the best of human thought," and that without facts, "imagination has no seed." That said, he describes himself as "a humanities guy. I hate facts." While Freeman probably didn't intend this attitude to extend to his book, a reader well-versed in Hudson River human and natural history will find a fair number of errors in both copy-editing (Lake Tear of the Clouds is "forty feet up Mount Marcy") and research (the *Clearwater* is a sloop, not a schooner), but these are in the end minor distractions.

At the book's close, Freeman writes: "I can't say what the trip meant, or what the Hudson might mean to America's past, present, or future, only that like any waterway, its banks are littered with rune." His translations of these runes in *Drifting* are unfettered, weaving from one line of thought to another, promising grist for memorable conversations over beers following a float trip down the Hudson, and—more formally—one more rewarding textual testament to this iconic river's power to inspire and enlighten.

Steve Stanne is coauthor of *The Hudson: An Illustrated Guide to the Living River, and extension associate with the New York State Water Resources Institute at Cornell University.*

New & Noteworthy Books Received



A Beautiful and Fruitful Place: Selected Rensselaerwijck Papers Volume 2

Edited by Elisabeth Paling Funk and Martha Dickinson Shattuck
(Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2011)
283 pp. \$34.95 (paperback) www.sunypress.edu

The second volume of papers to come from the annual Rensselaerwijck Seminar on New Netherland, *A Beautiful and Fruitful Place* combines the efforts of scholars from both Europe and the United States. Compiled from ten years of the seminar, topics include domestic life in New Netherland, the relationship between New Netherland and New England, and the continued influence of the Dutch in the New World after 1664. Many of the foremost scholars on New Netherland feature in this anthology that increases considerably the available scholarship on a key aspect of American history.



Arcadian America: The Death and Life of an Environmental Tradition

By Aaron Sachs (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013)
496 pp. \$35.00 (hardcover) <http://yalepress.yale.edu>

Created in the period before the Civil War, garden cemeteries demonstrate an approach to the land that recognizes the inter-relatedness of human action and ecological change. Sachs argues that the interpretation of nineteenth-century garden cemeteries can play an important role in facing twenty-first-century issues of the denial of environmental limits and death.



Celebrating the Revolutionary War: Municipal Symbols of a Free Country

Compiled by Marvin W. Bubie (Averill Park, NY: MNO Books, 2011)
240 pp. \$29.95 (paperback) www.mnobooks.com

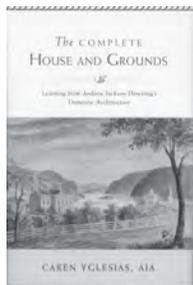
In this latest in a series of books by Bubie on historical seals, he captures the Revolutionary War history of municipalities from 1620 through 1783. Complete with written accounts of how the Revolution shaped the identity of each location, he profiles towns and villages along the East Coast. Paying special attention to New York, this Hudson River Valley author continues to utilize his unique and innovative historical approach as a way to enhance understanding of the tremendous impact the Revolution had on the formative years of American development.



**Childhood Pleasures:
Dutch Children in the Seventeenth Century**

By Donna R. Barnes and Peter G. Rose
(Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012)
184 pp. \$29.95 (paperback) www.syracuseuniversitypress.syr.edu

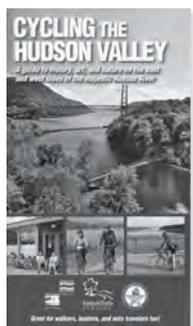
The seventeenth century in the Netherlands was a period of great prosperity and imagination for adults and children alike. Using a variety of perspectives and images, the authors shed new light on the games, activities, celebrations, and foods that defined the lives of Dutch children. With more than fifty color illustrations, a collection of Dutch recipes, and a lengthy bibliography, *Childhood Pleasures* demonstrates the many similarities between children of past generations and those of today.



