

PALISADES  
AND  
SNEDENS LANDING

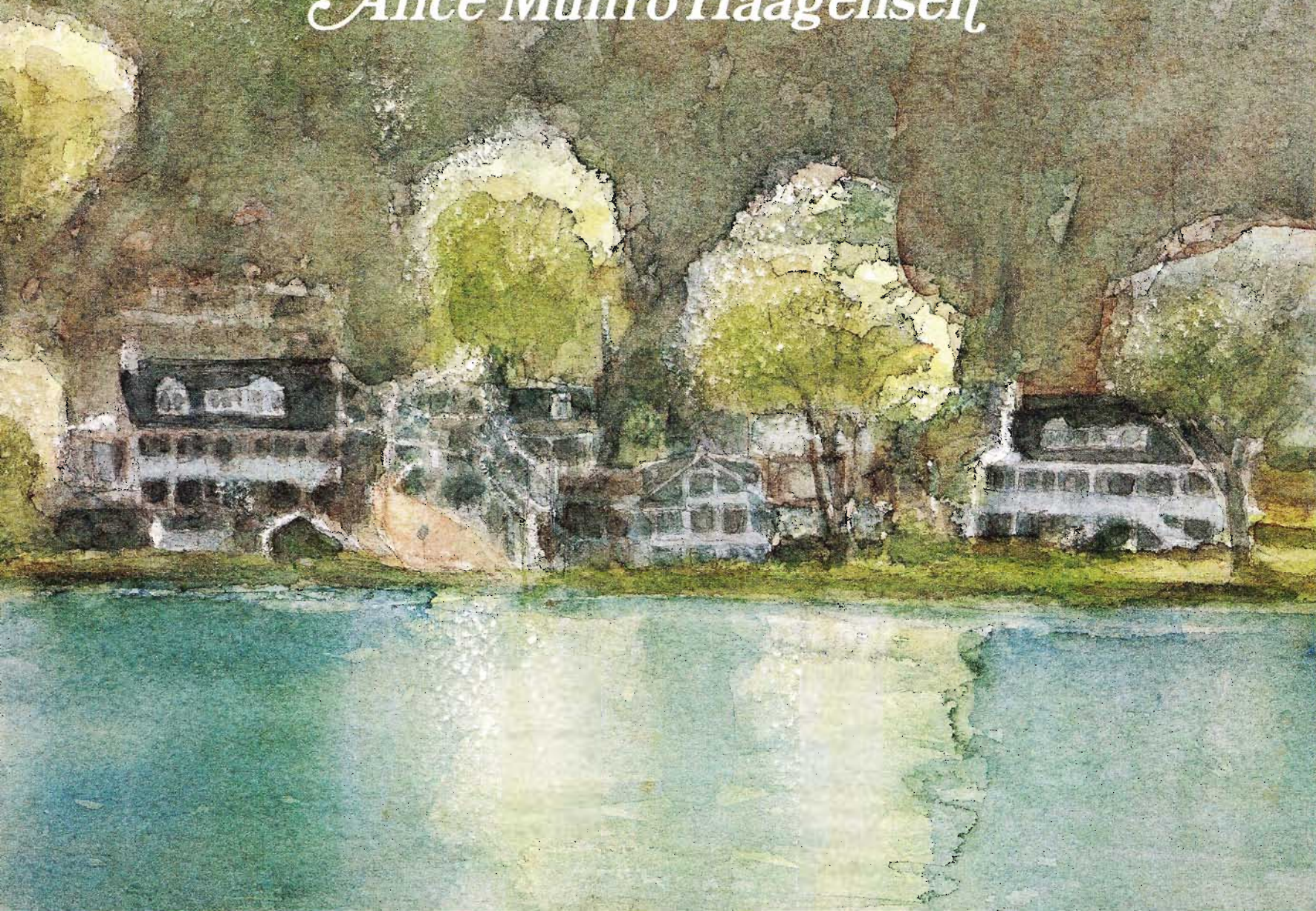






# *Palisades & Snedens Landing*

*Alice Munro Haagensen*





# PALISADES AND SNEDENS LANDING

FROM THE BEGINNING OF HISTORY  
TO THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

BY

Alice Munro Haagensen

JACKET AND FRONTISPIECE  
PAINTING BY W. LEE SAVAGE

**PILGRIMAGE**

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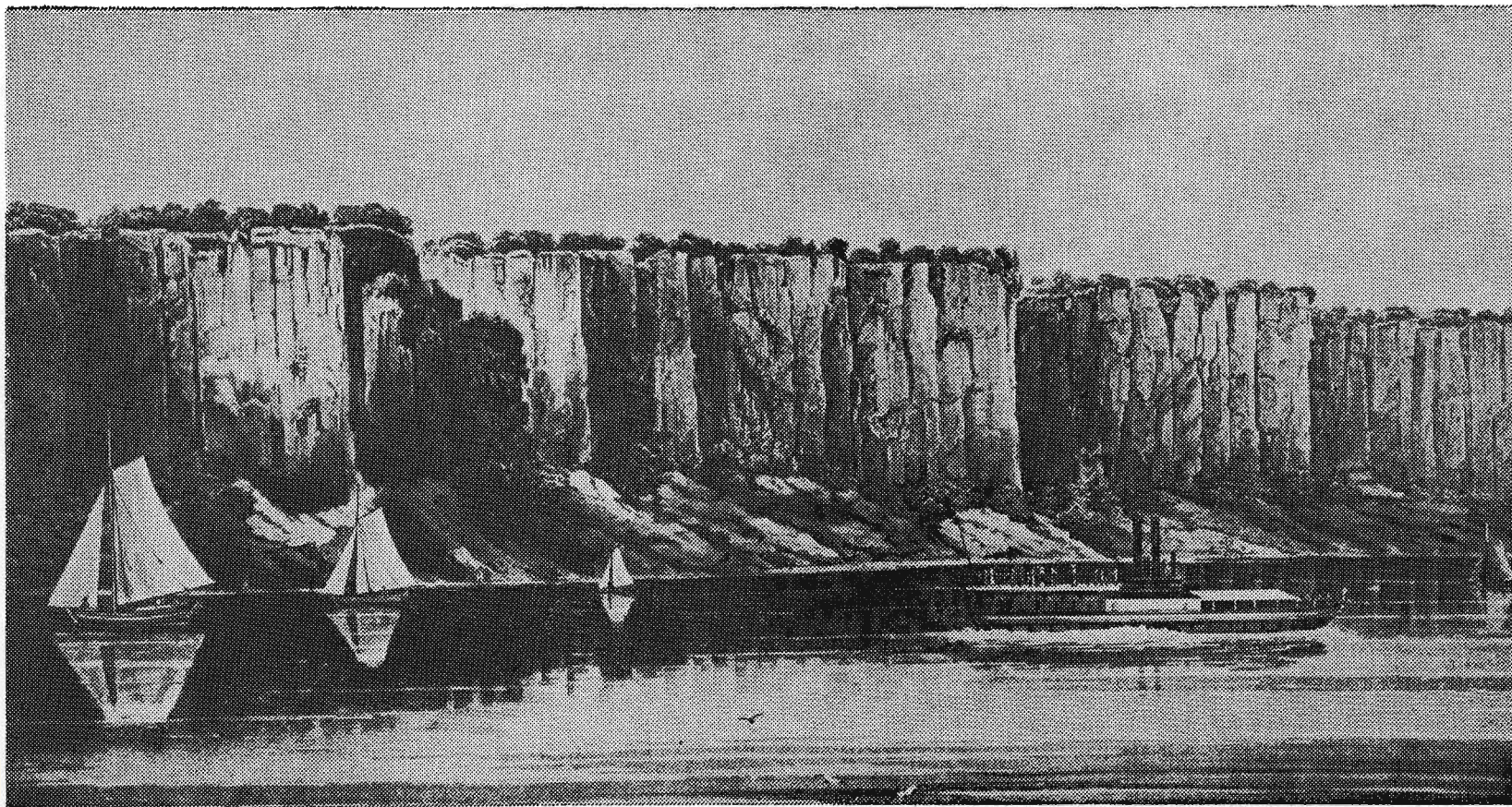
Alice Gerard

with love from

To my helpful husband  
Cushman Davis Haagenen

Alice Munn Haagenen





The Palisades. Lithograph by J. Hill from painting by W. G. Wall, 1820. The first break north of the city in this great wall of rock, where the cliffs fall from five hundred feet to two hundred feet, is the setting for the hamlet of Palisades, and its slope toward the river, which has for centuries been called Snedens Landing.

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## PREFACE



WHEN I HELPED move the Palisades Library from the **Big House** to the Old School in 1944,\* I was amazed to discover the historical material about this small hamlet which poured out of cupboards, came down off walls, and was moved from shelves. There was Nicholas Gesner's Diary, 1829-1850, preserved in four dilapidated boxes; the original Verplanck Map of the Lockhart Patent and its surroundings in 1745, and a beautiful facsimile made by James S. Haring; a fine map of the village in 1822, and various other old maps and plot-plans; a number of original deeds for property here from 1741 on, and exact copies of deeds and title searches for much of the property in the village; a book listing the inscriptions on the tombstones in the old village cemetery in 1901; more than a hundred photographs of people who lived in Palisades in the nineteenth century; glass negatives for the fine pictures in **The Story of the Ferry**, and others, taken about a hundred years ago; post cards of buildings and scenes of that same period, made to sell in Mr. James Post's store; and, perhaps most

---

\*The **Big House** is the house—not so very big—now often called **The Old Library**, across Route 9W from the Antique Shop (**Yonder Hill Dwellers**). The library remained in the Old School for nine years, from 1944 to 1953, before moving to what seems to be its permanent home in the Jordan house.

interesting, a number of manuscript volumes of Winthrop Sargent Gilman's notes, comprising everything that an intelligent, curious, industrious observer could discover about the village a hundred and more years ago. He interviewed old inhabitants, wrote innumerable letters of inquiry, poked around and measured ruins, worked out genealogies, copied water marks from old documents, and photographed people, houses, scenes, and especially noble old trees.\*

This is the stuff of history, but an intimate history, still alive, connected on one side with the past and on the other with our present, and with its roots in this one small hamlet. Over most of the forty-odd years since then, I have been examining the material, and reading and re-reading Mr. Gilman's notes, every time discovering something I had missed before, talking to old people who were children in his time, following up things he said and checking them with authorities which weren't known in his day. (George Budke's voluminous collections of documents relating to Rockland County in general and the Blockhouse in Palisades in particular,

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\*There is a list of manuscript books and other material collected by Mr. Gilman, and the forms in which they are available, in Appendix No. 1.

for example, came out in the 1930's, after Mr. Gilman's death. See Appendix No. 2.)

In a rather intensive study of the older houses in Palisades, I have come to think of the village as a palimpsest. (A parchment which has been written on twice, the original writing having disappeared.) We know of a good many houses which were here during the Colonial period and the Revolution, yet few remain. The old stone houses which survive were mostly built after the Revolution. Then in Gesner's early days (his diary covers 1829 to 1850), there was a whole community living around him, yet most of the houses in the neighborhood now existing were built in the late 1830's to 1890's.

So many interrelationships between the families in the village came to light that I have prepared a number of genealogies to help straighten them out; and now, when we read about a John Sneden, for example, we can turn to the family tree and point to the exact one.

**Exact**, however, is a word one can seldom use in writing history. In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, names were spelt in any way that pleased the writer, and the same Christian names would appear in generation after generation of the same family. Things were just as vague in other fields:

In the eighteenth century the English calendar was changed by eleven days, and the beginning of the year moved from March 25th to January first; land was bounded by a clump of bushes, a blaze on a tree, or two saplings; measurements such as a morgen or a league varied from country to country; and even today the length of a degree of latitude varies according to its distance from the equator. (In Appendix No. 3 I have given a few illustrations of these tantalizing facts.)

Modern history must draw the line somewhere; and I have stopped this history at the turn of the century, when Mr. Gilman wound up his notes. Isabelle Savell has published a fine book about **The Tonetti Years at Snedens Landing**; and a further history of that period will have to await a writer with more perspective than myself. (I have, however, collected a good deal of material on this period, and on my own period from 1941-on, which will be available in the Palisades Library.)

This book is intended to be a sort of source book for the history of Palisades. The fact that I can quote references from books, manuscripts, or individuals for everything I say, and that I have had different parts checked by experts wherever possible, does not mean of course that it is all correct; but it is as close to the truth as I can make it.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MY list of acknowledgements will seem endless, for dozens of people have helped me over the years. In a desultory way I have talked to nearly all the old inhabitants of Palisades, and everything they have told me has been written down, even if I can't bring it all into this account. I have often been advised to use a tape recorder; but I have been doing this for my own pleasure, and I like to see what I put down.

Mr. Gilman's daughter, Anna Gilman Hill, told me so many wonderful stories that finally I persuaded her to write down her recollections of village life at the end of the nineteenth century; and the interesting result is available now in the Palisades Library.

Adeline Denike Van Blarcom also loved telling about old days in the village. Not only did she spend hours talking to me, but every so often she would write me a letter adding more stories or contradicting something someone else had said.

Mildred Post Rippey is a fount of Palisades history, original and articulate; but unfortunately her chief interest is in the present and future, and she spends her time taking such courses as public speaking, city planning, and creative writing. I treasure whatever she tells me.

A few years ago I met a daughter of Helen Park Stockman who had lived in **Seven Oaks** in her childhood. Through the daughter I was able to persuade Mrs. Stockman to write her recollections of Palisades. She also sent me some delightful photographs of Palisades in the old days.

Others who have helped me with information or photographs are Kathleen Martine and her sisters Emma and Marian Stewart, Miss Jennie Fox, Mrs. William (Emily Wahrenberger) Munson and her son, Dr. Albert Munson,

Miss Mamie Sneden, John Sneden, Mrs. Grace Sneden, Mrs. Newton Sneden, Miss Helen Sneden, Alex Schultz, Adele and Harry Sisco, Constance Lieval Price, and Frances Sisco Pierson. Anne Tonetti Gugler has been generous in answering questions and in lending me Barry Faulkner's charming unpublished account of the Tonettis.

Elizabeth Fox Finck, who grew up in Palisades and has been the chairman of the Palisades Historical Committee for the last twenty years or so, has been able to track down all sorts of material for me. So has Laura Ebmeyer, the postmistress, who of course knows everyone; and when I have no results from written enquiries from neighbors, a word from her will secure the information I need. She seems to attract old pictures, diaries, maps, etc. which are looking for a home. Helene Stansbury, as wife of the late Archer Stansbury, has many old family papers and photographs and is in touch with most of the old families in or outside of Palisades. She is also an authority on the Palisades Cemetery. (It was Mrs. Stansbury who was able to tell me where the fabulous collection of Sneden papers was, and which Mann now has the pistol found in the blockhouse so long ago, and many other things.)\*

Mary Perrine has kindly given me information about her father, Van Dearing Perrine, and lent me a copy of his "Coasting Firewood" to photograph. Jack Allison, who lived on the Palisades as a boy, has written me about his recollections. Howard Walden, the author, read my manuscript and helped to tighten up the English.

The beautiful picture of Snedens Landing from the

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\* The William Sloats, in Norwood, N.J. have the Sneden papers; and the Lindley Mann family, also in New Jersey, has the pistol.



river and the copies of old postcards by William Agnew which I have used are only a few samples of the hundreds of photographs of this village made by this prolific photographer. Over more than twenty years, besides making many general photographs of Palisades, he has photographed the crowd at the Memorial Day ceremony at the flagpole every year, and people leaving the Palisades Church on almost every pleasant Sunday — a possible wonderful resource for a twentieth century historian.

I have had various kinds of help in connection with the blockhouse on Woods Road, although the definitive job of excavating has yet to be done: Richard Koke of the New-York Historical Society sent me copies of the findings of the 1925 N. - Y.H.S. Expedition to the blockhouse and showed me the utensils and uniform buttons which had been found. In 1972 Don Troiani of the Company of Military Historians did some excavating, but left to work on another project. Then in 1976 Kevin Durkin, a trained archaeologist, did some intensive work on the ruins with the help of Murray Fornaro, an interested amateur. He found and catalogued about a thousand objects, which turned out to be chiefly animal bones; but he got a job and eventually moved away to start a fundamentalist commune in Colorado\*. In 1979 Marvin Rasnick and Lawrence Smalheiser went over the site with a metal detector, but, surprisingly, found nothing.

In 1959 Mary Malcolm Nafe, who was then in ninth grade, wrote a history of Palisades for a competition, which incidentally she won, and accompanied it with an album of photographs of Palisades houses and views, which are so

good that I have borrowed several for this book.

Helen Norman, who lives in **Niederhurst**, Mr. Gilman's old house, has suggested to me several interesting projects, such as the painting of "Snead's Landing" and the similarity between Andrew Jackson Downing's plans and Mr. Coles' house.

From the beginning Mrs. Sheaf Satterthwaite, Jr., whose mother Mrs. Speer used to live in Palisades, and who lived here herself for a while, has helped me, copying Mrs. Hill's reminiscences, bringing neighbors from New Jersey to talk to me, and calling my attention to various bits of information in books or the news.

Isabelle Savell, in her book on "The Tonetti Years at Snedens," has of course made enormous contributions to Snedens' history, and I have borrowed from it in my account of the period, as well as using certain of her fine photographs.

John Scott, of the Historical Society of Rockland County, has not only read my manuscript and helped to clarify the writing, but embellished it with interesting references and with some of its best photographs.

Robert D. Gerard, who is a busy geologist, took time to write a lucid description of the geological history of the Palisades; and Dr. John Nafe lent me Schuberth's book, which provides the latest theories on the subject. Charlotte Schreiber of Lamont also advised me on the geology.

Although Marion Lowndes' lively account of the "Next Fifty Years" of the Palisades Library, 1916-1966, deals with a later period, her description of Miss Quidor covers the nineteenth century as well as the twentieth.

Norman Baron, with his pupils from the Rockland Project School, interviewed old Charlie Lundstrom about his childhood in Skunk Hollow, and later showed me around the ruins and the spring there, and photographed the monument on the border for me.

Lee Savage has helped me often in the field of art. He

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\* Kevin Durkin is a man of parts. Between his painstaking work on the blockhouse and his move to Colorado, he worked as a technician in the surgical pathology department at Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons. While there he developed such a significant improvement in pathological procedures that the **Annals of Surgery** published an article describing it.

allowed me to use a copy of his beautiful painting of Pali-sades from the north, found material for me about John Quidor and Jasper Cropsey, and made a fine copy of Cropsey's painting of the pool near the waterfall. Best of all, he painted another beautiful picture of Snedens Landing to use on the jacket and as a frontispiece for this book.

I have had a very active correspondence with three local historians. Claire Tholl, the architectural historian, has joined me in such expeditions as the discovery of the Station Rock, on the border between New York and New Jersey, (which we found only because she was able to persuade Tom Demarest, who had seen it ten years before, to locate it again for us), to inspect some of the old houses (her specialty), and to look at the Gesner burying ground. She is a skilled photographer and map-maker, and has plotted out graphically for me some boundaries about which I have had questions. If she happens to have doubts about anything, I have learned to pay attention.

Howard Durie, who is a retired title searcher and a family connection of the Snedens, has told me so much about the Sneden genealogy that I have a special notebook for his letters, and for mine telling him a few facts I have found out from Gesner's diary, old wills, etc.

Another notebook is devoted to my correspondence about the Dobbs and related families with Margaret Travis Lane, a descendant of old Jan Dobbs, and to her interesting articles about the real Dobbs Ferry (in Westchester) in various historical magazines. Although she now lives in Troy, N.Y., she has an encyclopedic knowledge of Westchester history and genealogy.

Since 1982, when I first met Virginia McGuire of the Hastings Historical Society, I have had a delightful time exchanging information with this group of lively historians, including also Karolyn Wrightson, Mary Allison, and Mimi Copp, about such subjects as bone factories, picnic groves, Masefield's stay in Yonkers and explorations on our side,

and the Hastings **Fete Venetian**, which included boat trips to our waterfall.

Another person with whom I have had a fine time exchanging information is Joan Geismar, who wrote her doctoral dissertation for Columbia University on the remarkable settlement of Skunk Hollow, south of the New Jersey border.

Thomas Demarest, a member of an old Rockland County family, spends his days doing carpentry, landscaping, and yard work, but finds time somehow to do serious and fundamental research in local history. He introduced me to the earliest files in the county clerk's office; and he is the authority for some of the most interesting facts in this history.

Wilfred Talman helped me start off my research with a list of historical references and some valuable background information. Other local historians who have helped me are Judge Stanley Bradley, who published a history of Alpine, N.J.; Reginald McMahon, who has written articles about Vriessendael and Jack Earnest, as well as several about old houses in Rockleigh, N.J.; Jack Focht, who has written about John Torrey; Carl Nordstrom, who has written historical works about the Rockland County region from a sociological point of view; Julian Salomon, who read and corrected what I wrote about the Indians; Dr. Jacqueline Holland, who read the part about Skunk Hollow; and Cathleen Heslin of Rockleigh, N.J., who lent me a copy of Dauphine Taylor's genealogy of the "Snedens of the Field," and helped me reprint the Verplanck map for general distribution.

My friend Mrs. Robert Reed, formerly of Dobbs Ferry (Susan Reed East, I call her to differentiate her from Susan Reed West, the folk singer), arranged for me to meet several Westchester historians, especially Wolfert Lockwood and Rebecca Rankin, both now gone, and Sister Mary Agnes Parrell, who has published a history of Dobbs Ferry.

Loring McMillen of the Richmond Restoration on Staten Island has made a survey of many of the old houses in Palisades and Snedens Landing, and, while he has overturned many of our old ideas, he has given us a sounder foundation for our historical reconstructions.

Gordon Jacoby and his associates of Lamont's Tree Ring Laboratory gave countless hours of their own time to help us date the foundations of the **Big House**. There had been suggestions that this was built in the late 1600's, but their painstaking work over months brought only the dates 1735 and 1738 for the years the foundation beams were cut. This is an invaluable tool for historians; the chief drawback is the hours of time it demands of highly skilled scientists. We are very much indebted to Lamont's "dendrochronologists" for their help in answering an important question.

Renald Von Muchow, the photographer at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, who usually makes meticulous photographs of pathological slides and anatomical drawings, has copied for me most of the photographs which have been lent me, with results which sometimes seem miraculous. My husband Cushman Haagensen, who is a hard working surgeon and writer, has patiently acted as intermediary, carrying back and forth negatives, prints, or books, sometimes several times a week. Then he mounts each picture in the way that he developed for his own scientific papers.

This is a small part of the help he has given me, which ranges from the building of shelves to hold all my notebooks, and a fine big table where I can spread out my work, to constant encouragement and friendly but critical reading of the finished product.

My sister Jeannette Munro, herself an historian and frequent contributor to the "Princeton Recollector," has also read successive versions of my history and urged me to persevere, as has my grandson, Simon Gerard.

My other sister, Carol Sheldon, not only has made use-

ful suggestions about my manuscripts, but has brought to my attention interesting and out-of-the-way bits of information, such as the origin of an "Agnew" and Captain Drinkwater's trip to Piermont in 1901 with wood.

Outside of perhaps prejudiced relatives, the person who persuaded me to do more than file my material in the library cupboard was Mary Chamberlin of Heyhoe Woods. She and her husband, Jo Chamberlin, the writer, have been patient in reading the various versions and making suggestions for improvements; and Mary has gone beyond this in typing up clean copies and assuring me of the value of what I am doing, when, as often happens, I begin to doubt it.

Besides talking to individuals I have spent a good deal of time in libraries. Without the rich material of the Palisades Library, of course, this book could not have been written; and Beatrice Agnew, its librarian, is highly skilled in tracking down information. The others I have found most valuable are the New-York Historical Society Library, with Sue Gillies, the former reference librarian; the New York Public Library, especially the former American History Room, the Local History and Genealogy Room, and the Manuscript Room; and the New York Genealogical and Biographical Library. I have also found material in the libraries of Columbia University, the Holland Society, and West Point, as well as local libraries in New City (where Mrs. Yvonne Yare helped me), Nyack, Dobbs Ferry and Tarrytown.

The National Archives and Library of Congress in Washington, the New York State Library in Albany, the Library of the Museum of the American Indian, Bronx, N.Y., the New Jersey Historical Society in Newark, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Clements Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and the Courthouse and County Clerk in New City have all supplied me with information and copies of source material; and of course the Budke Collection of

documents about Rockland County in the MSS Room of the New York Public Library and the volumes which the Rockland County Librarians have reprinted from it are invaluable.

I have put most of the information I have received in loose-leaf notebooks or folders, which will eventually be given to the library.

The Historical Committee of the Palisades Library in its latest form has done much to ensure that this historical material in the library is made available on microfilm, and generally in other forms too. A card index is being prepared which will make access to the material much easier.

Finally, the preparation of this manuscript was made

easier by Annie Gerard's fine lettering on a couple of maps, by Charlotte Carlson's careful copy of Mr. Gilman's plan of the Gesner-Conklin burying ground, by the almost faultless typing of Jenifer Latham (Secretary and 1/2), and by the final painstaking arrangement and reproduction of text and illustrations by her friend, Henry Battestin, who did it out of kindness to her and to a writer whom he wanted to help.

After some vicissitudes, its publication was finally assured when W. Lee Savage offered to help, and found Ioannis (John) Daskalakis of "Pilgrimage" Publishing, who published it in the form I had hoped for, but never expected to achieve.





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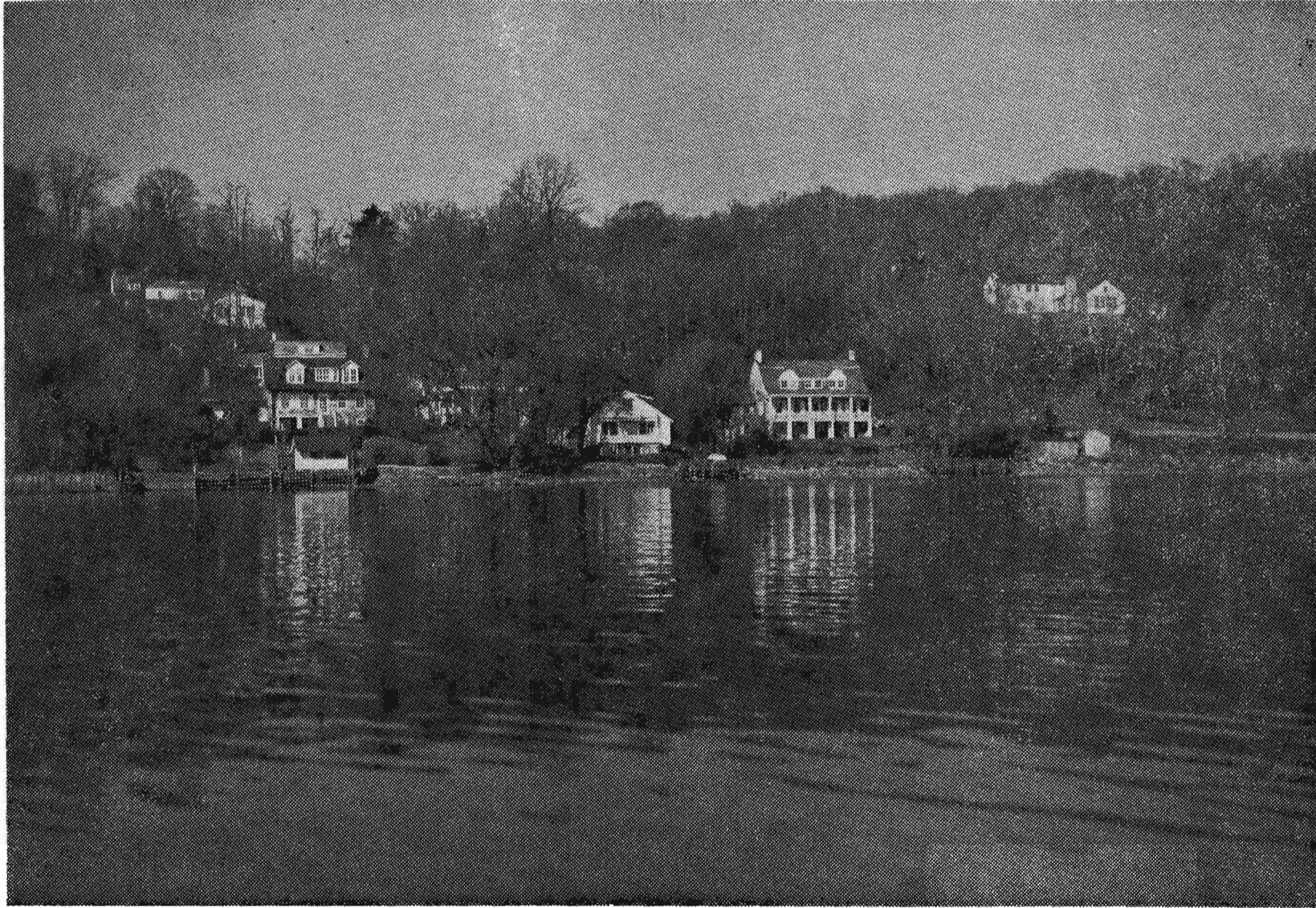
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# I. INTRODUCTION

## **Snedens Landing and Palisades Today, Highlights of Palisades History, Various Names of Village, "Hamlet", Postal District, Geology of the Hudson, Verrazano and Hendrick Hudson, "Reaches", the Tappan Indians.**

### **Snedens Landing and Palisades Today**

THE present Snedens Landing, the vaguely defined\* part of the hamlet of Palisades that faces the Hudson River on its west bank, twelve miles north of the George Washington Bridge, is a secluded and legendary place, the creation of Mary Lawrence Tonetti, who owned many of the houses in the first half of the twentieth century and rented them for pittances to creative friends. It was a rare writer, actor, artist, architect, or musician who had not lived here or visited here during that period, and all were friends and admirers of Mrs. Tonetti, who was herself a sculptor. Since her death in 1945, there are perhaps more doctors and television executives than artists in Snedens; but there are still celebrities here, and the Landing has changed less than one would expect.

In 1951, a world-renowned institution, Columbia Uni-

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\*In the early days **Snedens Landing** was taken to mean the dock on the river where the ferry actually landed and the few houses around it; the **Snedens Landing** in Gesner's **Diary** meant probably the 120 acres near the river and partway up the cliff which was owned largely by the Snedens from 1752 for about a hundred years; in Mrs. Tonetti's time it came to mean chiefly the houses Mrs. Tonetti owned and rented out; nowadays, anyone who lives to the east of Route 9W, except perhaps those on Torrey Cliff, considers himself or herself to be in **Snedens Landing**; and some to the west of 9W have been known to refer to their houses, not quite seriously, as being in "**Upper Snedens Landing**".

versity's Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory, was built on Torrey Cliff, the "mountain" to the south. The hill had been called after John Torrey, the famous botanist and professor at Columbia, who lived there from 1854 to 1865. Now Columbia is represented again by Lamont's ships, which sail the oceans of the world, contributing significantly to the knowledge of the earth's geology.

In the center of Palisades, west of Route 9W, there are still representatives of the old families, some of whose ancestors moved up from the Landing a century ago; and among the newcomers there and on the slope to the west are many who add variety and distinction to the life of the village.

Part of the attraction of Snedens was that Mrs. Tonetti had kept unspoiled the old stone or white frame houses, changing or adding to them only in a way that increased their charm. Since there are many old houses in the rest of Palisades as well, the old part of the village was in 1968 designated a Historic District by the Town of Orangetown.

In 1985 Scenic Hudson sponsored a study of Palisades, with a view to entering the older section, as well as many individual houses, in the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Highlights of Palisades History**

There has always been a general idea that there was a long history behind the interesting present; but few have

realized how important, varied, and well-documented that history is, covering not only Snedens Landing, but all of Palisades.

In the seventeenth century, before there was even one house here, the Governors of New York and New Jersey met at the foot of the hill by the river to try to agree upon the boundary between the provinces; and the house to the north of the Landing built soon afterwards became familiar by name to negotiators in New York, Perth Amboy, and London, as they carried on their labyrinthine disputes over the boundary which was obviously nearby.

As William Merritt's **Cheer Hall**, this same house served as the seat of government for the province of New York for three weeks in 1702.

It was Merritt's nephew across the river, Jan Dobbs, who was the first ferryman of the famous Dobbs Ferry; and the Snedens who moved across from Westchester soon took over the ferry, and gave rise to many legends.

During the Revolution George Washington and many of his officers passed through the settlement which they called Dobbs Ferry\*, or stopped to visit the blockhouse which they had built on the cliff. (One authority, George Budke, wrote: "That this fortification is the most important relic of the Revolutionary War, not only in Rockland County, but anywhere in the vicinity of New York, is beyond question".) From 1780-on there was always at least a captain's company stationed in the blockhouse, which often played an important part in General Washington's strategy. The letter Benedict Arnold wrote from there during the crucial period of his machinations gives a stunning picture of his duplicity. During the last year of the Revolution, all

authorized communications between the patriots and the British passed through the "Dobbs Ferry" blockhouse. At the end of the war the new American nation was first saluted in the person of George Washington by a British warship lying off Snedens.

After the Revolution, ships built in Snedens sailed up and down the coast; and brownstones in New York were built with stones from the quarries south of the landing. In 1832 a thousand Methodists came to camp meeting on the west slope of the Palisades. At the same time nearly everyone in the village was told that he or she was descended from royalty and heir to a stupendous fortune as a descendant of Anneke Jans.

Toward the end of the last century prosperous New Yorkers began to build summer homes in Palisades. Andrew Carnegie came out to look at some property, but was put off by the saucy behavior of little Nannie Gilman. The PreRaphaelites found an outpost here; and New York City authorities had one of their first encounters with environmentalists when they tried to use the Piermont marshes as a landfill site.

The economic ups and downs and social changes of the nineteenth century all were reflected here in microcosm; and at every period there are available the accounts of individuals, illustrious or simple, who bring the events to life.

### Various Names of the Village

The village's history is not well-known partly because of its small size and partly because it has been called by so many different names. First there was just one large house near the river, considered to be in Orange County or in Tappan. In 1714 an old will called the locality Rockland, and the name adhered, though loosely, for more than a century;

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\*When Washington spoke or wrote of Dobbs Ferry, he sometimes — but seldom — referred to the landing in Westchester; and on a map of his camp in Westchester in 1781, only the settlement on the west side of the river was called "Dob's Ferry."

throughout the eighteenth century it was sometimes called Corbett's or Corbet's Point, after a former owner of the first large house by the river; and a notice by the local patriotic committee in 1776 spoke of "Snyden's or Dobbs's Ferry, on the west side of Hudson's River". This reference led many, including the local historian, Winthrop Gilman, to assert that the village was customarily called "Dobbs Ferry on the west side of the Hudson," but no other eighteenth century source has been found which uses that name. It was indeed called Dobbs Ferry during the Revolution, but with no qualification. Lossing, in his charming book **The Hudson**, says that Snedens Landing was once called Paramus, but this also cannot be verified.

In 1855, when the village finally obtained a post office of its own, after having been called Rockland for more than a hundred years, it took the name of Palisades. Ironically enough, the postal authorities had advised against keeping the name of Rockland, because there were so many others in the country; but nothing could be more confusing than the name which was selected, which is constantly mistaken for the nearby New Jersey towns of Palisade (without the s) and Palisades Park.

### "Hamlet"

A "hamlet" to most people is a rather archaic term, meaning, as the Shorter Oxford Dictionary says, "A group of houses or small village in the country. **Esp.** a village without a church." Now, in New York it is used to designate a neighborhood, small or not so small, which has no municipal government of its own. This probably dates back to 1870, when the State Legislature passed general laws for the incorporation of villages, and decreed that the term "village" was to refer only to an incorporated village. No law was passed concerning the use of the term "hamlet,"

but it was obviously picked because the more usual term "village" had been preempted.

In 1972 there was an attempt to organize Palisades as an incorporated village, in order to preserve the character of this very special community; but it lost by a narrow margin to those who worried about the responsibility and expense of self-government. Now in 1985 the subject has come up again, and the proponents are better prepared and more ready to answer questions. If it loses this time, it will probably be the end of it.

Governmentally, therefore, for the time being, Palisades is a hamlet\*, governed by the Town of Orangetown, in the County of Rockland. Its school district is called South Orangetown; its library system is Ramapo-Catskill; its church is part of the Hudson River presbytery; and yet Palisades is a definite entity, with a character of its own.

### The Postal District

Its boundaries are best defined as those of the postal district. That is bounded on three sides by the Hudson River, the New Jersey-New York state line, and the Sparkill creek, where Oak Tree Road crosses it on the way to Tappan. On the north the line runs south of the American Legion Headquarters on the County Road, and south of the Country Club on Route 9W.

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\*New City, the county seat, and Pearl River are also called hamlets. Although this is understood to be the technical governmental term, in daily life it is never used. In this history, therefore, which is not particularly concerned with governmental relationships, and which will be read, one hopes, occasionally in other states, the constant use of the word "hamlet," rather than the more customary generic term of village, would seem obtrusive. (In Ohio an **incorporated** village is a "hamlet." In New Jersey it is a "borough.")



Laura Ebmeyer, the postmistress, reckons that there are about 500 families in the postal district, not counting the 130 or more individuals in the Retirement Home.

### Geology of the Hudson

Since the history of the village has always been influenced by its magnificent situation, overlooking one of the most beautiful rivers of the world, it is interesting to understand something of the geology of the region, and the formation of the Palisades. This is particularly appropriate because much of our modern knowledge of the geology of the earth has been gathered over the past three decades by the ships and technicians of the Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory in Palisades. A geologist at Lamont, R. D. Gerard, provides the following description of the origin of the Palisades.

"About two hundred million years ago, in the Triassic and Jurassic periods, (before North America and Europe split apart\*) thick layers of nonmarine sediments were deposited in a series of basins along what is now eastern North America, from Nova Scotia to the Carolinas. These rocks are known as the Newark Group, and underlie much of Rockland and Bergen Counties. The rocks are brick red or purplish in color, and include sandstones, conglomerates, and shales.

"Many of the early homes in the area were built of this red sandstone, as well as the "brownstones" in

New York City. An outcropping of red sandstone and shale can be seen at the river just south of Snedens Landing\*\*; and this quarry probably supplied material for most of the stone houses in the village. Other exposures are found in the numerous quarries along the river from Sparkill to Hook Mountain. [Green, in his **History of Rockland County**, speaks of thirty-one quarries in operation between Grand View and Upper Nyack in the first half of the nineteenth century.]

"The Late Triassic period saw widespread activity and faulting, called, in an understatement, the Palisades Disturbance. In this area it was manifest by the invasive injection of molten rock, called diabase, or dolerite, between horizontal layers of the sandstone, forming what geologists call an intrusive sill. This sill, hundreds of feet thick, became tilted and exposed with time, and the overlaying softer beds of sandstone were worn away. The great towering cliffs of the Palisades were left, stretching for about twenty-five miles, from Weehawken to Hook Mountain, or Verdrietige Hook (troublesome bend) as the Dutch called it.

"The columnar structure which characterizes the Palisades cliffs owes its origin to vertical cracks which developed as the sill slowly cooled deep within the surrounding strata. Such formations are rare, and are seen in only a few other parts of the world, such as the Giant's Causeway in Ireland, and the cave of Staffa, off the coast of Scotland. In places the rock is marked by transverse cracks which make it resemble steps, so that one name for the Palisades rock, derived from the Swedish word for step (trappa), is trap-rock.

"During the past million years four separate ice sheets spread across northern North America. During each invasion the southern limit of ice reached to a line just south of the New York-New Jersey border. Some geologists believe that at the end of one of these episodes a great mass of ice blocked the lower Hudson Valley, backing up the meltwaters, which poured

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\*At this time there was a single continent, which geologists call Pangaea. In the course of a few million years, this split, first into a southern continent, called Gondwanaland and a northern, Laurasia. Later, at an infinitesimal rate, these were divided east and west into the continents as we know them today; and they are still moving. (A bumper sticker at Lamont reads "Reunite Gondwanaland.")

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\*\*These are the "red rocks" where Albert Munson told the writer he used to swim with Mrs. Tonetti's son Joe.

through the gap where Sparkill Creek now is, and ran down the Hackensack Valley until the ice melted, and the river could again follow its original bed."

Christopher Schuberth, of the American Museum of Natural History, gives another account of the extent of the Palisades and the early course of the Hudson, while admitting that "the evolution of the Hudson . . . to the present time is poorly known, and what is known is a matter of dispute."

He maintains that the Palisades Ridge extends more than forty miles along the Hudson from Haverstraw into west-central Staten Island. Of the course of the river he says that one school considers that the first river veered westward through the Sparkill "wind gap," then across the Watchung Mountains near Paterson, and only veered east again at the Millburn Gap. Then, this theory goes, the river was finally captured, ten or fifteen million years ago, by a smaller stream that had gradually worked its way northward to intersect the older river at Sparkill; and our Hudson found its present bed.

Be that as it may, the lower Hudson River is now a fjord, estuary, or branch of the sea, extending a hundred and fifty miles to Troy, just north of Albany, with a four and a half foot tide in its lower reaches. Ocean liners go up the river as far as Albany.

The village of Palisades is at the first real break in the cliffs north of Weehawken. Here the cliff drops from five hundred to two hundred feet, and falls to the river more gradually, with an irregular plateau halfway down, so that a road can wind down in easy curves. One result is that each house on the slope seems to have a different and more beautiful view of the river.

### Verrazano

For millennia the Indians had the river, which they

called the Muhheakantuck, to themselves\*; but in 1524 Giovanni da Verrazano, an Italian exploring for François-Premier of France, said that he saw from what has been considered to be lower New York Bay "a very big river which was deep within the mouth." He sent a small boat two leagues to the upper bay "a most beautiful lake, three leagues in circuit," but, "all of a sudden a violent contrary wind blew in from the sea and forced us to return to our ship [the **Dauphine**], greatly regretting to leave this region." He went no farther,\*\* but from then on the river appeared on maps of the new land. It was given various names, of which the commonest were Mauritius, after Prince Maurice of Orange, and North River, to distinguish it from the Delaware, which was the South River. (North River is still used occasionally in New York City to refer to the Hudson, now as opposed to the East River.)

### Hudson and the Half Moon

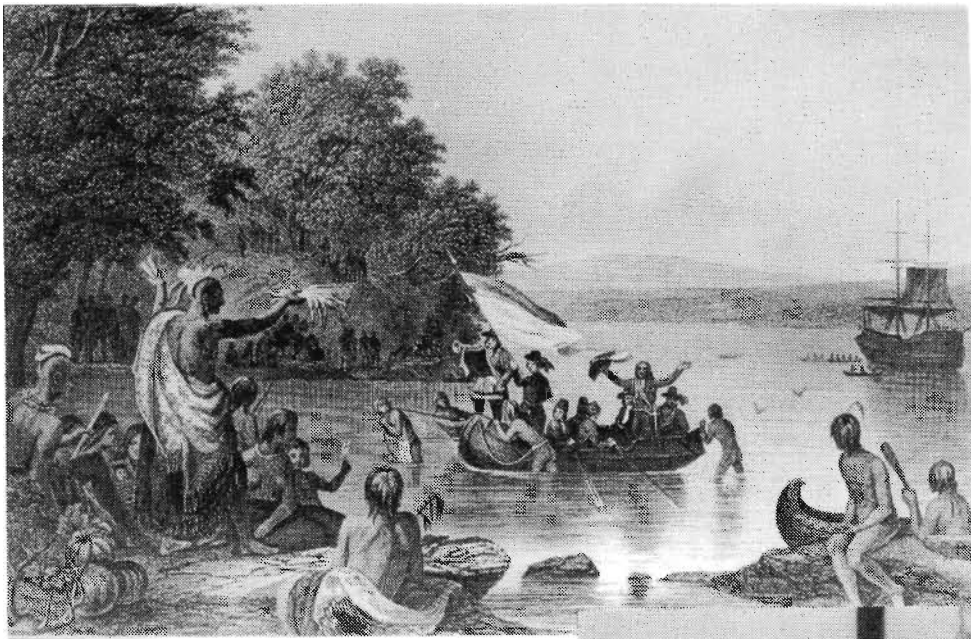
Other Europeans visited it, but none left a record until Henry Hudson's trip in the **Half Moon** in September and October of 1609, undertaken for the Dutch in the hope of discovering a northwest passage to India. His ship's officer, Robert Juet, kept a journal of this trip, and we have some extracts from Hudson's own account — the first entry of the Hudson into formal history.

The boat that Hudson sent out to reconnoiter reported

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\*Washington Irving said that the Indians called it the "Shatemuc"; but Julian Salomon, who is an authority on the subject of Indians in this region, has not been able to document this.

\*\*Verrazano came to a strange end: Morison says "Verrazano was on his way to cut logwood in Brazil when the Caribs killed him and ate him in the West Indies."



A nineteenth century conception of the reception of Hendrick Hudson by Indians, engraved from a painting by Robert W. Wier (Sic.), 1896.



The Ghost of the Half Moon on the River. Mrs. Howard Robbins made an accurate etching of Hudson's ship on a window of her Palisades house, so that when seen from a certain position it would seem to be sailing once more on the river.

that "The Lands . . . were as pleasant with Grasse and Flowers, and goodly Trees, as ever they had seene, and very sweet smells came from them". The sweet smells seem to have struck most explorers, as Robert Boyle details in his fine book "The Hudson".

The **Half Moon** passed the Palisades going up the river on September 14th, a beautiful fall day with a fair wind. Juet was too concerned with the navigation and the "savages" to comment on the spectacular scenery. A few Indians attacked them on their way up the river, but most were "loving" and brought them goods for barter: tobacco, beaver and other skins, oysters, wheat, corn, grapes, currants, "pompions" (pumpkins), beans, and "strokes of beads."

Many of the Indians were gorgeously dressed in "Mantles of Feathers, and some in Skins of divers sorts of good Furs." Juet adds, "They had red Copper Tobacco pipes and other things of Copper they did wear about their necks." Nonetheless, the trader found: "They desire Cloathes and are very civil."

After two weeks the **Half Moon** ran into shoal water just south of the present location of Albany. Deciding that this was not the northwest passage, Hudson turned back and passed the Palisades, again without landing, on October 2nd.\* (Three hundred years later, during the Hudson-Fulton Celebration in 1909, little Mildred Post, later Mrs. Rippey, sat with her family and friends on the front lawn of the Austin Abbott house, now only a cellar-hole in Tallman Park, watching replicas of the **Half Moon** and **Clermont** go past up the river; and later she wrote a poem about it. In Appendix Number 6).

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\*Hudson also had a tragic end: two years after he sailed up the Hudson, a mutiny by a starving and diseased crew, led by Juet, set him adrift to perish in the inhospitable waters of Hudson's Bay.

## Reaches of the Hudson

Sailors divide the river into **Reaches**—straight stretches from one bend to another, which a sailboat, if it has a favorable wind, can sail in one tack, or reach. Johannes DeLaet, who in 1625 wrote a description of the Hudson derived from Hudson's and other travelers' accounts, listed nearly all the reaches by names, and they have not changed very much to this day. He began with the Tappan Reach; but later mariners named the one just south of it, which runs past the Palisades, the Great Chip Rock Reach.

## The Tappan Indians

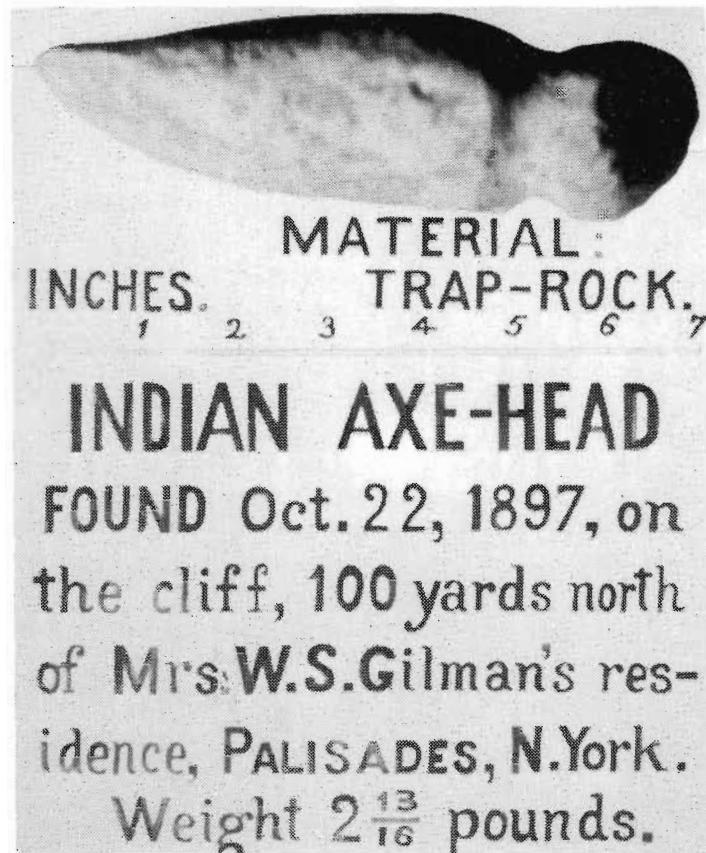
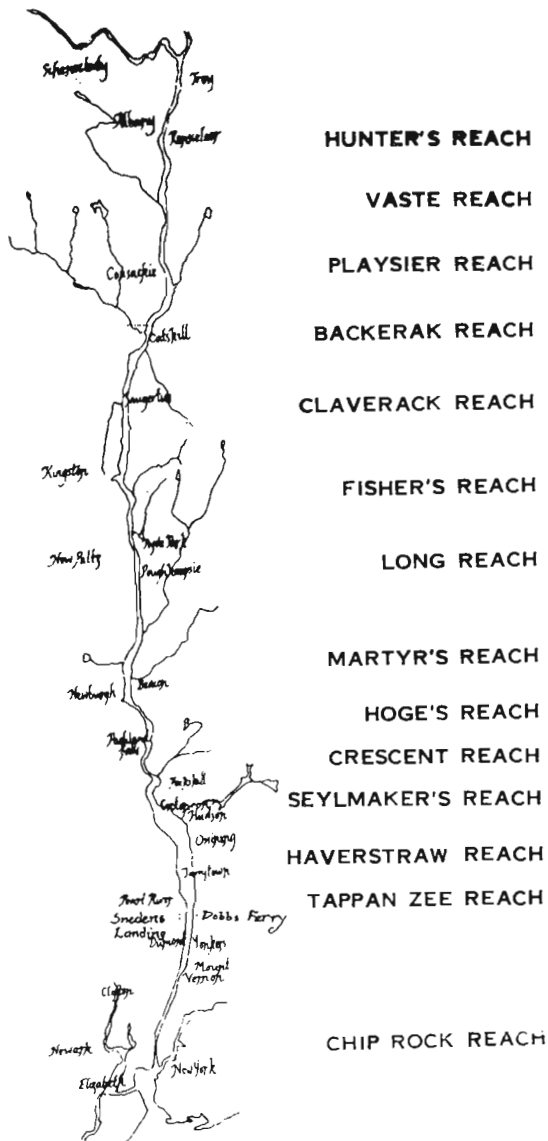
An old map, made by Lucini, twenty-odd years after Hudson's trip, calls the river the "Martins or Hudson", and shows the "Tappaen" Indians to the west of the Palisades. These were a band of the Delaware, or Lenni Lenape, a tribe of the Algonquian Indians. The Algonquians occupied the coast from the Gulf of Saint Lawrence to North Carolina, and also the shores of the Hudson as far as the trading post at Fort Orange (now Albany). North of the Tappans were the Haverstraw bands, who, like all the other Rockland County Indians, were a part of the Munsees. Along the upper Hudson and around Fort Orange were the Mahicans, or Mohicans, a separate but related tribe.

The Tappan Indians made their living chiefly by agriculture and fishing, although in winter they did a certain amount of hunting and trapping. Each band was self-sufficient until the colonists taught them to want the products of civilization, including guns and liquor, and to obtain them by trapping, especially beavers, which were needed in Europe for men's top hats.

North and west of the Delaware were the more warlike



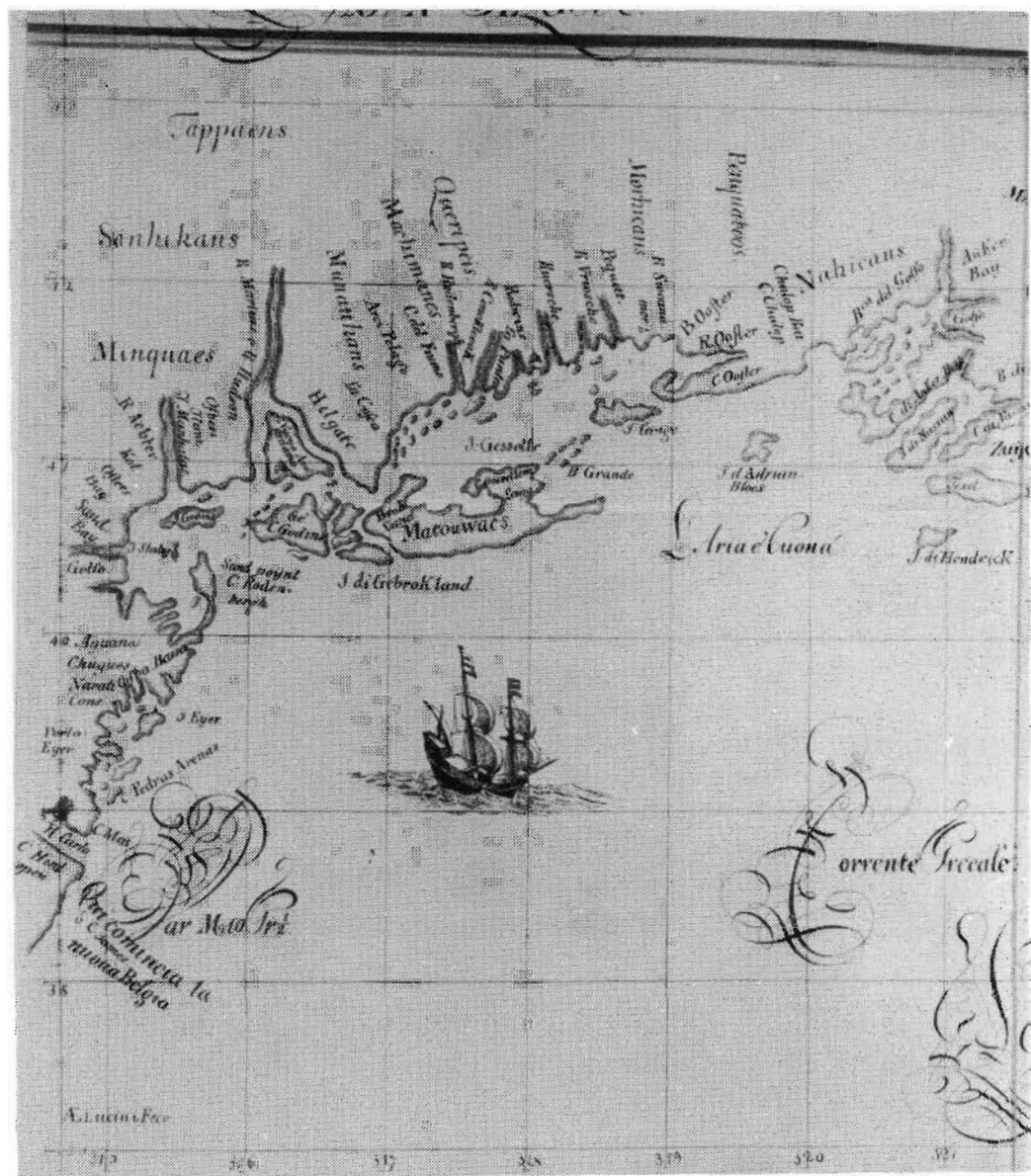
## The Fourteen Reaches of the Hudson



This axe-head was once one of the treasures of the Palisades Library, but now it cannot be found.

Drawn by Tom Allen for the Hudson River Sloop. The names Dobbs Ferry and Snedens Landing are added by Annie Gerard. Cornelia Bedell writes on page 297: "The 'rack' or sailing course, opposite Nyack, which is now best known as the Tappan Zee, was sometimes called 'The Sleeper's Haven' because crews of becalmed sloops could sleep away the hours in the shadow of 'Verdrietige Hoek' or 'Tedious Point'."

Part of Lucini's Map, about 1631, shows Tappaen Indians to west of Hudson. Notice near Blox Island it says "L'Aria e buono" (The air is good). And near Cape Mai, at the R. Carlo (Delaware or South River) it says "Qui comincia la nuova Belgia" (Here begins New Netherland).



Six Nations, or Iroquois, who called themselves allegorically the Six Fires of the Long House.

It was the Tappans who sold the land to sixteen Dutch settlers in 1681, receiving in exchange a great store of sewant (wampum), blankets, tools, guns, knives, clothes, rum and beer. The Indians stayed on, amicably, for a while, probably in the unsettled land to the west of the Hackensack River. In 1690 their Sachem sent twelve braves to help in the French and Indian Wars, and said he had in all sixty young men available. The Kakiat Patent to the west of the Hackensack River was settled, however, in the early eighteenth century, and the Indians moved out. As Daniel Denton, a Long Islander writing of the Indians there in 1670, piously described the process: "where the English come to settle, a Divine Hand makes way for them, by removing or cutting off the Indians, either by Wars with one another, or by some raging mortal disease"

In the matter of the Indians in and around Tappan, Thomas Demarest, in **Bergen County History**, makes a convincing case for the intermarriage of many of them with whites and blacks, and their retreat to the Ramapo Moun-

tains. He tells of Johannes DeVries Jr.\*, who, to validate his vote in a contested election, had to prove his ownership of a piece of land near the Pascack Brook. His deed was dated 1735, and he deposed that there were "50 or 60 apple trees and peach trees on it planted by him and Indians." Demarest goes on: "Did they associate? In 1760 a Muster Roll was taken of men raised in the County of Orange for Captain Howell's Company of Militia. One of the men on the Muster Roll is John Defries, born at Tappan and twenty-five years old. His description: 'Indian'." Demarest later points out that among the families still in the Ramapos are the DeFreese.

The Indians in Rockland County have left few traces, according to Julian Salomon. Among them are many Indian place names, shell heaps near the river, rock shelters in the mountains and along streams, and "Spook Rock", a shrine or "sacred abode of the spirit." Hidden in the earth are thousands of arrowheads and other artifacts which may be found wherever the ground is suitable for planting.

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\*Johannes DeVries Senior, a free Negro, was the son of a Dutch army captain and a "woman of color" named Swartinne (Black Annie). He was one of the Tappan patentees.



## II. COLONIAL TIMES

### **Vriessendael, Valott, Tappan, Orangetown Resolutions, Tappan Church, Orange and Rockland Counties, The Lockhart Patent, William Merritt and his 'Chearhall', Lord Cornbury, Captain John Corbett, Ludlows, Breaking up of Patent, The Manns, Houses on the Western Slope and Rockland Road, Early Commuters.**

**I**N the seventeenth century, until 1664 under the Dutch West India Company, and afterwards under the English governors of New York and New Jersey, the land around New York and up the Hudson was handed out to large proprietors, who usually sold and resold the patent until eventually the land ended up in the hands of permanent settlers.

#### **Vriessendael**

The first settlement hereabouts was "Vriessendael", which David Pieterzoun DeVries established in 1640 in "a beautiful and pleasant place", a meadow on the shore of the Hudson under a mountain. For years this site was believed to be in the area of Tappan, including Piermont and the marshes between Piermont and Snedens Landing. A number of historians have questioned this, however. In 1969 Reginald McMahon argued convincingly that it must have been at Edgewater, where Revolutionary War maps show that there was once an extensive marsh and a couple of rivers. He quotes Thomas Demarest as proving that the Dutch *mijl* or league, as it was translated, was equal to four or four and a half English miles. If one reads the transla-

tion of DeVries' account with this in mind, it seems quite clear that his main plantation was near Edgewater, although he also owned the Tappan marshes.

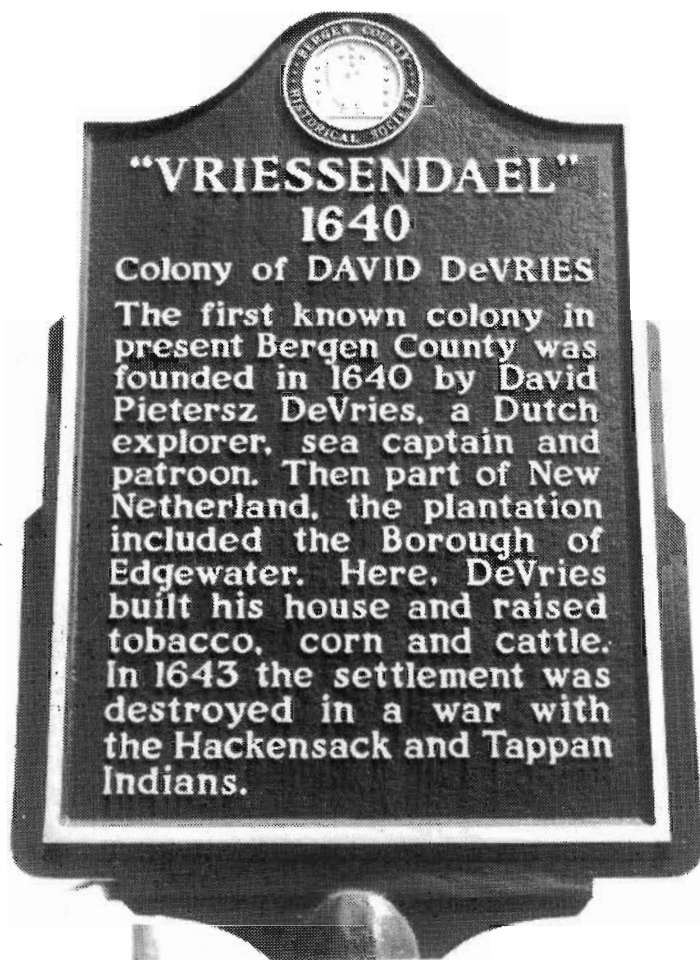
"On February 10th, 1640," DeVries wrote, "I began to make a plantation a league and a half or two leagues above the fort [that is, about eight miles above the tip of Manhattan] as there was there a fine location and full thirty-one morgens\* of maize land where there were no trees to remove. . . . I went there to live, half on account of the pleasure of it, as it was all situated along the river . . .

"The 15th of April I went with my sloop to Fort Orange (Albany) where I wanted to examine the land which is on the river. We arrived at Tappan in the evening, where a large flat of about two or three hundred morgens of clay soil lies under the mountains, three or four feet above the water. A creek which comes from the highland runs through it, on which fine water mills could be erected. I bought this flat from the Indians as it was only three leagues above my plantation and five leagues from the fort."

DeVries made friends with the Indians, and his plantation flourished until Governor Kieft's massacre of Indians

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\*See Appendix No. 3 for a discussion of "Morgens."



The colony founded by DeVries was often thought to have been on the site of Piermont and Sparkill; but Reginald McMahon, who composed this marker, maintains, convincingly, that it was near the site of Edgewater, although DeVries did own some land in "Tappan".

encamped near Jersey City precipitated a war in 1643. Before friendly Indians could intervene, the farm buildings and plantation of Vriessendael were laid waste. Discouraged, DeVries returned to Holland, and no trace remains of his pleasant settlement.

### Valott

A quarter of a century later, in 1669, Claude Valott and three associates were granted a large tract of land on the west side of the Hudson, called Tappan, running four miles along the river and three miles back, for a payment of twenty-four shillings a year, with the proviso that the grantees must settle the same within seven years. Apparently they couldn't, for the document was marked in the margin, "This patent is voide and trown up."

### Tappan

Finally, in 1681, a group of sixteen Dutch farmers, some of them free blacks, obtained from the Tappan Indians "a Cartaine tractt of Landt named ould tappan" in "ye province of East New Jarsey knowne by ye name of tappan" This was sold first by the Indians to Lady Elizabeth Carteret, the wife of the governor of New Jersey (and an ancestor of the "Cliffside" Lawrences of Palisades), and transferred by her to the farmers.

Since this tract was in a disputed boundary area between New York and New Jersey, they obtained from Governor Dongan of New York in 1686 another patent for the same land, a tract about eight miles long and two to five miles wide in the county of Orange, New York, the "towne of Orange," for the yearly payment of sixteen bushels



of good winter wheat. They settled the tract immediately and built a prosperous community which they called Tappan or Orangetown. (Sergeant Joseph Plumb Martin said in 1780 it was pronounced Tap-pawn.)

Green, in his **History of Rockland County**, published in 1886, has an interesting account of the glorious visions in the minds of the settlers.

“Orangetown was one of the very few patents, within the limits of our present County, which was bought with the idea of a permanent settlement, and most, if not all of the purchasers, moved onto their new possessions and began the founding of homes. Never, perhaps, did enterprise start with more enthusiasm and terminate with less result. It was the plan of those, who obtained that grant, to build a city which should eclipse all rivals in the Colony save its neighbor, New York. Nor, if we take the same view as did those settlers, will this project seem absurd. The wonderful agricultural resources of the Hudson Valley and the rapidity with which they were to be developed, were not foreseen at that time; what was realized was, the enormous profit to be obtained from trade with the Indians in furs, and surely no better location could be chosen for that purpose than Tappan.

“From it to the north, west and south, stretched a country still filled with game. It was convenient to the local Indians, and what would be more natural than that its fame as a trading post should spread to the more remote tribes in the western mountains, and draw to it their dusky hunters laden with the spoils of the chase. As an outlet, it had the slote or creek, now known as Sparkill, which, after many a sinuous turn through the scene of DeVries’ failure, at length emptied into the broad Hudson, at the mouth of which lay New York; and the flat-bottomed, broad bowed vessels of that day could navigate that creek well into the Orangetown grant.

“Following out their idea, the settlers had a part of their patent mapped out and divided into small lots. Each holder of property in the patent was expected to

buy and improve one or more of these, and the project started with great promise. Further than a start it never advanced, and to this day there is not, on all the original Orangetown grant, a place of sufficient size to amount to more than a country hamlet.”

### **Orangetown Resolutions**

The fact, however, that the land was settled directly by a group of independent farmers (many of whose descendants are still in Rockland County), and did not pass through the hands of a rich proprietor or patroon, seems to have given a special character to the community. Certainly, even before the Revolution, on July 4th, 1774, the freeholders and inhabitants took the initiative in passing the Orangetown Resolutions, which protested the British Government’s taxes and suggested the non-importation agreement, adopted three and a half months later by the Continental Congress. During the Revolution Sir Henry Clinton recognized the character of these farmers, when he declared that he could “neither buy nor conquer these Dutchmen.”

It must be admitted that many of the Dutchmen were equally obstinate in their loyalty to the British, so that there was actually a state of civil war in the valley during the Revolution.

### **Tappan Church**

Another field in which the settlers showed their stubbornness and their independence was in religion. The Tappan Dutch Reformed Church, organized in 1694, was the first church in Rockland County, and the only one for over fifty years. There are records of baptisms and marriages from the beginning, even before 1716 when the first church

was built, the one in which André's trial was to be held. The church maintained its connection with Amsterdam, in Holland, until 1749, when the majority of members voted to look to New York rather than to Amsterdam for direction. The New York oriented members called themselves the **Coetus**. The others, the **Conferentie**, split off and tried to organize a separate purely Dutch church; but the times were against them, and they faded out.

So strong was the Dutch influence in the whole fertile Hackensack Valley that Zabriskies, Campbells, and Demarests who settled there later all considered themselves Jersey Dutchmen. The Dutch language, in Tappan as in other towns, was spoken along with English until well into the nineteenth century.

*The enlarged representation herewith  
is given to show the details of the wording*



clearly. The date appears to be as follows,  
viz:      Month      Day  
            2              25      1783.

