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THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY REVIEW

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From the Editors

While perhaps not at first apparent, the articles in this issue share a common theme—struggle. The Dutch colonists had to carve a home out of the New World wilderness. Two centuries later, descendants of the original inhabitants of a part of that world (which wasn't entirely wilderness after all) tried to reclaim their sovereignty. Just fifty years after that, women undertook a march from New York City to Albany to assert their right to vote and gain adherents for their cause. Finally, while the rise and fall of Albany's lumber district perhaps doesn't readily seem to fit the theme, here, too, a struggle took place to establish and maintain a community on and around it.

This latter essay underscores the essential role of technological innovation, a concept that leads us to a second underlying theme of this issue—progress. Sometimes welcome, sometimes not, for better or worse it is always unstoppable.



Call for Essays

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

Submission of Essays and Other Materials

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

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



On the cover: Woman Suffrage Picket Parade, Harris & Ewing, 1917, Harris & Ewing Photograph Collection, Library of Congress. **On the back cover:** Empire State Campaign Committee, crepe-paper banner, 1915, Courtesy of Coline Jenkins, Elizabeth Cady Stanton Family and The New York State Museum

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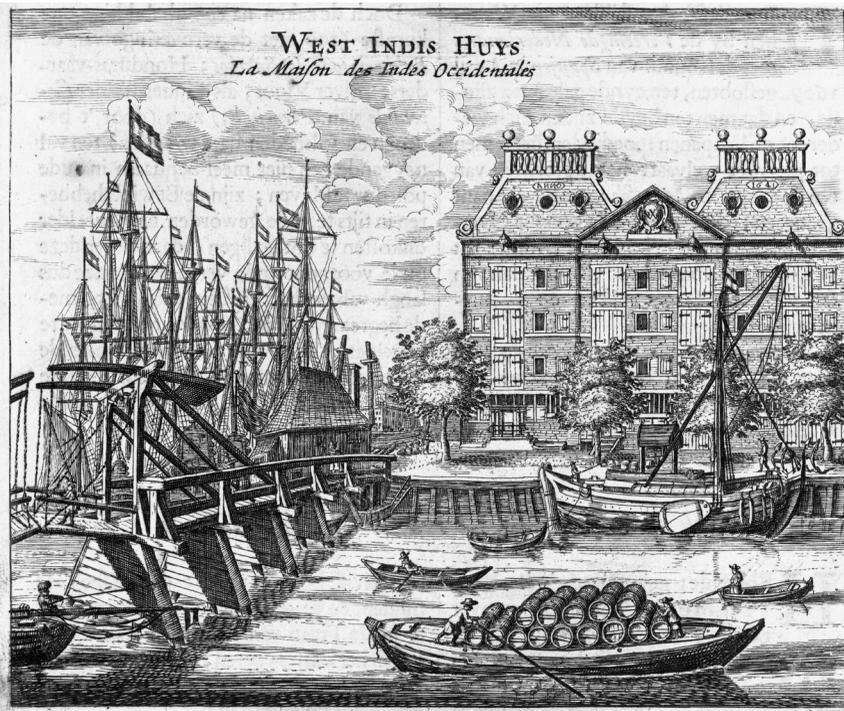
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Who Built Dutch New York? Personal Ties and Imperial Connections in the Seventeenth-Century Hudson River Valley

Susanah Shaw Romney



View of the West India House at Amsterdam. Jan Veenhuysen, 1665.

Image courtesy of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

Who built Dutch New York?¹ The question brings to light the people living along the mid-Atlantic coast from Henry Hudson's voyage up the river in 1609 through the year that the colony was handed over to the English in 1664. It is easy enough to tell the history of the period by looking at governors and company officials, but equally important in the creation of this foundational colony were the actions of sailors, soldiers, Dutch housewives, enslaved African families, Mohawk fur-trading men or Munsee farm women. Indeed, these

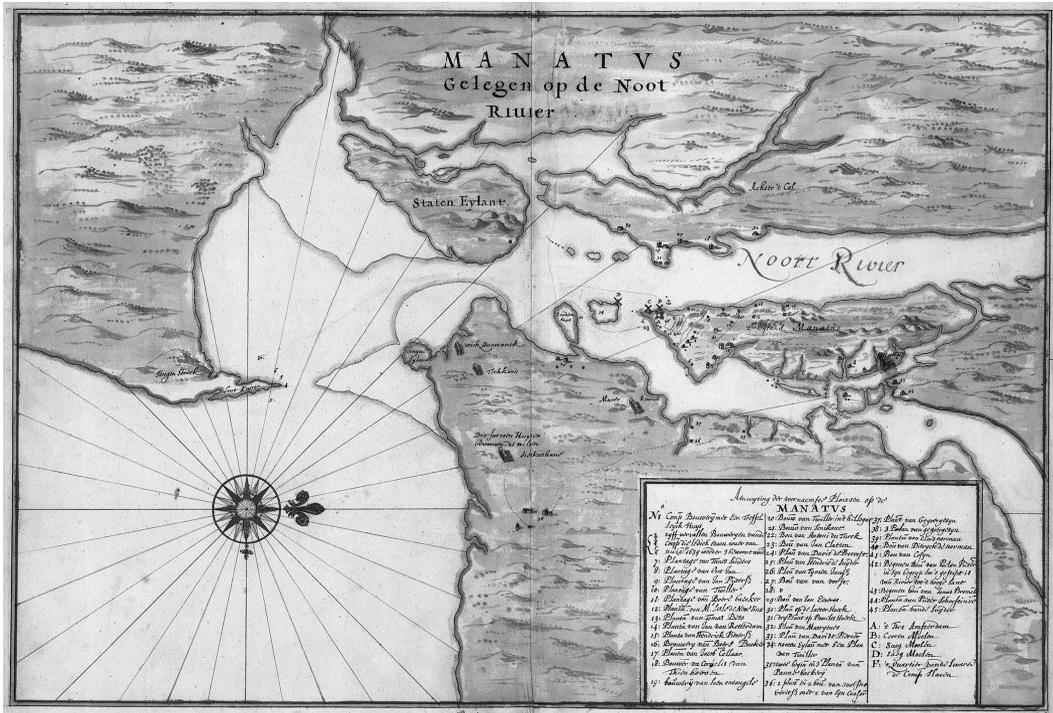
1 This article has been adapted from the 2018 Handel-Krom Lecture on Hudson River Valley History at Marist College.

rather ordinary people held the keys to the successes and failures of colonization in the region during the Dutch era.² The society that developed from Long Island to present-day Albany was rough; there was hierarchy, there was inequality, there was racism, there was violence, and there was brutality. Yet from within that harrowing process, people during the Dutch era together created a unique system of exchange and a multicultural society that established enduring patterns throughout the region.

The Hudson Valley was just one part of a region that Dutch ship captains began visiting and calling New Netherland along the coastline and river valleys of the mid-Atlantic coast of North America. Their presence was actually pretty thin on the ground, and it would have shocked the resident Munsee-speaking Native American communities to hear the area called “Dutch.” Still, the Dutch asserted a paper claim to the whole coastline as their exclusive trade zone, separate from the areas visited and settled by the French and English at the St. Lawrence River and the Chesapeake Bay around the same time. Beginning in 1609, Dutch ships made annual voyages up and down the Hudson River, trading for furs, particularly beaver skins, that could be sold for a killing in Amsterdam and ended up largely as hats. The profits from early trade to the Americas, including these furs, were sufficient to lead to the formation of a monopoly company in 1623, the West India Company (WIC), which decided to secure the region from European competitors by encouraging settlement by family households and African slaves beginning in 1624. Once these strangers arrived, concentrated mostly at Manhattan and present-day Albany, Natives and newcomers together created a unique economy that saw the exchange of everything from furs to firewood to food. Beaver skins and wampum beads, produced by indigenous people, even became the common currency of everyone in the region. The colony eventually grew to maybe 8,000-10,000 settlers and slaves by the time it was taken over by the English in 1664. Though by today’s standards, 10,000 people sounds like a small town, in the context of early seventeenth-century colonies, New Netherland was comparatively large. It dwarfed New France and Spain’s colonies at the time in New Mexico and Florida. Only the English colonies in North America were bigger. There were perhaps 500-1,000 Africans among that number. In addition, numerous communities of Munsee-speaking people populated the region. The Mahicans remained strong, and the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois, were at the height of their power.

Yet the story that is told about the greater Hudson region in the Dutch era is often one of smallness, weakness, and failure. Scholars tend to look at the records of the WIC, and it is undeniably true that the company failed to hold on to the colony. The “Dutch Empire” in a formal sense did not last long in North America. The WIC never quite figured out how to cash in on the colony’s thriving fur trade. Individuals and Dutch families made money and built lives for themselves, but WIC profits were overwhelmed by the costs of running a colony. And sure enough, Director-General Peter Stuyvesant

2 For fuller explanations and documentation, see Susanah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).



Manuscript map of New-Netherland and Manhattan by Joan Vingboons in 1639.
Library of Congress

complained all the time about the smallness and weakness of the colony—he wanted his employers to invest much more in building forts, sending soldiers, claiming land, and supporting immigration. He lost the argument. That left the colony easy prey for the English in 1664, with too few resources invested by a company that saw scant profits. But if the colony was easy pickings, it was rich pickings, too. Nearly all Dutch families living in Manhattan and the Hudson River Valley in 1664 stayed, and for a reason. Something about what had been built during the Dutch period worked for them, and it is important to take a look at what that was.

To understand who really built New Netherland, we need to take the focus off of the WIC and look instead at what ordinary people were doing. I would argue that people built functional economies and communities by relying on their most immediate ties and connections, their personal and familial relationships with others. A reliance on personal and familial connections was, in fact, normal for all the societies around the Atlantic in the seventeenth century. Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans all relied on social networks to build stable lives. But one would think that such ties would get disrupted by the upheavals and distances of transatlantic travel and colonization. Instead, those ties stretched and blended with new ties to create networks. The expansive connections people created and maintained through their travels can be understood as forming “intimate networks.”

People's intimate networks helped them resist, survive, or even profit from new long-distance connections reaching across the ocean. Also, we can go beyond that to see the ways intimate networks were part of the structure of empire itself. They were what allowed for the survival of overseas exchange and colonial expansion.

To see intimate networks in action, we can look at the lives of some of the people who lived in and built New Netherland. A good place to start is with the men and women of maritime Amsterdam. Sailors and soldiers for the WIC were some of the poorest workers in the city. And this is a time before the creation of the formal structures like banks, postal companies, or ship lines designed to serve individual colonizers that made later empires run smoothly. So how did people who were so economically vulnerable function within the vast distances of the Atlantic?



Standing Young Sailor,
Moses ter Borch,
in or after c.1660 –
in or before c.1665.
Image courtesy of
the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

Documents from the time reveal that they relied on personal connections and face-to-face transactions with the women and men of Amsterdam to build functional lives in a transatlantic era. It could seem inevitable that the personal ties poor people relied on to survive in seventeenth-century Europe would snap when stretched beyond their limit as people left home and traveled vast distances. But they did not. Rather, those networks expanded outward with their travels, and sometimes even grew. To give just one example, from 1641, a young man named Volckert Harmensz van Norden worked as a soldier for the WIC. In February 1641, he appeared before a notary with a widow called Anna Jansdochter and acknowledged that he “sailed out as a soldier about seven and a half years ago with the ship the Unity [Eendraght] & has now just arrived with the ship the Fame [Faam] as under-officer, And acknowledges himself to be indebted to [Anna Jansdochter], or the shower of this, for the sum of One Hundred guilders for expenses provided and funds loaned and by him thankfully taken and received.”

Just to give you an idea of how much money this was to him, he likely had earned eight guilders per month as an entry-level soldier (on paper, although that would be before expenses), so this is well over a year of wages he owed her. And he could not pay. He went on to agree that she could collect anything he had coming to him for his voyage directly from the WIC, which had not yet paid him. Company payroll was notoriously slow and, clearly, he expected to sail out again before he could get his money. He did not think his account would cover his debt to Anna, however, which means he expected to receive very little for seven and a half years of work. Therefore, he promised also to pay any remaining

balance out of whatever he would earn on his next journey, “be it with whatever ship or in whoever’s service it shall happen to be.”³ In other words, he signed away both his past and future income.

What is going on here is a very old and interesting profession; it is known as being a crimp in English—someone who owns and profits from sailors. Anna Jansdochter sold workers who owed her money to ship captains or companies. When poor young men appeared in Amsterdam looking for work, they needed someplace to stay and something to eat, but they had no money. Very frequently, women provided them with housing in inns and taverns, often as the wives or widows of ship captains. In addition, they might provide drink and female companionship. And they offered all this on credit, since the men were poor.

Anna was certainly out of pocket very much less than 100 guilders. Most of Volckert’s debt would have been accrued through in-kind expenses and interest. Women like Anna also might add cash loans on top, as this document suggested she did, so that the men could buy the clothes and supplies they needed for their voyages, or possibly some trade goods if they hoped to get access to profitable things like beaver skins in America. If Volckert ended up going to New Netherland, buying a beaver skin there would have cost him about a month’s wages and it would have sold for many times that in Amsterdam. That might be profitable to both Volckert and Anna, but it would have been far beyond his means without help. In turn, she owned him, having a claim on both his past and future wages.

The relationships formed between workers and lenders could be brief and transactional, but they also could be long-lasting; sometimes, the women of maritime Amsterdam acted as representatives, or business agents, for men they owned, selling goods and forwarding on credits due them. Thus, this short document actually gives us a window into how transatlantic empire worked.

Maritime workers like Volckert made the company ships move, quite literally, by the labor they provided on board as they hauled lines, secured sails, and loaded cargo. Soldiers like him were the ones pressing hard on Native American people for land, meaning that they were the means by which European space was physically carved out in the New World. Many sailors and soldiers saw opportunities in New Netherland and stayed or traveled back with wives once their terms were over. All that crucial work meant that finding men like him to work for the company, and keeping them tied to that employment through debt if necessary, was very important to the larger goals of the WIC.

It is not clear what happened to Volckert Harmensz. But as people like him went to work for the company in America, quite a few stayed and built families. As they did, the personal and economic connections they had to people like Anna Jansdochter in Amsterdam became networks that enabled overseas trade. Trade with New Netherland went on at all social levels, not just wealthy WIC merchants. Very modest families traded,

3 Debt acknowledgement, February 1641, 5075, inventory 1335, Notary. H. Schaef, Stadsarchief, Amsterdam.



Port of Amsterdam with the Gaardhouse, Reinier Nooms, 1652-1654.
Image courtesy of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

too, and they did so by relying on their intimate family ties; husbands and wives acted as transatlantic business partners.

Janneken Jans van Leeuwarden and her husband, Reinholt Reinholts, provide a rich example of a couple who did exactly this. They first went to Brazil in the 1640s, where they made small-scale loans to other soldiers. Janneken sailed back to Amsterdam in 1650 to collect those debts from the WIC. But then her ship sank and the account books were lost. By 1654, her husband was leaving for New Netherland, and she stayed behind to rectify their financial affairs, eventually joining him in America. Janneken traded furs from America, sending beavers over to a shoemaker, a member of the same guild as her shoemaker husband. Dutch shoes were very popular with Lenape-Munsee and Mohawk customers in the Hudson Valley, so this was a craft that could give them access to the main source of wealth in the colony, if they could sell them advantageously in Amsterdam.

Just over three years later, Janneken returned to Holland once again, while her husband remained behind. Janneken gave a receipt for “wares and merchandise sent by them from New Netherland” earning the couple more than 376 guilders, before hiring two shoemaker’s apprentices and catching a ship back to Manhattan.⁴ What you can see in this very brief synopsis of their lives is that couples who were not wealthy enough to found companies with employees to do the fur trading for them just relied on wives traveling back and forth across the ocean.

Fairly humble married couples like Janneken and Reinholt also drove the expansion of the colony onto lands alongside the Hudson River, expanding it out beyond the WIC forts

4 For more on Janneken Jans, see Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, 98–102.



Reading Woman, Moses ter Borch, after Rembrandt van Rijn, c.1660 – c.1661.
Image courtesy of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

at Manhattan and Albany. Take the family of Tjerck Claessen De Witt. He migrated to Beverwijck, at present-day Albany, in the 1650s as a young man without many resources. Soon, he married an Amsterdammer, Barbara Andriessen. By the end of the decade, the pair first became homeowners and then essentially homesteaders, moving aggressively with their growing family of eventually thirteen children onto Lenape-Munsee land. They participated actively in the conflict that resulted in the brutal displacement of one group of Munsee-speakers, the Esopus, from their homeland. Coincidentally, this happened the same year the colony of New Netherland “failed,” in 1664.

Eventually, the De Witts owned hundreds of acres, building a home that still stands as one of the great houses of the Hudson Valley, and became grandparents and ancestors to some of the region’s famous elite, including DeWitt Clinton, governor and senator for New York in the early 1800s. For well over two hundred years, their family lived on the land they aggressively claimed. They did this remarkable colonial expansion first under the Dutch empire, then under the English, and finally under the United States.⁵ Their story is not one of failure or weak colonization. In fact, their own personal intimate network proved essential to the colonization of the Hudson River Valley, and in the end was stronger and more enduring than formal empires.

The experience of the De Witts is a reminder that New Netherland, like all of early America’s colonies, was a violent place. In this case, this seemingly ordinary family was a part of the brutal process of claiming land. But intimate networks can also help explain

5 For more on the experiences of the De Witt family, see Susanah Shaw Romney, “‘With & Alongside his Housewife’: Claiming Ground in New Netherland and the Early Modern Dutch Empire.” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 73, 2 (April 2016), 187–224.

how people on the other side of the equation tried to make their own way in the rough world of the early colony.

The married couple Emmanuel Pietersen and Reytory Angola can give us a glimpse of how people relied on family ties to survive some of the violence. These two were among the first permanent African residents in the colony; they arrived as slaves beginning in 1626. At first, the people brought as slaves from west central Africa lived together in common slave houses in Manhattan, and they engaged in the heavy labor of building the port, docks, and warehouses; constructing buildings and fortifications; growing grain; and hauling firewood and ballast. After years of this kind of work, along with military service, a core group of them, including Emmanuel, petitioned local WIC officials for their freedom in 1644. Surprisingly, they received freedom for themselves and their wives, and even got grants of land where they could build farms. Obviously, this was an incredible and unusual victory in the history of early American slavery, but it was not without a shadow. According to the written freedom grant, all children, whether already living or yet to be born, would remain slaves.

But Reytory, in particular, did not accept that. By the mid 1640s, she and Emmanuel had no surviving children of their own. But when another married Angolan couple died, leaving orphaned their son named Anthony, Reytory and Emmanuel took him in. Reytory clearly decided to do all she could to obtain freedom for her adopted son. In 1661 she paid a notary to draw up a petition explaining that they, as free African residents of the colony, had adopted Anthony seventeen years before. She explained that she and Emmanuel had raised him at their own expense and loved him as their own child. And they asked the Governing Council of New Netherland to do two things: recognize him as their legal child, so he could inherit their farm, and officially grant him his freedom. Their petition was approved by the council in 1661.⁶

Reytory's actions on behalf of Anthony show us the process by which people made themselves free through the creation of intimate networks. Enslaved Africans in the colony actively embraced baptism and church marriage, recreating formal family and kinship ties to replace those that were severed by their forced exportation from Africa. Each time they baptized their babies, they chose godparents from among their neighbors, black and white, giving those children kin. Reytory was first Anthony's godmother; only later did she become his mother, out of Christian affection, as she explained in her petition. This group together built farms next to one another and lived as a community. And through Reytory's love and care for an orphaned member of that community, she built a life of freedom for him, even though according to the rules, he was supposed to stay a slave.

Finally, face-to-face connections shaped the all-important relations between New Netherland colonists and indigenous Americans. Unlike some other colonial areas in North America, in the Hudson River Valley region intermarriage between Dutch men and

6 For more on Reytory Angola and the petition for Anthony, see Susanah Shaw Romney "Intimate Networks and Children's Survival in New Netherland in the Seventeenth Century," *Early American Studies* 7 (Fall 2009): 270–308.

Lenape-Munsee or Mohawk women never became a widespread pattern. The relatively small number of mixed marriages deserves mention because interracial intimate relationships did become typical in some Dutch colonies, like Batavia on the island of Java. That suggests that intermarriage was not out of bounds for Dutch people when they thought about colonization. And blended families did become essential to the beaver skin trade just to the north of the Hudson Valley, in New France, so intermarriage was not beyond the bounds for Algonquian or Iroquoian cultures in the region, either. Yet Dutch and Native American communities never really melded together into one people or one family, even though they lived right next to one another and relied on one another in multiple ways. In other words, no single intimate network reached between the Dutch and Native towns in the area.

But face-to-face personal relationships that stopped short of kinship and intimacy did shape how things unfolded regionally. Two people who developed a close partnership in the lower Hudson Valley can help illustrate that process. One was a Hackensack leader, the other a New Amsterdam housewife. The man, Oratam of Hackensackij, appears in diplomatic records and land negotiations from the 1640s through the 1660s. The woman, Sara Roeloffs Kierstede, became Oratam's translator and trusted ally in the 1660s.

These two people came from radically different backgrounds, but they both became influential because of their family ties. Oratam came from the Hackensack group of Munsee-speaking Lenape Indians, who lived on the western bank of the lower Hudson. The politics of the lower Hudson Munsee relied on immediate familial and extended kin networks reaching throughout and between villages. Oratam first appears in records in the 1640s, when he negotiated treaties as a sachem "living at Achkinkes hacky" who also represented the people of "Tappaen, Rechgawawanc, Kichtawanc and Sintsinck." He always collaborated with other sachems, and the towns he spoke for shifted over time. Leaders among these communities were linked together by marriage and family ties, making them kin to one another. Patterns of exogamy among the whole population, too, meant people from every town in the area had family ties in neighboring towns. So intimate networks within and among the Native communities of the Hudson River Valley brought Oratam to the foreground. But what about this housewife who suddenly appeared as a translator? How did she end up in this politically delicate and critical position?

Sara Roeloffs Kierstede was born in Amsterdam in 1627, the child of Scandinavian immigrants. Her father was a simple sailor, who doubtless migrated in hopes of finding better work. He and his bride, Anneke Jans, married in 1623, and by the time they left for the Hudson Valley in 1630, the couple had two children. They were one of the earliest settler families of Rensselaerswijk, just across the river from present-day Albany. After her father's death in 1636, Sara's mother married the New Amsterdam minister Everardus Bogardus.

Sara's life does not seem to make her an obvious candidate for the role of diplomat. She married at around fourteen or fifteen to a New Amsterdam surgeon, Hans Kierstede. And from there on, her life seems to have been that of a quite ordinary colonial wife. She

baptized babies in New Amsterdam in 1644, 1647, 1651, 1653, 1655, 1657, 1660, 1662, 1663, and 1665, which suggests just how closely she was tied to her home in Manhattan. Lots of her life must have consisted of domestic moments with one or more of her ten children.

So how did she learn to speak fluent Munsee?

The answer can be found in her personal and intimate relationships. Upriver in Albany, people traditionally think about relations with Native Americans in terms of the beaver skin trade with Mohawks. And, indeed, this was a tremendously important economic system. Yet exchanges of food and drink might have been even more important than the fur trade. All throughout the Dutch period, up and down the Hudson River Valley, colonists bought meat, fish, and corn from Hackensacks, Wappingers, Mahicans, and others. They also depended on Lenape-Munsees to deliver firewood, and they counted on them as customers for their own goods, including consumables like alcohol and bread. This trade brought people together. These commodities were bulky, heavy and sometimes perishable, so they could not be taken long distances and stored up for a trading season, the way furs could. To do this trade, people had to live near one another.

Indeed, Munsee-speaking peddlers seem to have been a conspicuous presence in New Amsterdam. People from places like Hackensackij paddled with their goods to town for sale at all times of year, and they traveled on the same waterways and paths as their neighbors, the Dutch settlers. They got to know people personally, and would even deliver firewood right to people's doors, showing that they knew New Amsterdam residents pretty well.

As the young mother of a growing family, Sara would often have had occasion to buy many of the goods local villagers brought to town for sale. In addition, her particular household at today's Whitehall and Pearl streets placed her literally at the center of the New Amsterdam exchange system. In New Amsterdam, visitors brought goods, often by canoe, to the shore for sale, and the Kierstede home lay on the bank where the canoes hauled out. By 1656, the colony council established Saturday as the official market day, placing the market "on the shore by or near the house of Master Hans Kierstede" and directing "anyone who has something to buy or to sell" to gather there.⁷ Hackensacks, Wappingers, Raritans, and other downriver Munsee-speakers would have had plenty to offer at these markets. Effectively, Sara had weekly language instruction just outside her door in to-and-fro bartering and face-to-face conversation simply by living the life of an ordinary *huysvrouw*.

These kinds of early connections during the Dutch era in the Hudson River Valley influenced how this region took shape. Later in life, Sara Kierstede claimed that some 2,000 acres of land at Hackensackij had been given to her by Oratam in recognition of their relationship and her advocacy for his people. In the 1670s, widowed and remarried as Sara Van Borsum, her new husband received a grant of land on Manhattan as a thank you from the colonial government for her work. So, Sara and Oratam's interaction shaped

7 For more on Oratam and Sara Roeloffs Kierstede, see Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, 249–269 (quotation 265).

peace and war during the Dutch era, and it shaped the pattern of settlement in subsequent decades. During those years, the WIC lost all of the Dutch land claim in North America. But if you look at individual families, you see a different picture.

Together, all of these people (Oratam, Sara, Reytory, the De Witts, Janneke and Reinholt, Volcker, and Anna) show us just how much the history of the Hudson River Valley was shaped by intimate networks. Tracing the history of colonization, trade, expansion, and diplomacy in this region requires looking at the intimate details of the lives of this diverse group of people.

Susanah Shaw Romney is Assistant Professor of History at New York University.

Strange Partners in Land Equity: Mohicans and Tenant Farmers “Invade” Upstate New York in 1859

Warren F. Broderick



Looking north, toward the island where the ruined Livingston country retreat stood.
Courtesy Columbia County Historical Society

In 1859, a notorious family of Anti-Renters, led by brothers Peter and John Finkle, invited a group of Mohican tribal members to come east from their reservation in Wisconsin, where they had been forced to relocate, and reconstitute as the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Tribe. The Finkles and their friends joined efforts with the Mohicans (Levi Konkapot, Jesse Wybro, John N. and Joseph L. Chicks, Aaron Konkapot, Timothy Jourdan, and others) by occupying three farms in Columbia County, on the Mohicans' traditional homelands. These occupations resulted in contentious arrests and legal proceedings, but the Supreme Court in Columbia County would not address broader issues of tenant and Native land claims. Nonetheless, these highly publicized incidents galvanized local residents toward final resolution of old rent claims and demonstrated the commitment of the

Mohicans to continue to assert their homeland rights, an effort they continue today. The author has resurrected details of a fascinating and long-forgotten chapter in New York State local history by mining original archival sources, including early newspapers and local, state, and tribal government records.

“AN INDIAN INVASION” was the title of an intriguing short article in the *Burlington Free Press* of April 22, 1859. This newspaper was an example of many in the eastern United States that published short articles, derived from longer newspaper accounts published in Hudson, New York. Their editors likely were captivated by the novelty of Native Americans seizing land in rural upstate New York years after major eastern Native populations has been forced west onto lands in Michigan Territory (now Wisconsin) and in what is today’s Oklahoma.

The Mohican Indian nation once held more than 600,000 acres of land on both sides of the Hudson River. Disenfranchised by the colonial government, much of their land was taken and then granted to wealthy landowners. Following a residence of more than forty years in Madison County, New York, the Mohicans were pressured to travel westward, eventually settling in Wisconsin in the 1820s. Today known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Band of Mohicans, the majority of the tribe resides on a 22,000-acre reservation in Shawano County, Wisconsin.

While the bold and surprising actions taken by the Mohicans in 1859 are the focus of this story, a summary of the “Anti-Rent War” is necessary to understand why they were invited to come east and engage in land seizures at this time. The so-called “Anti-Rent War” (or “Wars”) was an organized revolt by tenant farmers in upstate New York in the mid-nineteenth century. The wealthy Van Rensselaer and Livingston families owned vast acreage in Albany, Rensselaer, Columbia, and Delaware counties. These families leased land to tenant farmers with the stipulation of an annual payment of “ground rent.” These lands had been granted by New York’s colonial government to “Patroons” who headed these families in the seventeenth century; they were given deeds to some of these holdings by Mohican sachems.¹

Beginning with the death of Stephen Van Rensselaer III in 1839, family descendents and their assignees instituted an aggressive collection policy for rent in arrears. Many tenants who could not satisfy their debts were served with “writs of ejectment” to evict them from their farms. These actions were carried out by local law enforcement officials and posses often consisting of hired civilian thugs. Resistance to the evictions soon turned violent, with tenant unrest spreading from Albany County throughout the region. This uprising constituted a unique chapter in American history and has been extensively studied by scholars.