**The Complete House and Grounds: Learning from
Andrew Jackson Downing's Domestic Architecture**

By Caren Yglesias (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011)
255 pp. \$40.00 (hardcover) www.press.uchicago.edu

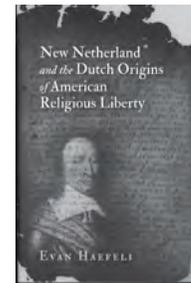
Newburgh native Andrew Jackson Downing was among the most significant architects in American history due to his adapting of European ideas to the American landscape. Downing's understanding of a house as a dwelling to be incorporated into the larger landscape revolutionized architecture in the United States and inspired later architects to follow his model. Yglesias utilizes many photographs and charts to enhance the text, and also includes a detailed glossary of terms to make the book easily understandable for both fans of architecture and anyone who enjoys the architectural beauty of the Hudson River Valley.



**Cycling the Hudson Valley:
A Guide to History, Art, and Nature on the East
and West Sides of the Majestic Hudson River**

Parks & Trails New York (Albany, NY: 2012)
142 pp. \$23.95 (spiral-bound) www.ptny.org

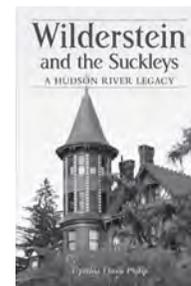
An extensive and detailed guide to cycling in the Hudson River Valley, complete with forty color maps covering both shores of the Hudson River from Manhattan to Albany, the guide provides insightful history and relevant visitor information for each region. Dozens of color photos enhance the travel information that includes things to see and do, important contacts, and travel notes for each mapped section. This guide is a must-have for riders of any level that are interested in the diverse landscape of the Hudson River Valley.



**New Netherland and the Dutch Origins
of American Religious Liberty**

By Evan Haefeli (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012)
384 pp. \$45.00 (hardcover) www.upenn.edu/pennpress

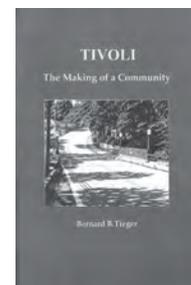
The expectation of religious tolerance in the colony of New Netherland was accepted in principle though more difficult to uphold in practice. The transition from Dutch to English rule created new challenges but benefited from an unusually tolerant period in English history. Through use of a variety of historic documents and laws, Haefeli examines the significance of religious tolerance that began under Dutch colonization and explores how Dutch principles led to the development of religious diversity in America.



Wilderstein and the Suckleys: A Hudson River Legacy

By Cynthia Owen Philip (Delmar, NY: Black Dome Press, 2012)
152 pp. \$17.99 (paperback) [www://blackdomepress.com](http://www.blackdomepress.com)

The architectural and historic significance of the Wilderstein mansion make it among the most important historic homes in the Hudson River Valley. In this second edition of *Wilderstein and the Suckleys*, the author utilizes a wide array of primary source documents to tell the story of both the house and the family that lived there. With a new color photo section and afterword by Wilderstein Executive Director Greg Sokaris, this book documents the legacy of Wilderstein within the context of an important period in Hudson Valley history.



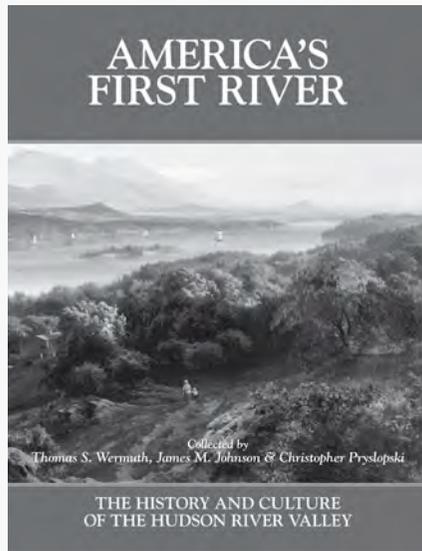
Tivoli: The Making of a Community

By Bernard B. Tieger (Tivoli, NY: Village Books Press, 2012)
194 pp. \$15.00 (paperback)

Written by a Bard professor emeritus of Sociology who moved to Tivoli in the late 1960s, this updated history recounts 300 years of village life. The author balances his dual roles of academic and dedicated resident to present a lively narrative made even more unique by his new research and personal perspective. Liberally illustrated, it also features appendices and an extensive bibliography.

Andrew Villani, The Hudson River Valley Institute

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The History and Culture of the Hudson River Valley

Collected and with an introduction by Thomas S. Wermuth,
James M. Johnson, and Christopher Pryslopski

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