The legend translated is, "Samuel Verbrugg,  
and the Fathers pray that (the church) may in-  
crease and prosper."

The Seal of the First Tappan Church — Drawn by Mr. Gilman.

## Orange and Rockland Counties

Orange County, including what is now called Rockland County, was organized in 1683, and Tappan, or Orangetown as it was also called, was the first county seat. Soon, as the northern part of the county beyond the Ramapo Mountains became more thickly settled, it became necessary to have a duplicate courthouse and "gaol" in Goshen. This was fortunate during the Revolution, because it happened that the courthouse in Orangetown had burned in 1773, so the county government was transferred to Goshen for the duration of the war. In 1790 the supervisors started meeting in New City, which was more central.

By 1798 the northern settlers were much more numerous than the southern, and it was decided to divide the area. The part south of the mountains was called Rockland County, while the remainder retained the name of Orange.

## Lockhart Patent

In the meantime, to return to the area near the river, the southern half of what had been Valott's patent, two miles along the river and three miles deep, was bought from him by Dr. George Lockhart, a New York physician and land speculator of Scottish descent.\* On February 7, 1685, New Jersey confirmed the purchase with the proviso that he "lay thirty tons of stone at Amboy in order to build a prison house", and pay six pounds, five shillings quitrent every year. Less than two weeks later he sold half the extensive marsh land to "Frederick flypson" (Frederick

\*See Appendix No. 7 for details of the Lockhart Patent. This obviously conflicted with the Tappan Patent, but apparently the differences were resolved peaceably.



Phillipse) for five shillings. There must have been some other consideration, for Lockhart seems to have been a shrewd businessman. A couple of years later, on June 27, 1687, he obtained a patent from Governor Dongan of New York for more or less the same property, which had now been surveyed by Leonard Beckwith.

This tract of land, 3,410 acres, covered with thick forest, and chiefly accessible by river, was kept in one piece until the middle of the eighteenth century. Its successive owners were prominent New York citizens of British extraction, all of whom came and went by river.

### **William Merritt and His Cheerhall**

There is no record of Lockhart ever having lived on his land. On October 20th, 1687, less than two months after his patent was finally confirmed by New York, "George Lockhart of the City of New York", mortgaged or sold the whole tract to William Merritt for 353 pounds, 17 shillings. It was probably Merritt who built the house north of the landing, which he called "**Cheerhall**".

Until recently this was assumed to be the stone house, sometimes called the **William Sneden house**, now existing in roughly the same position. There have always been doubts however; and finally, in 1983, Loring McMillen, the expert on historic buildings, declared that the stone house was not built until about 1820, and that none of the houses he examined around the landing could be said to be pre-Revolutionary.

The assumption must be that the considerable number of pre-Revolutionary buildings at the landing were either burned or torn down, and that those existing now were built in the active and prosperous period after the Revolution.

The original "**Cheer Hall**", however, must have been a

substantial house. William Merritt, a former mariner, was mayor of New York City in 1695-1697\*, and was probably in the process of building his country house at that time. His widowed sister, Sara Crab, with three young children, and Edward Meek, her son by a former husband, were listed in the 1702 census among the few inhabitants of Orange County. Merritt's son John was not listed in that census, but according to other records he was appointed Judge of the Court of Sessions and Pleas for Orange County in 1702, along with his father. (In Appendix No. 4 the complex network of their relationships on both sides of the river is described.)

### **Lord Cornbury**

Lord Cornbury, the Governor of New York, stayed in **Cheer Hall**\*\* in September 1702 to avoid an epidemic of yellow fever in New York City. He had been in Albany in July and August of 1702 when he got news of the "terrible sickness in New York City, which had killed upward of 500 persons". He came down the river to what was probably the nearest place to New York where he could feel safe, and stayed off and on for three weeks. On September 8th the members of his Council joined him there for a meeting. The Council was given the news that England was at war with Spain and France, and voted on various orders, warrants, petitions and licenses.

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\*While Merritt was mayor, he was responsible for ordinances arranging to light the streets of New York by means of candles in every window facing the street, and a lantern on a pole at every seventh house.

\*\*In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries spelling was a matter of personal preference, and the same name can be spelled differently in the course of a few lines.

On September 12th and 17th he met the Council in Kingsbridge, across the river and nearer New York City; but on September 24th, 27th, and 29th he was again writing from Orange County, presumably in Merritt's house.



**Lord Cornbury, Governor of the Province of New York. Spent about three weeks in William Merritt's house in 1702. He had this portrait painted to show his resemblance to his cousin, Queen Anne. His term of office was ended by his being thrown in jail for debt.**

Lord Cornbury could not have been a welcome guest. William Smith in his **History of New York** described him as dishonest, a bigot, and a transvestite, universally detested. His explanation for putting on women's clothes was that he wanted to show how much he looked like his cousin Queen Anne; and he had a portrait painted to prove it. At one dinner party he made a speech about his wife's ears, and invited all the guests to feel them for themselves. He had come to this country to escape crippling debts in England; and at the end of his governorship he was thrown in jail in New York and released only when he became Earl of Clarendon on the death of his father.\*

### **Captain John Corbett**

In 1705 "William Merritt Esqr of Cheerhall in Orange County, Marjory his wife, Jannet, the widow and relict of George Lockhart Late of the City of New York Chyrurgeon Deced, and John Merritt gent, and Jannet his wife"\*\*\* all jointly sold their patent to "Captain John Corbett of the City of New York Merchant," after having mortgaged it to him in 1703. The deed said: "William Merritt hath made considerable improvements". He must have. By now the price was 1800 pounds. The deed included, besides the "3,410 acres, more or lesse", excepting half the salt meadow, "three negroe men, slaves named Stephen, Dirck, and Toby, three yোক of oxen, Eleven cows, seven yearlings, four two

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\*A genealogist who is researching the Merritt family and who knows Lord Cornbury's reputation, was surprised to see that the name Cornbury appeared in conjunction with the Merritts some time in the eighteenth century, and was repeated at least ten times.

\*\*\*William Merritt's son John was married to Lockhart's daughter.





**The Big House or Old Library after the changes in the nineteenth century.**



**Probable early appearance of the "Big House". Drawn by Claire Tholl, the architectural historian.**

year olds, two three year olds, seventeen sheep, Eleven lambs, five horses, and one sett of Smiths Tooles".\*

Captain Corbett had been master of the ship **Beaver**, sailing to and from Europe, and later an alderman in New York City. His first wife had died, and now he had remarried and was moving to the country. He lived in the house only a dozen years, but he and his wife, who survived him for some time, left a strong imprint on the vicinity, for it was called Corbett's Point for years afterwards.

There is a tradition in the village that Corbett lived in the **Big House** at the top of the hill and shot deer from his front porch. Tree-ring analysis of the foundation beams, however, shows that the present **Big House** was built after 1735, certainly by Corbett's son-in-law, Henry Ludlow, so if there was any house on the site before 1717, when Corbett died, it has been almost completely rebuilt. There are indeed signs of an extensive fire within the walls, which may be an indication of an earlier origin.

On Captain Corbett's death in 1717, the patent, which he referred to in his will as "a plantation called Rockland in Orange County", passed to his wife and then to his daughter Mary, who was probably about thirteen years old when he died. His wife continued to live in the house by the river for some years, entertaining such guests as James Alexander and his fellow-surveyors. Mary grew up to marry Henry Ludlow, of a well-known New York family, in 1725, and had thirteen children. The young couple probably lived in New York for the first eight years or so of their marriage; but they were in Orange County in 1733, when they were received into the Dutch Reformed Church in Tappan. Six of their children were baptized in that church between 1734 and 1744.

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\*In 1706, when he was at least in his mid-sixties, and just two years before his death, William Merritt returned to the sea and was commissioned pilot of H.H. Ship **Lowestaffe**.

Although the **Big House** was altered to suit Victorian taste in the nineteenth century, Mr. McMillen has said that its noble proportions, rare paneling, and fine detail must have made it one of the most distinguished houses of its time and place.

### Breaking up of Patent

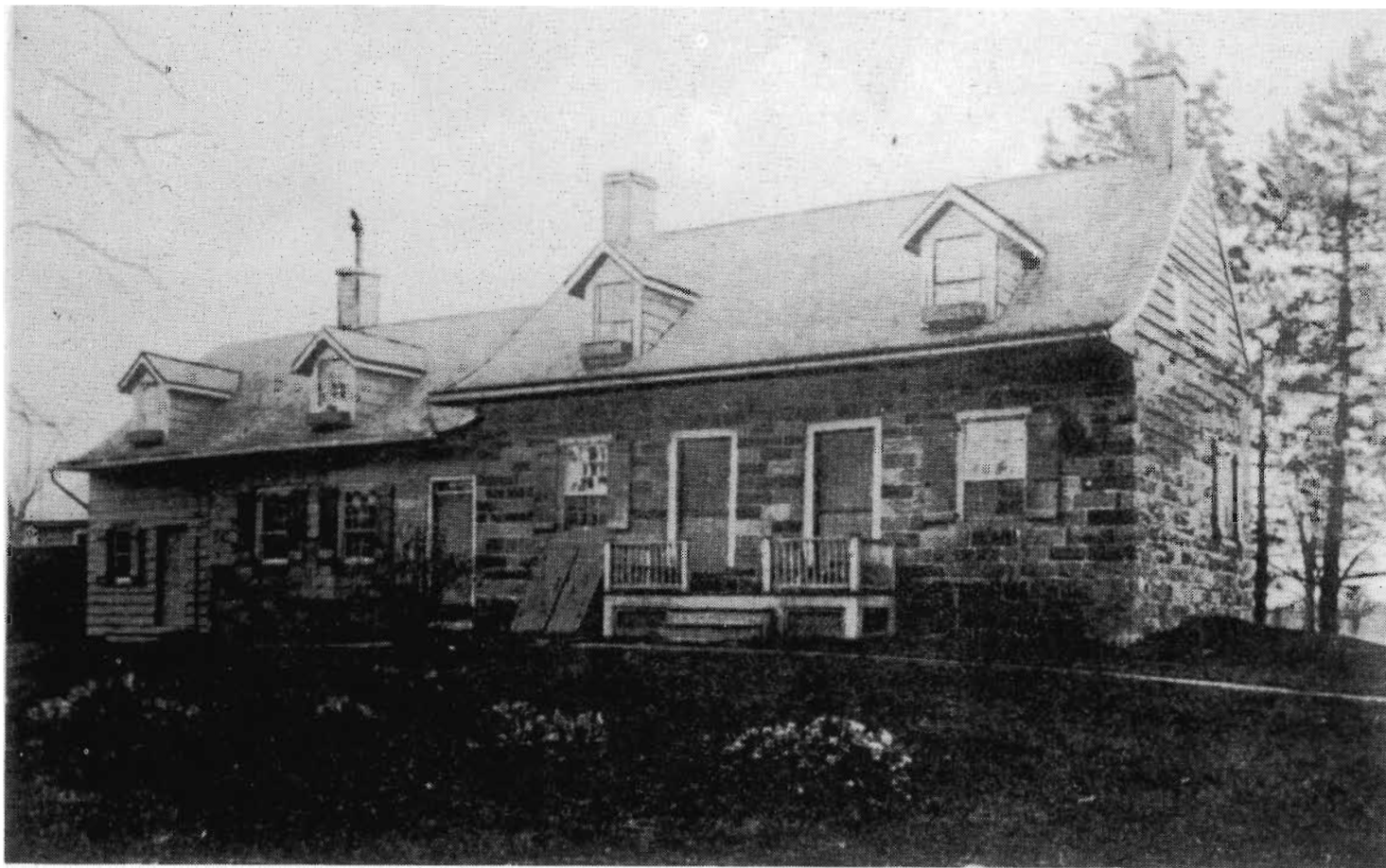
The Ludlows broke up the patent in the middle of the eighteenth century and moved back to New York City. Jonathan Lawrence of Westchester bought the **Big House** and 504 acres at the top of the hill in 1749. Three years later, in 1752, Robert Sneden, of Dutch descent, also from Westchester, bought **Cheer Hall** and the 120 acres around the landing and part way up the hill\*\* which remained in the family's hands for another century. Most of the rest of the patent ended up in the hands of other Hollanders, such as Posts (Poosts), Willseys, and Blauvelts, and of Germans, such as Manns, Gesners, and Hagens. Up to then those listed on deeds were described as gentlemen or merchants; now artisans of various sorts appeared — wheelwrights, blacksmiths, coach-makers, ship carpenters, curriers, and an occasional yeoman, farmer, or planter.

### The Manns

The Manns were among this latter group. In 1767 George Mann of Wuertenberg, Germany, bought 98 acres of land at the top of the hill from one of the Lawrences;

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\*\*The 120 acres extended surprisingly far up the hill on the south side of the road, running to Ludlow Lane, and taking in much of Torrey Cliff, now Lamont, and most of Mr. Gilman's property.



**Nineteenth century view of the only Mann house still standing intact. This was built in 1784.**

later he and his sons bought many more large parcels of land on the western slope. They built at least four houses, of which only one remains — the old stone house between the church and Route 9W — which, according to Winthrop

Gilman, was built in 1784. Another Mann house, built in about 1850 at the corner of Washington Spring Road and Lawrence Lane, survives in two parts. In the twentieth century, Miss Margaret Lawrence bought it and proposed to tear it down to save taxes; but her sister, Mary Tonetti, wanted it, and was told she could have it if she could get it off the property. She got it as far as Washington Spring

Road; but winter set in, and she was forced to leave it there blocking the road until the following spring. Then it was sawed in two, and half added to the "Log Cabin", part of which had been bought at Wanamakers, and the other half to the Adriance house nearby, the two parts of which are now called "Chateau Hash" and "Hachette".

The last Mann moved to New Jersey in the 1930's but they left many relatives in the village.\*

### **Houses on the Western Slope and Rockland Road**

While settlers were gradually building houses on the eastern hillside between the Lawrences at the top and the Snedens at the bottom, other settlers were buying the good farming land on the western slope, where the "Road to Snedens Landing" had been laid out in 1745 over an earlier track. Jacob Concklin bought land in 1748 on what turned out to be the Jersey side of the then unsettled border. His first small house was replaced in about 1796 by the present handsome stone structure, built by his son, the second Jacob Concklin, who married Elizabeth Gesner, the older sister of Nicholas, the diarist. It was their daughter Elizabeth who married the Samuel Sneden who appeared out of nowhere, to live in the old Concklin house and found the "Snedens of the Field".

John Gesner's house, now gone, was built, still in New Jersey, in about 1749, either by himself or by his father of the same name, who had bought land in Tappan in 1725. Here John brought up his large family and from here he sent five sons to Nova Scotia during the Revolution. In

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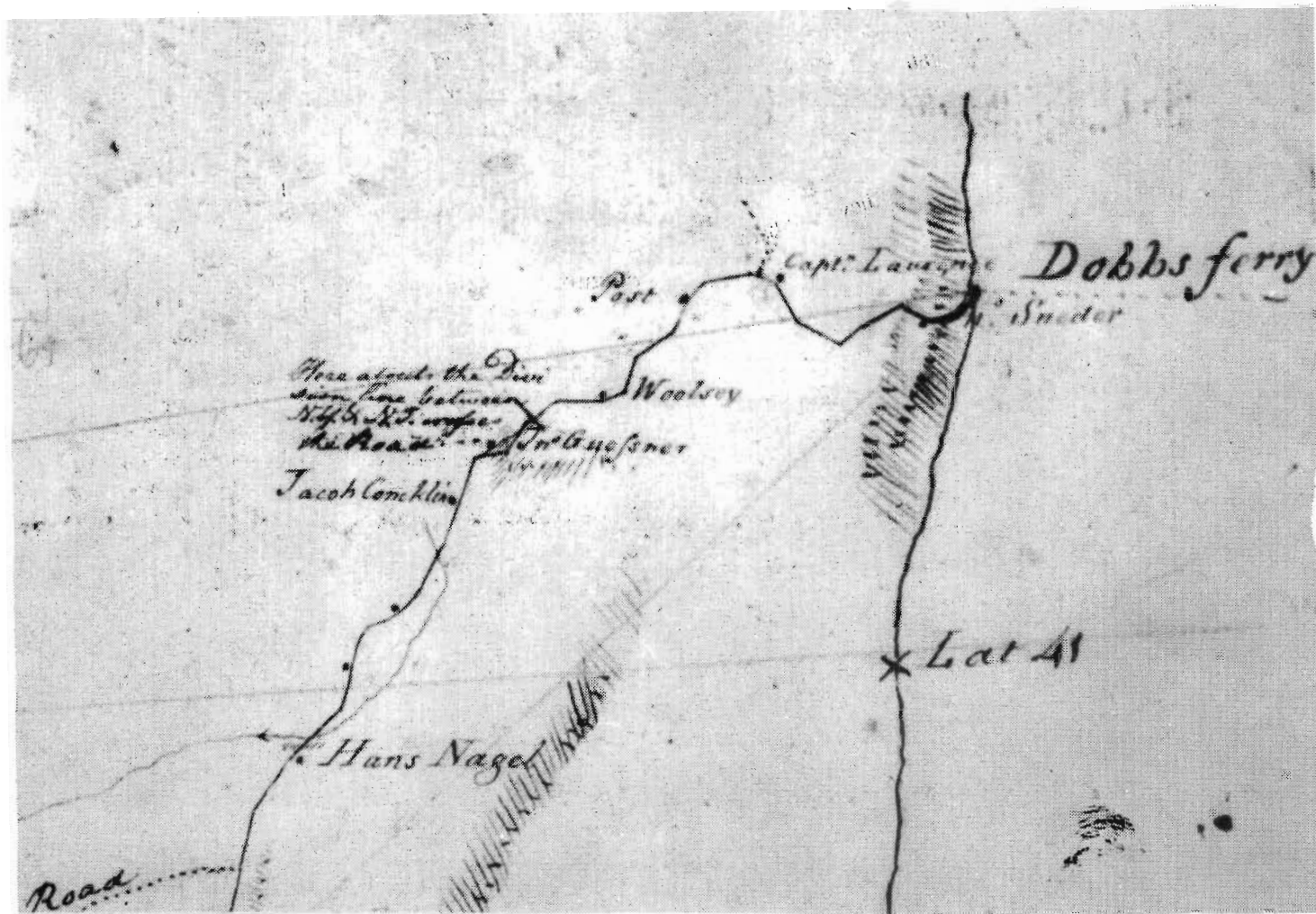
\*When he sold his farm on the western slope to Mr. Perry, David Mann is said to have announced that he would never again do a day's work for anyone; and neither he nor his son ever did.

1796, when his wife had died, and Nicholas, his only surviving son, had built his house nearby in New York, John Gesner sold his house and burying ground to the energetic Jacob Concklin Jr., for his son Jacob Concklin the third. The younger Jacob Concklin married Mary Quidor, and had eight children before he died in 1811. His widow, who continued to live for twenty-odd years in what Nicholas Gesner called the "o.ho" (old house), became the object of the diarist's obsessive attention. He went to her house several times a day; and in his diary he chronicled every one of her absences from home\*\*, and complained of her frequent visits to her married daughters living nearby. Altogether he caused so much talk among relatives and neighbors, and made her life so miserable, "jawing, jawing, jawing", as she put it, that in early 1832 she moved in with her daughter Phoebe Van Wickel. The old house remained empty; and by Mr. Gilman's time all that remained of it was a depression in the ground.

Erskine's Revolutionary War map, Number 110, shows Jacob Concklin's and "Jno Guessner's" houses in New Jersey. In New York, besides "Sneders" a little above the landing and Capt. Lawrence at the top of the hill, only Post and "Woolsey" (Willsey) are shown on the Closter Road. The Post's house is long gone, and there is only a faint chance that the present Willsey house is the original one. Village tradition says that the Willsey house nearer the boundary, which was torn down for the Palisades Interstate Parkway, was the one where all the Willseys were born, and that the existing one was built by Captain John Willsey, who certainly lived there in the nineteenth century.

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\*\*From indications in the diary it can be conjectured that, Nicholas' wife Gracy being a poor cook, Nicholas had lent money to Mary, (or "Pol. Conck") with the proviso that she cook for him. This would explain his complaints when she was away from home, and his meticulous listing of every meal she gave him.



Detail of the Erskine-Dewitt Map, No. 110, made during the Revolution by Washington's geographer, Robert Erskine, showing the important houses in "Dobbs Ferry". It seems to show no important houses by the river, but "M<sup>o</sup> Sneder's" part way up the hill. This may mean that Cheer Hall was burned or destroyed

between 1769, when the boundary settlement mentioned it, and 1780, when Erskine died, Bailey was probably referring to this map when she said that John Sneder's house (the Watson house or Dingdong) showed on Erskine's map.



Another of Erskine's Revolutionary War maps, Number 113, shows several houses on Rockland Road, the precursor of Route 9W. Of the three older houses now existing on the west side of 9W, (Tallman Park runs along most of the east side), the northernmost, the Tallman house, was entirely rebuilt at the end of the nineteenth century, but the foundation seems to date from about 1805. Next is the Van Dien house, which shows many signs of eighteenth century construction, and, indeed, has a large stone near the steps with the date 1760, although it has been changed and added to several times. The third, the Haring house, is said to have been built in 1830 and 1865 on the site of a pre-Revolutionary log house, and there are eighteenth century vestiges still to be seen. (There is also an agreeable ghost).

### Early Commuters

One curious feature of village life was the close connection with New York City. From early days members of local families were as often as not listed on deeds as "of New York City". It looked as if their roots were here, but in order to make a living they had to find work in the city; and there was frequent coming and going. This continued on throughout the nineteenth century as is shown by Nicholas Gesner's diary, and by Mrs. Van Blarcom's account, for instance, of the Adriances, or Auryansons, who lived in the house near the bottom of the hill called **Chateau Hash**. (Mrs. Van Blarcom called it **Green Gate house**.) According to her they were always moving to New York City, (Bank Street) and back. And Mr. Adriance, who was a carpenter, built the house west of the parsonage for his son John, and they went back and forth too.



### III. THE BOUNDARY CONTROVERSY BETWEEN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

THE reason why the Tappan settlers and Lockhart had to secure patents from both New Jersey and New York was that the boundary between these provinces was under litigation for nearly a hundred years, from about 1684 to 1773. The account of the negotiations leads one to the inescapable conclusion that the delay was due to sharp dealing on the part of the Province of New York.

The original description of the boundaries of New Jersey when Charles the Second's brother, the Duke of York, afterward James the Second, granted it to Berkley and Cartaret in 1664 was in part: "All that tract of land . . . being to the westward of Long Island and Manhattans Island and bounded on the East by the main Sea and part by Hudson's River . . . and extendeth . . . to the Northward as far as the Northernmost branch of the said Bay or River of Delaware which is one and forty degrees and forty minutes of Latitude and crossing in a straight line to Hudson's River in one and forty degrees of latitude."

It should not have been so difficult to find out where the 41st degree of North Latitude reached the Hudson River; but every time the question came close to being settled the New York authorities would make some objection, and the matter would go back to Perth Amboy, New York City, or London for more protracted negotiations. New York claimed land south of the line and was not willing to give it up without a fight; and since New York was a Crown Colony and New Jersey still a Proprietary Colony with regard to land tenure\*, New York's claim had royal support.

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\*This meant that in New Jersey the quit rents and other perquisites went to the proprietors and in New York they went to the Crown.

As the Merritt-Corbett-Snedden house was the only one of consequence anywhere near the boundary line, wherever it might be, it became the meeting place for governors, surveyors, and other negotiators who met over the next century to discuss the matter.

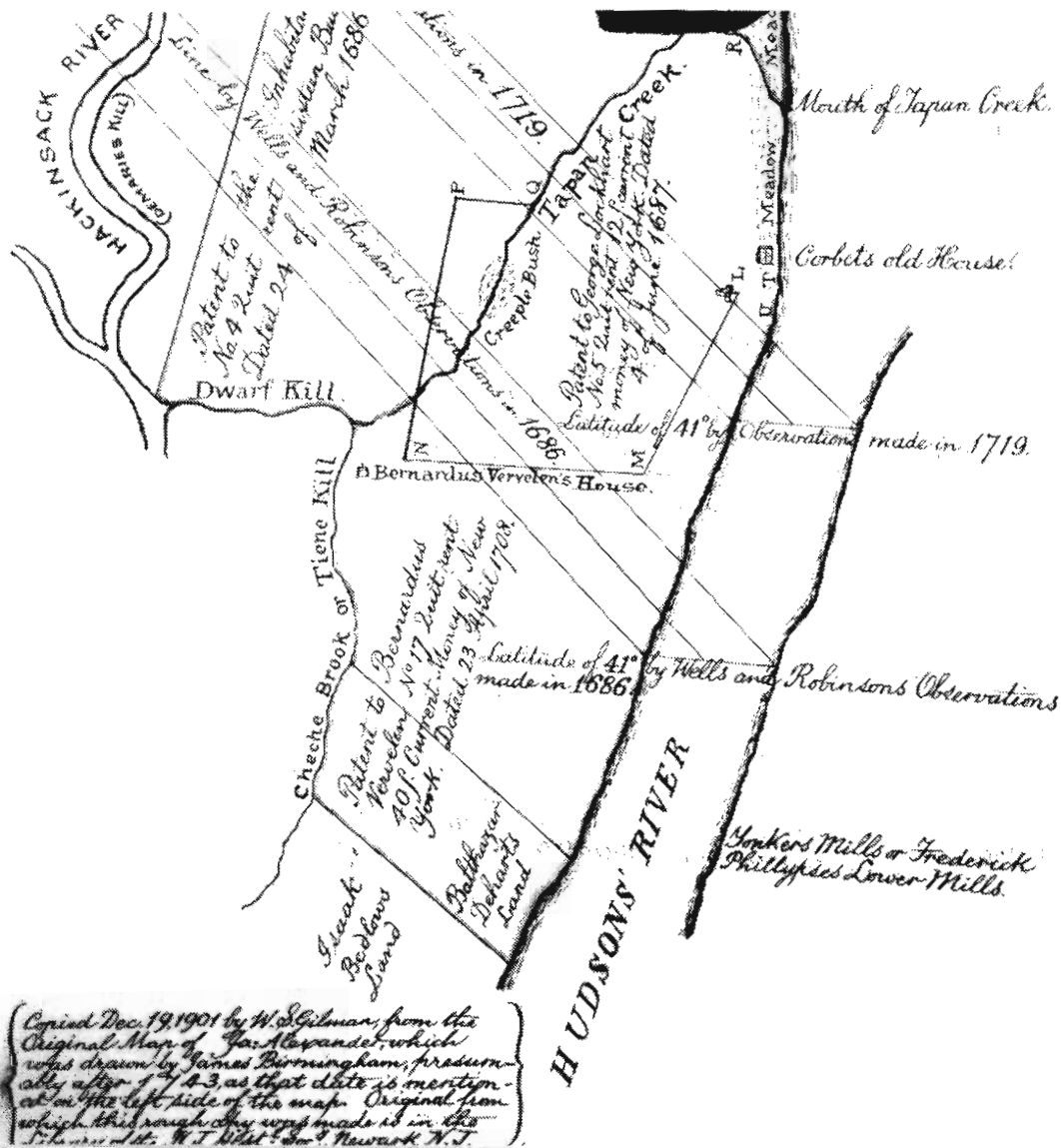
Sometime in the early or mid 1680's the Governors of New York and New Jersey met by the river with their advisors to discuss the boundary. Lewis Morris, a boy of twelve or thirteen who came along, probably with his father, remembered it well. Sixty years later, in 1745, when he was Governor of New Jersey and Lord of the Manor of Morrisania, he described the meeting.

Governors Dongan of New York and Lawrie of New Jersey and others met "at a place nigh which stood afterwards the house of Col. William Merret on the west side of Hudson's River, where an observation was made of the latitude, and marked with a pen-knife on a beech tree standing by a small run or spring of water that runs down on the north side of the place . . . I was told that they then did agree that the mouth of Tappan creek should be the point of partition on Hudson's River between the province of New York and that of New Jersey."

This would seem to be confirmed by the wording of the Lockhart Patent of 1685 from New Jersey: "Beginning at Tappan Creke upon sd Hudson's river aforesaid at the line of division agreed upon by the governor of the sd province of East New Jersey & the Governor of New York."

The New York surveyors, however, without actually having surveyed the line, maintained that it ran a mile and a fraction north of Yonkers — a difference of about five miles!

Winthrop Gilman's copy of Alexander's map, showing the 1686 dividing line between New York and New Jersey, which was never surveyed, and the more nearly correct 1719 line. Note "Corbett's old House," where Corbett's widow was then living, the Letter L Tree near it, and the "Creepie Bush" to the west of it. (From the Dutch Kreupelbosch — thicket or swamp).



In 1719 James Alexander for New Jersey and Allain Jarrett for New York surveyed the whole boundary, starting at the western end. They agreed, reluctantly, until they got to the Hudson. There Alexander quite correctly, as the final settlement proved, declared the boundary to be about a mile south of the house where they were then staying as guests of Corbett's widow, called on one of their maps "Corbets Old House." Jarrett, however, after spending a few days with his principals in New York City, came back and complained that there was something seriously wrong with the surveyors' quadrant, so all their reckonings were wrong. They must send to England for a much larger instrument.

Years passed. There were other abortive attempts to a settlement, always hampered by the New York authorities or the Crown; and it was not until 1769 that the province's agreed that the 41st degree of latitude reached the river at a line 79 chains and 20 links (a little less than a mile) south

of "Sneydon's house formerly Corbet's."\* The treaty was signed in 1773.

Marking the boundary was a great rock near the water in the middle of which was chiseled a line and the words Latitude  $41^{\circ}$  North. On the south side were marked the words New Jersey, and on the north, New York. About ten years ago Thomas Demarest of New Jersey and a friend rediscovered this rock with its faint inscription; and recently, he and Clair Tholl, the editor of **Bergen County History**, located it again, so that a photograph could be made. Considering the many graffiti on nearby rocks, it seems wise to keep its whereabouts a little vague.

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\*This figure is perhaps no more exact than the  $41^{\circ}$  turned out to be. In Budke's papers, Vol. 29, page 45, there are affidavits by Johannes Isaac Blavelt (sic), and Abram Kool that in 1769 they saw James Clinton run an east-west line from a point on the Hudson "a mile, nine chains, and some links to the southward of Corbet's old house".



**The Station Rock, on the New Jersey-New York boundary. Actually, it is at  $40^{\circ} 59' 51.20''$ . Taken by John Scott; 1982.**

This was not the end of the matter, however. In 1874 a more accurate survey by G. H. Cook, the New Jersey State Geologist, showed that the "Station Rock," which marked the border was actually at  $40^{\circ} 59' 51.20''$  or about 900 feet farther south than the 41st parallel. When New Jersey suggested readjusting the boundary to allow for this and other mistakes, all of which were in New York's favor, New York refused. The boundary still begins at the Station Rock, now on Palisades Interstate Park property, thereby giving New York about ten square miles of extra land.

There has been even more trouble about the other boundaries. The northwest corner was supposed to be at the northernmost branch of the Delaware River at  $41^{\circ} 40'$  latitude. After a good deal of quibbling about which was the northern branch, the line ended up farther south at  $41^{\circ} 21' 57''$ , thus giving New York between 150,000 and 200,000 extra acres.

The part of the boundary which in the grant was supposed to be to the west of Long Island and Manhattan was somehow moved over to take in Staten Island for New York; and that part declared to be the Hudson River was interpreted by New York as being at high water mark on the Jersey shore. This meant that New York claimed control over the Jersey shore, and brought suits to stop Jerseyites from building wharves along their own shore. In 1826 Mayor Philip Hone of New York actually had a Captain Cochran arrested for landing passengers in Perth Amboy! This was only remedied by a suit in the Supreme Court of the United States in 1833 with the result that the boundary was finally conceded to be the middle of the Hudson River.

One would think that, since the east and west line at Palisades slants rather sharply northward, this would have brought the line at the shore even more to the north of the Station Rock; but as described above, it was at the rock in 1874, and remains there in spite of New Jersey's protests.

The rough mountainous land next to the Hudson on both sides of the line was not colonized like the rest of the region, partly because of its inhospitable nature and partly because of the doubt as to which state had jurisdiction. Some of it was included in the Lockhart Patent of 1685. South of that were the King's Woods, one of the forests used to supply the great trees needed for the masts and other parts of British ships. Not until after the Revolution was it settled by squatters, freed slaves and Indians.



**New Jersey Boundary Monument, 1882 — Abraham Browning, Thomas McCarter, George H. Cook, Commissioners. 433 feet West from Station Rock. E. A. Bowser, Surveyor.**



## IV. THE SNEDENS OF THE LANDING AND THEIR FERRY

### **Dobbs Ferry, Robert and Mollie Sneden, "Mrs. Sneethin's" Bill, Ferry Boats, Legends about Mollie Sneden, The Mystery of George Calhoun, John Sneden, "The Patriot".**

#### **Dobbs Ferry**

**T**HERE are no known records of the famous Dobbs Ferry for the first fifty-odd years of its existence; but tradition says that it started across the river in 1698 or 1700, when Jan Dobbs, son of an English mariner, is known to have leased 282 acres on the east shore of the Hudson from Frederick Phillipse, and built a house on Willow Point, near the site of the present Dobbs Ferry Railroad Station. Most travel was by boat in those days, and Jan Dobbs had good reason to cross the river often. His uncle, William Merritt, had bought the land on the west shore before that date and was engaged in clearing land, and building houses and outbuildings. His aunt, Sarah Crab, and four cousins were also living there by 1702. No doubt there were family visits; and perhaps Merritt had work for Dobbs and his neighbors.

In 1729 Jan Dobbs' son, William, married; and he is said by east bank historians to have been from that time the first real ferryman.

#### **Robert and Mollie Sneden**

The fact that the Verplanck map of 1745 shows 'Sneedings House the fferry' on the west side has been considered to show that Robert Sneden and Mollie, his wife, had bought the Corbett house and were running the ferry at that time;

but Robert Sneden is known to have bought the house and 120 acres at the bottom of the hill in 1752. Margaret Lane, the Dobbs family historian, suggests that perhaps the map just designated the location of a rented house at the west end of the ferry, where passengers debarked and waited to embark. Mollie Sneden was probably William Dobbs' half-sister, so it could have been a family affair.

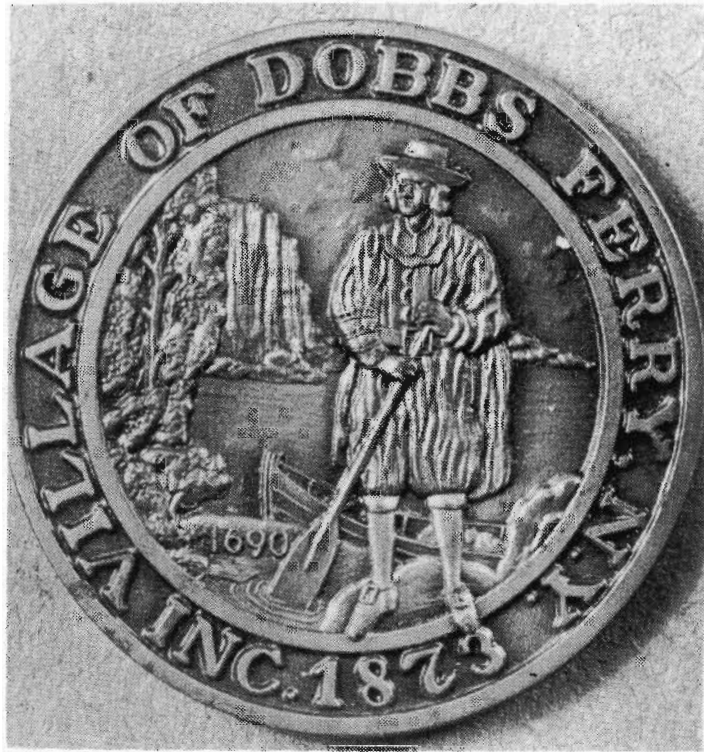
Robert Sneden did have a bill for cable in 1750, but that could have been used merely in some connection with the ferry landing. By 1756 he must have died, because in that year, "Mary Sneden, Wido" received a license to operate a tavern, probably next to the ferry. Howard Durie, in his article on the Snedens in "Relics", describes a later license, on January 2, 1763, giving her the right "to keep a Public House for entertaining of travelers and to sell by way of retail all sorts of strong Liquors in the house wherein the said Mary Sneden now dwells and out doors from the date hereof until the first day of January next."

Family tradition says that William Dobbs, with the help of his son Abraham, ran the ferry until 1758; and there is a record of his securing a license for a tavern on Broadway in 1760.

#### **Mrs. Sneethin's Bill**

From 1758 - on there was little doubt that Mollie was running the ferry. Her descendants have a large bill

to "Mrs. Sneethin" for five pounds, two shillings, ten pence, from a New York businessman, Thomas Lawrence, a son of a neighbor, Jonathan Lawrence, the "Elder Senior". This bill included, among other items bought in 1758 and 1759, "Ringboalts for the ferry boat", "band for the rudder of the big boat", and "mending hawser". Mollie never did pay this; consequently her credit was probably shaky. At least,



The Centennial Medal commemorating the 1873 incorporation of Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. shows William Dobbs, who started the first official ferry in about 1730. The reason for the date 1690 is unknown, but it is perpetuated on the flag of Dobbs Ferry, and now on the medal.

in 1765, when "Widow Mary Sneden" bought cable, rope, and marline from Samuel Loudon, on the bill was the notation: "To pay at 2 months". Finally, in 1766, Thomas Lawrence's sister, Ellison, who had married Mollie's son John in 1762, paid the earlier bill, now seven years overdue. One can only imagine the family discussions that had gone on.

From this time on the ferry was run by the Sneden family for nearly a century and a half from 1758 to 1903, and continued under various arrangements until 1946. The name Dobbs clung to the ferry and to the settlements at both ends, however, until after the Revolution.

### Ferry Boats

The first boat used as a ferry was a periauger. This word came from the Spanish **piragua**, meaning dugout, and was also spelled perriauger, pelliAuger, pettiauger, and even pettinger. Eventually there were two boats, one large enough to carry horses and wagons. When there were passengers at Dobbs Ferry waiting to go across, the ferryman at Snedens would be notified by the display of black shutters, one for passengers alone, two for horses and wagons.

In Gilman's **Story of the Ferry**, written in 1903, Miss Ella Coates, granddaughter of Captain Larry Sneden, describes bills for two of the larger boats used by the Snedens in the early nineteenth century. The first, the **Tappan Packet**, 55 feet long, 15 feet, 11 inches wide, and weighing 35 tons, had been built at Tappan (Slote) in 1792, and had already seen fifteen years of service when it was bought by John Sneden Sr. for \$80 in 1807. (Tappan then included Piermont and the shipyard at Bogertown on the Sparkill Creek.) This may have still given some years of service, because the next bill was for a new pettiauger, the **Friendship**, slightly smaller, built at Tappan (Slote) in 1821,

and bought the same year by John Sneden Jr. for \$1250.

'After 1860,' Miss Coates says, "the perriaugers were replaced by 28 foot cat-boats, and these in 1875 by the 18 foot boats in which many so pleasantly voyage by sail or by oars to Dobbs Ferry still."

### Legends about Mollie Sneden

The most famous story about Mollie Sneden tells of the Tory spy who came to her during the Revolution for shelter. (All the Snedens but her son John were Loyalists.) She put the man in a large chest, and set out on it several pans of milk. When the Americans came to hunt for him, she said they could look everywhere, but they mustn't disturb the cream which was rising; and the spy was saved.

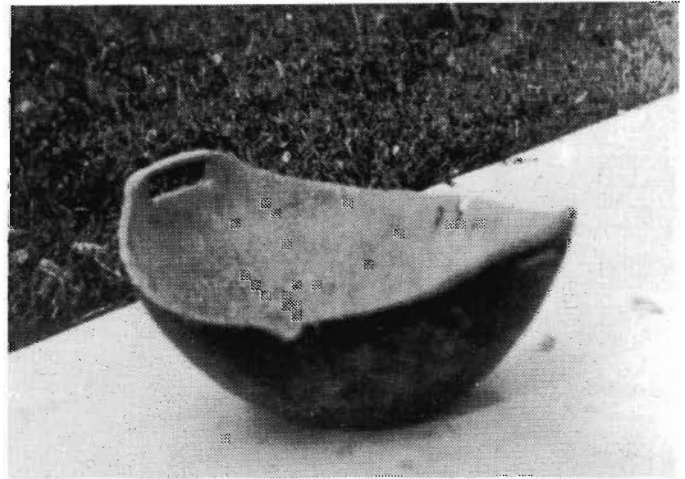
Another story is of the hundred pigeons Mollie is said to have brought down with one shot. Allowing for the fact that the **Encyclopedia Britannica** says that one flock of passenger pigeons in those days had been estimated to consist of more than 2,230 **million** birds, this is not inconceivable.

The particular story which one would like to believe — but hesitates — is that Mollie Sneden might have been a spy for the Americans. Freeman's **Life of Washington** gives the text of Nathaniel Sackett's letter to Washington from which this inference was drawn. It was dated April 7, 1777.

"Week before Last I sent in a woman — the wife of a man gone over to the enemy. Our people has taken her Grain for our use. She made a very heavy complaint. I advised her to go to New York and complain to Lord Howe. She was pleased with the advice and set off to his Lordship and to request the time that she might expect relief. She left the city last Friday week, and says that she despairs of any relief soon; that there is a large number of flat bottomed boats in the harbour of New York which are intended

for an Expedition against Philadelphia and that the British army is going to subdue that city; and that the poor Tory sufferers will not be relieved until that Expedition is over. She says that provisions of every kind in New York is very dear; that when a cow calves, they let the calf suck until it is fit to kill, and then kill both cow and calf together and eat them; that the beef of such cows sells from 18 to 2/per Pound; that flower is 28/per hundred wt and everything in proportion and she fears very much that the Kings army will not be able to subdue the Rebels in less than two or three years."

This was obviously written with tongue in cheek; but whether it was or not, it doesn't quite fit Mollie, since her

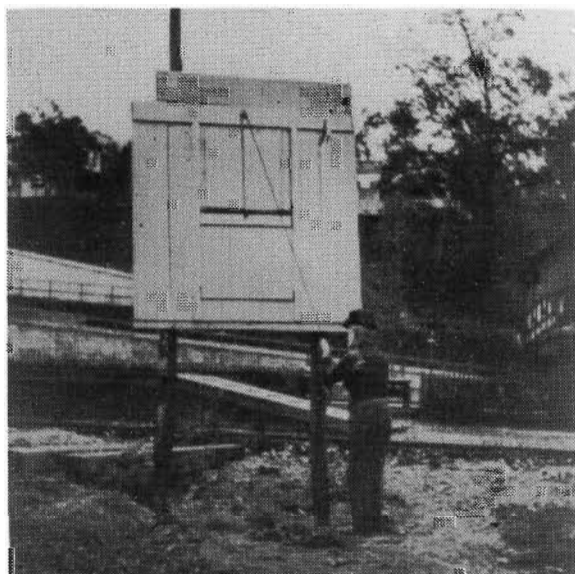


**Knot Bowl.** Made from the burl of a tree, said to have been given to one of the Snedens by an Indian, to reward him for ferrying him across the river. In the Bergen County Historical Museum. (Mary B. Davis, Librarian for the Museum of the American Indian, writes: "The burl was chopped from the tree and hollowed out by charring and scraping. After white contact was made, metal gouges were used, and the bottoms flattened so they could sit on tables. They were made well into the 19th century.")

husband had been dead for about twenty years, and it was her sons who had gone over to the British.

### **The Mystery of George Calhoun**

A mysterious character, George Calhoun, first pointed out by Mr. Durie in his article in **Relics**, made a couple of appearances in the family chronicle and then disappeared. On May 24th, 1765,, "Mary Sneden and George Calhoun" got a marriage license. This might have been Mollie Sneden,



**Signaling from Dobbs Ferry—one black shutter brought the small ferry-boat from Snedens, two the large one for horses and wagons. Ferry man at Snedens had to look through a spy glass every five minutes.**

who was a widow of fifty-six at the time, or her daughter, Mary. It is hard to believe that the marriage went through. There was never any mention of Mollie having remarried; and her daughter Mary married Samuel Lawrence about two weeks later. But George Calhoun, on September 30th, 1765, bought from Samuel and Mary Lawrence for fifty pounds their twelve-acre share of the Sneden property. This is as much as is known now, but future research may discover the story behind these facts.

With all the traditions about Mollie Sneden, one cannot doubt that she was a strong character; and one final proof of this is the fact that in 1788, when she was seventy-nine years old, two of her sons in Nova Scotia, Samuel and William, gave their "trusty and loving friend and mother, Mary Sneden" a power of attorney to sell their shares of the family property in "Dobbs Ferry" to their brother John.

### **John Sneden "The Patriot"**

John Sneden was the patriotic son who stayed behind when his brothers left to go to the British. The fact that he had married Ellison, the daughter of the patriot Jonathan Lawrence, "The Elder Senior", in 1762 possibly brought him over to the American side.\* He is said to have piloted American ships-of-war on the Hudson, while his brother Robert did the same for the British.

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\*There has also been a suggestion that the family delegated him to remain in Snedens to look after the family property. He certainly did that. After the war, he seems to have reimbursed his brothers and sisters; and the 120 acres were divided among his children.

RELATIONSHIPS IN CONNECTION WITH DOBBS FERRY

On East Bank

Mary Merritt Dobbs

1632-1737

Jan Dobbs

b. c. 1675

William Dobbs

Maria

b. 1706

ferryman

b. 1709

probably the  
same as Mollie,  
1709-1810, who  
married  
Robert Sneden

John Sneden

"the Patriot"  
1738-1822

married

Jonathan Lawrence  
the "Elder Senior"  
1695-1777

Ellison

Thomas

Sent bill  
to Mollie  
for supplies

John "Boss" Sneden

1770-1829

William Sneden

1807-1871

Capt. Larry Sneden

1800-1871

Ran ferry c. 1830-1869

John Newton S.

Ran ferry in  
1870

Horton S.

Ran ferry  
1875-1886

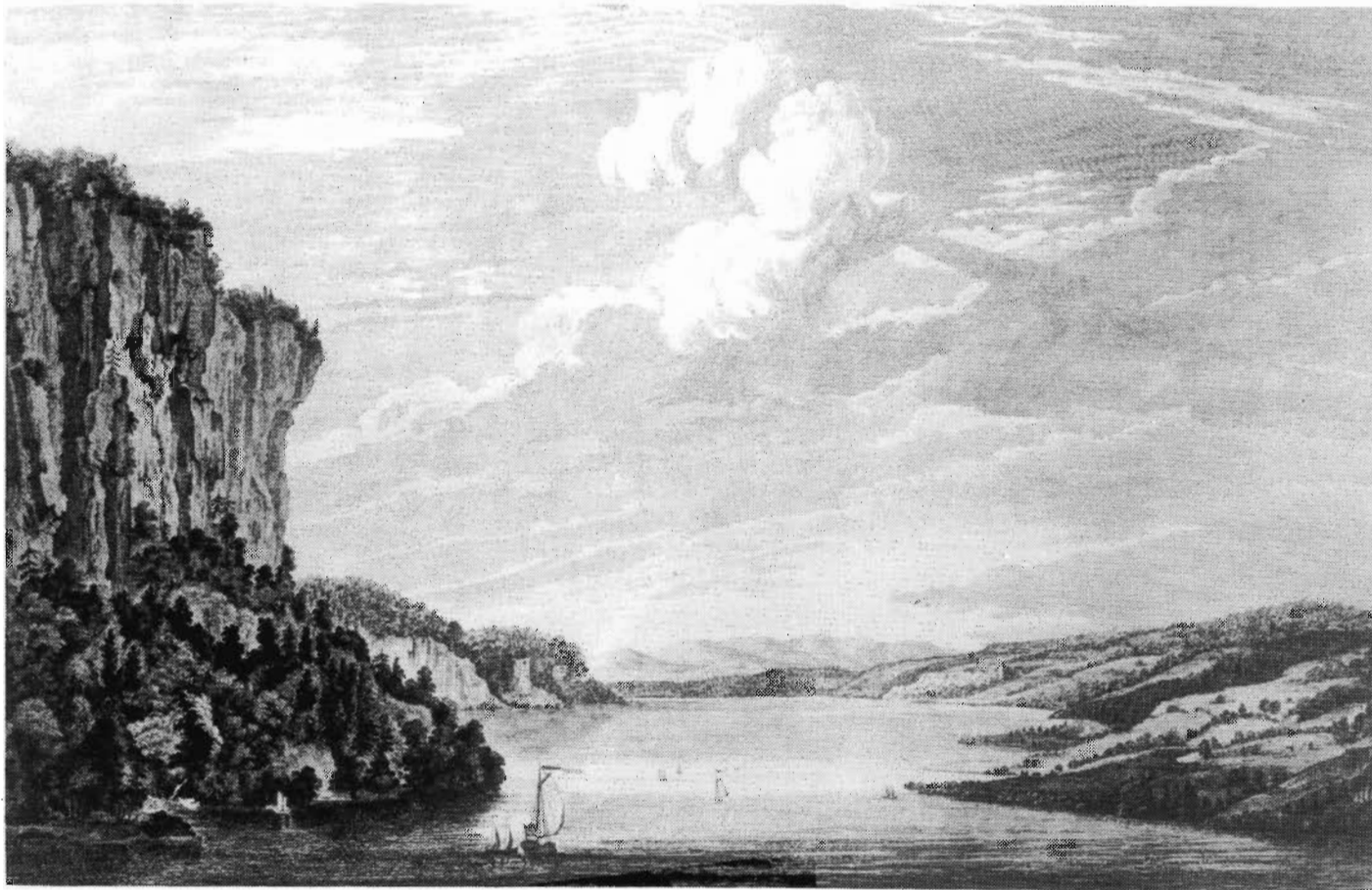
Mary Neal S.

1826-1909

m. Capt. William  
Coates, ferryman  
1871-1874 & 1886-1903

Sources of Information:

Margaret Travis Lane about Dobbs Family  
Story of the Ferry, pages 3 & 4  
Palisades cemetery records



**"A VIEW IN HUDSON'S RIVER OF THE ENTRANCE OF  
WHAT IS CALLED THE TOPAN SEA."**

**"Sketch'd on the Spot by his Excellency Governor Pownal."  
Painted by Paul Sandby, Engraved by Peter Benazech."**

**Thomas Pownall, 1722-1805, came to New York as secretary to Sir Danvers Osborn, the Governor, and was later appointed governor**

**of Massachusetts, then governor of South Carolina before returning to England in 1760. (Perhaps he was lucky not to have been governor in New York. It is a curious fact that between the reigns of William and Mary in 1689 and the accession of George the Third in 1760, of the fourteen governors of New York, one Leisler, was executed, one, Osborn, committed suicide, one, Lord Cornbury, was thrown in jail, and six others died soon after taking office.—Information from Cole's History of Rockland County, pages 6 to 10).**



## V. THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

**Martha Washington, Dennis Sneden's Bill, Gesners and Snedens Leave, British Ships on the River, The American Fire Ships, The End of the Turtle, Redoubts, The Baylor Massacre, The Lawrence Family, Jonathan Lawrence Jr., Different Names for Settlement, The Blockhouse, Soldiers' Living Conditions — and Officers', Benedict Arnold in Snedens, The Capture of André, British at Snedens Trying to Help André, Believable Traditions — Zig-zag Road, Washington's Spring and Washington's Table, The Shot from the Asia, Captain Pray and the Water Guard, The French-American Encampment, The March to Yorktown, Dobbs Ferry as Center of Communications, Activities at the Blockhouse, William Stephens Smith, Captain Pray's Blunder, Jonathan Lawrence Jr. Resigns, Nineteenth Century Lawrences, Lawrence Burying Ground, Salute to the Flag.**

### **Martha Washington**

**E**ARLY in the Revolution, the ferry carried spectacular passengers — Martha Washington and her entourage. In December 1775 she was traveling from Mount Vernon to join her husband in Cambridge; and since General Washington told her to stay north of New York City, on account of the Toryism there, they crossed the river at Dobbs Ferry. Her son Jack Custis and his wife, Captain George Lewis, Mrs. Horatio Gates, and a maid, came with her; and they traveled in a chariot drawn by four horses, with a black coachman, and a postillion in scarlet and white livery. A detachment of horsemen under Lieut. Col. George Baylor had been ordered to accompany Mrs. Washington from Philadelphia to headquarters. As Mrs. Washington wrote to a friend

"I left it [Philadelphia] in as great pomp as if I had been a very great somebody".

All roads were bad at that time, of course, but the primitive road straight down the cliff at Snedens must have been one of the worst parts of the trip. The story is often told that Martha stopped for tea in Mollie Sneden's tavern near the landing, and that Mollie ferried her across, but these, although quite possible, are only what Mr. Gilman was to later call "floating legends".

### **Dennis Sneden's Bill**

A few months later, Mollie's son Dennis was certainly running the ferry. His brother John's descendants have a

copy of a bill of his, with no date, for ferrying members of the Militia and the Continental Army and their horses and wagons across the river, perhaps on different occasions. (See Appendix No. 10). One can't be sure it was paid, for on July 29, 1776, the Orange County Committee forbade all the Snedens but John to "keep ferry"; and around that time Dennis took off for the British fleet in his small open perriauger, with four Gesner sons. Nicholas Gesner, the diarist, was a boy of eleven at the time, and stayed with his father. Later, in his entry for July 19, 1834, he described the difficulties faced by the would-be neutrals:

"It may not be improper to note here that our Father and Mother, John Gesner and Famitcha Brower, wished to remain neutral in the War of the Revolution. He refused to sign the Association Articles, dreading the Consequences; was called a tory, but truly he was a peaceable man in every respect. Threatenments were made, and his sons grown up were all menaced to be taken to New England, and confined in dungeons (or mines). Violence was used in many places and with many. Father Gesner, now about 52 or 53 years old, admonished his sons Jacob, Isaac, Henry, and Abraham to take opportunity to go to New York, now in possession of the British. With some others, after their father had admonished them to be good boys, they went off in an open pettiauger belonging to Denis Sneedeen."

### **Gesners and Snedens Leave**

Most of the loyalist Snedens and Gesners went to Nova Scotia after the war, but Mollie and her son Dennis, who never married, stayed, sometimes in New York City, and sometimes in Snedens; and both are buried in the local cemetery. After the war they probably lived in the small white house southwest of the William Sneden house.

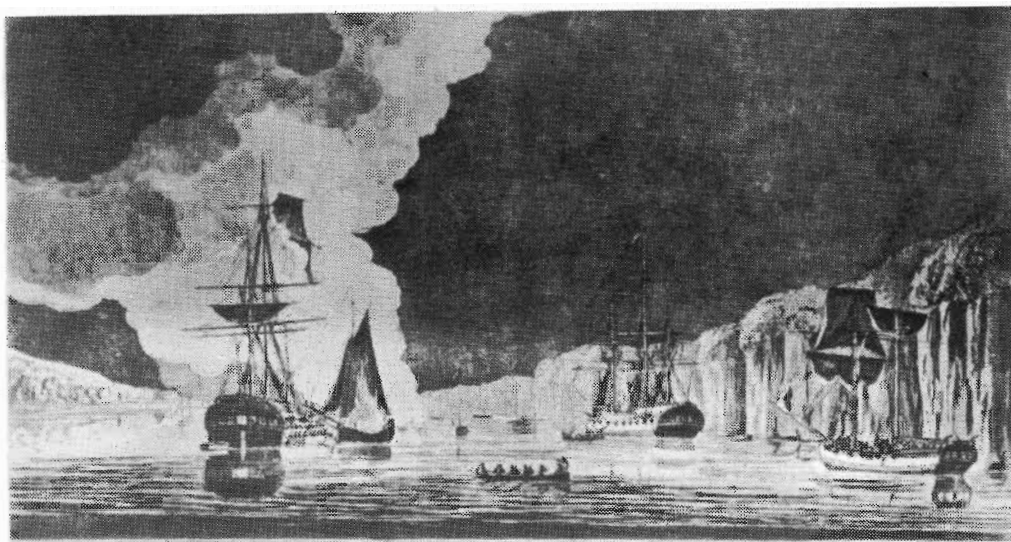
The Committee did not issue the prohibition against the Snedens without cause. A year before, on July 17, 1775, five of the Sneden sons, but not John, had been listed as having refused to sign a patriotic pact called the Association. Now the Committee had discovered that Robert was serving as a pilot of British ships on the river. They declared, moreover, that the four other non-signing brothers were "greatly suspected of carrying on a treasonable correspondence with . . . ships-of-war belonging to the king of Great Britain, lying in the aforesaid river."

### **British Ships on the River**

The ships-of-war mentioned in these communications were the **Phoenix** and the **Rose**, which with three tenders sailed up the river on July 12, 1776, almost certainly piloted by Robert Sneden. They went as far as Haverstraw Bay, but much of the time they were in the Tappan Zee off Tarrytown in full view of Snedens. The Shore Guard and Militia in Orange County watched them so carefully that they did most of their foraging in Westchester, where they had more sympathizers.

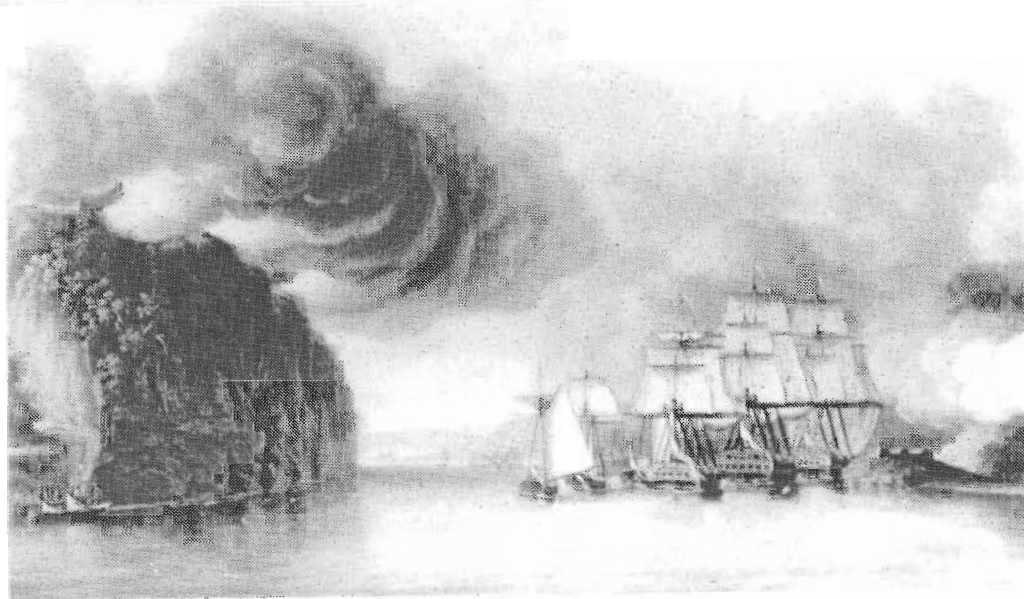
### **The American Fire Ships**

The patriots did their best to get rid of them. On August 3rd six small "row gallies" exchanged cannonades with the great ships for two hours, giving about as much damage as they received. The Americans then dropped down river to Dobbs Ferry to recover. On August 16th, the patriots had more success. Two specially built fire ships laden with combustibles approached the men-of-war in the evening. The one that attacked the **Phoenix** was thrown off;



*The PHOENIX and the ROSE Engaged by the ENEMY'S FIRE SHIPS and GALLEYS on the 16 Aug. 1776.*

**"The enemy" in this case were the Americans, who attacked the British warships with fireships on August 16, 1776, and did enough damage to drive them away.**



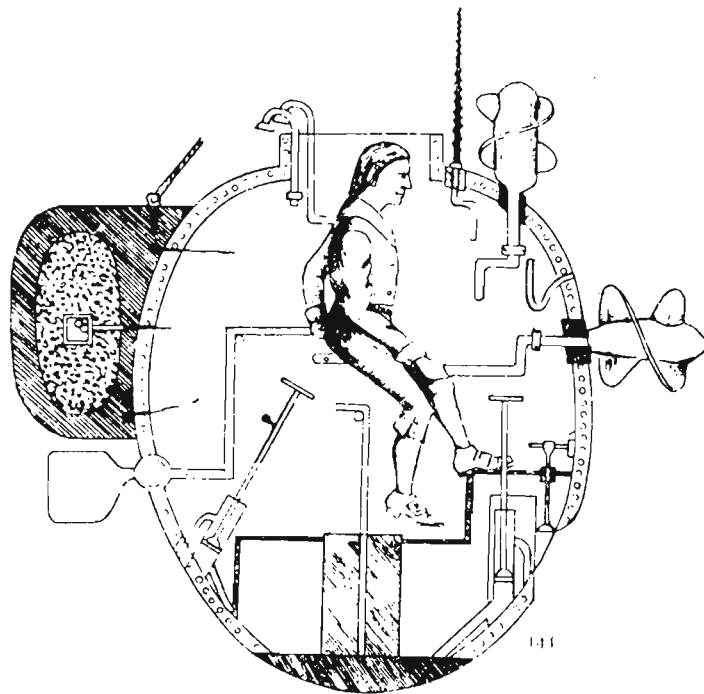
**"Forcing the Hudson River Passage," October 9, 1776, by Dominique Serres. The Phoenix and the Roebuck, on their way up the Hudson to Dobbs Ferry to do more damage.**

but the other grappled with a tender and took off cannon, guns, cutlasses, etc. before setting it afire and escaping with the booty. The British war ships took alarm and sailed down the river to Staten Island in time to join the attack on Long Island on August 22nd.

### The End of the Turtle

Later, on October 9th, 1776, the Americans were mortified to hear that two large British ships-of-war, the **Roebuck** and the **Phoenix**, and a smaller frigate had sailed past the batteries of Fort Lee and Fort Washington and the **chevaux de frise** (sunken ships and other man-made obstacles in the river, joined with a chain) with no apparent damage, and had got as far as Dobbs Ferry. They sank a schooner loaded with rum, sugar, wine, etc., drove a couple of American galleys ashore at Dobbs Ferry (probably in Westchester) and, worst of all, they sank a sloop which had on board David Bushnell's submarine, called **The Turtle**. This was a round machine designed to maneuver under water, and attach a magazine of powder to the underside of the enemy ship. This could then be exploded by a clockwork mechanism. It had failed once when it had been aimed at Admiral Howe's flagship. Now it was finally destroyed.

Although the British ships made many forays up the Hudson, their usual anchorage was farther south. William Smith\* wrote in his **Historical Memoirs** for August, 1778: "Dobbs Ferry . . . is now passed by the Continental troops, in sight of the ships laying near Spuyten-Devil". Again in September of that year he wrote: "No ships in the River above Kings Bridge . . . Great Stores at Tarry

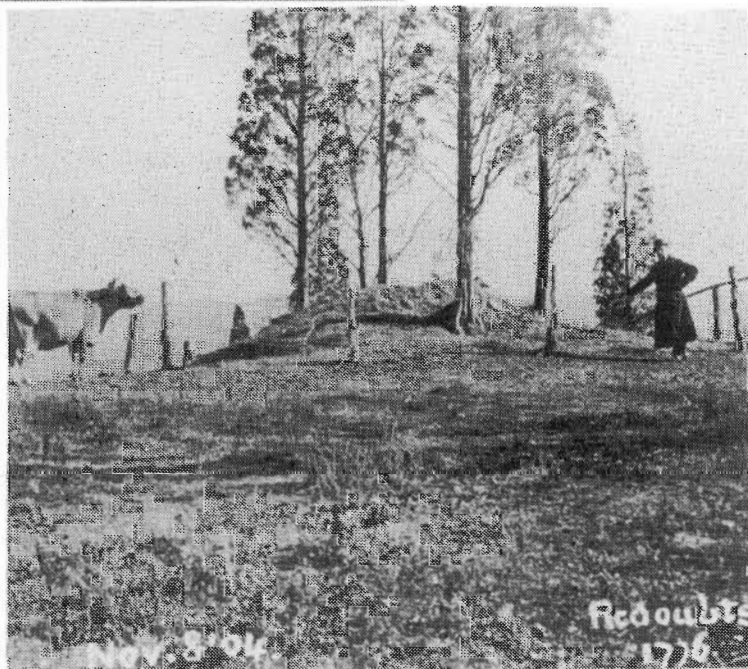


**The World's first combat submarine, called "The Turtle". Built by David Bushnell.** "The submarine had enough air to support life for half an hour; a bottle of phosphorus was used to illuminate the compass and water gauge — water was admitted into the bottom to submerge the submarine and then pumped out for surfacing. On September 6, 1776, "The Turtle" approached the flagship of the British fleet. However, the copper-sheathed hull of H.M.S. "Eagle" was too tough for the bomb carried by the submarine to be attached securely. The subsequent explosion did no damage either to the ship or "The Turtle's" operator, an army sergeant named Ezra Lee, but it did give the British Admiral Howe an unwelcome scare." **Quotation from Grafton.** A month later it was brought up the Hudson to Dobbs Ferry to be used against the intrusive British warships; but the sloop carrying it was sunk, and the Turtle was destroyed before it could be tried again.

\*See Appendix No. 13 about William Smith.



Site of the redoubt, above the William Sneden and Mollie Sneden houses, showing the remarkable lack of trees in Palisades around the turn of the century.



A closer view of the redoubt, with a cow and Mr. Gilman.

Town, brought from the West Country across Dobbs Ferry and Kings Ferry in sight of the Ships”.

### **The Redoubts**

In November, 1776, five hundred patriots were stationed at Snedens Landing with four cannons and a howitzer, probably on the redoubt halfway up the hill\*, so that when the British wanted to cross the river to attack Fort Lee, they were forced to land farther south, near Closter, even though the climb up the cliff was much more difficult.

### **The Baylor Massacre**

Two years later, on September 27, 1778, according to a report to Washington, “a party of the Enemy landed at Dobbs Ferry . . . and were on their march towards Clarks-town” en route to Old Tappan and the infamous “Baylor Massacre”. The British surprised Colonel Baylor and his company of dragoons, captured Baylor, and killed or wounded severely nearly a third of his soldiers, giving little quarter.

### **The Lawrence Family**

The prominent patriotic family in the village of Dobbs Ferry (now Palisades) during the Revolution was that of

Jonathan Lawrence, called on his tombstone the “Elder Senior.” Although his father was also Jonathan Lawrence, it is convenient to call this one Jonathan the First, since he was the first of the four Jonathan Lawrences connected with this village between 1749 and 1883. In 1749 this Jonathan had bought the **Big House** and five hundred and four acres of land at the top of the hill from the Ludlows, who had moved back to New York City. His son Jonathan, the Second, became a merchant chiefly in New York City, and later, during the Revolution, a sort of bureaucrat who served on commission after commission: to forward troops to Pennsylvania, to procure specie to pay bills, to find salt, and to build barracks at New Windsor, on the Hudson. While he was at Fort Constitution, opposite West Point, on this last assignment, his wife got into trouble selling tea at an inflated price\*\*. Their son Jonathan, the Third, who was sixteen at this time, had apparently created problems for them — General Clinton had characterized him as a “wild young lord” but said he had become more responsible recently — and at this point, undoubtedly mortified by his mother’s conduct, he left his parents to stay with his grandfather in Rockland, and spent most of the rest of his short life there. He began immediately to help guard the ferry, and the next year when his grandfather died, he joined the army. He always signed himself Jonathan Lawrence Jr. It may have been with reference to him that his grandfather was called the Elder Senior.

### **Jonathan Lawrence Jr.**

The young Jonathan Lawrence the Third had an active

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\*The Field Exploration Committee from the New-York Historical Society found in 1924 on the lower plateau “the remains of an extensive earth works (sic) overlooking the landing. Here well marked, there obliterated, this embankment extends from before the old fort to a point at least 800 feet south”. (Mrs. Gugler says that remains of the works have been found near the “Red Barn”; but by the 1980’s almost nothing can be seen.)