The Anti-Renters were well organized and politically astute. They established the Antirenter Party, which had a strong influence on New York State politics from 1846

1 Shirley Dunn, *The Mohicans and Their Land: 1609–1730* (Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 1994).

to 1851. Assailed by lengthy legal proceedings, negative publicity, concerted conspiracy not to pay rent, and aggressive investigations of the state Attorney General, the landed proprietors gradually sold out their interests to land speculators. The new lease assignees continued to encounter legal difficulties and some violent resistance through the 1860s before claims for payment of long-overdue rents were finally extinguished.

Violent encounters throughout the region led to assaults and even murders, followed by civil and criminal trials. An especially violent incident occurred in 1846 after brothers Peter Finkle (1818–1884) and Calvin Finkle (1815–1874) seized a vacant farm in Taghkanic owned by the Livingston family in an unsuccessful attempt to test the legality of feudal land ownership. In a celebrated trial held in Hudson, the Finkles were represented by William Henry Seward, formerly New York's Governor and later Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of State. Violence erupted during a subsequent attempt to eject the Finkles from the farm. Tried and convicted for assault with intent to kill at a criminal trial conducted at the Supreme Court in Columbia County in 1847, Peter and Calvin were sentenced to three and one-third years in Sing Sing Prison. The brothers were pardoned in 1849 by newly-elected Governor John Young, who sympathized with the Anti-Rent movement.²

Of Palatine German descent, Peter and Calvin Finkle were among the eight children of Joseph W. Finkle (1772–1849) and Catherine (Finkle) Finkle (1772–after 1860), who moved from Germantown to the southeastern part of Columbia County in the early 1800s. Two additional brothers, John I. Finkle (1804–after 1875) and Joseph Finkle, Jr. (1811–1862), also were active in Anti-Rent activities.³ The stress of having two of his sons tried and convicted of highly-publicized felonies apparently took its toll on Joseph W. Finkle. His gravestone in the West Copake Reformed Cemetery contains this strongly worded (while not entirely accurate) inscription:

In memory of Joseph W. Finkle, died Sept. 7, 1849, aged 76 years, 11 months, & 16 days, whose death was caused through perpetual grief by the false imprisonment of three of his sons, Peter Finkle, Calvin Finkle, John I. Finkle, who ware [sic] all three falsely condemned & sentenced for a term of years to Singing prison, in order to quail [sic] thare [sic] noble spirits, blight their patriotic zeal, constrain them to renounce thare [sic] honest integrity of honesty, & submit to oppression, frauds, & fudal [sic] sistoms [sic].

Calvin and Peter Finkle both resided for a time in the Helderbergs, in rural Albany County, during the 1830s and early 1840s and again, following their pardons, in the early 1850s. This was an early scene of Anti-Rent activity. Fighting the wealthy landowners and their agents became an obsession for the Finkle brothers, so their militant activity in Claverack, Copake, and Taghkanic resumed when they moved back to their native

2 James D. Livingston, "Fighting the Finkles: Charles Livingston vs. 'Little Thunder,'" *Columbia County History and Heritage*, Vol. 11 (Fall 2012), 44–46; Henry Christman, *Tin Horns and Calico: A Decisive Episode in the Emergence of Democracy* (Cornwallville, NY: Hope Farm Press, 1975 [1945]), 280–281.

3 Information received from Bruce Romanchak, Schodack, N.Y., a Finkle family descendant.

Columbia County in the 1850s. From time to time, they also offered their services to assist Anti-Renters in Rensselaer County. Peter Finkle was the apparent author of a broadside entitled “Anti-Rent Song, THE FINKLES AND THE MERCINARIES OF THEIR LANDLORDS,” now in the collection of the Albany Institute of History and Art. The first stanza reads:

There is a farm in Taghkanic, that lies on Finkle’s Hill,—
Which aggravates the landlords—we both they have tried to kill—
But luck was in our favor—defeated they have been—
By raising New-York *bullies* to put us to an end!”

Likely possessing no more than grade-school educations, the Finkle brothers were far from ignorant thugs. They were devoted readers and well-versed in New York State law regarding land tenancy. They assisted in their legal defense during their trials, were active organizers in Anti-Rent politics, lobbied for sympathetic candidates, and were consulted by sitting legislators. Involving Native Americans in their land-claim efforts may have constituted their most creative strategy.

To avoid detection, the organized Anti-Renters wore outlandish makeup and costumes, sometimes mimicking Native Americans. Hence, they were referred to as “calico Indians.” To maintain their anonymity, their leaders also used Native-inspired nicknames. For instance, Peter Finkle was known as “Little Thunder.” The leaders and their attorneys argued in court that one of the reasons the Patroons’ title to the land was flawed was because of its illegal seizure from Native Americans by New York’s colonial government. However, not until 1859 did actual Native Americans become involved in their land-seizure efforts.

In the eighteenth century, Massachusetts and New York governments both claimed land in eastern Columbia County. In 1757, New England land agents purchased “title” from Mohicans in Stockbridge to some lands in the Livingston Manor in an attempt to induce settlement in this border region. It is not documented whether or not the Anti-Renters and Mohicans were aware of these earlier legal maneuvers when they collaborated to seize farms in 1859, but it is not unreasonable to assume that the Mohicans had knowledge of this aspect of their nation’s history.⁴

In April of 1859, newspapers in Hudson began to report on a unique “Indian invasion.” A small party of Stockbridge Indians (i.e., Mohicans) had come east from their Wisconsin reservation and taken possession of a 200-acre farm belonging to Norman Niver. The farm was located just west of Bain’s Corners (the present Craryville) in the towns of Copake and Hillsdale. Norman Niver (1826–1910) had purchased the farm from his father the previous year; the Indians took possession in early April, while the farm was temporarily

4 Patricia U. Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 214–215.

vacant and awaiting a new tenant.⁵ The farmhouse and some of its outbuildings remain standing today.

As soon as he learned of the occupation, Norman Niver instituted proceedings for “forcible entry and detainer” in the Supreme Court in Columbia County. The Mohicans claimed that this farm was a small part of their original homeland, which had encompassed nearly the entirety of Livingston Manor, and their rights had never been legally extinguished. While admitting that their title to lands along the Hudson River and the Massachusetts border had been extinguished in 1684 and 1685, they still claimed an interest in the large intervening area. Franklin Leonard Pope, a historian who thoroughly researched colonial land records in preparing his 1886 study of the controversy surrounding the establishment of Massachusetts’ western border, concurred. “By means of this barefaced fraud,” wrote Pope, “some 175,000 acres of land which had never been purchased from the Indians at all” were included in the 1683 patent that was later assigned to the “shrewd and enterprising” Robert Livingston.⁶

The admitted purpose of the Mohicans in detaining the Niver farm was to present their land-claim demand in court. A grand jury was immediately empaneled. Following due deliberations it determined that its authority was limited to adjudicating Norman Niver’s request for ejectment on the grounds that he could prove ownership of the farm. Judge Darius Peck thus determined that the question of the Mohicans’ title claim needed to be brought in a higher-level court.⁷

The Indians vacated the premises in an orderly fashion and proceeded to occupy a vacant farm south of Copake Lake owned by Aaron Shultis (1830–1895), who rented it from the Livingston family. No evidence has been found of any court proceedings involving this farm, nor did either of these seizures involve violence. In fact, the *Hudson Daily Gazette* remarked that the Indians:

pass their time making baskets, which they dispose of at remunerative prices in the neighborhood. They are a hardy-looking set of fellows, and seem very peaceably inclined. Their spokesman, Levi Konkapot, is gentlemanly and courteous in his manner, and displays more than an ordinary degree of intelligence in conversation.⁸

Franklin Ellis remembered the Shultis farm occupation when he commented in his 1878 history of Columbia County that an old summer home of the Livingston family near Copake Lake had been demolished “to prevent it from being used as a place of harboring by the Indians, whom the Anti-Renters had induced to contest the validity to the Livingstons’ title to the land.”⁹ This claim was corroborated by poet Wallace Bruce,

5 Deed, Christian Niver to Norman Niver, March 1, 1858, Deed Book 9, pp. 5–7, Columbia County Clerk.

6 Franklin Leonard Pope, *The Western Boundary of Massachusetts* (Pittsfield, MA: Privately printed, 1886), 23–25.

7 *Hudson Daily Star*, April 18, 1859.

8 *Hudson Daily Gazette*, May 12, 1859.

9 Franklin Ellis, *History of Columbia County, New York* (Philadelphia: Evarts and Peck, 1878), 387.

a Hillsdale resident, who remembered exploring the deserted ruins of the mansion as a boy in the 1850s. He recalled that the place “was frequented every summer by a remnant of the old Stockbridge tribe.”¹⁰

Many newspapers across the Northeast carried accounts of this unusual incident in Copake, but all of their information seems to have been derived from accounts in the three Hudson newspapers. According to the *Hudson Daily Gazette*, the party consisted of “five Indians and three squaws, with two or three half- or quarter-breeds.” The man identifying himself as their “leader” informed the newspaper that he was Jesse Wybrow. He claimed to be a half-breed. The band stated that they had come from Wisconsin and spent the past winter “in the vicinity of Albany.” John Hadcock (1795–1883), the “attorney-in-fact” representing the Stockbridge tribe, “was present at the examination and expressed some disappointment at the form the proceedings assumed, as he had anticipated an opportunity of contesting the matter of priority of claim.” A resident of New Stockbridge, Madison County, Hadcock served for some time as an agent of the Mohicans. Possibly his actions in Columbia County were deemed unsatisfactory as the Tribal Council revoked his authority to represent them the following March.¹¹ (Biographical sketches of the men involved are found at the end of this article.¹²)

The Mohicans carefully planned the seizure of these farms in Copake, and had the official sanction of tribal elders. The Tribal Council minutes of March 4 state that “the

Jan. 19th

General Council convened at the public Meeting House to devise means to aid Aaron Konkajot, Timothy Jourden, and John N. Whicks, delegates at North Copake, there attending national business. After much talk it was found that no public moneys could be made available to aid said delegates. It was finally voted that the people contribute out of their own pockets - whereupon 24 dollars were raised and remitted by mail.

Voted to adjourn.

J. Shugland. Sec.

Tribal Council minutes, January 19, 1860. Arvid E. Miller Library Museum, Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Bowler, WI

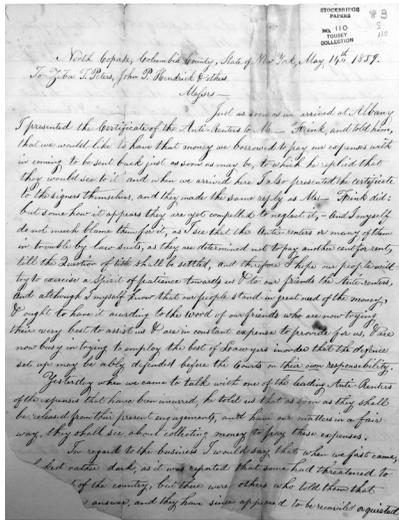
10 Wallace Bruce, *The Hudson* (New York: Bryant Literary Union, 1894), 222–223.

11 Transcript from Tribal Council Minutes of March 5, 1860, Arvid E. Miller Library Museum, Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Bowler, WI.

12 The biographical information on these Mohicans came in part from the Arvid E. Miller Library Museum, Stockbridge-Munsee Community and from research conducted by Jo Ann Schedler, Bonney Hartley and Sherry White, Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Mohican Nation, Bowler, Wisconsin.

interests of the tribe at Albany, N.Y., were discussed.” At a March 23 meeting, the council discussed “a letter sent by Levi Konkapot who is at Albany, requesting that the men with their wives be sent to go and take possession of lands in Columbia Co., N.Y., which lands are claimed by our people.”

On May 14, John N. Chicks sent a letter from “North Copake” (Craryville) to the tribal elders discussing recent developments at some length. He had presented a “certificate” to the Anti-Renters that was likely used to document official tribal support of their plan. He assured a Mr. Frink that the Mohicans would be able to cover all their expenses. This was probably John Catson Frink (1822–1911), a harness maker from Valatie whom they had hired to outfit their party.



Letter from John N. Chicks explaining the situation in Columbia County. Courtesy of the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library

Chicks also referred to the need to be reimbursed by the Anti-Renters for some expenses. While this infers that the Anti-Renters colluded with the Mohicans in the Niver farm seizure, the date of the initial collaboration between the two groups is not documented. For them to select farms in their homeland in Copake and Taghkanic as targets required input from sympathetic local residents, likely the Finkles. While accounts of the Niver farm seizure never mention the Anti-Renters, they were clearly working behind the scenes, using their local knowledge to identify vacant farms that might be seized more easily.

The three vacant farms seized by the Mohicans and Anti-Renters in Columbia County also held special significance for the Mohicans and were clearly situated within their former, remembered homelands. Franklin Pope learned that Copake Lake was known to the Mohicans as *Achkookpeck*, and the map he prepared for his book identified an “Indian Village”

just to its north. A century later, historian Dorothy Samms noted that the Mohicans “had their wigwams in what is now Craryville” on the Niver farm.¹³

As to the legal aspects of their expedition, John Chicks remarked that:

The deeds of Livingston & Rensselaer we have seen, and they do not cover the lands they claim. All the claim they have are by the contracts, leases, Mortgages and sales they have made on the lands they never owned and by statutes of limitation.¹⁴

13 Dorothy Samms, Editor, *A History of the Roeliff Jansen Area* (Copake Falls, NY: The Roeliff Jansen Historical Society, 1990) 27.

14 Letter, John N. Chicks to Ziba H. Peters, et al., May 14, 1859, Stockbridge Papers, Towse Collection item #110, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

During the summer, the Finkle brothers and their supporters were involved in another contentious incident when they attempted to prevent the recapture of a farm in Taghkanic that had been seized from Joseph Finkle. “Clubs and pistols were raised” and the new tenant, Lewis Coon, filed a complaint for assault, burglary, and malicious mischief. No charges were apparently brought against the Finkles by a grand jury, but the house in question was demolished and its contents destroyed by unidentified persons. There is no indication that the Mohicans were involved in this incident.¹⁵

The Mohicans had apparently spent the next few weeks living and making baskets on the Shultis farm. During their next and final attempt to occupy a farm, Peter and John Finkle, along with their neighbors, Richard Rockefeller (aged 19) and William Brush (aged 21), took the lead.

The farm they selected is found in an isolated location in the north part of the Town of Taghkanic, at the base of a rocky eminence known as “The Pinnacle.” At an elevation of nearly 1,500 feet—the highest elevation for a few surrounding miles—this may very well have been one of the sites known as *Wawanaquasick* by the Mohicans. E.M. Ruttenber translated this name as “where the heaps of stone lye,” a landmark where passing tribal members placed stones.¹⁶ Franklin Pope wrote that *Wawanaquasick* “marks an angle in the boundary between the Townships of Claverack and Taghkanic.”¹⁷ In 1768, Joseph Van Gilder noted that this site “lies about nine or ten miles east” of the Hudson River and was revered by the Mohicans as an “offering place.”¹⁸ Indeed, the Pinnacle is located a little less than ten miles east of the Hudson River and just east of the aforesaid angle in the town boundary.

The 180-acre farm was then owned by John McMahan (1805–1862) and his wife Maria, until it was sold at a referee’s sale in Hudson to satisfy a money judgment brought by Jeremiah and Phebe Best. It was purchased by Stephen L. Magoun (1815–1883), a prominent Hudson attorney and land speculator.¹⁹ Magoun leased the farm to John G. Finkle (1795–1863) and his father-in-law, Jacob Kilmer. John G. was a cousin of Peter Finkle and his brothers; he is shown as residing there on the 1858 map of Columbia County by Beers and Lake. His lease was transferred to Peter Finkle, who was dispossessed by Stephen Magoun on August 3, 1859. Magoun then leased the farm to Elijah/Elisha Mallery, another son-in-law of Jacob Kilmer. Mallery, who has not been further identified, provided the most detailed account of the subsequent events to the *Hudson Daily Star*. Since files of the other Hudson newspapers of the day, the *Gazette* and *Republican*, have not been preserved, no other accounts of these incidents exist.

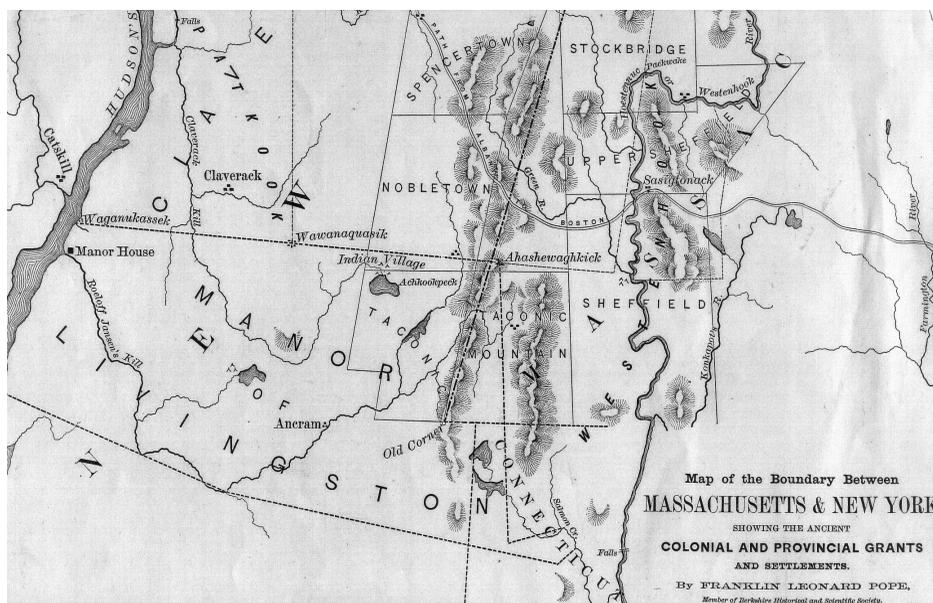
15 *Hudson Daily Star*, June 8, 9, 22, 25, 1859.

16 Pope, *Western Boundary of Massachusetts* 22, fn. 5.

17 E.M. Ruttenber, *History of the Indian Tribes of Hudson’s River* (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1872) 373–374.

18 Debra Winchell, *History’s Faces* (<http://historysfaces.blogspot.com/2012/10/wawanaquasick.html>)

19 Deed, Henry Taylor (referee) to Stephen L. Magoun, September 13, 1856, Deed Book 5, pp. 589–590, Columbia County Clerk.



Detail of “Map of the Boundary Between Massachusetts & New York” by Franklin Leonard Pope, note “Wawanaquasik” due north of Ancram as well as “Konkapot’s River” east of Sheffield

Elijah Mallery moved into the farmhouse on August 4 and “was left in peaceable possession” until Wednesday, August 24, when Peter Finkle obtained a warrant from William R. Smith, a justice from Gallatin (a town adjoining Taghkanic on the south) to evict Mallery on a claim that his (Finkle’s) lease was still valid. On that date, the Finkle brothers, along with their allies and the Mohican men, took possession of the house, assaulting a hired man and throwing out Mallery’s furniture and personal items. Mrs. Mallery “did not yield without a struggle” and “gave Peter Finkle a pretty severe blow with a club.”

Two days later, Town of Copake Constable Hendrick (or Henry) Drum attempted to serve eviction papers on Peter and his associates. He left after being threatened with physical harm. The next day, he left the legal papers on the doorstep. Later that same day, Deputy Sheriff Andrew Decker, along with Elijah Mallery, Henry Bashford, and Henry Dunkin, served papers of replevin to retrieve some of Mr. Mallery’s personal property. On the following Tuesday, August 30, a posse led by Constable Drum, Deputy Sheriff Decker, and another unidentified constable was organized to remove the trespassers and seize the house. The posse was composed of “Mr. Mallery, Ezra Stickles, Samuel Myers, Walter Miller, Wm. Moore, Abram D. Miller, Henry Pechtcl, Hiram D. Miller, Henry Dunkin, Allen Mahew, Henry Coons, Lewis Coons, Aaron Snyder, Peter Bashford and Daniel Wilderwax.” They rendezvoused at the nearby house of James Bashford and “proceeded in a body to the fortified house.” The posse broke into the house, but the squatters “had all vamoused [sic].” They searched the outbuildings and the Pinnacle and visited the nearby farms of William Michael and George and Anthony Finkle (brothers of Peter) with no success.

On Friday, September 2, Elijah Mallery sent Henry Bashford and several others to collect “oats in sheaf lying on the farm,” but Peter Finkle chased them away at gunpoint. A warrant for “breach of the peace” was obtained against Finkle. The next day, the heavily-armed posse (now also including Levi Milham) proceeded to the house near midnight. The men were greeted at the door by Peter Finkle’s wife Arvilla (Strevel) Finkle. Forcing their way into the house, they found Richard Rockefeller, William Brush, and Levi Konkapot in a bedroom. They were arrested without incident. Upon entering another chamber, the posse was greeted by an enraged Peter Finkle, who struck Allen Mahew and Henry Bashford with a bedpost. Finkle attempted to strike Mr. Mallery and Deputy Sheriff Decker, but they resisted and all three men apparently tumbled down the stairs in the total darkness. Mallery fired a shot and wounded Peter Finkle, but the latter escaped by jumping out a window. He fled from the posse despite being shot a second time.

After the other men were taken into custody, the posse found the wounded Anti-Renter at the house of his brother, William Finkle (1802–1869), a few miles away. Peter was under the care of two physicians (one being Dr. Stephen Platner of Copake) for gunshot wounds in his shoulder and ankle. He was allowed to remain at his brother’s for another day before being removed to Hudson in a wagon under the accompaniment of Hudson physician Dr. William H. Pitcher. On Monday, Peter Finkle’s brother John also was taken into custody.

The proceedings in Columbia County Supreme Court commenced that day and concluded the following day. Stephen Magoun represented Elijah Mallery and Elijah Payn (1806–1876) represented Finkle. The only witness other than the participants was Jacob Kilmer. The other participants in the farm seizure, including the Mohicans, were not criminally charged. Peter was released on bail and returned home in a carriage to recuperate. The jury found Peter Finkle guilty; he was only ordered to compensate Elijah Mallery \$302.50 for straw, wheat, and hay lost or spoiled during the farm occupation.²⁰ Apparently, Finkle was absolved of any involvement in criminal activity as part of a plea bargain.

Following the disposition of this case, any attempts to seize and claim land in Columbia County appear to have ceased. The Mohicans returned to their Wisconsin reservation sometime in 1860. They were still in Columbia County on January 19, when the Tribal Council convened to “devise means to aid Aaron Konkapot, Timothy Jourdan, and John N. Chicks, delegates at North Copake, there attending national business.” While “no public moneys could be made available,” a collection was taken and “24 dollars was raised and submitted by mail.” This entry clearly indicates that the land seizure and claim efforts in Columbia County not only had tribal sanction but were considered important tribal business. Unfortunately, the very revealing Tribal Council minutes are incomplete for these years.

²⁰ Judgment, *Elijah Mallery vs. Peter Finkle*, Sept. 1859 Special Term of Columbia County Supreme Court, Box 23, Columbia County Clerk’s Office.

The Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Tribe today views this event as a proud exercise of sovereignty and a demonstration of resiliency. Though the land claim was ultimately unsuccessful, it is an example of the tribe's ongoing diplomatic strength and signifies the attachment it places on its eastern homelands.

Many believe that after the tribe was forced to remove to Wisconsin it ceased maintaining any interest or involvement in its original territory. However, the 1859 land-claim incident clearly demonstrates the high value the tribe placed in the affairs occurring in its homelands, and its belief that the Anti-Rent activities provided an opportunity to assert this claim. This is all the more remarkable given the immense resources needed to take the trip east at a time of rebuilding, yet again, on the new reservation lands in Wisconsin. And now we have evidence that Mohicans returned to spend time in eastern Columbia County on a regular basis in the mid- to late-nineteenth century.

Further, it is significant to note the complexity of what it meant to enter into this partnership with the Anti-Renters, who felt disenfranchised by the ruling elite. From the Mohican perspective, the ancestors of these same Anti-Renters had been among those who had disenfranchised their tribe from the land. Therefore, it was truly a "Strange Partnership," demonstrating yet again the Mohicans' willingness to put a survival- and sovereignty-focused practical outlook ahead of all else.

This same spirit carries through in the tribe's efforts today, such as its investment in historic preservation on its eastern homelands. Whereas in 1859 it was the Anti-Rent movement, in 2016 the tribe continued to utilize existing channels such as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to negotiate agreements to protect Mohican cultural sites.²¹

John Finkle did not marry and continued to reside with relatives in Copake and Taghkanic as late as 1875. Peter moved to Bath-on-Hudson in the Town of Greenbush, Rensselaer County, by 1860, and then again to Albany by 1865. He returned to Rensselaer County by 1870 and remained there, dying in Castleton-on-Hudson in the Town of Schodack on October 30, 1884. In life, Peter was known as a broad-shouldered, muscular man, intelligent and sociable, but for being a "crank" on the subject of rent.²² On that subject, he "appeared utterly different to reason and law." His brother, Calvin, had been killed on October 9, 1874, in Defeestville, in North Greenbush, over a matter arising from a debt owed to Col. Walter Church, a former agent of the Van Rensselaers.

In 1877, Peter Finkle was again in court as the result of an ejectment suit involving a farm he owned in Schodack. Newspaper accounts at the time claim that Stockbridge Indians had been living in one of his barns and were planning to bring action in federal court to acquire a legal interest in Finkle's 70-acre farm and surrounding lands.²³ The

21 This commentary and perspective was provided by Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Mohican Nation.

22 *Troy Daily Times*, October 30, 1884.

23 *Troy Daily Times*, June 4, 1877; *Troy Daily Whig*, June 4, 1877; *Troy Daily Press*, June 4, 1877. Admittedly fragmentary Tribal Council Minutes for 1877 do not mention this incident in Schodack but do refer back to the 1859–1860 land seizure efforts in Columbia County.

following year, he attempted unsuccessfully to record a deed for 550,000 acres of land in Rensselaer County from the Mohicans “purported to be executed in 1863.” He refused to pay the recording fee.²⁴

These occupations in Columbia County resulted in contentious arrests and legal proceedings, but the New York State Supreme Court would not address broader issues of tenant and Native land claims. Nonetheless, these highly publicized incidents galvanized local residents toward the final resolution of old rent claims and demonstrated the commitment of the Mohicans to continue to assert their homeland rights—an effort they continue to this day.

Warren F. Broderick of Lansingburgh is an independent scholar formerly with the New York State Archives. His particular interests, along with Mohican Indians, are Herman Melville’s life, regional art, and ceramic history.



Biographical Sketches

Levi Konkapot was born at New Stockbridge, New York, ca. 1822 and in 1843 was listed as a student in the Oneida Conference Seminary (later Cazenovia College). Subsequently, he attended Oberlin College; after leaving, he requested a written recommendation in a racially charged letter addressed to college Treasurer and Board member Hamilton Hill.²⁵ He appears in the 1850 census for District 36, Calumet County, Wisconsin, with a listed occupation of farmer living with the family of Isaac and Lucy Jacobs. He is listed with no family members in the 1856 tribal census. On October 8, 1860, he was awarded 62.5 acres of land on the “Stockbridge Reservation.” Levi enlisted in the U.S. Army at Albany, New York, on March 3, 1862. A private in Company F of the Second New York Heavy Artillery, he died on May 31, 1864, from injuries received in combat near Petersburg, Virginia. He is interred in the City Point, Virginia, National Cemetery. His mother Lucy received his pension in 1867.

Joseph L. Chicks, son of Jacob and Hannah Chicks, was born in New York State in 1817 and appears in the 1850 census in District 36 with an occupation of farmer. His family consists of a younger woman, Isabel Chicks, and a family of four. He is listed in the 1855 state census and listed with three children in the 1856 tribal census. Joseph registered for the draft in July-August 1863 and enlisted as a private on September 8, 1864. He married Isabel Dingley in 1875 and died in Brothertown, Wisconsin, in 1882.

²⁴ *Albany Evening News*, April 15, 1878.

²⁵ Letter, Levi Konkapot, Jr., to Hamilton Hill, August 3, 1857, Oberlin College Archives.

John N. Chicks, son of Jacob and Hannah Chicks, was born in New York State in 1800 and appears in the 1850 census in District 36 with an occupation of farmer. His family consisted of a wife, Hannah, and young family of four. He is listed in the 1855 state census and with three children in the 1856 tribal census. John registered for the draft in July-August 1863 and enlisted as a private on September 8, 1864. He was awarded 58.25 acres of land on the reservation on October 8, 1860. John was deeply involved in tribal government and served as a leader of the Citizens Party. He is interred in the Stockbridge Indian Cemetery on Lake Winnebago in Stockbridge, Wisconsin.