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\*\*The Committee’s complaint about Mrs. Lawrence is given in Appendix No. 12, as is General Clinton’s description of young Jonathan Lawrence.



and distinguished career, receiving many complimentary comments from Washington and other officers. He was at Valley Forge as a second lieutenant for a short time in the spring of 1778, and probably fought in the battle of Monmouth. As early as the fall of 1778 he was sending intelligence to Washington through his colonel, William Malcom. In 1779 he was made captain, and for the next three years he took an active part in fighting and in gathering intelligence, mostly around Dobbs Ferry. In 1780 he captured the famous spy, James Moody, and delivered him safely to West Point. (Pennypacker in his book **Washington's Spies**, suggests, however, that the capture was not due to Lawrence's initiative, but was contrived by Moody so that he could be taken to West Point and communicate with Benedict Arnold about his betrayal.)

### Different Names for the Settlement

All through the Revolution, Washington and his officers called the present hamlet of Palisades, Dobbs Ferry, while spies called it Snedens or Sneethins Landing, or some variation of the name, probably because if they were not themselves Snedens, they knew about the Tory Snedens who had lived at the bottom of the hill.

### The Blockhouse

At a low point in the war, in August, 1780, Washington ordered the construction of a blockhouse at the western end of Dobbs Ferry, explaining to Rochambeau "We intend to establish a communication that will save us a considerable land transportation in case New York is our eventual object." This was to be used as a guard for the ferry route,



Mr. Gilman standing on the ruins of the blockhouse in 1904. Most of the smaller stones were used by Angie Hyde to build her house, just to the south, but the larger stones remain.

a center for the collection of intelligence, and a means of communication\*. Washington himself established headquarters in Tappan that year from August 8th to August 23rd, and again late in September for the André trial.

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\*No mention of this blockhouse is found in standard histories of the Revolution; but George Budke in **Rockland County During the Revolution**, redresses the balance. On page 149 he writes: "That this fortification is the most important relic of the Revolutionary War not only in Rockland County, but anywhere in the vicinity of New York is beyond question." In Appendix No. 14 there is a more detailed account of the blockhouse.

The blockhouse, according to spies' reports, consisted of an outer circular breastwork eight feet high, taking in not only the brow of the cliff but also a part of the upper slope, and an inner square breastwork of the same height on the top of the cliff to the east of the present Woods Road. These walls have been described by James J. Haring, a local historian who lived in Palisades more than a hundred years ago, as of timber faced with stone. The square inner structure had a timber roof over a lower story, and an upper story with no roof but a four-foot parapet. Surrounding the whole complex was an "abatis," composed of tops of trees with the ends of branches all sharpened, pointing outward,

close together, and with the butts fastened securely in the ground near the wall.

The blockhouse when completed was usually garrisoned by a company of about twenty-five men; but on occasion, when it was being constructed, or when regiments were crossing the river, the tiny settlement swarmed with hundreds of soldiers.

### Soldiers' Living Conditions—and Officers'

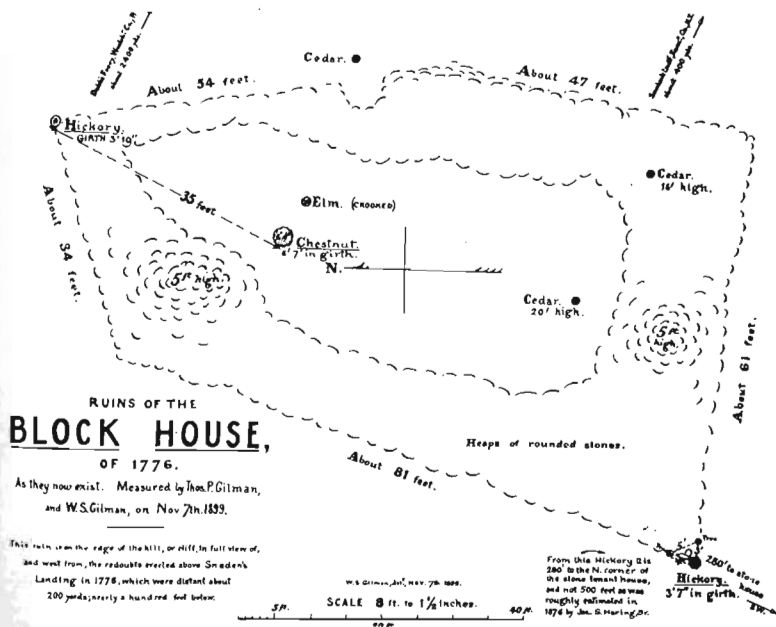
The conditions under which most of the soldiers lived while they were working on the blockhouse were described vividly by Sergeant Joseph Plumb Martin, who was stationed there as a member of the Corps of Sappers and Miners:

"That fiend, scarcity, followed us here; and when we chanced to get any meat, we had no salt. For a long time we had to go three-fourths of a mile to the river to get water, which was trifling, however, compared with the trouble of having nothing to cook, which was often the case with us. There was indeed a plenty of fruit to be had . . . but there were mosquitoes enough to take a pound of blood from us, while we could make an ounce."

(It was probably at this time that "Washington's Spring," partway up the hill, was discovered.)

As an officer, Dr. James Thacher, who was stationed at Tappan at the same time, had few such privations. One night he dined with Baron Von Steuben and remarked complacently in his diary, "The Baron keeps a splendid table."

Thacher was one of the many visitors from the camp who came over to watch the building of the blockhouse; and later, in 1782, he was to be stationed there, either in the blockhouse or nearby. One may be sure, however, that he didn't care much for the scenery. He came from Barnstable on Cape Cod, with its sand dunes and marshes, and



A plan of the blockhouse ruins measured in 1899 by Cousin Tom and Mr. Gilman.

when he was staying up the river, across from West Point, he deplored the view, "with its hideous mountains and dreary forests."

### Benedict Arnold in Snedens

Even before the blockhouse was completed, on September 11th, 1780, Benedict Arnold spent a day there to escape the patrol boats which had prevented his first meeting with Major John André to arrange the betrayal of West Point. The letter he wrote to Washington from the blockhouse is almost amusing in its duplicity. He said:

"Yesterday I had the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 7th, and am very happy to hear such favorable accounts from the southward. I hope our affairs in that quarter will soon wear a more pleasing aspect than ever."

Of course, if his plans had gone through, the aspect would have been pleasing only for Arnold and the British. He added:

"The inhabitants of Westchester complain, that the country is not sufficiently guarded against the enemy. I have, therefore, sent Colonel Hay fifty men from West Point, as more eligible than taking them from the lines."

This was undoubtedly the same Colonel Udny Hay to whom he had already sent two hundred men as guards and two hundred as woodcutters. Colonel Lamb had protested that with so many men gone they would not be able to finish the works at West Point, nor to defend what was there; now Arnold was sending more. He went on:

**Benedict Arnold who spent a day at the Dobbs Ferry blockhouse in September, 1780, and the pass which he gave to André.**



BENEDICT ARNOLD

*Head Quarters Robinsons  
New Sep: 22<sup>d</sup> 1780*

*Permit Mr. John Anderson to pass the  
guards to the White Plains, or below  
at Mr. Chems. He being on Father  
Business by my Direction.*

*B. Arnold M Gen*

"I came here this morning in order to establish signals, to be observed in case the enemy came up the river; to give some directions respecting the guard-boats; and to have a beacon fixed upon the mountain, about five miles south of King's Ferry, which will be necessary to alarm the country. The one fixed there formerly has been destroyed."

This suggests that he was making sure that the communications with the blockhouse would be confused, that the guard-boats would in some way be immobilized, and that if it was not indeed he himself who destroyed the beacon, at least he would see that it was not fixed. When he said:

"There are some cannon at West Point which are of little service, except for signal-guns. I propose sending two of them to Colonel Gouvion [at the blockhouse] for that purpose, if agreeable to your Excellency."

it is obvious that it was another plan for diminishing West Point's defenses.

Sergeant Martin afterwards told of seeing Arnold walking in the woods that day, and said he thought he was "upon some devilry."

A letter which Washington received from General Nathanael Greene a few days later, on September 23rd, also means more to present-day readers than it did to Washington. Greene was giving news of the Army at Tappan, and mentioned that:

"The Block House goes on very well and will be complete in four or five days, and I think it will be a very strong place. The Minister [of France, Luzerne] was down to view it yesterday."

At the end of the letter he added casually:

"There has been some firing on the East side of

the North River at the shipping which lay near Tallards Point but I have no account of what effect it had more than to make the shipping move a little further from the shore."

This, of course, referred to Colonel Livingston's firing at the **Vulture** off Tellers Point the day before; and Greene with the rest of the world was soon to learn that its effect was to force André to return to New York by land and be captured.

Two days later those at the blockhouse saw the British Sloop-of-War, **Vulture**, going down the river with Arnold on board, fleeing to the British in New York. They fired some shots which might have changed history if their aim had been better.



Major André, in a sketch he made of himself, the night before he was hanged. When he was imprisoned in Tappan, most of the communications regarding him came through Snedens Landing.

## The Capture of André

An interesting, perhaps apocryphal, story about André's capture across the river in Tarrytown is told by Elias Boudinot in his journal. André, he says, "came to the cross Roads, one leading to New York, the other to Tarry Town on the North River. It so providentially happened that the Horse on which he rode had been bred in Tarry Town. André lost in thought did not attend to either his Horse or to the Road, and the Horse naturally took the Road he had been used to, and André soon found himself challenged by a sentinel."

When André had been captured near Tarrytown and taken to Tappan by way of West Point to be tried and hanged, it was to the western Dobbs Ferry that the British sent messenger after messenger in an effort to save André's life.

### British at Snedens Trying to Help André

The forlorn hope of the British and their final desperation can be read in the eyewitness accounts of the missions that came through Dobbs Ferry in the next few days.

One soldier, Sergeant Edmund Gale, described in his diary of September 27th coming over from Tappan with Sgts. Frost and Poland to see how the building of the block-house was getting on. While they were there they saw a British naval officer arrive with a flag of truce from the **Vulture**, probably carrying Beverly Robinson's letter in defense of André. American officers took the emissary to "a house near the ferry," which might have been Mollie Sneden's tavern.

The happenings of the next two or three days were described in the diary of Colonel Israel Angell, who came over from Tappan to be officer of the day at the ferry. On



**This Washington Spring, half-way down the road which bears its name, is said to have been used by Washington and his troops during the Revolution.**

September 29th Sir "Hary" Clinton sent a flag of truce with a message that André had gone to see Arnold under the protection of a flag and ought not to be detained.

That maneuver failing, the next day, the diary continued, "a flagg came from the Enemy to dobbs Ferry and brought a number of things from the Enemy to Major Andrews [André] his servant came in the flagg."

The last fruitless interview, between the British General Robertson and the American General Nathanael Greene at Dobbs Ferry on October 1st, was described by Chief Justice William Smith, who waited with the other emissaries on the **Greyhound** off "Corbett's Point." General Robertson

brought a letter from Arnold which stated that André had come under the cover of Arnold's flag, and should not be considered a spy; but Greene "produced a letter from André to Washington in which he faults his own Disguizes in the Transaction with Arnold, and confesses he had no Flagg . . . Greene, said Arnold was a Rascal and André a Man of Honor whom he believed, and they would consent to no Conferences or Additional Evidence." The **Greyhound** lay there off Snedens Landing till noon the next day, when André was executed.

### **Believable Traditions: Zig-zag Road, Washington's Spring and Washington's Table**

There is a local tradition that the road to the ferry, which used to come straight up the Palisades, was changed during the Revolution to its present zig-zags in order to make it easier for wagons carrying guns and other heavy traffic. Another tradition is that Washington's Spring, half way up the hill, was used by the troops — perhaps even by Washington. A third of these completely believable traditions is that Washington, Lafayette, and Von Steuben dined at the **Big House** during the Revolution as guests of the Lawrences. Certainly Washington visited the blockhouse at least once, probably while it was being built in August 1780, as did the French Minister, Dr. James Thacher, and others from the army; and since Lafayette and Von Steuben were in Orangetown at that time, it seems reasonable to suggest that Washington might have brought them with him to see the works, and afterwards to dine with his friends the Lawrences. Jonathan Lawrence the Elder Senior had died in 1777; but in his will he mentioned that three sons were living with him, and probably Jonathan Lawrence Jr. also made the **Big House** his home. A beautiful old table which had been in the possession of the Lawrence descendants



**The Washington Table, where Generals Washington, Lafayette, and Von Steuben were said to have dined as guests of the Lawrences, probably in 1780. Bought in 1899 from Mrs. John G. Willsey, a descendant of the first Jonathan Lawrence, and always kept in the Palisades Library.**

until 1899 has always been called the Washington Table. It is now the property of the Palisades Library.

### **The Shot from the Asia**

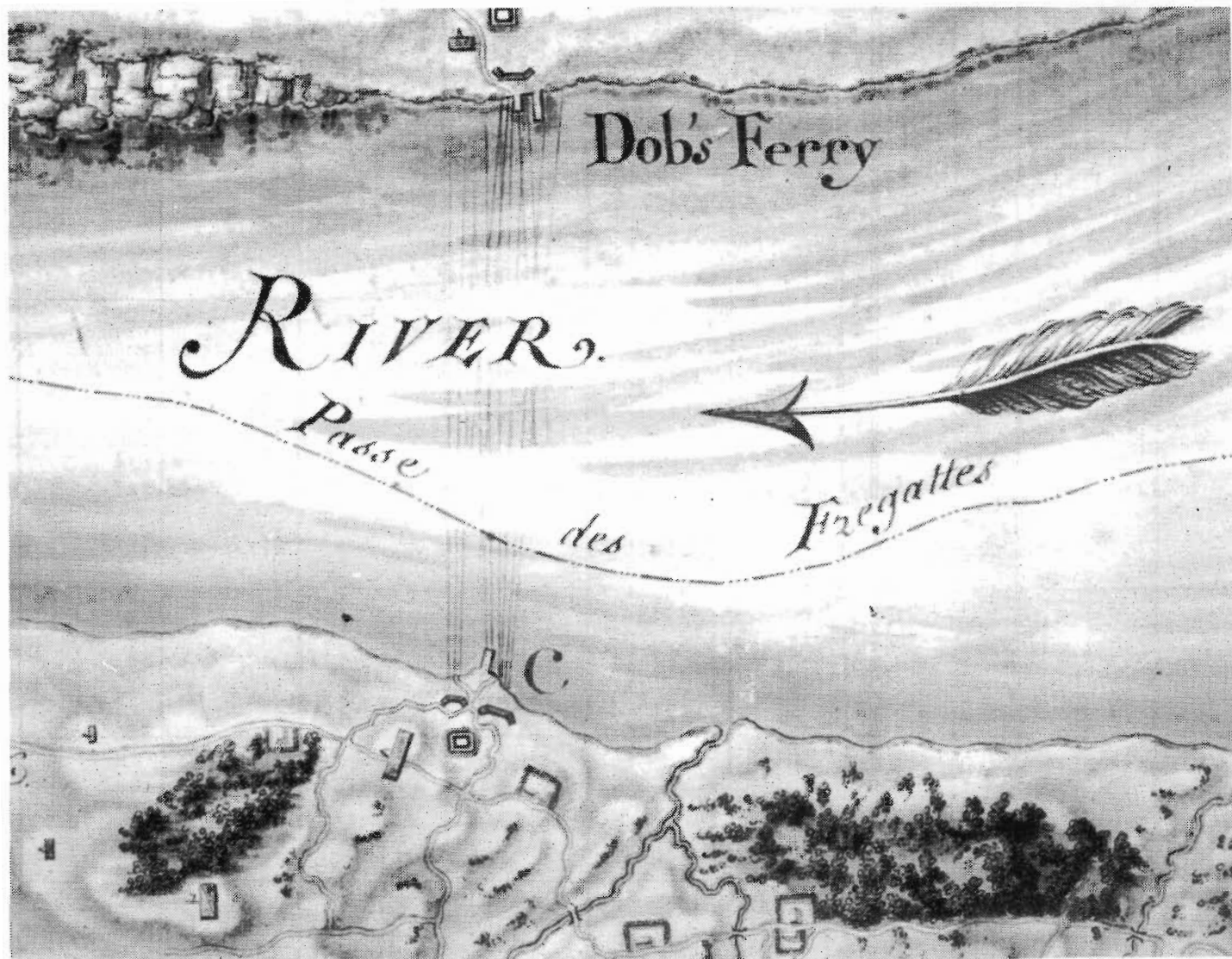
Another unverified but possible story recounted by Mr. Gilman was of the shot from the British frigate **Asia**\*

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\*It is interesting that Carl Carmer, in "The Hudson", says the **Asia** joined the **Phoenix** and the **Rose** up the river in 1776, and that they bombarded the shore. He doesn't say where he got this information.







Detail of the French map of the camp of Washington's and Rochambeau's armies in Westchester in 1781. This shows "Dob's Ferry" only on the west side of the river, with redoubts part way up the hill and the blockhouse at the top. The structure to the left of the road may be the Mollie Sneden house shown on the Erskine map. (Page 22)

which cut off the top of a cedar tree at the top of the hill — or were there two cedars? Old Mr. Herbert Lawrence told Mr. Gilman that the tree was at the south edge of the “timothy meadow” (between the present Route 9W and the Post Office), and he often used to sit on the spot; while old Mr. J. T. Stansbury said it was a tree southeast of the Presbyterian Church, and showed Mr. Gilman a piece of the root. A third more tangible indication of a bombardment was the cannon ball which John Hagen found in 1897, “where Mr. Lawrence had been ploughing, N.W. of the parsonage.”

A rumor which Mr. Gilman did **not** mention, but which has cropped up in various historical accounts, is that the **Big House** served during the Revolution as headquarters for General Washington or General Nathanael Greene. In Appendix No. 15 these accounts are detailed and evaluated.

### Captain Pray and The Water Guard

In the spring of 1781 John Pray of the newly-formed Water Guard\* based in Nyack, was given command of the garrison of the blockhouse, and visited it every day. He kept a vigilant watch on the river and collected information for General Washington, who was seldom far from the Hudson.

### The French-American Encampment

In July and August of 1781 General Washington and

his ally, General Rochambeau, camped together across the river in the embattled “neutral ground”, and made plans for the attack on the British at Yorktown which was to bring the end of the war in sight. The fine map of the encampment shows “Dob’s” or “Dop’s” Ferry only on the west side.

### The March to Yorktown

When the armies were ready to cross the river, on August 19th, en route for Yorktown, General Hazen’s regiment was said to have gone by Dobbs Ferry to join the “two or three Hundred Jersey militia posted at Corbet’s Point,

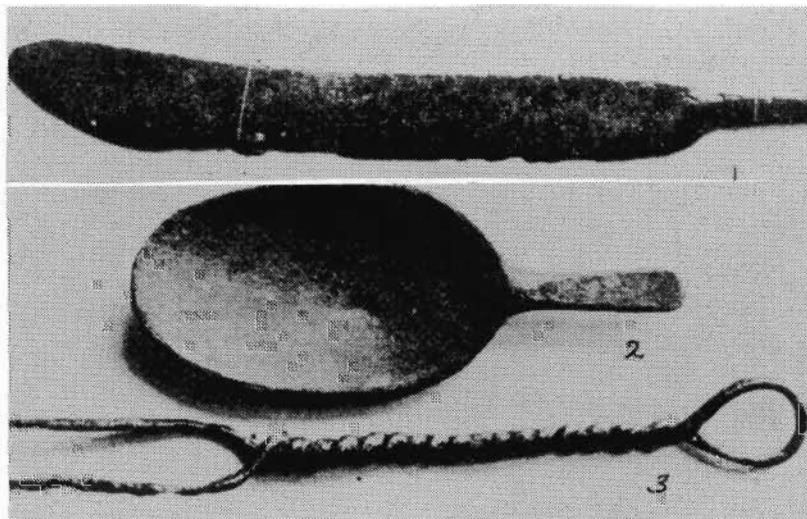


Table knife, spoon, and fork improvised by Revolutionary War soldiers, found in the ruins of the blockhouse by the Field Expedition Committee of the New-York Historical Society in December, 1924. Many other artifacts were found at the time, including buttons from Revolutionary War uniforms. These can all be seen at the New-York Historical Society in New York City.

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\*This military Water Guard is sometimes confused with the Shore Guard, which was organized early in the Revolution by local inhabitants to watch out for maurading parties from British ships and to protect their neighbors from them. The Shore Guard sometimes communicated by beacons, or signal flares.

the Western Shore of the Ferry at Dobb's, 20 miles up the Hudson" mentioned by William Smith. From there they marched together to Chatham, N.J., where large bake ovens were constructed to convince the enemy that the aim was an attack on Staten Island. The rest of the two armies made the long march\* north to the much more capacious Kings Ferry, and then south again on the west side of the river.

### Dobbs Ferry as Center of Communications

The winter of 1781-82 was comparatively quiet at the blockhouse; but on May 10, 1782, Washington issued an order giving the post at Dobbs Ferry a new and important role. "I have given the most peremptory orders", he wrote, "that no Flags from the enemy shall be received at any other place or post but Dobbs Ferry on any business or pretext whatever, and that no flag from us to them shall (for any reason however pressing) be permitted to pass to the Enemies Lines except from the same place."

Although the actual fighting had ended with the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in October, 1781, and peace negotiations were going on in Europe, Washington did not dare to relax. He could not believe that the British had sent one of their greatest generals, Sir Guy Carleton, to New York merely to wind up British affairs in this country.

The blockhouse became an important listening post. Members of families separated by the war were allowed to meet there, prisoners of war were exchanged, messages were sent and received; and the officers in charge were able to

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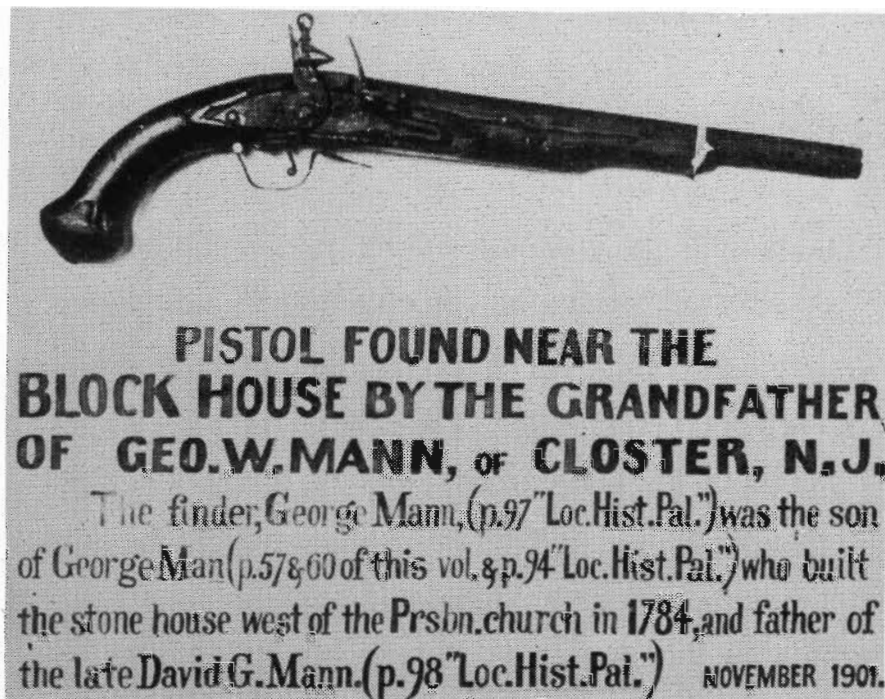
\*Clermont-Crèvecoeur in his journal gave a horrifying description of the French army's difficulties during the six days that it took to march the forty miles to King's Ferry. (See Appendix No. 9).

gather important information for Washington from these encounters.

### Activities at the Blockhouse

In the summer of 1782, Dr. Thacher describes some of the activity;

"The tour of duty at Dobbs' ferry having fallen to our regiment, we marched from Nelson's Point [opposite West Point] on the 24th [of July], crossed the river at King's Ferry, and on the 25th encamped near the block-house at this place. This afternoon a flag of truce arrived here from New York with despatches for



General Washington, which were immediately forwarded to him.

"August 5th. Flags are passing and repassing from this post to New York and back every day, and several gentlemen have been permitted to come out of that city. By the intelligence which they bring, corroborating those which we receive from other sources, commissioners are sent from the court of London to Paris,



**Col. William Stephens Smith, who was stationed at the blockhouse in Dobbs Ferry in 1782 and 1783, and who complained of the "general imbecility of the post". He later married the daughter of John and Abigail Adams, held several high positions, was involved in some crack-brained schemes, and ended his days as a farmer in Lebanon, N.J.**

where they are to meet French and American commissioners for the important purpose of negotiating a general peace . . . A very considerable number of deserters have come out from New York within these few days past."

Since this duty, combined with the command of the Water Guard, was too much even for the energetic Captain Pray, Washington had arranged in June 1782 for Colonel John Greateon, with part of his regiment, to relieve the garrison of the blockhouse and encamp the rest of the detachment under its cover. He added: "Captain Pray, who has long commanded at that post, and who has acquitted himself in that service with great reputation, is still to retain the command of the Water Guard." Colonel Greateon was apparently of two minds about his command. He wrote General Heath on June 21, 1782: "I think that two field officers is little enough at this post, one to attend to the discipline of the troops, the other to flags. The duty here is considerable hard. I have but about one hundred men present fit for duty — a grand command indeed! If I had my proper command this place would be very agreeable." Later, in October, 1782, Washington wrote to Colonel Webb: "Although there will not be a field officers Command at Dobbs Ferry, yet the importance of the Post renders it essential, that the Major whose Batallion is on duty, should be there to superintend the general business of the post."

### **William Stephens Smith**

The Commissary of Prisoners, Colonel William Stephens Smith, who later married the daughter of John Adams, was stationed at the blockhouse from October 1782 on. He was an ambitious young man, who had asked for service in the Caribbean, where there was still fighting. He felt he was in a backwater in Dobbs Ferry, and wrote to



Washington, complaining of the “general imbecility of the post.””

Soon after Colonel Smith arrived, the high-spirited Captain Pray, who had been answerable to no immediate superior for so long, was complaining to Washington that although he had every man in the detachment cutting wood and building huts, besides their duty on the river, and although there was a public express horse at the post at Dobbs Ferry, “nothwithstanding the Commanding Officer orders me to send a boat and crew with those [private] letters to Head Quarters, which I cannot possibly do on account of the Wind and not being abbl to take the men from other duty. I am oblige to Send the bearer off on Foot.”

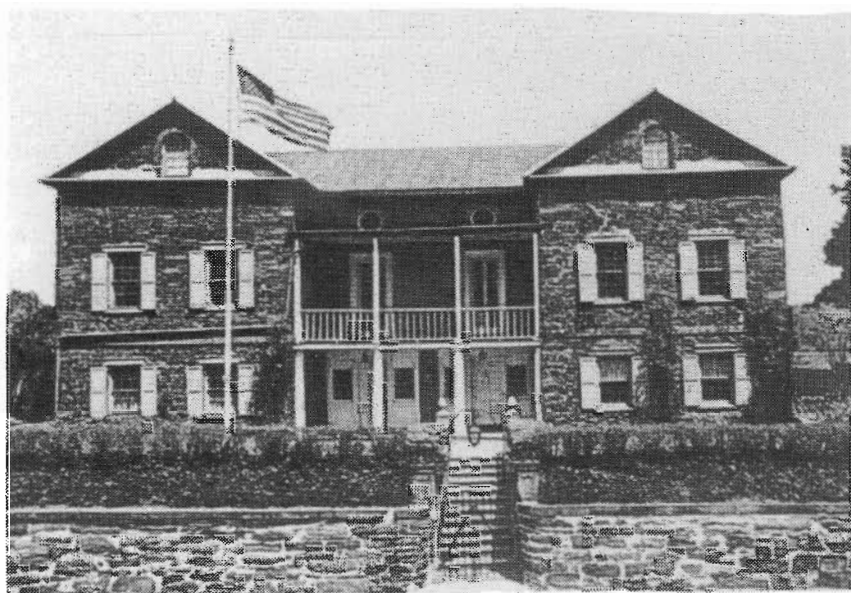
As he so often had to do in that army of individuals, Washington wrote back through an aide, reminding Captain Pray of military discipline and telling him he must do what Colonel Smith said.

### Captain Pray's Blunder

Captain Pray's enthusiasm sometimes got him into trouble. Budke describes one such exploit. “On April 1st [1782] a party of Captain Pray's men of the Water Guard, stationed at South Nyack, who were on shore on the east side of the Hudson fell in with a party of the local militia, and in the dark, they attacked each other, four of the latter were wounded, and the entire party taken prisoners before the mistake was discovered.”

Captain Lawrence, Captain Pray, and Colonel Smith were all actively engaged in securing intelligence for Washington, and there are many references to all three officers in his correspondence. Washington also wrote often about the importance of the blockhouse and its place in his strategy.

**The Abigail Adams Smith House, 421 East 61st, N.Y.C., now the headquarters of the Colonial Dames of America. In 1795 William Stephens Smith and his wife Abigail Adams bought this property and planned to build an imposing house, to be called Mount Vernon. Within a year, however, financial reverses forced him to sell it, and the property became known as “Smith's Folly”. In 1924 it was bought by the Colonial Dames, and it contains many mementoes of the Smiths.**





### Jonathan Lawrence Jr. Resigns

In 1782, when the main fighting ceased, the years of privation caught up with Captain Jonathan Lawrence Jr., and he was forced to resign because of ill health. He had a difficult time, as did the other Lawrences, and the **Big House** finally went out of the family for a couple of years. In 1794, however, after receiving a land grant from the government and selling it, he was able to buy the house back and lived there until his death in 1802.

### Nineteenth Century Lawrences

His son Herbert inherited it, and lived to know the Palisades historian, Winthrop Gilman, in the mid-nineteenth century. Strangely enough, he doesn't seem to have said much about his distinguished father. It was Herbert Lawrence who in 1861 gave the land for the flag pole in Palisades. Another son, Jonathan, the Fourth, married the daughter of Nicholas Gesner, who often mentioned him in his nineteenth century diary. A third son, George, was Palisades' first postmaster.

### Lawrence Burying Ground

Most of the Lawrences are buried in the Palisades

Cemetery, which was at first the Lawrence Burying Ground. This dates back to the time of Jonathan Lawrence, the "Elder Senior", whose wife, Mary Lawrence, was the first to be buried there, in 1774. (See Appendix No. 5).

### First Salute to the Flag

At the end of the Revolution a historic event occurred at Dobbs Ferry (now Snedens). When General Washington first met Sir Guy Carleton in Tappan in May 1783\* to work out the details of the evacuation of New York City, the British frigate **Perseverance** anchored off the western end of Dobbs Ferry. After the negotiations were finished, Washington was invited to dinner aboard the **Perseverance**. As he boarded the ship, and again as he left, the new nation was first saluted, in his person, with volleys of seventeen guns.

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\*In a report which he sent home to Hesse-Castel, Major Baurmeister of the Hessian army said that on May 5th, the night before the conference, General Washington was "at Lawrence's house, across from Dobbs Ferry". (The editor of Baurmeister's memoirs notes "not identified".) Baurmeister often made misstatements, and nothing has yet been found to confirm or contradict this.



## VI. FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

**Sneden Family, Newcomers, Bone Factory, Shad, Quarry, The Landing's Commercial Heyday, Shipping and Shipbuilding, Sneden's and Lawrence's Shipyard in New York, Strawberries, Samuel Sneden, Gesner's Diary, Destruction of Forests, Trips to New York, Small Stores, Blacksmith Shops, Frequent Fires, Methodism, Trouble Between Reform and Old Side, Moses Taylor, Gesner-Conklin Burying Ground, Oak Tree Road, Post Row, Summer Kitchens, André's Toe Bone, Jack Earnest, Skunk Hollow, The Mountain Church and the Swamp Church, Turkey Ridge, or The Mountain, The Civil War, Anneke Jans.**

### **Sneden Family**

**A**FTER the Revolution Mollie Sneden and her unmarried son Dennis stayed on in New York, at least until after 1788, and Dennis carried on a coastal trade. Later they moved back to Snedens. They were said to have lived in the "**Mollie Sneden House**", just north of the road near the Landing; and since Elison Westervelt, Mollie's great-granddaughter, who made this assertion to Miss Coates, was twelve when Mollie died in 1810 at the age of a hundred and one, one would like to believe her. Loring McMillen, the architectural historian, reports, however, that the house shows no sign of an eighteenth century origin. It is known to have been moved back from the road by "Dan Ed" Conklin, the boat-builder, in the 1880's, and it may have been substantially rebuilt at that time.

The stone house south of the Landing road, later to be called the "**Captain Larry Sneden House**", must have been built by John Sneden Senior, "The Patriot", soon after the end of the Revolution. Loring McMillen says that it was built around 1800. It is possible that the original "**Cheer Hall**" or "fferry house", was gone by that time. No record has been found of it after 1769, when a boundary settlement referred to "Sneydon's House, formerly Corbet's". The southern stone house may have been built to fill a need for a house near the ferry where passengers could wait for wind and tide. John Sneden owned it until 1818, when he sold it to his son Robert.

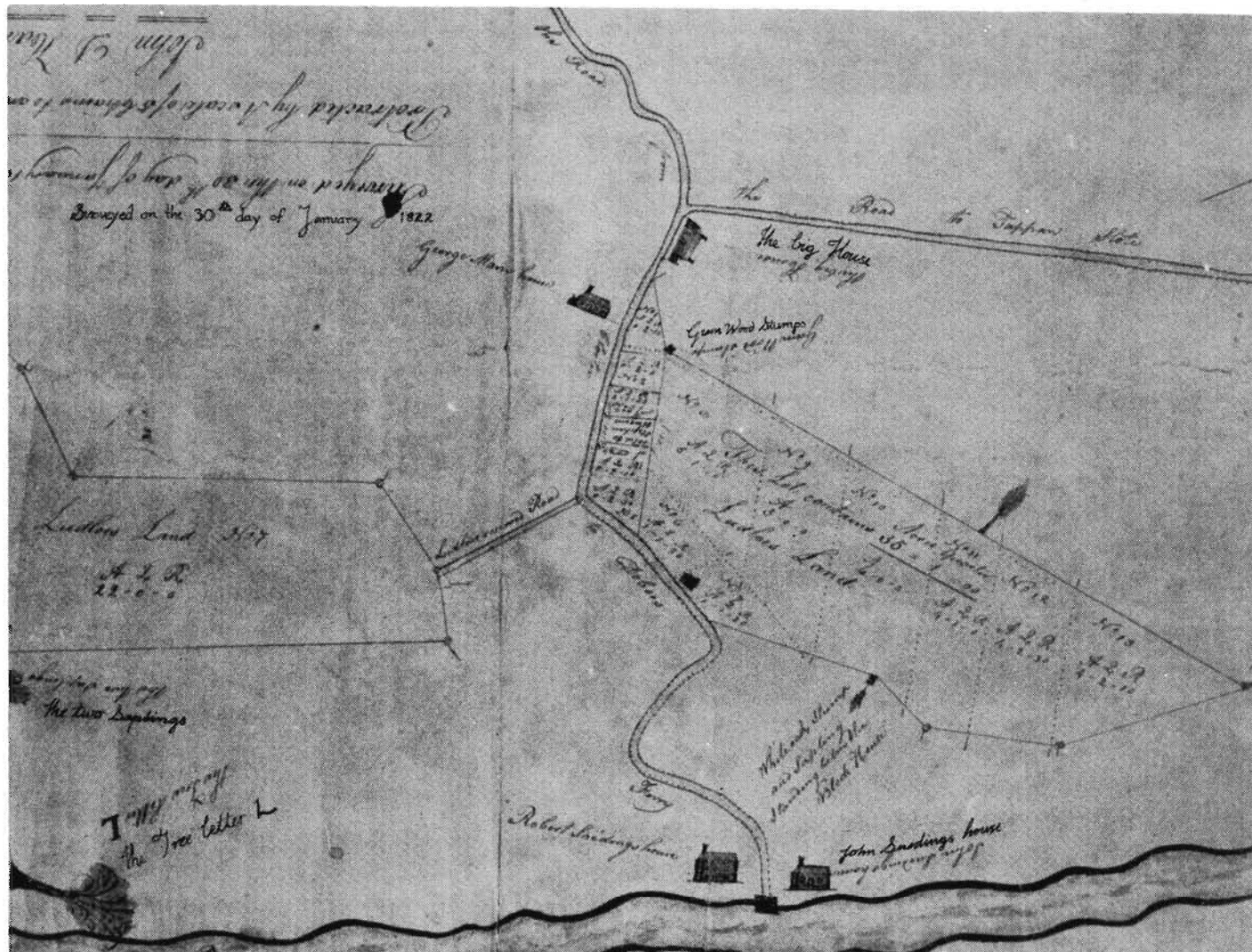
Dennis, who died in 1824, aged eighty-nine, may have helped his brother John run the ferry when he first returned. (Mollie, in her late seventies and eighties, would hardly have been working on it, and there is no indication that Robert



Mollie Sneden had lived in Cheer Hall earlier as the wife and widow of Robert Sneden; but this house is considered more particularly hers, although it seems to have been completely rebuilt since the time when she and her son Dennis lived there.

Captain Larry Sneden's house. Built probably after the Revolution. The Ferry House is in the lower right corner.

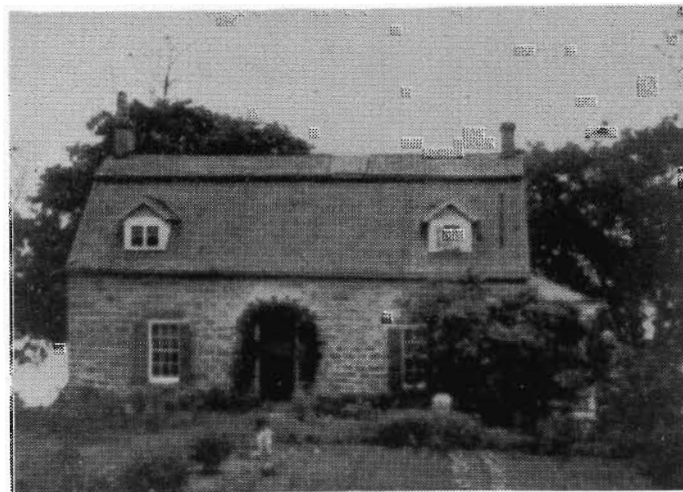




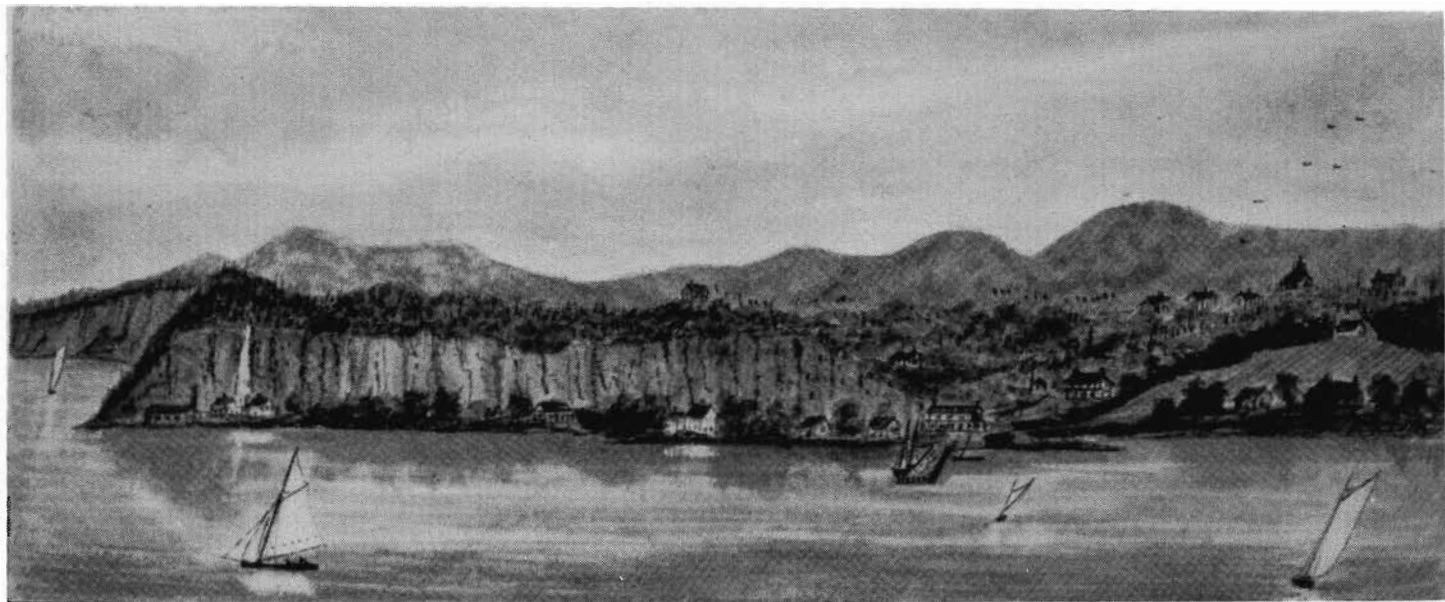
The central part of John D. Haring's map of 1822, showing two Sneden's houses by the river, the Mann house and the Big House at the top of the hill, and one other, not identified, part way up the hill. (There must have been others, not shown.) "A Q R" stands for acres, quarter acres, and rods. Where some of the legends are upside down, Annie Gerard has written them right side up as well. The map hangs on the wall of the Palisades Library.



**The William Sneden or Stone House, to the north of the road at the Landing. It was once thought to be Cheer Hall; now it is considered to have been built around 1820 by John Sneden Junior. This photograph was made in 1893, before the steps were added — twice — and removed twice.**



**The back view of the William Sneden house, before 1915.**



**"Sneden's Landing, 1858", by the painter Sneden.**

**Although the skyline is unrealistic, this shows many identifiable houses, including the Bone Factory at the Waterfall and the Torrey house at the top of the cliff.**

Jr. ever did). No records of the ferry have been found, however, until 1807, when John Sneden bought a second-hand pettiauger for it, and 1822, when John Sneden Jr. ("Boss Sneden") bought a new one. Since Boss Sneden lived on Sparkill Creek, in what is now Piermont, and had a shipyard there, he must have had a helper in Snedens. This perhaps explains his need to buy land in Snedens from his father in 1818, to build the stone house north of the road for a ferry-house, and to arrange for one of his sons to live there.\*

The 1822 map of Snedens in the Library shows Robert Sneden to the south of the Landing road, and John Sneden to the north, which fits in with Mr. McMillen's statement that the northern stone house was built around 1820. He found no pre-Revolutionary houses at all at the Landing, although it is known that there were a number of houses there in Colonial times.

Family tradition says that "Boss" Sneden's son Lawrence, "Captain Larry", was living in the northern stone house in 1826; and he probably started his long career as ferryman then, if not before. In 1834, after his father's death, he bought the southern stone house and lived there, running the ferry, almost till his death in 1871.

His brother William moved into the northern stone

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\*In Appendix No. 17 a detailed account of land transactions, wills, etc., supplies the background for these suppositions.



house, and lived there until **his** death, also in 1871.\* William's children all died relatively early of consumption, and neither he nor Captain Larry had any Sneden descendants, so the Snedens "of the Landing" gradually died out. Captain Larry's daughter, Mary Neal, however, married Captain William Coates, who took over the ferry and ran it off and on, alternating with one or another of William Sneden's sons, until 1903. It was their daughter, Ella Sneden Coates, who saved many Sneden papers and, in **The Story of the Ferry**, gave her recollections of what she had heard from her father.

### **Newcomers**

In the meantime, much of the land at the bottom of the hill was sold to a vigorous lot of newcomers — Dobbs', Willseys, Manns, VanOrdens, Stanburys, Voris'; and Palisades, then Rockland, became a very busy village.

### **Bone Factory**

To the south, near the waterfall which fell from the top of the cliff almost to the river, there was a "bone factory."\*\* On old maps this was called Carbonville or Carrinville. Several other bone factories are marked on mid-century New Jersey maps on the shore below the Palisades. No contemporary written description of these has been found, but Stanley Bradley of Alpine was told that the many horses

and mules that dropped dead in the streets of New York City every day were loaded into scows and brought to the factories — all necessarily isolated because of the stench — where the meat was removed and the carcasses boiled and ground up for bone meal. The painting, "Snedens Landing, 1858" by Sneden"\* shows the bone factory at the waterfall — a long low building with a tall chimney.

### **Shad**

After the middle of the century, the bone factory workers gave way to shad fishermen, who kept their boats and nets around Captain Jack Coates' "Little House" at the cascade. Mr. Gilman described the "busy scene": "Jack Coates' premises were then surrounded by farmer-fishermen who came from Closter and the vicinity by the now almost impassable ravine road, to procure a quantity of shad for salting down . . . The ravine road ended, as now, at the top of the Cascade, & the rest of the journey used to be performed on foot".

### **Quarry**

Between the cascade and the road at the Landing was the sandstone quarry, divided into fifty-foot strips among the eight Sneden heirs. According to Ella Coates there were twenty-five men working in the quarries at this time.

### **The Landing's Commercial Heyday**

At the landing there were several small stores and at

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\*Cameron Blaikie Jr. points out that, according to the Northern Railroad of New Jersey records, William Sneden was engaged in 1857 to survey the course of the railroad from Jersey City to Piermont.

\*\*See Appendix No. 19 on Bone Factories.

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\*See Appendix No. 40 on The Artist Sneden.

least one inn. Ella Sneden Coates tells about Snedens Landing during its heyday.

“Wagons of farm and garden produce came from Closter, Tappan, Duncantown, Pascack, Kakiat, Kas-kat and Kinnikamack, and the surrounding country. A warehouse some 25 feet square stood by the river at the end of the public road. About the year 1850 Capt. Lawrence J. Sneden built a pier extending 500 feet into the river, wide enough for three wagons to pass abreast, with a T at the end towards the river, to turn upon, to accomodate his perriaugers, and other craft. The wagons often stood in a line from the top of the hill (by the first Library — Watson house) to the end of the pier waiting their turn to unload.”

[**The Watson house** (now the “Ding Dong”) is at the second bend of the road, about a third of the way to the real top of the hill. The goods shipped included lumber, meat, dairy products, and garden produce, especially strawberries.]

### Shipping and Ship-building

“The usual means of reaching the city before the year 1859 was by steamer or sloop. The fare was 25 cents\*, including lodging overnight when necessary. As the berths only numbered a half a dozen, and the passengers were often a score, travel by this means was not luxurious.

Capt. Peter VanOrden, John Wilsey, Sr. and Jr., John Vooris and Henry Dobbs, resident here, owned

& commanded vessels engaged in river traffic or voyaging to Virginia for pine wood and oysters. Ship-building was then an important industry at Sneden’s



Miss Ella Coates, 1861-1949. Daughter of Captain William Coates and grand-daughter of Captain Larry Sneden. She owned many Sneden papers, and in the first article in *The Story of the Ferry* she left a vivid picture of Snedens Landing in the early nineteenth century.

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\*In studying old copies of the Rockland County Journal, however, Tom Demarest found an advertisement in November 25, 1834, for the steamer **Washington Irving** which charged only 12½ cents for the daily trip from Nyack to New York. If one got on at Snedens, where it stopped to meet the stage from Tappan 25 minutes later, the fare must have been less.

Landing. Timber was cut on the hills, brought down to the landing, sawed by hand in saw pits and made into the fine sloops which were launched at high tide from the ways in the ship-yards in front of the **William Sneden** house and south of the **Ferry House**.

"Among the vessels launched here were the "**Accommodation**", a sloop of 60 tons; the "**Benjamin Franklin**", still in service from Yonkers; the "**Chief**", a schooner of 160 tons & very fast, and the "**Brave**", of like size in 1844, the last vessel built here."

Miss Coates seems to have forgotten another vessel built in Snedens in 1868. Daniel de Noyelles, in **Within These Gates**, calls attention to the **Rockland County Messenger** of July, 1868 which tells of the launching: "On Wednesday of last week, July 9, 1868, the usual quiet village of Sneden's Landing was set in a blaze of excitement, by the announcement made a few days previous, of the launch of a new vessel from the yard of its owner, Capt. William Sneden." Capt. Sneden, who then lived in the old house to the north of the Landing, sprinkled the boat with Hudson River water and declared the name to be "the **Union Volunteer**, who saved this great Republic from monarchy". (Thereby seeming to cover both wars.)

When the steamboats began to replace sailing vessels, two of the best-known were built by men from "Rockland". The **Orange**, the first steamboat to run from Nyack, was built in Nyack by Nicholas Gesner's nephew, Henry Gesner, in 1827. Green's **History of Rockland County** gives a detailed history of this pioneering steamboat, which was sometimes called "The Pot-Cheese" because of its shape (75 feet overall, with a 22 foot beam), and sometimes, sarcastically, "The Flying Dutchman", or "The Gazelle". The fuel used on the **Orange** was wood, and huge piles of cordwood stood along the roadside, from the foot of Main Street to Piermont Avenue. The **Orange** ran between Nyack and New York, stopping at Tappan Slote (Piermont). Cole in his **History of Rockland County** told why the next steam-

boat was built by Dutchmen at Tappan Slote. They were so angered by the failure of the **Orange** to stop at their landing one day that they built the **Rockland**, 25 feet longer and considerably faster. The **Orange** soon added a false bow and altered her paddle wheels, which put her ahead again.

In 1834 a group of Rockland County men formed a stock company and had the **Warren** built by Sneden's and Lawrence's boat-yard in New York. Nicholas Gesner often mentioned that his son-in-law, Jonathan Lawrence, Herbert Lawrence's younger brother, was in New York working on the **Warren** or fetching lumber for it. This was a larger boat, which made seven stops between Haverstraw and New York.

### **Sneden's & Lawrence's Shipyard in New York**

In Appendix No. 21 there are many clues from Gesner's diary and elsewhere, which, put together like a jigsaw puzzle, show that Sneden's and Lawrence's — or Lawrence's and Sneden's — shipyard was owned in the 1830's and 1840's by Benjamin Sneden, brother of Samuel (of the Snedens in the Field, described below) and Herbert Lawrence, son of Jonathan Lawrence Jr.; that it was situated in Williamsburgh, Brooklyn, with a sail-loft on Water Street, New York City, and that it employed a number of the neighbors from "Rockland". After Benjamin Sneden's death in 1842 it seems that his son Samuel took his place.

### **Strawberries**

When steamboats began to make regular trips on the river, farmers began to grow strawberries in quantity for the New York market. They shipped them in small splint

baskets with handles which held about a pint, and sold for five cents each. The grower received about half the price, paying the freight out of his share.

By 1854 the Nyack Steamship Line put on a special Strawberry Boat for the three weeks of the season; and five years later the Northern Railroad of New Jersey had a special Strawberry Train. In 1860 it was reckoned that in the short growing season more than a million baskets were sent from Rockland County by train to New York, in addition to those that went by teams or boat. In **Retrospect**,

## Strawberry Boat,

Landing at Piermont Plank Wharf and Closter.

The Steamer

### ARROW,

Capt. R. T. Blanch,

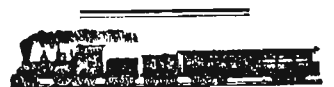
Will run (during Strawberry season) commencing Monday, June 12, and continue three weeks, as follows: Leave Nyack every night, (except Sunday and Saturday night) at 10 o'clock; Piermont Plank Wharf at 10 1-2, Closter at 11 o'clock. Returning, leaves New York, Chamberst. Pier, at 10 o'clock.

A. N.

The Arrow will leave New York every afternoon, at 7 o'clock, (except Sunday and Saturday afternoon) for Youkers, Piermont, and Nyack. This boat will continue to run her regular trips, as heretofore, through to Haverstraw.

Prices of Freight on Strawberries for common baskets, 6 cents per 100 baskets, and 9 cents for fancy baskets. 200

**Schedules for the Strawberry Boat and the Strawberry Train in the 1850's and 1860's.**



Northern Railroad of New Jersey.

## STRAWBERRY TRAIN

Will commence on MONDAY, JUNE 6th, and run daily, as follows, during the Berry Season, Saturdays and Sundays excepted:

Leaves	P. M.	Leaves	P. M.
Piermont,	7.10	Tenafly,	8.55
Upp'r Piermont,	7.30	Englewood,	9.10
Tappan,	7.45	Van Brunt's	9.20
Col. Blanch's,	8.00	Fort Lee,	9.35
Closter,	8.15	Hackens'k Jen.	9.50
Deenrest's,	8.25	English Neigh-	
Schraalenburg,	8.40	hood,	10.00

Arriving at Jersey City at 10.30.

## RETURNING SAME NIGHT

Leaving New York city by the 11 o'clock boat.

The Regular Daily Trains from Piermont at 6 A. M. and 3.25 P. M. will also take Berries and other Freight.

-Freight charges the same from all stations.-  
For 1000 BASKETS to Jersey City, ONE DOLLAR, Or \$1.50 to New York City, delivered to Consignees.

Empty packages carried on return trips free of charge, at owner's risk.

Every Package Must be distinctly marked.  
SEYMOUR & TOWER, Contractors.

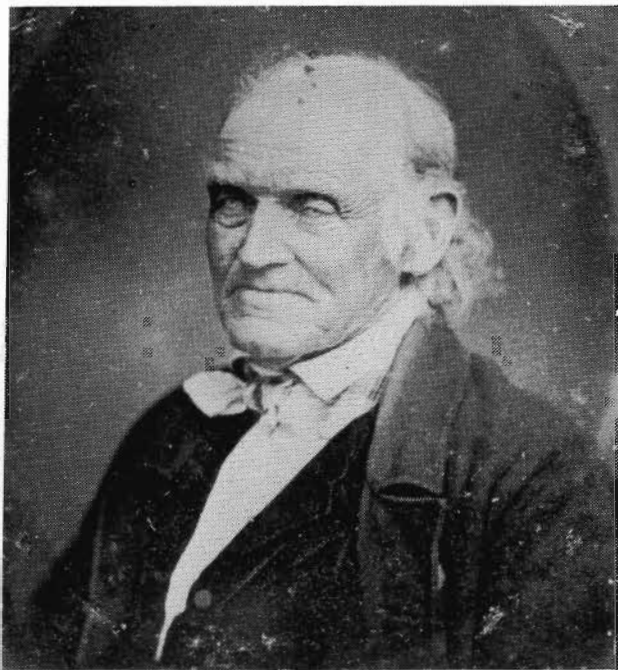
Mr. Gilman described how strawberries and other produce were loaded: "Farmers and others embarked upon a barge with their produce, and by the time the steamboat reached a point opposite the "Little House" (as our Capt. Wm. Coates' grandfather's house at the foot of the Cascade was then called) were safely transferred to the steamer's deck, when the barge was towed back to the landing."

## Samuel Sneden

In 1784 Samuel Sneden wrote from Shelburne, Nova Scotia, to his mother, "Mary Sneden, living at the upper ship-yard, New York," telling of the birth of a daughter, Mary, named after his wife and his mother, and mentioning "Little Sam Sneden, Shoemaker." It seems likely that this grandson of Mollie Sneden might have later returned from Nova Scotia, and been the Samuel Sneden who appeared, no one knows from where, to marry Elizabeth Concklin of Closter Road, and found the other branch of the Snedens, always called "Snedens in the Field." The reasons why this seems probable are given in Appendix No. 20.

## Gesner's Diary

Nicholas Gesner left in his diary a graphic picture of village life between 1829 and 1850. He lived in an old house still standing on Closter Road near the Jersey border. The huge white oak tree in front of the house is supposed to have been planted by his wife, Gracy. If, as Mrs. W. C. Denike told Mr. Gilman, she planted it in 1772, it was 21 years before the house was built, and she must have been eight years old at the time. (Tree ring specialists, however, confirm the approximate age.) Gesner described the weather



**Nicholas Gesner, 1765-1858, whose diary, detailed, gossipy, irascible, brings to life the Palisades (then Rockland) of 1829-1850.**

**Nicholas Gesner's house, built in 1793, and the tree supposedly planted by his wife, Gracy, in 1772.**



—even more extreme than nowadays\* — his life as a farmer, surveyor, and school teacher\*\*, his neighbors, his obsessive interest in his niece by marriage, Mary Quidor Concklin, what he ate, and the bitter quarrels connected with the

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\*Gesner wrote, for example on January 11, 1835: "Walking across the river on ice for the past three days." On August 4, 1835 and August 22, 1836 there were frosts. On June 12, 1842: "The heaviest white frost I have seen in years. Ground in some places frozen." Talman, pages 111 to 116, gives many other examples of extreme weather in those days.

\*\*The school in which he taught was on the Closter Road behind the Willsey tenant house. Mrs. Richard Van Dien told Mr. Gilman she remembered jumping the brook to the north of it on her way to his school. (P.N. 179).

school and the two sects of the Methodist Church. He wrote also of many interesting happenings in the world around him, such as flights of wild pigeons, Halley's comet, flour riots and cholera in New York City, the new church in Tappan, the railroad in Piermont, and Croton Aqueduct.

He kept the diary during most of his life; but unfortunately much of it was burned as waste paper before Mrs. Abraham Post, a Gesner descendant, rescued what was left, and later gave it to Mr. Gilman. The surviving







Dumkin's Blacksmith Shop in a later form, as the Blacksmith Tea Shop in the 1920's, run by Ella Speer.

carried from wells, the only cooking and heating from stoves and fireplaces, the mother nearly always pregnant or nursing babies that all too often died in infancy! The mere thought of what she must have gone through in winter, trying to dry diapers from one or two babies, along with the usual family washing, is appalling.

### Destruction of Forests

One understands the photographic views of Palisades in the late nineteenth century showing great open vistas and almost no trees, when one reads Nicholas Gesner's frequent references to shipping wood to New York, and John Scott's description in his article on the Erie Railroad in Piermont, published in **South of the Mountains**, of "leveling the forests for many miles around for the thousands of cords of wood needed to stoke fire boxes of the many engines and steam-boats." "High Gutter Point," near the state border was one of the pitching points where logs were thrown over to the ships waiting in deep water below. This is probably the same high lookout that children today call Eagle Rock.

### Trips to New York

Among the other things Gesner sent to New York for sale in care of his son Jacob or Zebulon Woolsey, were apples, raspberries, currants, and potatoes. Once his wife Gracy sent chickens, flowers, and "an old ewe, but thin." Of another trip, in September, 1833, he wrote: "Gracy went to New York took Barrels and 4 or 5 baskets of very handsome and very large summer pippins, a basket with chickens and 2 small Hindquarters of lamb." The next day he wrote:

"Gracy and Jim Miller back from New York. James Post fetched. Made 41 [shillings] and expenses and laid out 23.8, leaves 17.4 of which Sally to get a ham for us, &c."

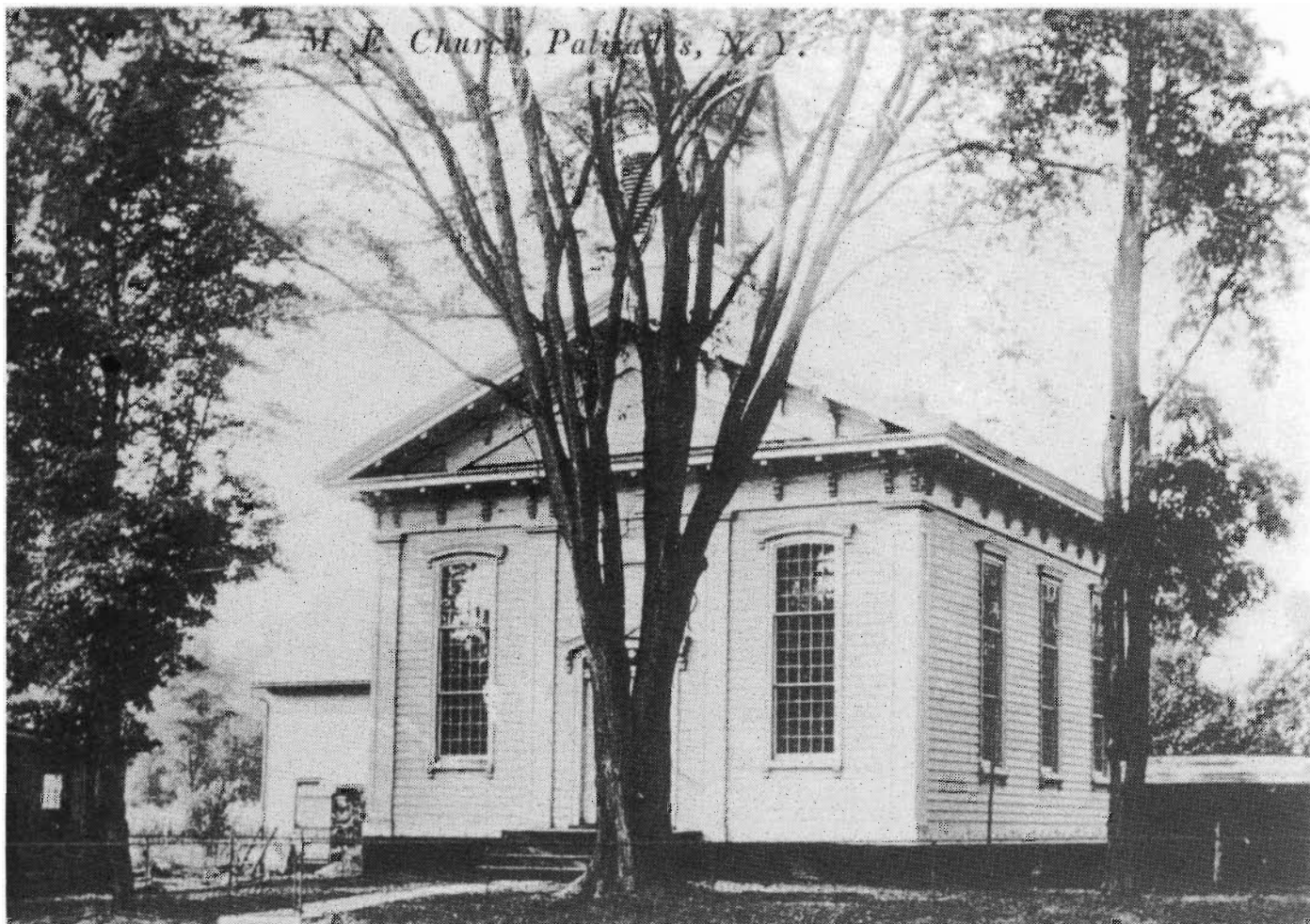
For a time the frequent trips to New York City mentioned by Gesner were made either by sailing vessel or by steamboat. He described one trying trip on May 11, 1831, which started in one and ended in the other:

"I went New York from home about 9 or 10 o'clock . . . Went with John Willse and George Quidor from Snedens. [In the margin he added 'Gracy went too'] A violent South wind. First single reef, then double reef, just below (?) the leech Rope of Mainsal broke and tore the Sail. Amazing. There was a terrible swell. We got in near West Shore where it was more Calm. The Rockland Steam boat came near along. They Attended to our Signal, took from the Schooner about 15 passengers and got in about 4 oclock P.M. John and George Got in the same night late."

### Small Stores

Gesner grew much of his own food, but supplemented this with purchases from neighbors who kept stores in their own houses. One reads of John Van Kleeck keeping store in the basement of the **Big House**, of Henry Coles' store near the old Doughty house opposite the Watson house, another in the Coats' barn at the Landing kept by William Van Sciver, and Jesse Trenchard's and George Lawrence's stores next to each other, opposite the present library.

In an old house on the site of the present library, Herbert Gesner had a cobbler shop, but he may have priced himself out of business. His father wrote on April 18, 1842: "At Herbert's 1 half sole and a piece for a welt, 1 sh. (It's too much) unpd." Next day Nicholas wrote: "I mended my shoe." Later there was a bakery there, and



The Palisades Methodist Church, built in 1859, with its cupola. Now it has lost its cupola and is the antique shop, Yonder Hill.

Emma Quidor, who was born in 1865, told Constance Price that on cold days her mother would give her a penny, and after school she would run over to the bakery, almost next door, to buy a hot roll to warm her hands on the long walk down the hill to her home.

### **Blacksmith Shops**

Other neighbors kept blacksmith shops. Jesse Trenchard had one west of the "country store," and across the road — perhaps not at the same time — were Mr. Denike's and Mr. Wahrenberger's. When the latter burned down, Mr. Wahrenberger rebuilt it to the east, where it later became August Dumkin's. Mildred Post Rippey remembered visiting August Dumkin's Blacksmith Shop in the first years of this century, when her invalid sister's wheelchair needed repairs. She wrote: "I was fascinated with all that was going on in the shop. I could hardly bear to leave — the smell of burning hooves, the clang of the forge, and the shower of sparks flying upward enchanted the little girl that was 'me'."

### **Frequent Fires**

There were frequent fires, which were generally uncontrollable. The first fire company in the county was organized in Nyack in 1834, but of course it was so far away that it could have been of little help. Even when the Piermont fire company was organized in 1852, it must often have come too late. The only recourse in the village of Rockland was to organize bucket brigades from the nearest well, which were not very efficacious.\* This is one reason why

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\*Emily Wahrenberger Munson described the fire in her father's blacksmith shop, when the stove was filled too full with coal and

it is so hard to give a definite date for any of the old houses. Nearly all have been partially or wholly burned at one time or another. Even without a fire, of course, many of the houses were remodeled and changed over the years.

### **Methodism**

With the coming of Methodism to this area in the early nineteenth century a new religious revival struck the village of Rockland.\*\* Until then, going to church had meant riding or walking down the "cow path" to Tappan, seeing the neighbors, and listening to the Dominie in the decrepit Dutch Reformed Church (which was replaced by the present handsome structure in 1835). The Methodists, on the other hand, emphasized the individual's responsibility for his own salvation and for that of others. Anyone could preach; and Gesner speaks particularly of two women preachers: "Mrs. Thompson's remarkable preaching. Elegant, acute," and "Miss (Mistress) Van Saun a great preacher."

There was apparently plenty of excitement at the services. Gesner wrote on September 27, 1833 of a Reform preacher: "He is a great singer. He is considerable noisy in his devotion." He spoke more strongly on November 5, 1834 of the other church: "Methodist Episcopal meeting I have been informed was attended with Great shoutings.

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became overheated. Her mother rang the dinner bell all the way to the Jersey border to get volunteers to help. The blacksmith shop burned, but they saved the house next door.

\*\*This was part of a century-wide religious revival in the early nineteenth century called "The Great Awakening", which affected members of other sects as well as Methodists. The Camp Meetings were usually non-denominational.

A. V. Sturr, their local preacher and present School master in District No. 1. He is among the people pulling and haling (sic) a few young people into the alter. Jesse Trenchard's wife fell. The whooping and screaming in the Meeting House was never equaled in this place."

Each convert experienced a psychological change which was called being "born again." Rocklanders accepted the new faith with enthusiasm. On September 18 to 24, 1832, there was a camp meeting which lasted for seven days in George Mann's woods north of the present Oak Tree Road. More than a thousand people came to listen to the "very powerful preaching."

### **Trouble Between Reform and Old Side Methodists**

Even in this small village, two kinds of Methodism appeared; and there was great antagonism between the two sects, one, the Methodist Episcopal, or Old Side, represented by Moses Taylor, and the other, the Reform Methodists, by Nicholas Gesner.

### **Moses Taylor**

Moses Taylor had lived in Rockland as a child, when his parents left British-occupied New York to live for the duration of the Revolution in a log cabin in what is now Tallman Park. By 1805, having made a moderate fortune elsewhere, he retired and bought the Abraham Haring house just over the border in New Jersey. After his wife Margaret died in childbirth eight years later, and was buried with her baby in the Palisades Cemetery, Mr. Taylor married a daughter of Joshua Martin of Rockland and had a number of other children.