Jesse Wybrow (Wybro/Weybro) was born ca. 1836 in Wisconsin and appears in the 1850 census in District 36 living with the family of Clarissa Miller and Elizabeth Pye. He married a woman named Charlotte in 1861 and is listed with his wife and a young son, Harrison, in the 1870 census in Green Bay, residing in a boarding house. His occupation is given as “lumber dealer.” In the late 1860s, his lumbering practices on reservation land drew criticism from some of his fellow tribesman. He was a member of the Citizens Party and referred to himself as a “half-breed” during the land claim controversy of 1859. Jesse and his family were living in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, at the time of the 1875 state census.

Aaron Konkapot (sometimes known as Aaron Williams) was living in 1844 in Michigan; his parents were Elisha Konkapot and Mary (Williams) Konkapot. He appears in the 1850 census in District 36 living with his parents and an older brother, Eli Williams, and is listed as living alone in the 1856 tribal census. Aaron is listed in Indian federal census schedules between 1885 and 1899. He died on January 20, 1900, and was interred in the Holy Angels Cemetery in Red Springs, Wisconsin.

Timothy Jourdan was born in 1795 in New York State, probably at New Stockbridge. He appears in the 1850 census in District 36 with an occupation of farmer. His family consisted of his wife Pruella (Fowler) Jourdan and six children ranging in age from nine to twenty. He was awarded seven acres of land on the reservation on January 19, 1865. He died at nearby Red Springs, Wisconsin, on April 17, 1881, and is probably interred in the Stockbridge Indian Cemetery on Lake Winnebago in Stockbridge, Wisconsin.

General Rosalie Jones and the “Votes for Women” March to Albany: Creating a New Political Activism

Jane Mathews Swersey



(From left to right) General Rosalie Jones, War Correspondent Jessie Hardy Stubbs, and Colonel Ida Craft. They are wearing the hats worn in the November, 1912 New York City Torchlight parade. Ida Craft, as always, was prepared to hand out literature. Library of Congress

Each year as the warm weather emerges in the Hudson Valley, thousands of people walk along or across the Hudson River, raising awareness and funds for various causes. Some even march to Albany and take their message directly to the seat of government. These actions, now routine and viewed as a fundamental First Amendment right, were unheard of until three New York suffragists challenged convention and took to “walking for a cause” in the cold, snowy December of 1912.¹ Twenty-eight-year-old Rosalie Gardiner Jones, along

1 Two more women walked the entire distance, Sybil Wilbur, reporter for *The Woman Voter and Newsletter*, and Katherine Stiles. Stiles began the pilgrimage as a stunt with her husband, who was an Associated Press reporter. According to Wilbur, Stiles was converted to the cause and walked the entire way. See Sybil Wilbur, “The Hike to Albany,” *The Woman Voter and Newsletter*, New York, February 1913, 14.

with veteran suffragists Ida Craft, fifty-one, and Lavinia Dock, fifty-four, walked the length of the Hudson Valley—170 miles with detours, in thirteen days—to raise awareness and funds for the cause of woman suffrage. They challenged accepted norms, helped revitalize the national woman suffrage movement, and with the help of the network of Hudson Valley suffrage clubs, introduced thousands of New Yorkers to the reasons why “Votes for Women” should become a reality. At the same time, these three women introduced a modern form of political activism by walking to the seat of government, petition in hand, and by talking to as many people as possible about the right of women to vote. Before the 1913 Women’s Suffrage Procession, the Ku Klux Klan march down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., in 1925, the Bonus Army in the 1930s, or Gandhi’s internationally famous 1930 Salt March, Rosalie Jones, Ida Craft, and Lavinia Dock took suffrage into the streets with their hike that focused on meeting ordinary people and educating them about the importance of an active, informed, articulate, equal electorate.²

Because this type of political activism was radical and further moved women into the public sphere, many leaders of the suffrage movement feared it would set back the cause. They did not foresee its educational impact or publicity value. Although no one formally objected to this new type of campaign, the women were, at first, “met with several varieties of opposition from the older suffrage workers, not only of New York State but of many other parts of the country.”³ Yet, this new type of political activism extended the boundaries of women’s visibility in the public sphere and moved suffrage off the well-defined and orchestrated parade routes and soapboxes and out into the streets and crossroads of rural New York State. In doing so, it allowed a level of intimacy between the suffragists and citizenry. “Personal contact became a valuable asset.”⁴ Rosalie Jones believed in the hearts of the rural people: “If once you win them you have them forever.”⁵ She won their hearts. The women engaged local political equality leagues, stopped at street corners, public schools, banquets, factories, movie theaters, and parish houses. They held impromptu meetings, and conversed with young and old who had never thought about woman suffrage. Under the auspices of local suffrage clubs, they attended luncheons that

2 Jacob Coxe led unemployed workers on a march to Washington in 1894. He was prevented from speaking and interest dwindled. The difference between Coxe’s March on Washington and these suffragists is the focus on the role of government. Both had the similar physical goals of marching to the seat of government, Washington, D.C., and Albany, respectively. But Coxe’s political goal was to lobby Congress to create jobs for the unemployed. For the “Votes for Women” pilgrimage, the petition they carried was secondary to the idea of meeting people and introducing them to the arguments supporting woman suffrage. The “principal reason for the march was not to impress Governor-elect Sulzer with arguments in favor of woman suffrage but to appeal to the people in behalf of the cause.” (“Pilgrim Sentries Watch for Sulzer,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 30 December 1912, 4). Rosalie Jones believed that the 1915 New York State referendum on woman suffrage could not be carried without the upstate vote. The pilgrims sought to inform and educate people because they would decide the issue. Rather than asking the Legislature for support, the pilgrims hoped to influence the people actually voting on the issue.

3 Jessie Hardy Stubbs, “The Hand that Rocks the Fountain Pin is the Hand that Rules the World,” *Maryland Suffrage News*, 13 June 1914, 83.

4 *Ibid*

5 “Sybil Wilbur, “The Hike to Albany,” *The Woman Voter and Newsletter*, February 1913, 13; Ida Husted Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 6, 1900–1920, National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1922, 451.

rallied guests. “In this way every man and woman in that Hudson River country whose interest had been aroused was enlightened.”⁶

This article examines how three downstate suffragists, with the help of local Hudson Valley suffrage organizations, were able to bring national attention to the woman suffrage movement by introducing their “Votes for Women” pilgrimage as the “walk for a cause” concept. It argues that what started as a novel idea became a useful political tactic, and common fundraising and awareness-raising activity in its immediate aftermath and well into the twenty-first century. The march demonstrates the determination, fearlessness, commitment, and passion of a small band of women as well as the mutual admiration they received from the people throughout the Hudson Valley.

The New York State woman suffrage movement revitalized itself between 1907 and 1912. When Harriot Stanton Blatch, daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, returned to the United States in 1902 after twenty years in England she found that “the suffrage movement was completely in a rut in New York State... it bored its adherents and repelled its opponents.”⁷ She sought to reenergize the movement, and in 1907 founded her Equality League of Self-Supporting Women (later the Women’s Political Union), which focused on working class women. At the same time, Harriet May Mills sought to solicit more rural women by speaking in twenty upstate counties over the course of two months.⁸ In 1908, women of wealth and social prominence made their voices heard. Katrina Ely Tiffany was president of the College Equal Suffrage League and Katherine Duer MacKay founded her own Equal Franchise Society. Between 1909 and 1910, the very wealthy Alva Vanderbilt Belmont organized the Political Equality League and funded the move of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) from Ohio to its permanent New York City headquarters on Fifth Avenue. In 1911, Alice Clement energized the Rochester Political Equality League by working at the state and local levels. During those same years, investment banker James Lees Laidlaw helped organize the Men’s League for Woman Suffrage and Carrie Chapman Catt founded the Woman Suffrage Party in New York City.

The changes were evident. “In 1905, the New York State Woman Suffrage Association counted ninety-seven suffrage societies in the state representing thirty-one counties and 3,403 members. By 1910, there were 115 suffrage clubs affiliated with the New York State Woman Suffrage Association, representing thirty-six counties and 55,000 members.”⁹ These new organizations led to more political activism and reinvigorated the movement. The revitalization also led to new tactics and new questions about the proper behavior of suffragists.

In the center of this suffrage activity emerged the young New York City socialite Rosalie Gardiner Jones. She was born into affluence on February 24, 1883, to Dr. Oliver

6 Jessie Hardy Stubbs, “The Hand that Rocks the Fountain Pin is the Hand that Rules the World,” *Maryland Suffrage News*, 13 June 1914, 83.

7 Harriot Stanton Blatch, *The Challenging Years* (Conn: Hyperion Press, Inc.,) 1940, 92.

8 Goodier, Susan and Karen Pastorello, *Women Will Vote*, (Ithaca, NY, 2017) 45.

9 *Ibid*, 41.

Livingston Jones and Mary Livingston Jones, both of whose families had colonial roots that traced back to Major Thomas Jones, who had owned land that is now within his namesake Jones Beach State Park. In 1908, her mother, because of her vast land holdings, was reputed to be “the richest woman in America—or the world.”¹⁰ Rosalie’s family homes were on West 72nd Street in Manhattan and an estate, Jones Manor, in the Cold Spring Harbor area of Long Island. She spent her winters in the former, summers at the latter. In December 1901, she made her debut into society. By the spring of 1902, she ended the cotillion season with other socialites from distinguished families, including Livingstons and Schuylers.¹¹ Seven years later, Jones was associated with a different set of society women while distributing literature at an “open air” suffrage meeting in New York City’s Madison Square Park. The speakers included Harriot Stanton Blatch, who arrived in Mrs. Pierce Bailey’s big red automobile with Frances Cabot and other members of society’s own Equal Franchise League, the suffrage organization founded by Katherine Duer MacKay.¹²

Jones spent the next two years in Paris and London, returning to New York in the spring of 1911.¹³ It did not take long before she was again participating in suffrage activities. In 1911, “Miss Jones, Mrs. Blatch, Mrs. O.H.P. Belmont and Inez Millholland held a street meeting at the corner of Wall Street and Broadway in Manhattan. They drove up in an automobile and Dorothy Fooks, an eleven-year-old suffragette, was used as a ploy to gather a crowd. Once the crowd was assembled, the child was pushed aside and the women spoke. The result was soft tomatoes and eggs thrown at the women.”¹⁴ By November, Jones shared the platform with Professor John Dewey when he spoke for suffrage in Huntington, Long Island.¹⁵ In May 1912, her activities increased. She participated in the New York City suffrage parade, toured 250 miles of rural Long Island in a horse and wagon, and was elected president of the Nassau County branch of the New York State Suffrage League while attending its convention.¹⁶ In June and July, she and another suffragist, Elisabeth Freeman, covered 1,500 miles in Ohio in a horse-drawn wagon, spreading the cause of woman suffrage to rural areas in advance of its state referendum.¹⁷ Later that year, at the October New York State Woman Suffrage Association convention in Utica, Jones addressed the assembly by discussing “What Happened in Ohio.”¹⁸ She also was chosen

10 “Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Jones of New York is Probably World’s Wealthiest Woman,” *Clarence (MO) Courier*, 12 August 1908, 2.

11 “What is Doing in Society,” *New York Times*, 3 April 1902, 9.

12 “Suffragists Hold a Street Meeting,” *New York Times*, 14 May 1909, 5.

13 “In Society,” *New York Sun*, 23 April 1911, 17.

14 Jane Mathews Swersey, “The Woman Suffrage Movement in Suffolk County, New York, 1911–1917: A Case Study of the Tactical Differences Between Two Prominent Long Island Suffragists: Mrs. Ida Bunce Sammis and Miss Rosalie Gardiner Jones,” M.A. thesis, Adelphi University, 1986, 28.

15 “Well-Known Speakers at Suffrage Meeting,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle (NY)*, 13 November 1911, 10.

16 “The Line of March,” *New York Times*, 5 May 1912, 10; Mathews Swersey, “The Woman Suffrage Movement in Suffolk County,” 28–33; “Suffragists Plan Tour,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 28 May 1912, 5.

17 Jane Mathews Swersey, “General Rosalie Jones, Long Island Suffragist,” *Nassau County Historical Society Journal*, 47 (1992), 24–25. See also Vicki Weiss, “Rosalie’s Army of the Hudson,” *New York Archives* 17, no. 2 (fall 2017): 12–17.

18 “Suffrage News,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 12 October 1912, 24; Sybil Wilbur, “The Hike to Albany,” *The Woman Voter and Newsletter*, February 1913, 13.



New York City Suffrage Parade. Library of Congress

as a Nassau County delegate to the National American Woman Suffrage Association Convention held in Philadelphia in late November.¹⁹

Parades were one of the new tactics used by the New York City suffrage organizations. The first took place in 1908, when twenty-three women marched from Union Square to East 23rd Street. By May, 1911, the New York City suffrage parade from 57th Street to Union Square boasted 3,000 participants and the May 1912 parade attracted as many as 15,000. Representatives from many organizations took part. Six months later, New York suffragists empowered themselves. Beginning at 8 p.m., in the dark of night, they marched down Fifth Avenue in a Torchlight parade. “Respectable” women who were not expected to be out in the dark without an escort carried 5,000 Japanese lanterns to light the way in a blaze of glory. The parade “served to underscore women’s willingness to sacrifice bodily comfort for a larger political purpose.”²⁰ In the midst of the parade was Rosalie Gardiner Jones.

Then she had a novel idea: walking to New York’s capital. On December 10, 1912, New York newspapers announced a *new* woman suffrage tactic: a “Votes for Women” pilgrimage. Suffrage pilgrims would walk the length of the Hudson Valley along the

19 “State Suffrage Work to be on District Lines,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 21 October 1912, 26.

20 Santangelo, Lauren, “Five Thousand Lanterns: The Radicalism of Suffrage Parades,” behindthescenes.nyhistory.org; 28 July 2015.

Albany Post Road from Broadway and 242nd Street in New York City to Albany, where they would present Governor-elect William Sulzer with a petition signed by representatives of the Cooperative Committee, a group of six New York suffrage organizations. The idea was unique in American political activism: women in the street marching to the seat of government.

The intent of the hike was threefold: 1) to raise awareness of the cause by taking the message of woman suffrage out of the city and to the more rural parts of New York; 2) to raise money by selling suffrage literature and materials; and 3) to put pressure on elected officials. The principal reason was awareness. The pilgrims planned the walk for December to ensure they would meet “farmers and farmers’ wives en route and not the summer boarder.”²¹ Jones later explained that the pilgrimage wasn’t just to hike to Albany: “It is the fact that this is the only way to reach the rural communities that gives it its significance.”²² The pilgrims also hoped to unify the cause by taking advantage of the existing network of eastern Hudson Valley suffrage organizations and embracing the disparate groups that made up the New York State Woman Suffrage movement: “rural women, working class women, immigrant women, black women, male suffragists and radical women – all of whom, despite glaring differences sought the same goal: Votes for Women.”²³ The pilgrims would visit farms, churches, and factories; attend luncheons held by local political equality leagues; and meet in the homes of local supporters. Rosalie Jones, Ida Craft of Brooklyn, and Lavinia Dock of the Henry Street Settlement in Manhattan walked the entire distance. They planned to be joined “by members of the suffrage societies of the towns at which they stopped,” and asked the local suffragists to secure for them opportunities to speak at already-planned assemblies being held during the two weeks before the New Year.²⁴ The hike would culminate in Albany with representatives from New York suffrage societies joining them.

The idea of a hike first occurred to Rosalie Jones the previous summer, while she and Elisabeth Freeman campaigned for suffrage in Ohio. She presented her idea of a

21 “Suffrage Host Off to Albany,” *New York Times*, 16 December 1912, 8.

22 “Sybil Wilbur, “The Hike to Albany,” *The Woman Voter and Newsletter*, New York, February 1913, 13; “Suffragette Commander Will Not Heed Mother,” *Los Angeles Times* (CA), 21 December 1912, 8.

23 Goodier and Pastorello, *Women Will Vote*, 3. The marchers were themselves a disparate group. Lavinia Dock, the oldest of the hikers at age fifty-four, had a long and active nursing career. She oversaw nurses at Johns Hopkins; wrote *Textbook for Materia Medica for Nurses*, the first manual of drugs for nurses; worked among poor immigrant laborers with Lillian Wald at the Henry Street Settlement; was a member of the Women’s Trade Union League (WTUL); and joined the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women in 1907, its inception year. She also picketed with English women at the House of Commons in 1909 and was later arrested three times in Washington, D.C., while working with Alice Paul and the National Women’s Party (NWP). Ida Craft, fifty-one, was also a longtime activist. She was a lifelong club woman who started her activism with the W.C.T.U. and began her suffrage work in the 1890s. She went to Albany as a delegate representing the Bedford (Brooklyn) Political Equality League for the 1894 Constitutional Convention. She was a member of the New York State Woman Suffrage Association and, as chair of its Industrial Committee, attended and addressed the annual meetings as early as 1900. She was a member of the WTUL and in 1910 addressed African American women at their Brooklyn Equal Suffrage League meeting. She was a friend of Jeanette Rankin and was recognized by the NWP for her work as a Washington, D.C., picket. Alphonse Major, in charge of the luggage and commissary, was the group’s lone male. He was a successful businessman who started a cement (glue) company ca. 1880 that was incorporated in 1906. He was a member of the Men’s League for Woman Suffrage from New York’s First Assembly District.

24 “Pilgrims Tramp to Albany,” *The Woman’s Journal and Newsletter*, 21 December 1912, 401; “Pilgrims March Bravely Onward,” *The Woman’s Journal and Newsletter*, 28 December 1912, 409.

“pilgrimage” at the November NAWSA annual convention in Philadelphia.²⁵ At the time, six British suffragettes, known as the “Brown Women” (because of the color of the uniforms they wore), had just completed a five-week, 400-mile march from Edinburgh to London with a suffrage petition to present to Prime Minister H. H. Asquith. Along the way, the English pilgrims sold suffrage literature, made impromptu speeches, gathered signatures, and met with local suffrage organizations. The idea originated with Florence Gertrude de Fonblanque, who led the hike.²⁶



The first day's hike, December 16, 1912. American Press Association

Within a day of the initial announcement, plans for the Albany pilgrimage took shape. Following the lead of the British suffragettes, the hikers adopted both their military and pilgrim spirit. Ranks were given to the hikers: “General” Rosalie Jones, commander; “Colonel” Ida Craft, second in command; “Surgeon General” Lavinia Dock, in charge of first-aid; Jessie Hardy Stubbs, “war correspondent” in charge of newspaper reporting and the commissary. A supply vehicle carried snacks of sandwiches, chocolate, and nuts for the hikers; “Votes for Women” leaflets to distribute; and booklets, badges, and buttons for sale. The commissary was an automobile owned by Alphonse Major of Brooklyn, a member of the Bedford Political Equality League, and assigned as chauffeur and baggage handler in charge of the hikers’ suitcases the entire way. Olive Schultz, the march’s “Official Scout,” was to lead the procession in her own car, from time to time driving ahead to the next village to announce the army’s approach. The pilgrims carried with them Boy Scout knapsacks emblazoned with the “Votes for Women” motto and staffs that had been cut from trees on the Jones estate in Cold Spring Harbor. General Jones, Colonel Craft, and

25 “All Ask Why They Did It,” *The Woman’s Journal*, 4 January 1913, 6.

26 “Suffragettes on March,” *New York Times*, 13 October 1912, 33; “Suffragists March on London,” *Jennings Reporter (KS)*, 24 October 1912, 3; “Edinburgh to London,” *The Guardian*, London, England, 18 November 1912, 16; “Suffragettes Long March,” *New York Times*, 10 December 1912, 32; Jaime Schultz, “The Physical is Political: Women’s Suffrage, Pilgrim Hikes and the Public Sphere,” *International Journal of the History of Sport*, May 2010, 1133–1153.

war correspondent Stubbs wore their unofficial badges of honor—white and yellow hats that had been the official headgear of the November torchlight parade in New York City.²⁷ Lavinia Dock's emergency supply kit was emblazoned with the motto: "First Aid Is All Right for our Bruises Small but Nothing Will Save Us but Votes for All."²⁸

The plans were carried out with military efficiency. The day after the hike was announced, the Brooklyn headquarters of the Woman Suffrage Party was supplied with an announcement poster and placards calling for volunteers. Arrangements were made so friends could send letters to pilgrims en route. A brigade of fourteen newspaper correspondents, six women writers and eight men, was formed to accompany the suffrage army. By the end of the week, the *New York Sun* reported that "Rosalie Jones returned from a reconnoitering trip in the course of which she picked out stopping places for the suffrage pilgrims and selected the hotels." The route of the fifteen-day journey was along the Hudson River, primarily on the Albany Post Road (today's U.S. Route 9).²⁹ The itinerary was December 16, Irvington; December 17, Ossining; December 18, Peekskill (Raleigh Hotel); December 19, Fishkill (Holland House); December 20, Wappingers Falls (Rush's Hotel); December 21, Poughkeepsie (Nelson House); December 22, Rhinebeck (Rhinebeck Hotel/Beekman Arms); December 23, Germantown; December 24 and 25, Hudson (Worth Hotel); December 26, Stuyvesant Falls; December 27, Valatie; December 28 and 29, Schodack Center; December 30, Rensselaer; December 31, Albany (Hampton Hotel).

The petition to Governor-elect Sulzer was engraved on parchment, hand-illuminated by General Jones in beautiful calligraphy, stunning color, and detail, and signed by representatives from six different suffrage organizations. Those who signed the message as "The Co-operative committee" were: Harriet May Mills, president of the State Association for Equal Suffrage; Nora [Stanton] Blatch de Forest, Women's Political Union; Katrina Ely Tiffany, Collegiate Equal Suffrage League; James L. Laidlaw, Men's League for Equal Suffrage; Mary Garrett Hay, chair, Woman Suffrage Party, and Helen C. Mansfield, Equal Franchise Society.³⁰

Less than a week after announcing the "Votes for Women" pilgrimage, "about five hundred gathered at Van Cortlandt Park... to see the suffragists with their banners, pilgrim staffs, knapsacks, sweaters and marching manners and smiles."³¹ The air was

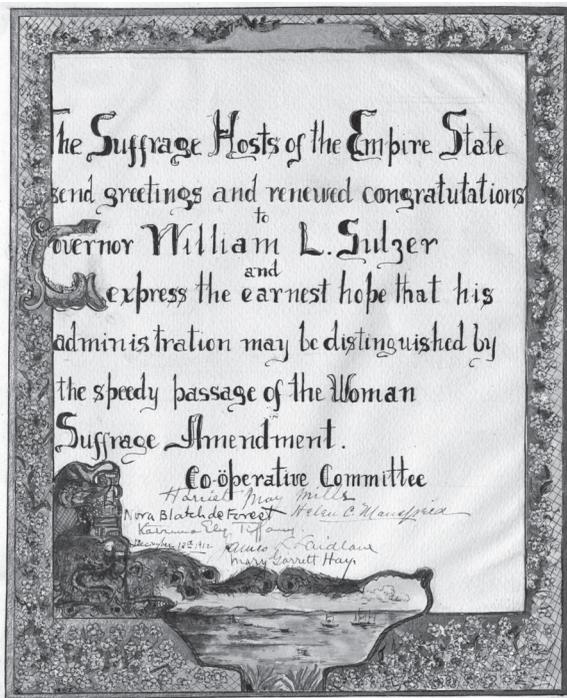
27 "Pilgrims Peanuts Will Ride in Auto," *New York Times*, 13 December 1913, 9; "Suffrage Host Off for Albany Today," *New York Times*, 16 December 1912, 8; "Suffragists to Walk to Albany and Sulzer," *New York Sun*, 10 December 1912, 1; "Hikers Out of Fog, Battle with Wind," *New York Times*, 20 December 1912, 8; "Suffragists Plan Albany Pilgrimage," *New York Times*, 10 December 1912, 3.

28 "Suffrage Host Off for Albany Today," *New York Times*, 16 December 1912, 8; "25 Suffragettes Start Hike from New York to Albany to Push 'Cause,'" *Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin (NY)*, 16 December 1912, 1.

29 "Suffragists Plan Pilgrimage from New York to Albany," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 10 December 1912, 32; "Pilgrims Peanuts Will Ride in Auto," *New York Times*, 13 December 1912, 9; Gertrude L. Marvin, "General Rosalie Jones and Her Valiant Army March into Albany," *Tacoma Times (WA)* 1 January 1913, 3; "Suffragists Plan Albany Pilgrimage," *New York Times*, 10 December 1912, 3; "Suffragists Ready for Tramp to Albany," *New York Sun*, 13 December 1912, 7.

30 Sybil Wilbur, "The Hike to Albany," *The Woman Voter and Newsletter*, February 1913, 14. The Woman Suffrage Party formed the Cooperative Committee in 1912. Its goal was to have the New York suffrage organizations work together. Representatives from the committee were scheduled to meet in Albany and attend the January 1, 1913 opening of the Legislative session.

31 "Of Suffrage Pilgrimages," *Cincinnati Enquirer (OH)*, 17 December 1912, 5.



Petition in favor of women's suffrage signed by members of the Co-operative Committee. The petition was hand illuminated by General Jones and presented to Governor-elect Sulzer by her. Courtesy of the New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Albany, New York

crisp and the pilgrims were “clad in sweaters, mackinaws, short skirts and high boots and headed by one of their number beating a martial tattoo on a snare drum.”³² It was 9:40 a.m. on December 16 when “General” Rosalie Jones, standing in the official scout car and using a megaphone, gave the order “Forward March” in true military style. She then sounded the official pilgrim war cry “Votes for Women, Votes for Women, Sulzer, Sulzer, 1915!” Among the nearly 200 to fall in line and join the march at 242nd Street were twenty-six women representing different suffrage organizations. Colonel Ida Craft marched beside General Jones. “Behind them was ‘Surgeon General’ Lavinia Dock, and a few steps further back marched ‘Private’ Kate Abbott beating the drum.” Next was Jessie Hardy Stubbs followed by prominent suffragists Harriet Burton Laidlaw and Harriet May Mills.³³

The hikers walked at a leisurely pace as they began their journey. Because they were walking in the streets, they were protected by mounted police as people shouted both support and opposition. At the Yonkers/New York City line, the march stopped long enough to change police escorts and give the suffrage yell. The pilgrims arrived at Getty Square in Yonkers an hour ahead of schedule; after waiting for permits to speak, they began their self-appointed tasks. General Jones, Jessie Stubbs, and Harriet Lees Laidlaw addressed the crowd while Colonel Craft greeted people and distributed literature. Henrietta Wells Livermore and the Political Equality League of Yonkers hosted a luncheon followed by another mass meeting where Jessie Stubbs again spoke.³⁴ The pilgrims hiked to the city limits and stopped for afternoon tea at the Amackassin Inn. They lost many hikers after Yonkers but gained others.

32 “Suffragettes Start Hike From New York to Albany To Push ‘Cause,’” *Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin*, 16 December 1912, 1.

33 “Away They Go, So Light of Toe,” *Allentown Democrat (PA)*, 17 December 1912, 9; “Suffrage Corps Weary,” *Baltimore Sun (MD)*, 17 December 1912, 1; “Six Tired Pilgrims End First Day’s Hike,” *New York Times*, 17 December 1912, 1.

34 “Six Tired Pilgrims End First Day’s Hike,” 1; “Away They Go, So Light of Toe,” 9.