His chief interest became the organization of the

Methodist Episcopal "Old Side" Church in Rockland. In 1832, at his invitation and with his help, the Old Side Methodists built a small church to the north of the **Big House**. The church opening is mentioned in Gesner's Diary for November 9, 1832.

The services of Gesner's Reform Methodists were held in various private houses in Rockland and at the "Upper Landing," now Piermont or Sparkill. Eventually a small "Steepleless Church," called Gesner Hall was built, near the site of the present Post Office.

The two branches of the Methodist Church had continued quarrels. Nicholas Gesner wrote that Moses Taylor, etc., were "circulating their venom against reform." Certainly he himself said unkind things about Jesse Trenchard and Zebulon Woolsey, among others, and referred to Catherine Mann as "that female bigot, Cathy Mann". On January 21, 1835 Gesner gave vent to his irritation. "The bare faced impertinence practiced by the greater part of the Old Side, this seeming sanctity under all their wicked strategems &c are truly despicable".

In the Cahier\* dated June 3, 1832, Gesner had a long discussion of the troubles within his own "class" and also told why he criticized the other sect. He "never said anything against the Doctrines they Preached exclusive of the church government," but that government he criticized as "Roman Catholic" and "aristocratic." It must have been infuriating to him when his problem son, Jacob, joined the Old Side in 1842.

Gesner died in 1858 at the age of ninety-three. (One of the last entries in the diary of this indefatigable man was "My work all stands still".) He was buried in what he called the "Lawrence Burying Ground," which had by then been enlarged to make room for others outside of the family.

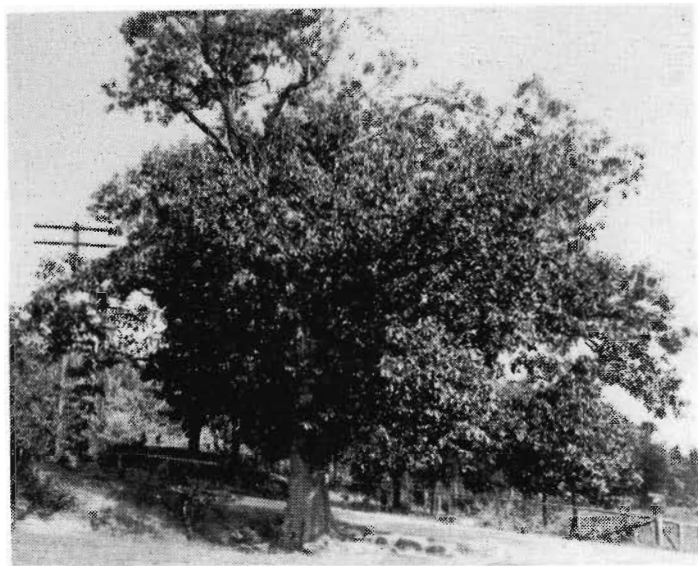
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\*Mr. Gilman's name for sections of the diary.

## **Gesner-Conklin Burying Ground**

There was a Gesner-Conklin Burying Ground a little to the west of the family's house, in which his parents and several of his family were buried, but it had not been used since 1852. Nicholas referred to it in his diary, on the occasion of the death of Mary Quidor Conklin in 1838, as "the Burying Ground of John Gesner at Rockland"; but actually it was over the border in New Jersey. (See Appendix No. 49)

After his death one heard no more of the Reform Methodists. Perhaps they returned to join the Old Side Methodists, who in 1859 built a fine new meeting house (now the Antique Shop), chiefly financed by Moses Taylor. The old church across the road was used as a parsonage and then as a dwelling house. Adeline Denike Van Blarcom



**The Oak of Oak Tree Road toward the end of its life.**

said she was living there in 1885 as a child of three; and she remembered that when it burned down in that year she was taken out and laid in the grass, while her parents and the neighbors vainly fought the fire.

Moses Taylor survived to enjoy the new church for ten more years, until his death in 1869 at the age of ninety-eight ("full of years and full of hope," Cole wrote in his history).

## **Oak Tree Road**

For a long time the short cut to Tappan was by the "cow path" along the Tallman Lane north of the present Oak Tree Road, down the hill to the west, and across the Sparkill Creek by a log. In 1836, however, Nicholas Gesner mentioned the new road to Tappan, which was first called Tappan Road, and later came to be called Oak Tree Road after the large tree which used to stand near the spring at the northeast corner of the crossing with Piermont Road or Route 340. (See Appendix No 18)

## **Post Row**

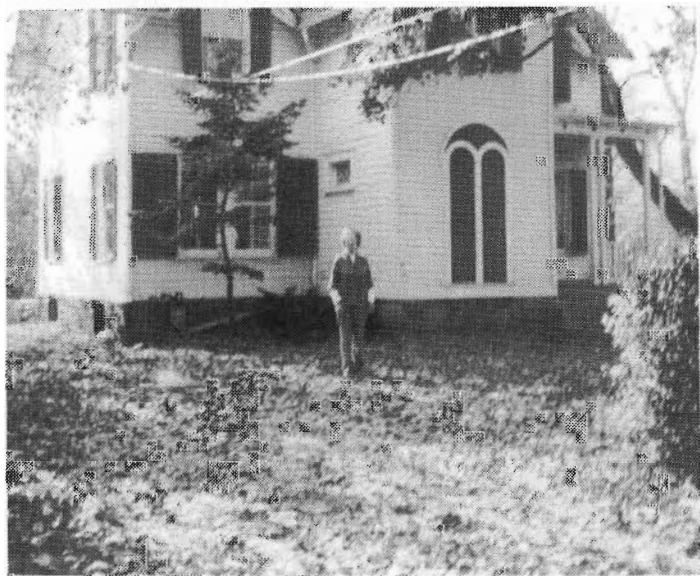
About thirty years after this road was built, Abraham Jacob Post, one of the prominent—and philoprogenitive—inhabitants of Palisades, who lived in the now long-vanished Post Homestead on Closter Road, gave pieces of land along the south side of Oak Tree Road, west of the Old School and the Denikes' house, to seven of his children. The pleasant frame houses which were built on the plots are still known as Post Row. Another son, Jacob Abraham, lived in a house on Closter Road near the corner. James already had a house on the north side of the "timothy meadow," so he sold his lot to the Rikers, another old family. Now the only



Post descendant left in Post Row is Mildred Post Rippey. (See Appendix No. 23)

### Summer Kitchens

Mrs. Rippey has described an interesting feature of these houses, and others built before or around the same time—their summer kitchens. The wood or coal ranges ordinarily used for cooking, which warmed the houses pleasantly in winter, were not popular in summer; so additions were built out in back of the houses, often under a big shade tree, where cooking could be done without overheating the house. In the Heinke house, just east of the Old School, the summer kitchen was in the basement, which was cooler than the rest of the house. Mrs. Rippey said that in later times,



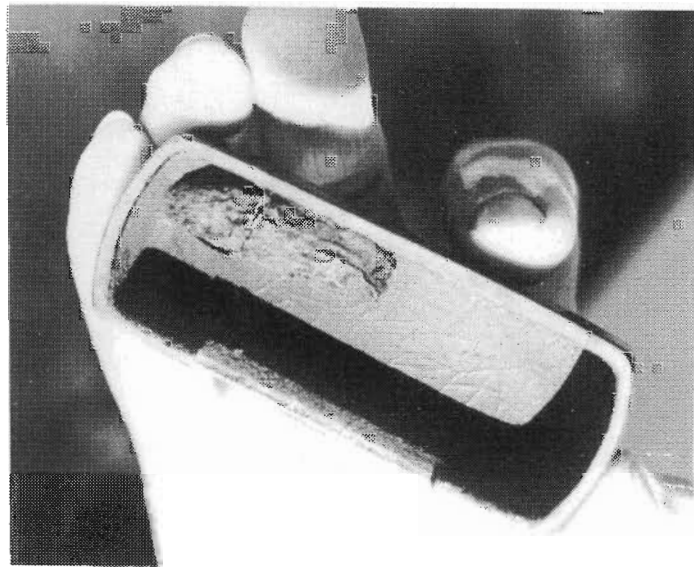
Mildred Post Rippey, the last Post living in a house on Post Row.

when kerosene became available, they used kerosene stoves.

Constance Lieval Price was told that when the Quidor house, where she lived, was built, cooking was done over a big fireplace. The summer kitchen was built out in back, and had a wood range on which canning and preserving could be done. In hot weather families often spent as much time as possible in basements, which were always cooler.

### André's Toe Bone

In 1821, forty years after the hanging of Major André, his bones were taken from their grave in Tappan to be transported to Westminster Abbey. Cole's **History of Rockland County** implies that the Duke of York and the British Con-



André's toe bone in its little sarcophagus. Held by Miss Ethel Gove, descendant of the David Doremus who rescued it from the dust.

sul James Buchanan came up the river in a British man-of-war to fetch the bones, and anchored at Sneden's Landing.

The truth is more bizarre, as Claire Tholl, the historian, tells in the **North Jersey Highlander**. Following the account written by Mr. Buchanan himself in 1833, she tells how the bones were taken up and put in a handsome sarcophagus covered with crimson velvet [made in New York at a cost of a hundred guineas], and left temporarily at the house of Mr. Demarest, a retired minister in Tappan.

When he returned to the city, Mr. Buchanan learned that newspaper articles had aroused local opposition to the idea of such an honor being paid to one who had come close to defeating the Revolution. To avoid a confrontation he returned secretly at night and had the sarcophagus loaded on a carriage early in the morning of August 12th and taken to New York by road. This is confirmed by Nicholas Gesner, who said in 1834 "his remains were put in a carriage, taken to New York, and carried to England."

The day after the removal, according to Mrs. Tholl, David Doremus, a young cabinet maker who was the ancestor of Wilbur Gove of Palisades, found in the dust a small black object which he recognized as a toe bone. He made a tiny sarcophagus for it, and it has been handed down in the family ever since. Now it is in the possession of a great-granddaughter, Ethel Gove, and her mother, in Northvale, New Jersey. Eventually it will come back to Miss Gove's brother, Wilbur Gove, in Palisades.

### Jack Earnest

There was some slavery in Rockland County; but probably Nicholas Gesner's feeling about it was typical of many owners. On November 19th, 1841, he wrote about buying a 23-year old slave named Jack from his father for

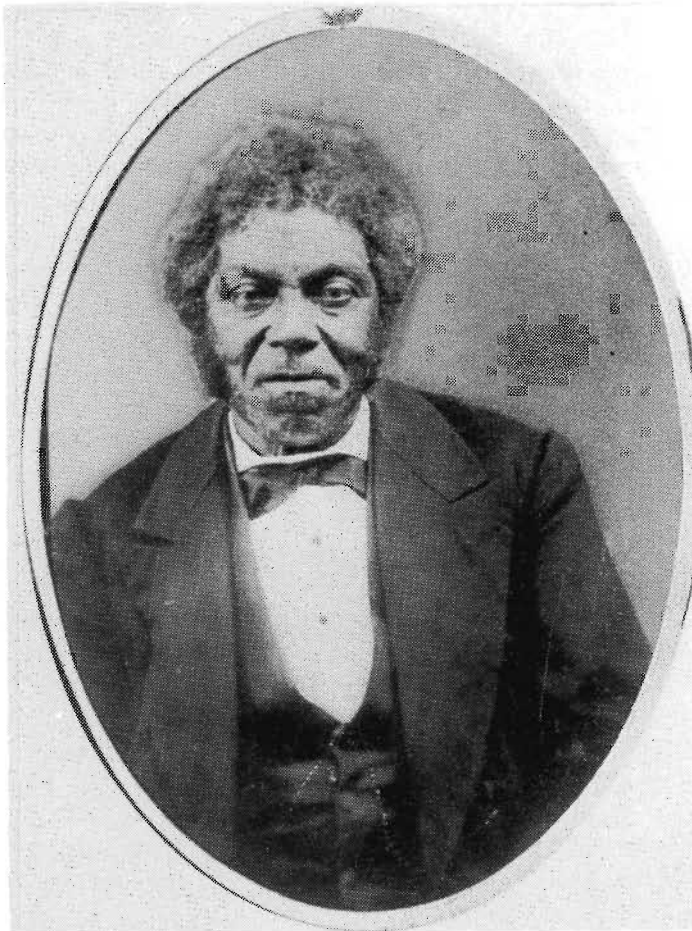
£80 (\$400), and said "As I ever was opposed to slavery, I told him after he had served me 7 or 8 years I would let him free. But after he had been with me one year or thereabouts, my brotherinlaw Jacob Conklin by flattery and persuasion promising him a piece of ground to raise some potatoes and Broom-corn for himself, Jack was overpersuaded." One gets the impression that Jack had the final say about the sale. Conklin made Jack work 14 years, and freed him and paid him a hundred dollars only when Jack "twitted" him by passing on Gesner's criticisms. As a free-man he was given the surname Earnest because he was so earnest about signing a deed in 1806 for land on "the mountain."

### Skunk Hollow

"The mountain", was, in this case, just over the border in New Jersey, and Earnest's purchase of land there was one—perhaps the first—in a rural free black community distinguished by its early beginnings and long occupancy (about 1806 to 1905). As "Skunk Hollow" it has been studied by the Columbia University Department of Anthropology Field School. Joan Geismar, who wrote her doctoral dissertation on the subject, searched around the cellar holes and ruins, investigated census, tax, and other records, and talked to former residents; and she came up with a pretty clear idea of what was going on there in the nineteenth century.

Ruins of about twenty structures altogether have been found at the site; but at the settlement's peak, between 1870 and 1880, there were twelve active households of blacks, some probably intermarried with Indians. They had their own Methodist Episcopal church, and a resident minister, "Uncle Billy" Thompson.

According to Mrs. Lottie See, the Thompsons' great-granddaughter, Mr. Thompson, as a young man, crossing



**"Uncle Billy" Thompson, the minister in Skunk Hollow, and later of the A.M.E.Z. "Swamp Church" on the road to Sparkill. He died in 1886, before the Sparkill Church was built.**

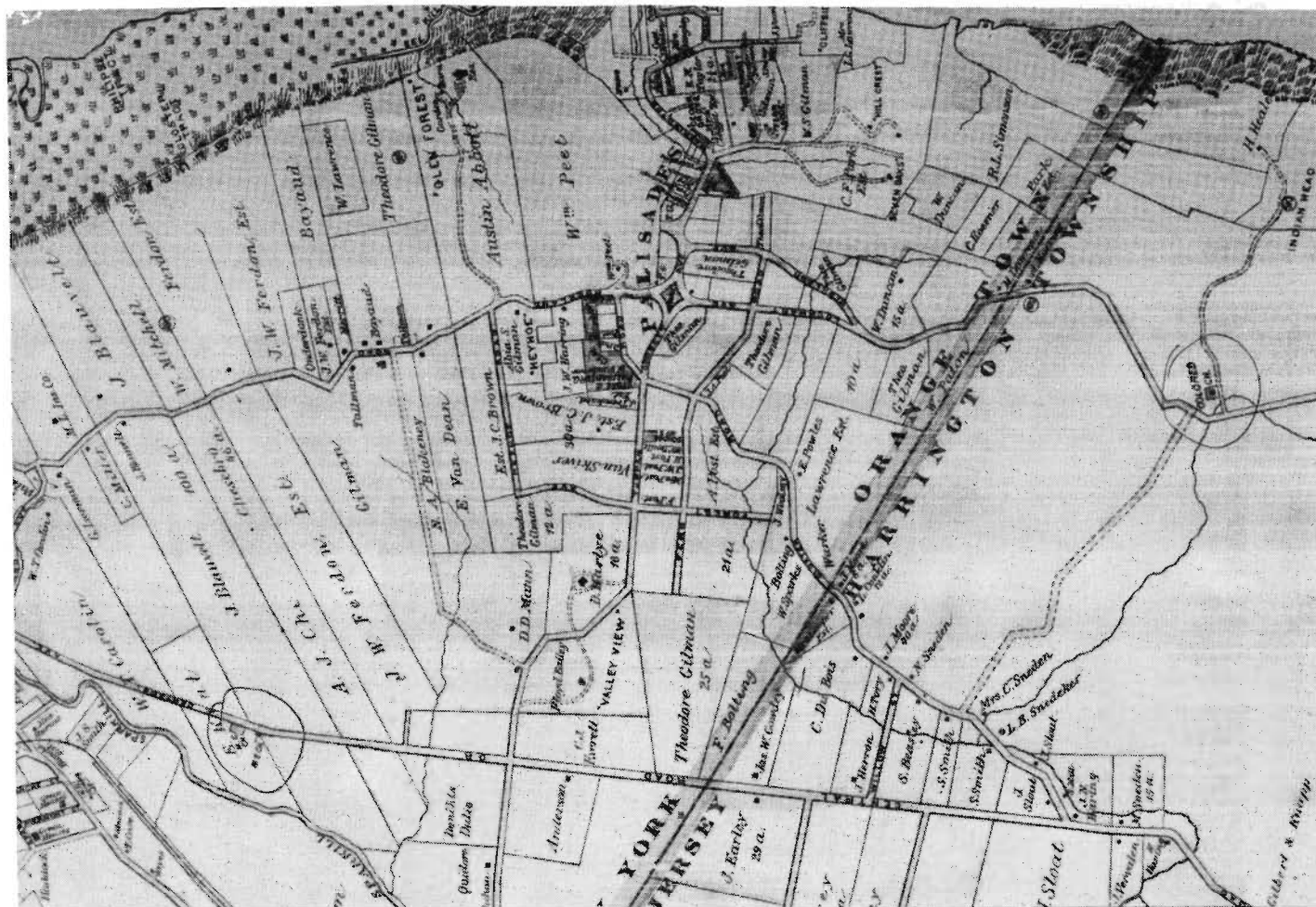
the river on the Yonkers Ferry, saw a beautiful young slave girl. He fell in love with her and saved his money until he could buy her and make her his wife. In her photograph

taken perhaps eighty years afterwards, one can still see something of the charm and vitality which won his heart.

Blacks and whites came to services in the "Mountain Church" from "Rockland" and other nearby communities. It was not easily accessible, however. The snow and ice in winter and mud in spring must have often made attendance difficult or impossible. The obvious solution was to build another church, called "The Swamp Church", on Carteret Avenue, (also called Central, Piermont, or County Road, or Route 340), a little south of Sparkill. This and the "Mountain Church" are shown on Beers' 1891 map. The Rev. William Thompson was the minister for this church as well as for the



**"Aunt Betty" Thompson, his wife, aged 99 in 1906. She was the beautiful young slave he bought and married, perhaps eighty years before.**



1891 map from Beers' Atlas. Shows the "Mountain Church" (called "Colored Church") at bottom, "Swamp Church", (called M.E. Ch.) on Central Road on upper left. In the bottom right corner is the "Heater's" house. Toward the Landing, Captain John Willsey's house is mis-called "Capt. J. Woolsey", as is his house on Closter Road. The Gesner Burying Ground was off "Central Road", on the "Jas. W. Gowdey" property. The Concklin-Sneden house was on Closter Rd., here marked S. Beasley. (Samuel Beasley, a descendant).

Mountain Church until his death in 1886. Joan Geismar suggests that it was the loss of its church and minister that started the disintegration of the Skunk Hollow community.

### **Turkey Ridge, or The Mountain, in New York**

Across the border in New York, but still on “the mountain”, often called “Turkey Ridge” in the late nineteenth century, was a mixed community of blacks, including Olivers, Siscoes, and Oblenis’, and whites, including Harings and Yearlings. The white Heiders (Heathers, Heaters) lived in New Jersey, but near the cliff, apart from the black settlement. Nicholas Gesner wrote now and then of neighbors moving up on the mountain; and that is where, after a new school was built in “Rockland” in 1836, the first little red schoolhouse\* was carted by Henry Conklin, although Gesner had to admit, on August 5, 1836, “Whose oxen he had I do not yet know”.

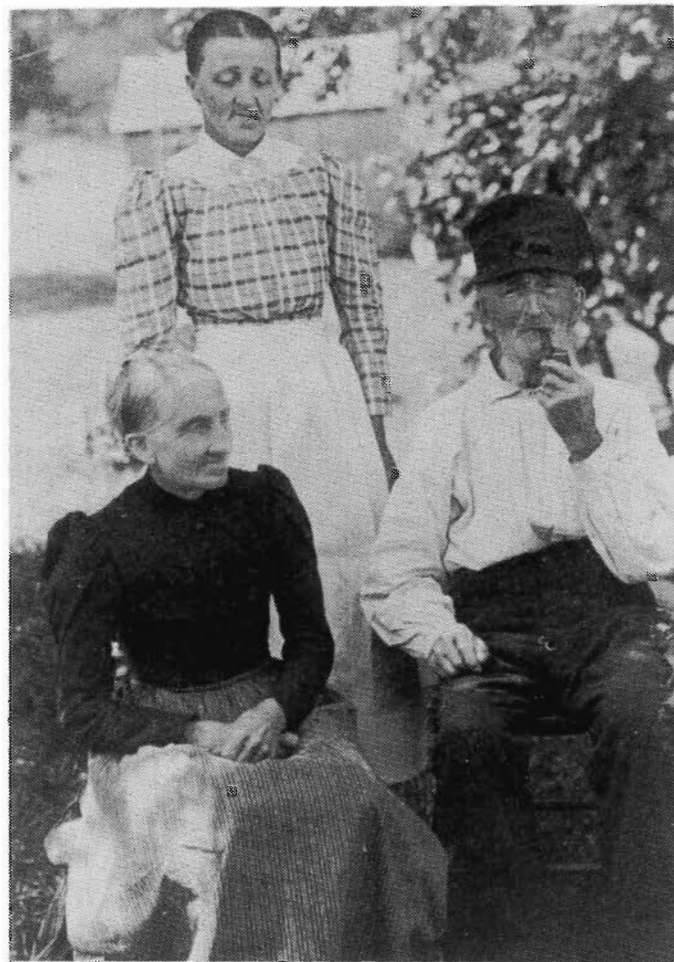
Charlie Lundstrom, whose mother was a Haring, said that Skunk Hollow was given its name by his grandmother Guster, because his grandfather had seen a skunk near the spring where they got their water. This is one explanation; another is that it was named for the ubiquitous skunk cabbage.

Jack Earnest’s sad end on the mountain was described by Gesner on Nov. 19, 1841. While he was sleeping by the fire in the house he had built with such anticipation, a spark caught his clothes and he burned to death. According to Joan Geismar, the house probably survived, and was sold to the Rev. William Thompson.

After 1906 the New Jersey community faded out, and

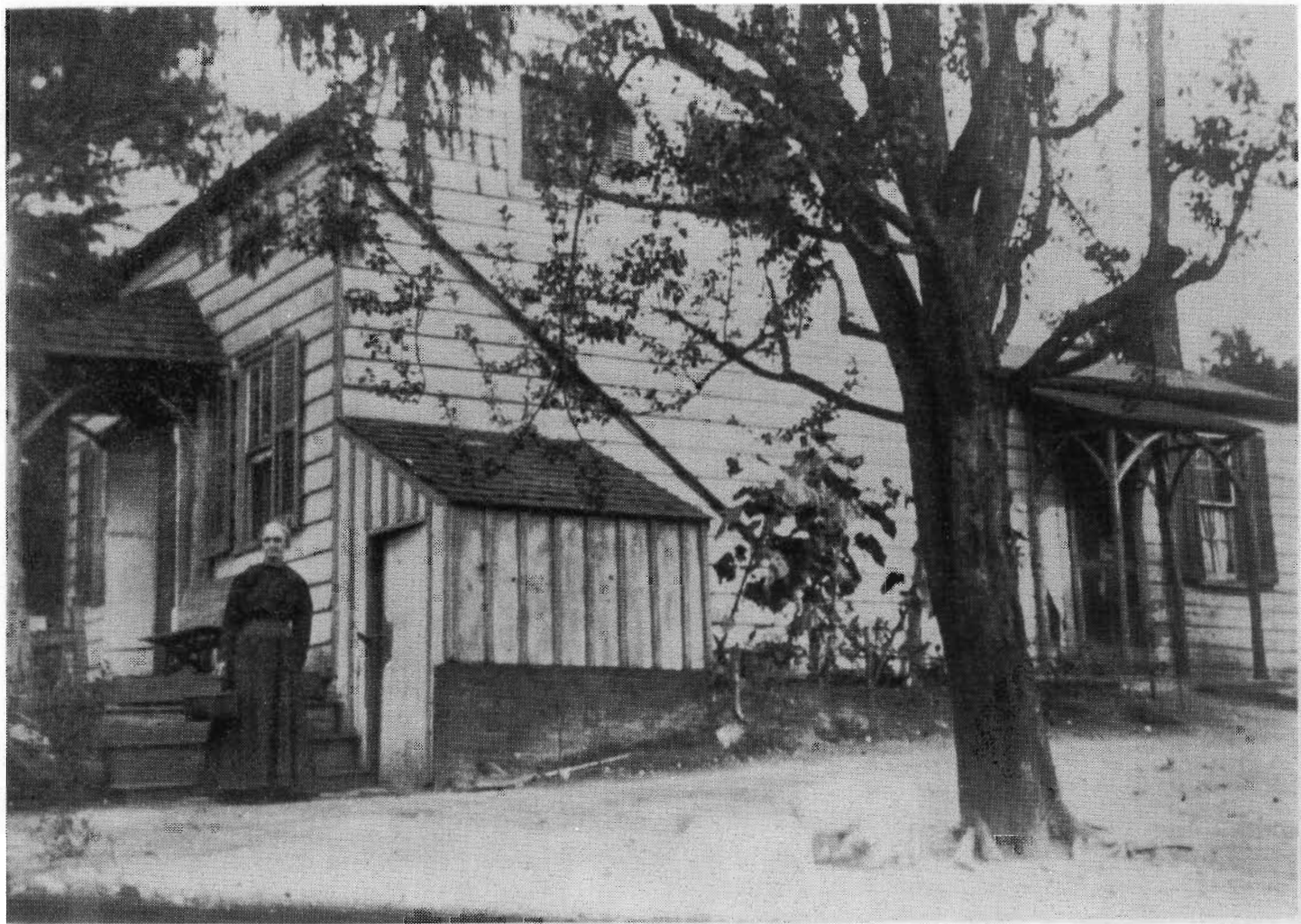
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\*This was the first school house on record, which had been on Closter Road, near the Willsey tenant house.



A family that lived on “the mountain”. Seated: Mrs. and Mr. Henry Heider (or Heater). Standing: their daughter, Caroline. According to Mrs. Hill, the Heiders had a farm near where the Lookout now is. Mrs. Van Blancom said it was of stone, and was destroyed when Route 9W came through. Mr. and Mrs. Heider died long before that, and Caroline moved down to the Landing to a small house to the north of the road.





Another "mountain" dweller. Elizabeth Roemer Pauli standing in front of the Roemer house, which later belonged to the Heinzmans, and now is on Lamont land.



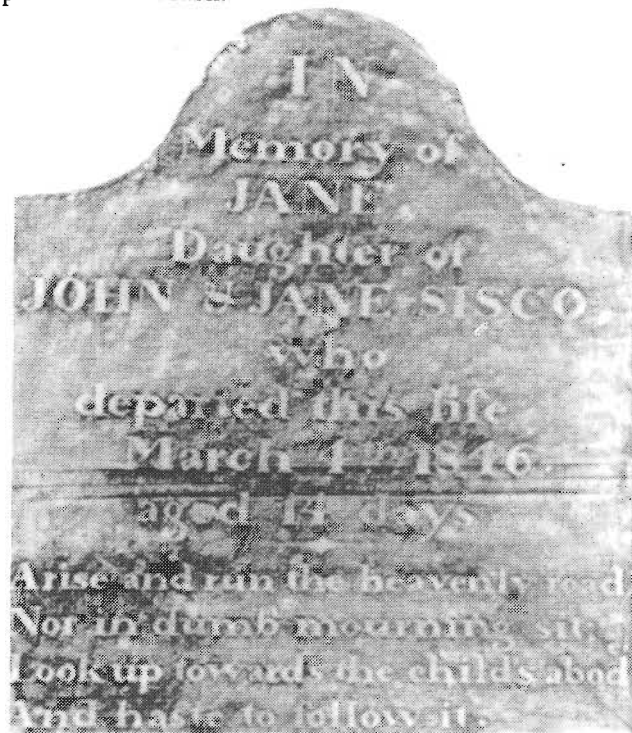
## The Civil War

At the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, Palisades, like the rest of Rockland County, was of two minds. The few Republicans were all for the war; but the predominating Democrats were divided between those who upheld the rights of the states to secede and those who were willing to fight to preserve the Union.



**Norman Baron pointing to the spring which was the only source of water for the settlement at Skunk Hollow, and near which the skunk was seen which gave the name to Skunk Hollow.**

what land was not taken by the Borough of Alpine for taxes was bought by speculators. Those on the New York side stayed until the Palisades Interstate Parkway was put through around 1954.



**The last tombstone in Skunk Hollow Graveyard. Now in the Sisco plot in the Palisades Cemetery.**

The Lawrences were of the war party. Herbert, one of Jonathan Lawrence, Jr.'s. sons, gave the small triangle of land which is still used for a flagpole, and it was inaugurated

in a patriotic ceremony on June 1, 1861. Herbert's brother, Jonathan Lawrence the Fourth, who was Nicholas Gesner's son-in-law, gave a speech in which he made a rare family reference to his father's service in the Revolution, and said if he were younger (he was 66 years old at the time) he would be fighting too.

Some of the Posts were of the peace party, but they apparently were not united, for one of the receptions after the ceremony was held at Abram Post's house on the Closter Road. The other was at T. W. Bayaud's, in the **Big House**.

Forty-five years later, Captain Henry Dobbs listed for Mr. Gilman twenty men from Palisades who had served in the Civil War on the Union side, either as volunteers or as draftees. (See Appendix No. 24)

### **Anneke Jans**

The Anneke Jans affair, often referred to by Nicholas Gesner as the "Brower concern", was the occasion for dreams of riches and royalty for most of the interconnected families of Palisades. Many stories are told about the birth of Anneke Jans. One author, Wikoff, said that she was born Anneke Wibber in 1605, the granddaughter of William the Silent of Holland by a secret marriage, and that she was brought up in the Dutch Palace. When she fell in love with Roeloff Jansen, an "agriculturist," married him, and emigrated to the New World, her father was annoyed and left her inheritance in trust, to be given to the seventh generation of her descendants. (The American State Department was asked to look into the matter a couple of hundred years afterwards, but could not be persuaded to intervene.)

This is the story believed by thousands of Anneke Jans' descendants. It hardly seems relevant that recent genealogical research in Holland has found that Anneke Jans and her

husband Roeloff Jansen were both born in Norway, probably of Dutch descent, and that the Webber or Wibber family had no connection on the one hand with the royal line, and on the other with Anneke Jans.

There are plenty—too many—records about Anneke Jans and her affairs in New York. In 1633 she and her first husband owned a farm, or *bouwerie*, of 62 acres in downtown New York, including the site where Trinity Church was later built. Jansen died in 1637, leaving her with five children, and in 1638 she married Everardus Bogardus, a preacher sent to New York by the Dutch East India Company, and had four more children before he died at sea. When she died a few years later, this farm was leased or sold by her heirs to Governor Lovelace, taken over by the King of England, then leased or given to Trinity Church; but the children of Anneke Jans Bogardus never acknowledged the legality of the deed to Governor Lovelace nor the right of the church to keep the land.

One objection was that one of Anneke Jans' sons, Cornelis, had not signed the deed to Lovelace; other objections were put forward by those, like the families in Palisades, who were supposed to have descended from a son who had signed. Suit after suit was instituted against Trinity Church—some twenty in all—from 1743 when Jacob Brower, a descendant of Anneke Jans, was said to have taken forcible possession of the land and had to be evicted, to 1913, when a lawyer was disbarred for circularizing the descendants with a view to bringing another suit. Through Famiche Brower, a supposed descendant, who was Nicholas Gesner's mother, the Posts, Conklins, Willseys, Snedens, Ver Valens, Denikes, Lawrences, Manns, Dobbs, Trenchards, Stansburys, Quidors, and no doubt others in Palisades all had an interest in the case. Nicholas Gesner, in his diary, often referred to current lawsuits.

Too much knowledge, however, is sometimes dangerous to preconceived ideas. In 1982 a letter to William Bogardus,

who has organized an "Anneke Jans-Everardus Bogardus Descendants Association", brought the sympathetic but devastating answer that Famiche Brower, and therefore all her descendants in Palisades, were descended from Nicholas, a brother of the Jacobus Brouwer who married Anneke Jans' granddaughter. This means that they never had a claim on the Anneke Jans estate, and all their outlays were doubly futile.

This affair, which John Fiske called "one of the most pertinacious cases of litigation known to modern history" ended with Trinity Church in safe possession of the land, the lawyers richer and the claimants poorer; and in 1870 Munsell said "It has been calculated that if their ancient farm in New York, now in possession of Trinity Church, and supposed to be worth several millions, was recovered and equally apportioned among all who claim to be descendants of Anneke Jans, it would give them about twenty shillings apiece."

Wall Street, looking west to Trinity Church about 1895. Part of the land claimed by Anneke Jans' descendants.



## VII. MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

**Changes Brought About by Steamboats and Railroads, Coming of City Folk, Post Office, Henry Coles, Torrey, Agnews, Parks, Cliffside Lawrences, Winthrop Gilman and Cousin Tom, New Church, New Library, Miss Emma Quidor, Big House, New School, New Houses on Western Slope, Heyhoe, W. S. Gilman Senior Tried for Rioting, Land Company, Sneed's Landing.**

### **Changes Brought About by Steamboats and Railroads**

**A**ROUND the middle of the nineteenth century there were many changes in the economy of the country which affected the village of Palisades. The steamboats which took the place of sloops on the river could not come in to the pier at Snedens Landing. Instead they stopped farther out and were met by the ferry or another small boat from shore. The pier gradually fell into disuse and disintegrated.

Captain John Willsey retired from the shipping business and started a "beer saloon" in the long white house called **Captain John's** at the first bend in the road above the river. He lived in the Willsey tenant house on Closter Road, and his little daughter Ada drove him down to the landing in a sulky every day.

After the steamboats began to make regular trips, there was a "stage" which ran daily from Tappan to Snedens Landing, connecting with the steamboat **Washington Irving**. This went on until the railroad made it unnecessary.

### **Coming of City Folk**

The first railroad, from Piermont to the west, was opened in 1841; another, up the west side of the Hudson

in 1859. Palisades became more accessible to city dwellers and less necessary as a transportation center. Business in Snedens Landing slackened, and New Yorkers began to buy land for summer places. Now there were more new kinds of jobs as coachmen, gardeners, caretakers, laundresses, and seamstresses for the city people in the big houses.

### **Post Office**

One of the new jobs was that of postmaster. The first post office was opened in 1855. Henry Coles, who was probably keeping a general store near the landing at the time, had been chosen to be the first postmaster; but it was decided that he lived too far from the center of the village, so George Lawrence was given the position. He had it first in his store, which has been known recently as the "Country Store". Later it alternated for years between James Post's, on the northern side of the central triangle, and Frederick Wahrenberger's on the southern side, where the Post Office now is, depending on whether the Federal Government was Democratic or Republican. There was a little annex which, at the change of administration, was moved bodily across the "timothy meadow", now an overgrown triangle of trees and brush in the center of the village.



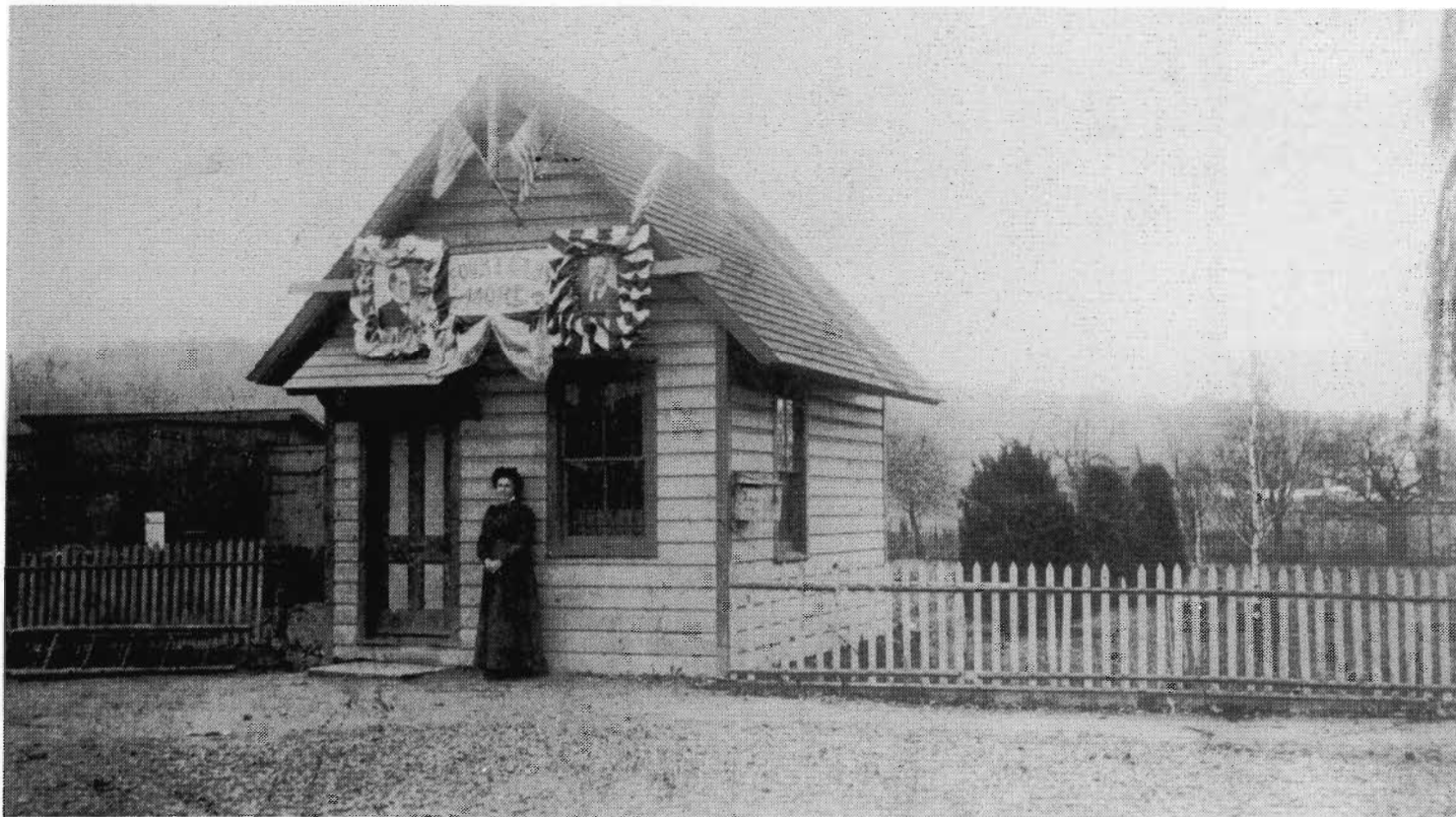
**Captain John's House.** This is at the first turn of the road as it goes up from the Landing. Captain John Willsey had a "beer saloon" here in the last half of the nineteenth century; and his daughter Ada used to drive him down here every day with a horse and buggy from the Willsey tenant house on Closter Road, where he lived at that time.





**James Post's house with the post office annex. This must have been made during the Democratic administration of Grover Cleveland, 1885-89 and 1893-97, or Woodrow Wilson, 1913-1921.**





**Henry Coles**

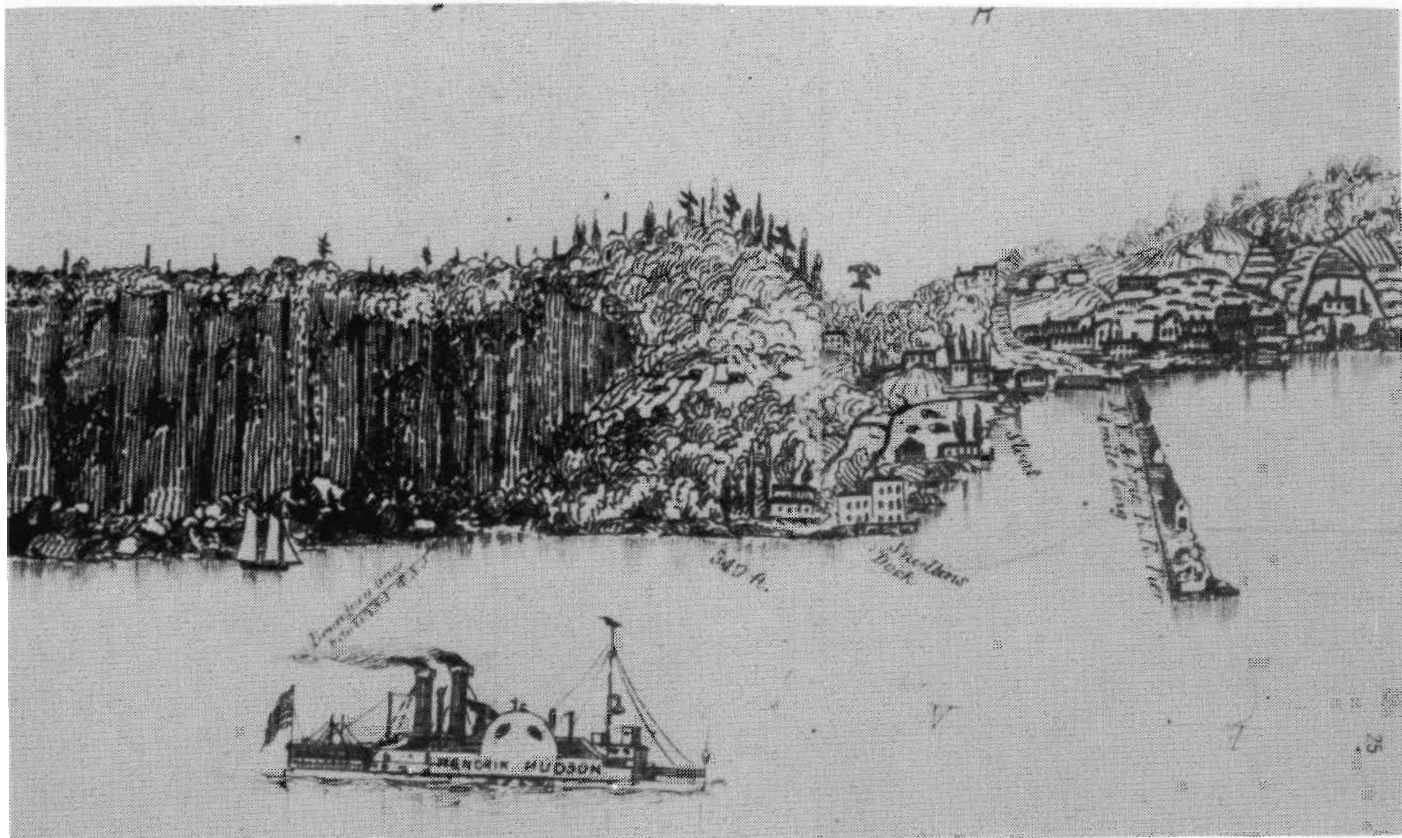
Henry Coles was one of the picturesque characters in the village. He says in **The Story of the Ferry** that he came here around 1850; and it is known that he had a store half-way down the hill, near the Doughty house and across from the Watson House.

In 1862 he bought land near the top of the hill, off Ludlow Lane, from Floyd Bailey, and built a stone house in the rural Gothic style from popular plans by Andrew

**McKinley and T. Roosevelt elected, Wahrenbergers keep P.O., 1900.  
Emily Wahrenberger is happy.**

Jackson Downing. A few years later, reputedly feeling that a stone house was too damp and gloomy, he sold it to W. C. Claggett, and built the attractive frame house to the west. This was on the site of Peter Quidor's house, which Mr. Coles describes, perhaps from first-hand knowledge, in **The Story of the Ferry**, page 68:

"The old house that stood on the ground that my

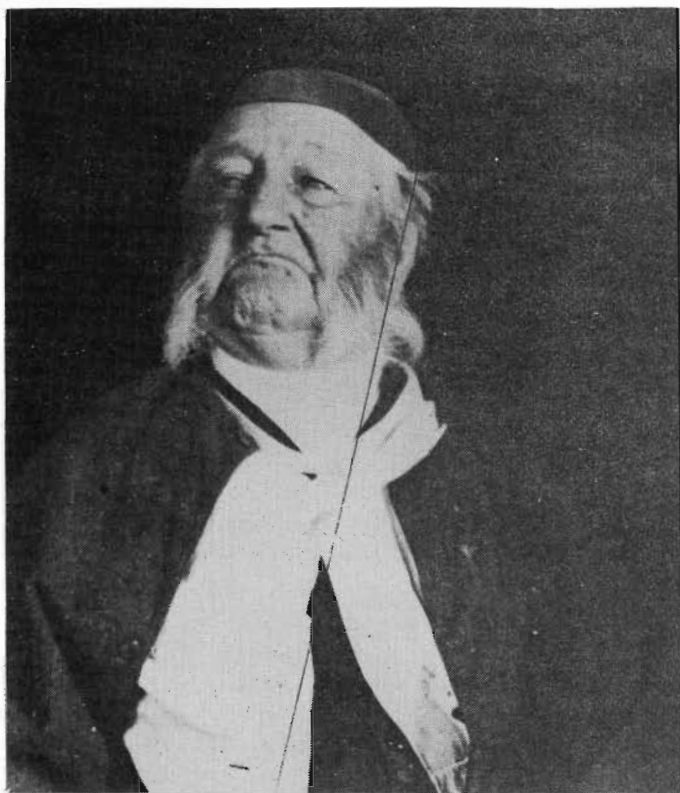


present house occupies is worthy of some notice. It was in its time of no small pretensions, 30 feet long by 20 feet deep, and had two stacks of chimnies, and was at one time occupied, as I have been told, by a Quidore family.

"There the girls and boys from the surrounding villages gathered on a Saturday night for a good old-fashioned Virginia Reel, stamping the time well on the white pine floor. The boards in those days were 15 inches wide, and 1 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  thick. To my mind it is a relic of the last century (18th) before the invention of lath, as its walls show, being laid up with mud as can

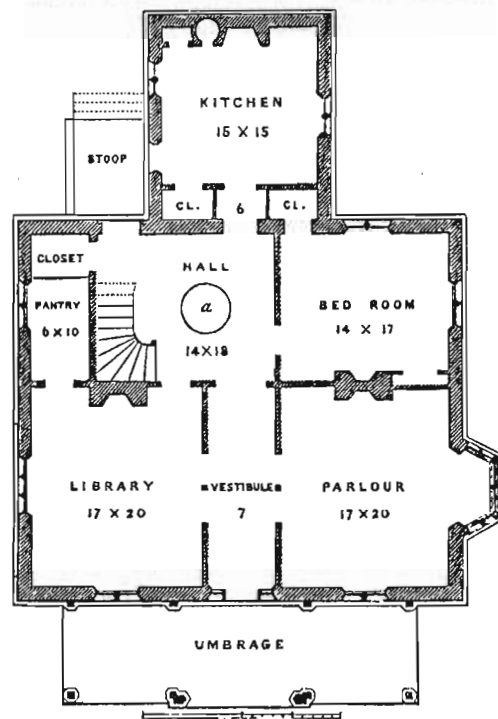
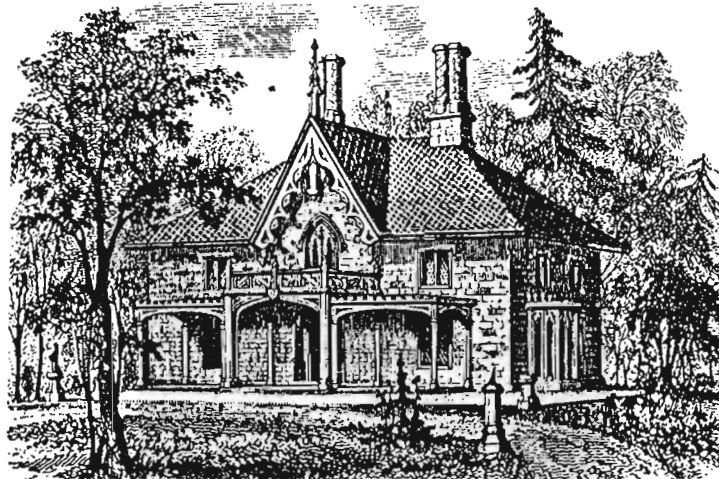
**William Wade made a panorama of the Hudson from New York City to Albany in 1846 as a guide for steamboat passengers. It is interesting, though not always correct. A discontinuity can be noted at Snedens Landing. The Hudson River Sloop Clearwater republished the panorama in 1979 with extensive notes on architecture, transportation, marshes, etc.**

be seen this day at my barn." [If he remembered it, this could not have been during the time of the Quidor family, however, because in 1811 the Peter Quidors moved to New York City with their ten-year-old son John, who later became a painter.]



Henry Coles, 1807-1898.

Mrs. Hill described the Coles family in her Reminiscences: "I well remember "Daddy Coles" walking briskly along the road. He was most original and hated closets and unnecessary chimneys; [maybe she meant fireplaces] and both of the nice houses he built had at least one false chimney and no closets which he said 'the women folks kept too much rubbish in'. He had three delightful daughters and nice grandchildren. One daughter, Mrs. Weld, lived in a lovely old Dutch house in Closter; Mrs. Doughty, the second daughter, had a son Ralph [who listed the stones in the



Design from Victorian Cottage Residences by Andrew Jackson Downing, from which Mr. Coles' stone house was built.

cemetery]; and the youngest, Mrs. Haring, was the mother of Ida and Laura Haring." [Laura Haring Smith, who later lived in the old Haring house on Route 9W, was the librarian of the New York Academy of Medicine in the early 20th century.]

### Torrey

Dr. John Torrey, the famous naturalist, was one of the first newcomers, coming out by boat in 1854 to build a house on the hill where the house of the Director of Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory now stands. While he was living there he added to his great collection of plants, which included thousands collected by John Charles Fremont\* and other explorers; and before Dr. Torrey left he presented the herbarium to Columbia University, where he was professor of chemistry in the Medical School. The hill where he lived is still called **Torrey Cliff**.

### Agnews and Parks

Then in 1860 two friends, Cornelius Rea Agnew\*\* and Charles F. Park, came from New York and Englewood,

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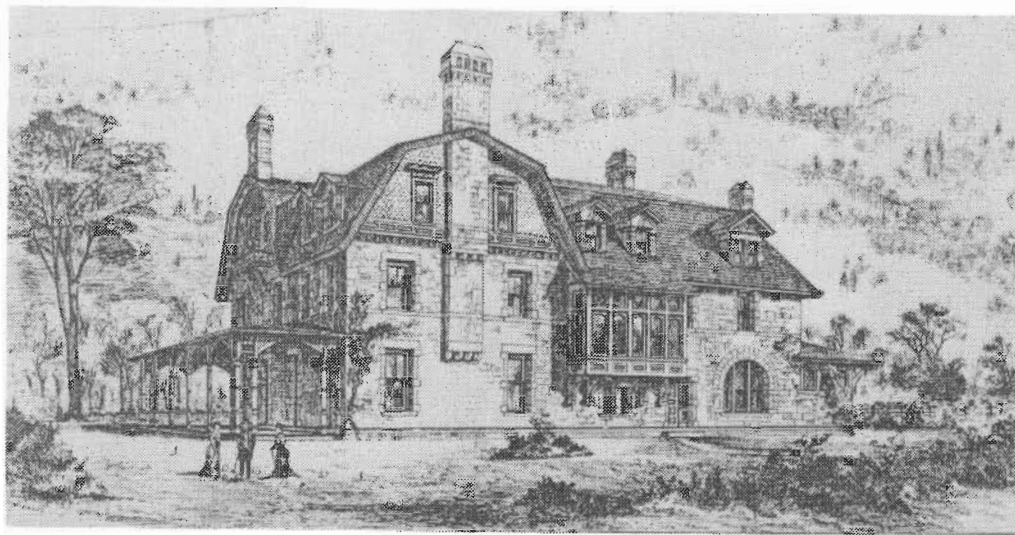
\*Fremont lived for a time in Westchester County, and as a naturalist he worked closely with Dr. Torrey. He, his wife, Jessie Benton Fremont, and his son are all buried in the Rockland Cemetery in Sparkill.

\*\*Dr. Agnew was a well-known eye and ear specialist. Besides founding clinics in several New York hospitals, he was a professor in Columbia University's medical school, and trustee of Columbia College. Among other distinctions, he gave his name to the flannel shirts worn by lady nurses in the Civil War. The story is told in Appendix No. 26.

respectively, and bought land for summer places on the hill near Dr. Torrey. Dr. Agnew lived where the main Lamont house now is, and Mr. Park nearby at **Seven Oaks**. By coincidence each of these families had seven girls and one boy.



**Dr. John Torrey, the distinguished botanist, who had a summer home for eleven years on what is now called Torrey Cliff. With his neighbors in Palisades he founded the world-renowned Torrey Botanical Club. One of its achievements was the creation of the New York Botanical Garden in 1888. There he is commemorated by a "Torrey Room".**



**"Cliffside", Mr. W. E. Lawrence's house. Architect's drawing.**

(Recent families in Snedens seem to run to girls also, although they usually stop at three or four.)

Dr. Torrey sold his house to Dr. Agnew in 1865 and moved away, but he stayed in touch with Dr. Agnew, Mr. Park, and Mr. Gilman, his neighbors, who were among the earliest members of the Torrey Botanical Club. His house was struck by lightning in the nineties and was soon afterward torn down. Some of the lumber was built into the house two doors west of the Antique Shop. Traces of his garden were found long after his house on the hill was gone.

#### **Cliffside Lawrences**

From 1860 on, Henry Effingham Lawrence, of an older



**Seven Oaks, the Parks' house.**



branch of the family (Smithtown, Long Island, and Elizabeth, New Jersey, were both named after his ancestors), brought his family out to board for the summer in a large house called **Arcadia** on the river south of the landing. In 1870 he bought land and moved the house to the rear, and soon began building in its place **Cliffside\***, an imposing Victorian mansion, which was finished in 1876. His wife, Mrs. Lydia Lawrence, and his daughter, Margaret Lawrence, became active in many village projects. In the next few years, as business declined at the landing, he bought more land and many of the houses. and later his daughter Mary, who became a sculptor and married another sculptor, François Tonetti, fixed them up—not too much—and rented them to artistic and literary friends.

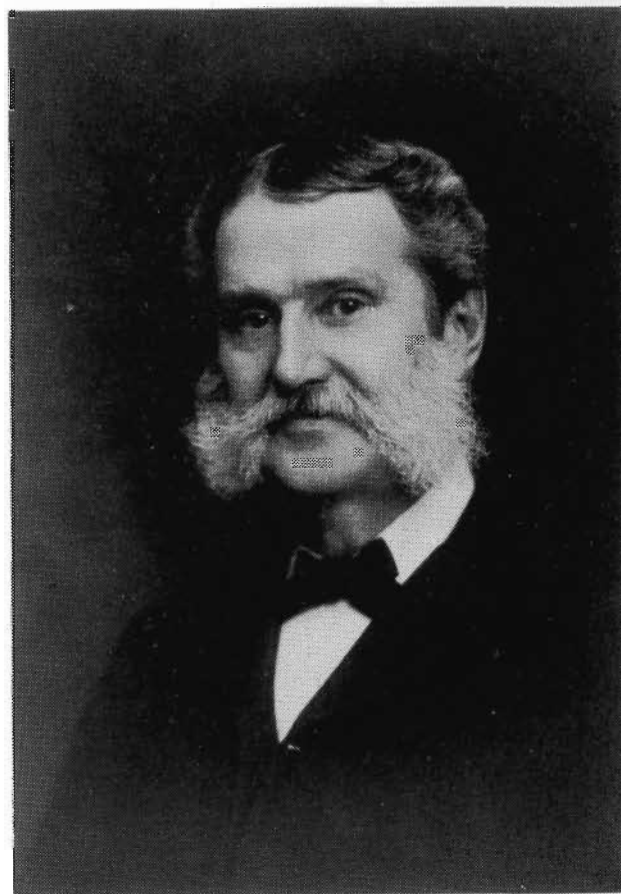
### Winthrop Gilman

In 1861 Winthrop Sargent Gilman Jr., a banker, came to the village, married Anna Park of **Seven Oaks**, and built first **Fern Lodge**, then **Niederhurst**, off Ludlow Lane at the top of the cliff. Among many other activities, he set himself to work on the history of Palisades. He interviewed old inhabitants, collected or copied old documents, photographs, and maps, described the village as it was at that time, and left a number of invaluable historical collections in manuscript. Most of them are now available in facsimile, in type-script, or on tape in the Palisades Library, through the efforts of the Palisades Historical Committee.\*\*

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\*Cliffside was designed by J. Cleveland Cady, the architect who designed also the Metropolitan Opera House on Thirty-ninth Street, the Natural History Museum, and the Demarest Railroad Station. According to Mr. Bradley, Cady built a house for himself in Alpine, New Jersey, a few miles south of **Cliffside**.

\*\*There is a list of manuscript books and other material collected by Mr. Gilman in Appendix No. 1.



**Winthrop Sargent Gilman Jr. (1839-1923), who was responsible, more than anyone else, for preserving historical records and photographing the Palisades of the last century, thereby making this history possible.**





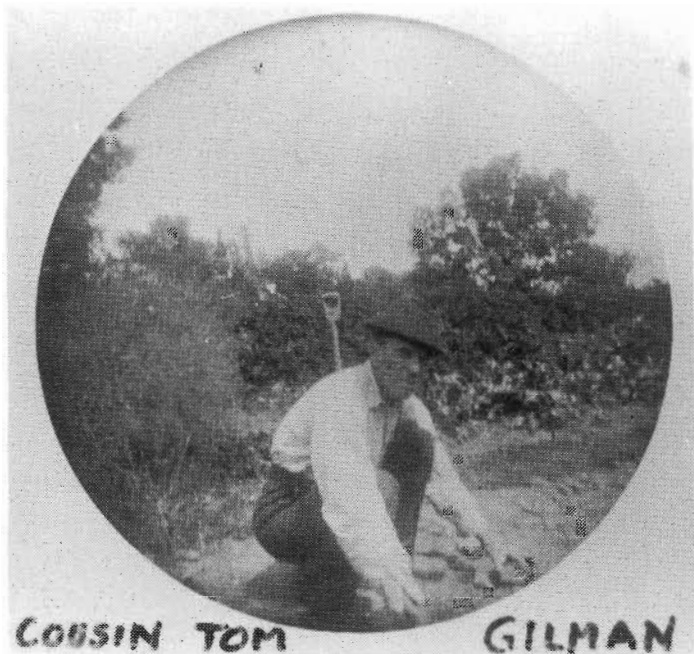
Anna Park at eighteen, painted in 1859 by Fridolin Schlegel, a young German artist. He is said to have been in love with her; and certainly when she married Winthrop Sargent Gilman Jr. two years later, the artist gave up a promising career in New York and went back to Germany.



Anna Park Gilman, the beautiful and courted young girl of the earlier photograph, became after her marriage a semi-invalid, whom her niece, Helen Park Stockman, remembered lying in "a lovely fourposter" at the foot of which was a large cage full of finches.

## Cousin Tom

In his work around the place and on expeditions he was almost always accompanied by "Cousin Tom" Gilman. As his daughter Anna Gilman Hill wrote: "This cousin and lifelong companion of my father has always been a beloved member of our family circle. During the gold panic of the 70's he went through a severe illness caused by strain and overwork. Some months later the doctors advised a quiet country life and much out-of-door work and no mental exercise.

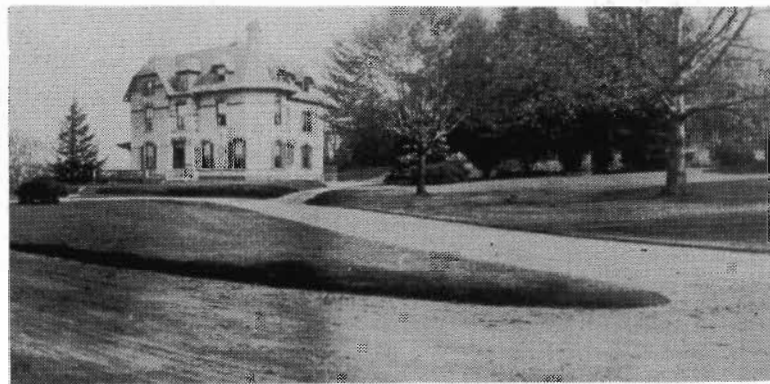


Winthrop Gilman's shy but beloved cousin, who had enough of Wall Street after the Panic on "Black Friday" of 1873. He came out to Palisades and spent the rest of his life studying and sketching birds and flowers and blasting rocks.

"Here was a Herculean task ready for him—the subduing of tons of rock, and the eventual building of roads, gardens and lawns. He learned to drill rocks most skilfully, and the loud blasts that resounded through the countryside testified to the progress of Cousin Tom's work."

Cousin Tom seems to have been a shy, quiet man, with a love of nature and an appeal for women. Anne Tonetti Gugler recalled that her mother, Mary Tonetti, was the only person to whom Cousin Tom would speak freely; Mildred Post Rippey remembered that he used often to go on nature walks with Miss Jennie Fox; and Helen Park Stockman wrote that he had a particularly warm relationship with "Aunt Anna", the wife of Winthrop Gilman. "Uncle Winthrop", Mrs. Stockman explained, "was so lacking in humor".

Elizabeth Fox Finck has letters of his written to his niece, Anna Gilman Hill, and to Jennie Fox around 1900 with the most detailed information about birds and flowers, and a charming little book made for Miss Jennie with accurate colored drawings of birds and flowers, and meticulous observations of habitat and dates of sightings in exquisite tiny script.



Winthrop Sargent Gilman Junior's Niederhurst in its early days. It stands off Ludlow Lane, at the top of the cliff.

## New Church

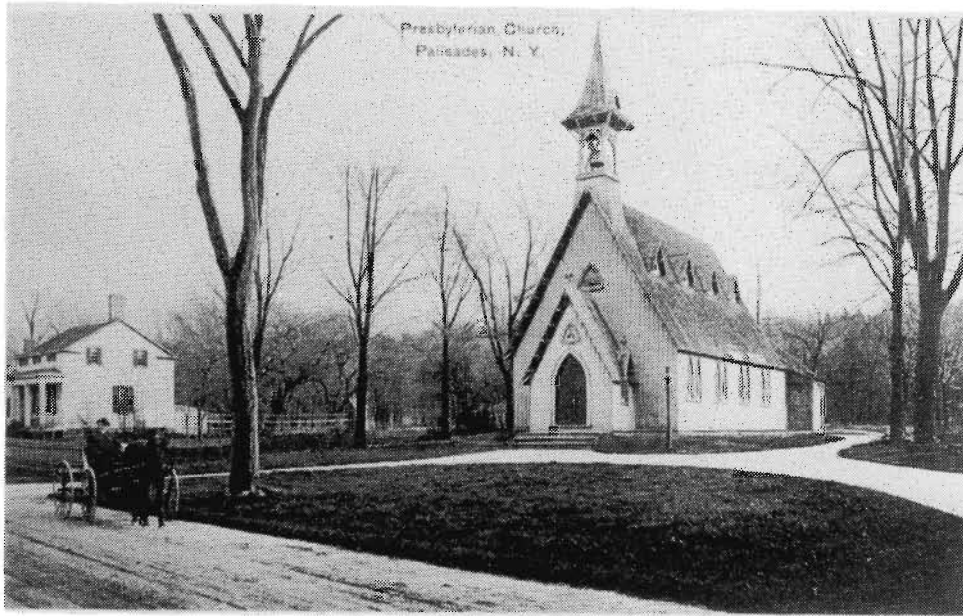
Mr. Gilman and his friends set to work almost immediately to found a new Presbyterian Church. Dr. Agnew bought the now abandoned Steepleless Church, and it was used for the first organizational meetings and services, while the present Presbyterian Church, designed by Mr. Gilman, was being built. On New Year's Eve of 1864 he and Mr. Park climbed the roof of the unfinished church in a fierce snowstorm to ring in the New Year for the first time.

The Presbyterian and Old Side Methodist churches co-existed for some time. Addie Denike and Mildred Post attended both Sunday Schools; but soon the Presbyterian church drew ahead in attendance.

## New Library

In the Steepleless Church, abandoned for the second time, Dr. Agnew arranged a fine library and reading room; but this was so thoroughly vandalized that it had finally to be abandoned once more. For a time it was used as a store and post office; but it was soon thereafter destroyed by fire.

When in 1891 a new attempt was made to start a library in the Watson House, Mrs. Lydia Lawrence provided not only the house, but six hundred books, a resident caretaker (Mrs. Henry Dobbs), and supportive funds as well. It was indeed a success this time.

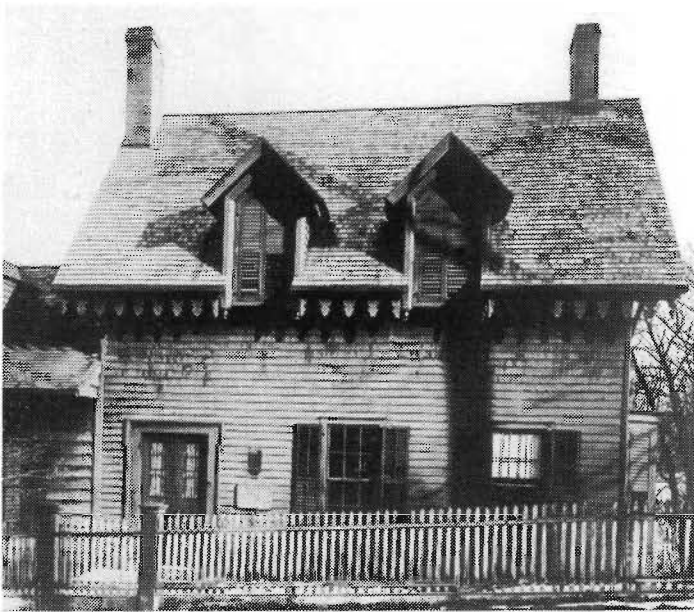


James Post in front of the church, around 1900.

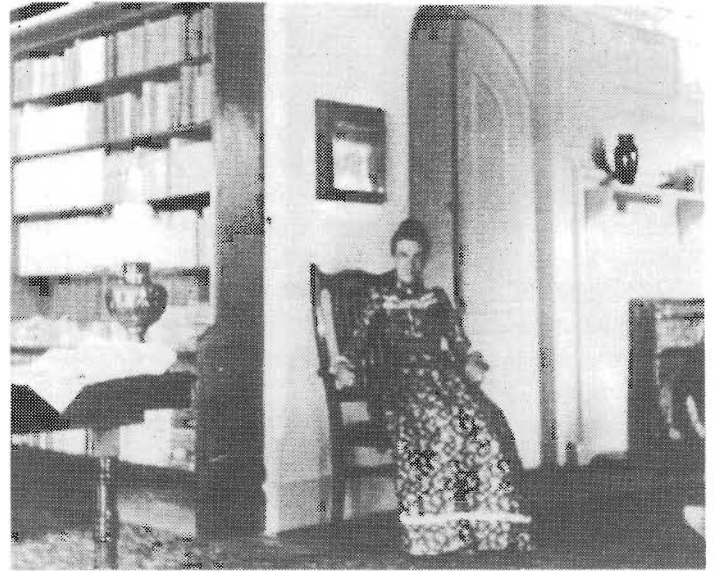
## Miss Quidor

Emma Quidor, still in her twenties, became librarian, and for the next fifty years she typified the library for generations of children and their elders. From the old Quidor house on the way to Tappan, she used to climb up one side of the Palisades and down the other to the Watson house.