By nightfall, six tired pilgrims marched down Millionaires' Road into Irvington without the pomp and circumstance that marked their departure. They were unable to hold their meeting under the auspices of the local suffrage organization at the Volunteer Fire Department because a broken truck could not be moved to make space for them. But they were invited to dine and spend the night in Irvington-on-Hudson as guests of Mrs. Roswell Skeel who, with Fannie Garrison Villard, was an outspoken member of the Hudson River Equal Rights Association.³⁵

The next day's weather was ideal for marching from Irvington to Ossining. General Jones held roll call in the filled hall at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, where a delegation of Tarrytown women gathered to hear Jessie Stubbs speak for twenty minutes. On the church lawn after the meeting, a number of motion picture cameras filmed the pilgrims, who were surrounded by boys and girls. Then off they hiked, their ranks reinforced by local suffragists from Rockland County, focused on bringing their message to the ordinary people they met along the way. General Jones found it difficult to leave, but over the voices of the well-wishers, Surgeon General Dock could be heard chanting, "Votes for Women, Votes for Women." Schoolchildren cheered as the suffragists left the village. When the marchers passed Lyndhurst, the estate of Jay Gould, Colonel Craft suggested calling on Miss Helen Gould to give her some literature. The accompanying journalists agreed. General Jones did not and the hikers kept walking. As they passed through Tarrytown, girls from the Knox School for Leaders waved a streamer bearing the school name and cheered. General Jones shouted to the girls, "You are all going to have the vote." The students cheered even more.³⁶

Further on, suffragists from Ossining met the marchers and escorted them to the Sleepy Hollow Country Club for a luncheon as guests of Anna Ross Weeks. Afterward, a man driving a wagon stopped and asked what was going on. General Jones halted the army and held an impromptu rally. Later, when they reached Ossining and a crowd of almost 200 people, General Jones climbed onto the commissary car, called on marchers to give a suffrage yell, spoke about votes for women, and fielded questions. The rally ended with more cheering and a yell by high school boys. Just outside Ossining, Clifford B. Harmon drove up and invited the marchers to spend the night at his cottage colony. The pilgrims accepted and after they met Ossining's original suffragist, Mrs. Clinton B. Arnold, they bivouacked in a bungalow.³⁷

The third day's march was the most challenging yet. The march was a forced one, meaning the pilgrims would hike the ten miles to Peekskill without stopping for lunch. It was just the three charter pilgrims who started "in a drizzle and mantle of fog so thick

35 "Suffrage Corps Weary," *Baltimore Sun*, 17 December 1912, 1; "Votes for Women' Hikers March On," *Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin*, 17 December 1912, 1; "Tarrytown Women in Political War," *Reading Times (PA)*, 3 August 1910, 1.

36 "Votes for Women' Hikers March On," 1. "Suffrage Pilgrims are Down to Four," *New York Times*, 18 December 1912, 3; "Women March Toward Albany," *Reno Gazette (NV)*, 17 December 1912, 9.

37 "Long Walk for Suffragists," *Parsons Daily Eclipse (KS)*, 17 December 1912, 1; "Suffrage Pilgrims are Down to Four," 3.

that only a few feet of road could be seen.” Despite the fact that only one or two spectators gathered to see the start, Rosalie Jones proclaimed, “The weather shall not daunt us.”³⁸

To raise awareness, they spoke with anyone they met along the way—a lone man in a wagon, the local postmaster, laborers, and villagers. They sang to keep their spirits up, and when a young woman yelled “Good luck!” from her steps, the pilgrims stopped while Colonel Craft handed her an application for membership in a suffrage organization. The journey was “an almost continual ovation. Automobiles tooted their horns and passersby... shouted words of encouragement.” The sentiment from the onlookers was “Let ‘em have the vote if they want it that bad!”³⁹

Two miles outside of Peekskill the marchers were met by Anna McKeller, president of the Peekskill Suffrage Club, club members Mrs. T. H. Fink and Mrs. Jacob Fish, and a single policeman. Late in the afternoon, the hungry, wet, mud-bespotted, and footsore trio reached the Raleigh Hotel, where a crowd and good news awaited them. Jessie Stubbs was back from New York with letters and telegrams promising reinforcements. She addressed the crowd with “a long and erudite dissertation [and] afterwards went to the Orphie House and made a speech between films.”⁴⁰

The next morning, with no mention of reinforcements, General Jones ordered the “Votes for Women” cheer from the local crowd who had gathered to see the pilgrims start. The throng answered the hail and the pilgrims headed toward Fishkill “in a downpour of rain which was soon succeeded by flurries” and then continuous snow. They were met at the Putnam County line “by a delegation from the Putnam County branch of the Woman’s Political Union and escorted to Garrison, where a lunch was prepared for them by the Union.”⁴¹ The marchers stopped there so the army could admire West Point across the river. They kept their spirits up with song, the pilgrim yell, and the distribution of literature. The ovation from the countryside continued and many women came to their gates to invite the marchers in for tea. The hikers declined all invitations. However, they did stop when necessary. When they reached the Annsville district school, Colonel Craft suggested they go in. The teacher, Miss Florence Boggs, who opposed woman suffrage, allowed General Jones a few minutes to speak to the children while the other pilgrims

38 “Suffragists Defy Drizzle and Fog,” *New York Times*, 19 December 1912, 24.

39 “Suffragists Defy Drizzle and Fog,” 24; “Three Little Suffragettes Tramping Alone to Albany,” *Jackson Clarion Ledger* (MS), 19 December 1912, 1; “On to Albany! Cry Brave Spartan Sisters as they March toward the Capital with Message,” *Sandusky Star Journal* (OH), 20 December 1912, 1.

40 “Suffragists Defy Drizzle and Fog,” 24; “Three Little Suffragettes Tramping Alone to Albany,” 1; “Inez Craven isn’t Wanted on March,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 19 December 1912, 2. Inez Craven was an English suffragette who started the march with her bulldog, Lizzie. She ended her participation sometime after the hikers reached Yonkers. Her dog, supposedly the official mascot of the pilgrims, injured its foot and could not continue. Craven gained attention by telling journalists that she would not wear stockings, and when asked about exposing her ankles she said she would paint them black as far up as needed. A photograph of her smoking a cigarette on the first day of the hike appeared in several newspapers. Jones feared that Craven would resort to militant British tactics and stated that she was not welcome on the march.

41 “Suffragette Hike Through Putnam,” *The Brewster Standard* (NY), 27 December 1912, 4.

handed out literature. The suffragists then asked Miss Boggs to “think” about their message. Miss Boggs replied that she had given it thought.⁴²

It was almost 7 p.m.—two hours after dark—and still snowing when the suffragists trudged into Fishkill. “The last six miles were made in pitch darkness, ankle deep in mud, and in the face of a bitter northeaster.” Because of the winding roads, what was supposed to have been a sixteen-mile hike turned into a twenty-two-mile trek. Undeterred, General Jones led her followers into the Holland House. When asked about the next day’s hike, she vowed, “We will march until we drop.” Not ready to drop, Lavinia Dock addressed a gathering of local suffragists, while Jessie Hardy Stubbs handed out “Votes for Women” buttons and addressed veteran firefighters at the anniversary dinner of the Tompkins Hose Association.⁴³

After sleeping late, rubbing alcohol on their stiffened joints and salve on their blistered feet, the pilgrims began an easy, routine, and exciting day toward Wappingers Falls—easy because it was a “jaunt” of only nine miles on a clear day, routine because it was day five of the hike, and exciting because the Assembly Ball, the social event of the season in Wappingers Falls, was being held in their honor. General Jones sounded the “Forward March” shortly after 1 p.m. Accompanied by a score of suffragists, the pilgrims marched to cheers through crowd-lined streets.⁴⁴

The hikers stopped at another roadside school where one lone boy answered, “Yes, Ma’am” when General Jones asked if the boys were in favor of suffrage. The teacher, Miss Elizabeth O. Livingston, said “she did not know where she stood on the question of women voting.” The suffragists made sure she had enough literature to read throughout the winter. At Hughsonville, a hamlet south of Wappingers Falls, “the whole population turned out including the village clerk, Police Department and village cut ups.” The anti-suffragist town matriarch, Mrs. Hester Lawson, shouted “keep woman in the home and not let her go gadding around looking for votes.”⁴⁵ She didn’t “think it a woman’s place to stick her nose into the menfolks’ business.” The army did not stop until they reached Wappingers Falls, where they “were met by a large delegation with rousing cheers” and a hired saboteur.⁴⁶

The saboteur was commissioned by General Jones’ most formidable foe: her mother, Mary Jones. Mrs. Jones was a known anti-suffragist and continuously challenged Rosalie’s

42 “Hardships Endured by Walkers,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 20 December 1912, 7; “Suffragists Undismayed By Bad Roads,” *St Louis Star and Times* (MO), 20 December 1912, 10; “Hikers Out of Fog, Battle with Wind,” *New York Times*, 20 December 1912, 8.

43 “Hardships Endured by Walkers,” 7; “Founding Feminists: December 19, 1912,” <https://feminist.org/blog/index.php/2013/12/19/founding-feminists-december-19-1912/> (accessed April 16, 2018).

44 “Their Feet Sore But Hearts Stout,” *Mansfield News Journal* (OH), 20 December 1912, 1; “Women Trampers are Fagged Out,” *The Ogden Standard* (UT), 20 December 1912, 11; “‘Albany Only Eight Miles Away,’ Cry Suffragists, Ending 140 Mile March,” *Wichita Daily Eagle* (KS), 21 December 1912, 1.

45 “Mother Sends Aid to ‘Hike’ General,” *Detroit Free Press* (MI), 21 December 1912, 6.

46 “Calls Back General of Suffrage Army,” *New York Times*, 21 December 1912, 11; “Mother Sends Aid to ‘Hike’ General,” 21 December 1912, 6; “Four Little Suffragists Hike Through Mud and Snow,” *Pittsburgh Press* (PA), 21 December 1912, 6; “‘Albany Only Eight Miles Away,’ Cry Suffragists, Ending 140 Mile March,” *Wichita Daily Eagle*, 21 December 1912, 1.

activism. After reading exaggerated newspaper accounts of her daughter's sore feet and poor health, she hired an emissary, Mr. F. H. O'Connor, to stop the army wherever he found it and to order General Jones home. Mr. O'Connor met the pilgrims as they walked the last stretch of road to Rush's hotel and followed them in. General Jones refused to go with him and explained that "Mother doesn't understand the importance of this campaign. It isn't just the tramping over the post road to Albany. It is the fact that it is the only way to reach the rural communities that gives it its significance." She added that, "I will not desert the cause." Mr. O'Connor left with only a note from the General to her mother.⁴⁷

The pilgrims celebrated their victory over the battle with Mrs. Jones by dancing until 2 a.m. They were the "guests of honor at the assembly dance, the most exclusive social function of the season...held at the Academy of Music." In attendance were more than 300 guests from Vassar, Yale, Princeton, Williams, Amherst, as well as members of Dutchess County society. Undaunted by any of the day's events Jessie Stubbs promoted the suffrage cause between dances and tried to persuade the Dutchess County elite. The pilgrims "danced until the strains of 'Home, Sweet Home' signaled that it was time to go to bed."⁴⁸

The next day's hike to Poughkeepsie was filled with enthusiasm and support. At 6 a.m., Colonel Craft and Jessie Stubbs visited the Sweet Orr Overall Factory. With approval from both the factory superintendent, D. L. Walker, and the company president, John M. Goring, the machinery was shut down so the suffragists could address the 500 women employees. As the hikers prepared to leave, the superintendent presented the charter pilgrims with three gifts: a miniature pair of overalls; a key ring, because he expected them to receive a key to the city of Albany; and a group of twenty women employees to march as a bodyguard for the seven miles to Poughkeepsie. There was "wild excitement" as the pilgrims left. The factory roofs were crowded with cheering men and women as the army, with its bodyguard, stepped off. Tied to the pilgrims' staffs, the tiny trousers flapped in the breeze.⁴⁹

There was more encouragement along the way as spectators showed their support. Daniel Dolan, the local barber, offered to "dress the pilgrims' hair for free." When the hikers passed the Gallaudet Home for the Deaf, four men signed "We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and much success in Albany." The ranks swelled further. Halfway to Poughkeepsie, the pilgrims were met by a detachment of 100 Vassar students led by Professor Abbie Leach, chair of the Greek Department. Shortly thereafter, they

47 "Calls Back General of Suffrage Army," *New York Times*, 21 December 1912, 11; "Suffragette Commander Will Not Heed Mother," *Los Angeles Times*, 21 December 1912, 8; "Mother Sends Aid to 'Hike' General," 6.

48 "Suffragette Hikers Reach Poughkeepsie," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 12 December 1912, 2.

49 "Trousers and Shaves for 'Em'," *Leavenworth Post (KS)*, 24 December 1912, 8; "Suffragettes on March Have an 8 Mile Reception," *St Louis Post Dispatch (MO)*, 22 December 1912, 30.



The Nelson House, Poughkeepsie, circa 1904, Library of Congress

were joined by twenty more Vassar recruits and English Department Chair Professor Laura J. Wylie, an ardent suffragist and a founder of the Poughkeepsie Equal Suffrage Club.⁵⁰

With both factory and college women following in rank and chanting “Votes for Women,” the pilgrim army marched on until they were invited by Mrs. Charlie Kirk and Mrs. Mary MacCannan to stop at Brookland’s Farm for some hot doughnuts and fresh creamy milk drawn from a herd of sixty “suffrage cows.” “Votes for Women?” asked Lavinia Dock. “There is no need of converting me,” replied Mrs. Kirk. “I was converted twenty years ago.” Refreshed, they took up the hike again, paused briefly at the Poughkeepsie Post Road Tavern to mark the halfway point of their journey, and then advanced into Poughkeepsie at 1:30 p.m.⁵¹

Poughkeepsie welcomed the pilgrims in grand style. The city was attired in suffrage yellow and “Votes for Women” placards were displayed throughout. Mayor John Sague met the pilgrims at the Nelson House and presented them with the key to the city. He then presided over the luncheon given in their honor by Mrs. Horatio Bain and the Equal Suffrage League. The mayor spoke of the importance of the pilgrims’ new political tactic, stating “that the long hike was doing more to arouse interest in woman suffrage than anything else they could have conceived . . . If this nation is to strangle bribery, corruption and graft” it needed the help of “Votes for Women”. People cheered, waved their yellow banners, and gave the suffrage cry. There was so much excitement and so many people who

50 “Suffragettes on March Have an 8 Mile Reception,” 30; “Trousers and Shaves for ‘Em,’” 8; “Suffragette Hikers Reach Poughkeepsie,” 2.

51 “Suffragettes on March Have an 8 Mile Reception,” *St Louis Post Dispatch*, 22 December 1912, 30; “Poughkeepsie Greet Suffrage Hikers,” *Portland Daily Journal* (OR), 22 December 1912, 4; “Suffragette Hikers Reach Poughkeepsie,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 21 December 1912, 2; “Girls Cheerful on Albany Road,” *San Francisco Call* (CA), 22 December 1912, 59; “Girls Desert Mill to Follow Hikers,” *New York Times*, 22 December 1912, 26.

wanted to meet the hikers that the luncheon became a fundraiser. A fee was charged to be presented to the hikers, with all proceeds going to the cause. General Jones spoke and addressed the issue of class divisions to the audience of factory women, college professors, and students, and “a majority of the big folks in the city.” She argued that class divisions were detrimental to the cause and solutions were needed to end any contentiousness.⁵²

Sunday was no day of rest for the pilgrims. They embarked on the sixteen-mile hike from Poughkeepsie to Rhinebeck in ideal weather. Escorted to the town line by Mayor Sague, the hikers had an additional recruit—eighteen-year-old Vassar student Gladys Coursen of Poughkeepsie committed herself to the pilgrimage.⁵³

The troops marched through the estate-lined streets of Hyde Park. They stopped at the Lodge House on the Crumwold Estate of Archibald Rogers for water and rest, and later halted in front of the Eagle Hose Fire Company, where they were greeted by the mayor and the assistant fire chief. General Jones spoke to the crowd of villagers. Her audience included Madeline Huntington, Louise Vanderbilt, and Vincent Astor. When asked if she was in favor of woman suffrage, Miss Huntington replied, “I am but I don’t know much about it.” Colonel Craft, well supplied as usual, gave her plenty of literature to read. “Mr. Astor was not interested.”⁵⁴

The pilgrims then headed to Staatsburg. They lunched at the home of Geraldine Thompson (now part of the Mills Norrie State Park) before going to the village, whose general store was decorated and another crowd waited. This time, General Jones addressed the issue of women and war and was cheered when she finished.⁵⁵

At nearly 6 p.m., Progressive Party politician Jack McGee met the pilgrims on the outskirts of Rhinebeck and escorted them to their night’s encampment, the Rhinebeck Hotel, where most of the village’s inhabitants were gathered at the crossroads to greet them. The hotel, also known as the Beekman Arms, had housed General George Washington during the American Revolution. Without protest from the hotel’s owner, General Jones sat in the same armchair Washington had when he reviewed the Continental soldiers. She declared she was sure that if General Washington were alive, he would favor votes for women. Before ending their day, the suffragists made several addresses and attended an evening church service. Jack McGee “spoke for the cause in the Episcopal Church.”⁵⁶

52 “‘Albany Only Eight Miles Away,’ Cry Suffragists, Ending 140 Mile March,” 1; “Girls Cheerful on Albany Road,” 59; “General’s Mama Bound Up State After Daughter,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 22 December 1912, 5; “Calls Back General of Suffrage Army,” *New York Times*, 21 December 1912, 11.

53 “Add Another Private,” *Cresco Twice A Week Plain Dealer* (IA), 24 December 1912, 4; “Suffragist Pilgrims Meet Vincent Astor,” *New York Times*, 23 December 1912, 5.

54 “General Jones Limps,” *Baltimore Sun*, 23 December 1912, 7; “Add Another Private,” *Cresco Twice A Week Plain Dealer*, 24 December 1912, 4; Margaret W. De Peyster “Suffrage Hikers Cause Vincent Astor to Flee,” *Los Angeles Times*, 23 December 1912, 2; “Suffragist Pilgrims Meet Vincent Astor,” 5.

55 “Suffragist Pilgrims Meet Vincent Astor,” 5.

56 “Party of Gotham Millionaires Hears Hiking Suffragettes Propound Doctrine of ‘Equal Rights,’” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 23 December 1912, 10; “General Jones Limps,” *Baltimore Sun*, 23 December 1912, 7; “Suffragettes Near Their Destination,” *Akron Beacon Journal* (OH), 23 December 1912, 1; “16 Mile Suffrage Hike,” *Washington Post* (DC), 23 December 1912, 1; “Suffragist Pilgrims Meet Vincent Astor,” 5.

The next morning, from the stump of an old tree in front of the Beekman Arms, General Jones delivered a speech. She then walked up the steps of the hotel to the place where it is said General Washington reviewed his troops. Standing there, staff in hand, she watched the pilgrim army begin its march toward Upper Red Hook⁵⁷ They now numbered six. Katherine Stiles from Brooklyn, a recent convert, joined General Jones, Colonel Craft, Surgeon General Dock, and Private Coursen. Alice Clark, who had hiked from New York City to Peekskill and then returned to New York for work, rejoined the pilgrims.

The hikers seemed weary, but their enthusiasm soon picked up. Once more, they garnered support from the community, factory workers, and local politicians. Just outside Rhinebeck, Edward Sheak, local owner of a greenhouse, presented each of the hikers with a bunch of violets. The Bakers Chocolate Works sounded its whistle for the pilgrims until they passed out of hearing, and employees of the Hoffman Tobacco factory crowded the balconies and cheered them. Catherine Hoffman and Mary Lown met the hikers in a pony carriage and escorted them into town. When they entered Red Hook, the pilgrims passed the home of village President William S. Massonneau, which was decorated with suffrage bunting, and were welcomed by Women Suffrage Party Treasurer Margaret Chanler Aldrich. She greeted them and then took her place at the head of the line. Upon arriving, Margaret Chandler Lewis, president of the Equal Suffrage League, introduced General Jones to a crowd of 200 people, to whom she spoke.⁵⁸



The Ham General Store and home in Upper Red Hook, courtesy of Red Hook Historical Society

The pilgrims arrived in Upper Red Hook around nightfall and had to revise their sleeping and hiking plans. They had no place to stay that evening, and the next day's weather forecast was dismal. General Jones produced a blanket and suggested bivouacking.

57 "Suffragists Hunt a Place to Sleep," *New York Times*, 24 December 1912, 18.

58 Ibid. "No Santa Claus for Hiking Suffragettes," *Pittsburgh Post Gazette (PA)*, 24 December 1912, 2.

She only averted mutiny when Mary and Alvin Ham, proprietors of the general store, offered their home for the night. The six hikers were provided with two beds and two cots. Commissary Jessie Hardy Stubbs and Alphonse Major slept in the barn with the cows and chickens. The decision to alter the itinerary was easier. The women decided they would walk only six miles to Livingston and then continue to Hudson on Christmas Day.⁵⁹

Despite the abbreviated plans, the pilgrims got a late start on Christmas Eve. A morning storm dumped 11.4 inches of snow. Luckily, the Hams' general store was next to their home. The pilgrims raided the store and depleted its supply of snow-appropriate clothing. General Jones purchased "two pair of artics [a rubber overshoe reaching to the ankle or above], four pair rubbers, six pair of woolen stockings, six pair red mittens, four woolen caps that come down over the ears [and] two mufflers." Once the army was equipped and dressed in its winter gear, General Jones announced, "We must keep to the schedule no matter what the weather is," and sounded the "Forward March!" Facing a driving snowstorm and cutting wind, the women headed out of Upper Red Hook escorted by Lillian and Julia Rockefeller.⁶⁰ They kept as brisk a pace as they could. At Clermont, when the crowd of men and women gathered at the corner grocery store asked for a speech, General Jones responded, "We must press on." However, Colonel Craft stopped and delivered an address anyway. After two hours, the army halted for a rest. Colonel

Craft, as enthusiastic as ever and "chipper as a young colt, suggested a snowball fight." Sides were formed and both claimed victory. They resumed their hike singing Christmas carols along the way.⁶¹

Their next stop was at Blue Stores for a luncheon provided by Lillian Rockefeller. While there, word was received that for a second day in a row they had no place to sleep; accommodations could not be provided at Livingston. (It was, after all, Christmas Eve.) The General called a "council of war" and suggested that if the hikers pushed on the ten miles to Hudson, they could halt on Christmas Day. Colonel Craft and Surgeon General Dock



Cartoon of the hikers and the obstacles caused by the December weather. Satterfield, *Binghamton Sun*, Wikimedia Commons

59 "Gen. Rosalie Jones and Her Squad Arrive at Upper Red Hook," *Louisville Courier Journal* (KY), 24 December 1912, 2; "Suffragists Hunt a Place to Sleep," 18; "No Santa Claus for Hiking Suffragettes," *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, 24 December 1912, 2; "Suffrage Pilgrims Wade Through Snow," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 24 December 1912, 3; "General Jones Band," *Greenville News* (SC), 24 December 1912, 3.

60 "Courage Put to Test," *Nebraska State Journal* (NE), 25 December 1912, 1.

61 NYC Weather Archive, thetarryeyedtypepad.com (accessed 28 April, 2018); "Suffragists Plod 24 Miles," *Chicago Tribune*, 25 December 1912, 5; "Suffragette Army Braves Knee-Deep Snow for 6 Miles," *Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin*, 24 December 1912, 16; "Courage Put to Test"; "Suffragists March 22 Miles in Snow"; "Suffrage Pilgrims Wade Through Snow," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 24 December 1912, 3.

agreed that would be best. “Mounting a chair, Miss Jones gave the command, ‘We must push on to Hudson before nightfall.’ A rousing cheer went up.” It was reported, “A little thrill ran through the band as they realized the hard struggle that lay before them . . . Skirts were hastily pinned boot high and ear mufflers adjusted before the women soldiers started out on their way. Courageously, they plodded through snow drifts, slipping, sliding and sometimes falling, but always up and off again.”⁶²

Almost every step of the day’s hike—more than twenty miles—was done with snow beating in their faces and ice forming in their hair. At times, they had to stop just to clear the snow from their scarves. Their stockings were soaked and they were wet to their knees when they marched down Hudson’s Warren Street. When they finally reached the Worth Hotel, General Jones fell in the street and had to be assisted up the steps. Undeterred and inside, she gave a suffrage speech that set the rafters singing.⁶³ Although it was their longest march in the worst weather yet, the worn marchers were jubilant. The hotel supplied them with hot blankets while supporters provided accolades. Elizabeth Aldrich wrote a poem honoring the hikers. In part, it read:

*’Twas the night before Christmas and all through the land
The women had walked, a conquering band. . .
For there to my wondering eyes did appear
That miniature army of four tired dears,
With an odd draggled General wary of bones,
I knew in a moment ’twas Rosalie Jones.*⁶⁴

The army undressed and were wrapped in hot blankets when General Jones issued her last official order of the night. With her feet in hot water and her face covered with cold cream, she said, “Those who wish may go to supper but I am going straight to bed.”⁶⁵

For the first time since the army left New York City, it had a day’s rest from hiking to observe Christmas. Still, it continued its goal of raising awareness. The women slept until noon and then visited the Hudson Skating Rink, where the manager stopped everything so General Jones could speak. Standing on her skates in the middle of the rink, she addressed more than 100 skaters.⁶⁶ When finished, it was reported that she “skated and skated well.”⁶⁷

62 “Courage Put to Test,” 1; “Suffragists March 22 Miles in Snow,” 4; “‘On to Albany!’ Cry Brave Spartan Sisters As They March Heroically Toward NY Capital Bearing Message to Sulzer,” *Great Falls Tribune* (MT), 25 December 1912, 1; “Courage Put to Test,” 1.

63 “Suffragists March 22 Miles in Snow,” 4; “Suffragists Plod 24 Miles,” *Chicago Tribune*, 25 December 1912, 5.

64 “Suffragists Plod 24 Miles,” 5.

65 “Suffragists March 22 Miles in Snow,” 4.

66 “Suffragists Have a Day of Rest,” *Poughkeepsie Eagle News* (NY), 26 December 1912, 5.

67 “Suffragette On March Announces Betrothal,” *New York Sun*, 26 December 1912, 4. Newspapers sometimes tried to create drama during the hike. One case was the Christmas engagement announcement of pilgrim and Vassar student Gladys Coursen to newspaper reporter Griffith Bonner. The idea was fabricated and based on how closely the two walked and talked while hiking. Both the Coursen and Bonner families were from Poughkeepsie and the two had known each other since childhood.

When the women returned to the Worth Hotel parlor, they “found a huge tree laden with presents.” Acting as Santa Claus, General Jones presented her troops with much-desired gifts: soothing lotions, ear muffs, gloves, woolen stockings, boots, and a big cake. The War Correspondents, in turn, gave her a copy of *Pilgrim’s Progress*. The inscription read, “And it came to pass when the people heard the sound of trumpets and the people shouted the walls of Albany fell flat.” Jones read the dedication and responded “That they will . . . and we will march around them ten times, once for each state that has granted suffrage to women.”⁶⁸

In the evening, the army, camp followers, and everyone but Surgeon General Dock (who had a blister the size of a dime on her foot), attended the annual Charity Ball held at the armory. The pilgrims dressed in costumes representing women in American history who had advocated women’s rights since the seventeenth century. They stood silent as they were introduced on the floor. Jessie Hardy Stubbs represented Margaret Brent of Maryland, the Spirit of 1647; General Jones, Abigail Adams; Katherine Stiles, Mercy Otis Warren, the Spirit of 1776; Ida Craft, Lucretia Mott, the Spirit of 1848, the Seneca Falls Convention; and Gladys Coursen, a “girl of today” (1912).⁶⁹

Refreshed and invigorated by the day’s rest from marching, the pilgrims made the decision to walk only five miles each remaining day. They were thirty-two miles from Albany and had six days to get there. They left Hudson in slushy, ankle-deep snow and headed toward Stockport. Excitement best described the day’s hike. Before deploying, General Jones summoned the war correspondents and revealed “her tentative plans for a little jaunt from New York to Washington, beginning some time in February and to reach the national capital at the inauguration of President Wilson.” The general stated, “We’ll go to Washington a hundred strong, see if we don’t.” The idea was devised Christmas night and few details were worked out before morning. Two things were clear: The pilgrims would “carry a message for the National Association of Suffragists to President Wilson, urging him to support the cause in his message to Congress,” and “On to Washington” was their battle cry.⁷⁰

The plan exhilarated the hikers and caused considerable discussion, but more excitement followed. As they walked along Fairview Avenue in Hudson, General Jones accepted an invitation to slide on the ice with children. She lifted her staff high, took a short run, and launched into the slide. Then she took another. A moment later, the pilgrims, war correspondents, and escorts were sliding and laughing with the children. Later, Katherine Stiles and Gladys Coursen borrowed sleds from boys and enjoyed some downhill runs.⁷¹

68 “Suffragette on March Announces Betrothal,” 4; “Suffragettes to ‘Hike’ to Inauguration of Wilson,” *LaPlata Home Press* (MO), 2 January 1913, 2.

69 “Suffragette on March Announces Betrothal,” 4; “Suffragists Get Pilgrim’s Progress,” *Washington Herald* (DC), 26 December 1912, 1.

70 “Cupid is with Suffragettes,” *Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin*, 26 December 1912, 1; “‘On to Washington,’ Next Pilgrim Cry,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 26 December 1912, 2; “Suffragettes Near Albany,” *Bridgewater Courier News* (NJ), 27 December 1912, 6.

71 “Hikers Halt to Slide,” *Baltimore Sun*, 27 December 1912, 7; “Suffragettes Nearing Goal,” *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* (NY), 27 December 1912, 2; Margaret Watts De Peyster “Suffragettes in Plan to March on Washington,” *San Francisco Call*, 27 December 1912, 1.