Once in the library, she made it a haven for young and old. As Marion Lowndes said: "Arriving in search of adventure they could be sure of a beaming welcome from Miss Quidor who managed to make them feel, as she kept a sharp eye on their choice of reading, that she was discussing books and exchanging ideas with them man to man."



Watson, or "Ding Dong" house. Bailey says John Sneden built part of this before the Revolution. The first successful library was here, 1891-1898.



Miss Emma Quidor in the second library, in the "Big House".

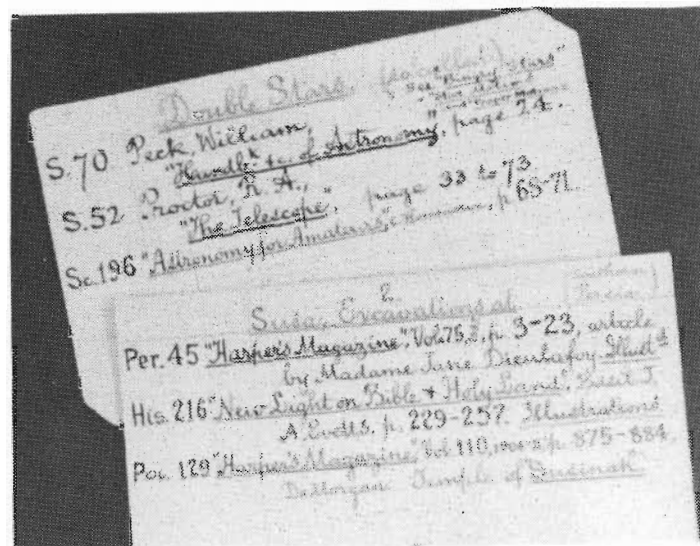
Mr. Gilman was one of the library's most active members. He made a monumental subject index, now unfortunately of interest chiefly for the beauty of the calligraphy and the evidence of wide reading.

The entertainments which have always been an important function of the library in Palisades, were held in the basement. Addie Denike Van Blarcom described one when as a flower girl, she put her head through a paper violet and sang a little song.

## Library Moved to the Big House

Miss Quidor had a shorter walk, as did most of the

Palisadians, when in the spring of 1899 the library was moved up the hill to the **Big House**, at that time also owned by Mrs. Lawrence. Mr. Gilman had ready a history of the **Big House**, and meticulous plans for the arrangement of the rooms. This is in the Palisades Library under the title "**Our Kitchen Window.**" In this largely speculative history he suggested that Lockhart may have built the **Big House** in 1685. His authority was a story by old Mr. Joseph Stansbury that in 1844 old "Uncle Johnny" Lawrence had told him that the **Big House** was a hundred and sixty years old that year. That would mean it was built in 1684. This is so unlikely that it makes one think that perhaps one or other of the old gentlemen might have really said a hundred and six years old, which would make the date a more likely 1738. In other publications, Mr. Gilman did use 1727 or 1729 as the probable date.

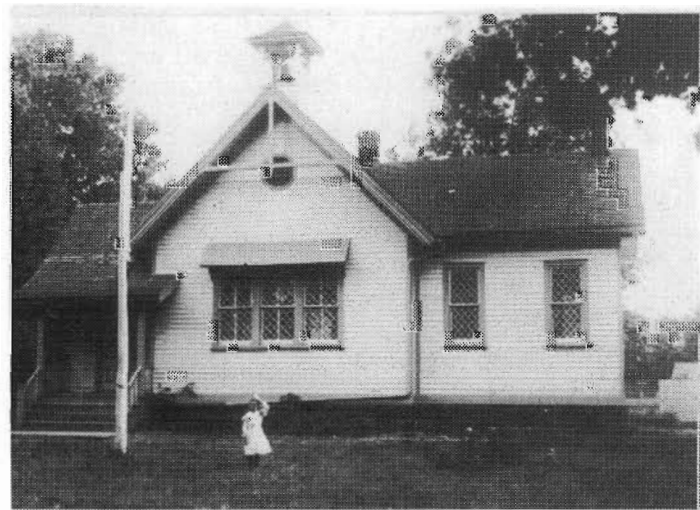


Examples of Mr. Gilman's index cards.

### New School

Mr. Gilman said that the school house (now the **Community Center** or "**Old School**") was built in 1870 "through the energy and push of the late Dr. C. R. Agnew," but Mr. Gilman had a hand in it too. It was built on land given by the Post family.

There had been at least two schools before this one. The first school on record was on Closter Road, near the Willsey tenant house. The second was a one-room building on the northwest corner of the Old School lot, east of Post Row, which was built in 1836. It was at this time that the first school building was moved to the "Mountain" by Henry Concklin.



Addie Denike in front of the "Old School", about 1890.



## New Houses on Western Slope

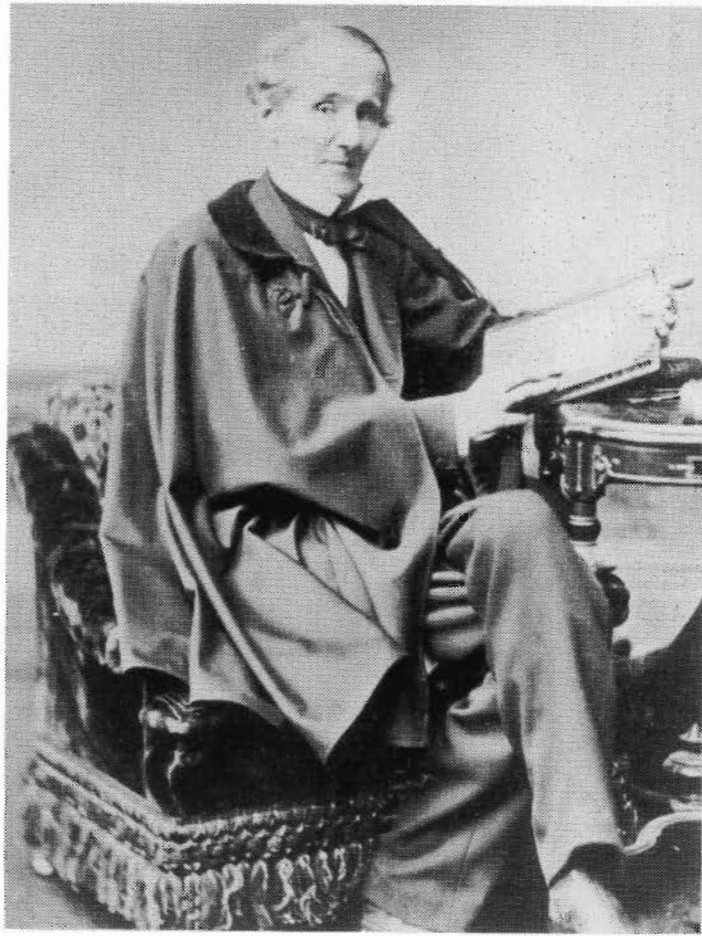
On the western side of the Palisades two large houses were built; and the owners took their parts in the life of Palisades. Floyd Bailey built **Valley View** on the south side of Oak Tree Road, and gave his name for a time to the road down the hill. He died in 1897, and his successor, James N. Wallace, lived there on into the twentieth century. On the north side of the road, east of the old Mann house, Isaac N. Sears built his house; and he became one of the founders of the Presbyterian Church. Now, not only are the owners gone, but the last houses were torn down in 1954 to make way for the Parkway and developments.

### Heyhoe\*

Mr. Gilman's father, Winthrop S. Gilman Sr., (1808-1884) came to Palisades in 1871 and bought a house on Rockland Road, now, roughly, Route 9W, from the Clinton Gilberts, which he called **Heyhoe**. This became a legendary place. It had to be large, of course, to house thirteen children, servants, and friends. It is said that the doorknobs were of solid silver and that there were twenty-six marble fireplaces. The house burned down in the 1930's about the the time that Route 9W was put in. Henry Kennell, who built on the site, still keeps finding marble fragments when he ploughs his gardens and digs in his orchards.

### Winthrop Sargent Gilman Sr. Tried for Rioting

Winthrop Sargent Gilman Sr. was apparently a con-



Winthrop Sargent Gilman Senior (1808-1884), who lost his warehouse and risked his life in Alton, Ill., in defending the abolitionist editor, Elijah Parish Lovejoy. Later he came to New York and founded the private banking house of Gilman, Son, & Co., taking each son into the bank as he left college. He also took in his nephew, Thomas Poynton Gilman (Cousin Tom). During the panic of 1873-1874 his banking house suspended payment, and he sold his city house and moved to Heyhoe to live there the year round.

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\*According to C. P. Noyes, who married Mr. Gilman's daughter, Emily, the name Heyhoe was given the house by a "whimsical daughter," commemorating one Frances Heyhoe, who married into the Gilman family in 1740.

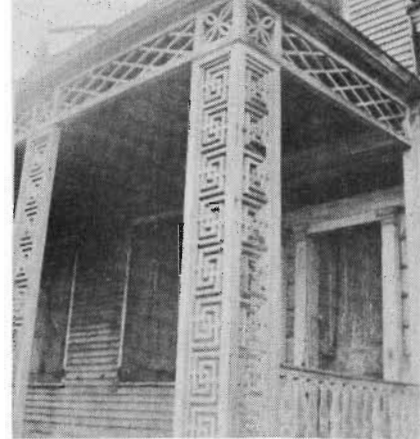




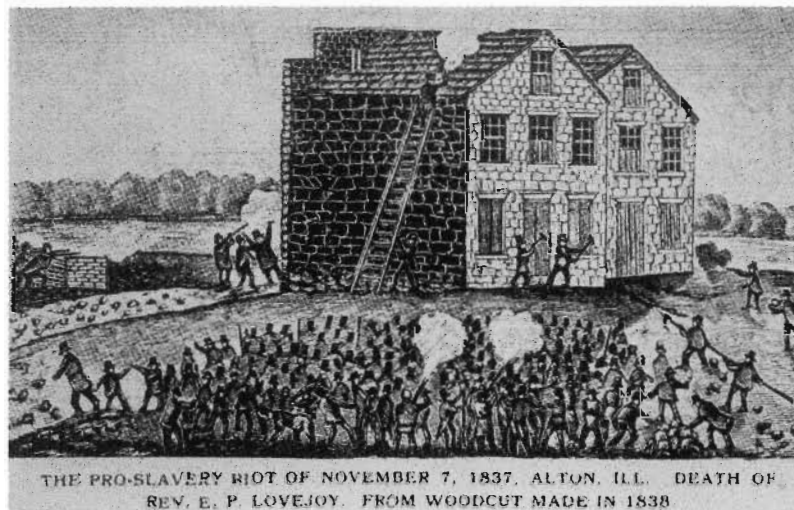
**Ruin of Heyhoe. Winthrop Sargent Gilman Sr.'s house, after it burned in the 1930's.**

servative and respectable banker; but if one looks up his name in the New York Public Library, one sees a booklet dealing with his trial for the crime of riot! This turns out to be with reference to his lending his warehouse in Alton, Illinois in 1837 to shelter the printing press used by Elijah Parish Lovejoy to print the abolitionist **Alton Observer**, after three other presses had been destroyed by mobs. Mr. Gilman was in the warehouse when a member of the besieging mob was killed by one of the defenders. Later when Mr. Lovejoy ventured out to parley and was killed and the warehouse was set on fire, the defenders were forced to give up. The mob destroyed the press, and the battle was lost, but not the war. Now there is a Lovejoy award for courage in journalism, but Mr. Gilman's courage also deserves recognition.

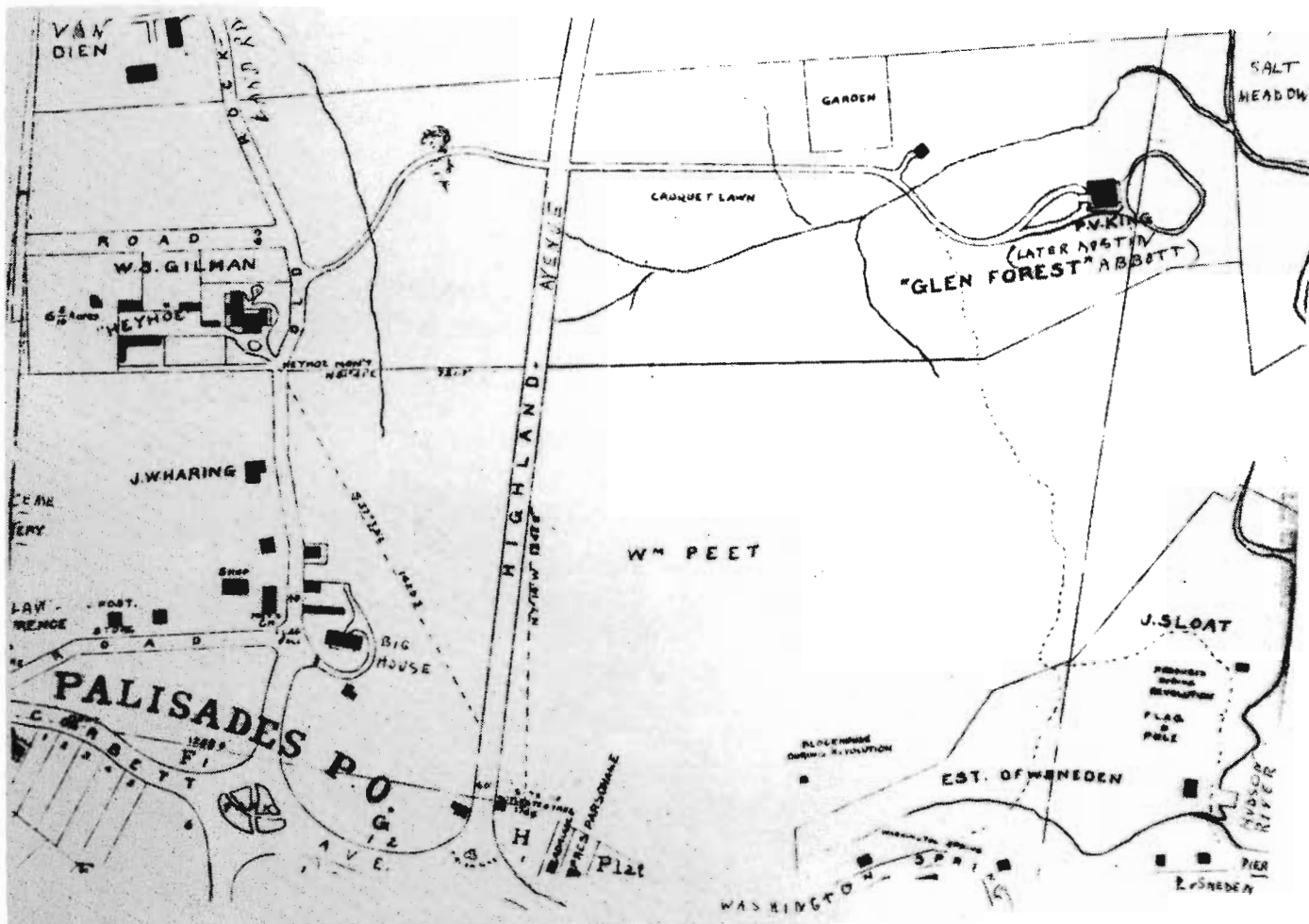
He came to Palisades in a period of fantastic land speculation, when new roads and railroads were changing the whole economy. There was even a project to build a



**Detail from Heyhoe. American Regency Style. Taken by Charles Witney in 1936, before the fire.**



This was Godfrey and Gilman's warehouse which Mr. Gilman had offered the abolitionist editor Elijah Parish Lovejoy as shelter for his press, after mobs had destroyed three others. Mr. Lovejoy can be seen at the left of the warehouse falling from a fatal shot, while a man on the ladder is setting the fire which finally drove Mr. Gilman and the other defenders out. The press was again destroyed.



North central portion of Serviss map of 1874, showing "Glen Forest", at that time belonging to Peter V. King, later Abbott's, now in the Palisades Interstate Park; the extensive buildings at "Heyhoe", Winthrop Gilman Sr.'s house; and the Heyhoe Monument, which shows the distance to the Boylested tree. Highland Avenue does not now exist; but in the 1930's Ruth Salmon and Lydia Hyde thought they could trace its course by a row of large oak trees in the woods; and Conrad Lattes in the 80's confirms this.

(A complete Map will be found folded at the end of the book).



**"Green Glen" by Jasper Cropsey (A painter of the Hudson River School, 1823-1900). By family tradition this is at Snedens Landing, painted in 1899, when Cropsey and his family used to cross the river from his home in Hastings to picnic and sketch. The painting can be seen in the museum in the old Cropsey house in Hastings.**



railroad along the west shore of the Hudson, with a depot at the Voris house (later to be called by Mrs. Tonetti "**the Pirate's Lair**"), a little south of the landing road.

### Land Company

The senior Mr. Gilman formed a land company with friends from Providence—Goddard, Ives, Brown, and Gilman—which bought much of the land at the top of the hill, and had the village surveyed and a map drawn by Serviss in 1874. Before they could make much headway the bubble burst. There is a memorandum showing prices asked on some of the plots in 1874, and the more realistic prices of 1887, after Mr. Gilman's death. Many are down from \$1000 to about \$300, and one plot of one and a quarter acres went from \$2500 to \$312.50. (See Appendix No. 27).

After this not much was heard of the land company until 1919 when a new project revived hopes for development. "The Lockhart Land Company" published a leaflet describing the amenities of Palisades. There was a description of the proposed New York State Highway (9W): "as it passes through Palisades it is called the New Jersey State Line—Nyack Federal Aid Highway. It . . . is destined to carry a heavy traffic." "The Lockhart Land Company," the leaflet declared, "is prepared to build houses from the plans to suit home seekers costing \$10,000, less or more."

If Winthrop Gilman, Jr. was involved, this development was strictly controlled. The text of a deed from Mr. Gilman to Mr. Denike, in 1871, for land a little south of the Ebmeyers' present house, stipulates in part that Mr. Denike should not "carry on any livery stable, slaughter-house, tallow-chandlery, foundry, gas works, distillery, sugar bakery, or theatrical or equestrian performances, or any business which may unfavorably affect the morals of the community

or offensive to the neighbors or any gaming or liquor saloon." Mr. Denike settled for a blacksmith shop.

### Sneads Landing

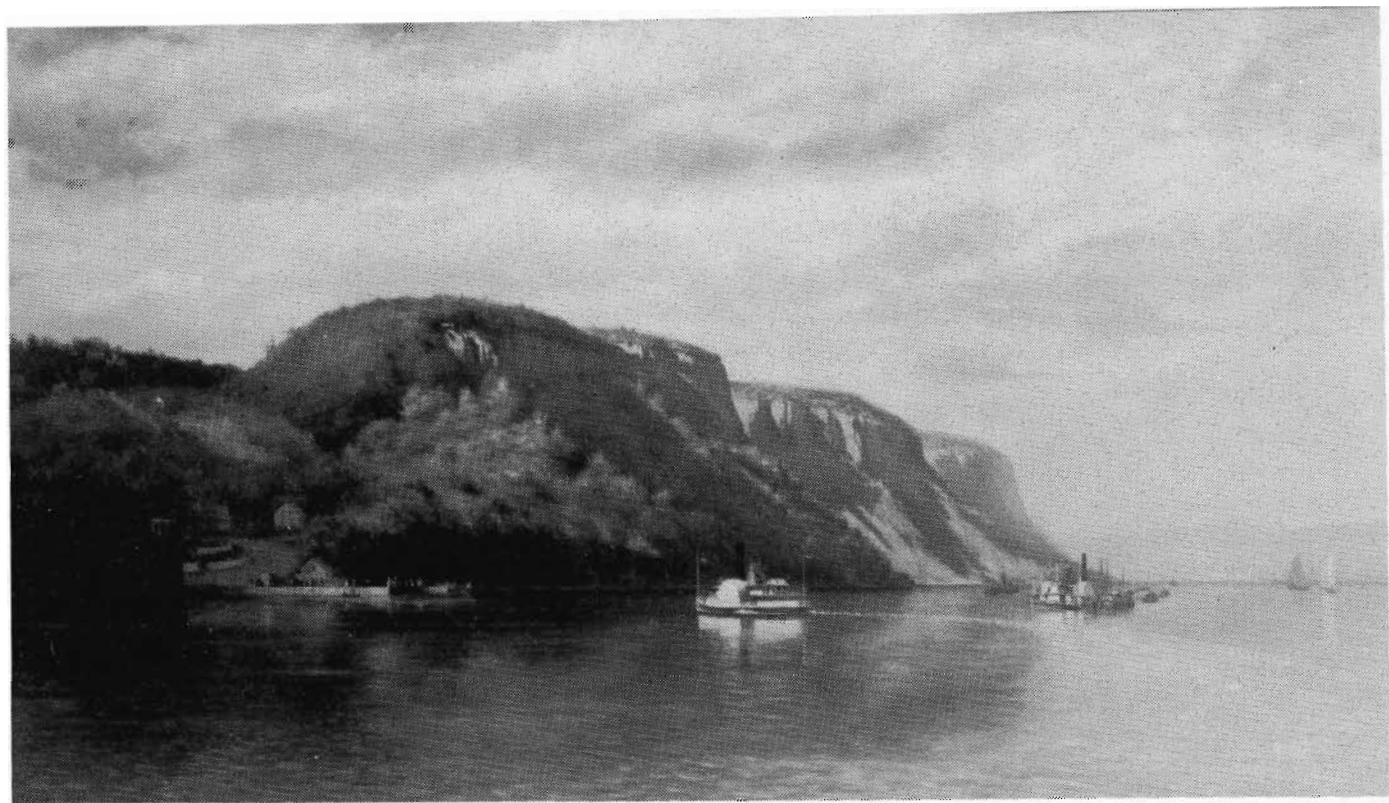
A delightful, if not completely accurate, view of what is probably Snedens Landing in 1867 is John George Brown's painting, "View of the Palisades (Sneads Landing)". Jerome Robbins saw this in 1976 in the Fine Arts Museum in San Francisco; and his postcard to Helen Norman started an intensive investigation in the village, which seems to show that there is no other locality on the Hudson which is more like the view or the name than this one.\* The painting was from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd; and it was later shown in the Whitney Museum in New York. Now it belongs to the San Francisco Museum.

Since the configuration of the land seems backward for Snedens, Lee Savage has suggested that Brown perhaps followed a not uncommon procedure, making a sketch to be engraved, and painting a picture from the engraving which came out reversed. It is indeed true that when the photograph of the painting is reversed, it looks very much like the line of the Palisades at Snedens.

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\*Mrs. Ebmeyer, the postmistress, inquired through the **New York State Postmasters Monthly** and heard of no place called Sneads Landing up or down the Hudson; Mrs. Savell checked the **Legislative Manual** and found no such place as Sneads listed among New York villages or hamlets; and Mrs. Norman wrote the San Francisco Museum, asking if by chance the postcard showed a mirror image of the painting, since the cliffs to the north are not really that high. The answer was no.

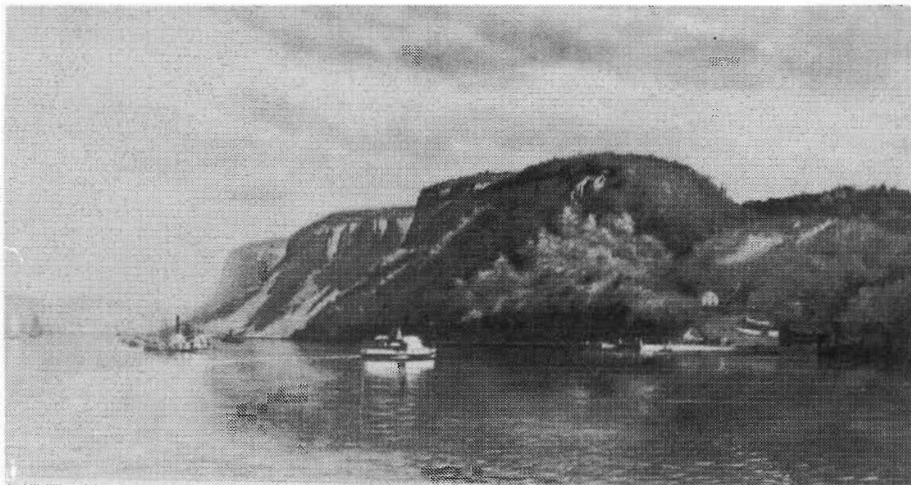




View of the Palisades, Hudson River (Sneads Landing) by John George Brown, 1867. The painting which has raised so many questions. The sidewheelers in the picture are the Thomas E. Hulse and the Cayuga, as can clearly be seen in the original painting.



**Brown's painting as it would look reversed. This is much more like the conformation of the Palisades near Snedens Landing.**



**View from Palisades looking south, showing the "mountain" rising to south of the village. Copy of oil painting by W. Lee Savage.**



## VIII. VARIOUS ACCOUNTS OF LIFE IN PALISADES AT THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

**Anna Gilman Hill, Helen Park Stockman, Andrew Carnegie Changes His Mind, Hudson River in 1870's, Pre-Raphaelites in Palisades, Lizzie Leonard and Emily Munson, Archer Stansbury, Adeline Denike Van Blarcom, the Dows, Alex Schultz, Mary Lawrence, The Waterfall, The Centennial Celebration.**

### **Anna Gilman Hill**

ONE OF THE junior Mr. Gilman's daughters, Anna, who grew up in **Niederhurst**, married the financier Robert C. Hill in 1894, moved away to Englewood for some years, and then, when her mother died in 1920, came back to Palisades to live in **Niederhurst** for the rest of her life. Her father and Cousin Tom spent their last years in the **Lodge**.

Anna Gilman Hill was a renowned gardener and writer on gardening subjects. She also wrote a vivid description of the Palisades of her childhood in the late eighteen hundreds (she was born in 1872). She told what she knew of the various houses and of the people who lived in them, and how they passed their time.

### **Helen Park Stockman**

Her cousin, Helen Park, now Mrs. Henry Stockman,

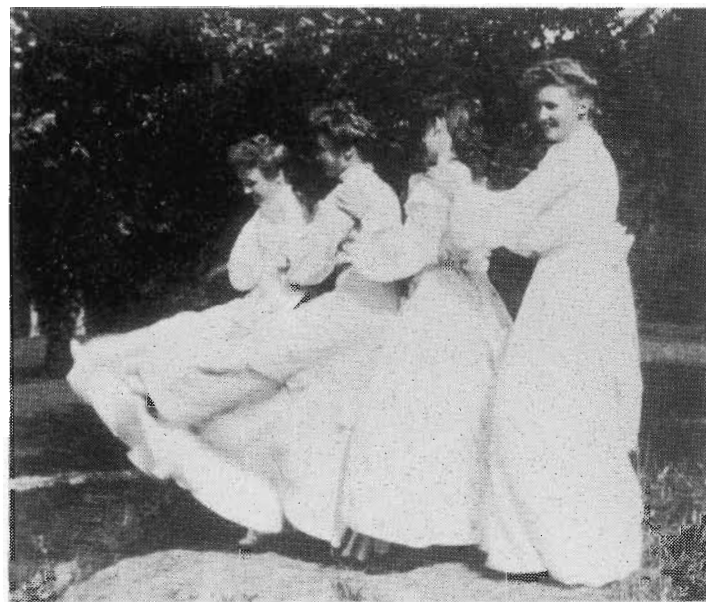
also wrote a charming description of life in nineteenth-century Palisades for a large and happy family of summer visitors.

Amusements were simpler a hundred years ago. The three Gilman children and their cousins, the seven Park girls and one boy, enjoyed walks up on the "mountain" past the Roemers and Dumkins and Frank Heintzman, "to Crum Rock, now the Lookout," or to the west, "along Turkey Ridge, where Miss Eliza Torrey had built her house, afterward lived in by the Yearlings."

On other days they would be taken in carriages to meet their fathers at the Tappan or Sparkill Station, with stops to see the gypsies near the great oak tree and spring at the bottom of the hill. Mrs. Stockman wrote: "About the gypsies—I remember them so well, and the rather sinister hotel [**The Oak Tree Hotel**, across the County Road to the west]. The carts were the real Romany ones, curtains and bedding sticking out the back. As a rule, two carts, and they camped at the spring—came and just as suddenly departed. The



**Nannie Gilman, afterwards Mrs. Robert Hill, and Mary Lawrence, afterwards Mrs. François Tonetti, with their pets. Probably in the 1880's.**



**Four of the seven Park sisters, from left, Bess, Catherine, Carol, and Julie. Cousins of Nannie Gilman Hill, early 1900's.**

women in long full skirts and necklaces—the men scary looking. I seem to remember that the men mended pots and pans. Our old cook told me tales of the gypsies stealing children and horses, and we were told not to stray too far. Whether they were traveling north or south I never knew, but it seemed to me they came every year. What a carefree life. I envied them.”

On the other hand, Frances Sisco Pierson said that her grandmother, Mary Sisco, with whom she lived in the old Adriance house west of the parsonage, always felt sorry for the gypsies and gave them food.

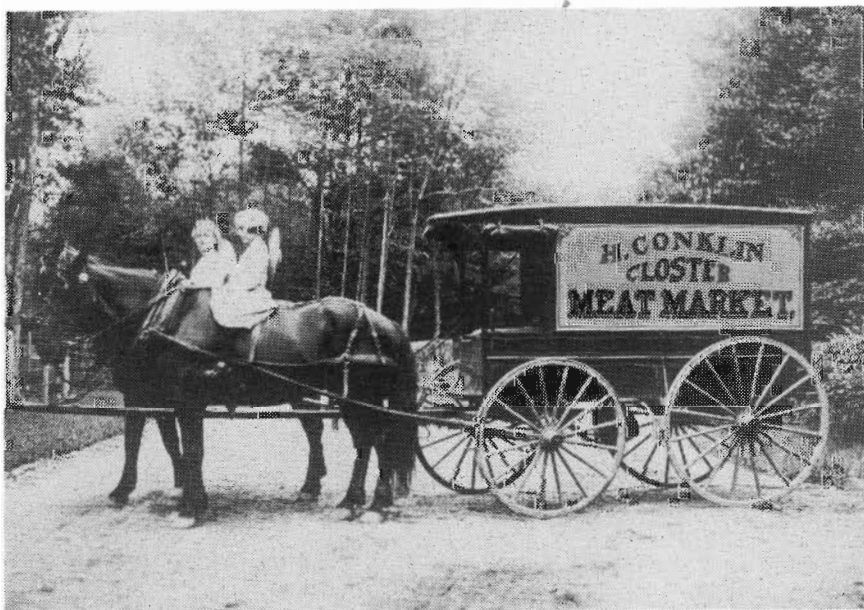
The Oak Tree Hotel is described by Constance Lieval Price as a resort hotel. Perhaps it seemed sinister to little Helen Park because it was so near to the gypsy encampment.

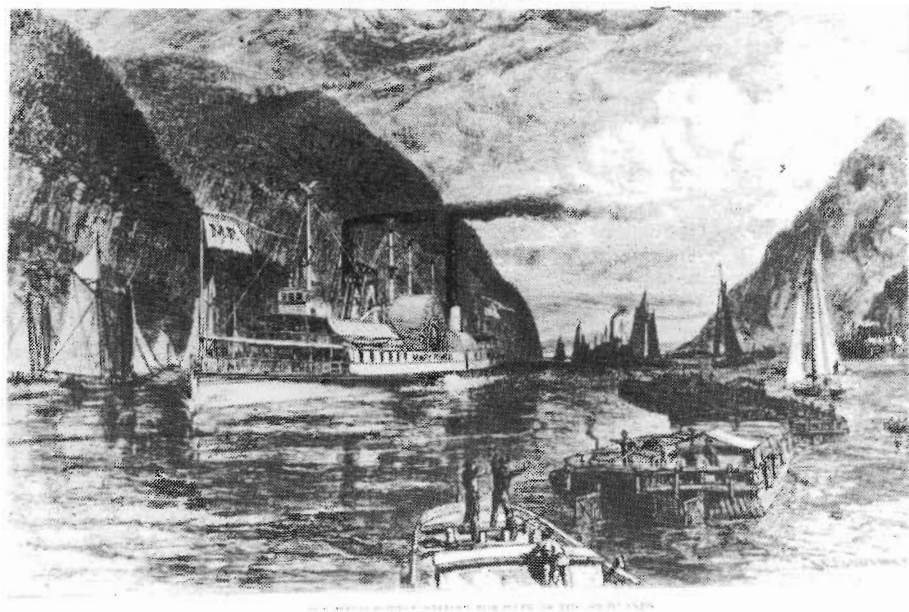
(Midred Post felt the same way, however. She says, “It was a saloon, and my father sold the proprietor his famous Happy Bill cigars.”)

In the winter, when the Parks had gone back to Englewood, the Gilman children skated on the shallow ponds in the woods north of the village (as children still do), and coasted down the long Park-Agnew hill, with a coachman posted at the bottom to stop traffic. They all joined the village children at quilting bees and church picnics.

One excitement for the children was the arrival of H. Conklin’s meat wagon. Mrs. Stockman described it: “A complete butcher shop where you opened the back, all cooled by great blocks of ice with beef, lamb, and pork all hanging and all his shining butcher tools. A team of

Little Park girls, Marian and Helen, with meat wagon. According to Mildred Post Rippey, Harvey Conklin was not only butcher but photographer, and contributor of some of the best photographs in The Story of the Ferry.





**The Hudson River in the 1870's.**

**Captain Coates in his ferry boat. Girl  
in bottom is a cousin of the Park girls  
named Eleanor Doty.**



strong bay horses brought it all the way from Closter. Mr. Conklin sliced calves liver expertly and would always slip me a small piece of raw meat."

### Andrew Carnegie Changes His Mind

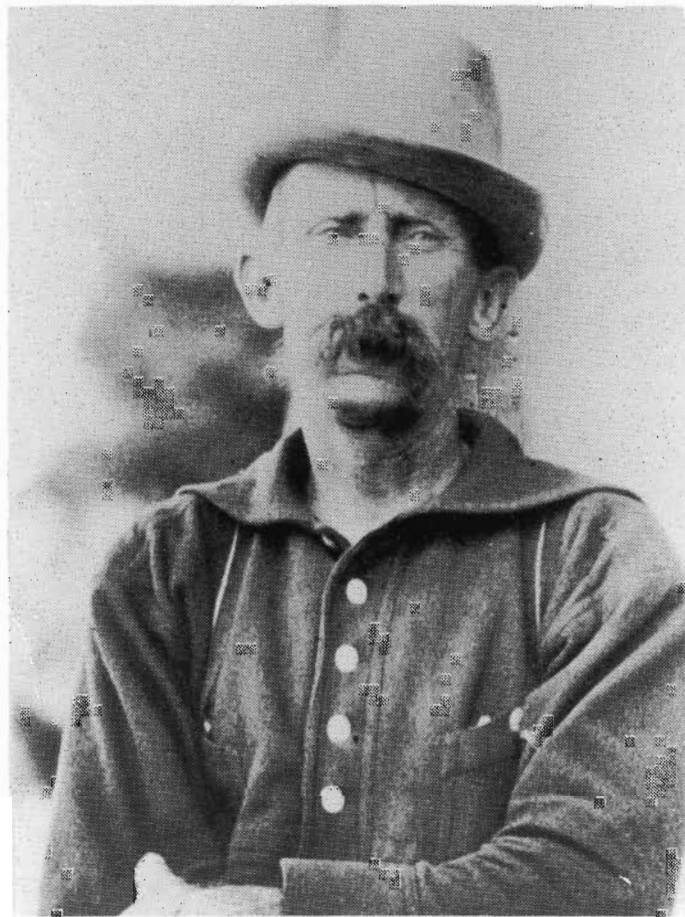
Nannie Gilman was irrepressible as a child, as indeed she was as an old lady. At the age of twelve, she perhaps tipped the balance in Andrew Carnegie's decision against settling in Palisades near his friends the Gilmans. He came out to look over the property on election day in 1884. "I was cautioned not to say a word about politics," she wrote, "for Mr. Carnegie was a dyed-in-the-wool Republican and rooter for Blaine . . . Time came for them to leave and we all went down to the landing to see them off. As they pushed off from the dock Mr. Carnegie stood up in the boat and called to my father 'Here's hoping for a sweeping Republican victory!' That was too much for my pent-up feelings; I tore down the long dock and yelled at the top of my lungs our slogan 'Blaine, Blaine, James G. Blaine, the greatest liar in the state of Maine!' . . . Mr. Carnegie lost interest in the real estate."

### Hudson River in 1870's

In those days the Hudson River in the summer was a constant entertainment. Mrs. Hill described it:

"Of the passenger steamboats the **Chrystena** a one-stacked snow white boat ran daily from Tarrytown to New York stopping at Dobbs Ferry and Yonkers to pick up passengers. Captain William Coates then met the west shore dwellers and brought them home in his sailboat or heavy row boat. He could row the crossing in eleven minutes on a smooth day.

"I remember clearly how the river was alive with boats of a bright afternoon. The big schooners coming up on the two o'clock breeze wing-and-wing, the little sloops chasing



Captain William Coates, who married Mary Sneden, and ran the ferry off and on from 1871 to 1903.



all around them, cat-boats galore, just fishing, and the big Albany Day boats, the **New York** one day and the **Albany** the other. Then toward sunset up would come my favorite the **Daniel Drew**, not to be confused with the later much larger **Drew** which passed at night after I was in bed. But the Queen of the river and pride of our hearts was the **Mary Powell** which went up to Albany one afternoon and back to the city the next. Kind Captain Coates used to row me out to midstream to catch the thrilling and mountainous swells she kicked up.

"Then there were always long rows of empty barges being towed up to Haverstraw for the brick or to Rockland Lake for the ice.\* These seemed to be going day and night. By Thanksgiving time all the fluttering sails and gliding steamers and even the tows had ceased for the river would be full of ice till March."

One situation that makes one think of twentieth century problems arose in 1877. "One hot summer," Mrs. Hill wrote, "the street cleaning department of New York City decided to dump a large number of scows off our salt meadows. By the time the stench had disappeared we children found that many treasures, including pennies, were being washed up on the shore . . . But an epidemic of typhoid broke out among the villages near the dump and I remember we children were hustled off to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to stay until after frost. Such was the voluble rage of the inhabitants that the street-cleaning department decided that it was better to dump the scows out to sea."

### Pre-Raphaelites in Palisades

The Pre-Raphaelite movement in England had an

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\*Mrs. Stockman remembered that one could always tell the ice barges by their windmills, which were used to pump water from the melting ice.

offshoot in the Palisades of the 1870's and 80's. As Mrs. Hill wrote later: "My Aunts Miss Julia, Alice and Serena Gilman . . . had been in London and were much interested in the work of that group of men headed by William Morris, and including Burne-Jones, Rossetti, and Maddox Brown, and their decorating firm which brought a complete revolution in the taste of the English Public . . . The Palisades Needlework Class\* started by my Aunts and my sister Bertha under the aegis of the Decorative Arts Society [in New York] first taught Kensington Stitch in exquisitely soft shades of Crewel. Each girl had a Sampler with a strawberry, a wild rose and its foliage, a buttercup, and a daisy clearly stamped on it. On these they worked until they were proficient and then they were taught couching in Chinese gold thread. Then they were ready to take orders from the Decorative Arts Society . . . All young and attractive girls working once a week in the **Niederhurst** library and taking the exquisite work home to finish."

Augustus Saint-Gaudens, in his **Reminiscences** describes another art class in Palisades in the mid-1870's which was not quite so productive.

"Meanwhile, my affairs remained in such a state that I did some teaching which required fabulous exertion; for that old friend of my father's, Dr. Agnew, then living on the Hudson opposite Dobbs Ferry, had a number of children to whom I gave lessons in drawing. It seemed to me as if I started out at daybreak on those hot summer days; taking the cars to Dobbs Ferry, where I stood on the dock, and, with a string, pulled a wooden arm which branched out of the top of a pole to indicate to the man with a boat on the other bank of the river, a mile or two away, that somebody wanted to cross. Then an approaching speck on the water became the

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\*Or **Panewocle**, as Nannie Gilman called it. Mildred Post Rippey says that for a while the class was held in one of the outbuildings behind "**Heyhoe**."

ferryman, who had seen the sign and was coming over to take me back. On landing I climbed a steep hill in the hot sun, and taught the young pupils who, I am afraid, were not as much interested in what I said as they should have been. They have since become among the most charming of my friends. After an hour or so with them, I descended the hill, crossed the river in the row boat, took the train, which deposited me at Thirtieth Street, where I arrived at one o'clock more dead than alive."

In **The Tonetti Years**, Isabelle Savell suggests that perhaps seven-year-old Mary Lawrence was one of the pupils. Certainly she became later one of "the most charming of his friends."

### **Lizzie Leonard**

Lizzie Leonard, who as a young girl stayed with relatives in the old Trenchard house, just west of the country store, left a diary describing visits to the library or church where she saw the other young people, including her special friend, Frazier Hill, and an occasional dance in Conklin's boathouse by the river.

### **Emily Wahrenberger Munson**

Mrs. Emily Wahrenberger Munson, who was eighty-nine in 1967, said that she went to school in the present Old Schoolhouse, and then to the Nyack High School, which she reached by walking the two miles to Tappan, and then taking a train. She left school at sixteen to help her father, Fred Wahrenberger, who was postmaster. The post office at that time was near its present site on Oak Tree Road and he had a blacksmith shop at the same corner. When that burned down, in about 1883, Mr. Wahrenberger built another one to the east, afterward owned by August Dumkin.

For recreation, Emily Wahrenberger and her friends often walked to the cascade, or waterfall, with the Lawrences' permission. Occasionally they were allowed to swim in the river, wearing, not bathing suits, but cumbersome wrappers. In winter there would be sleigh rides along the river to Nyack, and then to an ice cream parlor in West Nyack.

### **Archer Stansbury**

A very special treat for the young people in Palisades was described by the late Archer Stansbury who was honored as one of the older dignitaries at the Bicentennial celebration at the flag pole on Route 9W.

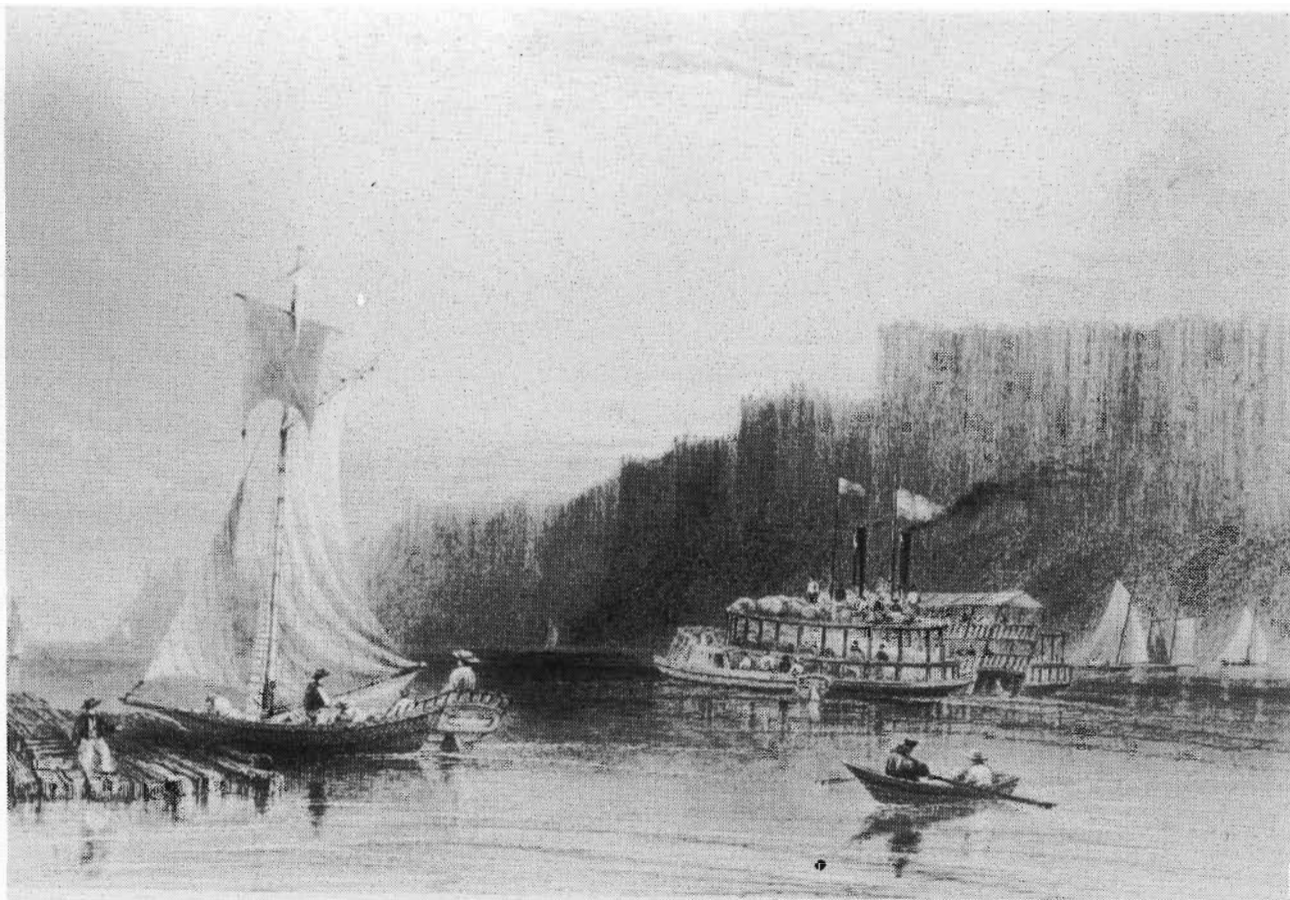
"My father, Harry Bradford Stansbury, a pilot whose license covered from Martha's Vineyard to Dismal Swamp, North Carolina, was very fond of the Hudson River, and in early youth helped Captain Bill Coates on the Ferry. One wild blustery day Captain Coates asked him to take Dr. Agnew across the river, and this he did with such skill that the pleased doctor gave him a five dollar gold piece.

"At one time he was quartermaster of the **Chauncey Vibbard**, an early Hudson River Boat. Later he was Captain on the excursion boats of Starin and Son, and would often bring a big crowd from the city to Forest View Grove [a picnic place and dance hall in the park a mile or two south of Snedens, now abandoned] on the steamboat **Richmond** or the **Glen**. He would come up to opposite Snedens Landing, give them three long whistle blasts, indicating he was turning around, and to let the folks here know that he was headed for the Grove, and to invite them to come down to enjoy the dancing and good time—all free to them. Sometimes I would borrow one of Uncle Zeb Garrison's row boats and row a group of our friends down there and back."

Across the river from Forest View Grove was Dudley's Grove, another picnic ground, in Hastings-on-Hudson. On



Palisades Party at Forest View Fairgrounds, about two miles South of Snedens Landing, about 1900. Standing: Edna and Archer Stansbury, Helen Wahrenberger, later Mrs. George Brown. Sitting, from left: Adeline Denike, later Mrs. Demarest Van Blancom, Jennie Post, Mattie Stansbury, Mrs. Garrison, Captain Henry Dobbs, Mrs. Stansbury (Aunt Lizzie), Frances Smith, later Mrs. William Mabie, and Cousin Cliff Stansbury. This crowd could not have fitted into Archer Stansbury's rowboat. They must have been brought by Captain Dobbs in his sloop, Anne Amelia.



**Caption for Bartlett's Painting of Safety Barges. From Henry Collins Brown's *Lordly Hudson*, pg. 93.** "Passing the Hudson River Palisades. An early passenger steamboat with barges. These barges carried enormous loads of merchandise and also passengers at the same time. They were later utilized for excursions, as their deck space gave room for dancing. They were towed to Alpine Grove, Dudley's Grove, Iona Island and other picnic grounds during the summer. At the left is a raft of timber floating down to the city. The Hudson River sloop seems to be docking at the raft, while shad fishermen approached in a rowboat." (This may well have been at Forest View Grove).



**Family group: Winfield Post, Mrs. Abram (Famiche Willsey) Post, Nellie Denike, Mrs. W. C. Denike, Adeline Denike. (Adeline Denike Van Blarcom's cousin, great-grandmother, sister, grandmother, and herself). In Denikes' yard, Old School in background. About 1892.**



pleasant weekends in summer in the late nineteenth century, the river between the two "Groves" was crowded with excursion boats carrying thousands of merry-making passengers.

Since steamboats occasionally blew up or caught fire, the excursionists were often taken in "safety barges", capacious crafts with two decks and wide promenades, towed by a smaller boat. In Appendix No. 29 there is a fine account by Mary Allison of the gay times at Dudley's Grove in its heyday.\*

### **Adeline Denike Van Blarcom**

Adeline Denike Van Blarcom, who died in 1977 at the age of 95, enjoyed talking and writing of the Palisades of her childhood, and of the people—nearly all of them her relatives—who lived in the various houses. As little Addie Denike, she lived with her grandparents in the first house of Post Row, just west of the Old School, and after she married Demarest Van Blarcom, they returned to Palisades and continued to live there for many years.

She tells the usual stories of walks to the cascade in summer and coasting downhill and skating on "Post's Pond" in winter\*\*—but she didn't spend all her time in play. She

\*Dudley's Grove disappeared years ago, and was rediscovered by Lee Savage in 1981, when he was making a film about Jasper Cropsey. Seeking along the eastern shore of the Hudson the exact viewpoint from which Cropsey's "View from Dudley's Grove" must have been painted, he found it at the present site of the Palisades Boat Club. It turned out that when Dudley's Grove gave up in about 1910, the boat club had taken its place.

\*\*"Post's Pond" was made by damming two brooks which ran through the swampy ground between Oak Tree Road and Closter Road. The Posts cut ice from it and kept it at an ice house just off Closter Road. In summer Holstead Post sold the ice from his ice wagon.



**Addie Denike's grandparents, William Clark Denike, and his wife, the former Julia Adeline Post, who gave a home to four grandchildren and two orphaned Snedens, as well as Mrs. Denike's mother, Mrs. Abram Post.**



had to help her grandmother with the six children to whom she had given a home: four Denike grandchildren and two of the little Posts, the last heirs of the Snedens of the River, whose parents, Frances Sneden and Henry Post, and uncles Horton and Sherman Sneden, had all died of consumption when young. When the Trenchard's well across the road went dry she had to take water several times a day from the fine well in front of the Old Schoolhouse to Miss Libby and Miss Phoebe. At one time she went to live with the Conklins in their house just north of the Antique Shop, to help when Mrs. Conklin was sick.

Since there were no ready-made clothes for sale in the village, there were a number of local dressmakers for those who had not the time or the knack for sewing. Miss Libby Trenchard made Addie Denike's clothes; and Miss Jennie Sherwood in the William Sneden house, and Miss Julia



**The Stansbury girls and Mildred Post on the skating pond. In the background is the house built after the old Abram Post house burned down.**



**Holstead or "Holly" Post brought ice.**



**Other children playing on the skating pond, with another Post house, the Denike house, and the Old School in the background.**



A photograph of Marie Dow which appeared in the New York Times of July 27, 1919 with the following caption: "Mme. E. D. Cartier de Marchienne, formerly Mrs. Hamilton Cary of New York and Newport, and now the bride of the Belgian Minister to the United States, the marriage recently taking place in Paris".

Conklin were also dressmakers. Mildred Post Rippey said that Addie Denike later became a dressmaker herself; and it was she who made Mildred Post's dress for graduation from eighth grade. She added: "I hated it."

### The Dows

Mrs. Hill and Mrs. Van Blarcom alike were fascinated by the Dows, who came to Palisades around 1890. Mr. Dow was an executive in the Knickerbocker Ice Company at Rockland Lake; but it was Mrs. Dow and the four daughters that they noticed. Listen to Mrs. Van Blarcom first: "The Dows lived in the Haring house [on the main road to Piermont] and kept boarders. Owed everyone—\$1500 to Mildred's grandfather [James Post] for livery. They owed him a terrific bill for groceries too. They owed my grandfather for milk. They never paid it all even after Jessie Dow married Bert Oltman. I ran the door sill off for the milk money but never got it all.

"The Dow girls were like models, attractive, not beautiful, with very small waists. They used to arrive late in church to make an entrance. Jessie married Mr. Oltman. She was an artist. Later she divorced Mr. Oltman and married Major Wright. Marie first married Mr. Frost from Poughkeepsie (rich), then another man [Hamilton Cary of New York and Newport], divorced both, married the Belgian Ambassador to the United States [Baron Cartier de Marchienne]. Lottie, who was the pretty one, married Pat Connolly. Nan didn't marry."

Now Mrs. Hill, describing the Hinsdale\* house, built

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\*Not much is known about the Hinsdale who built this house; but Henry P. Hinsdale was present at the Centennial Celebration, and his signature is reproduced on page 38 of Palisades Notes.

"before my time" at the southwest corner of Washington Spring Road and Lawrence Lane, wrote: "Sometime after 1894 Mrs. Dow and her four gay daughters bought it. Mrs. Dow lived there until her death. Katherine Langhorne Adams [who with her husband built the Adams house on Woods Road] has painted a magnificent portrait of the erect intelligent aristocratic-looking old lady sitting in her drawing room against the fine old long curtains of crimson brocade as a part background. Seen through the window back of her is her beloved Hudson River in winter snow and ice."

Anne Tonetti Gugler, who used to be a friend of Betty Connolly, Mrs. Dow's granddaughter, recalled Mrs. Dow sitting up in bed with all her rings and mixing a cake, while the cook stood by. She said that the Oltmans built the house on Lawrence Lane just to the south, perhaps using part of the Woolsey house which once stood there. When they were divorced, Jessie continued to live there with her new husband, Major H. Gordon Wright. When she died, Major Wright sold it to Dorothy Willard (Mrs. Cyrus McCormick), who also bought the Dow house on the corner, built a swimming pool, added other buildings, and made it into an elaborate estate. Nan Dow, the maiden daughter—there always seemed to be one to take care of old ladies in those days—ended her years in the stone house north of the landing after her mother's death.

### Alex Schultz

Although Alex Schultz lived in Palisades a little later, in the first years of the twentieth century, his reminiscences seem to fit in here. He lived in Palisades from 1906 to 1932, in various houses near the center of the village.

His father, a butcher in Nyack, would walk to Tappan and take the train to work. On Saturday nights he stayed open until midnight, and since there was no train that late,

his son Alex, then around ten, would drive the horse and buggy to Nyack to get him. As there was a curfew for unaccompanied children, Alex would go early in the evening and then wait or go to the movies until time for his father to go home.

His father had a white horse and wagon. The horse had been one of a pair that performed at the Hippodrome—they walked the plank. When its mate died the horse refused to perform, so through some influence his father got the horse.

The village boys spent their free time exploring Turkey Ridge or Skunk Hollow, or the woods to the north where there was a well-defined path. They were familiar with the remains of the Colored Church on the mountain—it had a stone foundation and was a weathered old building. Sometimes they hunted foxes, squirrels, or opossums. At other times they explored around the ruins of the blockhouse, and the bull-pen, where the Lawrences kept their bulls. The cows were kept in a barn near the **Library**, or what is called the **Big House**.

More information about the Schultzes, where they lived, the family horses, and the post office comes from a note by Mildred Post Rippey: "Alex Schultz also lived in Addie Van Blarcom's house at one time, before Addie married and came home to her grandmother's house. His father, Harry, was also a butcher in Palisades, in Betty Lee's house [the Country Store]. Alex's grandfather, (Grandpa Schultz to everyone) delivered the mail to and from Tappan station. I remember he had a very old horse as stubborn as a mule (or else just plain tired), and Grandpa S. had to get out of the wagon on occasion and literally pull him along. The mail was never on time!"

### Mary Lawrence

A summer resident who later came to stay and had a



lasting influence on Snedens Landing was Mary Lawrence. Barry Faulkner in **Sketches from an Artist's Life** says of her:

"The Lawrences were a well-to-do, genteel and conservative New York family, and unconventional Mary ill-fitted their social framework. A large, robust girl, bursting with humor and vitality, she alternately perplexed and scandalized her family. Her loves were dogs, horses, stable boys and fishermen, and her talent a gift for sculpture. She studied with Saint-Gaudens in New York and became his favorite pupil. So great was her promise that he recommended her as his successor teaching the life class at the Art Student's League, and at the age of twenty-three she was commissioned to carve the monumental figure of Columbus for the Chicago World's Fair."

### **The Waterfall**

One of the most memorable of Mary Lawrence's creations was the landscaping of the cascade, or waterfall, near the New Jersey border.

Her mother, Mrs. H. E. Lawrence, had bought the cascade and the land around it in 1884 to forestall a proposed pier and picnic ground for excursionists. According to Mrs. Hill's story, Mary Lawrence was then given a generous sum of money—\$5,005.00—by her father to embellish the property in the hope of countering another threat—the plan to build a railroad along the west side of the Hudson. Her biographer, Isabelle Savell, says, however, that in Mary Lawrence's letters, the references are to the project of developing the property to hold at bay the Palisades Inter-

**Palisades Cascade, 1875. "Nearly opposite Dobbs' Ferry a pretty cascade tumbles down in a snowy sheet from the upper edge, and falling on the banks below rushes towards the river in a narrow channel. Dobbs' Ferry is the next town above Hastings, on the eastern bank, and 22 miles from New York."**

state Park Commission. In 1909 Mrs. Lawrence gave the Park a piece of land at the top of the cliff for this purpose.

For whatever reason, Mary soon began to plant flowers and bushes around the waterfall to enhance its natural beauty. With the help of her friends, Stanford White, Charles McKim, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens, she designed the exedra, or pergola, near the river, copied after one she had seen in Amalfi in 1887. Later she and her husband François Tonetti built the pools at different levels, with steps between and niches for flowers and shrubs.



**The exedra at the waterfall designed by Mary Lawrence with the help of her friends, Charles McKim, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and Stanford White.**

Mrs. Stockman, who had been one of the little Park girls, described it recently. "Amalfi, a lovely Italian garden on the edge of the Hudson . . . A square pool with goldfish, box-bordered pebbled walks and potted oleanders and a beautiful pergola."

### **The Centennial Celebration**

One celebration which brought the whole village together was the Centennial of the Revolution on the Fourth of July, 1876. It was ushered in by a salute of thirteen guns at daybreak, punctuated as usual by the sound of firecrackers all day, distinguished particularly by the planting of a Centennial White Pine in a small park in the center of the village, and formally celebrated by a parade to the flagpole and an impressive ceremony with speeches, followed by the serving of a barrel of fine lemonade made of three hundred and fifty Palermo lemons.

Some of the older village inhabitants thought that a time capsule was buried at the time but it seems unlikely, since Mr. Gilman said not a word about it in his long account of the ceremony, which was so detailed as to give the measurements of the shag-bark hickory under which the paraders assembled.\*

The park was later destroyed when Route 9W was built, between 1919 and 1927.

Mrs. Hill remembered all her life having marched in the parade as little Nannie Gilman at the age of three and a half, holding the hand of her great-grandfather, Francis Doremus, aged 87, a veteran of the War of 1812.

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\*Mr. Gilman's account of the ceremony was published as a souvenir booklet a hundred years later by the Palisades Historical Committee.



## IX. CONCLUSION

### **The Last Days of Winthrop Sargent Gilman Jr., Mary Lawrence Marries François Tonetti, The Palisades Interstate Park.**

#### **The Last Days of Mr. Gilman**

**W**RITTEN history must stop somewhere; this history, although it begins in the mists of the past, ends rather definitely where the nineteenth century winds down into the early days of the twentieth century. What happened from then on is a separate story.

Winthrop Sargent Gilman, upon whose records so much

of this history is based, seems to have wound up most of his historical research in 1903. That is when his **Story of the Ferry** was brought out, and **Palisades Notes** and **Local History** stop then or soon after; but his contribution to village life continued in other directions, and his last years belong rightly to the story of the nineteenth century.

Mildred Post Rippey, in her speech about Mr. Gilman at the Bicentennial celebration at the flag pole, said: "The school was one of his primary concerns . . . He visited the school frequently, dashing into the classroom to bring us up on current events or to relate some exciting piece of news, such as the discovery of the planet Uranus. . . . When the 'Lusitania' was the largest ocean-going liner in the world,

**The Landing, 1903. Left, Captain John's House, Mollie Sneden House, behind, Cheer Hall, and right Capt. Larry Sneden's House and the Ferry House.**





Mr. Gilman took four children to see it docked in New York harbor. He had a child by each hand, and the other two held the tails of his morning coat! I was one of these. Another group was taken to the Fulton Street and Washington Street Markets.”

After Mr. Gilman’s death in 1923 at the age of eighty-four, Mr. Faivre, the Presbyterian minister, wrote: “Few churches have been blessed with such an elder. There have been times when he rang the bell, played the organ, took up the collection, and preached the sermon.” Of his work in the library, Mr. Faivre said: “For ten years he worked night and day preparing an index system.”

### **Mary Lawrence Marries François Tonetti**

If, however, the eighteenth century could be said to be Mollie Sneden’s and Jonathan Lawrence Jr.’s and the nineteenth Nicholas Gesner’s and Winthrop Gilman’s, the first half of the twentieth century was certainly Mary Lawrence Tonetti’s. In 1900 Mary Lawrence married the Italian-French sculptor, François Tonetti; and Saint-Gaudens, hearing the news, is said to have broken down, wept, and said: “And now the finest talent in America will never work again!” But he added philosophically: “He’s a regular picnic feller, and as she is a regular picnic girl, there’ll be lots of festive children, I guess;” and there were. Mrs. Tonetti, with her usual uncommon sense, saw the danger of having two sculptors in the family, and turned her immense energy and ability to raising a large and interesting family and creating the very special place that is called Snedens Landing.

### **The Palisades Interstate Park**

Another event at the turn of the century helped to

shape the community and to make Snedens Landing the protected enclave that it is—the formation of the Palisades Interstate Park. At the end of the nineteenth century the New Jersey Palisades were being blasted away to supply crushed stone for construction in New York City. Conservationists were concerned, but it was a difficult situation, since the Palisades were more visible to New Yorkers, and easier to reach by boat from New York than from the back country of New Jersey. Finally in 1899, largely through the persistence of Elizabeth Vermilye and the New Jersey Federation of Women’s Clubs, an interstate commission was created.

The mandate was to buy up all the shore land and the face of the cliff between Fort Lee and Piermont; but somehow or other Snedens Landing was spared, perhaps because of its historic background, perhaps because of the influential people living there. The commission did take some unsettled land south of Palisades, and Mrs. Lydia Lawrence gave them several acres more; but the waterfall and the village were untouched.\*

Later actions of the Park Commission continued the beneficent process. John D. Rockefeller Jr. bought up seven hundred acres of land along the top of the Palisades and gave it to the park. It is said that this was to ensure that the view from the new museum at the Cloisters would never be spoiled. He suggested that a parkway be built through this strip, and today Palisadians enjoy a pleasant drive home from the city.

A few years later, in 1942, the park bought from the Standard Oil Company the cliff land between Palisades and Tallman Park, including what had been the old Austin Abbott

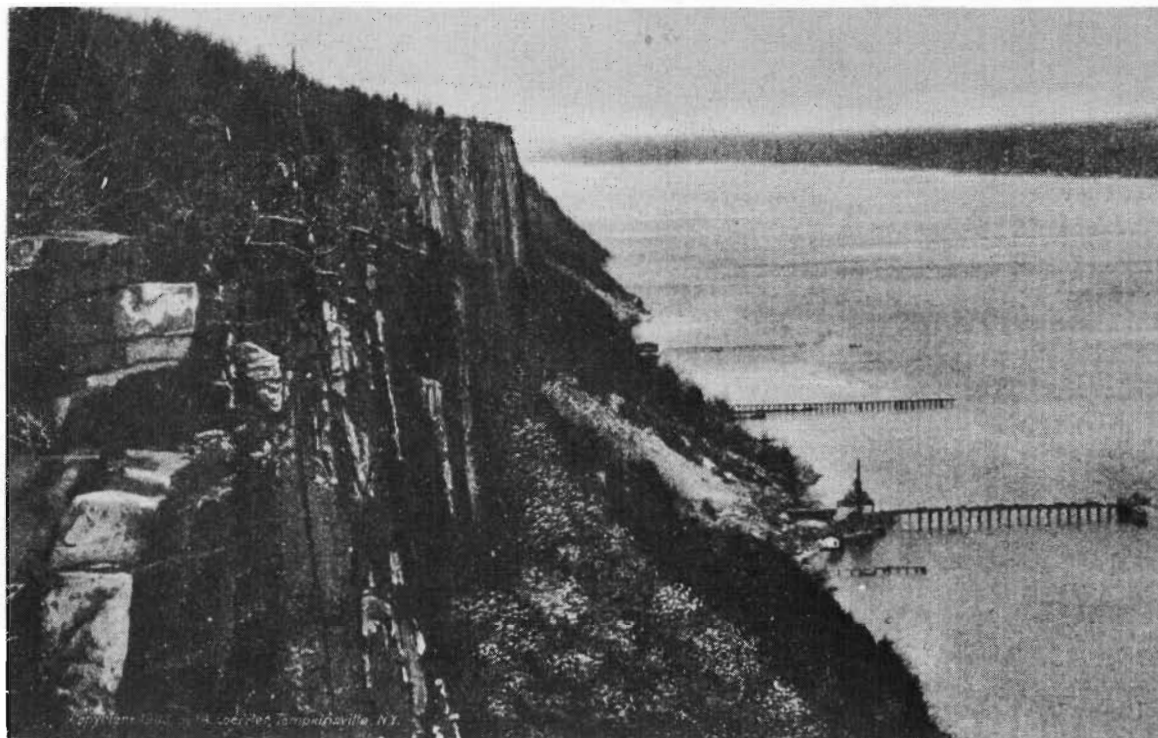
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\*Ironically enough, the waterfall was so badly damaged by vandals in the years after Mrs. Tonetti’s death in 1945, and it seemed so difficult to protect it, that the Tonetti heirs offered it to the Palisades Interstate Park. It was accepted only after a considerable fund was raised, in 1979 and 1980, to pay for guards and maintenance.

estate. This completed the protection of that part of Palisades which faces the river, and ensured that the seclusion that was so much a part of Snedens would not change.

So in 1900 the scene was set for a new and remarkable chapter in the history of Snedens Landing. Mrs. Savell, in **The Tonetti Years at Snedens Landing**, gives a delightful picture of Mrs. Tonetti and her family; but the village itself,

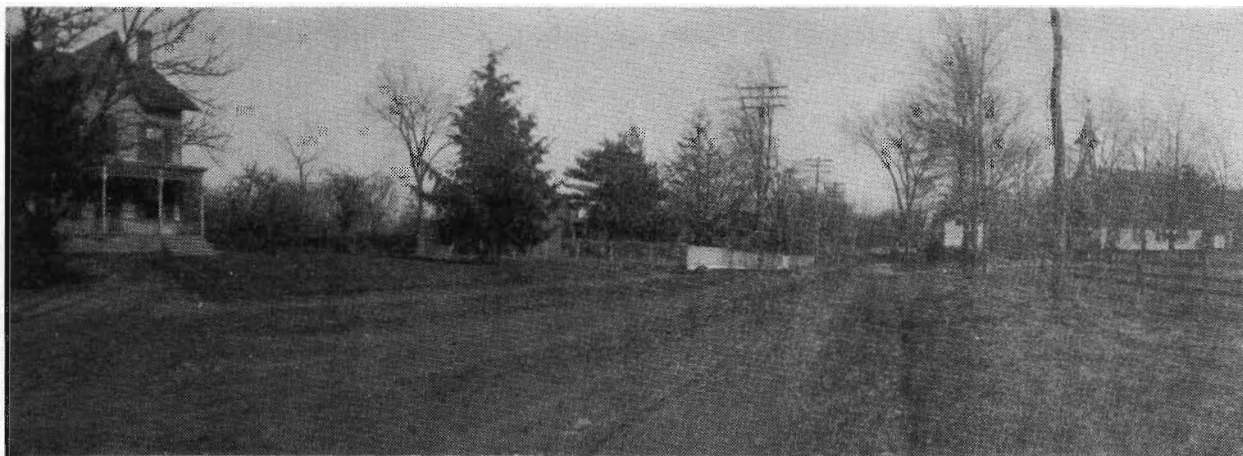
on both sides of the road (which is sometimes considered the dividing line between the Landing and the rest of the village, although it doesn't quite work that way) took on a new life. The details could fill another book.