Some of the excitement was more harrowing than playful. The marchers arrived at Stockport around 1 p.m. As the pilgrims crossed the bridge spanning Kinderhook Creek, two men standing in front of McGuire's general store set off a number of fireworks and skyrocket. One rocket, instead of ascending, went hurtling across the road in a shower of sparks. It hit Lavinia Dock, knocking the staff from her hand. One of her companions grabbed her and prevented her from falling. Scarcely had the army recovered when, without any warning, young Louis Wilcox fired his shotgun within very close range of the pilgrims, causing them to jump in terror. The reporters ran after the boy and caught him. Once he explained that he meant the shot to be a salute of honor, they let him go. Both instances were meant as friendly fire. Undaunted, the army quartered at the Stockport Hotel and spent the evening around a bonfire, making speeches and debating woman suffrage.⁷²

The next day once more tested the fortitude of the pilgrim army. They were ahead of schedule, the itinerary was vague, but again the weather forecast was dismal. The pilgrims discussed the possibility of marching into Albany on Saturday rather than Tuesday. Such a plan would necessitate two forced marches in terrible weather. They decided to start for Valatie as scheduled and determine later whether or not to push on. They headed north in a cold, steady downpour.⁷³ "As the day wore on, the weather turned from rain to sleet, and then to snow." Some of the roads were a foot deep with slush and snow. General Jones said she never saw "such horrid, mean and contemptible weather. But, it was still "Albany or Bust!"⁷⁴

They stopped for lunch in Kinderhook and General Jones announced that the pilgrims decided to push on in the dark for another three miles to Valatie in order to finish their march into Albany on Saturday. They plodded on to finish in weather that rivaled the Christmas Eve blizzard, reaching the Pine Bush Inn at 5 p.m. There they bathed, changed their clothes, and were driven three miles north to the home of Joseph Valentine to address a gathering of people. It was still snowing when the pilgrims finished their meeting and headed back to the inn. The automobile carrying General Jones, Colonel Craft, and Surgeon General Dock slid at a turn in the road, went over an embankment and wound up at the bottom of a gully. The occupants were "hurled topsy-turvy" into the mud. The General's arm was bruised but no one else was injured. In the cold and snow, the women huddled together on the side of the road and waited for another car to approach. When one finally did, General Jones hailed it and asked the driver to bring them back to the inn. He complied. In all the excitement, General Jones forgot to ask the Good Samaritan his name.⁷⁵

72 "Suffragettes in Plan to March on Washington," 1.

73 "Rally in the Rain," *Salina Evening Journal* (KS), 27 December 1912, 1.

74 "Brass Band Will Meet Suffragists," *Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin*, 27 December 1912, 1; "Rally in the Rain," 1; "Army Auto Upset," *Bridgewater Courier News*, 28 December 1912, 6; "Darkness and Driving Snowstorm," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 28 December 1912, 2.

75 "Darkness and Driving Snowstorm," 2; "Army Auto Upset," 6; "Suffragist Army Dumped in Ditch," *Detroit Free Press*, 28 December 1912, 2; Margaret Watts De Peyster, "Auto Accident All But Stops Suffrage Army," 28 December, 1912, 3.

The next day, with the temperature low and their spirits high, General Jones and her army started on its last day's march to Albany in deep snow while singing the "Pilgrims' Chorus."⁷⁶ They left the Pine Bush Inn at 9 a.m. and by 12:30 p.m. arrived at East Greenbush, where they were greeted by two prominent local suffragists, Katherine Gavit, secretary of the Woman Suffrage Party, and Elizabeth Smith, president of the Albany Equal Suffrage Club. After lunch, the pilgrims, Miss Smith, Mrs. Gavit, fifty or more Albany supporters, and the war correspondents hiked the last five-mile stretch to Albany.⁷⁷

Shortly before the sun began to set, General Jones halted her army on a hill in Rensselaer and "pointing at the distant towers of the capital with her birch staff said, 'Comrades, behold our goal... We have endured hardships, privation and pain that the cause of women's suffrage be given new impetus in this state.'" Then the pilgrims, followed by the Albany Equal Suffrage Club, war correspondents, and Dr. C. M. Culver, a member of the Men's League who paid their toll and secured a police escort, crossed the bridge into Albany. They paraded up streets crowded with the usual Saturday afternoon crowds to the capitol and down State Street to the Hampton Hotel, where they made their headquarters. "Whistles blew, bells rang, trolley cars clanged their gongs, traffic paused, windows were thrown up, stores and shops were deserted while Albany gazed upon them with amazed attention. Large numbers escorted them to the steps of the capitol, where they lifted their cry, 'Votes for Women.'" Tired and footsore, the pilgrims gloried in the fact that they had reached their destination two days ahead of schedule.⁷⁸

Once they arrived at their hotel headquarters, General Jones spoke briefly to thank her friends and supporters. She reiterated the original goal of the pilgrimage: winning the hearts of rural people. "We have left a trail of thought and suggestions behind us."⁷⁹ "We feel that we have touched the people along the line of march as we could by no other method. A pilgrimage has always stood for the highest ideal for the cause it represents and we are sure from the receptions we have been accorded that our march has not been in vain." The marchers were besieged by friends and congratulated on their successful journey. They rested quietly that evening.⁸⁰

The next morning, the pilgrims remained jubilant. General Jones declared that "none suffered from soreness of muscles and were good for another walk, if necessary." "I'm ready to go one hundred miles more," she stated. Though the hike was complete, the pilgrims continued to raise awareness about woman suffrage with their usual high

76 "Suffrage Hikers Reach Goal Today," *Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin*, 28 December 1912, 1; "Army Auto Upset," 6.

77 "Suffrage Hikers Reach Goal Today;" 1; "Army Auto Upset;" 6; "Suffrage Patriots Reach Their Goal," *Pittsburgh Daily Post (PA)*, 29 December 1912, 4.

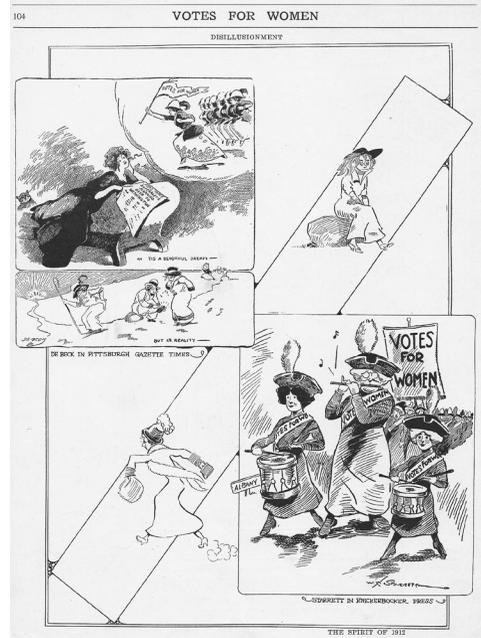
78 "Four Militant Suffragettes Reach Albany," *Charlotte News (NC)*, 29 December 1912, 1; "Pilgrims End Hike; Arrive in Albany Footsore But Glad," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 29 December 1912, 5; "Suffragettes Reach Albany Before Time," *Philadelphia Enquirer*, 29 December 1912, 2; Wilbur, "The Hike to Albany," 14; Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6: 452; "Suffragettes Reach Albany Before Time," *Philadelphia Enquirer*, 29 December 1912, 2.

79 "Suffrage Patriots Reach Their Goal," 4.

80 "Rosalie's Army Reaches Albany," *Morning Tulsa Daily World (OK)*, 29 December 1912, 1; "Four Militant Suffragettes Reach Albany," 1.

spirits and energy. Their Sunday plans included a number of open air meetings in the morning; a speech at the Christian Science Church by Sybil Wilbur, the *Woman Voter* reporter who had walked the entire distance; an afternoon tea at the Western Avenue home of Helen Hoy Greeley, an Albany and New York suffragist; and two evening meetings, one in Albany, the other in Rensselaer. "Crowds were expected and red hot speeches promised." Their Monday plans included riding through the city in their scout car, getting permits from the mayor for street meetings and a mass meeting at the Historical and Art Society.⁸¹

General Jones, who had stayed at the home of Katherine Gavit, arrived at the Hampton Hotel Sunday morning. She met with the other pilgrims and began to plan how to accomplish their final task of presenting their petition to the Governor-elect Sulzer, who was due to arrive in Albany the next day. The plans were finalized during the Greeley afternoon tea. Carrying knapsacks, staffs, and banners, Colonel Craft and Surgeon General Dock would act as sentries at the Union Railroad Station and await Sulzer's arrival. Katherine Stiles and Sibyl Wilbur would take up a silent vigil at the Hotel Ten Eyck, where Sulzer was scheduled to stay. Once he arrived at the station, the sentries were to follow Sulzer to his residence, remaining silent and keeping a respectful distance from him. Gladys Coursen was to act as intercept and arrange a two-minute audience between the governor-elect and General Jones. In the meantime, General Jones, wearing her knapsack and with staff in hand, would wait at the Hampton Hotel for news of the meeting.⁸² The two women held guard all day in the rain, but their wait was in vain. By five o'clock, General Jones received word that the governor-elect would not arrive until the following day, so she cancelled the watch and ordered the women to have tea. When Sulzer did arrive, he went straight to the executive mansion. The suffragists then consulted with his advisors and made the necessary meeting arrangements.⁸³



DeBeck, William Morgan, 1890–1942,
Starrett, William Kemp, *Cartoons Magazine*,
February 1913, vol. 3, issue 2, 104

81 "Silly Women,' Bishop Calls Suffrage Army," *New York Sun*, 30 December 1912, 4; "Suffragists End Hike in Splendid Shape," *New York Tribune*, 29 December 1912, 5; "Suffragettes Watch in Vain for Sulzer," *New York Sun*, 31 December 1912, 2.

82 "Pilgrim Sentries Watch for Sulzer," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 30 December 1912, 4; "Silly Women,' Bishop Calls Suffrage Army," 4; "Suffragists Scouts Out to Sight Sulzer," *New York Times*, 30 December 1912, 18.

83 "Sulzer Swears Aid to Cause," *The Woman's Journal*, 4 January 1913, 4; "Hikers' Spirits Drop in Sulzer's Absence," *New York Tribune*, 31 December 1912, 7; "Keeping Watch on Sulzer," *Nebraska State Journal*, 31 December 1912, 1; "General' Rosalie Jones Leads 'Army' Against Anti-Suffrage Foe While Waiting for Sulzer's Arrival at Albany," *Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin*, 31 December 1912, 1.

Once arranged, the pilgrims arrived at the executive mansion for their two-minute audience. General Jones was immediately presented to the governor-elect. She, in turn, introduced him to each of the other marchers. Then General Jones brought forth the framed petition, placed it in Mr. Sulzer's hand, and said:

Governor-Elect Sulzer, on behalf of the suffragists of the State, we pilgrims, who have carried this message from New York to Albany on foot, having left December 16 and arrived December 28, in order to greet the governor-elect upon his arrival, present it to you. We endorse it and we trust that your administration will prove a great success and that it may be featured by the granting of suffrage to women.⁸⁴

The governor-elect accepted the petition and then commended and congratulated the pilgrims. He stated that he had always favored equal suffrage for men and women and would recommend that the Legislature act quickly on a woman suffrage amendment to the New York State Constitution. He pledged his cooperation for the cause and stated that "all that I can do for your cause will be done." The pilgrims gave three cheers as the governor-elect returned to the mansion.

The pilgrims returned to their hotel, where General Jones thanked each member for her "endurance, faithfulness and loyalty. She then disbanded the army." Lavinia Dock and Katherine Stiles took the train back to New York, but Rosalie Jones, Ida Craft, Gladys Coursen, and Jessie Stubbs stayed in Albany and attended the inauguration and inaugural ball with other New York suffragists, including Harriet May Mills, Mary Garrett Hay, and Alva Belmont.⁸⁵

Rosalie Gardiner Jones believed that because of the army's impromptu meetings and crossroads gatherings, hundreds of people heard the "Votes for Women" argument and received thousands of pieces of literature. She concluded: "the pilgrimage did more to advance the cause than anything else that could have been done, and it showed conclusively that woman's perseverance, grit and fortitude compare not unfavorably to man's." Others agreed. Through the efforts of the pilgrims, Hudson Valley suffragists, and the use of the press, the suffrage cause gained national attention. The *Woman Voter and Newsletter* stated that the Albany pilgrimage resulted in \$3 million (nearly \$76 million in today's dollars) worth of free advertising for the cause and declared that "the simple expedition over open road" garnered more publicity than several seasons of suffrage work."⁸⁶ The *Woman's Journal* stated that the pilgrimage secured "more newspaper space for a greater length of time than even the great suffrage parades." Anna Cadogan Etz, press secretary

84 "Suffrage Message in Sulzer's Hands," *New York Tribune*, 1 January 1913, 9; "Sulzer Receives the Suffragettes," *Burlington Free Press (VT)*, 1 January 1913, 14.

85 "Sulzer Receives the Suffragettes," 14; "Suffragettes Watch in Vain for Sulzer," 2.

86 "Pilgrim Sentries Watch for Sulzer," 4; "Three Million Dollars Worth of Advertising," *Woman Voter and Newsletter*, February 1913, 20.

for the Women's Political Union, wrote, "No event in the suffrage annals of the State ever aroused the interest and discussion occasioned by this 'hike' from New York to Albany."⁸⁷

Before there was radio or mass media, Rosalie Jones and her comrades, with the help of Hudson Valley suffragists, were able to reinvigorate the national conversation about woman suffrage. The "Votes for Woman Pilgrimage," which was chronicled in local and national newspapers, engaged women and men.⁸⁸ People were excited about the pilgrims and informed by them. Rosalie Jones and other suffragists understood the power and benefit generated by this excitement. By increasing awareness of the importance of "Votes for Women", the pilgrimage helped accelerate the achievement of suffrage in New York in 1917 and the nation in 1920.

Rosalie Jones did carry through on her plan for a "little jaunt from New York to Washington." The day after Governor Sulzer's inauguration on January 2, 1913, Alice Paul wrote Jones and invited the pilgrims to participate in the Suffrage Procession she was planning for the day before Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. Their hike, Miss Paul said, would be an "excellent way of advertising the suffrage procession."⁸⁹ Dubbed the "Army of the Hudson" and led by General Jones and Colonel Craft, the pilgrims hiked the 230 miles to Washington, D.C., in seventeen days.

After the success of the "jaunt" from Newark to Washington, the novel approach of Rosalie Jones' suffrage pilgrimages was accepted as a viable tactic—one that has become commonplace in American activism. The suffrage pilgrims marched to the seat of government to raise awareness and funds. They wanted people to be informed and educated about their cause. In the months immediately following the "Votes for Women" pilgrimage, Ida Craft and Rosalie Jones continued to walk for their cause. Ida Craft, joined by three other women, hiked from New York City to Boston in August 1913. General Jones led another army along the west side of the Hudson River in January 1914 with a petition requesting women poll watchers. Throughout 1914, other suffragists organized pilgrimages: Maryland suffragists calling themselves the "Army of the Severn" conducted a thirteen-day pilgrimage throughout the state to Annapolis under the leadership of "General" Edna Story Latimer.⁹⁰ Women in Missouri, wearing pilgrim capes, marched 200 miles from St. Louis to Springfield.⁹¹ In Ohio, women converged on Salem, and in New York on Rochester. In early 1915, a mass suffrage meeting in Washington was followed

87 "All Ask Why They Did It," *The Woman's Journal*, 4 January 1913, 6.

88 As indicated in the above notes, articles about the pilgrimage appeared in newspapers across the country. The same article often appeared in many different newspapers. I have used as sources the different newspapers to demonstrate the wide variety of places that covered the pilgrims. Often the same headline had a different and sensational title. One example of a sensational headline is "Suffragists Use Alcohol." The article referred to the pilgrims using rubbing alcohol on their stiff joints. Other times newspapers tried to create drama. Two examples include 1) an article stating that Rosalie Jones' mother was bound upstate and would overtake her in Rhinebeck, and 2) that Gladys Coursen got engaged on Christmas. Neither was true, but they did add drama. I chose not to use these articles because I wanted the tone of this essay to be as serious as the pilgrimage was to the hikers.

89 Letter, Alice Paul to Rosalie Jones, 2 January 1913. National Women's Party papers, Sewall-Belmont House, Washington, DC, microfilm reel 1, slide 0083.

90 See the Pilgrims' Edition of the *Maryland Suffrage News*, 13 June 1914, 81–88.

91 "Suffrage Hike Planned," *Washington Evening Star (DC)*, 21 June 1914, 2.

by a pilgrimage to the White House. That same year, women from all over New Jersey converged in Orange, while California women, using automobiles, made a pilgrimage from San Francisco to Washington, D.C.

Countless other causes with varied political points of view were influenced by Rosalie Jones' tactic. In the spring of 1914, twenty years after his original march, "General" Coxe led his second army to Washington. That June, Baltimore Socialists hiked to Washington, D.C. Like the General's "Votes for Women" pilgrims, their purpose was to inform people throughout the country. They were entertained by local Socialist organizations along the way. During the United States' involvement in World War I, Mrs. Oliver Cromwell Field of New York announced plans for a more than 100-person march to Washington, D.C., to protest against American importation of German-made goods. They planned to follow the same route as the suffrage pilgrims and gather signatures on petitions to be delivered to government officials. Mrs. Field anticipated that Rosalie Jones would help her with the arrangements.⁹²

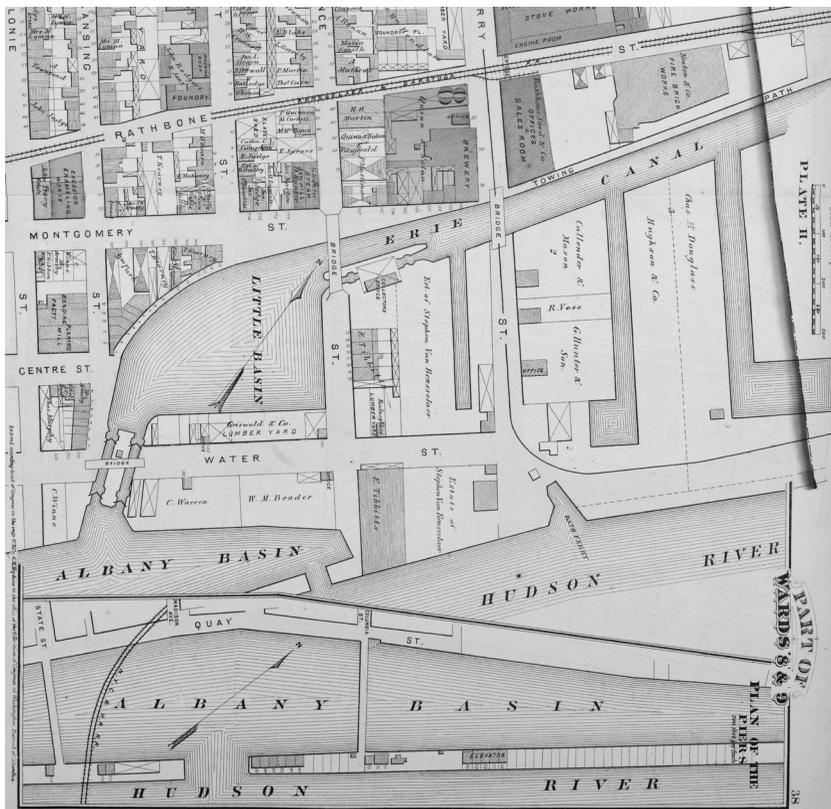
Today there are many walks to raise awareness and funds throughout the Hudson Valley, New York State, and the country. These walks are familiar, many times unremarkable, and not always limited to political issues. Awareness and funds have been raised for the March of Dimes, to Defeat ALS, Make Strides against Breast Cancer, end Alzheimer's disease, prevent suicide, understand Autism, prenatal care, kidney disease, prostate cancer, and many more causes. The credit to Rosalie Jones, Ida Craft and Lavinia Dock—the pioneers who initiated what was then a radical idea and is now a widely accepted form of political activism—is long overdue.

The author would like to thank Natalie Naylor for all her encouragement, support, and insight. Onward! Jane Mathews Swersey earned a master's degree in history from Adelphi University. She retired from teaching history after thirty-four years.

92 "Baltimore Socialists to Hike to Washington," *The Washington Times (DC)*, 10 June 1914, 14; "Women Plan Protest Hike to Capitol," *New York Tribune*, 7 April 1919, 4; "Protest Admitting German Made," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 7 April 1919, 16.

Shipping Through the Capital Region: The Rise and Fall of the Albany Lumber District

Edward T. Howe



City Atlas of Albany, New York, C.M. Hopkins, C.E. 1876, Plate H (detail).
Courtesy of the New York Public Library

“A pretty big bundle of sticks, Sir,” sententiously remarked my hack-driver as he landed me shivering from head to foot, in the middle of the Albany lumber district yesterday morning.

“Our State Institutions XVI: The Albany Lumber Trade,” *New York Times*, January 15, 1872, 5.

The above observation was uttered by an awed visitor when the Albany lumber district was in its heyday as a major wholesale distribution center in the United States. From about 1850 to 1890, the lumber district ranked first or second in the nation as an intermediary between the lumber mills and various wholesale customers—a significant achievement that has largely gone unheralded. Accordingly, this essay will focus on the rise of the lumber district—from its roots in the colonial era followed by its nineteenth-century growth to its subsequent decline and eventual demise in the twentieth century.

After Henry Hudson reached the headwaters of his eponymous river in 1609 on a voyage sponsored by the Netherlands, the Dutch attempted to settle the area in 1614–15 with fur traders by erecting Fort Nassau on Castle Island, just south of present-day Albany. After flooding forced its abandonment in 1618, the Dutch West India Company in 1623 persuaded French Protestants (the Walloons) to establish a new fur-trading colony on the nearby mainland that became Fort Orange the following year. Citing the slow profitability of the colony, the Dutch West India Company subsequently created a patroonship system in 1629. Initially, it deeded large tracts of land to its stockholders for organizing feudal agricultural settlements of rent-paying tenants. A year later, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, a diamond merchant and a company director, began acquiring holdings on both sides of the Hudson River. These holdings eventually included most of Albany and Rensselaer counties and parts of Columbia and Greene counties—almost a million acres. In return, Van Rensselaer was required to purchase the land from Native Americans and to bring fifty settlers onto it within four years. Fort Orange (officially Beverwijck in 1652) became Albany in 1664 with the English takeover of the colonial province of New Netherland. Governor Richard Nicolls, seeking Dutch support of the peaceful conquest, allowed the Van Rensselaers to keep their patroonship of Rensselaerswyck.¹

Trees were felled by the early Dutch settlers for fuel, implements, houses, buildings, and to clear land for crops. Before sawmills were constructed, an axe and a wedge (usually a piece of metal or wood) were the only means available for creating boards and shingles.² Kiliaen Van Rensselaer—who never left Holland—quickly recognized the necessity for sawmills and signed a contract in 1631 with some Scandinavians to build one near Fort Orange. A letter written by Van Rensselaer to Pieter Cornelisz Van Munnickendam confirmed the operation of another sawmill in 1638. Additional sawmills in the Albany area included one leased in 1654 to Barent Pietersz Coeymans (for whom the Town of Coeymans in Albany County is named) and Teunis Van Spitsberger.³ Though the number of sawmills subsequently multiplied throughout the Hudson Valley, lumber sales were confined to local markets.

1 Cuyler Reynolds, *Albany Chronicles* (Albany, NY: J.B. Lyon Company, Printers, 1906), 7, 17, 18, 20, 24, 46, 66.

2 William F. Fox, *History of the Lumber Industry in the State of New York* (Harrison, NY: Harbor Hill Books, 1976), 8.

3 Muriel Schumacher, *Manufacturing and Industry in Rensselaerswyck During the Patroonship of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer* (New York: Albany County Historical Record, 1943), 2, 4, 6.

When the English took over in 1664, Albany inhabitants were still focused on trading with Native Americans—mainly for beaver pelts—but a diversified economy soon emerged. By the end of the seventeenth century, and through the first half of the eighteenth, the Albany economy centered on “commercial” (merchants engaged in domestic and foreign trade), “production” (crafts), and “service” (preparing food, providing shelter, and transporting people and goods) activities. While exports of beaver pelts continued, sloops (single-masted vessels of Dutch origin) carried additional profitable goods, chiefly lumber and grain, and passengers southward to other ports on the Hudson River and down to New York City. Sloops returning from New York City carried imported and domestic manufactures and people headed for Albany and other destinations. When chartered as a city in 1686, Albany had about 500 residents, but its growing and diversifying economy helped increase the population to 2,000 around 1750.⁴

The emergence of the waterfront area in the northern part of the city by 1750 was enabled by a number of different craftsmen. They included makers of kegs, crates, and boxes, as well as boats, ropes, and sails. Other occupations included ship chandlers—dealers in supplies and equipment for the growing number of water-borne vessels, and wheelwrights, who specialized in making or repairing wheels for wagons and carriages.⁵

Recognizing that its expanding port required an upgrade in its landing and loading facilities, Albany financed large docks and a seawall in 1765 to ensure that it remained a major center of commerce.⁶ In a section of North Albany near the waterfront, a storage area for white pine and other logs from northern forests also was formed at this time. A part of this section of the city, owned by the Van Rensselaers, would become the emerging lumber district in the mid-nineteenth century.

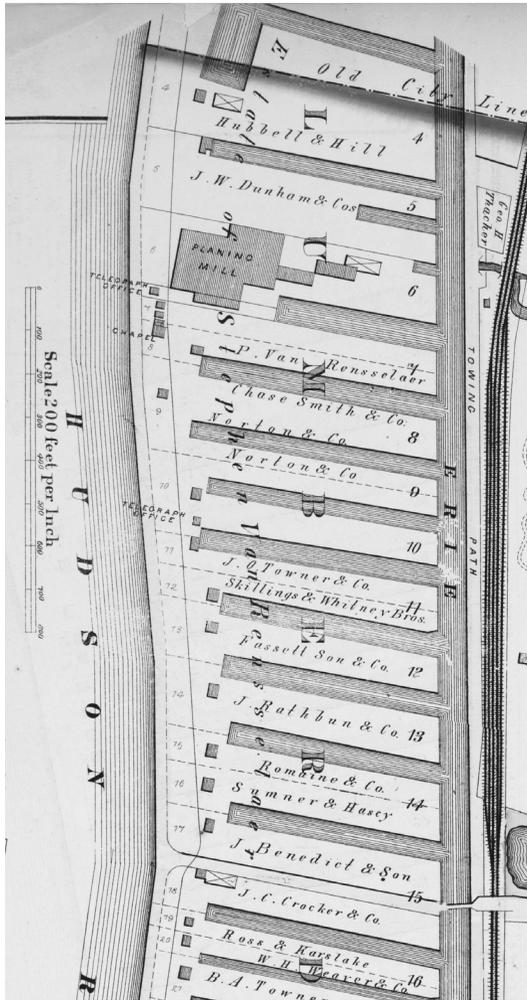
After the Revolutionary War, migrants poured out of New England and moved westward into central and western New York and Pennsylvania, intending to cultivate the rich farmlands they had bought from land speculators. In the nineteenth century, parts of these lands would supply the growing demand for lumber.

After the first logs were floated downstream by the Fox brothers in 1813, vast amounts of marked white pine logs were increasingly driven on the upper Hudson River (known as “log drives”) to sawmills at Glens Falls. White pine lumber—a softwood known for its durability—was widely used for construction and other activity (e.g., making the aforementioned kegs, crates, and boxes). After milling, rafts transported the lumber to Albany, where it was subsequently shipped down the Hudson River. The effort and cost of transporting this bulky commodity by wagon over rutted rural roads to Albany would have been much greater than using frictionless rafts.

4 Stefan Bielinski, “A Middling Sort: Artisans and Tradesmen in Colonial Albany,” *New York History*, vol. 73, no. 3 (July 1992): 262, 266–268.

5 *Ibid.*, 285.

6 Stefan Bielinski, “From Outpost to Entrepot: The Birth of Urban Albany, 1686–1776” in *Visions of New York State: The Historical Paintings of L.F. Tantillo* (Wappingers Falls, NY: The Shawangunk Press, 1996), 28.



City Atlas of Albany, Plate I (detail).
 Courtesy of the New York Public Library

By the early nineteenth century, there was a growing fear that more of the interior trade of New York State would be siphoned southward on the Susquehanna River to Philadelphia or Baltimore, or through the linkage of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. To prevent this, and to create a profitable two-way trade route between the Great Lakes and the Hudson River, the New York State government financed the building of the Erie Canal in 1817.⁷ Although a section from the Genesee River to Albany was opened in 1823, the entire project was not completed until 1825. This artificial waterway had a depth of four feet, a width of twenty-eight feet on the bottom, and a width of forty feet on its surface so that “all the lumber produced in the country, and required for market, may be transported upon it,” along with large amounts of other commodities.⁸ Toll collectors were stationed along its length—a distance of 363 miles from Buffalo to Albany—and received a variety of charges for both goods and people, hauled by boats drawn by mules and horses.