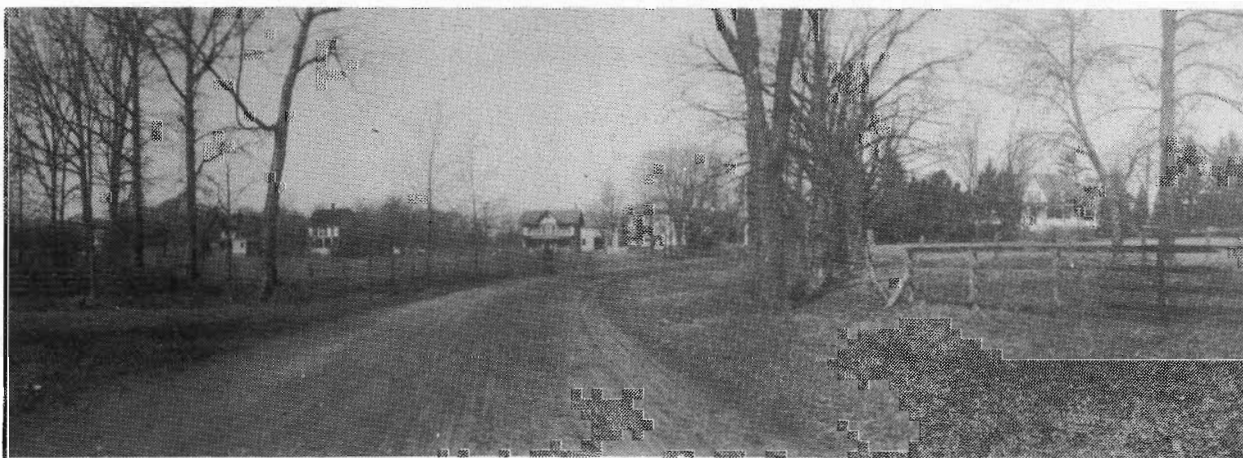
*The Palisades, Hudson River. N. Y.*

The Palisades to the south, in New Jersey, in 1903, showing quarries and docks.

**Views of Palisades, 1903. These long photographs were taken by Harvey Concklin, according to Mr. Gilman.**



**Washington Spring Road, looking east. Left, Parsonage and Hagen houses. Right, Stansbury house and Church.**



**Old Rockland Road (Now Route 9W) looking north. From left: Post houses, James (P.O.) and Abram, Auryanson's carpenter shop, Methodist Church, and Big House.**

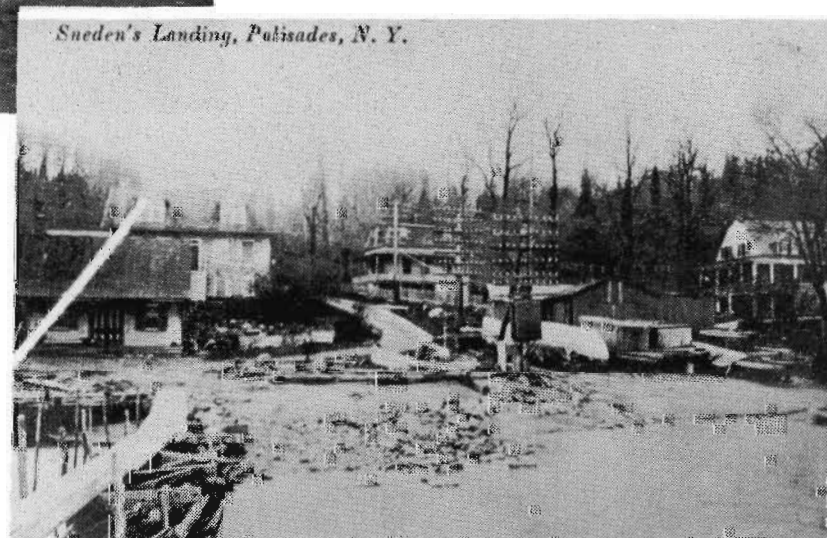
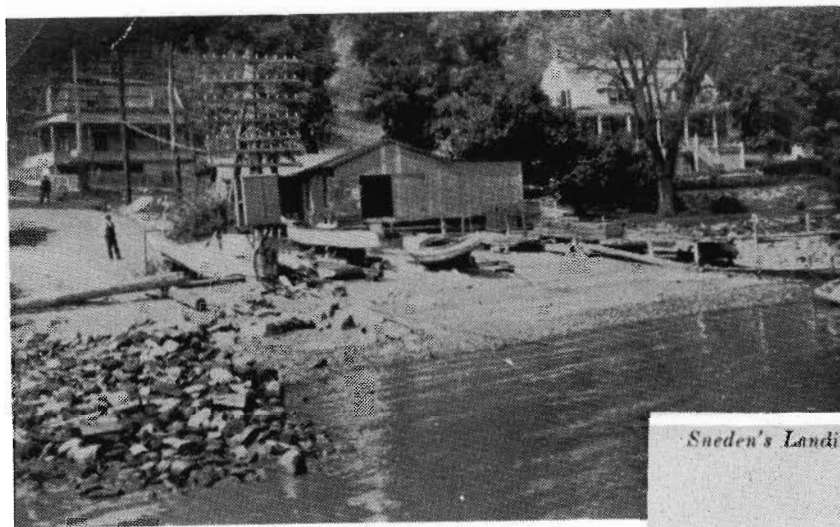


The intersection of Oak Tree Road and Closter Road, about 1900, showing the Jordan house, now the Library, and George M. Lawrence's store, now a private house, also pictured below, with his house to the right.



**The Landing at the turn of the Century.**

Two views of Snedens Landing about 1900. Concklin's boat-building house in foreground, Capt. Levinus Hill standing on the road in the upper photograph. The prominent telephone poles conducted the main cable, which crosses the Hudson at this point.



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## Appendix Number 1

### Winthrop Sargent Gilman's Manuscript Books and Other Material Collected by Him in the Palisades Library Safe; And Other Forms in Which They are Available

(As a result of the recent theft of the library's two copies of **The Story of the Ferry** it has been decided to limit the use of the remaining copies of Mr. Gilman's works for the time being. They will not circulate, but may be consulted in the library with permission from the librarian.)

**Local History** — Illustrated information on genealogy, houses, maps, etc., put together in 1890's, and delivered to Miss Quidor, the librarian, in 1900. Material added later by Mr. Gilman, and by Miss Edna Stansbury. 156 pages. In back is list of 89 portraits of Palisades individuals collected by Mr. Gilman.

Original copy in safe.

Three typed copies made in 1977 by Mildred Rippey. Table of Contents added.

- One bound, in circulation—974.728 Gil
- One bound, in reference—R974.728 Gil
- One unbound, in looseleaf notebook.
- One version on microfilm in library.

**Palisades Notes** — "Private Memoranda of W.S.G., made from 1876 to the present time [1899] for his personal amusement." Letters, photographs, maps, notes of interviews and expeditions, etc. 222 pages.

Original copy in safe.

Seven facsimile copies made by "Secretary and 1/2" in 1979. Table of Contents added, and a list of the photographs in the library collection.

- One bound, in circulation—974.728 Gil
- One bound, in reference—R974.728 Gil
- One in binder in Historical Committee Filing Cabinet
- One each for New City and Newburgh Libraries
- One each for Mmes. Chamberlin, Stansbury, and Haagensen.

One version on microfilm in library.

**Story of the Ferry** — 2 Vols. Illustrated collection of articles on the history of Palisades, including the History of the Ferry, the Gesner Diary, the Cemetery, the Lockhart Patent, and many others. 159 pages, 75 illustrations, index. Original copy in safe.

Seven copies made by Mr. Gilman.

1. Made for Palisades Library, loaned to State Library in Albany when their copy burned.
2. National Library, Washington, D.C.
3. State Library, Albany, burned.
- A. New-York Historical Society "Given at the request of Mrs. H. E. Lawrence".
- B. Made for Mrs. H. E. Lawrence
  - Mrs. Helene Stansbury has Vol. I.
  - Mr. James M. Ransom has Vol. II.
- C. Probably W. S. G.'s copy, now in Palisades Library safe.
- D. Made for Mrs. C. P. Noyes, Mr. G.'s sister, now in New York Public Library.

Reprinted in one volume in 1976 by University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, in limited edition of 100 copies, 974.728 Gil.

Also, Mr. Gilman made twelve copies of the Title Page, Preface, Table of Contents, Index, and sixteen illustrations, to be given to libraries in Rockland, Westchester, and Bergen Counties; and an unknown number of the above, without illustrations.

**A Retrospect** — Mr. Gilman's history of the Palisades Presbyterian Church up to 1888, and a description of Palisades in 1861-1864. October 14, 1888. 28 pages.

Original copy in safe.

Twelve enlarged facsimile copies made in 1983.

- One bound, in circulation—B-Gil
- One bound, in reference—R-B-Gil.

**Our Kitchen Window** — Program of the opening of the Palisades Library in "The Big House," April 27, 1899. Includes texts of Gilman's article about the history of "The Big House," called "Our Kitchen Window," with 23 illustrations, and Prof. George Castegnier's article on "Marquis de LaFayette and Baron Steuben." 25 pages. Five copies made by Mr. Gilman, one each for New-York Historical Society, New York Public Library, Congressional Library, State Library, Albany, and Palisades Library. (At least the first two have been discarded.) Original copy in safe.

Two typed copies made in 1978.

One bound, in circulation—974.85 Our

One bound, in reference—R974.85 Our.

**Palisades Cemetery** — "List taken by Ralph Doughty, Nov. 1-4, 1901, in the Palisades, or Lawrence, or Rockland Cemetery." 61 pages. Commentary, alphabetical list, list of oldest stones, etc., by W. S. Gilman, Nov. 5, 1901. Original in safe.

Two facsimile copies made in 1978.

One bound, in circulation—352.72 Dou

One bound, in reference—R352.72 Dou.

**Gesner Diaries** — Nicholas Gesner's handwritten diaries, 1829-1850, salvaged by Mr. Gilman.

Original in four boxes in safe.

One facsimile copy made by Xerographic process at New York Public Library in 1959, and bound in four volumes by Mrs. Dorothy Worzel

On reference shelf, Ref. B. Gesr.

One version on microfilm in library.

**Accordion Files** — Two legal envelopes, one containing 11 abstracts of titles for land in Palisades, the other, 17 copies of deeds, dated from 1699 to 1838. Sent to Mr. Gilman

from Providence by heirs of partners in Land Company, Goddard, Ives, Brown, and Gilman.

Originals in safe.

Two facsimile copies made of each by "Secreatry and 1/2."

One bound, in reference—R 333.1 Dee

One, unbound, in box in Historical Committee Filing Cabinet.

## Appendix Number 2

### The Remarkable Budke Collection

**A good description of George Henry Budke and his Collection is included in a leaflet distributed by the Library Association of Rockland County:**

#### "WHO WAS BUDKE?"

He knew more about Rockland County than any other living man, probably more than any one man has ever known," the Journal News said about him when he died.

George Budke was born in 1868, came to Rockland County in infancy and lived here until 1911. He died in 1948.

He was a businessman—but his hobby was Rockland history.

He studied it, wrote about it and collected materials about it. These materials he eventually sold in 1933 to the New York Public Library for safekeeping, since he was worried that they would not be given proper care in Rockland County.

#### "WHAT IS THE BUDKE COLLECTION?"

The Budke Collection consists of 92 items housed in NYPL's Manuscript Division.

It includes wills, diaries, business records, voting

lists, tombstone inscriptions, genealogies, county records, church records, tax rolls, election returns, town and village histories and records, court records, census records.

Not each "item" is in fact a single item. Some are boxes of loose documents, hundreds of pieces of paper to the box. One item consists of a tube containing perhaps 80 maps. Another item is 11 volumes of cemetery records.

## "HOW HAS ROCKLAND COUNTY OBTAINED THIS MATERIAL?

[In 1976] the County's public libraries, with the advice of two County historians who studied and evaluated the entire Collection, selected eleven items as being of the highest interest and value.

These are the eleven [and their call numbers in the Palisades Library].

BC-29: Papers relating to the N.Y. and N.J. boundary controversy, 1686-1775, compiled by Budke, 1924. [341.42 BUD]

BC-33: Records of the precinct of Haverstraw, N.Y., April 1752 to April 1791. Copied by Budke, 1922. (Contains material relating to the history of other parts of the County as well.) [352.0747 BUD]

BC-51: Returns of the Schools of the Town of Clarkstown, 1796-1799. [371.009 BUD]

BC-55: A notice of John Haring, a patriotic statesman of the Revolution, by Franklin Burdge. Typewritten copy by Budke of an original pamphlet in NYPL. (History and some early Haring genealogy.) [974.728 BUR]

BC-57: Records of the township of Clarkstown, New York, April 1791 to March 1896. Typewritten MS., 1922, with introduction and index by Budke. [352.0747 BUD]

BC-67: Patents granted for lands in the present

county of Rockland, New York, with biographical notices of the patentees, Budke, 1928, typewritten manuscript. [333.16 BUD]

BC-69: Abstracts of early deeds, patents, mortgages and other instruments affecting the land titles of Rockland County, N.Y. Budke, 1918, typewritten manuscript. [346.0438 BUD]

BC-70: Historical Miscellanies VI. [974.728 BUD]

BC-71: Historical Miscellanies VII. [974.728 BUD]

BC-88: Indian Deeds, 1630-1748 [346.0438 BUD]

BC-88A: Genealogy and Diary of David Pye. [929.2 PYE]

The Library Association of Rockland County put two copies of each of these volumes in every public, high school and college library in the County, as well as in the legislature and the historical society."

The next step was to make for the New City Library microfilms of all the other items in the collection that were copiable. This was finally achieved in 1983. (See **South of the Mountains**, Vol. 28, No. 2, page 19.) Eventually it is hoped that the microfilms can in their turn be printed out and made available to other county libraries.

Every item in the New York Public Library Budke Collection has been listed and described by John Bennett in a book called "Guide to the Budke Collection," published by Benlind Publishers in Nyack in 1975. This comprehensive volume lists many other works by Budke, and gives extensive genealogical information about his family, including his descent from Lambert Adriaensen Smidt, one of the Tappan patentees, as well as biographical information about Budke himself.

In addition to the Budke Collection, three issues of the **Rockland Record**, published by the "Rockland County Society," (now non-existent), in 1930, 1931-2, and 1940, contain many of his interesting and scholarly articles on county history. Volume 3, published in 1940, is particularly im-

portant for Palisades history, for it contains a detailed account of the blockhouse in Dobbs Ferry (Snedens Landing), derived from original sources. Budke described one way in which he obtained these in a letter dated Feb. 20, 1927, which was published in **South of the Mountains** in the Jan.-Mar., 1967 issue:

"I have but recently obtained from the Library of Congress photostatic copies of about four hundred documents relating to the Revolutionary War as it affected the country that is now Rockland County" . . .

In 1973 as one of the series of Bicentennial Publications under the editorial supervision of John H. Bennett and Yvonne Yare, the Rockland County Public Librarians' Association reprinted from the three issues of the **Rockland Record** all the articles concerned with the Revolution under the title "Rockland-Record — American Revolution by George H. Budke". Three years later the same Association published another Bicentennial Publication with a somewhat similar title: "Rockland County During the American Revolution, 1776-1781, by George H. Budke". This was composed of newspaper articles about the Revolution by Budke which had been published in the Nyack **Journal News** from 1941 to 1945. A third publication under the same auspices was "George H. Budke Map Collection, BC-90", a bibliography of maps, by Thomas Demarest, published in 1973.

Anyone interested in Rockland County history must feel an obligation to Budke and his monumental works, and to those who have made them accessible for research.

## **Appendix Number 3**

### **Illustrations of Confusion and Ambiguity in Historical Records**

In Appendix No. 37 "Early Snedens," there are listed

more than thirty ways in which Snedens can be spelled, from Sudeich to Smethkins; and in Appendix 35 "The Lawrence Family," it is mentioned that in five successive generations of the Lawrence family a son was named Jonathan. Besides these in the direct line, there were a number of cousins of the same name.

Other pitfalls for historians and genealogists are the variations, not only in spelling names, but in actual names. William J. Hoffman in his article about the Brower family, points out that Adam and Adolph were used interchangeably for the name of Famiche Brower's father. In the same way, Famiche was in one instance a nickname for Phebe (Concklin), and in another for Euphemia (Willsey). One of Mollie Sneden's sons, moreover, was called alternately Jesse, Jesper, or James.

The English Calendar change was especially interesting and especially confusing. In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII reformed the Julian Calendar by dropping ten days, and starting the year on January first; and most Catholic countries followed him. Henry VIII, however, had taken England out of the Catholic Church, and insisted on keeping the old calendar, ten days behind the Continent. This went on until 1752, when England finally gave in, including, of course, the American colonies. This meant, by then, adding eleven days, and shifting the beginning of the year from March 25th to January first. George Washington's birthday, for instance, which was on February 11, 1731, Old Style, was changed to February 22, 1732, New Style.

A "Morgen" as a measurement of land, varies surprisingly. It is defined by the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary as the "area of land that can be ploughed in one morning," "in Holland and the Dutch colonies, equal to about two acres" but "in Prussia, Norway, and Denmark, a measure of land now equal to about two-thirds of an acre." The same dictionary says that an acre was "originally as much land as a yoke of oxen could plough in one day."



A league, which is often mentioned in older documents, is defined in Webster's International Dictionary as "A measure of length or distance varying in different countries from about 2.4 to 4.6 English statute miles. The marine league of England and the United States is equal to three marine, or geographical miles of 6,080 feet each (1/60 of a degree)."

Even numbers can be ambiguous. A thousand million carrier pigeons in the United States or France are a billion. If there were carrier pigeons in Great Britain or Germany it would take a million million to make a billion. In the United States, a million million is a trillion; in Great Britain a trillion is a million, million, million.

The question of which hurricane ended the Dobbs Ferry-Snedens Landing Ferry provides an example of the difficulties of recalling contemporary history. Mrs. Hill, writing in 1953, said it was the hurricane of 1938; Gerald Murphy, writing in **South of the Mountains** in 1958, repeated the statement; according to a friend in Irvington that is the common belief in Westchester; Anne Gugler, Mrs. Tonetti's daughter, agrees; and the final, incontrovertible proof—one would think—is that Richard Salmon, now of Grand View, says that he was its last passenger at the time of that hurricane; and his account has found its way into newspaper articles, and even into a history of Dobbs Ferry. Against these authorities this writer, who came to Palisades to live in 1941, would hesitate to offer the evidence of her senses, having had a ride in the ferry in 1942 or 1943 as a guest of Geddes Smith, and, with her husband, having watched the sinking of the ferry in the hurricane of September 14th, 1944; but luckily there are the records of the Ferry Association. Neither hurricane is mentioned in the minutes, and there is no mention of the orphaned state of the Association on the death of Mrs. Tonetti in 1945; but in that year there is a discussion of a subscription to raise money for a new engine, and at the meeting of May 24th, 1946, William Katzenbach and Ralph Gugler, the then managers, threw up their hands; and

none of the saddened members felt able to take their places. A historical institution ended at the age of two hundred and seventeen years (if not two hundred and forty, as tradition would have it).

## Appendix Number 4

### Family Connections

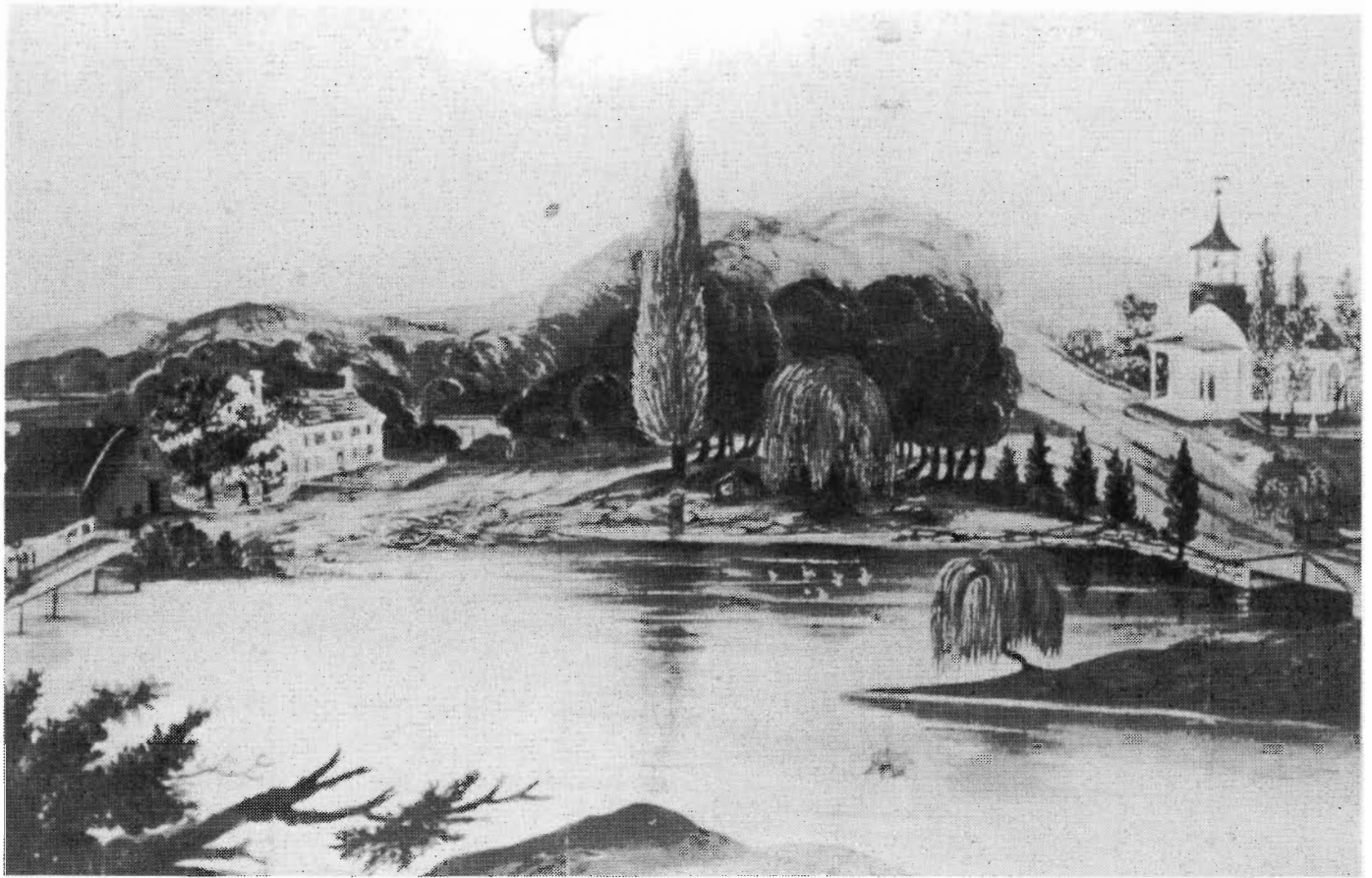
The world was smaller in Colonial days; and everywhere one looks one finds connections between individuals and families.

William Merritt was a particularly good example. It has already been mentioned that his son married Lockhart's daughter Janet. One of his sisters, Mary, was the mother of Jan Dobbs, who settled across the river at about the same time that Merritt settled on this side. Another sister, Sarah Crab, a widow, lived near him in Orange County. She is listed in the small Orange County Census of 1702 with two "children" (i.e., boys), and one "gerll," and a grown son, Edward Mek, by an earlier husband. Both sisters were long-lived. Mary Merritt Dobbs Pittman died in 1737 at the astonishing age of 104 years and 9 months, leaving her sister, Sarah Merritt Meeks Crabbe, who was at that time 102!

Margaret Lane describes "an interesting family reunion [which] took place on Phillips Manor at Tarrytown, N.Y. in the 'Sleepy Hollow Church' on March 21, 1710 when Sarah Merritt Meeks Crabbe, her son, Edward Meeks, Jr., her two nephews William and John Dobbs, and her niece, Margery Dobbs Reyers, were present for the baptisms of three baby girls:—

**Sara**—Dau. of **Edward Meghts** (Meeks) and Marytje, his wife

Sponsors: **Jan Dopse** and Effie Bastjaense, aunt of Michiel Reyersen



The dam and mill at Phillipse Manor, and, across the road, the century. The two parties with their baby girls must have landed on Sleepy Hollow Church, painted by an anonymous artist, nineteenth the other side of the dam and walked across the road for the baptism.

**Sara**—Dau. of Simon Wieller (Wheeler) and Elisabeth his wife.

Sponsors: Michiel Reyersen and **Sara Crab**

**Marytje**—Dau. of Michiel Ryersen and **Mazerie (Margery) Dobbs**, his wife

Sponsors: **Willem Dopse** and Maria Bluwet (Blauvelt), wife of Ryck Lent.”

William Merritt had already sold his house to John Corbett five years before; but Sara Crab and the Meeks must have continued to live nearby. In those days there were few roads, and everyone who lived near the river must have had a boat. It seems reasonable, therefore to suggest that the party made their way to Tarrytown by river and then up the Pocantico Creek, which was navigable as far as the mill dam. When they debarked there, it was a short way across the road to the church for the ceremony.

If Mollie Sneden was Maria Dobbs, daughter of the above Jan, as Mr. Durie suggests, she was a great-niece of William Merritt, and a half-sister of William Dobbs, the first official ferryman. One possible indication of this is the receipt found among the Sneden family papers signed by Michael Dobbs, who was the youngest brother of Maria Dobbs. Another indication is her longevity, which may have been inherited from the Merritt sisters.

The Lawrence family was joined to this family network by the marriage of Ellison Lawrence, the daughter of Jonathan Lawrence, the Elder Senior, to John Sneden, Mollie's son, and, probably, by the marriage of Ellison's brother Samuel to John's sister Mary.

Another connection is with Jasper Stymus, or Steimer, who owned the ferry-house across the river in 1769, and perhaps helped run the ferry. He was a cousin of Jennie Lefurgy who married Peter Dobbs; and it was Peter's grandfather who sold Jasper the ferry-house. Peter and Jenny's son, Amos Dobbs, came across the river to Rockland, and founded

one of the two Dobbs families here. The other was founded by Peter's cousin Jeremiah, who lived in the Sloat, and was the grandfather of Captain Henry Dobbs of Palisades. To add to the complications, Amos' great-granddaughter, Evelyn Sophie Dobbs, married Albert T. Sneden, one of the “Snedens in the Field.”

## Appendix Number 5

### The Palisades Cemetery

The Palisades Cemetery, like the village in general and Jonathan Lawrence in particular, has never been given its true place in history.\*

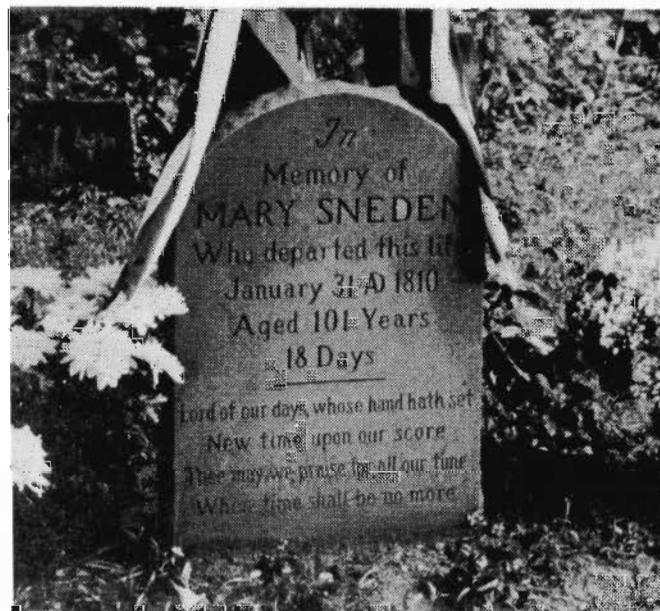
It began as an eighth of an acre which was used as burying-ground for the Lawrence family. The oldest grave on record is that of Mary Lawrence, the wife of Jonathan Lawrence, the “Elder Senior.” She was buried in 1774, and three years later her husband was buried nearby. Soon, however, others besides Lawrence were included. Of the eight oldest graves, up till 1797, two were of Concklins, and one of a Gesner. Before Herbert Lawrence bought another eighth acre from George Mann in 1838 (and there are available a copy of the deed and the map which Nicholas Gesner drew to go with it) at least thirty-seven others had been buried in the “Lawrence Burying Ground,” only a few of them Lawrences.

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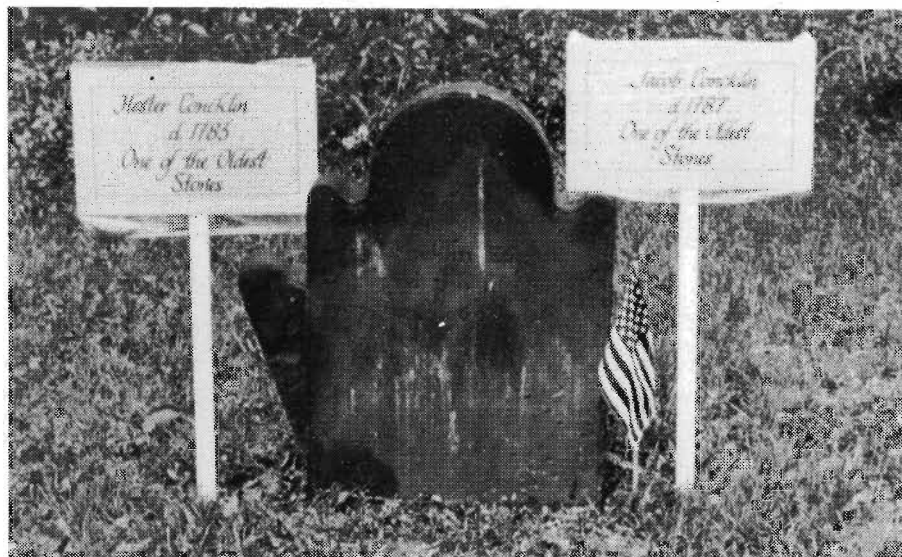
\*When a list of Revolutionary soldiers from Rockland County and their burial sites was prepared for the D.A.R. in 1976, no mention was made of Jonathan Lawrence, Jr., one of Washington's most trusted officers, nor of the two-hundred-year-old Palisades Cemetery where he is buried.



**Mr. Gilman's photograph of Mollie Sneden's tombstone, taken about eighty years ago. It was already beginning to flake away; and in 1982 it was replaced by a new one with the same legend.**

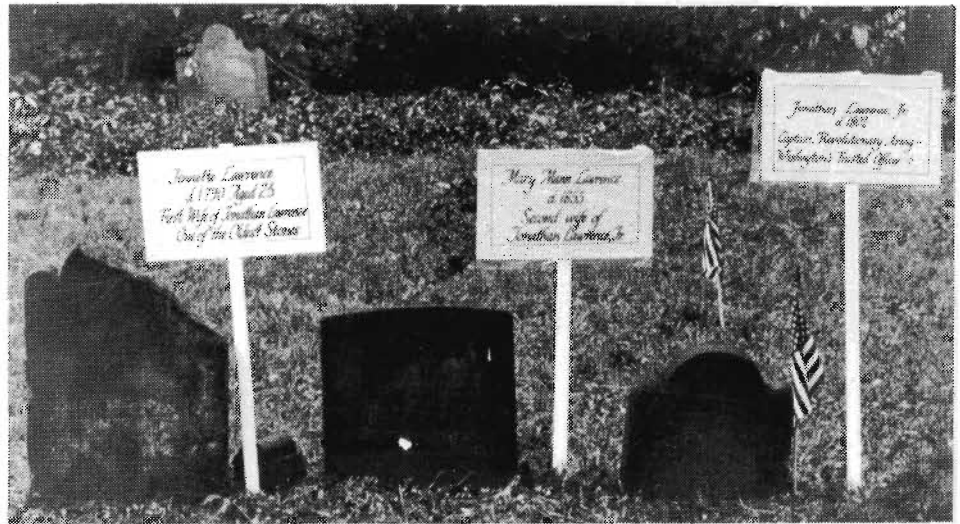


**The new tombstone of Mollie Sneden set up in May, 1982 to replace the original which had completely disintegrated.**

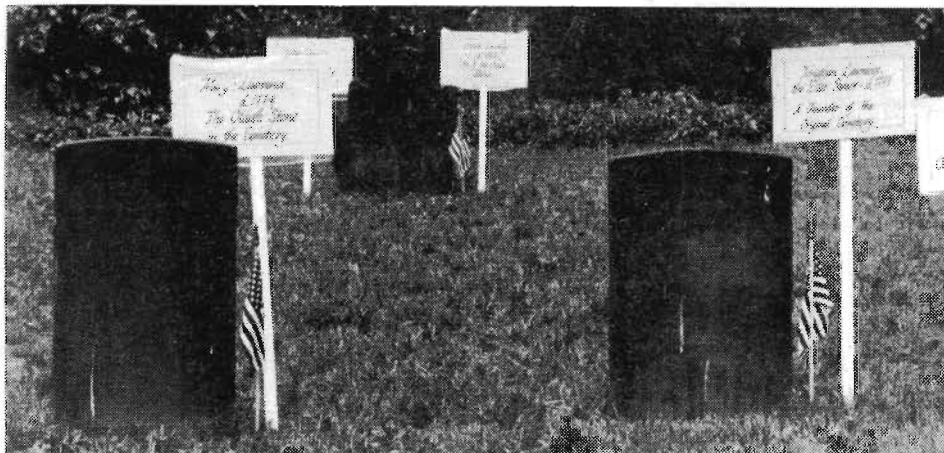


**Some of the oldest stones in the Palisades Cemetery. Although there are today no Concklins or Manns in the village they had important roles in its past history.**





**Tombstones of Jennette Lawrence who died in 1790, and Mary Mann Lawrence who died in 1835, the successive wives of Jonathan Lawrence, Jr. who died in 1802. He was the grandson of the "Elder Senior".**



**Tombstones of Mary Lawrence who died in 1774, the oldest grave-stone, and that of her husband Jonathan Lawrence, the "Elder Senior", who established the cemetery and died in 1777.**



In the nineteenth century the graveyard grew gradually as the Manns and Lawrences sold adjacent lots to neighbors. In 1861 David Mann sold six acres around the cemetery to George M. Lawrence, son of Jonathan Lawrence Jr.; and for more than thirty years the deeds for plots (copies of many of which are in the cemetery folder) were all granted by George M. Lawrence and his wife Maria.

In 1892, after the death of George M. Lawrence, Samuel Brown bought some of the land from Maria Lawrence; and by 1912, when Christie made a map of the cemetery, Samuel Brown was listed as the owner of the whole thing, now called the Palisades Cemetery.

In the meantime Ralph Doughty, probably at the suggestion of Mr. Gilman, made a list of the legible grave-stones in the cemetery. This was bound up with an intro-

duction and index by Mr. Gilman in 1901. It is particularly valuable because many of the original stones, such as Mollie Sneden's, are now illegible.

After Sam Brown died, the property passed to his son George, and it was George Brown's widow who sold the cemetery to Karl Kirchner, a real estate dealer in Tappan, in 1949. Now the management of the cemetery was out of the hands of villagers who had a personal interest in it, and was a business venture. Mr. Kirchner found that not many wanted graves—perhaps ten in the twelve years he kept it—because the cemetery is small to offer perpetual care. (Mrs. Brown moved some of her family to a Nyack cemetery for that reason.) He did not lose money on it, however, because in 1962 he sold it at a much increased price to a businessman in Brooklyn. A "co-partnership" called the Palisades Com-



A fragment of the tombstone of Dennis Sneden, Mollie's son, the tombstone of Phoebe Gesner Sneden, John "Boss" Sneden's wife, and the tombstone of John "Boss" Sneden, Mollie's grandson.

pany in Jamaica, L.I., owned the cemetery briefly; but in 1964 Adolfo F. Luca of Brooklyn bought it, and he still owns it at the present writing.

While the 2.3 acre property was being sold and resold as a business venture, however, the individual plots were tended by the families concerned. People continue to be buried there, and the cemetery remains very much a part of the village.

Since the Lawrences, Snedens, and Gesners, in the oldest part of the cemetery, had gone from the village, their graves were for a long time neglected and overgrown; but in 1974 the Archer Stansburys came to the rescue—after all many of the old families were relatives—and they have given the old graves tender loving care ever since.

In 1982 an organization was formed to take over some of Mrs. Stansbury's responsibilities. (Mr. Stansbury had died in 1978.) About twenty plot owners agreed to make yearly contributions for the maintenance of the cemetery. The organization will be called the P.L.O.T. Care Fund (for Palisades Lot Owners Tribute).

After the wording of Mollie Sneden's epitaph was discovered by Mrs. Stansbury (see Appendix No. 32), the Palisades Historical Committee raised money for a new tombstone. On Memorial Day of 1982, the new tombstone, and the newly-cleared old part of the cemetery were introduced in a ceremony planned by Mary Chamberlin of the Historical Committee. Many who attended saw the cemetery for the first time.

Over the years the question of buying the cemetery for the church or the village has occasionally come up; but nothing has come of it yet.

### Interesting Epitaphs

**Mary Sneden (Mollie), died Jan. 31, 1810, aged 101 years, 18 (or 13) days.**

(Born January 1709). Tombstone became completely illegible. Mr. Gilman left a photograph which shows part of the inscription; and Mrs. Stansbury in 1981 found the original in an old Dutch Reformed Hymnal:

“Lord of our days whose hands have set  
New time upon our score  
Thee may we praise for all our time  
When time shall be no more”.

In 1982 the Palisades Historical Committee set up a new tombstone with the same inscription.

**Jonathan Lawrence, Jr. Died April 28, 1802, Aged 42 years, 7 months, 17 days.**

Budke copied it before it became illegible, as it now is. (BC. 38.)

“Who, during six month's illness, suffered no pain,  
and cheerfully resigned his soul in hope”.

**Jennette Lawrence, Wife of Jonathan Lawrence, Jr., of New York. Ob. 21 Sept., 1790, Aged 23 years.**

“She gone to Realms above  
Far, Far beyond the sky  
To taste red evening love  
And dwell with the world high”.

**Isaac Tallman, (first husband of Mary Neal Sneden, and father of Maria Tallman Kipp).**

“Engineer, Killed on the N.Y. & Erie R.R. whilst running the night express with Engine no. 37, caused by a rock laying on the track April 4, 1853, Aged 30 years, 3 months & 26 days”.

**Daniel Post, died July 22, 1814, 52 years.** (brother-in-law of Nicholas Gesner, uncle of Abram Post who married Famiche Willsey).

His tombstone says:

“A pale consumption gave the fatal blow!  
The stroke was certain, but the effect was slow.  
With wasting pain death found me long oppressed,  
Pityed my sighs and kindly brought me rest”.

**Jane Sisco, daughter of John and Jane Sisco who departed this life March 4, 1846, Aged 14 days.** (This was the only stone left in the cemetery of the “Mountain Church” in Skunk Hollow. With Nash Castro’s\* permission the Siscos moved it in 1974 to their plot in the Palisades Cemetery.)

The epitaph says:

“Arise and run the heavenly road  
Nor in dumb mourning sit  
Look up towards the child’s abode  
And haste to follow it”.

## Appendix Number 6

### The Hudson-Fulton Celebration in 1909

During the Hudson-Fulton Celebration, replicas of the ships commemorated, the **Half Moon** of 1609 and the **Clermont** of 1807, came down the Hudson. Mildred Post and her family and friends watched the procession from the Austin Abbotts’ front lawn at the top of the cliff. Now nothing remains of the house but a cellar-hole in the Park.

Many years later Mildred Post Rippey wrote a poem about her memories:

---

\*Nash Castro at this writing is General Manager of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

## A Child Remembers

Out on the cliffs in the deep, dark wood  
There’s a hole in the ground where a castle stood,  
And the weeds grow lush, and the trees grow tall,  
And no one ever comes there at all.

But long ago there was a day  
When the castle was beautiful and gay,  
And the view from the cliffs was an artist’s dream,  
With the river flowing calm and serene.

A little girl with cheeks aglow  
Watched the boats on the water below.  
She saw Hendrick Hudson’s “Half Moon” that day  
And Fulton’s “Clermont” puffing away.

There were the “Half Moon’s” blue and gold sails  
That had weathered many historic gales,  
The gallant “Clermont” steaming alongside,  
Its paddle wheel turning with the tide.

\* \* \* \*

A mist came up from the river soon,  
And it all disappeared like Brigadoon.  
The little girl left the spot in tears  
And dreamed about it for many years.

She waits—for she knows the boats will return,  
And up the river again they’ll churn,  
The castle will spring from the ground, and then  
She’ll be a little girl again.



The Austin Abbott house, torn down in 1934, which Mildred Post Rippey remembered as a "castle". It had a magnificent cupola, tile floors, cork walls, and a great sweep of driveway in front of the house.

## Appendix Number 7

### The Lockhart Patents

The more one studies the Lockhart Patents from the provinces of New Jersey and New York, and the maps Winthrop Gilman and Verplanck made to show their extent, the more confused one becomes.

The first patent George Lockhart received from the proprietors of the Province of East New Jersey on Feb. 7, 1685 read in effect that it began at Tapan Creeke [Sparkill Creek] "at the line of division agreed by the Governors of the sd (sic) province of East New Jersey & the Governor of New York," and ran two miles down the river and three miles back. This was simple and direct, and included according to the deed 3,800 acres, or, allowing for "barren land and swamps," 3,000 acres, at a half penny per acre. (Budke Collection, Vol. 67, pages 39-40.)

The confirmatory patent Lockhart obtained from Governor Dongan of the Province of New York on June 27, 1687 (reproduced on the following pages) made no mention of the line agreed upon by the governors. When the maps made by Winthrop Gilman and Verplanck are compared with the text of the patent, it can be seen that Lockhart must have been wrong in measuring the distance from the western line to "Tapan River" (Sparkill Creek). Verplanck discovered this when he resurveyed it in 1745, and corrected it on his map, leaving spaces for some of the figures which were too much for him. Gilman's map, while interesting because it shows the Vervalen, DeHarte, and Orangetown, or Tappan, Patents, is obviously wrong in making the west side of the Lockhart Patent, which is supposed to be 640 rods, longer than the south line, supposed to be also 640 rods. The line on his map from the west side to Tappan Creek, supposed to be 492 rods, is certainly far less.

[Even so, the Lockhart Patent is a marvel of exactitude compared with the patent given by Governor Dongan of New York to the farmers in Tappan on March 20, 1686, which describes part of it as running along the north side of Tappan Creek "to creplebush & . . . along another creek . . . that falls into Hackingsack River northerly to a place called the Greenbush."] (Budke Collection, Vol. 67, pages 65-66.)

Since the Lockhart Patent began at the "Letter L Tree" on the top of the cliff, headed southwest, and ended by running back along the Hudson to the place of beginning, there was a small, almost triangular enclave to the south which was not included in the patent. Here there was only a narrow strip of land between the cliff and the river, so it was worth nothing for settlement. In the early 1700's this was included in the Vervalen Patent, south of the Lockhart Patent.

Now, in the twentieth century, this land is still an enclave, belonging to the Palisades Interstate Park, and merging with the Lamont Nature Sanctuary to the west, and, since 1980, taking in the waterfall.

### (NEW YORK — CONFIRMATORY.) (THE LOCKHART PATENT)

THOMAS DONGAN Capt. Gen<sup>l</sup> Governour in Chief and vice admiral in and over the Province of New York and Territories depending there on in America under his most Sacred Majesty James the Second by the Grace of God King of England Scotland France & Ireland Defender of the Faith &c WHEREAS Leonard Beckwith by virtue of a Warrant from Philip Wells Esqr Surveyor General of his said Majesty's Colony of New York hath Surveyed & Laid out for George Lockhart a certain tract of land in the County of Orange beginning at a white oak tree up on the hill by Hudson River marked with three notches and a cross and the letter L and runs from thence south-

southwest 7° 30' westerly 480 rodd then W. 3° northerly 640 rodd from thence north by east 640 rodd from thence due east 492 rodd to a marked tree by Tappan River thence as the river runs to Hudson River and so by Hudson River thence to the place where first begun being bounded to the east by Hudson River to the south and west by the Kings woods to the north by the land of Tappan and Tappan River containing 3,410 acres there being left for sufficient highways as by the return of the survey remaining upon record in the Secretary's Office relation being thereunto had may more fully and at large appear AND whereas the said George Lockhart hath made application unto me for a confirmation of the afore recited parcell of land and premises by Patent under the Seal of the province NOW KNOW YE that I the said Thomas Dongan for and in Consideration of the Quitt Rent herein after reserved by virtue of the power and authority to me derived from his most sacred Majesty aforesaid and in pursuance of the same have given granted ratified released and confirmed unto the said George Lockhart all and singular the aforerecited parcel of land and premises together with all the soil meadow and woods within the limits and bounds aforesaid (except one moiety or half part of all that meadow lying upon the side of Hudson River within the limits aforesaid that is to say excepting all that moiety or half part thereof which lyes next adjoining to the side of the said river with all and singular the messuages tenements houses barns buildings orchards gardens trees timber woods underwoods swamps moors marshes meadows rivers runns rivulets streams creeks waters lakes pools ponds fishing hawking hunting and fowling mines minerals (Royal mines only excepted) and all other profits commodities hereditaments and appurtenances to the said tracts and parcells of land within the limits and bounds aforesaid belonging or in any wise appertaining and every part and parcell thereof (except

before excepted) TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said tracts of land and premises unto the said George Lockhart his heirs and assigns to the only proper use benefit and behoof of him the said George Lockhart his heirs and assigns forever excepting always as is above excepted TO BE HOLDEN of his most sacred Majesty his heirs and successors in free and common soccage according to the tenure of East Greenwich in the County of Kent in his Majesty's Realm of England YEILDING rendering and paying therefore yearly and every year for ever as an acknowledgement or quit rent unto his most sacred Majesty his heirs and successors or to such officer as shall by him or them be appointed to receive the same at the City of New York the sum of Twelve Shillings Current money of this province IN TESTIMONY whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and caused the seal of the province to be hereunto affixed and these presents to be entered upon record in the Secretary's Office the twenty seventh day of June Annoq Dom. 1687 and in the third year of his Majesty's Reign.

(signed) Thomas (L.S.) Dongan.

At a Council held at Fort James in New York the 2d day of Septemr 1687—This Patent was approved and passed.

(signed) John Kniget D. Secry.

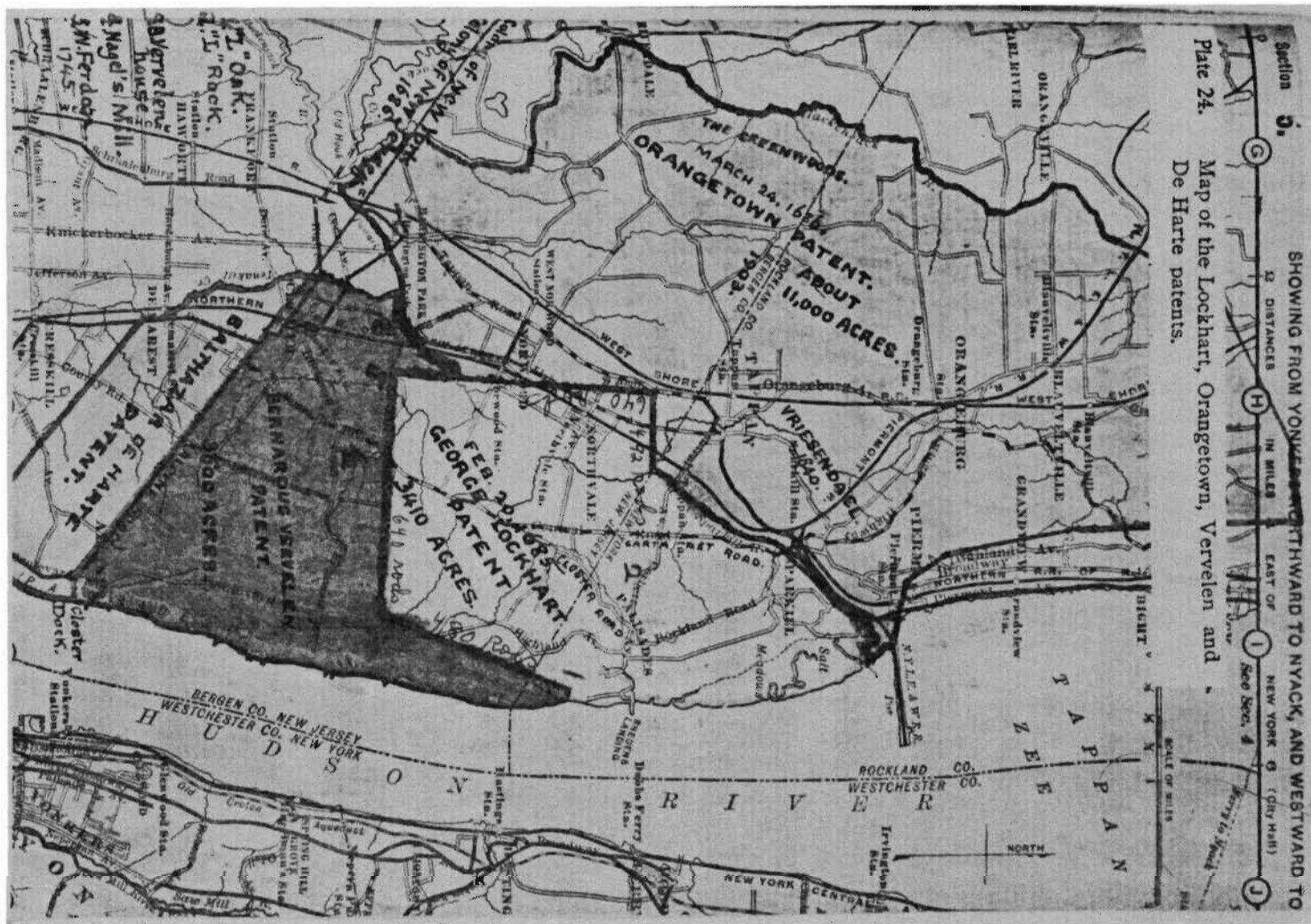
Recorded in the Secretary's Office for the province of New York in lib: No 2 Book of patents begun 1686 in page 272 to 274 by John Kniget D. Secry.

May it please your Excellency The Attorney Gen<sup>l</sup> hath perused this Patent and finds nothing contained therein prejudicial to his Majesty's Interest.

Exam'd June 27, 1687.

(signed) W. Nicolls





**Map from The Story of the Ferry, marked by Mr. Gilman to show the early patents. When the map is examined, it can be seen that the Lockhart patent must be wrong in measuring the distance from the western line to "Tappan River" (Sparkill Creek). It will also be noticed that the southern line, and the western line, both of which are supposed to be 640 rods, are not equal. Another mistake is the placement of Vriesendaal between Tappan and Piermont.**

## Appendix Number 8

### The Verplanck Map and its Facsimile

Two of Mr. Gilman's most precious legacies were the original Verplanck map of 1745 and the exact copy made by James S. Haring in 1876. They are the more prized because of the great efforts Mr. Gilman employed to locate them. His story of their finding illustrates better than any other his painstaking methods of research. This is found in **Story of the Ferry**, beginning on page 62.

#### "The Finding of the Philip Verplanck Map

(A two years Romance, with an unexpectedly happy ending.)

In a letter written by the late James S. Haring to W.S. Gilman, preserved at page 60A of "Palisades Notes", dated July 1st., 1876, mention is made of an old Map made by Philip Verplank (Verplanck) dated June 19, 1745, upon which the residence of Henry Ludlow, is located. (Now the Palisades Library.)

It was not until about twenty-two years after the date of this letter, or in the first half of 1898, after the purchase of "The Big House" as a home for the Palisades Library, that it occurred to the writer to make efforts to consult this map. Mr. Haring had, in the meantime, deceased, and his son (of the same name) had moved away from Rockland County. The numerous surveys and maps once in the possession of the elder Haring were, it was feared, lost to view, and the Verplanck Map among them.

Numerous attempts were made to ascertain whether this ancient survey of the George Lockhart Patent of 1685 (for such at a later period it proved to be) was still in

existence, but without the least prospect of success. Late in the summer of 1898 (about the month of August) it was ascertained that Mr. James S. Haring, (Jr.) was living at Crafton, Pa., where he was engaged in civil engineering. From him it was then learned that he had in 1876 made a fac-simile of the old Map, which his father had borrowed for the purpose from its owner, the late John H. Outwater (1) resident at that time at the southern outskirts of the village of Tappan. Shortly after making the copy the Map was returned to Mr. Outwater. Mr. Haring suggested that the Original might be found with one of the heirs of the late John H. Outwater, and suggested my calling upon Mrs. John J. Van Orden of Piermont, one of his children who might give information of its whereabouts. Upon calling at Mrs. Van Orden's house it was learned from her that upon the death of her mother, about five years before, the children had all left the county excepting herself, having given up the old house at Tappan, but by correspondence with them it might be possible to ascertain where the Map now was. Mrs. Van Orden said, however, that it seemed to her unlikely that any such old Map was among the old deeds and papers of her father, but if any one could throw light upon the matter it would be her sister, Mrs. Wm. Ellis Blauvelt, of 120 West 102nd. St., N. Y. City.

Mrs. Van Orden expressed herself as not interested in old papers, but she remembered distinctly that at the breaking up of the family at Tappan after her mother's

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(1) John H. Outwater was the grandson of Thomas Outwater, of Revolutionary fame in Orange Co., N.Y., mentioned on pages 27, 28, 34, 38 and 96 of Cole's "Hist. of Rockd Co." 1884. See p. 42 of "Local History of Palisades." Mr. John H. Outwater died in 1880, aged 79 years. He is mentioned in Gesner's "Diary", No. 35, p. 26 and No. 37, p. 11. The Outwater family left Tappan at the death of Mrs. J. H. Outwater, about 1893, after a residence of about 130 years.

death there was an old chest containing old papers of various sorts, and she had said to her brothers and sisters, "You may have this trunk, and the old papers, for I do not want them." Mrs. Richard Hutton, of Blauvelt, N. Y., a sister of Mrs. Van Orden, then took the chest, and contents.

Correspondence was now begun with the various members of the family, Mr. Wm. D. Outwater, in Susquehanna, Mrs. Gesner, of - - - - , New Jersey, Mr. Jno. D. Outwater, N. Y. City, Mrs. Hutton, of Blauvelt, N. Y., and Mrs. W. E. Blauvelt, of N. Y. City, without any practical result.

Not long after the interview with Mrs. Van Orden Mr. Jas. S. Haring, Jr., of Crafton, Pa., called upon the writer at his place of business, to say that if at any time he could lay his hands upon his fac-simile copy of the Verplanck Map he would take special pleasure in presenting it to the Palisades Library that it might be preserved, as it certainly should be if the original was lost. He further stated that it was his intention, upon the occasion of his first visit to his old home at Orangeburgh, Rockland Co., to make a diligent search for the fac-simile. He had no doubt but that it was among his numerous maps, preserved in tin cases at Orangeburgh. On Dec. 1, 1898 Mr. Haring called again to say that he had paid a hurried visit to his father's old home, and though he had looked over many of the cases he had not found the object of our search, but that he had given instructions to his care-taker to allow the writer to examine them at any time, and if the copy was found I might take it away with me.

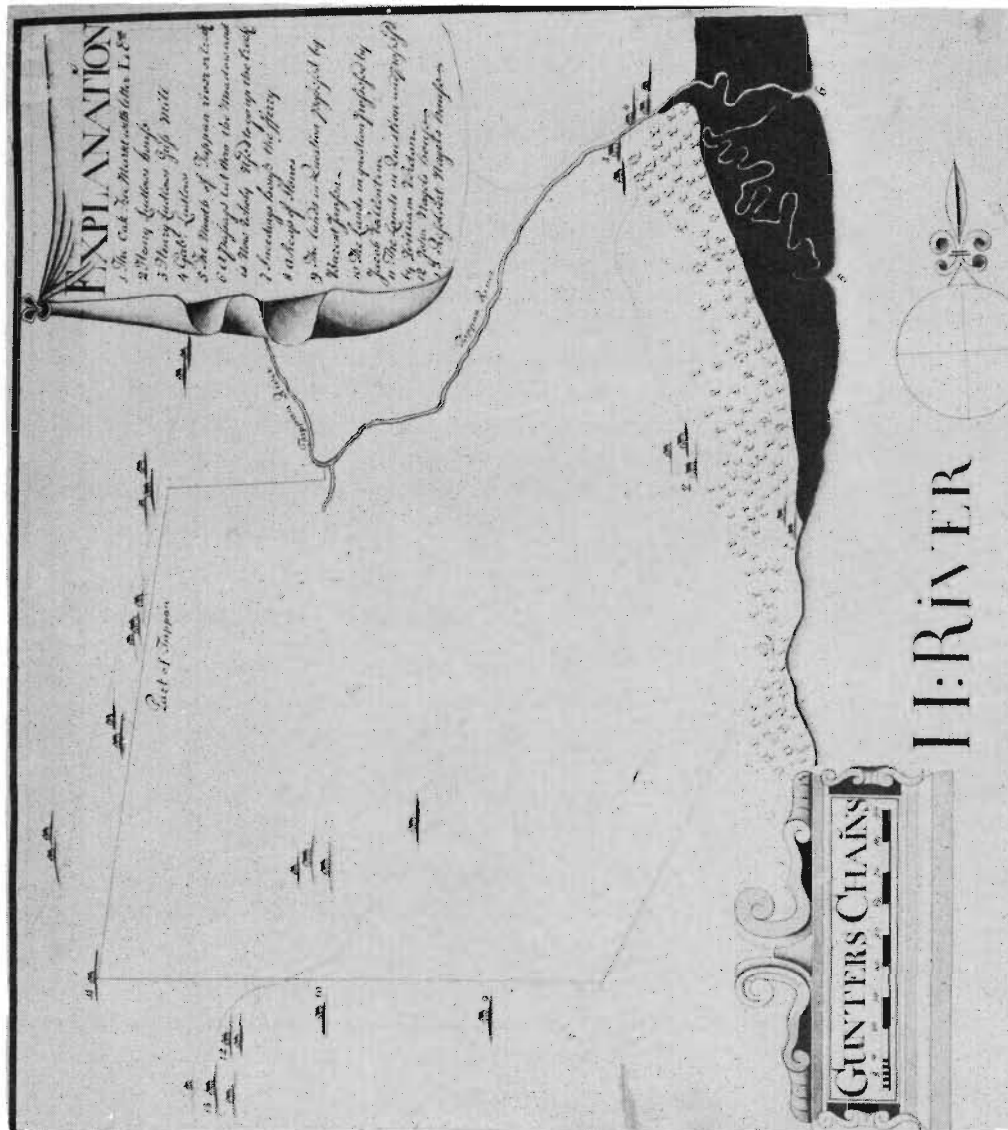
The following day, an unusually cold one, the writer went to Orangeburgh and made a search, as long as the intense cold of the unheated house would allow, but without avail. Upon leaving we told the care-taker, and his wife, that if the map would be found a reward of \$5. would be given. The wife spoke up with enthusiasm at once,

saying, "Oh I can find it, if it is there, you may be certain."

The very next day, Dec. 3rd., I found a postal card from the wife upon my desk in the city, with the words inscribed on it, "I've found the Map!" That afternoon I drove quickly in a sleigh to Orangeburgh, where I received the Map. It was found in fair condition, but torn at the edges in places, and discolored also, somewhat. But it was easily cleansed and the discoloration covered with a little flake-white, (water color paint) and thereafter framed for the Library, where it now adorns the south of the Reading Room. The drawing is admirable and suggests the idea that the work is a faithful copy of the original. The sheet upon which it is drawn is Whatman paper, 21 by 25 and 1/2 inches in size, the map itself being 18 and 3/8 by 22 inches. It is mounted on a stretcher in its frame. Copies of the map were made the full size, by photography, and sent to the Congressional Library, Washington, D.C., the Historical Society, N.Y. Cy and the State Library, Albany, N.Y.:

Immediately upon finding the fac-simile copy of the Philip Verplanck Map a renewed effort was made to find the original. Advertisements were inserted in various Rockland County papers, and inquiries made of the Historical Society, N.Y., the State Library, at Albany and the Congressional Library, Washington, and in various other directions, but without avail. A photographic copy of Mr. Haring's faithful facsimile of the Map was shown to Mrs. Wm. Ellis Blauvelt in hopes that it would bring to her mind the original, once in her father's possession, and which the other children thought was then in her possession if it had been preserved. But Mrs. Blauvelt could not recall having seen any map of that sort among the old papers which were said to have been in the trunk at the time of the break up of the family at Tappan years before.

Towards the close of January 1899 it seemed to have



**Fascimile of Verplanck Map, 1745  
Made by James S. Haring in 1876**

been made evident that there was now no hope of obtaining any clue as to the whereabouts of the original Philip Verplanck Map of the George Lockhart Patent, when one day there appeared upon the desk of the writer a postal card, which read as follows:

"I have found the Map. Mrs. W.E.B."

The same evening we hurried up to 120 West 102nd. street, with the photographic copy of Mr. Haring's facsimile of the Map to ascertain whether what was now found was the original. Upon entering the room the original Map was seen pinned upon the wall, and a mere glance was sufficient to show that it was indeed the original. Upon comparison with the photographic reproduction of Mr. Haring's fac-simile the wonder was great that such a true copy could have been made by the clever draughtsman. His copy was surely a "fac-simile."

It appears that Mrs. Blauvelt had upon the occasion of one of my former visits remarked to her husband upon my leaving, "I do now remember that there was some sort of an old map in that trunk, which Mrs. Gesner (her sister) asked if she might have to make a copy of. I wonder if that could be the Map Mr. Gilman wants." Mrs. Gesner was thereupon requested to return the Map to Mrs. Blauvelt, when lo, and behold, it was the very object of this long search!

After some delay, and correspondence, Mrs. Blauvelt consented to part with the map for a consideration, on the understanding that it should be preserved in the Palisades Library, and not (as the writer at first plead might be the case) in the State Library at Albany. It is therefore now deposited in the safe of the Library."

W.S.G. 1899

After Mr. Gilman's death in 1923, his great collection of historical material was kept in the library in the **Big House**, treated with respect, and consulted occasionally by visiting researchers; but there was no one person to notice that in the

two moves of the library, from the **Big House** to the Old School in 1943 and from the Old School to its present location in 1951, the original map was missing.

It turned up finally behind a chest in the Geddes Smiths' house, where it had been put for safe keeping during the upheavals. Mr. Smith had died in 1953, soon after he had finally helped to establish the library in a home of its own; and the map was discovered by Mrs. Smith accidentally a few years later. Concerned library trustees decided to spread the risk of mislaying it again by keeping the facsimile and giving the original to the newly-formed Historical Society of Rockland County, which was growing vigorously under the leadership of John Zehner. It was thought that Mrs. Blauvelt would have been content with the decision to keep it in the county, near her old home. It was given to Mr. Zehner in a ceremony on May 30, 1958; and it is now one of the treasures of the Historical Society.

### Legend on the Verplanck Map

"By the request of Resolvert Nagel and John Nagel have Surveyed a Tract of Land Sectuate lying and being in Orange County on the West Side of Hudsons River which said Tract of Land was formerly Confirmed to one George Lockhart and is now belonging to Henry Ludlow and Mary his Wife &c.

Beginning at a White Oak Tree upon the hill by Hudsons River markt with Three Natches a Cross and the Letter L And runs from

Thence South Thirty Degrees Westerly One Hundred and Twenty Chains\* Thence North Eighty seven Degrees West

---

\***Gunters Chains** were a form of measurement worked out in the seventeenth century by Edmund Gunter. A chain of 100 links was 66 feet long, or 4 rods. Eighty chains made a mile. An acre had 10 chains to a side.

one hundred and Sixty chains

Thence North Eleven Degrees and fifteen Minutes East  
One Hundred and Sixty Chains/Thence East four hundred  
and [space]

to a markt Tree by Tappan River, are the Words of the  
Confirmation, but the Said Course will not hit the said Rivr  
but falls [space]

South of the Southermost part of the said Tappan River  
running East Two hundred Rod/Thence North five Chains  
to the Said Tappan River thence

Down along the Said River as it runs to Hudsons River  
Thence down along the said River as it runs to the place  
where it first

begun containing four Thousand Onehundred and  
Seventyfive Acres Three Roods and Thirtytwo perches  
Deducting one Moiety of the

Salt Meadow and allowing five PCt for highways their  
will remain Three Thousand Eight hundred and  
Eightyseven Acres

and Thirtysix perches The Which Said Survey was  
actually performed the 19th Day of June 1745 by

Philip Verplanck Survr

Facsimile made from the Original Map now in  
possession of John Outwater, Esq., of Tappan. Copied  
June 19, 1876 by James S. Haring Jr., Surveyor.

#### Explanation

1. The Oak Tree Markt with Letter L &c

2. Henry Ludlows House
3. Henry Ludlows Griss Mill
4. Gabl Ludlow
5. The Mouth of Tappan river or Creek
6. A Passage cut thro the Meadow and is now Wholy  
Used to go up the Creek
7. Sneedings house the ferry
8. A heap of Stones
9. The lands in Question proposed by Barent Janson
10. The Lands in question proposed by Jacob Vallentine
11. The Lands in Question and proposed by William Verdon
12. John Nagels houses
13. Resolvert Nagels houses"

## Appendix Number 9

### Difficult Journeys

#### James Alexander's Trying and Futile Surveying Trip in 1719

Traveling was always difficult in colonial times, with muddy roads, or none, and contrary winds (or none); but James Alexander, the New Jersey surveyor, had a particularly trying time in July, 1719, when he was surveying the boundary between New York and New Jersey, beginning at the Delaware River and ending at the Hudson. Besides the usual hazards of the road, he had to cope with cloudy or windy weather which often made it impossible to take observations, with scarcity of provisions, and with obstructive Indians. He also had continual disputes with Captain Jarrett, the New York surveyor, who hampered the project as a matter of policy.

On July 9th Alexander came to "the Indian town



called Cashreghtonk where the Indians scrupled to let us go further thro their town." Two days later "The Indians haveing held a Council near our tentt after which they called us to them & one of them made a Long speech to us with a fluent Expression good gestures & very good thoughts as appeared by what our interpreter Thomas Foulks told us the drift of which was that they wanted some rum to lett us go thru their town."

Finally on July 27th he had finished his part of the survey and set out from Machackemack with a waggon to take his provisions and instruments to Esopus on the Hudson—and one of the wheels broke! The next day it was mended and he went on to meet Captain Jarrett, who arrived on horseback because **his** waggon had also broken down.

In his entries for July 29th and following, Alexander describes their adventures from Esopus to Tappan by boat.:

July 29, 1719.

At 2 in the afternoon got to Esopus Creek where found a sloop whereof one Mayer was Master bound for York agt [against] highwater.

About 5 in the afternoon Capt. Walters & Capt. Jarret came we got our things aboard the sloop & about 8 went out of the Creek. wind at N.E.

July 30, 1719.

A fine gale all day at N.E. but very cloudy & rainy, betwixt 8 and 9 at night got abreast of Tapan but the Master would by no means put me ashore for he said it blew so hard we should certainly be overset in the Canoe & Loose our things therefore with not a little regret was I oblided to go for York. Betwixt Eleven & twelve at night got to York.

July 31, and August 1, 2 and 3, 1719

All this time at York I kept pressing of Capt. Jarret

to go for Tapan which I could not Prevail with him to do till

August 4, 1719.

at 3 in the morning Set out from York Att 11 the tide was spent & wind Contrary therefore Set ashore at the Jonkers mills.

At 6 in the Evening got to Mrs. Corbets at Tapan. [The former **Cheer Hall**]

At 8 Capt. Harrison came there also—he told us he had left John Chapman & the chainbearers about 20 miles off.

August 5, 1719

All day Cloudy and Rainy.

August 6, 1719.

All day Cloudy and Rainy.

In the Evening came John Chapman with the Chainbearers who acquainted us they had carried the Line to Hudsons river & had according to Directions markt the number of miles upon a tree at the End of Every mile & markt the No of Tallies at every tally.

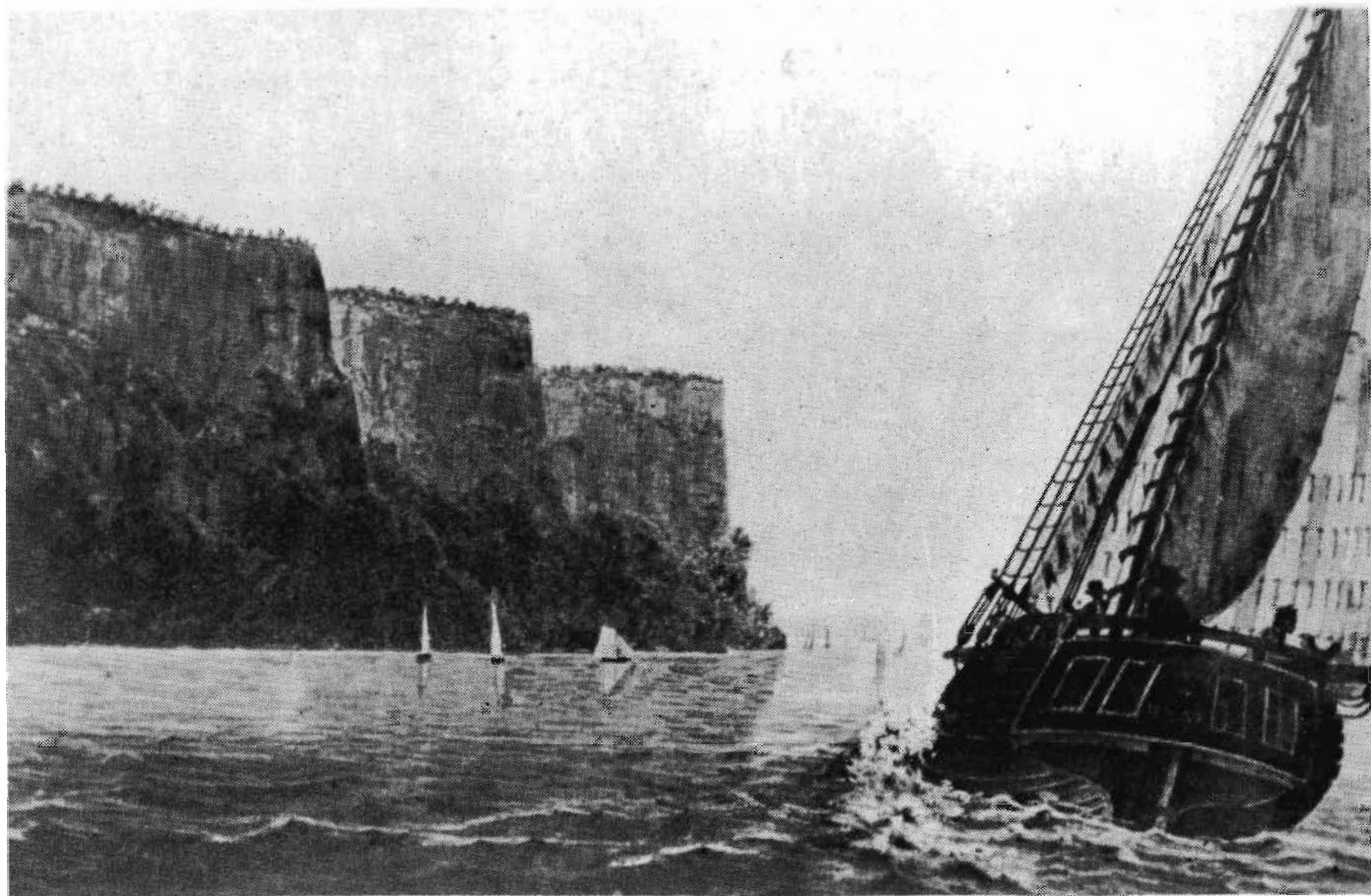
But they being all so Sick they could not chain to this place.

In the end the whole troublesome trip went for nothing, for Captain Jarrett declared he had found such serious deficiencies in the quadrant used "that he could neither rectify the wide errors of the instrument nor take upon him to fix the station by it . . . notwithstanding the methods proposed by Mr. Alexander for correcting the said errors."

Not until fifty years later, in 1769, was the boundary finally settled.

### **Clermont-Crèvecoeur's March Over "Incredible Roads" to Kings Ferry in 1781**

Sixty-two years later the roads in Westchester were no better, according to the description by Clermont-Crèvecoeur,



**The Packet "Mohawk of Albany" by Pavel Petrovitch Svinin (1787-1839). James Alexander, and later Nicholas Gesner might have traveled in just such a craft.**

one of Rochambeau's generals (a distant connection of the Crèvecoeur who wrote **Letters from an American Farmer**). He and his troops were on the first stage of the march to Yorktown, the beginning of the end of the Revolution.

"I left on 18 August [1781] with the artillery park's wagon train, but that day we were only able to go four miles, and we slept in bivouac . . . One cannot imagine how many afflictions we had to endure during the six days it took us to march from Philipsburg to King's Ferry on the Hudson River, a distance of 40 miles. It took us six days because of the terrible weather and incredible roads. There was a terrific storm on 20 August. I floundered in the mud and in a horrible marsh with all the wagons and the artillery train, not knowing where I was or how I could get out of it. Not until day-break was I able, with great difficulty, to extricate myself."

Extract from **The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army**. Clermont-Crèvecoeur's Journal, Vol. I, page 40.

#### **And William Henry Whiton's Roundabout Way from Albany to Piermont in 1847**

In 1847, even though steamboats were available, traveling was still tedious and time-consuming. At the time that Eleazar Lord was building the railways to Piermont, his son-in-law, Henry Whiton, described in his diary a trip from Albany to Piermont.

"Saturday, Nov. 20th, 1847: Left Albany at 7 O'clock A.M. on my return to Piermont. The boat grounded a few miles below Albany and we did not reach New York until 8½ O'clock Saturday . . . took steamer Columbia Sunday morning at 4 O'clock for 'Dobbs Ferry'. Crossed over from Dobbs to Snedens Landing. Carriage from Snedens to Piermont, got home in time to attend church."

(This is an entry discovered by John Scott in the Whiton Diaries, now available at the History Center in New City, Vol. 2, page 90.)

## **Appendix Number 10**

### **Dennis Sneden's Bill, in Possession of the William Sloats**

"Sundry Dr. to Ferriges to Dennis Sneden	
To ferrying Capt. Samuel Raymond Company 56 men	2-16- 0
To ferrying part of Capt. Thomas Moffet's Company 45 men	2- 5- 0
To Horse pasturing and other Necessarys Capt. Ebenezer Woodhull	0-17- 6
To Necessarys the said Woodhull	0- 5- 3
To ferrying 10 men & horses Lieut. James Sayre	1- 5- 0
To ferrying six of the Light Dragoons for Asariah Mertine Jr. mastr	0-15- 0
To ferrying 4 Loaded waggons & seventeen horses for Mr. John Rynear waggon master	5-14- 0
To ferrying 41 of Genl Nixon's Brigade James King Lieut	2- 1- 0
	<hr/>
	15-18- 9

In his article, "The Town that was Robbed" Lewis Owen "pins those old names down," and gives references for each one. "Samuel Raymond was captain of the Orange County Minutemen. Captain Moffett is carried in the "History of Orange County" as an officer of the Cornwall Minute Company. Ebenezer Woodhull was captain of the Light Horse Company of Colonel Jesse Woodhull's Orange County

Militia. Sayre was his Lieutenant. Azariah Mertine (Martin) was 'Second Master' of the same regiment. Local men all. John Ryneer, wagon master, was undoubtedly a civilian in Army pay. But Lieut. James King of General Nixon's Brigade—. . . John Nixon wasn't appointed Brigadier General (in the Continental Army) until August 9, 1776." This is of course puzzling, because Dennis Sneden had been forbidden to "keep ferry" after July 29th, 1776. Perhaps General Nixon didn't know this when he asked to be taken across.

## Appendix Number 11

"Declaration by the Orange County Committee,  
July 29, 1776

Warning Four Sneden Brothers not to Keep Ferry  
(From Force, Peter: American Archives,  
Fifth Series, Vol. I, page 648)

Orange County (New-York) Committee

Clark's Town, July 29, 1776

In County Committee on the South side of the  
Mountains, in the County of Orange:

Whereas Dennis Snyder, Jesse Snyder, William Snyder, and Samuel Snyder, all living at or near a place commonly called Snyder's or Dobbs's Ferry, on the west side of Hudsons River, in the County of Orange, and State of New-York have refused to sign any or either of the Associations that have been put forth, or recommended by our honorable Convention; and as the abovesaid persons are greatly suspected of carrying on a treasonable correspondence with our unnatural enemies, or ships-of-war, belonging to the King of Great Britain, lying in the abovesaid river, by the great opportunity afforded them in the privilege they have by keeping ferry, knowing the

abovesaid persons to be inveterate enemies to the common States of America:

Therefore, Resolved, That the above Dennis Snyder, Jesse Snyder, William Snyder, and Samuel Snyder are hereby forwarned not to keep ferry, or employ any other person to ferry in their room, or employ a craft on the abovesaid river, upon any pretence whatsoever; and all other persons are hereby forwarned against having any correspondence with the abovesaid Snydens, or any other person or persons whatsoever, that are in any degree enemies to the liberties of America.

And whereas John Snyder is advertised in the publick Gazette as pilot of the ships-of-war up the abovesaid river greatly to the damage of the said John Snyder: It is hereby requested, that the said Printer will insert Robert Snyder instead of John Snyder, who has always appeared to be a warm friend to the common cause of America.

Per order of the Committee:

John Coe, Deputy Chairman

Attested: John Coleman, Secretary"

(Neither the National Archives in Washington nor the New York State Archives can find an original copy of this Proclamation. Cole's **History of Rockland County**, page 36, has a copy which does not quite agree with this, and Gilman's copy follows Cole's; but since the rest of the material on the Revolution in Cole was copied from Force, one may assume that this was too, and that the differences were due to the copyist.)

## Appendix Number 12

Jonathan Lawrence Junior and His Parents

The Disgraceful Affair of Mrs. Lawrence's Overcharging

**for Tea** (From the New York State Library, Albany)

“Committee of New Windsor to Provincial Congress  
in Committee, New Windsor, 31st May, 1776

.....  
It gives us pain to find any Person counteracting the Orders of Congress and more especially so when it happens with those who profess Friendship to the common cause. This has lately been the case with a certain Mrs. Lawrence, wife of Capt Jonathan Lawrence who is a Commissioner under Congress at Fort Constitution, and his son a Clerk there in the pay of the Continent. Mrs. Lawrence early in the Spring settled in this Precinct and opened a shop here, then knowingly contrary to the Resolve of Congress has retailed Bohea Tea at 8 shillings per lb., and to evade the Resolve in that Respect pretends to sell her Tea at 6 shillings per lb., but will not let the purchaser have the Tea unless they take a paper bag to put it in at 2 shillings, and so in proportion for a greater or less quantity.

There is something so disingenious in this kind of conduct that we view it in a worse light than an open violation of the Rule. Upon having this complaint laid before us, we thought proper to Depute one of our Members to wait on Mrs. Lawrence (In Tenderness for her sex) and treat with her on the matter, by letting her know that if she would desist from her present conduct in that particular, and return the money Extorted to the Persons from whom she received it, and sell her Tea at the price fixed by Congress, in that case we would make matters as easy as we Consistently cou'd. But she refused to comply with this Reasonable and Indulgent Proposal, and the remainder of her Tea (as we are informed since) been removed to Fort Constitution under the care of her husband and son, which has much Disgusted the Inhabitants as they conceived it as kind of Insult to have

that Fortress made an Asylum for that useless Herb and the Illegal venders of it. We thought it proper, as also being in duty bound to inform you to this Matter, that what is right may be done therein, that in future the Resolve of Congress may not be violated or evaded in this manner for want of punishing those who have already transgressed. We have the Honor Gentlemen to be with all due esteem your most obdt Humble Servants,

By Order of the Committee.

SAML BREWSTER, Chairman

To the Honorable the Provincial Congress for  
the Colony of New York.

**General Clinton's Description of Jonathan Lawrence, Jr.**

(Force Papers, Fifth Series, Vol. III, page 1219)

General George Clinton to James Duane, from Fort  
Constitution, Dec. 14, 1776.

“Old Mr. Lawrence applied to me to recommend his son (a lieutenant in Colonel Swartwout's regiment in my brigade) to your committee . . . His colonel tells me (on his honour) that he believes him to be brave; that though he has been a wild young lord in times past, this campaign he has been attentive to duty and sober, and that he will, in his opinion make a good First Lieutenant, which is the office he now bears.\* Indeed, he says he has the charge of the company the most of this campaign and has executed it well.”

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\*The Military Service Records have no record of any Lawrence having been a lieutenant in Col. Swartwout's Regiment; but it is known that Jonathan Lawrence, Jr., (at 16!) had been serving as clerk at headquarters, and military records were often informal.

## Appendix Number 13

### Chief Justice William Smith's Inconvenient Interest in Snedens

William Smith, Chief Justice of New York under the British, had built a house in Haverstraw in the early 1770's, as had his brother Thomas, and his sister Martha and her husband, Ann Hawkes Hay; and in his detailed diary, kept between 1753 and 1783, he occasionally referred to the neighboring "Corbet's Point", or "Dobbs Ferry" in a slightly admonitory way.

He came of a well-known Whig family, (another member was the Joshua Hett Smith who played such an ambiguous part in the Arnold conspiracy), and agreed that Great Britain had treated the colonies unreasonably; but his respect for law and hatred for war kept him—alone of his family—loyal to the Crown. He believed that the Patriots were a misguided and violent minority, and hoped that if they could be contained, vigorous young America would come to be the dominating partner in the British Empire.

His trouble was that the British would seldom accept his suggestions, but made what seemed to him to be half-hearted and ineffectual attempts to prosecute the war. To Smith the alternative to a British victory would be exile from his country.

When he was coming down the river from his wife's home in Livingston Manor on August 9th, 1778 to take the decisive step of joining the British in New York, he wrote in his diary: "Came to that night below Dobbs Ferry, which is now pass'd by the Continental Troops, in Sight of the Ships laying near Spuyten-Devil." A few days later he came back to the subject. The man who brought Smith's horses from up-river reported: "No Ships in the River above Kings Bridge. Great Stores at Terry Town brought from the West Country across Dobbs Ferry and Kings Ferry in sight of the Ships".

On October 5th of that same year he wrote hopefully: "The Phenix, Capt. Parker, gone up Saturday Night to Haverstraw with 40 flat bottomed boats. . . . Washington weak at Fishkill with only 4000. I mentioned this to Mr. Eden, and hinted that now was Sir H. Clinton's Time to penetrate Hudson's River". But no one took the hint.

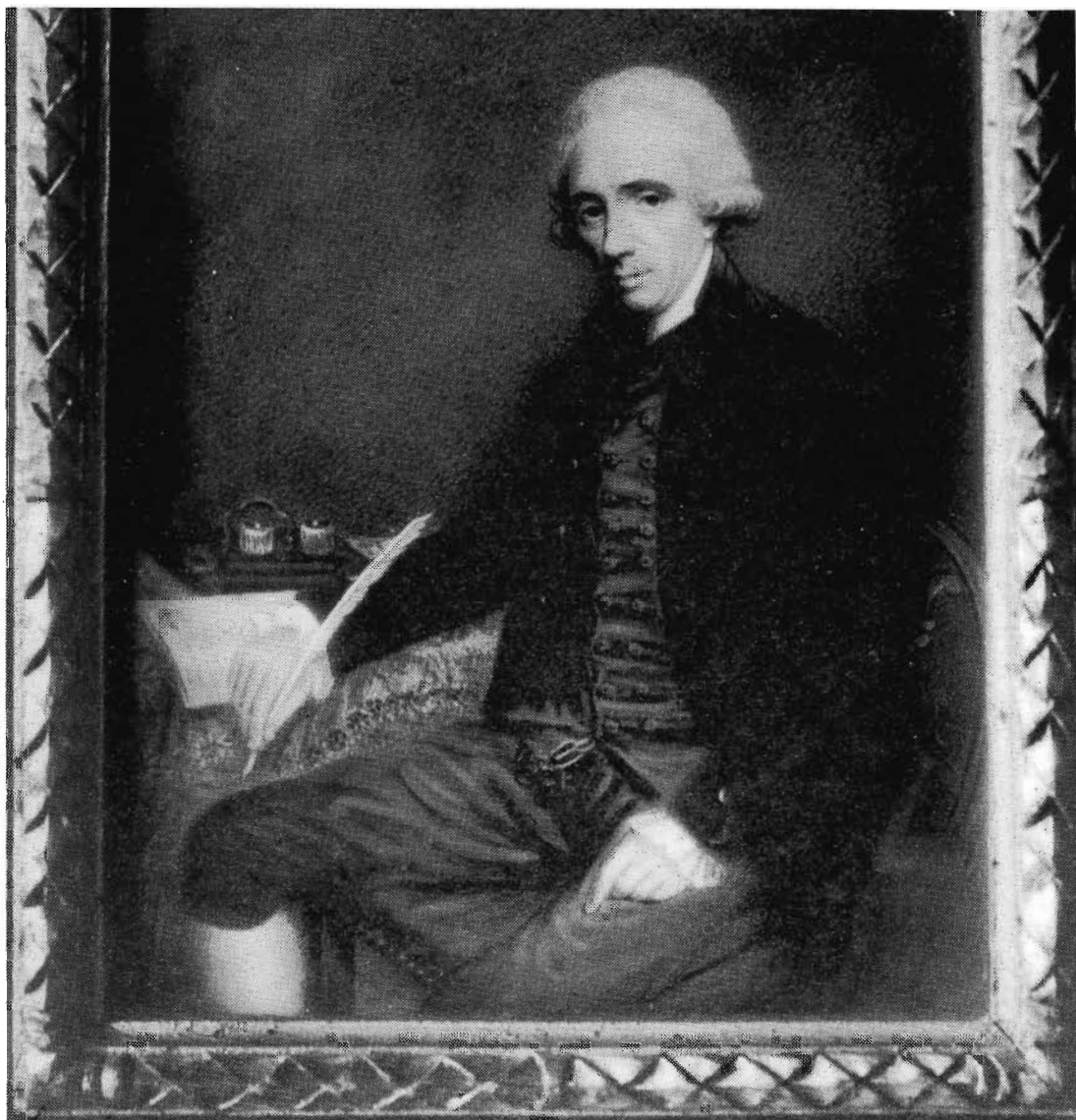
Two years later, on August 3rd, 1780, he wrote to Eden, one of the British Commissioners: "The King's Army may deprive the Rebels of the two Eastern Roads [west of the Hudson] by incamping even on the Banks of the River Hudson at Orangetown or Tappan as it was called antiently (sic) by the Indians". Luckily for the Patriots, his suggestion was not taken up; and by coincidence Washington wrote Congress that same day detailing his plans for building a post at that very spot. Smith may not have known about Washington's plans yet, but he learned on the seventh that the American army was at Tappan; and a couple of days later he wrote in exasperation: "Why is not our Army rather at Tappan than Whitestone or Flushing where the soldiers injure themselves paddling in the mud and water for clams!"

That fall Smith was to visit Dobbs Ferry under conditions very disagreeable to him. On October first, 1780, he was sent up the river to "Corbet's Point" with the British General Robertson in the frigate **Greyhound**. Their mission was to intercede with the Americans to save Major André, who had been condemned as a spy. Only General Robertson and an aide were allowed to land; and Smith was condemned to wait on board in frustration, accompanied by a man he detested, Andrew Elliot, the Lieutenant Governor.\* Since General Robertson's conversation with General Greene produced no results, he wrote a letter to General Washington which he sent off at noon the next day, not knowing that at

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\*Elliot was also Superintendent General of the Police, Receiver General of Quit Rents, Collector of Customs, and Superintendent of the Wharves.





**The Chief Justice William Smith.**

that very moment André was being hanged. The **Greyhound** dropped down the river.

His next visit to Dobbs Ferry was even more unhappy. In 1783 General Carleton asked him to "attend him with Mr. Elliot to the intended Interview with General Washington and Mr. Clinton, proposed to be 5 May". This was George Clinton, Governor of the newly formed State of New York; and the interview was for the purpose of arranging the British evacuation of New York. Smith hesitated. No doubt the prospect of another expedition with Elliot was not attractive; but Smith also "mentioned that it would not be grateful to me to treat with a man [Clinton] who was once my Clerk and now assuming the Station of a Superior and perhaps disposed to consider me as an enemy".

He was prevailed upon to go, however; and he found himself again in the **Greyhound**, anchored again at Dobbs Ferry, and still accompanied by the same antipathetic Andrew Elliot. Sir Guy Carleton and the others came in the larger **Perseverance**. The next morning they were all rowed from Dobbs Ferry to the Sloat in barges. The two generals rode to Tappan for the conference in a "chariot". Although all the others were offered horses, Smith and Elliot insisted on walking, and Col. Williams Stephens Smith, the fastidious young commander at the blockhouse, found himself obliged to accompany the no doubt morose couple.

The Chief Justice's part in the negotiations seemed to be confined to cautioning General Carleton not to commit himself. The 17-gun salute to the new country the next day must have seemed to Smith a signal that that country was finally lost to him.

Besides all the inside information about what went on in the highest British circles during the Revolution, Smith's diary gives glimpses of the human background.

On October 5, 1779, for example, he wrote:

"This Country may be said to indure a Pestilence. It

can't be called a very mortal Season, but I never knew so prevalent a Sickness. Agues and Intermittents are common Affliction. In some Instances the Fever is malignant, carrying the Patient off in a few Days. The aged drop off under the Ague. Some lay long under nervous or remitting Fevers and die when they are putrid. While I am writing, three of my Children are down, and my Brother's Son Abraham. Ivy the Coachman has had the Ague but is recovered. We are a Hospital at this House. We have had Eleven or 12 sick at a Time. Scarce Hands enough well to attend the Disseased. This is not the Case only within the British Lines, but all along the Sea Coast of New England, and in Jersey and Pennsylvania. Would to God that the common Affliction might incline both Parties to Peace and quicken the Period of our Deliverance from the Calamities of a destructive War!"

Another example is his account of the exceptional weather in 1780. On Jan. 20 he wrote: "The oldest man in this Country does not remember such a long continuance of a very severe Cold. We cross the Hudson in all Places and in numerous Bodies". Not until Feb. 22 did he write: "Ice impassable to Poulus Hook. It has been a Bridge from the 16 January, 36 Days".

He thought the summer of that year exceptional, also, although it sounds delightful to 20th century New Yorkers: "Aug. 16. Heats oppressive since July 20. Last 14 days mercury above 80°. This day at 86°. It has been at 88°."

## Appendix Number 14

### Washington's Forgotten Blockhouse Dobbs Ferry on the West Side of the Hudson

(A special study has been made of the blockhouse on

Woods Road by this writer, and two articles published, a short one in **South of the Mountains** for Oct.-Dec., 1975, and a longer, slightly altered one, in **The North Jersey Highlander** for Spring, 1981. The following appendix includes much of the latter article—restored—which was too detailed to be a part of the text of the history, as well as source material, such as Anthony Wayne's and William Stephens Smith's letters, and spies' reports.)

"The Hudson is the Key of the Continent" said General Washington in 1779; and the Loyalist Chief Justice William Smith, Jr. quoted him<sup>1</sup> with approval in the critique of General Clinton's conduct of the Revolution which he sent on August 3rd, 1780, to William Eden, one of the British Commissioners. Later in the same communication<sup>2</sup> Smith pointed out that "The King's Army may deprive the Rebels of the two Eastern Roads [west of the Hudson] by incamping even on the Banks of the River Hudson at Orangetown, or Tappan as it was called antiently (sic) by the Indians."

It was a strange coincidence that on the same day Washington wrote Congress that he had ordered the army to march to that very place, at the western end of Dobbs Ferry, just north of the Jersey border, where he planned to build a military post. This post was to play a part—sometimes minor, sometimes major—in his strategy from that date until the end of the war in 1783; and it seems even stranger that the post's whole existence has been rather generally ignored.

This may be partly owing to the fact that Washington called the settlement on both sides of the river "Dobbs Ferry," although he referred far more often to the one on the west.

There are no references to this military post in standard histories of the American Revolution, nor even in Cole's **History of Rockland County**. In Green's **History of Rockland County** there is quoted a description of the blockhouse by a

spy<sup>3</sup>—nothing more. Although the post was established to facilitate communication and used to obtain intelligence, and although it was often referred to in Washington's correspondence and daily orders from August, 1780 until the end of the Revolution, neither James Truslow Adams' seven-volume **Life of Washington** nor Carl Van Doren's **Secret History** has any reference to it.\*

Winthrop Sargent Gilman, the local historian who lived in Palisades from 1861 till his death in 1923, collected information about the blockhouse from old inhabitants, some of whom were only one generation removed from the Revolution; and he made photographs, measurements, and drawings of the ruins in 1899 and 1904.<sup>4</sup> Then in 1924 members of the Field Exploration Committee of the New-York Historical Society came out to excavate, and found many military buttons, utensils, and other artifacts.<sup>5</sup>

In the 1930's George H. Budke, a Rockland County historian, made an exhaustive study of the history of the blockhouse, suggesting, however, a different nearby site. This was published in the short-lived **Rockland Record** in 1940 and recently republished.<sup>6</sup> He had discovered a treasure-house of material in the military correspondence of Washington in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and wrote what was considered, by the few who had the opportunity to read it, the definitive study of the blockhouse.

In 1960 James Jackson published in **Delaware History**<sup>7</sup> an account of the Second Delaware Militia, who spent most of their brief career stationed in Dobbs Ferry, helping to build the blockhouse; and in 1962 Adrian Leiby, in his

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\*One history, however, does give proper credit to the village, and it comes as a surprise to most readers. Barber and Howe, in their **Historical Collections**, published in 1841, say on page 478: "About a mile south of Piermont is Dobbs Ferry, a noted place in the revolution."

**Revolutionary War in the Hackensack Valley**\* gave many interesting details about the post.

The project had started when General George Washington, early in the summer of 1780, conceived the project of fortifying one of the Hudson River landings between Closter (Alpine, N.J.) and Dobbs' Ferry (Palisades, N.Y.); and Major General Anthony Wayne and Robert Erskine, Geographer to the Continental Army, received orders to examine, and report to him upon, such landing places as could be found within that distance. In accordance with their instructions, they proceeded on a reconnaissance and Wayne reported to Washington the results of their observations as follows:†

Totowa 18th July 1780

In obedience to your Excellency's orders I proceeded with Mr. Erskine to reconnoitre the Landing places from Closter to Dobbs' Ferry & found the following VIZ.

Closter landing\* situated about Six or seven miles above Fort Lee & a little south of Phillips's† was formerly made use of by the Inhabitants in its vicinity and rendered practicable for two horse sleds,—from the Declivity of the mountain to the river is about one half mile which is too steep & narrow to admit of Common Carriages—the Decent being equal to One foot in five, on an average—nor is there a sufficient area at the Dock to turn a team or lodge stores upon—notwithstanding this, the enemy found means to carry up a few light field pieces in 76—but from experience I know that artillery can be conveyed by manual labour over precipices and thro' defiles Impracticable for Horses & waggons, which must have been the case here.

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\*See "The Scene of the Landing of the British Forces in the Jerseys in 1776" in *Rockland Record*, vol. 3, page 47.

†Phillips's, i.e., Manor Hall in Yonkers, N.Y.

this road is at present Obstructed by felled trees & large rocks so that nothing but single footmen can pass & that with difficulty—a few Infantry might defend the Avenue—yet it will not afford a proper position to erect a Battery to cover the landing from the Insults of Shipping.

the next is called Closter Dock—about a mile & a half higher up the River and little North of Phillips's—this road is also Impracticable for waggons part of the way forming an angle of near 20 Degrees decent—but as a Military position much superior to the first—between this & Dobbs's is an other landing, less practicable than either of these.

Our next Object was Dobbs's ferry which affords an easy & safe carriage, the roads leading to it from Closter, Paramus, &c. being very level & with a little Improvem't may be made excellent—there are six months men under Captains Laurence & Blanch, at Tappan & Closter sufficient for the purpose.

the ground on the west side of the river is favorable for Batteries against shipping—an attempt was made by the Enemies Gallies to annoy the ferry way in 1778—when they soon found it expedient to fall down the river on receiving a few shot from a little work thrown up in haste to cover the Landing, as noted on the enclosed sketch.

there are two small eminences one on the North the other on the South side the road, which with a Block house & Captains command in each, wou'd effectively cover the Battery from any attempt by land unless accompanied by artillery & in force. The east side is also favorable for Batteries to cover the Landing—and Immediately to the S.E. is a hill or Strong rising ground Commanding all the Country within reach of Cannon shot, and may be rendered a safe repository for the stores when landed.

the Inclosed Sketch will shew the respective positions aluded to, with the width of the River at Dobbs's.

I must beg leave to refer you to Mr. Erskine for the state of the roads & their Distances.

Interim I am your Excellency's most obt & very Hum Sert

Anty Wayne

N.B. there is a very fine forage Country in the vicinity of Dobbs's the owners chiefly Caitiffs\*

His Excellency  
Genl Washington"

This long, detailed report was so obviously favorable to Dobbs Ferry that General Washington wrote to the President of Congress from Peekskill on August 3rd, after Sir Henry Clinton's unexpected return from Long Island had forced the Americans to give up the idea of an attack on New York City at that time: "We shall repossess the river tomorrow and proceed with our whole force to Dobbes' Ferry."<sup>10</sup>

Washington must have thought better of this plan, unless indeed Dobbs Ferry was meant to refer to the whole region around the west end of the ferry, because his army, after crossing the river at Kings Ferry (Stony Point) and marching south, stopped at Orangetown, or Tap-pawn as one of the soldiers said the natives called it.<sup>11</sup> This is about two miles west of the river, but then there was no direct road from Snedens Landing to Tappan, and the marching distance was about twice as far by road. Washington himself was in Orangetown, or Tappan, from August 8th to August 23rd, when most of the army moved on again.

Early in August, 1780, a corps of Sappers and Miners

was organized under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Jean Baptiste Gouvion, the French engineer, to camp at Dobbs Ferry and work there on the new fortifications.<sup>12</sup> In addition, sixty of "Colonel Baldwin's Regimented artificers" were sent down from West Point by the new commander, General Benedict Arnold;<sup>13</sup> about two hundred and sixty of the second Delaware Regiment camped and worked there;<sup>14</sup> and three hundred and thirty men were sent over from the regular army at Tappan to help by day;<sup>15</sup> so that the British spy who said that there were two thousand men there at Snedens under Baron von Steuben, making fascines,<sup>16</sup> was perhaps not exaggerating by much more than 100 percent. (Fascines are cylindrical bundles of brushwood used to protect batteries or to make the framework for redoubts.)

The soldiers must have been employed not only in cutting timber, making fascines, and moving rocks for the "strong blockhouse" at the top of the cliff, and the "battery near it,"<sup>17</sup> but also in repairing or rebuilding the road from the river.

Two reports from spies give rather confusing pictures of the blockhouse. The first is from George Beckwith Intelligence, **Papers of Sir Henry Clinton**, Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

New York, February 25, 1781

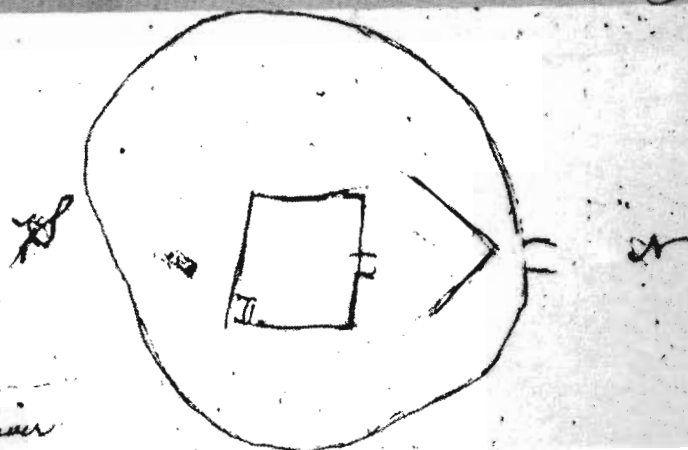
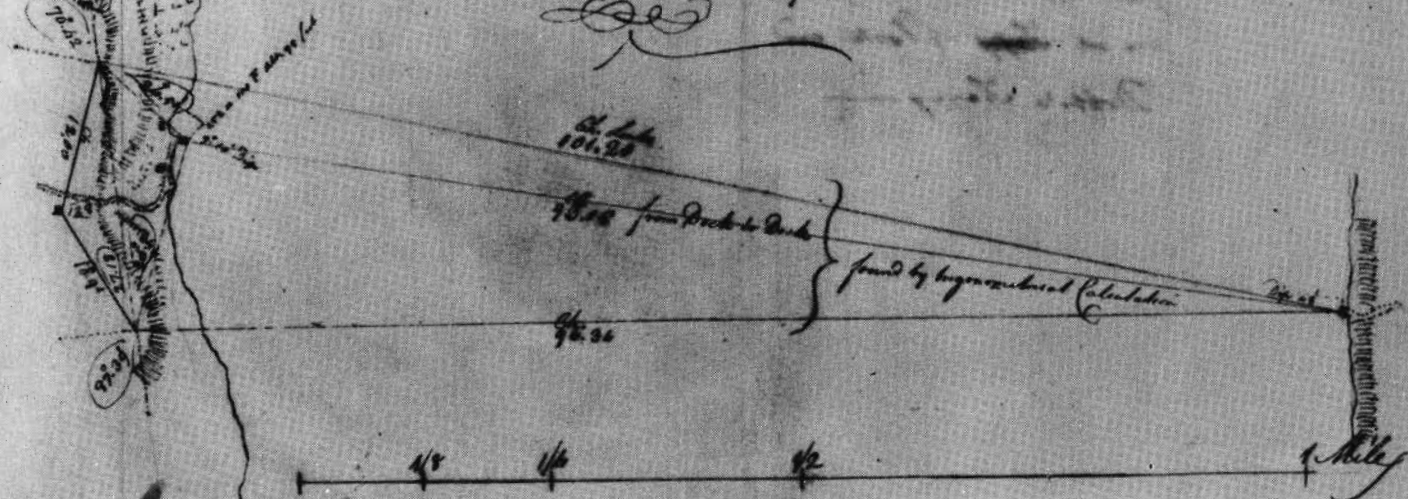
"Tunis Blauvelt returned last night from Jersey. He gives the following Information of the Block-House at Sneadens and of the detachment at that place.

"The Detachment of the Jersey Troops doing duty there was relieved last Monday and the Post at Wey Hawk was withdrawn the same day—There are to a certainty no cannon in the Block-House and Twenty-six men (which is the whole Detachment) are posted in it at nights under the command of an Officer; he neither knows his name or Rank. There are five Batteaux hauled up upon the Beach about a short half mile

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\*Wayne's term for Tories.

Data for Ascertaining the length of the  
North River at Dobbs's Ferry taken  
with a theodolite July 17<sup>th</sup> 1780 by  
Robt. Cushman P. R. E. Surg. A. A. S.



The North River

Sketch of the blockhouse by a spy.



below the Blockhouse, but no Guard to take care of them. There is one Centry only at nights; he is posted upon the Top of the Block House which is not roofed but the side wall rises four feet above the upper Floor, and there is communication with the Lower Story, at the South East Corner; the Door of the Block House Fronts at the Northwd and is covered by a Logg Flesh\*; beyond which an **Abbatis\*\*** is laid, which surrounds the whole and which has likewise an opening to the Northward.

"The opening in the **Abbatis** is closed between eight and nine at night and the Inner Door is shut at the same time. The Block house may be approached 'till within Fifty Yards without a Discovery.

"This Intelligence is given To the Informant by - - who lives near the Block House and went into it on purpose last Thursday. He remained 'till after Sun Setting and saw the Night Centry posted—as well as the Five Batteaux—The enclosed sketch of the Post he took upon his return home."

Geo. Beckwith

The second is from **Magazine of American History**, Vol. XI, page 436.

27 June, 1781. Observations made by a person who went to Verplanck's Point, the —— in a flag of truce.

"Sailing about between Stoney & Verplanck's Points I had a fair view of them both. At Stoney Pt. I counted 35 in number, men, boys, and blacks: and saw the

appearance of 2 pieces of cannon. At Verplanck's, counted 25 in number, and 2 pieces of cannon: and by what I could learn from the Guard, the number of men was near or quite the full complement of men they had. But they said they had 4 pieces of cannon at Verplanck's, and 2 at Stoney pt. A Capt., Lieut., & Ensign. at each post, with a Lieut. of Artillery for both.

"Opposite Tarrytown on the West Shore he saw 6 Whaleboats, and about 42 men in all. No appearance of any of them fitted for carrying swivels or wall pieces.\*

"He was by a mistake admitted into the Blockhouse near Sneathing's Landing. It is a Redoubt about a mile & a half from the landing, on a very rough Rocky height, Picketted in all round with tops of trees and branches; no way to get in without climbing over: About 4 Rods within this circle, is a round breastwork running quite round the height, 8 feet high, with a gate to pass in on the west side. Within that circle about 3 Rods, is another breastwork running around the top of the height, about the same height as the other, on which is wooden embrasures built, in which they have one piece of Cannon on a travelling carriage. On the South side [of] the inward work a gate opens into the first breastwork. The rise of the height is so much as to cause the top of the first breastwork to be no higher than the bottom of the second.

"At this time it was commanded by a Lieut. 2 Sergrts. 2 Cpts. and 25 men in the works."

The walls of the blockhouse have been described by James S. Haring, a local historian who lived in Palisades more than a hundred years ago, as timber faced with stone.<sup>18</sup> It does seem likely that the great piles of loose stones that remains as well as most of the smaller ones which have been

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\*Flèche: Arrow-fortification. A work in communication with the covertway, placed at the salient angle of the glacis. O.E.D.

\*\*Abatis—A defence formed by placing felled trees lengthwise one over the other with their branches toward the enemy's line. O.E.D.

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\*This must have been Captain John Pray's headquarters in Nyack.

taken for the construction of a nearby house, were used instead of the customary gravel or soil to form the center of the blockhouse walls; but perhaps the inner and outer framework were made of the fascines which the spy had seen the "two thousand men" working on, rather than of timber.

Budke proposed<sup>10</sup> the theory that a small stone building on Woods Road, now incorporated in a picturesque house built in the 1920's, was the original blockhouse. He suggested that the pile of stones nearby, which Gilman called the blockhouse, was really the "citidel" referred to in a letter by William Stephens Smith,\* stationed there in 1782. A careful reading of this letter, Gilman's **Local History and Palisades Notes**, Washington's dispatches, and the descriptions of the blockhouse by two spies, makes this theory questionable. The Smith letter, for example, spoke of the "citidel" and the "work," but did not make clear that they were different constructions. No other reference consulted since then has mentioned the citadel and none speaks of two structures.

Budke said that the Serviss map of 1874<sup>20</sup> showed the blockhouse farther south than the pile of stones. Gilman, however, in **Palisades Notes**,<sup>21</sup> included a letter from James Haring saying that the Serviss map was wrong in that respect. Budke claimed that the oldest inhabitants had no other explanation for the origin of the small stone house, but Gilman and Haring both said that it was a tenant house built by W. B. Oddie who had lived in the "**Big House**" off and on from 1840 to 1860.<sup>22</sup>

The present owners of the small stone house have dug in the ground around it to built walls and make gardens, without finding any Revolutionary War artifacts.

It does seem reasonable to believe Gilman, who made exhaustive studies on the spot, even measuring the distance from the blockhouse to a now-vanished landmark, (the "two

saplings"), rather than Budke, whose knowledge was, after all, gained chiefly from books on the subject.

Before the blockhouse was completed Benedict Arnold made his involuntary visit there on September 11, 1780, and wrote a lying letter to Washington. Nine days later, from Robinson's house opposite West Point, he wrote another letter which does not seem to have been noticed by historians of the André-Arnold affair. He was having trouble<sup>23</sup> finding a boat to go down the river to Dobbs Ferry to pick up André in case the latter chose to wait there for the rendezvous set for eleven or twelve at night on September 20th.\* A letter discovered by Budke in 1927 and published in **South of the Mountains**, the Rockland County historical quarterly, forty years later, tells perhaps how Arnold explained his need for a boat:<sup>24</sup>

H-d Qu-rs. Robinson's House  
Sept. 20, 1780

Dear Sir;

I think you informed me that the oyster rakes and one of the fish cans would be ready by this morning.—I am therefor to request that you will order a small Barge's Crew of five men with Two days Provisions who are to take the rakes and can and go on board of a Barge which I will send to the Village Land'g this afternoon at five O'clock & proceed from thence to Mich-l Cornelison's at Nyack to rake oysters and procure from Mr. Cornelison some Fish which he promised to take for me.

If the fish should not be ready you will please to give Directions that the can be left with M-r Cornelison till the men be sent down — the rakes to be left in his care.

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\*See page 164 of this account.

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\*Actually André went all the way to the **Vulture**, then off Tellers Point (Croton).

The Barge will easily contain 10 or 12 Bushels of oysters. the Men will return to Robinson's wharf by the 22nd., at sunset, except prevented by storms or unavoidable accident.

I am D.-r Sir with Esteem  
Your most obd-t Ser-t  
BA per RV

A copy of the letter was retained by Arnold and afterward fell into Washington's hands. The initials B. A. and R. V. stand for Benedict Arnold and his secretary, Richard Varick.

During the two months before André's capture, Captain Jonathan Lawrence Jr. of Dobbs Ferry had been nearer to disaster than he realized. Besides his regular military duties, which included such exploits as capturing the famous — and slippery — Tory spy, James Moody, and delivering him safely to West Point,<sup>26</sup> he had been supplying Major General Robert Howe, the former American Commandant at West Point, with intelligence through Joshua Hett Smith. Soon after Benedict Arnold took Howe's place he asked Smith to give him the source of his intelligence. Smith, less experienced or more anxious to please than Major Benjamin Tallmage across the river, who had refused a similar request, replied obligingly.<sup>26</sup> His main informant, he said, had been Captain Lawrence, "whose mode of procuring Intelligence can better be mentioned to you than committed to paper, an Opportunity of doing which I shall embrace as soon as the Hurry of Service will admit of my taking him from his command and introducing him to you at Robinson's." Although Arnold wrote back that he looked forward to meeting Lawrence, there seems to be no indication that he ever subsequently interfered with Lawrence's clandestine activities, which continued until his retirement in 1782.

After André's execution, those at the blockhouse turned their attention to their regular duties. The blockhouse was

soon finished, and it was usually garrisoned by one or more officers and twenty-five or thirty men, supplemented by larger forces during emergencies, and often rotated. There were frequent alarms and sorties, on the river and on land, but there was never a direct attack made on the fort.

A couple of letters from Washington show what he expected of them. On October 8th, 1780, he wrote to the Officer in command of the blockhouse:<sup>27</sup>

Sir

In addition to the Continental troops under your command, I have directed Major Goetschius of the Jersey State troops to send you from his corps a detachment of a subaltern and twenty men to be periodically relieved, and for your greater security to communicate with you and patrol the different landing places in your vicinity; but I would not have you to rely upon this, but take every precaution for your own security. You will find covering within the works for your whole party, of which you will mount a third part as a guard every night, and keep small patrols all round you so as not, however, to weaken your command too much. You will keep a vigilant look out towards the water by day and night and when you are furnished with a piece of cannon, should a fleet be going up the river, you will announce it by firing five discharges. I mean by a fleet such a number of vessels as may indicate an attempt upon the posts above. You will fire three pieces of cannon distinctly as a signal of movement in force against you and you will send off an express instantly to Head Quarters.

You will maintain the post to the last extremity should you once find yourself surrounded, and for this purpose you will endeavor always to have five or six days provisions on hand, but should you discover appearances of a serious attack in force and with artillery

time enough to withdraw your men you will do it, spiking up your cannon and setting fire to the works for which you should make previous preparation. You will always recollect that should you be obliged to submit to superior force after a vigorous resistance you will do honor to yourself, but should you be surprised, as it will denote a want of vigilance, there can be no apology for it. But I rely intirely on your prudence and bravery.

Given at Head Quarters  
Tappan 8<sup>th</sup> of October 1780  
G. Washington

P.S. You will of course keep your  
instructions a secret.  
The Officer Commanding  
at Dobbes ferry

Major Goetschius, in New Jersey, was reluctant to send his men to Dobbs Ferry. "It makes a great uneseniss among the Inhabitants . . . My detachment is perticular listed for a gaurd at the frontiers of this County . . . The Inhabitants at the lines paid a large sum of money to the soldiery per-ticular to have rest themselves and to follow their Lawfull Imploy." But after many more quite reasonable, however unsoldierly, complaints he ended his letter "with the Great-est respects and submission."<sup>27</sup>

On November 23, 1780, Washington forwarded the following orders<sup>27</sup> to Captain Alden then in command of the Block House at Dobbs' Ferry, Orange County:

Head Quarters 23d Novemb. 1780

Sir

I impart to you in confidence that I intend to execute an enterprise tomorrow night upon Staten Island, for which reason I am desirous of cutting off all intercourse with the enemy upon the East side of the

river. You will therefore tomorrow at Retreat beating set a guard upon any Boats which may be at the Slot or Niack, and not suffer any to go out on any pretence whatever. Towards evening you will send a small party down to the Closter landings and if they find any Boats there you will give orders to have them scutled in such manner that they cannot be immediately used, but to prevent a possibility of it, the party may remain there till towards day light but are not to make fires or discover themselves and then return to your post. I depend upon the punctual observation of this order, and that you will keep the motive a secret.

Acknowledge the Rect of this, that I may be sure you have got it.  
Capt. Alden

In the spring of 1781 the blockhouse was put under the direct supervision of Captain John Pray, of the newly organized "Water Guard," who had his headquarters at Cornelison's Point in Nyack, but visited the blockhouse almost every day.<sup>28</sup> He was only twenty-eight at the time, but he carried on his extensive responsibilities with vigor and efficiency. He watched and patrolled the river and supervised the various posts, as well as collecting information for General Washington, who was seldom far from the Hudson.

During most of the Revolution, Dobbs Ferry on the east side of the Hudson was too near the dreaded outlaw-infested Neutral Ground to be useful to the Americans, but in early July, 1781, General Washington and his French ally, General Rochambeau, camped there in force. The New-York Historical Society has a beautiful map showing encampments, batteries, artillery parks, etc., in this camp on the east side of the river. Strangely enough, it shows "Dobs Ferry" across the river.

Probably the nadir of Washington's relations with the blockhouse was reached on August 18, 1781, when he left

for Yorktown — and victory — and wrote to General Heath:<sup>29</sup> “The Redoubt on the East Side of Dobbs Ferry is to be dismantled (sic) and demolished . . . The Block House on the other side to be maintained or evacuated and Destroyed as you shall think proper. The Water Guards, and other precautions to prevent a surprize, you will be pleased to take into your consideration.”

General Heath, left in charge, did not destroy the blockhouse. It seems to have had a quiet winter, but undoubtedly it was still useful in protecting the ferry way and watching the river. On April 10th, 1782, for example, Captain Pray was able<sup>30</sup> to warn the General of a British raiding party which came up the river past the blockhouse in three boats, so that detachments of the army could be mobilized to protect strategic points upriver.

Finally, on May 10th, 1782, Washington, back in Newburgh, hoping for word of peace, but uncertain that the British were not preparing another attack, assigned a more important role to the blockhouse. He ordered<sup>31</sup> that all communications with the enemy under flags of truce should be carried out exclusively through the post at Dobbs Ferry. Negotiations, protests, exchanges of prisoners — all went for the time being through Captain Pray. This was in addition to Pray's intelligence work.

From this time until the end of the war in the spring of 1783, Washington referred often to his two concerns with relation to Dobbs Ferry — the gathering of intelligence by Captain Pray, Captain Lawrence, and later Lieutenant Colonel Smith, and his insistence that all communication should go through Dobbs Ferry, and that no boat should pass up the Hudson without notifying the officer of that post.

Early in June the intercourse with the enemy proved to be so demanding that Washington<sup>32</sup> sent Colonel John Greaton to relieve the blockhouse with his regiment, and to serve as Commissary of Prisoners, leaving Captain Pray in charge of the Water Guard. Captain Pray apparently showed

resentment at the change because Washington<sup>33</sup> send him a kind but admonitory letter, which seems to have closed the matter. Captain Pray then threw himself with energy into his duties of collecting intelligence and patrolling the river.

An indication of Washington's attitude toward the post appears in his communication of October 25th, 1782, to Colonel Samuel Blatchley Webb, when he ordered:<sup>34</sup> “One compleat Company to mount at the Post at Dobbs Ferry, One Company to be divided between the Block Houses of Ver Planck's and Stoney Point's, and two Companies to be kept constantly on your front on this side the Croton . . . P.S. Although there will not be a field officers Command at Dobbs Ferry, yet the importance of the Post renders it essential, that the Major whose Battalion is on duty, should be there to superintend the general business of that Post.”

Soon after this, in November 1782, Captain Lawrence, just twenty-three years old, after a very active service with the New York State Militia and Sappers and Miners, not only fighting but carrying out missions for Washington's intelligence, was forced by ill health to resign.<sup>35</sup>

That same month, Lieutenant Colonel William Stephens Smith was assigned<sup>36</sup> to the post at Dobbs Ferry, as Commissary of Prisoners. He stayed until the end of the war in March 1783. Smith was only twenty-seven at the time, but he had shown bravery and initiative in battle, and had served as aide to Generals Sullivan and Washington. He plunged into his new duties with enthusiasm, and after reconnoitering the British fortifications on Manhattan, proposed<sup>37</sup> an ambitious plan for attacking Fort Washington. When General Washington did not accept the plan, Smith wrote on December 12th, 1782:<sup>38</sup>

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letters dated the 6th & 9th inst. & observe that the Plan is laid aside, whilst it existed, my Spirits were kept afloat & I scarcely allow'd my self to reflect

(further than was necessary for the moment) upon my Position, but with it every spur to my ambition is vanish'd and I have nothing to engage my attention excepting flagg Duty, the general Imbecility of the Post, and the slippery Glacis upon which my Reputation as an officer at present rests.

I feel myself confident in asserting, that with the smallness of this Garrison & the present situation of the work, it must fall should the Enemy ever attempt it, with firmness, its abatis being old and dry may with ease be beat down with a Common Handspike the work its self is a curious Compound of Salient angles, consequently not capable of supporting each other, and the men defending it against the Charge of a small Column must be destroyed by the cover'd fire from the neighboring wood, the Parapet of the Citidel not being fence high & the distance from the wood small musquett shot. From the general opinion that seems to prevail respecting the post, I imagine a similar report has never been made. I therefore wish your Excellency would question the field officers of the Light Infantry, who have commanded here respecting this Report, as I am convinced my assertion must derive force from their Answers.

I wish to be inform'd (if proper) how long I may expect to remain here, I will then endeavor to sink myself to my station for the term & submitting with my usual Resignation to your will, be persuaded that you are the only competent Judge of the necessity of it.

I am with great Respect

Your Excellency's most obliged

Humble Serv't

W. S. Smith Lt. Col.

Washington's reply to this petulant letter on Dec. 16, 1782 was mild:<sup>90</sup>

... "I have myself seen the Work at Dobbs Ferry but cannot agree with you as to its indefensible State it never was calculated to withstand a serious attack but has always been supposed equal to any small party that might attempt it by a Coup de Main; and as that Post is assigned for the only communication we have with the Enemy it appears if not the only at least the best place where the duties of your Office can be performed." ...

Later, in January 1783, Lieutenant Colonel Smith returned from a visit to General Washington's headquarters at Newburgh apparently mollified, for he wrote:<sup>40</sup> "After breaking thro' numberless snow banks and encountering the Difficulties attendant on those who move in unbeaten Paths, I arrived here yesterday. The Post is in its usual order . . . I entertain the most grateful sense of the polite treatment I received at Headquarters."

Within the next month those at the blockhouse were involved in a sequel to the André affair.<sup>41</sup> John Paulding, one of the captors of André, was captured himself on January 25th by the British after joining a raid on the house of Colonel James DeLancey, the chief of the "cowboys,"\* where they missed capturing DeLancey but stole everything movable in the house. Washington, although not approving "the excursions of these people," felt that he could not leave Paulding to the notorious British prisons, and he arranged through Lieutenant Colonel Smith at Dobbs Ferry to exchange four British prisoners for Paulding and three other "skinnners." Smith's trip with the prisoners<sup>42</sup> and a flag to New York by way of Paulus Hook was probably more or

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\*The "Neutral Ground" in Westchester was infested by outlaws who preyed on the inhabitants. Those sympathizing with the British were called "cowboys," and the Americans were called "skinnners."



less routine for a Commissary of Prisoners, except for the notoriety of one prisoner.

Colonel Smith afterward married the daughter of John and Abigail Adams, and his wife's parents considered him something of a trial.<sup>48</sup> Among other occupations, he was at one time Surveyor of Customs in New York. His career was finally ruined by involvement in an attempt at revolution in Venezuela, and he ended his life as a hard-working farmer in Lebanon, New York.<sup>49</sup>

The Water Guard was disbanded in June 1783. Captain Pray eventually settled in New York City, and became an officer in the United States Customs.<sup>50</sup> Later, when the organization of Revolutionary army officers called the Cincinnati was founded, Captain Pray, Captain Lawrence, and Colonel Smith were all members; and they may have had an opportunity to discuss old times at Dobbs Ferry.

The blockhouse gradually fell into ruin. Captain Jonathan Lawrence Jr.'s son, Herbert Lawrence, who was 83 in 1876, said to Winthrop Gilman at that time, "As to the Blockhouse, I can offer you little information. When built or taken down I cannot say. When a small boy I passed into two rooms then remaining."<sup>51</sup>

Many of the smaller stones of the blockhouse have been used for a building nearby; but the ruin does not look so very different from that which Winthrop Gilman photographed in 1904. The pile of rocks in the quiet wood is all that is left to remind one of the blockhouse which was the center of so much activity — hundreds of soldiers camping in the woods, scavenging for food, cutting trees, digging, building, marching up and down the zig-zag road to the ferry, while officers negotiated, planned, intrigued, complained, or, like Captain Pray, engaged in strenuous and satisfying activity; and the British ships sailed ominously up and down the river.

## Notes for Washington's Forgotten Blockhouse

(Note: Where two editions are listed, the reference is to the most recent one.)

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12. Martin, 194; Fitzpatrick, XIX, 364.
13. Fitzpatrick, XIX, 360.
14. Jackson, 22.
15. Fitzpatrick, XIX, 364.
16. **British Intelligence Reports**, New York Public Library, quoted by Leiby, 267.
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26. Koke, 46, 47: Pennypacker, M.: **General Washington's Spies**. Brooklyn, Long Island Historical Society, 1939, 126.
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28. Budke, 18.
29. Fitzpatrick, XXIII, 22.
30. Budke, 34.
31. Fitzpatrick, XXIV, 239.
32. Ibid, 317, 339.
33. Budke, 37.
34. Fitzpatrick, XXV, 295.
35. **National Archives**. Letters from J. Lawrence, Jr., Aug. 28, 1782.
36. Budke, 38.
37. Ibid, 39.

38. Ibid, 40.
39. Fitzpatrick, XXV, 438.
40. Budke, 41.
41. Pennypacker, M.: 164-167.
42. Budke, 43.
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## Appendix Number 15

### Was the Big House Used as a Military Headquarters During the Revolution?

It was common usage for officers to take over the more important houses near an encampment to serve as headquarters; and the **Big House** was one of the few large houses in the neighborhood of Tappan, and right next to the important blockhouse which was being constructed. It belonged, moreover, to a family sympathetic to the Patriot cause. Even though Jonathan Lawrence, the "Elder Senior," himself had died in 1777, and his wife three years earlier, there were no doubt members of the family still living there who would have welcomed either General Washington or General Greene.

A contemporary suggestion that this might have happened is found in the Journal of Adjutant General Major Baurmeister of the Hessian Forces. On page 559 he says: "On the 5th of May, 1783 an adjutant was sent to General Washington, who was at Lawrence's house, across from

Dobbs Ferry, and the following forenoon General Carleton and his suite crossed to the opposite bank, where General Washington's carriage was waiting to take his guests to his quarters." (The twentieth century editor said in a footnote that he could not identify Mr. Lawrence.)

Unfortunately Major Baurmeister's credibility is somewhat tarnished by his earlier inaccurate account of André's capture; and his judgment can be questioned, when one reads on page 281 "It is likely that this vexatious war will terminate by making America probably the most desolate country in the world."

Another reference to the subject is the statement in Cole's **History of Rockland County**, 1884, page 64, referring to the army encampment in Tappan early in August, 1780: "General Greene, who was in command in the absence of Washington, had his headquarters at the old stone house formerly belonging to Mr. Man\* at present owned by Wm. Peet, Esq., and occupied by E. N. Taft, Esq. This is situated near the old road leading from Dobbs Ferry (Snedens Landing) to what is now Orangeburg." In an attempt to check this, inquiries have been made to the editors of the **Nathanael Greene Papers**; but they have so far found no reference to his having had his headquarters in the **Big House**.

Adrian Leiby in his well-documented "**Revolutionary War in the Hackensack Valley**" raised hopes that proof could finally be found with his statement on page 268 that "Washington had planned to use the Dobbs Ferry Blockhouse in connection with his planned attack on New York, and he sometimes made his headquarters there." His answer to an inquiry as to references, however, was "My recollection is that Joe Hyde in the old Lawrence house said that it was a tradition in his family (which included the Lawrences) that Washington had stayed there and there is every reason to suppose that he did, since he was in the area a good deal."

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\*The Big House never belonged to the Mann family.

In the thirty-nine volumes of the **Writings of George Washington**, and in the day-to-day accounts of his whereabouts no reference has been found to his stay in Dobbs Ferry (on the west bank) although he says in a letter that he has visited the blockhouse.

A tradition that crops up so often, however, raises hopes that some day it may be authenticated.

## Appendix Number 16

### The Remarkable Rise and Fall of Shelburne, Nova Scotia

(Information for this story, long sought, was found in Mary Archibald's booklet, "**Shelburne, Home of the Loyalists**")

Shelburne, where Samuel and William Sneden made their home after the Revolution, has a remarkable history. So many Loyalists were settled there in the 1780's that, with more than twelve thousand inhabitants, it became the fourth largest city on the North American continent, after New York, Boston, and Philadelphia.

Thousands of Loyalists had gathered in New York City before the end of the Revolution, and began looking into the possibilities for starting again in a new place. A large number of them fixed on Port Roseway\*, as Shelburne was then called, attracted by its deep harbor, safe distance from the sea, and potential for fishery. They asked permission of the governor of Nova Scotia to settle there.

The governor was glad to welcome them, because many of the New Englanders who had settled Nova Scotia before

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\*The name "Port Roseway" came from the French name, "Port Rasoir," which probably referred to the razor-sharp rocks on the coastline and in the bottom of the harbor.

the Revolution, taking the places of the banished Acadians, turned out to be sympathetic with the Americans, and he wanted the Loyalists as a counterbalance.

By April 1783 the first three thousand "Port Roseway Associates" sailed for Nova Scotia in a fleet consisting of thirteen square-rigged vessels, several sloops and schooners, and two ships of war. The town was rechristened Shelburne after Lord Shelburne, British Secretary of State for the colonies. Streets were laid out, land allotted and the refugees settled in, with more arriving each month. There were three newspapers, two saw-mills, many inns and stores, fifteen silversmiths, a fine volunteer fire department, and a large army post. About fifty ships made Shelburne their home port.

One large group was composed of fifteen hundred black Loyalists from the Pioneer Regiment. In 1792, not too happy with their situation,, six hundred of them moved on to settle in Sierra Leone in Africa; but many descendants of the black Loyalists are still in Shelburne.

The settlement faced many difficulties, some connected with its rapid growth and distance from the outside world, others universal — drought, disease, fires. Like Snedens Landing, it experienced a brief prosperity in the shipping boom of the early nineteenth century, but that too faded with the coming of steam. At one time the population dwindled to 300.

Now Shelburne is a quiet charming town of about twenty-five hundred people, and there are no Snedens left.

## **Appendix Number 17**

### **Solid Facts About the Snedens**

Studies of wills in the County Court House and land transactions in the County Clerk's office help to provide

certain solid facts on which to build a picture of the Landing in the early days.

On the death of the first Robert Sneden, Mollie's husband, in about 1756, a deed in New City (the mysterious 1765 deed to Calhoun, 1-407) says that he left no will, so all his land — 120 acres — came to Abraham. Abraham, it goes on, "out of love and affection" divided it into ten parts, one for his mother Mollie and one for each child. Mollie being the woman she was, probably controlled more than her tenth; but the Revolution came along, and all the land ended up in the hands of John Sneden Senior,, "The Patriot". He reimbursed some (Budke Collection #34), perhaps all of the others, however, and must have welcomed Mollie and Dennis on their return after the Revolution.

In 1818 John Sneden Senior, when he was eighty, sold a half acre to the south of the Landing road to his son Robert for \$1,200 (E-135),, and eighteen acres to the north of the road to John Junior, "Boss" Sneden for \$4,000.00 (D-462). This disproportion in price might be explained if Robert's land included the fine stone house which Loring McMillen says was built in about 1800, and if there was no "Cheer Hall" or other important building left on the northern side. Mr. McMillen says that the stone house on the north was probably built about 1820; and sure enough, the 1822 map shows John Sneden's house to the north and Robert's to the south.

Since "Boss" Sneden is known to have had a house and shipyard on Sparkill Creek, in what is now Piermont, and also an interest in the ferry at Snedens, his house at Snedens may have been built as a ferry house, with one of his sons put in charge. Family tradition says that John's son, Lawrence, was living there in 1826 when his daughter Mary was born (Bailey). After a few years he moved across the road and his brother William moved in.

The younger Robert seems to have found the other stone house too much for him. In 1830 he sold it to Henry Storms

(G-375), perhaps a family connection through Henry's wife Polly Lawrence, and moved to another of his properties, just a little up the hill. In 1834, after "Boss" Sneden's death, Henry Storms sold the southern stone house to Lawrence (I-244), who lived there and ran the ferry as "Captain Larry" Sneden until near his death in 1871.

William Sneden lived in the northern stone house until he too died in 1871. His sons John Newton and Horton also lived there, and each served his turn as ferryman.

When John Sr. died in 1822, apparently without leaving a will, Nicholas Gesner and George Mann divided the remaining 100-odd acres among eight of his children. (George Washington Sneden, the ninth, had moved to New Jersey and relinquished his share.) The quarry south of the landing road was portioned out in eight strips of about 50 feet each. Each of the heirs received one of these and a wide strip running east and west from the river across the narrow level land near the river and part-way up the cliff, besides other less regular plots elsewhere. The surveyor James Demarest made a map in 1822 showing the division. This was apparently not a final settlement — land was continually being bought and sold among the Snedens and a few of their friends.

"Boss" Sneden died in 1829, leaving his property to his wife; and on Jan. 17, 1837, Nicholas Gesner wrote: "Phebe Sneden here today, is bringing under consideration in what manner to settle Boss Sneden's estate so as to comfortably and fully secure her own living and let the heirs (the children) enjoy the property, being all in her hands during her widowhood". Gesner's rather complicated solution was for Boss Sneden's widow and her three sons, who were his executors, to sell the property he left to Jonathan Lawrence (the fourth), Gesner's son-in-law (Books D & E). Then Jonathan Lawrence and his wife Sarah resold the lots to their heirs, and one or two other interested buyers. Richard Elsworth's map of March 1837 shows this subdivision. The purpose of this

maneuver may have been to get around the inheritance taxes. It is interesting that the lot which included the stone house sold for the same amount as all the others.

## Appendix Number 18

### Early Roads

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, most traffic in the vicinity was by water. The only way Merritts and Corbetts could reach the back country was by rough Indian trails up and over the Palisades or by water to the Slote (Piermont) and up the Sparkill.

By 1735, however, when the Ludlows had built a house (the **Big House**) at the top of the cliff, and the ferry was running from Dobbs Ferry, there must have been a wagon road up the hill and on down the other side, southwards to Old Closter Road\* in the Hackensack Valley. Indeed, Charles Clinton, in his survey of 1738,, writes of "The Road that goes down to Corbets old house." (B. C. 29, p. 39)

Early road records are hidden away in fragile volumes in the depths of the town archives, and almost unreadable; but Howard Durie, in his **Relics** article, gives a description of what was probably the first official road in the settlement. So far as he can decipher it, it reads:

Beginning at the north side of Barent Nagel and so running northerly as the Road still goes to the house of Henry Ludlow, and so along the south side of the house, so still running as the Road goes down to Robert Sneden, so at the south side of the house and on down

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\*The road along the valley has been called variously Piermont Road, Old Closter Road, County Road, or N.J. Route 501.

to the Landing place free for all persons for to load and unload, thence running at the east side of Robert Sneden's house along the stone fence northerly to the south marsh; thence easterly to (. . . . .); thence northerly as the (. . . .) goes to the Creek, so running at the west side of Henry Ludlow's house and so northerly as the path goes along the (horse shed?); thence northerly as the Road (. . . .) to the hill and then with the best (convenience?) down the hill to the Mill Bridge.

(Book A, Orangetown Records, April 31,, 1745).

Interpreted, this seems to indicate a road running from the Nagle's property on the present Piermont Road up along Rockleigh and Closter Road to the **Big House**, then down the hill to the south of Robert Sneden's (rented) house (**Cheer Hall**), then between that house and the river, and north along the river to the Slote (Piermont).

The road down the hill was said by Mr. Gilman to have run straight down the ravine just south of the Hagen house (opposite the church). The Verplanck map of 1745 seems to show this; and some of Erskine's Revolutionary War maps show the road straight and others zig-zag. This is what one would expect if it is true that it was changed during the Revolution to accomodate the many heavy wagons needed for military maneuvers.

As for the condition of the roads at the top of the cliff, Mr. Gilman writes of one (Local History, page 32:)

"At this time (1861 to 1870, or so) the road from the Flag Pole to the Presbyterian church ran through, what is now, the premises of the "Big House", and in spring was very muddy, being narrow, and not well open to the sun. It was changed about the year 1871, or soon after the purchase by W. S. Gilman, Sr. of the Mann farm, January 14, 1871. At this time a lively

Frog-Pond existed just west of the Mann house in the spring months, and the land west of the present park was so miry that cattle used to be in danger of their lives at times. The idea of making a road from the Mann house to the Gesner Corner (site of the old Methodist Church) [and the present Post Office] was the subject of much merriment with old Mr. David Y. Mann of whom the farm was purchased as just stated. But "some things can be done as well as others!"