Construction also started on the Champlain Canal in 1817. It ran northward from Waterford (Saratoga County) to Whitehall (Washington County) over a distance of forty-six miles, with a link to the Erie Canal at West Troy (now the City of Watervliet). The main objective was to keep the vast lumber and iron resources of the Adirondacks from being diverted to Montreal. This waterway, the Erie’s first feeder canal, was completed in 1823.⁹

Shortly before construction of the Erie Canal began, *Spafford’s Gazetteer* pointed out the advantages Albany would accrue from this undertaking. With a population of almost 12,000 residents in 1813, Albany was “situated on one of the finest rivers in the world, with

7 John H. Thompson, ed., *Geography of New York State* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1966), 157–159.

8 Noble E. Whitford, *History of the Canal System of the State of New York Together With Brief Histories of the Canals of the United States and Canada*, vol. 1, (Albany, NY: Brandow Printing Company, 1906), 77, 123.

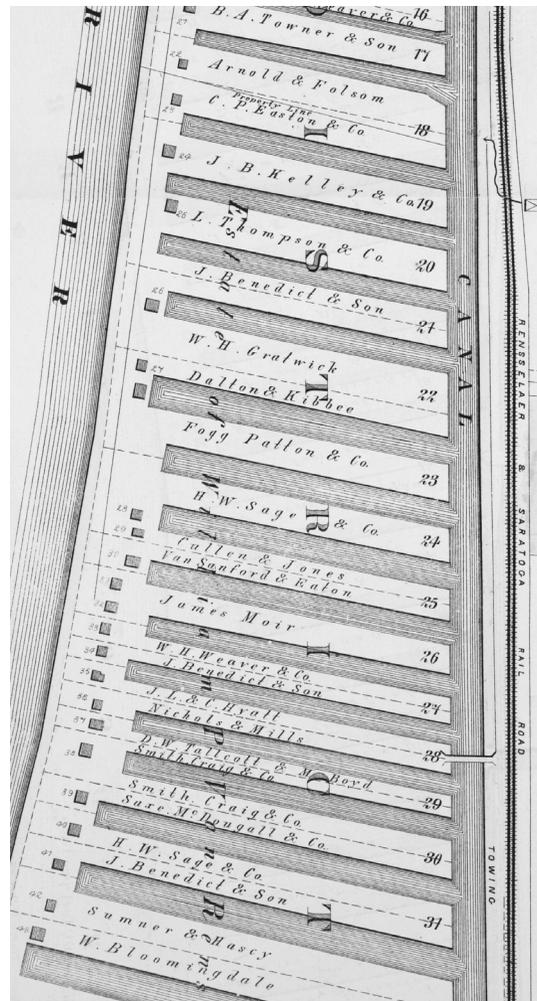
9 *Ibid.*, 411, 416.

an uninterrupted sloop navigation, in the center of an intensive and fertile country, with a great variety of manufactories, and 356 vessels in all kinds of trade, and seems destined to become one of the greatest inland Towns in America.” This view proved prescient.¹⁰

Still, despite its various crafts, shops, and commercial establishments, Albany had just one lumber merchant—Aaron Hand—according to the first edition of *The Albany Directory* in 1813. Ten years later, there were only four dealers: Hand, Salem Dutcher, Uriah Marvin, and John Quackenbush.¹¹

Anticipating the Erie Canal’s completion in 1825, the canal commissioners approved a plan in February 1823 to construct a basin in Albany, at the canal’s terminus (see page 51). This would “enable transshipments to be made between canal and river crafts, without the cost and delay of storage.” The following May, an elongated pier “had been staked out” by the state engineers to enclose the basin.¹² The “Long Pier”—440 feet long, eighty feet wide, and twenty feet high—was finally completed in May 1825.¹³ Private wharves and slips were located near the pier.

The Erie Canal’s opening brought an immediate and dramatic drop in freight rates that continued over several decades, helped by the canal’s fitful widening and deepening from 1836 to 1862. One source said that between 1830 and 1860 the annual average ton-mile charge for all goods from Buffalo to Albany on the canal fell from 2.50 cents to 1.07 cents, and from Albany to Buffalo from 5.51 cents to 0.66 cents.¹⁴



City Atlas of Albany, Plate I (detail).
Courtesy of the New York Public Library

10 Horatio Gates Spafford, *A Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Albany, NY: H.C. Southwick, 1813), 117–118.
 11 *The Albany Directory* (Albany, NY: Websters and Skinners, 1813); *Klinck’s Albany City Directory* (Albany, NY: E. and E. Hosford, 1823).
 12 Joel Munsell, *The Annals of Albany*, vol. VIII (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1857), 88–91.
 13 *Ibid.*, 119.
 14 George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860*, vol. 4 of the *Economic History of the United States* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1951), 138.

In addition to the Champlain Canal, various feeder canals in central and western New York augmented Erie Canal lumber shipments. The earliest of these were the Oswego (1828), Cayuga-Seneca (1828), and Chemung (1833) canals.¹⁵ They ran in a north-south direction and helped to unify rural areas with the rest of the state. After the boats arrived at the Albany “Long Pier” from the Erie and Champlain canals, lumber was transferred (as in the pre-canal era) to sloops and other watercraft for the journey to Hudson River destinations and New York City.¹⁶

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Bangor, Maine, was both a major locale of lumber production and a transshipment port for white pine lumber. Located on the Penobscot River, thirty miles from the Atlantic Ocean, it shipped a million board feet of lumber by 1816 and more than 30 million by 1830.¹⁷ However, by then Albany had eclipsed Bangor as the largest wholesale lumber market in the nation, a position it would retain for the next quarter of a century.

In 1828, there were still only six lumber dealers in Albany—the four previously-mentioned firms joined by F.I. Barnard and Giles Sanford. However, four years later, the number of merchants had risen to twenty-five.¹⁸

The *Annual Report of the Canal Commissioners of the State of New York* began publishing data on shipments of boards and scantling (small pieces of lumber) that arrived at West Troy (now Watervliet) in 1824 from both the Erie and Champlain Canals. (Other items—staves, timber, shingles, and wood cords—also came to Albany, but are omitted from this essay due to space limitations.) In 1828, Albany received 36,802,944 feet of boards and scantling; by 1834, the amount of such lumber received had risen to 62,103,000 feet, a gain of 68.7 percent.¹⁹

For many years after 1834, the canal commissioners published annual data on the quantity of boards and scantling arriving at “tide water” on the Hudson River (i.e., Albany, West Troy, and Waterford) from the Erie and Champlain canals, but not separated for each destination.²⁰ However, George R. Howell and Jonathan Tenney provided data on annual arrivals of lumber at Albany beginning in 1850. Thus, no data for Albany from 1835 to 1849 is available from either source. From 216,791,890 feet of boards and scantling

15 Peter Eisenstadt and Laura-Eve Moss, eds., *The Encyclopedia of New York State* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2005), 257.

16 James E. Defebaugh, *History of the Lumber Industry of America*, vol. 2 (Chicago: The American Lumberman, 1907), 410.

17 Jeremy S. Wilson, “Nineteenth Century Lumber Surveys for Bangor, Maine: Implications for Pre-European Settlement Forest Characteristics in Northern and Eastern Maine,” *Journal of Forestry* (July/August 2005), 219.

18 *The Albany Directory for the years 1828–29* (Albany, NY: Webster & Wood, 1828); *Child’s Albany City Directory* (Albany, NY: Printed by Edmund B. Child, 1832).

19 Joel Munsell, *The Annals of Albany*, vol. X (Albany, NY: Munsell & Rowland, Printers, 1859), 385; *Annual Report of the Canal Commissioners of the State of New York For 1828* (Albany, NY: Crosswell & Van Benthuyzen, 1829), 25.

20 *Annual Report of the Canal Commissioners of the State of New York For 1856*. In Assembly Document 100 (Albany, NY: Charles Benthuyzen, 1856), 304–05.

in 1850, when the lumber district began to emerge, the amount rose to 393,726,073 feet in 1853, a gain of 81.6 percent—an initial high mark.²¹

The U.S. Department of Agriculture published a study of lumber production from 1799 to 1946.²² It showed that national lumber production had risen from an estimated 300 million board feet in 1799 to about 1.6 billion board feet by 1839, but the quantity produced in each state was not published for this period. From 1839 to 1859, the value of lumber produced decennially became known for each state, but the quantity still was not provided. Nevertheless, the data indicated that New York State had become the major producer. The leading states in 1839 were: New York, (\$3,891,302), Maine (\$1,808,693), and Pennsylvania (\$1,150,220). By 1859, New York was no longer the top state. Pennsylvania now ranked first at \$10,743,752, followed by New York (\$9,710,945) and Michigan (\$7,040,190), with Ohio and Wisconsin showing gains after 1849. In 1839, New York accounted for 30.1 percent of the total value of lumber production in the nation, but only 10.4 percent by 1859. Beginning in 1869, when the quantity of lumber for each state was initially provided, the data showed that the growth of lumber production would be centered in the Midwest throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, with Michigan and Wisconsin as the major producers.

New York's years as one of the leading lumber-producing states was reflected in the continued growth of the lumber business in Albany throughout the 1830s and 1840s. By 1850, thirty-one firms operated at or near the city's pier. Realizing that more space was needed, the lumber dealers negotiated leases north of the pier on land that had been used for vegetable gardens by the Van Rensselaer family. The original leases, starting around 1850, specified that the Van Rensselaers would build the slips and the dealers would pay a yearly rental. What became the Albany lumber district would eventually encompass over 100 acres of land. Located between the Erie Canal and the Hudson River, the district started at North Ferry Street at its southernmost point and extended about a mile and a half northward. At the southern end, it had a width of 500 feet and was 1,150 feet across at its uppermost end.²³ As the lumber district emerged in 1850–51, the initial firms included Fassett & Washburn; William H. Bloomingdale; Higbie, Hammonds; Giles Sanford; and Wilson and Mead.²⁴ By 1853, twelve firms had entered the district. Sometime over the next twenty years, the lease terms changed. The dealers agreed to construct their own slips, retaining the amount of the rental payment and interest until it equaled the construction cost, after which the Van Rensselaers gained title to the slips and a yearly rental payment. The yearly rental, on average eighteen percent of the cost of the slips, was expected to pay for itself in about eight years. Thirty-one slips were in operation in 1870, with the largest being 1,000 feet long. The construction of several of these could

21 George R. Howell and Jonathan Tenney, *History of the County of Albany, N.Y., From 1609 to 1886* (New York: W.W. Munsell & Co., Publishers, 1886), 614.

22 Henry B. Steer, *Lumber Production in the United States, 1799–1946* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1948), 10, 11.

23 *The Albany Lumber Trade, Its History and Extent* (Albany, NY: The Argus Company, Printers, 1872), 9.

24 *Hoffman's Albany Directory, and City Register For the Years 1850–51* (Albany, NY: L.G. Hoffman, 1850).

cost up to \$25,000 apiece. In 1870, the Van Rensselaers reportedly received an annual total rental of more than \$80,000 from the dealers.²⁵

By 1845, Albany was also manufacturing machines for “dressing” lumber (i.e., smoothing its roughness on one or more sides), after John Gibson acquired the right to use a Woodbury patent that relied on rotary cutters and feeding rollers.²⁶

Albany was not the only lumber wholesale market that grew after 1850. The Illinois and Michigan Canal, opened in 1848, allowed Chicago to develop a huge lumber district along the South Branch of the Chicago River.²⁷ But Albany remained the dominant lumber market up to 1854, with receipts of 311,571,161 feet of boards and scantling; Chicago ranked second at 220,336,783 feet. However, the next year Chicago became the largest wholesale market in the U.S., by receiving 306,503,467 feet of lumber compared to Albany’s 245,921,652 feet.²⁸ Other notable lumber markets also emerged in New York (Buffalo, Oswego, North Tonawanda, and Tonawanda) and Burlington, Vermont, between 1840 and 1870.²⁹ Yet Albany and Chicago ranked first and second, respectively, until 1890. Chicago remained the national leader that year with 1,969,689,000 feet in lumber receipts, but Tonawanda had replaced Albany as the second largest market with 718,650,814 feet of lumber receipts. Albany received only 406,000,000 feet.³⁰

While Albany’s lumber industry grew after the opening of the Erie Canal, the rest of its economy began a transition from small craft shops to manufacturing enterprises that often depended on the canal for shipping raw materials and finished products. Beginning in the 1830s, cast iron stove foundries, breweries, and boot and shoe producers emerged and grew between 1850 and 1860. By 1880, Albany had over 800 manufacturing enterprises, nearly doubling that of 1860, dominated by the aforementioned industries.³¹

Although New York State was a leading producer and consumer of white pine lumber, the supply in the 1850s—especially with the depletion of sources in the Adirondacks—failed to meet the increasing demand of the urbanizing and manufacturing region in and around New York City, northern New Jersey, the Hudson River ports, and some foreign destinations. In order to meet these varying needs, larger sources of supply arrived at Albany from Allegany and Chemung counties in southwestern New York, southern Ontario, and Saginaw and Port Huron in Michigan. In addition, hardwood (e.g., walnut) lumber came to Albany at this time from Ohio, along with small amounts of spruce from Glens Falls.³²

25 *The Albany Lumber Trade*, 9–11, 14.

26 Defebaugh, 417.

27 Theodore J. Karamanski, “Lumber,” in *The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*, 2005 ed. <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/767.html> (accessed on 11/13/2015).

28 “Statistics of Trade and Commerce,” *Hunt’s Merchants’ Magazine and Commercial Review*, XL, no. II, February 1859, 229.

29 Defebaugh, 173, 435, 445, 458.

30 George W. Hotchkiss, *History of the Lumber and Forest Industry of the Northwest* (Chicago: George W. Hotchkiss & Co., 1898), 354, 685; Defebaugh, 418.

31 Brian Greenberg, *Worker and Community: Response to Industrialization in a Nineteenth-Century American City, Albany, New York, 1850–1884* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1985), 16, 17.

32 Michael Williams, *Americans and Their Forests: A Historical Geography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 178; Barbara McMartin, *The Great Forest of the Adirondacks* (Utica, NY: North Country Books, 1994), 48.

After peaking at 393,726,073 feet of boards and scantling in 1853, Albany-bound lumber began declining, accentuated during the Civil War (1861–65). Growth resumed again after the war until 1870, when a second peak of 452,303,900 feet of lumber was reached. These arrivals came mainly from Michigan and Canada.³³ Following the downturn caused by the severe Panic of 1873–1879, the district entered another growth phase with a third, and final, peak in lumber receipts of 477,000,000 feet in 1884.³⁴ Despite the cyclicity in receipts, the period from 1870 to 1884 appears to be the heyday of the lumber district.

The large increases in boards and scantling that arrived in the Albany lumber district after 1850—and other wholesale centers—ultimately resulted from improvements in log driving; the use of booms to sort out logs that were marked for a particular mill; and significant increases in milling output made possible through technical advances in sawing lumber, especially the use of steam power and newer types of saws. Further improvements in planing machines also occurred after expiration of the Woodbury patent in 1856.³⁵

The need to bring larger lumber shipments from greater distances led to major changes in lumber wholesaling. When lumber shipments arrived in Albany between 1825 and 1850, lumber dealers initially dealt directly with the captain of a sloop. He purchased a cargo of 70,000 or 80,000 feet of lumber for sale along the Hudson River and New York City. However, by 1870 a change had occurred as a merchant now dealt with the captain of a steam-driven vessel now capable of handling 600,000 or more feet of lumber. The captain had become an agent, who was paid to ensure the lumber was received by a buyer—often from New York City.³⁶ In addition, as lumber markets widened after the Civil War and into the late nineteenth century, some of the Albany wholesalers devised new marketing strategies to enhance profits: purchasing notices in trade journals, such as *The New York Lumber Trade Journal*, and sending price lists to retailers.³⁷

As the number of wholesalers proliferated in the district between 1850 and 1872, the firms became noted for their specialties. Many of them continued to concentrate on white pine, others sold both softwood and hardwood lumber, and a few dealt only in hardwoods. Among the more prominent firms was White & Company. Founded in 1858, it was one of the largest lumber firms in the U.S. and often Albany's leader in sales. It controlled large mills in Canada and handled the entire output of fourteen mills overall, specializing in white pine. This vertical integration strategy enabled the firm to ensure access to lumber and to reduce production costs. Other notable Albany firms included Salisbury & Company, dealers in several softwoods such as white pine, spruce, and hemlock; Joshua Rathbun & Company, which dealt only in hardwood lumber (oak, black walnut, and cherry); and H.W. Sage & Company, which owned the largest mills in Michigan and

33 *The Lumberman's Gazette*, 1, no. 2, August 1972, 11.

34 Howell and Tenney, 615.

35 Williams, 167–170, 175.

36 *The Albany Lumber Trade*, 13.

37 Fred W. Kohlmeyer, "Lumber Distribution and Marketing in the United States," *Journal of Forest History* 27, no. 2 (1983), 86.

sold both white pine and hardwood lumber. Owing to their increasing fortunes, many of these dealers lived primarily in mansions in the Arbor Hill neighborhood (especially on Ten Broeck Street). In addition to the wholesalers, H.Q. Hawley & Sons and S.&G. Rork operated extensive planing and sawing businesses for making doors, sashes, blinds, and other products.³⁸

By 1872, the total number of dealers reached its apex of fifty-two, with thirty-seven firms located within the district and fifteen nearby.³⁹

The significant increase in boards and scantling arriving in Albany between 1853 and 1870—and arrivals at other wholesale centers—was reflective of the lumber industry's importance to the national economy. Between 1850 and 1870, the lumber industry was the second largest manufacturing industry in the U.S., with about six percent of the total value of manufacturing output. However, by 1880 this industry had fallen to fourth place in manufacturing output value and by 1890 had declined to fifth place (about four percent of the total value of manufacturing output).⁴⁰ Although flour and grist mills remained the largest industry nationally over the entire period of 1850–1890, other more highly-valued industries were overtaking the lumber industry in importance (e.g., iron and steel) in the late nineteenth century as the Second Industrial Revolution proceeded.

However, the total number of lumber dealers in or near the district began to decline after 1872. By 1890, only thirty-four remained—a decline of 35.8 percent. Twenty-nine of these firms were in the lumber district.⁴¹

For most of its existence in the nineteenth century, the lumber district was an especially busy place. Canal boat workers—employed by their owners—unloaded and sorted the lumber into piles on the docks in the slips. In addition, hundreds of laborers—mainly of Irish descent after 1845—were employed by the dealers in their yards. They loaded lumber from the docks onto sloops, schooners (two-masted sailing vessels), and barges until the early years of the twentieth century. At its pinnacle of lumber dealers in 1872, 1,500 men, excluding clerks, were employed on the docks and were paid a total of \$600,000.⁴² Other lumber district occupations included lumber inspectors (Albany had one of the nation's earliest lumber inspection systems), who measured and graded the quality of lumber; tally boys, who worked with the inspectors and wrote down the amount of board feet of the graded lumber; and office assistants. Most of these employees lived in the adjacent laboring-class neighborhood of North Albany.

The lumber district offered many advantages: telegraph and telephone lines greatly enhanced internal and external communications; a horse-drawn trolley car, operated until 1921 along a road parallel to the Hudson River, made it easier for the dealers to reach

38 *The Albany Lumber Trade*, 17, 18, 24, 32, 38, 40.

39 *The Albany Directory for the Year 1872* (Albany, NY: Sampson, Davenport & Company, 1872).

40 Williams, 5.

41 *The Albany Directory for the Year 1890* (Albany, NY: Sampson & Murdock Company, 1890).

42 Defebaugh, 414.

their offices; ubiquitous hydrants significantly lessened any fire damage; and there were amenities such as dining facilities, stores, and houses of worship.⁴³

Understanding the collective need to promote business activity and internal cohesion, the lumber merchants organized the Board of Lumber Dealers in 1863. Its purposes were to “inculcate just and equitable principles in trade; to establish and maintain uniformity in commercial usages; to acquire, preserve, and disseminate valuable business information; and to adjust controversies and misunderstandings between persons engaged in business.” If these procedures failed, an arbitration committee of the board was set up to hear a voluntary submission by aggrieved parties. The Supreme Court (a lower court in New York State) then rendered a final judgment on any award the board made, except in cases involving claims to real estate titles.⁴⁴

After reaching its third peak of boards and scantling arrivals in 1884, the lumber district steadily declined over the next several decades as a major wholesale lumber center. By 1891 the amount of lumber arriving at Albany amounted to 366 million feet, a decline of twenty-three percent, and was probably less than 200 million around 1907, a possible decline of over forty-five percent since 1891.⁴⁵ Unfortunately, neither the Canal Commission nor any other reputable source reported the amount of boards and scantling that arrived annually at Albany after 1891.

Lumber shipments to Albany decreased after 1884 for several reasons. National and regional rail networks, especially their interconnectedness after 1869 with the completion of the first intercontinental railroad, encouraged a growing practice of direct lumber shipments from Midwest mills to buyers throughout the U.S. Some Albany firms, especially those who owned mills in the Midwest and Canada, even established agents in large cities, such as New York, to facilitate direct shipments all year round. As a result, New York City jobbers (wholesalers) avoided lumber storage costs in Albany in anticipation of the Hudson River becoming unnavigable in winter.⁴⁶ Fearing belching locomotives would spawn fires, the lumber district dealers did not introduce rail service until 1906.⁴⁷ Despite the new service, significant business losses continued. Further, although there was an upsurge in spruce lumber production from the Adirondack region after 1860 (particularly in the Glens Falls area), it began to decline after 1880.⁴⁸ Not even the abolition of canal tolls in 1882 could stem the downturn.⁴⁹ Finally, the dealers’ marketing efforts ultimately proved to be insufficient.

Facing increased competition from railroads that drew shipments—especially grain and foodstuffs—away from the canal system, New York officials wanted improvements that

43 *The Albany Lumber Trade*, 15, 16.

44 Howell and Tenney, 613–614.

45 Defebaugh, 411, 418.

46 Williams, 182.

47 Defebaugh, 416.

48 McMartin, 48, 49.

49 Whitford, 837.

would offer shippers a competitive alternative for their freight traffic and would enhance the export market in New York City.⁵⁰ Begun in 1895, an effort to enlarge the canal was halted in 1898 for lack of money. Seven years later, another huge construction project began that successfully culminated in the opening of the New York State Barge Canal System in 1918, of which the Erie Canal was one division. This enlarged and modernized waterway relied less on the use of locks, but more heavily on controlled rivers and artificial channels. Large freight barges, either self-propelled or pulled and pushed by tugboat, were employed to haul bulk products. They had a capacity to handle up to 3,000 tons of goods, compared to thirty tons when the original Erie Canal opened.⁵¹

The Barge Canal eliminated any need for the old Erie Canal, with its relatively narrow width and shallow depth. Given the state's willingness to sell its abandoned canal property, the City of Albany moved to acquire its portion of the available land. In 1921, Governor Nathan Miller signed the request into law.⁵² Four years later, the Albany Common Council authorized the purchase of the abandoned Erie Canal.⁵³ However, the city did not fill in and grade the canal—creating Erie Boulevard—until 1936.⁵⁴

Lumber shipments continued arriving at the Hudson River docks for off-loading near the old slips after the Barge Canal opened, but receipts continued their precipitous decline. Finally, “eastbound lumber shipments via the East division of the canal system ceased” in 1929.⁵⁵ The opening of the Port of Albany-Rensselaer, officially dedicated in 1932, failed to revive eastbound shipments from the lumber district.

The number of wholesalers in the lumber district also declined with the decrease in arrivals of boards and scantling after 1890. By 1918, only seven dealers remained in the district, including William E. Beebe, F.F. Crannell Lumber Company, Easton Cypress Company, Loren H. Elmendorph, Hughson & Company, A.S. Kibbee & Son, and L. Thomson Company. Another five firms were nearby: Blakeslee Lumber Company, C.T. Hubbell & Company, Hunter Dexter, Ramsdill & Company, and John Robinson & Company.⁵⁶ By then, the district was mainly serving local retail and wholesale buyers.

All of these firms slowly disappeared. The last two dealers were A.S. Kibbee & Son, whose roots were traceable to 1857, and F.F. Crannell, which started in 1849. Kibbee stopped doing business in the district in 1940. Crannell maintained its office at North Ferry Street until 1963, when the last vestige of the lumber district passed into history.⁵⁷

50 Noble E. Whitford, *History of the Barge Canal of New York State* (Albany, NY: J.B. Lyon Co. Printers, 1922), 15, 18.

51 Michele A. McFee, *A Long Haul, The Story of the New York State Barge Canal* (Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 1998), 17.

52 “Measures to Permit Closing of Canal Signed by (Governor) Miller,” *Albany Evening Journal*, May 12, 1921, 12.

53 Proceedings of the Albany Common Council, September 21, 1925, 451.

54 “Highlights of Mayor Thacher’s Annual Message to the Albany Common Council,” *Albany Times Union*, January 5, 1937, 17.

55 State of New York, Department of Public Works, *Annual Report of the Superintendent For The Year 1929* (Albany, NY: J.B. Lyon Company Printers, 1930), 23.

56 *The Albany Directory for the Year 1918* (Albany, NY: Sampon & Murdock Company, 1918).

57 *Polk’s Albany City Directory for the Year 1940* (Boston: R.L. Polk & Company Publishers, 1940); *Polk’s Albany City Directory for the Year 1963* (Boston, R.L. Polk & Company Publishers, 1963)

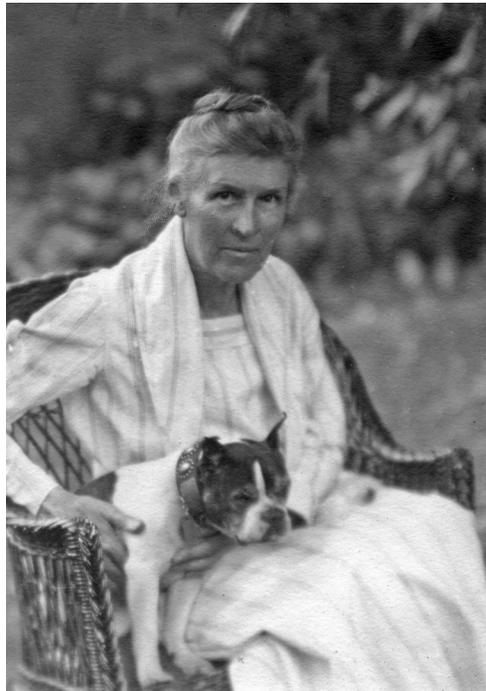
The land once owned by the Van Rensselaer family in the lumber district was eventually sold by its descendants, but it has remained an industrial area. It currently includes various commercial and warehouse properties and two government buildings.

In summary, from its colonial era Albany was a natural shipping port for lumber, with its advantageous location at the junction of the Mohawk and Hudson rivers. This transshipment activity accelerated with the building, growth, and enlargement of the Erie Canal. By 1850, when the lumber district was beginning, Albany already had become the largest lumber wholesaling operation in the United States. However, the emergence of Chicago and the construction of a national railroad network in the late nineteenth century—that enticed mill owners to ship directly to customers on a year-round basis—undermined Albany’s national importance. Although the abandonment of the Erie Canal did not immediately result in the lumber district’s closure in the early twentieth century, it eventually withered away. Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century, especially in the 1870s and early 1880s of its heyday, it was easy for an Albany visitor to see “a pretty big bundle of sticks” in the Albany lumber district.

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The Lost Legacy of Laura Johnson Wylie: An Exploration of Her Achievements in Local Women's History

Samantha M. Hesler, Marist '19



Laura Johnson Wylie.
Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections,
Vassar College Library

For the history of women and New York State, 1917 was a groundbreaking year. After years of frustration and multiple failed referendums, a new amendment to the state Constitution finally assured women's suffrage.¹ Not all areas of the state had been supportive. The city of Albany was notoriously anti-suffragist, while New York City was the exact opposite. Poughkeepsie was somewhere in between.²

1 "Votes Cast for Constitutional Conventions and Amendments," *Nycourts.gov*, April 23, 2018, https://www.nycourts.gov/history/legal-history-new-york/documents/Publications_Votes-Cast-Conventions-Amendments.pdf.
2 Eva C. Boice, "Woman Suffrage, Vassar College, and Laura Johnson Wylie," *Hudson River Valley Review* 20 (spring 2004).

While Poughkeepsie was not widely known for its suffragist activities, one person made a lasting contribution. Laura Johnson Wylie, an English professor and department chair at Vassar College, led the way for the suffrage movement in Poughkeepsie both prior to and after the 1917 referendum. The root of Wylie's activism began at Vassar, which at the time was led by an anti-suffragist administration. However, this did not stop Wylie. Her activism expanded into the surrounding city, culminating in her leadership of the Equal Suffrage League and later the Women's City and County Club. Despite the many obstacles she faced at Vassar, through her hard work and excellent leadership skills Wylie made a lasting impact on women's-rights activism in Poughkeepsie and helped set the foundation for a sustained effort of activism in the Hudson River Valley and beyond.

To better appreciate the achievements and contributions of Laura Johnson Wylie, it is important to understand some of the obstacles she faced, specifically in regard to the relatively large anti-suffragist movement in New York State. For suffragists like Wylie, New York was "at once the hope and the despair of suffragists."³ The anti-suffragist movement, although not officially started until 1894, was a powerful ideology backed by "access to money, leisure, and extensive social networks."⁴ The movement stemmed from the Enlightenment ideals of Rousseau, who argued that the role of women was in the domestic sphere where they could help raise future male leaders and maintain tradition in an ever-changing society. Anti-suffragists sought to preserve their important, unique social role. The movement appealed to many women across the state and became so influential that suffragists often had to change their arguments and rationale to succeed in the fight for enfranchisement.

The anti-suffrage movement even had a strong foothold at all-women's colleges such as Vassar. While Vassar was "progressive" in terms of being one of the nation's first female colleges, it "both encouraged and constricted social and intellectual independence."⁵ It was a school designed for women, but with an environment and policy manufactured by men. Prominent anti-suffragist leaders such as Lucy Price and Josephine Jewell Dodge were both products of a Vassar education. Many women's college populations were just as divided as the state and the country. A 1911 poll of Vassar's senior class showed large amounts of anti-suffrage sentiments or indifference, with more than twenty-nine percent of students disapproving of enfranchisement, twelve percent undecided, and one percent admitting ignorance.⁶ These alarming numbers reflect a fear that advocacy for the enfranchisement of women would take away students' educational opportunities, a non-political atmosphere at Vassar, and the relatively new status of Vassar as a prominent women's college.

The college's unsupportive environment for women's suffrage was largely solidified by its administration under President James Monroe Taylor, who served from 1886 to 1914.

3 Goodier, Susan. *No Votes for Women: The New York State Anti-Suffragist Movement*, (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 9.

4 *Ibid*, 7.

5 Brian Farkas, *Covering the Campus: A History of The Miscellany News at Vassar College*, (Illinois, iUniverse, 2009), 15.

6 Mezzacappa, Dale, "Vassar College and the Suffrage Movement," *Vassar Quarterly*, 3 (spring 1973): 4.

Anti-suffragism was cemented by the administration both through action and rhetoric. In one of his most decisive actions, President Taylor banned students from meeting to discuss suffrage in June 1908. This resulted in forty students and alumnae assembling in a graveyard outside the college gates. This meeting, organized by rising Vassar junior Inez Milholland, drew large amounts of publicity to the cause, including negative publicity for President Taylor.⁷ In a 1909 speech to alumni known as “The Conservatism of Vassar,” he presented his belief of the specific role of Vassar in women’s education. He explicitly explained that advocacy for other causes, such as women’s suffrage, was ultimately a distraction and disservice to young women who were pursuing their education. According to Taylor, “The mission of Vassar College was not to reform society but to educate women.”⁸ While Taylor wanted students to be cultured and truly liberal in intellectual matters, he also wanted his female students to use their education to be better housewives and mothers.⁹ Taylor would resign in 1914 as a result of what many considered “friction, suffrage, and socialism.”¹⁰

Before replacing Taylor, Vassar experienced a short interlude without a president. During this time, the faculty prompted the Board of Trustees to allow them to make their own decisions, specifically in regard to academic affairs. With a new sense of self-governance, the Vassar faculty began to take charge by delegating committees for faculty business and drafting up policy changes. It was during this unique time that students approached the faculty about the creation of a suffrage club on campus. Their idea was approved.

The eventual replacement of President Taylor with Henry Noble MacCracken in 1915 opened up a door for Vassar College and the suffragist movement. A drastic change from Taylor, MacCracken stated that “I stand for progressive and democratic management in college administration; for freedom, self-government and trust in the student body; for the advance of women through the suffrage and through every other means by which man may welcome her as friend and comrade in the business of life.”¹¹ Though MacCracken was a relatively outspoken proponent of women’s suffrage, it is important to note that he supported moderates and their reforms, not radicals. His staunch refusal of radical suffragists and their ideals presented an obstacle for suffrage to become fully embedded in Vassar culture. Despite seeming so different, MacCracken and Taylor were both troubled by radicalism and they both sought to maintain order, albeit in differing ways, at the institution.¹² One prominent example of MacCracken’s opposition to radical suffragism occurred in the fall of 1915, when he rejected the Suffrage Club’s request to have alumnus Inez Milholland speak on campus. Additionally, he did not allow the group to bring back Emily Putnam, a radical suffragist who had spoken during his inauguration day festivities.

7 Elizabeth A. Daniels and Barbara Page, “Suffrage as a Lever for Change at Vassar College,” *Vassar Quarterly* LXXIX (June 1983).

8 Elizabeth Hazelton Haight and James Monroe Taylor, *Vassar*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1915), 218.

9 Brian Farkas, *Covering the Campus: A History of The Miscellany News at Vassar College*, (Illinois, iUniverse, 2009), 15.

10 Elizabeth A. Daniels and Barbara Page, “Suffrage as a Lever for Change at Vassar College,” *Vassar Quarterly* LXXIX (June 1983).

11 “The Suffrage Movement at Vassar,” *Vassar Encyclopedia*, Vassar College.

12 *Ibid.*

Despite this unfavorable climate for a suffrage movement in the early years, there were many students who, like Laura Johnson Wylie, spoke out about women's rights and suffrage. These sentiments can be seen in the student-run newspaper titled *The Vassar Miscellany*, or as it is more commonly known, *The Miscellany News*. *The Miscellany News* had been in print since 1866 and continues to run today. It has served as a "recorder of historical facts and a barometer of values—for Vassar."¹³ If *The Miscellany News* represented the pulse of the college, its articles indicate that despite steps towards a more progressive college atmosphere, Vassar was often stuck in its Victorian-era ways until well into the 1920s. "By the early 1920s; *The Miscellany News* would focus almost exclusively on College life and mostly ignore the outside world."¹⁴ When world events or movements such as the First World War were featured in *The Miscellany News*, the articles were often opinion-free and relatively docile. Editors such as Hilda Scott Lass wanted to contribute political commentary but were often told that "making such declarations were not appropriate."¹⁵

While *The Miscellany News* was surrounded by a conservative environment and an overwhelming focus on campus-related content and issues, some articles represented the emergence of women's suffrage ideals at the school. These ideals and fundamentals were spearheaded by strong leaders and professors such as Laura Johnson Wylie. An editorial in the paper's December 11, 1914 edition showcases this tension between a desire for change and an administration stuck in the standards of the past. The editorial expressed frustration with students' lack of interest and initiative in forming a club to represent the goals and principles of the women's suffrage movement.¹⁶ *The Miscellany News's* female editors were becoming increasingly frustrated with the seeming lack of knowledge about the women's suffrage movement on a state and national level, as well as a lack of care shown to the issue as a whole. In the March 14, 1914 issue, editors questioned the college's lack of attention paid to the idea of women's suffrage, a movement that would drastically alter the lives and roles of women if achieved. The editors also questioned students' lack of interest and initiative under headlines such as "Why Not Organize?"¹⁷ They glibly pointed out the success of campus suffrage movements at colleges such as Bryn Mawr and Wellesley, and they criticized Vassar for being one of the first women's colleges in the country and yet so late to enter the world of politics and suffrage. While the above articles were written about women's suffrage during the time period of 1914 to 1920, it seems that *The Miscellany News* mostly wrote about the suffrage movement at Vassar in hindsight, years after passage of the U.S. Constitution's nineteenth amendment. This fact alone showcases the relatively adverse environment toward the vote for women at Vassar College.

13 Brian Farkas, *Covering the Campus: A History of The Miscellany News at Vassar College*, (Illinois, iUniverse, 2009), 3.

14 Ibid, 58.

15 Ibid.

16 "Editorial," *The Vassar Miscellany News Supplement*, December 11, 1914.

17 Brian Farkas, *Covering the Campus: A History of The Miscellany News at Vassar College*, (Illinois, iUniverse, 2009), 208.

Yet from this environment there emerged a strong leader of the women's suffrage movement in Poughkeepsie—Laura Johnson Wylie. Prior to entering Vassar as a student, Wylie had an irregular and often insufficient education. Her family relocated often, so Wylie's instruction came primarily via tutoring from her father and her own curiosity.¹⁸ According to historian Suzanne Bordelon, Wylie once noted “that when she entered college she could not spell, knew almost no geography, and was ignorant in many subjects quite familiar to her classmates.”¹⁹ Challenges never seemed to faze her. After graduating from Vassar at the top of her class in 1877, Wylie went on to attend Yale, where she was one of the first women to receive a Ph.D. Her 1894 dissertation, *Studies of the Evolution of English Criticism*, was “the first woman's thesis published by Yale.”²⁰ The following year, Laura Johnson Wylie returned to Vassar, this time as a Professor of English. Two years after this appointment, she earned the chair of the English Department, which she held from 1897 to 1922.²¹

Laura Johnson Wylie consistently tried to integrate progressive ideals and forward thinking into her classroom and later the administration, despite teaching on a campus that was often in tension with progressive ideals. “Wylie combined teaching with community volunteer work and a commitment to suffrage and social reform.”²² She was known for more than just teaching English: “she imparted her own interest in things of the spirit to her students, and she dispensed intellectual riches with a lavish hand.”²³ Her commitment to integrating ideas and movements of the social world into the classroom was something consistently noticed by both her students and her department. Wylie challenged the traditional thought of the Vassar administration. She discussed the raising of a democratic consciousness and advancement of a democratic government.²⁴ Among her students and peers, such as Professor Herbert Mills, she was known for her dominant trait: “an ever present struggle for human freedom. . .”²⁵

Wylie was an even stronger advocate outside of the classroom. According to the *Poughkeepsie Courier*, she was a “woman of indomitable energy, she was the local leader of the woman suffrage movement from 1910–1928.”²⁶ In 1909, Wylie, along with her colleague Lucy Salmon, helped establish the Equal Suffrage League in Poughkeepsie. While Vassar students and staff may not have been able to participate actively in progressive movements

18 Suzanne Bordelon, *A Feminist Legacy: The Rhetoric and Pedagogy of Gertrude Buck*, (Southern Illinois University Press, 2007), 74.

19 Ibid, 74.

20 Lynn Gordon, *Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1990).

21 Suzanne Bordelon, *A Feminist Legacy: The Rhetoric and Pedagogy of Gertrude Buck*, (Southern Illinois University Press, 2007), 75.

22 Lynn Gordon, *Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1990), 130.

23 “Laura Johnson Wylie,” *The Poughkeepsie Eagle News*, 4. April, 1932.

24 Suzanne Bordelon, *A Feminist Legacy: The Rhetoric and Pedagogy of Gertrude Buck*, (Southern Illinois University Press, 2007), 79

25 Ibid, 76.

26 Harvey Flad and Clyde Griffin, *Main Street to Mainframes: Landscape and Social Change in Poughkeepsie*, (Albany, New York, Excelsior Editions, 2009), 110.

on campus, they found an outlet off campus. The League had approximately seventy-four members, more than a quarter associated with Vassar. Wylie became president of the Equal Suffrage League in 1910. Under her leadership, it hosted many events in which women and men congregated over issues that were plaguing the enfranchisement of women. Wylie brought in dynamic speakers such as Inez Milholland, host of the graveyard women's suffrage meeting during the Taylor administration. In a November 20, 1911 Equal Suffrage League meeting at the Collingwood Opera House, Milholland spoke about issues such as "property qualifications, the status of women laborers, and male fear of emasculation."²⁷ Her sentiments about women needing to work together and cooperate with men are prescient of future second-wave feminism and leading feminists today, such as Bell Hooks. In addition to forums and education, Wylie led the League in canvassing neighborhoods leading up to the 1917 referendum. Her efforts paid off, as Poughkeepsie was "the only major population center along the Hudson River north of New York City that voted for the amendment."²⁸

Wylie's efforts for women's rights did not stop after the passage of the 1917 referendum that officially granted New York's women the right to vote. She believed that having won the vote, "women needed to demonstrate that they were responsible citizens."²⁹ The women of New York still had to prove their worth for a place in society. In order to gain this respect, Wylie founded the Women's City Club, later known as the Women's City and County Club, in 1918. Its goal was to bring "together women interested in the advancement of public welfare and to forward participation in political or civic matters of local, state, or national scope."³⁰ The club had many prominent

**Women's City and County Club
Soon to Close a Busy Season**

**Many Activities Mark
Past Winter in This
Organization**

**Miss Wylie Has Been
the President Since
It Was Formed**

(Contributed)
The Women's City and County Club will soon bring the winter's activities to a successful termination prior to the work which will be done during the summer months, not only in the city but in the various sections of the county. During the warm months several meetings will be held in different localities, at which all members, town and county, will have an opportunity to meet and discuss various questions which are arresting in interest, and merit particular attention. One of our brilliant present day thinkers has said: "I believe that education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform. — By law and punishment, by socialization and discussion, society can



MISS LAURA J. WYLIE

Poughkeepsie Star, April 14, 1925

members, such as Eleanor Roosevelt. As it was actively trying to establish itself in the community, Wylie led the charge with a series of different civic engagements, such as the establishment of a community kitchen during the 1919 flu epidemic, or conducting a survey of the destitute housing conditions in Poughkeepsie.³¹ Laura Johnson Wylie's leadership of the organization was expansive. In addition to the civic engagement pursued by the club, she brought in numerous speakers dedicated to progressive ideals. In a May 25, 1917 letter to her friend Fanny, Wylie describes how she organized for

27 Eva C. Boice, "Woman Suffrage, Vassar College, and Laura Johnson Wylie," *Hudson River Valley Review* 20 (spring 2004): 41.
 28 Harvey Flad and Clyde Griffin, *Main Street to Mainframes: Landscape and Social Change in Poughkeepsie*, (Albany, New York, Excelsior Editions, 2009), 111.
 29 *Ibid.*
 30 "Poughkeepsie Women to Promote Public Welfare," *State Charities Aid Association* 6 (1917), 3.
 31 Harvey Flad and Clyde Griffin, *Main Street to Mainframes: Landscape and Social Change in Poughkeepsie*, (Albany, New York, Excelsior Editions, 2009), 111.

“Mrs. Kelly to talk on minimum wage.”³² This meeting, which focused on the “industrial crisis and how to meet it,”³³ was one of the club’s most successful, with more than 125 members attending.

Wylie consistently encouraged club members to be politically active, something she was unable to do in the same scope at Vassar. Crucial to the club’s ideals was the practice of civics: “the club emphasized members getting to know government officers through the visitors and conferences it sponsored.”³⁴ It offered classes to teach women how the government functions and how to operate effectively within the system. Once members discovered a social ill within the community, they worked with local officials to generate solutions. While the club was politically active in pursuing social and welfare changes for the city, it also was active in the realm of politics itself. Women’s City and County Club notes state that one of the leading issues the club focused on in 1920 was “opposing the re-election of Senator Wadsworth, on the ground that we did not deem his social conscience sufficiently awakened to the needs of the present day.”³⁵

When it came to women being involved politically, Laura Johnson Wylie led by example. An article in the *Poughkeepsie Courier* describes her as being “an ardent advocate of equal suffrage both in the United States and abroad.”³⁶ Wylie was continuously participating in marches for suffrage and women’s rights. In 1912, she became heavily involved in Rosalie Jones’ “Votes for Women” march from New York City to the state capitol at Albany. With this march, Wylie and other suffragists were petitioning “Governor-elect Sulzer to further



The house at 112 Little Market Street 1930s.
Courtesy of Archives and Special
Collections, Vassar College Library

32 Correspondence from Wylie to her friend Fanny Hart, May 25, 1917, Box 3, Vassar Archives.

33 Harvey Flad and Clyde Griffin, *Main Street to Mainframes: Landscape and Social Change in Poughkeepsie*, (Albany, New York, Excelsior Editions, 2009), 112.

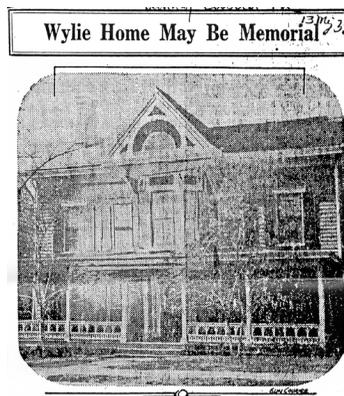
34 Ibid, 111.

35 “Condensed Report of the Executive Secretary of the Women’s City and County Club Given at the Annual Meeting of the Club, May 24 1920.” Women’s City and County Club. Poughkeepsie, NY, Dutchess County, NY: 1920–21. 5–10. [Call number 396.06 P86 (1920–21)] Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Vassar College Library.

36 “Equal Suffrage Meeting.” *Poughkeepsie Courier*, 21 Nov. 1911, Poughkeepsie Scrapbook, page 43/ Laura Johnson Wylie Biographical File (Box 4). Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Vassar College Library.

‘the cause’ of equal suffrage.”³⁷ Throughout the march, Wylie presented and spoke to other suffragists on behalf of the Equal Suffrage League. She consistently presented the ideas that women’s suffrage was imminent, that once it occurred, women must vote to protect their rights and working conditions, and that everyone, despite gender, must be free to govern themselves.³⁸

Although Wylie tried to bring progressive ideals into her Vassar classroom, she quickly realized she would have to move off campus to implement the change she envisioned. She moved from the traditional on-campus housing for Vassar professors to the heart of Poughkeepsie, in 1908 purchasing a home at 112 Market Street. The large, Victorian-style house with its expansive front porch provided a welcoming backdrop and safe haven for many suffragist activities. It was here that Wylie cultivated her leadership and hosted events and dinners for the Women’s City and County Club until her death in 1932.



Home of Professor Wylie at 112 Market street which may become memorial to her.

**Market Street Home of Prof. Wylie
May Be Dedicated As Memorial**

Poughkeepsie Sunday Courier,
June 12, 1932

Wylie’s home was more than just a house—it was symbolic of the incredible legacy she bestowed on her colleagues, her city, and New York State history. Upon her death in 1932, Wylie bequeathed her home to the Women’s City and County Club to use rent-free for six months. The club established the Wylie Memorial Fund, with members donating money to help the organization purchase and maintain the house and Wylie’s memory. With the help of a \$5,000 bank mortgage and contributions from club members,³⁹ the group was able to acquire 112 Market Street. Over the next decade, the Women’s City and County Club hosted dozens of meetings there. They ranged from social gatherings such as bridge clubs to legislative and city planning meetings.

By 1940, the club was struggling to maintain the property. Despite dwindling membership, it tried valiantly to keep the house through fundraising efforts, such as collecting pledges and producing a pamphlet titled “Our Miss Wylie.”⁴⁰ But by the summer of 1940, the club could no longer manage the expenses; it was clear it would have to separate itself from the property. It declared that “a new and most opportune use” had been found for 112 Market Street—Vassar College had agreed to accept the property as a gift in Wylie’s memory.⁴¹ It was used by Vassar to house professor Dr. Emerson Fite, who was also a city assemblyman.

37 “Suffragists in Waiting for Sulzer. Bishop Doane Says the Pilgrims are a Lot of Silly, Excited, Exaggerated Women.” *Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle* 30 Dec. 1912: 1.

38 “An Address on Women’s Suffrage: Before Mothers and Teachers’ Association by Prof. Laura J. Wylie Tuesday Afternoon. At Cannon St. School.” *Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle*. 5 Feb. 1913: 5.

39 Memorandum to club members, Laura J. Wylie Collection. Box 3 of 7. (VCSC).

40 Eva C. Boice, “Woman Suffrage, Vassar College, and Laura Johnson Wylie,” *Hudson River Valley Review* 20 (spring 2004): 47.

41 Laura J. Wylie Collection. Box 3 of 7. (VCSC).

More recently, the house provided a base for Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc., an environmental organization created by the famed singer-songwriter Pete Seeger. The organization remained there until 2003.⁴² Today, the house, a symbol of Laura Johnson Wylie, is abandoned and in a state of disrepair. There is no sign designating its historic importance.

Within an anti-suffragist work environment and city, Laura Johnson Wylie managed to shine. Despite facing an oppressive administration and campus climate, she and colleagues such as Gertrude Buck and Lucy Salmon were able to generate some discussion about progressive ideals and recruit many students, faculty, and alumnae for her suffragist activities outside of the classroom. Wylie's impact should be remembered not only for securing the vote for women's suffrage in New York State, but also for her major contributions to community life in Poughkeepsie, through the opening of soup kitchens, improvement in housing, and much more. In her obituary, Wylie was remembered as a "truly great teacher, a great woman, and a fine citizen whose life was an example of unselfish service."⁴³



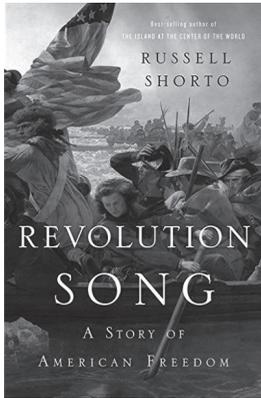
Image of 112 Market Street. Courtesy of Samantha Hesler

Today, it seems as if Laura Johnson Wylie's legacy has been lost to both the city of Poughkeepsie and Vassar College itself. As the centennial of national women's suffrage draws near, Wylie's importance to the state suffrage movement and to local civic engagement should be recognized and celebrated. At a time when the status quo was to limit women, Laura Johnson Wylie was able to implement changes throughout her college and her city.

42 "Poughkeepsie Journal: Clearwater Property was Once Summer Camp for Disadvantaged NYC Kids," *UniversitySettlement.org*, accessed April 24, 2018, https://www.universitysettlement.org/us/news/News/Poughkeepsie_Journal_Beacon_Camp/

43 "Laura Johnson Wylie," *The Poughkeepsie Eagle News*, 4. April, 1932.

Book Reviews



***Revolution Song: A Story of American Freedom*, Russell Shorto (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2018) 512 pp.**

Russell Shorto, best known for *Amsterdam* and *The Island at the Center of the World*, offers his perspective on the American Revolution in his newest work. Shorto's aim is to fill the gap created by "traditional accounts of the Revolution," which he claims have only considered two sides: "the British and breakaway American colonists" (xii). Into this gap, he weaves the stories of six historical characters. Some, such as Lord George Sackville Germain or Abraham Yates, Jr., may be familiar to those with an interest in American Revolutionary history. The Seneca warrior known as Cornplanter, the Guinean slave Venture Smith, or Margaret Moncrieffe Coghlan, the daughter of a British officer, might only resonate with scholars of race, ethnohistory, or gender history. Linking each of these five figures together—the common refrain to Shorto's "song"—is George Washington. How could such a wide cast of historical figures share such a prominent commonality? The short answer is: they don't. As a result, Shorto has crafted a narrative song whose individual parts sound clear enough, yet never seem to find harmony as a whole. Yet, anyone considering this book should count that as a small distraction, for within *Revolution Song* is an impressive examination of race, class, and gender during the Revolutionary era that is well-written and well worth the read.

While it is debatable that "traditional accounts" of the American Revolution approach that history from only one of two perspectives, the focus of several of Shorto's subjects are fresh and engaging. Though the existing scholarship on Germain or Washington is fairly exhaustive, stories that offer the perspective of a Native American or slave or a woman during the Revolution are typically rare. *Red, White and Black* by Gary B. Nash is one such exception, and Shorto's work is equally well-researched and impressive. If one considers *Revolution Song* as six separate biographies, each figure provides a unique and compelling worldview leading up to and during the American Revolution—separate perspectives that stand alone, yet also provide context for each other.

In researching each of his subjects, Shorto should be commended for both the breadth and depth of the sources from which he draws. Relying predominantly upon primary documents, Shorto's research is exhaustive and remarkable given some of his subjects. Of note, Shorto's treatment of Cornplanter, also known as Kayethwahkeh, is powerful and

compelling because of Shorto's ability to fill in the gaps left by the historical record. With Cornplanter (as with each of his subjects), Shorto takes the reader from birth through his early upbringing. He takes time to describe important relationships, events, and influences. This is no small feat, for while the primary material on Cornplanter is understandably sparse, Shorto brings together a wide array of secondary sources into a single narrative that paints the life and impact of one man with remarkable clarity.

Shorto's biography of Venture Smith is equally impressive. He tells the story of this native Guinean who watched his father's murder at the hand of slavers, was removed from his homeland, and subjected to the Middle Passage before being sold into slavery to a New England farmer. Through Smith's eyes, Shorto invites us to see the struggle of one man to hold on to the memory of his lost youth, to resist, and eventually to earn his freedom. What makes this story so compelling is Shorto's use of Smith's autobiography in conjunction with a vast collection of scholarship on both slavery and the slave himself.

In telling the life of Margaret Moncrieffe Coghlan, Shorto paints a melancholy portrait of a young girl relegated to boarding schools while her father, a British army officer, fulfills his duty to the British Empire abroad. While Margaret longs to be united with a father that constantly lets her down, her unfulfilled hope becomes a prominent factor in her relationship with other men as she grows into a woman. Her father's neglect, writes Shorto, shaped the young Margaret into a woman who was both defined by her father, yet led a life in defiance of him (153). As Shorto follows her eventual journey from Dublin to New York, Margaret provides a firsthand account of a city ripped apart by Loyalist sentiment and revolutionary fever. Through the unfortunate death of her stepmother, Margaret finds herself in the unique position of being the daughter of a loyal British officer in the care of a revolutionary militia leader. Thus, Shorto carries the reader on a weaving journey of Margaret's life that takes her closer to the central figure in his book—George Washington—than any of his other subjects.

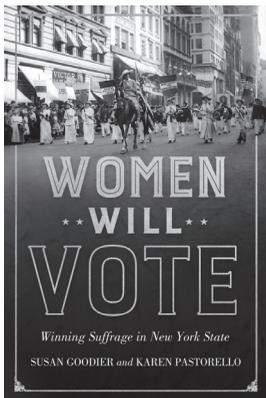
This attempt at a central theme, of a connection between Washington and the book's main characters, is where Shorto falters. In order to link the six to Washington, he relies on vague language—such as “it is possible that...,” or “he may have...”—as a substitute for actual documentation (17, 98). Though Shorto brings the world of Revolutionary America to life with a clear style and a compelling narrative, he also occasionally substitutes historical fact with prose. For example, Shorto supposes that the slave Venture Smith “could have gotten a glimpse of a newly minted celebrity of the war” (Washington) as he passed through New London on his way from Boston (121). Musings such as this serve as a stand-in for the source material typically required of a historian drawing such connections. Shorto's constant suggestion of connection with Washington is something of a distraction.

Of additional concern is the method of citation used in the book. Whether Shorto's choice or his editor's, the result is a confusing labyrinth of back-and-forth page turning

and searching to link a reference made in the text with its source. For example, in order to find the source of a quote on page 492, one must first turn to the back, where every quote is organized by chapter and page. Once the reader finds the quote, a brief citation is given pointing the reader toward a more standard bibliography organized by each of Shorto's subjects. In this case, the reader must turn to the bibliography section on Venture Smith, where one can finally learn that the quote from page 492 was taken from Smith's autobiography. If this sounds like a complicated process, it is—and needlessly so. Footnotes or endnotes by chapter would have better served the academic reader. As is, the book is clearly organized for the casual reader, who may be intimidated by comprehensive footnotes.

All this aside, Shorto has once again proved why he is a standard bearer for research-driven historical narrative that commands the reader's attention. *Revolution Song* is a rewarding read that brings to life the excitement, hope, and loss of those touched by the American Revolution. His style reads like a thriller, altering perspectives from one character to the next at just the right time to leave the reader longing for more. *Revolution Song* is a tune that will resonate with the reader long after the last page is turned.

Michael Mobbs, *United States Military Academy*



Women Will Vote: Winning Suffrage in New York State,
Susan Goodier and Karen Pastorello
(Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017) 316 pp.

Susan Goodier and Karen Pastorello point out in their book, *Women Will Vote: Winning Suffrage in New York State*, that by 1900 New York State not only led the United States politically, economically, and culturally, but also was the most intensely organized state within the national suffrage campaign. It is shocking there was no definitive study on the suffrage movement in New York State prior to the centennial celebration of women winning the vote in New York in 1917, and this book addresses

that issue. The authors argue that New York led the way with the women's rights movement because it started in New York in 1848 at the Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls and that all the national suffrage organizations eventually located their headquarters in New York City, mostly funded by New York donors. Additionally, New York was home to most of the nationally significant suffrage organizers of the national movement—Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, Mary Burnett Talbert, and Carrie Chapman Catt, just to name a few. With such an important and nationally significant story to tell about the New York State movement, why did it take so long to write about it?

Women Will Vote makes clear that the seven-decade march to a suffrage victory in New York would not have happened without the efforts of big leaders like Stanton and Anthony, but success lay in multiple different groups working toward the sole goal of suffrage. *Women Will Vote* does an excellent job of interpreting the history of these various groups and the impact of the local work on the state's overall campaign. The book is divided into eight chapters that each could almost stand as an article on its own, but taken as a whole, it is far greater than the sum of its parts. The first and last chapters summarize the start (1848) and end (1917) of the state's suffrage movement. While this information is not new, both chapters do a good job of covering the multiple events and figures that lead to suffrage victory. Chapters two through six highlight the motives and methods of the different groups and constituencies that worked for suffrage across the state. It is in these chapters that *Women Will Vote* makes the greatest contribution to the body of historical literature on suffrage in New York State. For example, the topic of chapter two is the role that rural women played in the movement. New York was a predominately rural state until the first decades of the twentieth century and, as early as the mid-19th century, suffragists found supporters outside of the large cities. Goodier and Pastorello note, that Upstate leaders dominated the New York State Woman Suffrage Association and they regarded New York City as a 'lost cause' because of its lack of organizational activity. Furthermore, political equality and suffrage clubs were established across the state at the local level, with many more located Upstate than in and around New York City—evidence of this can be found in Appendix 2, New York State Suffrage Organizations and Political Equality Clubs Map and List. Women like Elizabeth Smith Miller (1822–1911) and her daughter, Anne Fitzhugh Miller (1856–1912) founded the Geneva Political Equality Club in 1897, which grew to be one of the largest clubs in the state and hosted conventions for the NYS Woman Suffrage Association in 1897 and 1907.

Immigrant working women and African American women are the topics of the next chapters. While both groups were marginalized, African American women had the extra burden of enduring racism. Goodier and Pastorello assert that African American women in the state had a long tradition of participation in reform organizations including abolition, universal suffrage, temperance, anti-lynching, and civil rights, as well as women's suffrage. They describe how major New York leaders such as Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman were involved in several different reform efforts, as were lesser-known women like Hester Jeffrey from Rochester and Sarah Garnet from Brooklyn. They reiterate how African American women had to deal with racism within the suffrage movement as most suffrage groups in the state remained segregated for the whole of the campaign.

The book continues with the role of men in the movement describing how Frederick Douglass and James Mott were among the first to show their support for woman suffrage

at the 1848 Women's Rights Convention. It would not be until 1909 that a Men's League for Woman Suffrage of the State of New York was established. The authors note that the handsome Max Eastman who was the lead organizer of the Men's League often collaborated with the NYSWSA to publicize the cause of women's suffrage. While most of the activities of the group were centered in New York City, the rural areas in the state formed men's leagues too, such as the one example being in Ogdensburg. In Delaware County and Geneva, men and women joined mixed suffrage clubs. The authors indicated that despite the male presence in the mixed clubs, male suffrage supporters' largest contribution came from their influence with the all-male New York State Legislature.

Chapter six discusses the shift in tactics employed by the suffragists. By 1910, suffragists moved away from meeting in private spaces and into public spaces with street parades, open-air meetings, hikes, theaters, automobile tours, and whatever else would capture the attention of the public and the press. *Women Will Vote* details some of these new tactics and the "New Woman" behind them including Long Island native, Edna Buckman Kearns, along with her daughter Serena, who distributed pamphlets and participated in parades while riding in an old wagon pulled by a horse—a spectacle in 1913. The wagon is currently in the New York State Museum's collection.

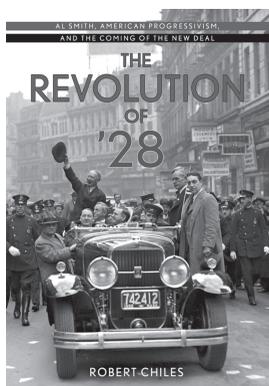
The remainder of the book covers the United States' entry into World War I and the decision that suffragists had to make between supporting the war effort or continuing the suffrage fight—several chose to do both, but some like Crystal Eastman, focused only on suffrage and helped to establish the Woman's Peace Party in New York in 1915. It also briefly covers the defeat of the 1915 suffrage referendum and the large push to the final suffrage referendum and victory in 1917. While the final suffrage campaign was a flurry of activity and organization, however, the book does not adequately explain the legislative lobbying and actions that went on for years prior to the 1915 and 1917 referendums. For example, how Harriot Stanton Blatch and her Women's Political Union's work began in Albany in 1910 by setting up an office there, hiring a lobbyist, and putting direct pressure on individual legislators was not well addressed in the book.

The final full chapter focuses on the 1917 suffrage campaign and does this well. However, in my opinion the highlight of the chapter is the little-known personal information of suffrage worker Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, drawn specifically from her personal correspondence and diaries. Pidgeon was sent by the National American Woman Suffrage Association to organize Upstate New York between 1915 and 1917. The authors trace Pidgeon's important work just prior to the 1917 referendum. In February to June 1917, she worked as a field secretary in Buffalo where she campaigned and learned how to work with the diverse immigrant communities there. In July 1917, Pidgeon was sent to

Auburn to lead Cayuga County's efforts. Having a first-person perspective of a suffrage worker in the final days of the New York campaign is a special touch to this last section of the book and a rare primary source.

The conclusion of the book summarizes the next three years of New Yorkers' involvement in the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920 and notes the first foray of women into New York State politics. Given the enormity of the seven decade-long suffrage movement and its importance within the larger movement, it is surprising that *Women Will Vote* rarely references the national movement. For example, in 1915 there were suffrage referendums in three other important eastern states—Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey—they, like New York, all lost. Despite this and a few minor omissions, Susan Goodier and Karen Pastorello have managed to accomplish what has not been done before, an interesting, comprehensive, well-written history about the long suffrage campaign in New York State.

Jennifer Lemak, New York State Museum



The Revolution of '28: Al Smith, American Progressivism, and the Coming of the New Deal,
Robert Chiles (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 286 pp.

In a widely-read and highly-regarded essay published in the *American Historical Review* in 1959, Arthur S. Link, one of the pre-eminent U.S. political historians of his time, pondered the question, “What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920s?” He determined that the reform impulse that had animated politics in the era of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson died out in the 1920s, in large part due to the “lack of any effective leadership.” No significant leader of reform politics again “emerged before Franklin D. Roosevelt,” Link concluded.

Written only fifteen years after the death of former New York State Assembly majority leader, governor, and 1928 presidential candidate Alfred E. Smith, Link's essay was oblivious to Smith's profound impact on 1920s America and the transformation of progressivism into what would become the New Deal. How oblivious? It failed to even mention Smith's name. Link was not alone in overlooking Al Smith. For the rest of the twentieth century, the sheer magnitude of the New Deal's achievements and the captivating and contradictory personality of its Hyde Park architect tended to blot out memories of Smith, who more than anyone laid the foundation upon which FDR built both his policies and politics.

But Smith is finally getting his due, thanks to the fine scholarship of Robert Chiles. As his splendid account of Al Smith's governorship, failed presidential bid, and transformational political appeal makes clear, Smith was perhaps the most influential American politician of the first half of the twentieth century never to hold national office. Not only did he lay the practical groundwork for the limited welfare state that emerged under the New Deal, he assembled key elements of its electoral coalition.

Three features of this well-written book deserve mention. The first is Chiles' brilliant synopsis of Smith's political rise and his rule as governor of New York (1919–20 and 1923–28). This story has been told by other scholars, but none more judiciously or carefully crafted. Chiles surveys Smith's policies on labor, public health, environmental protection, public control of water power, and budgetary and administrative reform with enough attention to detail to capture his monumental impact in making the Empire State a leader on key issues that would define liberal politics for decades thereafter. Chiles discusses some elements of Smith's administration that others have failed to note, including his pioneering use of public authorities and bond measures to assemble a vast system of state parks and initiate projects such as the Taconic State Parkway (Smith's naming of FDR as chairman of the Taconic State Park Commission helped set him up to be his successor in Albany in 1928). He also shows how Smith groomed figures who would loom large in the New Deal years, such as future Labor Secretary Francis Perkins and the prolific builder Robert Moses.

A second achievement of this book is its detailed account of the 1928 election. It preserves how central Smith's economic liberalism was to a campaign that most historians have interpreted mainly through a "culture war" lens that emphasizes the clash between the urban, Catholic Smith and a still largely small town, Protestant America. As Chiles reminds us, Smith repeatedly had to push back against characterizations made by his opponent, Herbert Hoover, that his economic policies were "State socialism" (90). Smith fended off Hoover's red-baiting by reminding voters that virtually every measure enacted to improve the lives of working people "at some time or another in the past twenty-five years has been referred to as paternalistic and socialistic" (4). In the end, however, Hoover's attacks took a toll and cost Smith such Democratic strongholds of the Solid South as Virginia, North Carolina, and Florida, as Hoover rolled to a landslide victory.

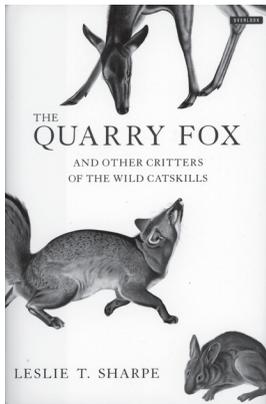
The third and most important contribution of Chiles' book is that it looks beneath the surface of the 1928 results to measure the impact of Smith's candidacy on the pre-New Deal Democratic Party. It has long been noted by historians that Smith performed very well in urban America, despite losing badly to Hoover, but no one has made a more meticulous attempt to measure and analyze Smith's impact on urban voters than Chiles. Looking closely at the industrial cities of New England, he sees a huge shift toward the Democratic Party

by voters who were not only sympathetic to Smith's immigrant background, Catholicism, and opposition to Prohibition, but who were even more intensely attracted to Smith's pro-worker economic policies. For textile workers in cities like Fall River, Massachusetts, there was nothing "roaring" about the 1920s. Their wages were stagnant or declining, and their mills were beginning to close and move to the South in search of cheaper labor. Workers in these cities saw Smith, as they would later see FDR, as their champion, and they flocked to his party, providing the key constituency upon which Roosevelt would later build.

Smith's story was in many ways a tragedy, and Chiles captures its poignancy as well as its political significance. Having lost in 1928, Smith saw his onetime protégé outflank him for the 1932 Democratic presidential nomination and go on to enact on a federal level many of the ideas that he had pioneered in the 1920s. Embittered by seeing this upstart son of the Hudson Valley elite don the progressive mantle that he had crafted during his long rise from his Lower East Side boyhood to the pinnacle of Democratic Party politics, Smith aggressively turned on FDR, leveling against him the same charges of "State socialism" that he had spent his own career fending off.

Much to his credit, Chiles ultimately helps us see how historically interdependent Smith and Roosevelt actually were. Smith blazed the trail Roosevelt would trod; Roosevelt in turn enacted the ideas and built the national political coalition that Smith began but was unable to complete. In these troubled times, we have much to learn from this story, and Robert Chiles is to be commended for telling it so beautifully.

Joseph A. McCartin, *Georgetown University*



***The Quarry Fox and Other Critters of the Wild Catskills*,
Leslie T. Sharpe (New York: Overlook Press, 2017)
249 pp.**

The placement of humans as an existential category distinct from plants, animals, and other natural life is a cornerstone of our western thought. In my own discipline of music, the vocalizations of birds and whales are, according to traditional definitions, merely instinct-based communication for survival, adaptation, and reproduction; music— "humanly organized sound" in John Blacking's classic formulation in *How Musical is Man?* (1973)— overlaps only coincidentally with any noises animals might make.

But in *The Quarry Fox and Other Critters of the Wild Catskills*, Leslie Sharpe reminds us that this stark human-nature divide is countered by the strain of nature writing found, for instance, in Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Nature" (1836), where he proposes "the idea that

divinity suffuses all nature, and that through the experience of being one with nature, an inner ‘transcendence’ is possible” (quoted on 183). *The Quarry Fox* is squarely in this tradition, which Sharpe pays tribute to in chapter dedications to John Burroughs, Rachel Carson, Edward Abbey, Loren Eiseley, John James Audubon, Henry David Thoreau, and Annie Dillard. Occasionally there can be such a sensuality to a writer’s encounters with nature, an enmeshment overwhelming the self, that attempts to render it in prose can seem overwrought. Sharpe, an editor, teacher, and past Vice President of the New York Audubon Society, is more conversational in tone, and more inviting—she is less concerned with tracing the ebb and flow of her own subjectivity than she is in turning her gaze outward, celebrating the very real commonalities that exist between humans and the world around us.

As in the best place-based writing, Sharpe evokes a world that will resonate with Hudson Valley inhabitants, while prompting us to examine anew sights and sounds sometimes taken for granted. Her description of the seasons, and particularly the times in-between them, brings forth some of her most lyric writing, as in her description of “that day in August when you step outside, the morning hot and bright, when the sun’s light, so high overhead through summer, has started to slant, its rays angled, more diffuse. And if the wind is blowing (though it’s a warm wind), underneath it is a coolness, subtle, quick, as slight as breath. That, for me, marks the first day of autumn...” (34)

Most especially, though, Sharpe trains her attention on the animals of the Catskills, both common (robins, blue jays, crows, bluebirds, raccoons, skunks, woodchucks, peepers) and exotic (foxes, bears, bobcats, mountain lions). Each essay flows between personal anecdote, folk wisdom, and naturalist erudition, accompanied by beautifully old-fashioned pen drawings. She pays homage to the names and knowledge of the original inhabitants of the Catskills, the Lenni Lenape, and the aphorisms, fables, and folklore of farmers, loggers, and long-time residents of the area. Far from adopting an anti-science posture, her insights are consistently informed by current research into animal behavior, with a wealth of detail from her reading of, and conversations with, animal behaviorists and ecologists.

In linking her everyday observations to known patterns of behavior, Sharpe is eloquent about an apparent contradiction between developing affective relationships with animals and cut-and-dried explanations of their behavior based on survival and reproduction. But she affirms her own impulse towards perceiving more than mechanistic instinct in her everyday encounters: she finds loyalty, devotion, and courage in robins fighting off the attacks of hawks on their young and mates, joy in the dance of the woodcock, curiosity in the blue jay eyeing her from the feeder. Her project is not so much to characterize these animals with human traits as it is to hint at the universality of such traits. She acknowledges, too, the contradictions of rooting for animals at all levels of the food chain: “It is such a

conundrum, loving these creatures that kill and eat each other in that never-ending cycle of life and death in the Catskills” (140). She seems to suggest that it is both natural and challenging for humans to love these animals in the same way, and for the same reasons, that it is natural and challenging to love each other.

In the title essay, Sharpe brings all of her thematic concerns together, narrating various encounters with foxes, and one in particular she meets near an old bluestone quarry, which becomes her particular companion across several seasons. Each meeting is marked by a sense of wonder, and above all, communication: this fox, predator of mice, frogs, and rabbits, hunted itself by coyotes and humans, is curious, sentient, profoundly alive. Sharpe searches biological explanations, local folklore, even Aesop’s tales of the foxy trickster, in trying to identify the sense of commonality she feels with the animal. Yet she stops short of asserting true communication, acknowledging she can never really be sure whether she might simply be projecting an invented communion between self and fox. How like us are animals, really? However detailed our observations, however much scientific detail or folklore we collect, that question can’t be answered with anything like conclusiveness. But Sharpe never stops asking it. The story of the fox spins out across a year of close contact, ending with an abruptness and tragedy that is surprisingly powerful.

Interspersed with such closely-observed encounters are shorter passages of cultural analysis and historical detail that sketch the changing relationship between humans and nature in the Catskills. Sharpe details the early history of settlement and colonization by Native Americans and Europeans, and brings the narrative forward to her own status as a “flatlander,” one of many past and present emigrants relocated from New York City to more rural environs upstate. She notes, too, some of the ecological and conservation issues that historically and currently affect the Catskills, discussing briefly yet passionately the dwindling populations of insects and bats. She saves her sharpest opprobrium for the widespread deforestation of the Catskills in the mid-1800s—an environmental catastrophe of “staggering, and still appalling” waste—in service of industry, commerce, and agriculture (181–184). The story, she notes, has a happy ending: the loss of Catskill wilderness spurred the creation of the Adirondack and Catskill Forest Preserves and their protection with “forever wild” status in the New York State constitution. The area is, today, largely reforested.

Other than a single mention of “a warming world,” there is no discussion of climate change in *The Quarry Fox*. Global warming is, of course, not a problem specific to the Catskills, but it is the defining environmental challenge of our time, and I found its omission curious in a book so profoundly alive with the detail of nature. The observations Sharpe makes of bird migration, hibernation, species mix, snow melt, and changing seasons are precisely the sorts of once-immutable patterns that are increasingly imperiled in the Hudson Valley, gone haywire in a changing world. Even as she discusses the devastation caused by events like the 2006 “300 year flood” in the Catskills that are projected to become ever

more frequent in a warming climate, she keeps the focus tightly on her personal experience, of terror as flood waters rise, of grief at the damage wrought on the nearby town.

Seeking to evolve our environmental attunement in the context of present dilemmas is a crucial piece of the tradition Sharpe evokes: Emerson and Thoreau sought to promote renewed awareness of nature in an American population increasingly walled-off in urban environments; Rachel Carson drew attention to the degradation caused by a rising tide of chemicals inundating our ecosystems. Part of updating this genre might be to make clear just how vitally relevant a humanistic, holistic perspective on environmental issues remains. How *does* one appreciate the minutiae of natural detail in a time of natural catastrophe? How do we find joy in the yearly rhythms of seasonal change, when those rhythms are increasingly haphazard?

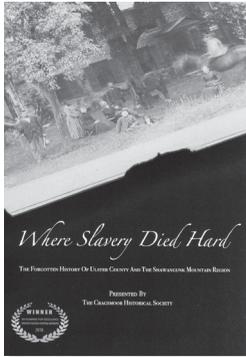
Obliquely, Sharpe proposes an answer or two. As she narrates her experience of the 2006 flood, she relates how she can always anticipate rain's end by the return of bird song—somehow, they know when the storm is lifting, and the return of their song is an early sign the scourge is moving off. Though it may be profoundly changed, nature will persist. Sharpe seems to suggest that even in catastrophe, a deeper, more closely-observed relationship with the life around us may save us, body and soul. Still, I wish she had addressed such concerns more directly and at more length, if only to have her thoughtful voice as part of the dialogue.

Admittedly, the result would have been something of a different sort of book. Skirting hot topic issues allows Sharpe access to insights broader than invasive species, habitat destruction, or even global warming. Life in any epoch is fleeting, and the connections she feels to the natural world suffer from human interference, but from other quarters of the natural world, or simply the entropy of existence, as well. She concludes the “Quarry Fox” essay with the guiding philosophy of the book: “It takes real courage to love the critters of the Catskills” (123). It is a warning, but also an affirmation.

With humanity, elegance, and closely-observed detail, *The Quarry Fox* inspires us to find the courage to love the world around us a little more deeply.

Joshua Groffman, University of Pittsburgh at Bradford

Exhibition & Film Reviews



Cragmoor Historical Society, “Where Slavery Died Hard”
Wendy E. Harris and Arnold Pickman
(The Cragmoor Historical Society, 2018) DVD and online
at www.cragmoorhistoricalsociety.com/slavery-film.

The Cragmoor Historical Society has produced a fine historical resource for those with a serious interest in early Hudson River Valley history. Its new documentary, *Where Slavery Died Hard*, is a meticulously researched and enlightening overview of “the peculiar institution” in a remote area of southern Ulster County. Although remembered as an artists’ colony located on a scenic ridge in the Shawangunk Mountains (south of Ellenville and north of Walker Valley), Cragmoor was the site of a slave-dependent farming community in its eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century incarnations.

The roughly fifty-minute, narrated video is carefully segmented. It begins with a nearly nine-minute historiographical preface that serves as a research tutorial. In this section, various primary sources used to develop the narrative of Cragmoor slaveholding are enumerated—period maps and newspapers, deeds, wills, census records, pamphlets, records of the local Dutch Reformed Church, the early-eighteenth-century van Bergen overmantel painting depicting slaves and owners on a Hudson Valley farm, and the narrative of Ulster County native Sojourner Truth (1797–1883). Also referenced are the archeological findings of SUNY New Paltz Professor Dr. Joseph Diamond regarding a large Kingston, New York, burial ground dating back to the 1750s, along with the call of SUNY New Paltz historian Dr. A. J. Williams-Myers for a “tangible, substantive image of these people and their owners” in the Hudson Valley. (The historical society has placed a full list of resources on its website at <https://www.cragmoorhistoricalsociety.com/slavery-film>.) The viewer is given a succinct economic history of slavery and slaveholding through the Dutch and British colonial eras in New York. One learns that when New York State passed its gradual manumission law in 1799, it was the so-called “Dutch counties” like Ulster that were the most resistant to ending slavery.

Moving more narrowly into a consideration of enslavement within the Town of Shawangunk, the video next narrates the attraction of European settlers to the fertile plains of three creeks in the Cragmoor area—Shawangunk Kill, Wallkill River, and Verkeerder Kill. As early as the 1690s, Dutch and Huguenot wheat and rye farmers from Kingston and

New Paltz began relocating there. During the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century, they turned to slaves to meet labor shortages in New York.

Pioneer families—the Jansens, Van Keurens, and DeWitts—are then examined in some detail for the next twenty minutes. They were successful farmers, political office holders (town supervisors), and/or businessmen (inn operators) over the course of the eighteenth century and into the early nineteenth century. Individual household heads held nine to fifteen slaves in the 1790 census, and the DeWitts retained three slaves as late as 1820—seven years shy of the end of slavery in New York State. The viewer learns that slaves probably occupied grade- or cellar-level kitchens of their owners' farms, that they were enumerated as chattel along with furniture and farm animals, that some owners bequeathed land to former slaves in the mid-nineteenth century, and that some of Cragmoor's freed blacks once attached to its pioneer families remained in the area until the late twentieth century.

The remaining third of the video takes up several themes. One is the complicity of Cragmoor's social and civic institutions, particularly its churches, in the maintenance of the racial hierarchies implicit in American slavery. Another is regional resistance of slaves to their bondage through arson, murder, and running away. Cumulatively, the carefully mined evidence supports the conclusion that slave labor was critical to the colonial and early national grain-growing economies of Cragmoor and Ulster County. The inhumanity of slavery was philosophical, physical, psychological, social, and material.

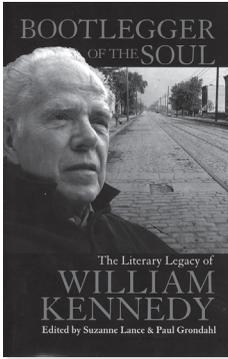
The final minutes of the video offer suggestions for future research and new ways of understanding Hudson Valley slavery. There is reason to believe that archeological work might uncover slave burial sites in Cragmoor, thus augmenting knowledge of existing slave cemeteries in Manhattan and Kingston. The existence of milling operations in Cragmoor along with evidence of a slave miller at Philipsburg Manor suggests that Hudson Valley slaves in upstate areas may have possessed a variety of skills beyond farming—perhaps carpentry and masonry, for instance.

A great deal of important information is packed into every sound bite and frame of this video, but it is rather dull to watch. To help the reader digest the flow of the dense data it delivers, the viewer would be helped by an early roadmap of sorts—a clearly stated outline of the various sections near the start—to supplement the narrator's periodic announcement of new topics. The filming might linger a bit longer on the maps shown to allow the audience to process the geography more fully. Visual summations of genealogies through subtitles superimposed upon other images, or family trees, would assist users interested in the generational aspects of the story of Cragmoor slavery. In several places, the background music, which was meant to be evocative of the period covered, seemed a bit too loud or, because of its tone, distracting from the somber message the video otherwise

methodically presented by narration. The vintage film footage near the end showing black men harvesting grain with a sickle or scythe was also probably meant to be evocative of the past, but in an otherwise painstakingly historical work, the clip, as film, was temporally misplaced and felt strange. Despite these aesthetic quibbles, this documentary is a valuable and accessible tool for conscientious students of local slavery in the North.

Myra Armstead, Bard College

New & Noteworthy Books

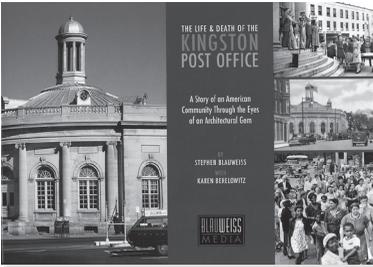


Bootlegger of the Soul: The Literary Legacy of William Kennedy

Edited by Suzanne Lance & Paul Grondahl
(Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2018)

393 pp. \$29.95 (hardcover) www.sunypress.edu

Kennedy, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel *Ironweed*, is unquestionably tied to Albany. From his upbringing in the city to his many works set there to his establishing the New York State Writers Institute at the University at Albany, the capital has always featured front and center in his life. *Bootlegger of the Soul* captures Kennedy's impact as a multitalented author through essays, interviews, and reviews, and serves as a biography, memoir, anthology, and tribute in one.

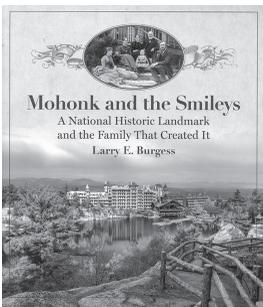


The Life & Death of the Kingston Post Office: A Story of an American Community Through the Eyes of an Architectural Gem

By Stephen Blauweiss
(Kingston, NY: Blauweiss Media, 2018)

180 pp. \$45.00 (hardcover) www.blauweissmedia.com

Opened in 1908, the Kingston Post Office was an impressive, Beaux-Arts structure built with Rosendale cement featuring skylights and a large dome. Perhaps more significantly, the structure served as a symbol of the city's growth and development during the first half of the twentieth century. While untimely and regrettable, its 1970 demolition has been the inspiration for multiple successful preservation and restoration efforts since.



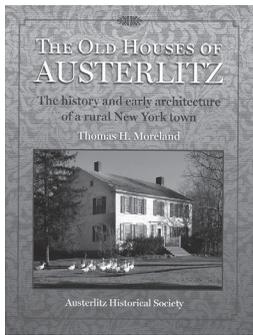
Mohonk and the Smileys: A National Historic Landmark and the Family That Created It

By Larry E. Burgess (Delmar, NY: Black Dome Press, 2019)

240 pp. \$29.95 (softcover) www.blackdomepress.com

The story of the Mohonk Mountain House, which celebrated its sesquicentennial in 2019, is one of conservation, recreation, and dedication. Nestled atop the Shawangunk Ridge in Ulster County, the hotel has been the scene of international conferences,

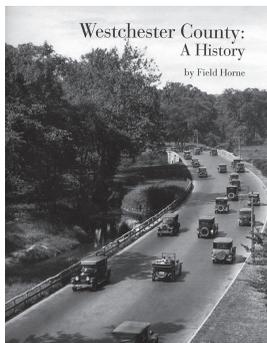
environmental battles, and a steady stream of visitors looking for an escape from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Through historic photos, postcards, current photos, and other archival images, Burgess captures the many iterations of the landscape, as well as the generations of the Smiley family who have overseen it from the start.



The Old Houses of Austerlitz: The History and Early Architecture of a Rural New York Town

By Thomas H. Moreland
(Austerlitz, NY: Austerlitz Historical Society, 2018)
396 pp. \$35.00 (hardcover) www.oldausterlitz.org

In rural Hudson River Valley towns like Columbia County's Austerlitz, history is found in its historic homes and structures, which hold many stories of residents from generations past. Thanks to an extensive search of town records and archives, Moreland provides details about 168 buildings predating 1888 and brings to life their many owners. The book also provides a detailed history of the town from the 1750s to the present, a chronological review of its architectural landscape, and hundreds of color photos—shining a well-deserved spotlight on the character and beauty of this community.



Westchester County: A History

By Field Horne
(Elmsford, NY: Westchester County Historical Society, 2018)
257 pp. \$40.00 (softcover) www.westchesterhistory.com

Stretching from early civilizations through the present day, this well-sourced and very readable account offers an understanding of the people, places, and events that have defined Westchester's identity over the last 400 years. An impressive amount of historic and modern-day images enhance the text and provide the reader with a visual connection on every page. Horne capably separates the history of this county from that of New York City, in which it has so often played a key role, and focuses on how the significant developments and eras in America have shaped the Westchester of today.

Andrew Villani, Marist College

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