(In the 1940's, when streams of trucks were turning from Route 9W down Oak Tree Road to build Camp Shanks, the road reverted for a time to its original profound mud.)

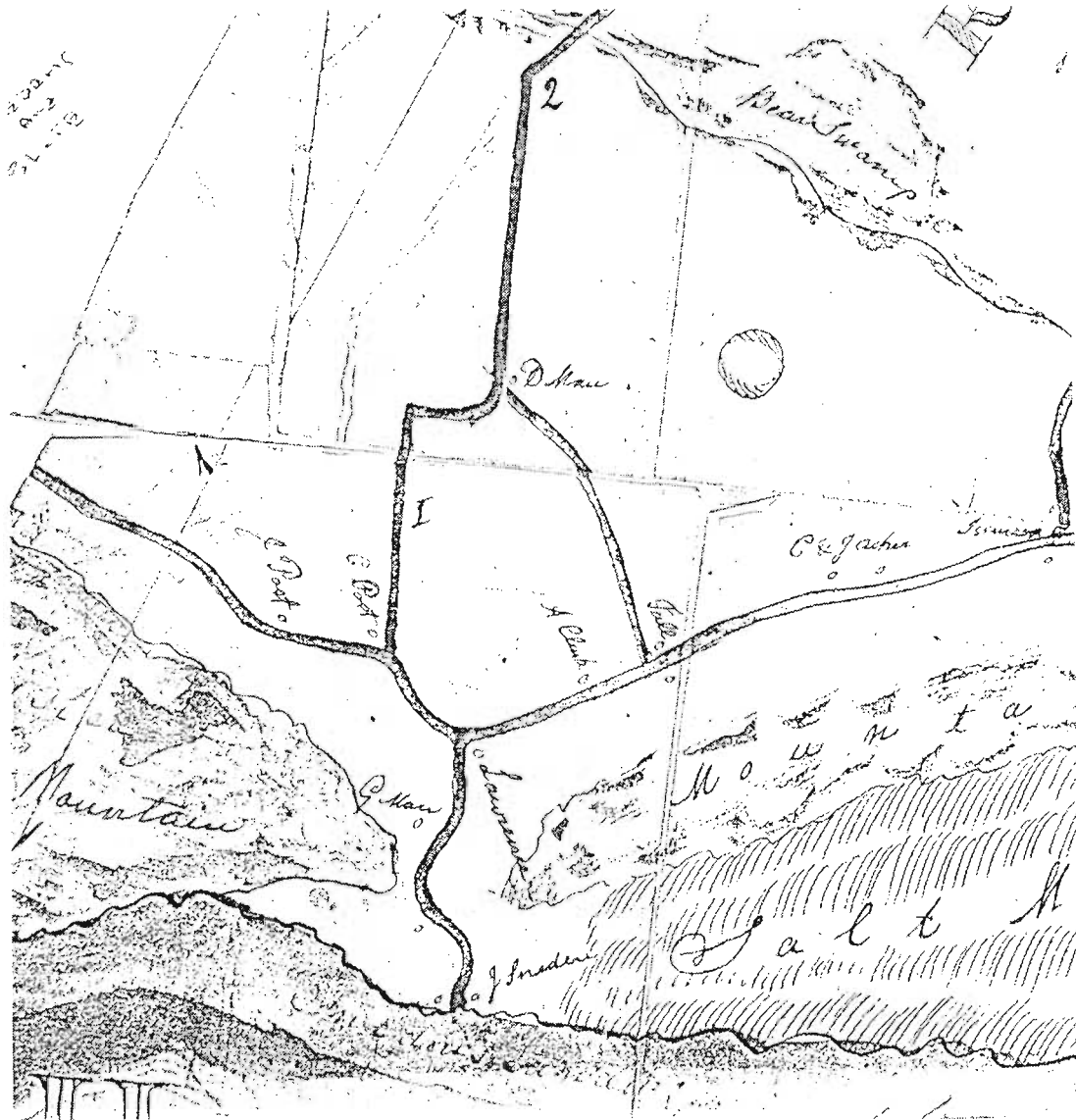
According to early maps there was no road southward along the top of the Palisades until after the middle of the nineteenth century, when the precursor of Route 9W was built, and called Lockhart Avenue, Sylvan Boulevard, or, as Davis' 1876 **Atlas** called it, Bolevars. Cole's **History of Rockland County**, page 225, however, mentions an earlier road: "The old military road from the ferry below the village through the dells of the Palisades to Fort Lee, New Jersey, may still be traced in the old wood road, east of the point where the Boulevard crosses the state line."

The road from Rockland north to the Slote (Piermont), on the other hand, was one of the earliest, being shown on the Verplanck map of 1745. It was called the Rockland Road.

John Scott has pointed out that O'Connor's map of 1854 calls Closter Road, and its continuation, Rockland Road, "King's Road." This may indicate that it was sometimes an alternative to the traditional "King's Highway" in the valley.

There was no real road straight west to Tappan until the 1820's or 1830's. Villagers used to walk or ride horseback to Tappan by the "cow path", which began at Rockland





**An 1824 map based on Tunis Smith's survey of 1806 for Peter Taulman showing the "cow path" south of the Tallman house on Rockland Road, and the new Tappan Road either just built or about to be built. (It doesn't show on Haring's 1822 map.)**

Road just south of the Tallman house and crossed the Sparkill on a log. On Feb. 9, 1836 Nicholas Gesner wrote of the "new road" to Tappan, (later to be called Oak Tree Road after the big oak tree where the road crossed Route 340).

After this road was built directly westward, Moses Taylor and a number of other local Jersey inhabitants requested, according to McMahon, page 51, "an easier wagon route to New York State and the steamboat landings at Piermont and Snedens Landing on the Hudson River. Their proposal was for an extension of Piermont Road to run north from the old easterly bend that climbed the Palisades, now known as Rockleigh Road . . . It ran almost due north in a straight line to the New York boundary, for a distance of some 4163 feet. It was to be opened August 1, 1859 . . . It was first known as Carterette Road (Road Returns, G15, 28, 49, Hackensack)." Obviously it must have been arranged that New York would build the extension to connect with Oak Tree Road. Besides the new name, which is sometimes spelled Cartaret, the Beers 1891 map supplies the name of Central Road; and to these must be added the names already given to the southern highway of which it is an extension, and Route 340, the New York Route number. No wonder there is sometimes confusion about its identity.

Every able-bodied male citizen worked on the roads in the nineteenth century. As Carl Nordstrom says of Nicholas Gesner (page 49): "The 70-year-old patriarch was still obligated for his allotted two days a year of physical labor repairing the country roads. Some years he worked himself, along with his neighbors; in other years he lent his wagon in lieu of his physical presence." As a matter of fact, in October, 1849, when he was eighty-four years old, Gesner noted that he had put in a day's work on the road, with John Willsey, Roadmaster.

On page 66, Nordstrom describes the situation in Nyack in the early nineteenth century, which must have been very like that in Rockland.

"The wagon road nearest the Nyack neighborhood was the King's Highway. It ran along the west slope of the Palisades from Tappan north to Haverstraw, hugging the sidehills, meandering here and there to avoid the quaggy swamps that lay in the path of a more direct route. To get to this road a Nyack resident had to climb some two miles across the Palisades, making his way along the private lanes the various farmers had cleared for their own convenience. Such lanes were the primary means of interfarm communication in the country.

"No special right of way existed, and passage along the trails was obstructed from time to time by the gates which each farmer constructed to mark the boundaries of his farm . . . As these farm-to-farm lanes had never been designed for heavy loads and were generally ill kept, if kept at all, the only practical means of transport for the traveler was on horseback or by foot. In the spring, when the heavy rains washed the farmers' lanes off the sides of the hills, and the lanes closed by the lowland bogs disappeared altogether, travel was especially difficult."

## **Appendix Number 19**

### **The Malodorous Subject of Bone Factories**

No one cared to write about bone factories. Besides the one at the waterfall at Palisades shown on the O'Connor map of 1854, there were at least two shown on mid-nineteenth century maps of the Palisades in New Jersey; and yet reference librarians and local historians can supply no information about them.

Luckily Judge Bradley, who wrote a history of Alpine,

N.J., found an old-timer who explained them to him (page 43): "It seems that every day a number of horses would die in Manhattan. The carcasses would be dragged to the waterfront and brought up on barges. Every part was valuable and nothing went to waste. The hides were skinned off and sent to a tannery. The hooves were used to make glue. The bones were ground up for fertilizer. Only the terrible odors remained, and that's why bone factories were located far from human habitation."

Across the river, in Hastings-on-Hudson, there was a bone factory as early as the 1830's which was better documented chiefly because it took a legal process to get rid of it. Karolyn Wrightson found a report in the Hastings Land Records which she describes in an article (unpublished) on the Hastings waterfront:

"One of the first factories in Hastings (about 1834) was Scheckler's bone factory, which tainted the air with fumes of sulphur. Scheckler also operated a distillery for 'cheap spirits'. In 1849 a group of eleven leading citizens of Hastings banded together for what must have been one of the Hudson Valley's earliest cases of protest against pollution . . . [They] had Maurice Scheckler indicted by the Westchester County Grand Jury 'for erecting and maintaining a nuisance for the distilling of bones of beasts for making ammonia salts and liquid ammonia'."

The process had been carried on in New York City as late as 1856, in the waste land which was to be the site of Central Park. The Park's Commission found it "a pestilential spot where miasmatic odors taint every breath of air." According to the A.I.A. Guide to New York City, page 150,

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\*The Columbia Encyclopedia says, in part: "Ammonia reacts with sulphuric acid to form ammonium sulphate, which is used in fertilizer . . . Originally it was obtained by the destructive distillation of the bones and hoofs of animals."

in the process of cleaning it up the Commission removed bone-boiling works and swill mills, which, with the many hogs, were the sources of the worst odors.

Even in 1860 a "glue maker" is listed in Wilson's Business Directory, who manufactured "glue, curled hair, raw hide whips, sand, and emery paper." But already the Department of Public Health was decreeing that there must be "Two docks set apart for boats removing bones, dead animals, etc., from the city. Contractor must furnish carts . . . for transportation and removing dead animals, bones, etc. Contractor must have boats, scows, barges, or vessels for receiving dead horses, etc. Contractor shall remove such dead horses, etc., at least once a day to some suitable place beyond the limits of the city."

More light on the process from the Code of Health Ordinances adopted in 1866: "That no person shall boil any offal, swill, bones, or fat in the built-up portions of any city or village (save in ordinary cooking); nor shall the business of bone crushing, bone boiling, bone grinding, bone burning, shell burning, fat burning, nor the skimming (or making glue from) any dead animals . . . be hereafter established within any of the said cities or villages." Another report of the Board of Health says that dead animals must be taken "not less than fifteen miles by water carriage from the City of Brooklyn."

The representation of an actual bone factory can be seen near the waterfall in the artist, Sneden's, painting of Snedens Landing in 1858. It is a long low building with a high chimney.

## **Appendix Number 20**

### **Was Samuel Sneden of Closter Road the Grandson of Mollie Sneden?**

The Samuel Sneden of Closter Road who married Elizabeth Concklin and inherited with her from her father Jacob

Concklin the house on Closter Road now called Jacob Concklin's or Samuel Sneden's House was buried in the Palisades Cemetery in 1863, aged 88. He was born in 1775 and would have been nine when Mollie Sneden's son, Samuel wrote her from Shelburne, Nova Scotia, on May 23, 1784, mentioning "Little Sam, shoemaker," and giving news of the birth of a daughter, to be called Mary, after her mother and grandmother. No other Samuel Sneden of that age has yet been found in genealogical records. Howard Durie has pointed out that there is a Mary Sneden listed in the Orangetown Census for 1800 as between the ages of 26 and 45, with two unmarried sons and one daughter. This might well have been the widow of Samuel Sr., come back from Nova Scotia to live near her married son, Samuel Jr. If so the daughter was Mary, born in 1784, and one of the sons, Benjamin, as is noted later. No record has been found of a Mary Sneden of that age in the other branch.

Doubts about this were raised by Elizabeth Fox Finck, Mildred Post Rippey, and Adeline Denike Van Blarcom, all of whom grew up in Palisades, and said that it has always been "known" in the village that there was no connection between the two branches of Snedens. If "Little Sam" came back before 1795, his grandmother Mollie and Uncle Dennis were alive, although perhaps living in New York; and his Uncle John and a whole family of cousins were living at the Landing. There was undoubtedly some antagonism, however, between the Tory and Patriot branches, which may have kept John's family from acknowledging their cousins.

A precedent for the possible ignorance of family connection is shown in Mr. Gilman's statement that there was no relationship between the two Dobbs families in the village — Captain Henry "Hen" Dobbs, and the nine children of Amos Dobbs. Actually, Mrs. Lane, in her genealogy of the Dobbs Ferry Dobbs, points out that they were all great-grandchildren of William Dobbs, the first ferryman. The

two Lawrence families in the village also were descended from seventeenth century brothers.

## Appendix Number 21

### Small Items of Information about Lawrence and Sneden's Shipyard in New York, chiefly from Gesner's Diary

In 1901 Robert K. Sneden, of another branch of the family\* wrote to Mr. Gilman: (Gilman: **Local History**, page 105A): "The only Samuel Sneden that I know was Samuel the shipbuilder of Greenpoint. Met him about 1860 at his sail loft, Water Street, N.Y. Some of his family must live in Williamsburgh yet." (Greenpoint and Williamsburgh are close together in Brooklyn.)

Long before this, on May 21, 1836, Nicholas Gesner wrote: "Jonathan Lawrence [the fourth, Gesner's son-in-law] building a steamboat at New York." In September of that year he noted twice that he was "drawing ship-timber for Jonathan Lawrence." In November he mentioned the name of the steamboat, the "Warren." This was one of the more famous steamboats on the river, and was financed by a stock company based in Rockland County, which according to Green's **History** gave the contract to "Sneden and Lawrence."

Two years later, on Nov. 5, 1838, Nicholas Gesner wrote: "Jacob Gesner moved today from Sneden's for Williamsburgh, L.I. He is there engaged in working at building vessels." On Jan. 18, 1841, "Jonathan Lawrence to New York, to work." On Mar. 5, 1842, "Jacob Gesner in N.Y. working in Lawrence & Sneden's ship-yard." On March 13, 1842, Jonathan Lawrence moves from 673 Water St., N.Y. to Nicholas Gesner's house, bag and baggage. On Sept. 23,

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\*See Appendix Number 40.

1842,, "Benj. Sneden (ship carpenter, N.Y. City), died this morning . . . His daughter, Sally Ann in N.Y. . . . His brother Sam<sup>l</sup> and relatives here — not one went to his funeral." This must have been a brother of the Samuel Sneden who had married Elizabeth Concklin — Samuel J. Sneden, Boss Sneden's son, had no brother Benjamin, so far as is known. In January, 1843, Gesner wrote of staying with Samuel Sneden, Benjamin Sneden's son, in New York on the business of his father's will, and mentioned another Benjamin Sneden, and a Mr. Williams, father of Samuel Sneden's wife. Of this latter Samuel Sneden, Gesner had said earlier, on July 5, 1836: "Samuel Sneden, son of Benjamin Sneden, and his cousin, Sam Myers, son of John Myers, came at my house." Also, Mr. Durie says he has a record of the younger Benjamin's marriage to Sarah White, on May 29, 1828. The final clue about the ship-yard is the entry of Jan. 6, 1843, when "Wm. Gesner takes tool-chest to N.Y. intending to work in Herbert Lawrence's yard."

## Appendix Number 22

### More Information About Wood as Fuel and "Pitching Places"

One indication of the early importance of the lumber business is the fact that two of the eighteenth century letters about Snedens of which the originals are still available refer to shipping wood from the dock there.

The first is sent by "John Gisner to Dennis Sneden, New York" on Nov. 1, 1784. The original is in possession of the William Sloats.

Sir. I am under the necessity to ask a favour of you with which if you can possibly comply: to be the

evening Tuesday at the Dock here where I will then have a lading of cord wood. And if you can not be there at that time to return a line with the bearer hereof or by word. & how many cord your Pettiauger carries, in so doing you'll greatly oblige your friend.

John Gisner

P.S. Remember me to the old woman  
& tell her I & my family are well.

(This must have been the father of Nicholas Gesner. And of course the "old woman" was Mollie Sneden.)

The other is sent by Thomas Ludlow (probably Mary Corbett Ludlow's son who was baptized in Tappan in 1742) from New York, 21 Sept., 1799, to Mr. Jacob Post at Rockland. Mildred Post Rippey has the original, which was discovered in her papers by her granddaughter Muna Imady.

Dear Sir; I have received your favor of the 19th Instant. I can only say the last wood that Hagen brought down E. Bloomer was with him and then we agreed he and his brother was to get the wood At the Dock and Hagen promised to bring It down. if you see Hagen before I do, you Will please to tell him I expect he will Bring the wood whenever its at the dock. We are all well & I hope soone to be with you for a day or two I am with Respect

Your Hbl. Servant  
Thos. Ludlow

Judge Bradley, in his **History of Alpine** gives some interesting information about the Pitching Places in New Jersey. On page 44 he says:

"Perhaps, in gazing upward along the far-flung cliffs, you may have noticed a steep ravine hard by

some jutting prominence. Pitching Places is what the river people used to call them. Years ago before the mansions came to the cliff top\*, the uplands were owned by wealthy city families for the sole purpose of providing firewood to heat their urban homes. Men with axes and ox teams cut and hauled logs to the precipice, where they were tossed over the edge to be picked up by waiting schooners below. There were several such pitching places in the Alpine area, including Jeffrey's (above Huyler's Landing), DePuyster's (just north of Alpine Landing), Courtland-Jay's at Clinton Point, Mott's, Ruckman's (at Ruckman Road ending) and High Tom's (above Undercliff Beach)."

Joan Geismar in her thesis about Skunk Hollow writes that it is likely that the pitching places "were sites conducive to construction of wood slides to guide the cut wood or logs to deep sections of the river below." As authority she cites Stephen Collins: **The Biotic Communities of the Greenbrook Sanctuary**. The **Wade and Croome Panorama of the Hudson in 1846** shows a "slide" south of the New York-New Jersey border.

By 1901, apparently, the local supply of wood was exhausted, and it was being imported from Georgia\*\*, if Captain Drinkwater's diary was representative. He left Brunswick, Ga. on Oct. 3, 1901 on his schooner **Lizzie**

**Chadwick** with a load of hard pine for New York. He discharged the deck cargo in New York City, and the account by his editor, Julianna FreeHand, goes on:

"The schooner was then towed to Piermont, a little town on the western bank of the Hudson, twenty-six miles above New York. Sumner had brought along a stevedore's crew from the city to unload the schooner. Rafts transported the lumber from the **Lizzie Chadwick** to shore.

'Sunday October 27, 1901 Overcast to Fair light N.E. wind On board all day. Had an avalanche of Callers on Board. Old & young Male & Female. Some very pretty Girls in this place & some would stop a clock. 3 rafts taken from ship 2 left along side Stevedore's crew went to town last night  
10 days in Port'

"Shipowners expected coasting captains to move the cargoes along as well as they sailed the ships. By the next day Sumner, already unimpressed by the stevedore's crew, was utterly disgusted by the haphazard progress they had made in unloading. These workers that he had imported to Piermont were behaving as though they were sailors fresh off the ship in a foreign port.\* The **Lizzie Chadwick** was making so little

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\*Bradley tells elsewhere in his history (page 141-on) about the well-to-do New Yorkers who built their houses along the top of the Palisades in "Millionaires' Row" in Alpine at about the same time — in the 1870's — that the Agnews, Parks and Gilman's were building in Palisades.

\*\*This was perhaps not such a turnaround as it seems. Collins, on page 20 of his study of Greenbrook Sanctuary, shows that trees on the Palisades have always been predominantly oak; and Miss Coates in **Story of the Ferry**, page 13, writes of sea captains in the early nineteenth century "voyaging to Virginia for pine wood and oysters."

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\*Night life in Piermont was pretty lively in those days. Leonard Cooke, now one of the most distinguished members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Zion in Sparkill, tells of the adventures of his grandfather, when he went to a bar in Piermont, looking for a good fight. When things seemed to have warmed up, he would say in a loud clear voice: "Did you ever see anything worse than a dirty Irishman?", and he would have his fight. He had a hard head and was a fast runner, so he would butt a few angry Irishmen, and then head for home in Sparkill, outdistancing all the befuddled pursuit.



progress in discharging that although Sumner had not worked as a stevedore since 1886 on the **Grace Cushing**, he and the cook volunteered to help.

'Monday, October 28, 1901 There =44 Bar=30.50 Wea=overcast 9.15 . . . discharging with 3 men in stevedore's gang & cook. Terrible work going on. The very worst I have ever seen in all my Experience.

11.15 Went to work for Stevedore as he couldn't get men & some of them Drunk.

Forgot to mail letter to Alice. Wrote a few lines in the Eve. Worked 5 hours for Stevedore.

11 days in Port'

"When the stevedore's men had recovered enough to return to work, Sumner left the schooner and bicycled along the Hudson to nearby Nyack. He first saw the Hudson River Valley in the fall of 1879. The young sailor had been impressed enough to pen a rare compliment, 'enjoyed beautiful scenery.' Now, twenty-two years later, it was fall again."

## Appendix Number 23

### Abraham Jacob Post's Gift to his Children of Land in "Post Row"\*

(Land given to seven of Abraham Jacob Post's eight children, on which they built houses, except that James already had a house north of the "timothy meadow," so he

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\*These are all shown on a map in Beers' 1891 Atlas. Jane Post VanSciver is not mentioned, but the land across the road is labeled VanSciver, so her land must have been merged with that.

sold his. Jacob Abraham, the oldest son, had a house on Closter Road, south of the Ebmeyers' present house.)

1 Julia Adeline, married William Clark Denike, had first house, just west of Old School, built in 1857 by Daniel Auryanson (later Adriance).

(According to Mr. Gilman in "**Retrospect**" the above was the only house in the row built before 1861, when he came to the village. The rest were built not long after 1864.)

2. Henry Post. Married Frances Sneden, both died young. Andrew Post had it afterwards; now Andrew's daughter, Mildred Post Rippey, lives there.

3. John Willsey Post, married Martha Ferdon. Miss Edna Stansbury, his granddaughter, lived there for years.

4. Lot owned by James Post, who sold it to the Rikers, who built on it.

5. Jefferson S. Post, married Mary Jones. His son was Andrew Post, who married James Post's daughter, Eliza ("Lida")\*

6. Jane Elizabeth, who married Jacob Van Sciver.

7. William Frank Post, who married Josephine Clark.

## Appendix Number 24

### List of the Twenty Men Who Went from Palisades, N.Y. to Fight For the Preservation of the Union in the Civil War of 1861-1867

"Prepared by Capt. Henry Dobbs, whose great-grandfather,

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\*Mildred Post Rippey explains how her mother came to be called "Lida." She had been named after her two grandmothers, Eliza, and disliked the name. On her first day of school, the teacher asked her name, and she whispered "Eliza." The teacher thought she said "Lida" and she became Lida from that day on. She was a woman of character and of many intellectual interests.

'Siah (Josiah) Fowler\* served in the War of the Revolution, 1776. Capt. Dobbs' father was Frederick Dobbs, whose father was Jerry Dobbs of Piermont, whose wife was Jane Fowler, daughter of the above 'Siah Fowler, of Westchester County, New York. Jane Fowler came over to Tappan from Dobbs Ferry to witness the execution of John André.

Palisades, N.Y., April 16, 1906  
(Gilman's **Local History**, page 137)

Name	Age at time of Enlistment	At present time
John Voris	19	
John N. Sneden	26	living
John Parcel	20	
Michael Grovestine	29	
Benjamin Hopper	19	
Ambrose Smith	20	
John W. Garison	21	
Zebulon Garison	19	living
Henry Dobbs	26	living
Warren Dobbs	17	living
Hamton W. Martin	28	living
William Martin	26	living
Samuel Whitehead	25	
Richard Smith	22	
Gilbret (sic) Smith	20	
Abnor (sic) Conklin	46	
Henry Poast (sic)	18	

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\*Mrs. Lane does not agree with Mr. Gilman about the first name of Jane Fowler's father. See "The Two Dobbs Families of Snedens Landing."

Andrew Woolsey	29	living
George Lawrence, Jr.	26	living
David Powles	22	living

Given Apr. 16, 1906 by Veteran Henry Dobbs, Sr."

(Cole's **History of Rockland County**, page 78-on, lists some of these and gives more details.)

## Appendix Number 25

### Charlie Lundstrom Tells Norman Baron and the Rockland Project School about Skunk Hollow — 1969 (Extracts from Interview) Tape transcribed by Mrs. Margaret Cheifetz

**Int.** We found an old stone foundation and farmland up where the church was, called Skunk Hollow. Well, we would just like you to tell us what it was like there — anything you can tell us.

**Charlie:** Well, that was some years back. My grandfather had a farm and my grandmother used to have a homemade laundry in the kitchen there. It was a red kitchen like that barn there and she had three or four colored women workin' for her, ya know. And she used to have a homemade laundry, ya know. She used to fix coats for children like these here, and she used to cook like crullers, bread and uh, and I mean she used to make soups, and she did everything like that, my grandmother did, Grandpop, grandfather, he used to farm. And, uh, I was a small boy about five years old. And my grandfather used to raise corn, potatoes and he used to raise cattle, everything you know, almost anything. And he used to raise cattle and he used to raise pigs, chickens, turkeys, ducks and everything else. It was a beauti-

ful farm there, there was no question about it. So grandpa used to make his money that way. He used to sell his stuff to the people. Then when winter come we used to kill so many pigs and he used to sell the pork to the people up there. Didn't have to go to the store, and you didn't even have to go to the store to get butter or cheese or anything. You could go to my grandmother, and she had it, see. Well, everybody up there was workin' with my grandmother and helpin' my mother all year round.

**Int.** What was your grandfather's name?

**Charlie:** His name was Abraham A. Haring. My grandmother's name was Guster and she had four children and one girl. The oldest boy was named John, and the next boy was named George, and the next boy was named Roland, and the next girl was my mother, Margaret, Margaret Haring. So she married a man named Mr. Lundstrom, see, and that's my father, see. So I had another brother, small brother, younger than me yet. So he was 25 years old and he was a cop up in Alpine, New Jersey, there. He used to take care of the roads up there and people, bad people, ya know. He, he got killed up there. A motorcycle accident. Some car run into him, crushed him ya know, killed him. So that left me with no brother, ya know what I mean.

Now let me get to this Skunk Holla business. Now Skunk Holla, always had a good name down there. Now I'll tell you why Skunk Holla came to happen. Why it has the name. My grandfather was the one that named it. And why? Because there was a spring down there. Now remember this kids. There's a spring down there. If I had time I would go up with you and show you many things up there in the mountains. So there was a spring there, and that's the only spring that everyone could get water from. So the mountain was so dry up there, the only place we had is Skunk Holla Spring to get the water, ya know, to take

home and cook and drink and everything. So, grandpops was goin' down to the spring one day with a horse and wagon and ya know with a great big tank on it to get water. And so grandpa when he's goin' down came home and saw grandma, and I was a kid, he said: "What you think I seen down there, Guster?" He said, "I seen a skunk." Why," she said, "that would be a good name — Skunk Holla Ha!" So it was grandpop that named the place Skunk Holla, ya see.

So then we had a minister — colored minister. He come from across the river there. And he used to come up, and he had a church up on top the hill there. And all the white people like youse and colored boys, ya know, and everybody went to the church up there. But they was all good to one another. They never fought, they never fight, they never say anything bad about one or the other. They were nice, nice people.

Then one Sunday I was in church and something scared the death out of me. I almost fell down and was trying to get under the benches away from this guy I seen. I said, "Sure hope I have nothin' to do with that fellow." So when I kinda look and see and went down right away to see Mr. Nixon (that was the minister's name), Nixon, Art Nixon. I said, "Hey!" I said. He said, "What's the matter? That fellow won't hurt you." He was the Chief Indian from up there, you know. I got friendly with him so he took me up to his place. So I went there. It was a mountain. It was a big rock cave, you know, in the mountain. And on it was a rock and he lived in there. And he had a table made in there. Well, I said to him, I said, "Oddwad" (Oddwad was his name). He was a Chief Indian — had feathers all over his head and he had bear skin on him. He had no clothes like you or me. He had bear skin on him and he had a pair of shoes he'd made out of skin, you know. And he was a great fellow — told me he was all alone, you know. So I asked what he was living off. "Oh," he said, "Charlie," he says — he told me he killed rabbits and he killed animals

around there, birds and things, around there with his arrow, you know. And he told me that's what he's living on, just meat — that's enough. So I said, "You ever have a piece of bread?" He says, "I know what bread is." I asked him "Ya ever have any potatoes?" He says, "No." I asked him about other stuff. He says, "No, I don't even know what you're talkin' about." He says to me. So what I did — I went home to grandma and I told grandma I'd been playin' with this Indian, you know. So I took him up some bread, took some cooked potatoes up to him, and I took him some cooked eggs up there to him. Oh, I took a lot of stuff up to him. And all I could hear him say was "thank you, Charles, and thank you God, I've got a friend."

Now here's another one I'll tell ya about. There was beautiful colored people lived right across the street from my grandmother. They had a farm too — colored people. They were very nice, and I'm going to give you their names. The father's name was Nicholas Oliver and the wife was named Sara Jane Oliver. That was the one lived next to my grandmother's place. And every time my birthday come on the 15th day of April, she always send me a cake.

So anyway, the next colored people were nice. Lived up a hill like. See how high that tree is there? Well, they were up there and we down here. Their name was Johnny Oblenis and Anna Oblenis. They were colored people too and they were really good church members. And they had a farm a small farm about 2 or 3 acres. They never went to the store. Never went to the store for anything. They had their own meat. They used to raise wheat and corn and all kind of . . . they used to bottle up and put in the cellar for winter. And the spring come they's plant a mighty big garden, ya know, with corn — everything in it. And everything growed wonderful. They had lots of good stuff and it was a wonderful place.

So now, this other party I'm tryin' to tell you about now used to live down about four miles down that way and their name was Anna Miles and Georgia Miles. That was their

name. And they used to do farming down there too. Down in there.

**Int.** Is that in New Jersey now?

**Charlie:** Yeah that was in New Jersey, yeah. All in New Jersey. Everything was in New Jersey. Not in New York State at all. There was only one man from New York State and his name was Henry Johnson. He used to come up and help the minister in the church, he used to do the carpenter work there. He used to be a great man for cutting trees down. You know, he didn't have no saw mill or anything, and he used to cut the trees down, you know, and make logs for building, these great big heavy logs; these square logs you see and he used to adze it out with a nail, an ax. We had a lot of fun. He used to make lumber and everything. And he used to make these fancy chairs.

We had two families of Jackson Whites up there. They was the meanest ones we had there. Once Dr. Morris got rid of them then we was all right. But outside of there they were trouble makers. Oh they did awful things to us. They did it even to their own color. Colored persons you see. If you're half white and Jackson White you called em Jackson Whites you see.

So then, here's another thing I'm wanta tell you bout. The minister come down from the church — the colored minister — he's a rally nice man — good looking fellow — got a long black suit on, a long black gown like some of our ministers wear here and like the Catholic priests, you know — wear em long — the black gowns they got on em. So he come down and he said to my grandmother, he said, "Well, he said, tomorrow grandma, we're going to have a meeting up there, he said, and I'd like to know what you gonna give us to help us — stuff to make a little money for the church, you know, like they do — yeah, they still do that. So anyway grandma give em stuff, everybody give em stuff. And when the Sunday come, beautiful cakes there, chocolate

layers, lemon layers, all kinds of cakes. They had mashed potatoes, they had soup, they had everything, ha, ha, ha. I never saw so much stuff in my life.

When I was a boy, working you know how much a week I got? I worked nine hours a day. A dollar a half a day. I got nine dollars a week. That's all I got. But remember one thing children, I used to save five dollars and have four dollars and still have fifty or seventy-five cents in my pocket before the week was up. How's that? That was living, huh? You've said it. Boy I could buy a loaf of bread for four cents a loaf; a quart of milk for three cents; a big bag of potatoes, five or ten cents. Cabbage, two cents a head; tomatoes, a big bushel basket, you know what a bushel basket is?, fifty cents for the whole bunch; sweet corn, for a dollar oh you had a truck load. Sweet corn, peas, cherries, currants, blackberries, anything, I don't care what it was, all. Oh everything was beautiful.

Now here's another part I want to tell you about this. This place I hope there comes some time I have time this summer, some time to come down around July or something maybe I'll go with you. I'll take you. This place is a cliff, and you can see the Hudson River. You can see the other side, the Yonkers, side; the Dobbs Ferry side? And you see this big boats go up and down the Hudson there. Well up on top that hill they call Indian Point. There's a point runs out towards the river. The point is like I put my hand out. Here's a mountain in the back of me, and I'm sitting on a rock. There's a point goes out like that and you look out under it and you think the thing is broke off, it don't go down ya know? When I used to go in there, I used to see quite a lot of people setting out on that rock, just setting out there with field glasses and cameras and everything else, setting out there. And this is true now. This is not a lie. So I walked in and there's a crack in the rock, you know, a crack in the rock. You know a crack in the rock about that much. There's a long crack in the rock. Now watch

me. I'll show you this is true, I tell ya. I seen a man there with a camera, and he was taking pictures, and then he always put his hand down like this, and I said to myself, "What in the world God are you after? Can't you see what you're doing? Can't you see what you're doing?" I said to myself. And I would say that for almost a half hour. Well I walked down. "Well, I said, you people having a good time?" He said, "Yeah." "But you ain't gonna have a good time much longer if you keep doing the thing I see." He said, "What you see?" I said, "Take and move your hand over this way, quick." And he looked at me — ohhhh — boy oh boy. You ought to see them all get out of there. You know what I showed them? I showed them about 20 copperheads with the heads all sticking out of the crack of the rock. Yes and there they was sitting and boy you're dead cause they're full of poison.

The road goes this way. Now listen me carefully. You go down the hill, there's a viaduct there, a bridge.

**Int.** Is that the old road or the new road?

**Charlie:** Old road. Over the old road what they call the thruway. Over the pass. Now as soon as you come to that bridge. You can park your car in there anyways. You go this way up the hill. See up through there. You see a little park in there. An old road. I don't think it's blocked up yet. You go up there and the first thing you will strike is an old cemetery. With old stones on it . . . buried there. And then there's another cemetery up in there. You see a stone wall, a big wide stone wall around the edge of this property. Well you go over the stone wall then you go up about 50 feet and you find the little cemetery. Now listen to me carefully and you'll find it. So you leave that cemetery and you see the road goes down this way and you go round a little bit a bend. There's a creek over there, a little pond on your left side coming down or going towards South ya

know. Then you come to the church foundation. Then you turn around go down this way and you see four or five foundations up against the bank down there. One party owned the first house on a good piece of land there. His name Sisco. And I want to tell you something. His name is Harry Sisco. His mother and father. If you want to talk with anybody about the mountain a little bit more than I do, you go see Harry Sisco. He lived there. Go see Harry Sisco and tell him I sent you there. Do that and he will tell you about his father and mother, his uncles and aunts and everybody else. Maybe he'll mention to you something what I know and he knows it as well as I do cause he lived there.

**Int.** Is Adele Sisco related to him?

**Charlie:** Yeah.

## Appendix Number 26

### The Story of How an 'Agnew' Got Its Name

Anne Austin's account of the Woolsey sisters\* who were among the first women nurses in our country, gives a lively picture of their experiences in the Civil War on the hospital ship **Daniel Webster**. This was fitted out by the newly organized Sanitary Commission, whose efficient General Secretary was Frederick Law Olmsted, who later designed Central Park. One of the members of the commission was Dr. Cornelius Rea Agnew, then Surgeon General of New York. He, Mr. Olmsted, other doctors, and several young lady nurses were sent on the ship to help in the Peninsular campaign in

Virginia in 1862. They found themselves overwhelmed with casualties, and proved their value immediately. Miss Austin describes the origin of "Agnews" on page 65:

"As a matter of fact, dirt and stains had become very serious problems. Katherine [Wormeley, a fellow nurse] observed to Georgy [Woolsey] one day that she did not know what she would do if she had to put on a certain dress one more time. Georgy, always suggesting the wildest things in the calmest way, said 'I know what I will do. Dr. Agnew has some flannel shirts; he is going back to New York and cannot want them. I shall get him to give me one.' Accordingly Santa Georgeanna appeared in an easy graceful costume, looking especially feminine. After experiencing this comfort they expected to dread going back to civilization if they had to part with their 'Agnews'."

The term found its way into Boatner's **Civil War Dictionary** as: "Agnew: The attire worn by Sanitary Commission nurses in the Peninsular Campaign. This consisted of a man's shirt, the original having been borrowed from a Dr. Agnew, with the collar open, sleeves rolled up, and shirt tail out, worn over a full skirt less the hoops."

## Appendix Number 27

### The Sad Accounts of W. S. Gilman's Sr.'s Land Company, 1871-1887

MEMORANDUM ONLY  
For Mr. W. C. Denike's Use

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\*One curious coincidence is that the distinguished Woolsey family, like the Agnews and the Parks, had seven girls and one boy.



				Approx. contents	Prices asked in 1874	Price in June 1887 subject to change without notice
1.	Lot 7	Block D.		1/4 acres for	\$ 2,500.-	\$ 312.50
2.	" 8	" "		2-4/10 " "	2,600.-	500.-
3.	" 9	" "		1-1/14 " "	3,500.-	625.-
4.	" 10	" "		1-1/14 " "	2,500.-	500.-
5.	" 1	" E.		3/10 " "	1,000.-	280.-
6.	" 2	" "		4/10 " "	1,000.-	300.-
7.	" 3	" "		4/10 " "	1,000.-	300.-
8.	" 4	" "		1/2 " "	1,000.-	325.-
9.	" 5	" "		1/2 " "	1,000.-	350.-
10.	" 6	" "		1-6/10 " "	4,000.-	1,000.-
11.	Plat H.	about		56/100 " "	3,000.-	975.-
12.	" F.	" "		4/10 " "	1,500.-	250.-
13.	Lot 5	Block I.		2-1/4 " "	2,600.-	812.50
14.	" 7	" "		3-3/4 " "	6,250.-	1,171.87
15.	" 2	" J.		1-1/4 " "	4,500.-	1,100.-
16.	" 3	" "		1-1/8 " "	2,750.-	625.-
17.	" 4	" "		1-1/4 " "	3,750.-	750.-
18.	Block B.	10.032 ±		" "	In 1871 cost 5,589.82	2,580.-
19.	Plat. 1.	25.45 ±		" "	9,798.25	4,072.-
20.	" 3.	12.06 ± about		" "	8,683.20	1,929.60
21.	" 7.	21.50		" "	12,362.50	4,730.-
22.	" 8.	5.22 ±		" "	1,967.94	522.-
					\$ 82,850.00	\$ 24,010.00

Right reserved to refuse any offers received  
N.Y. June 1st, 1887

## Appendix Number 28

### Tales of a Grandfather by Mildred Post Rippey

During my childhood I lived next door to my grandparents. Grandfather James Post was the Postmaster — when the Democrats were in power — owned a general store\*, an ice business and a livery stable. On Saturdays he

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\*Among the many other things which Mr. Post sold in his store were postcards made from pictures of village buildings and scenes (photographed perhaps by Mr. Gilman's photographer, Harvey

delivered groceries in the neighborhood and many times I went with him, especially in the winter months. What fun it was to glide over the hard-packed snowy roads! Sometimes the sleigh upset in a snow bank, spilling the groceries and making Grandpa very angry. It seemed hilarious to me but I tried not to laugh.

Grandpa bought a splendid team of work horses from the French restaurateur, Henri Mouquin, who lived in our town in the summer. The horses were named Henri and Louis, after the Mouquin brothers. Grandpa called them Heinie and Louie. They were a very impressive pair as they made their trips around the countryside hauling the ice wagon.

One unforgettable day my uncle Holstead (Holly) Post delivered ice to the home of Austin Abbott who lived in a mysterious Charles Addams' house on top of the Palisades overlooking the Hudson (now a cellar hole in Tallman Park). While uncle was drinking a beer in the Abbotts' kitchen Heinie and Louie ran away and toppled over the cliff, tangled in the harness. Mrs. Abbott sent word back to Grandfather's stable and he came — at his leisure — with a block and tackle to pull poor Heinie and Louie back into position. Soon they were again on their familiar run and my uncle no longer took time out for a beer in the Abbotts' kitchen. (I lived to regale my schoolmates with this tale, embellishing it shamelessly.)

A giant of a man, Grandpa was slow of speech and slow of action. He was late in planting his garden, late in cutting the ice, and never met the people at the train station on time. He knew he could not compete with Grandma's endless chatter, so he became a man of few words, interspersed with many sighs and ho-hums. I was never sure that he knew my name. He always called me "girlie." As he grew

Concklin of Closter, who was also the butcher who delivered meat to Palisades, according to Mildred Post Rippey). These postcards were reproduced, strangely enough, by a firm in Germany.

older he shuffled his huge bulk around cautiously, saying, "It won't take much to set me adrift." One day he was "set adrift" and fell against the parlor door, cracking it from end to end. I thought my uncle would have to raise him with the block and tackle that Grandpa had used to raise Heinie and Louie.

My father took me down to the ice pond one Sunday to watch the men harvesting the ice. He did not let me get close to the action because I might hear the "bad words" that were exchanged by the men. The whole procedure fascinated me: the horses going out on the ice, pulling the cutting machine, the grooves being made in the ice, and the men with long poles pushing the cakes up on a trestle to drop into the storage house where they were packed in sawdust.

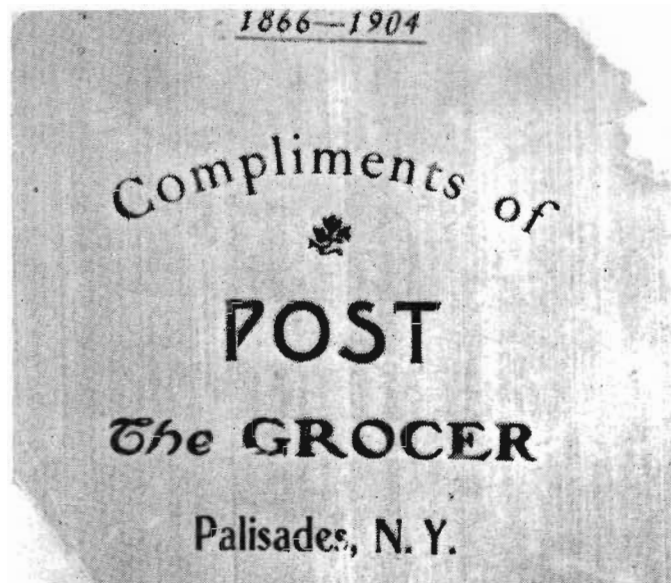
I especially recall the day when Grandpa, full of "pure apple cider," fell headfirst into the ice pond! I rushed home to see how Grandpa was feeling and a very grim Grandma met me at the door, saying, "You can't see Grandpa, he's sick," although I could hear him singing lustily in the background, "Three black crows sat on a tree, O Billy McGee, McGaw . . ."

Grandpa lived to be a very old man, sitting in his chair by the window like a great stone statue. Just before he died he started to talk, as if someone had released a spring in him, and while we stood by his bedside he seemed to relive his entire life.

Someone I love has said, "What a slender thread is the present moment upon which we balance our lives. A fraction of a second, a twinkling of an eye and the present has become the past."

I often wonder what Grandpa would have to say about our present world — sans ice ponds, sans general stores, sans livery stables — probably "ho-hum."

So be it



Trading stamps and lots with tea  
May bring notoriety.  
Should the owner soon decamp,  
Those who do the trading, stamp.  
Here, pure goods, tried once, used twice,  
No free gifts or "fake" device,  
Just the best in Groceries nice  
At the lowest market price.

We sell National Biscuit Co. goods



The James Posts' house to the north of the central triangle. This was built, probably, not long before 1866, when the store began.  
This photograph of Mr. and Mrs. Post and their family was probably made around the turn of the century.

## Mail Service

MAILS ARRIVE		MAILS DEPART
7.30 A. M.		6.30 A. M.
1.10 P. M.	•	12 M.
5.30 P. M.	•	6 P. M.

## Palisades Library

opens

Tuesday and Friday, from 7 P. M.  
to 9.30 P. M.

Wednesday and Saturday, 3 P. M.  
to 6 P. M.

## Appendix Number 29

### The History of Dudley's Grove

by Mary Allison

From the Hastings Historical Society Newsletter, Jan., 1982

[This is a description of the picnic grove across the river from Forest Grove, about a mile south of Snedens Landing. There might have been another at the waterfall if Mrs. Lawrence had not been alert to the danger and bought the land first, although it is hard to see how they could have accomodated many people on the narrow strip of land available.]

"Long before the **Day Liner** began to convey hundreds of people up to Bear Mountain for a day's outing, New Yorkers were fond of taking excursions to picnic spots on both banks of the lower Hudson River. During the middle

## CHURCH SERVICES

### Palisades M. E. Church

Preaching 10.45 A. M., 7.30 P. M. Sunday.

• •

### Palisades Presbyterian Church

Preaching 10.30 A. M., 7.45 P. M. Christian Endeavor 7.15.

Prayer Meeting, Wednesday 7.45.

Sunday School, 11.45 A. M.

• •

## COMMUNICATION

Post's Livery meets all trains on the Northern Railroad of New Jersey at Sparkill or Tappan station.

Coate's Ferry meets all trains on the New York Central Railroad at Dobb's Ferry across Hudson.

of the 19th century, one of the more popular such attractions was Dudley's Grove at the southern end of Hastings.

"The Dudley family once owned 500 feet of waterfront property that straddled the Yonkers-Hastings line. The excursion boats docked at the roughly 200 foot long piece of land that projects into the river where the Palisades Boat Club now stands. (This, incidentally, is reputed to be the second oldest boat club in the United States.) Old maps show that the Dudleys owned considerable acreage in this area of Hastings as well as in northern Yonkers.

"During the summer months, church groups, fraternal societies, social clubs, and similar organizations in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and New Jersey chartered passenger barges to take their members and their families for outings on the Hudson. Also called safety barges, these vessels were built like steamboats with two decks, wide promenades, and ample seating from which to enjoy the scenery, but they had no

engines. They were towed by smallish steamboats. As the name indicates, these barges were thought to be much safer than steamboats whose boilers frequently exploded. The barges were attached to a steamboat by a kind of movable rigging that reduced the noise and vibrations of the towing boat, something women appreciated.

"The barges usually landed at the Grove around noon-time, and passengers went ashore to stroll along the trails, eat and/or drink at the pavilion near the river, play on the swings, or rent rowboats. A song of the year, "Up at Dudley's Grove," celebrated this pleasure spot in music and verse. The refrain went:

She played the concertina as through  
the woods we'd rove;  
I was all alone with Kitty McGlynn  
up at Dudley's Grove.

"The Grove must have been a beautiful place for it attracted Jasper F. Cropsey many times. This noted painter of the Hudson River, who lived in Hastings at the end of his life, frequently sketched and painted views of and from Dudley's Grove from 1855 on.

"The Hastings Historical Society is fortunate to possess the account book of Orville Dewey Dudley for the years 1868-71. It indicates that he built an ice house during the late fall and winter of 1868-9 and was purchasing china, glasses, and chairs for the dining room the following summer. Mr. Dudley succinctly recorded his account of each day's event, the people who came, and the barges that brought them. The following sampling of his entries presents an idea of life at Dudley's Grove in 1870 and 1871.

#### **"1870**

June 8th \$25 Crescent Social Club Williamsburg . . . a very nice Party. Escty good plenty of Money small eaters but want it nice. Bar \$30.60 Dinners \$45.00 Boats \$1.00.

June 21st State St. Congregational Church \$25 Very nice party drink pretty freely have music and plenty of fun. Dinners \$3.35 Bar \$27 Landed at 2 and left at 4:30 ock.

Aug 4 Hiram Lodge. J. C. Sands Myers & Sleepy Hollow. Landed at 1 and left at 4 Plenty of money and very free with it 3500 people easey. 20 minits after they landed it rained very hard and drove them on the boats had to close the bare on account of wind and rain Dining 113 Bar 182.

#### **"1872**

July 22 Thistle Bond Charles Thread factory of Newark mite be rough enough if they all turned out only Half came on the Sleepy all Orange men and Scotch men the meanest people in the world. No decent looking ladies.

Aug 14 The Largest Escursion that Ever left New York Fully 4500 People Left NY at 11 ock and landed in the Grove at 3 ock left the Grove at 5 very orderly and liberal Party of Gentlemen and Ladies."

## **Appendix Number 30**

### **Vanished Landscapes**

#### **What Oak Tree Road was Like when Constance Lieval Used to Walk to School Seventy Years Ago**

In 1913 Oak Tree Road was not yet paved and the old white oak for which the street was eventually named still stood at the N. East corner of Carteret Road or Central Avenue. The tree was enormous and must have had a spread of nearly 100 feet. Enormous branches reached out more than the width of the road. At its base was a clear, cold spring which fed a small brook that led under Carteret Road, along Oak Tree Road, turned north at the Dalio property line and finally drained into the Sparkill Creek. Watercress

grew all along its course, with peppermint higher on the bank.

On the northwest corner stood the Oak Tree Hotel, which had degenerated into a saloon when I knew it — a quiet place owned by a man named Flanagan. At one time it was advertised as a pleasant country refuge from New York City with good train service on the Erie Railroad.

As you proceeded up the hill the road was heavily wooded on both sides. On the south the rocky woods were covered with clouds of Dutchman's Breeches, vast quantities of red and yellow Columbine on plants about eighteen inches high. At the base of the mountain were more springs with watercress, blue hepatica in quantity among the oak leaves, and a low, bright pink flower that grew only in cracks of the rocks. (I never have known what these flowers were — they were about an inch in diameter, vivid in color, a true pink, with stems about eight inches long, grew only where their roots were jammed in crevices and bloomed in May. The blooms covered the plants.)

At the top of the hill on the right was "Valley View," Mr. Bailey's place, with its extensive lawns and formal flower beds behind the low stone wall. On the left was George Mann's house and farm. He kept a cow and chickens that were cared for by his wife, the former Gretchen Wahrenberger. The land upon which "Valley View" and John Perry's house were built was part of the original Mann farm which was sold by David Mann, who thereupon announced that he would never again do a day's work for anyone and he never did and neither did his son. (This is hearsay, of course.)

Still on the left side of the road was John Perry's new brick house, then the Marder's house, a great gloomy, dark grey wooden place cut off from the southern sun by evergreens and well shaded on the north side. I believe that the Marder house was occupied in the 1880's by a family named King.

Pete DeLise was the Marder's gardener, lived on the place and started the first Boy Scout troop in Palisades.

Near the road was a small pond, probably dug out by a former owner of the property, which was fed by a spring surrounded by a low brick wall topped with slate. In the spring, which was rather a murky green, were enormous tabholes. The pond had water-lillies, some ducks, and a rowboat in it and was a favorite stopping place for home-bound school children. The ducks in this pond were not very bright — they laid their eggs in the water. The eggs sank and didn't come up until they were quite old. There was at least one rotten egg fight on the way to school, which caused a certain amount of trouble with the teacher and our parents.

Across the road, on the south side there was a field, beginning to be overgrown, where later Mr. Nessler kept a small herd of fallow deer. In a damp corner of this field grew much wild ginger, partridge berry, yellow violets and a thicket of aromatic black birch.

(Constance Lieval Price, June 1980)

### **Anna Gilman Hill's Description of Another Beautiful Spot**

On the road to Sparkill just where the road to Tallman Park branches to the right was the large place owned by a Mr. Carmen and built by a Mr. Brewster in 1840. That section was called Valentine's Hill. A large duck pond was between the large Victorian house and the road. This emptied out down the hill towards the village in a series of really lovely pools and little cascades. They were truly woodsy and natural. Tall ferns bent over them, wildwood flowers bloomed about them, and to me they were my first glimpse of deep wood brooks. A well-made inconspicuous iron fence enclosed the grounds but not near enough the brook to take away its fairy-like charm. You went slowly by to get your fill of beauty. Then around the fish pond were planted those old fashioned double daffodils that are the very first



to bloom in March. I saw a few of their descendants there last spring. 9-W had to obliterate the whole brook.

## Appendix Number 31

### Landmarks on Old Maps and Deeds

Of the landmarks referred to in old documents and deeds, Mr. Gilman has marked the sites of nearly all on the Serviss map of 1874.

**The Letter L Tree.** This is the oldest landmark, made to mark the beginning of the Lockhart patent in 1685. It was a letter "L" accompanied by "three notches and a crosse" carved on a white oak tree, of which Mr. Gilman thought he might have seen a piece of root two hundred years later. He describes it in **The Story of the Ferry**, pages 75-6, and says that a surveyor's mark was set in its place in 1874. It is shown on the Verplanck map of 1745, the 1822 map in the Palisades Library, and the Serviss map of 1874. It is now on Lamont property.

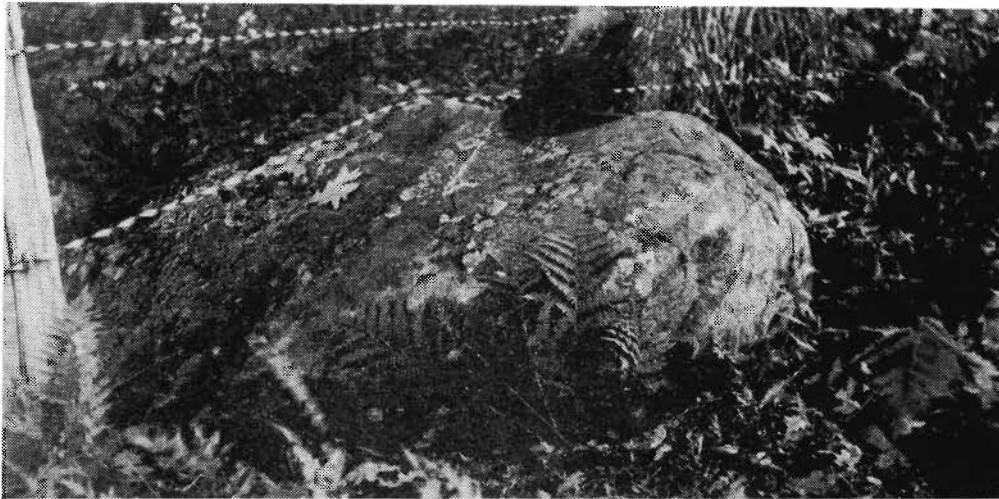
**The Two Saplings**, a short distance to the north and west of the Letter L Tree, are shown on the 1822 map, and at least their site is marked on the Serviss map by Mr. Gilman. They are mentioned in **The Story of the Ferry**, page 73 and in **Local History**, page 50, where Mr. Gilman says that an old survey (made, he thought, during the Revolutionary War) "gives the distance in chains and links from Mrs. Agnew's south-west corner (where in the last (18th) century were the Two Saplings) to the 'oak stump under the Block House,' i.e., 49 chains and 33 links (3255.78 feet)."

**The Letter L Rock** stood until the 1950's on a spot on the south side of Oak Tree Road to what is now the east side of the Palisades Interstate Parkway. As the parkway came through, Cleveland Holt, who lived in the Conklin

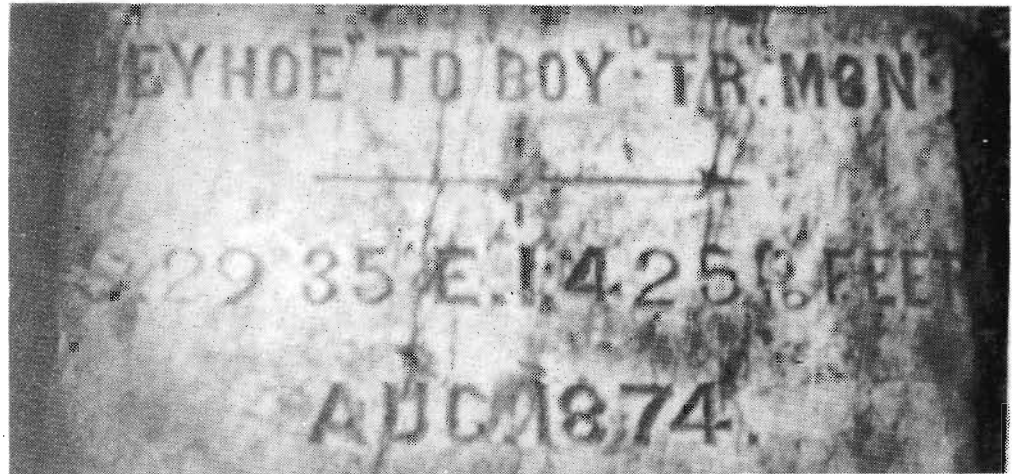
house on 9W, raised the question of its preservation, and William Yuda, the surveyor, thought he had arranged for it to be left intact; but one day in 1955 it was bulldozed out, and no trace remained. The "L" probably stood for Ludlow or Lawrence. When Mr. Gilman photographed it around 1900 the letter L could be plainly seen, cut into the rock. Later, in the 1950's, just before it was obliterated, there was a crack filled with cement, with the L marked on that. It was too far to the west to be shown on the older maps; but the Serviss map has a notation that the Letter L Rock is "1500 feet west of the schoolhouse."

**Kisanor's Corner** does not appear on any of the old maps mentioned, but Mr. Gilman says on page 30 of the **Local History** "Kisanors Corner" (same as Gesner's Corner) which was eastward from the house of the late Capt. J. G. Willsey under the woods and at the edge of the hill. This Kissaner's, Kisanor's, Gesner's Corner is frequently mentioned in deeds of land in the vicinity of Capt. Willsey's house." It is mentioned in the deed from Henry Ludlow to Jonathan Hazard of 1752 (in Accordion file, abstract of title, number 4), and in Jonathan Hazard's deed to Jonathan Lawrence of 1759 (in the Historical Committee's safe).

**The Boylstead Tree and the Heyhoe Marker.** The Boylstead Tree was mentioned in the deed from the Corbets to Jonathan Lawrence, the Elder Senior, dated 1749, as one of the points of reference. No one seemed to know what it meant until Loring McMillen explained in 1983. A "Bilsted Tree" is a sweet gum tree. Haring's 1822 map shows a "gum wood stump" east of the **Big House** and a little east of north of the **Mann House**. On the Serviss map of 1874 the Boylstead tree is shown, roughly in the same position; and also its distance and bearing from the "Heyhoe Marker" are calculated. This marker was in front of W. S. Gilman Sr.'s house, **Heyhoe**, on the west side of Rockland Road (the predecessor of Route 9W). When the Tennessee Oil Company put its gas line through in 1954, the Heyhoe Marker



**The Letter L Rock in Mr. Gilman's time, showing the Letter L and the derby hat.**



**The Heyhoe Monument, with its reference to the Boylstead Tree.  
The direction shown here: S29° 35'E, 1425 3/10 feet, Aug. 1874,  
does not agree with that listed on the Serviss map of that year: S37°  
32' E, 1425.3.**

was moved a few feet to the south, and a yellow disk was substituted for it in its former location.

## Appendix Number 32

### Answered and Unanswered Questions

One of the greatest satisfactions for anyone interested in history is to find the answer to a question which has been asked for years and not answered.

With the help of others I have had this satisfaction at least five times, which I will describe; but there are still many puzzles, and we may be sure the answers are somewhere.

#### The Station Rock

Our first discovery was the "Station Rock" on the boundary between New York and New Jersey. It is in the Palisades Interstate Park, but park authorities knew nothing about it. Claire Tholl, editor of **Bergen County History**, had heard Tom Demarest, a local historian, say that he had seen it ten years before. He was busy and hard to reach, but on Saturday, July 31, 1977, Mrs. Tholl picked him up, and left him in the park at the top of the Palisades to climb down. Then she joined my husband and me in our little outboard skiff to watch him where he was searching along the edge of the river. Suddenly he waved his arms — he had found it, its 200 year old writing still legible (and still inaccurate)!

#### Origin of Heyhoe

The other four discoveries were less dramatic but still satisfying. We had wondered for years about the origin of the name **Heyhoe** which Winthrop Sargent Gilman Sr. had given his house, now vanished, on the road to Sparkill.

The Abels and MacIvers had adopted this as an old Dutch name, when they started their little enclave off Oak Tree Road. I looked in lists of Dutch names, checked Dutch dictionaries, asked Henry Kennell, who had bought the site and Mrs. Stockman, whose family was connected with the Gilmans — no luck. Then in 1980 in the library of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, I found a privately printed account of the Noyes-Gilman Ancestry by Charles P. Noyes, a son-in-law of Mr. Gilman, which said: "(It) was named by a whimsical daughter, Heyhoe after a Gilman name in the old country." And his wife, Emily Gilman Noyes, says in a family history in the same library: "Samuel Gilman married Frances Heyhoe in 1740 [in England]."

#### Mollie Sneden's Epitaph

The wording of the epitaph on Mollie Sneden's tombstone had been an object of search by the whole Palisades Historical Committee for years. Now the sandstone has flaked away and the whole inscription is completely obliterated; but a century ago Mr. Gilman had photographed it. By close scrutiny we had been able to make out a few words in every line. Mrs. Ebmeyer remembered groups coming over from Westchester in the sixties to visit Mollie's grave; and we called historical societies in various towns in Westchester to find out if anyone had information about it. We also put notices in historical society bulletins; and a friend spent some time in the New York Public Library looking for a poem that would do. Then suddenly, in 1981 when Mrs. Stansbury was looking through a dilapidated old Dutch Reformed Church hymnal, there it was! a stanza in hymn number 641: "An Evening Song". The committee decided immediately to put up a new tombstone with the whole inscription.

#### A Boylestead Tree

Another small but interesting problem was the meaning

of a "Boylestead Tree". This was a corner marker in the 1749 deed from Henry and Mary Ludlow to Jonathan Lawrence. The Serviss Map of 1874 shows its location and that of the "Heyhoe Marker", in front of W. S. Gilman Sr.'s house, which gave the bearing and distance to the Boylestead Tree. The name could not be found in Bailey's three-volume Horticultural Cyclopaedia; and surveyors were unfamiliar with it.

Loring McMillen, however, who came here to advise us about old houses, knew immediately what it was. He had come up against the problem, because on an eighteenth century map of Staten Island there was listed a "Boylestead Swamp". A "Boylestead" or "Bilstead" tree is a sweet gum tree; and sure enough, Bailey has "Bilsted: Liquidambar".

With this in mind, we were able to recognize the "gum wood stump" in roughly the same position on Haring's 1822 map, made seventy-three years later, as being probably the remains of the same tree.

### **The Artist Sneden**

A communication from the New-York Historical Society in 1978, asking for information about the artist Richard K. Sneden, several of whose paintings and drawings had been acquired by the museum, started an investigation which is described in Appendix Number 40. The upshot was that the artist turned out to be the Robert K. Sneden who wrote Mr. Gilman twice in 1901. We found ourselves in the agreeable situation of being able to correct the New-York Historical Society.

### **Puzzles About the Snedens**

Of the unanswered questions, there are first of all three questions about the early Snedens. Was Mollie Sneden the same as Maria Dobbs? Who was the mysterious George Calhoun who was betrothed to a Mary Sneden and a short time afterward bought land from the Mary Sneden who had

just married Samuel Lawrence? Was the Samuel Sneden who married Elizabeth Concklin and founded the "Snedens of the Field" a grandson of Mollie's?

### **Washington's Headquarters?**

Something else that needs documentation is the statement that crops up occasionally that the Big House was used as Headquarters during the Revolution by General Greene or General Washington. The pros and cons are discussed in Appendix Number 15.

### **Bone Factories**

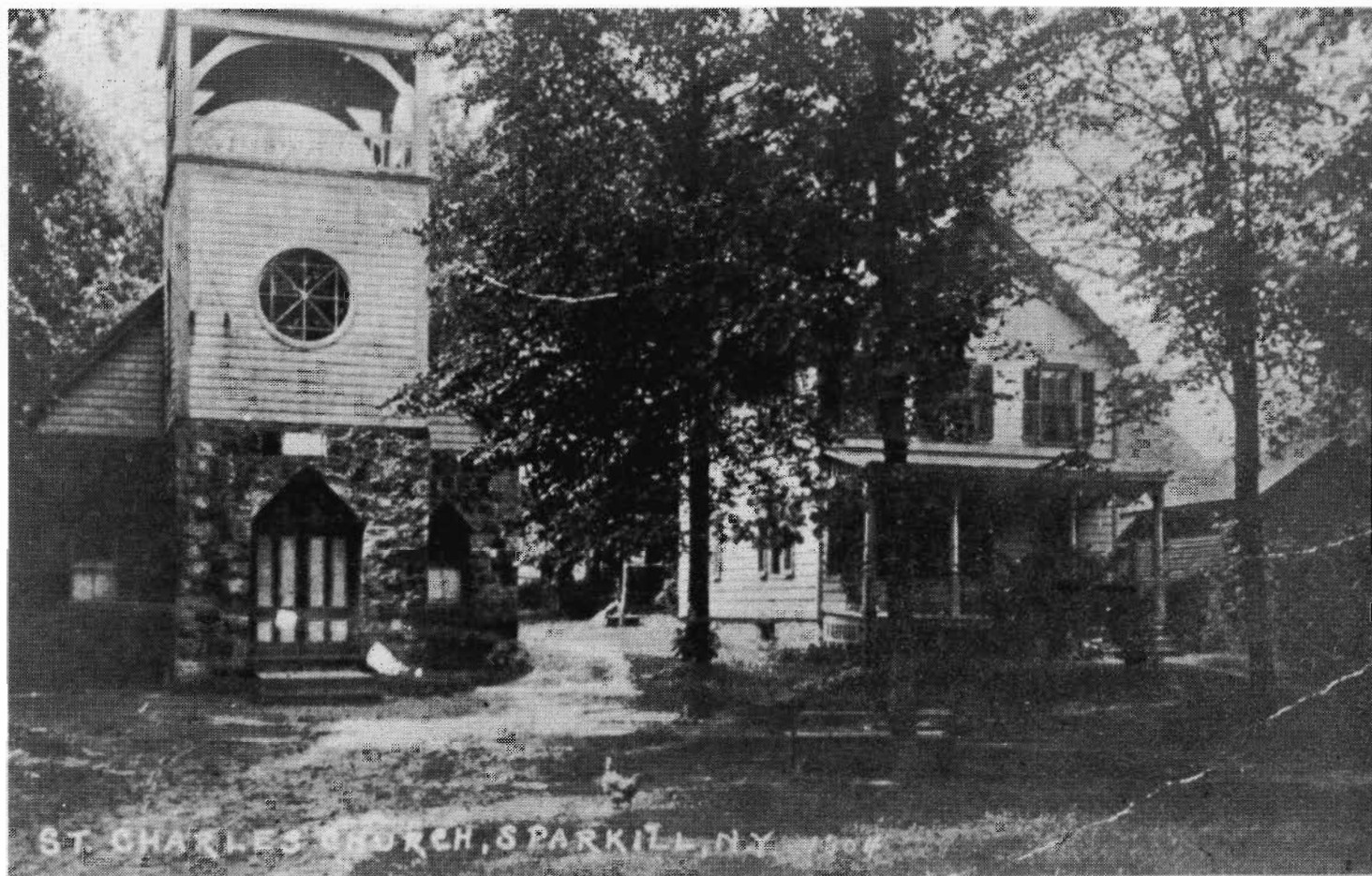
Another subject needing further exploration is that of the bone factories along the shore of the Hudson. We have a hearsay explanation from Judge Bradley, information about the background in New York City and Brooklyn, and a painting showing the bone factory near the waterfall; but there must be somewhere a description of the bone factories themselves. (See Appendix Number 19).

### **Mr. Gilman's Land Company**

The Historical Society files in Providence, Rhode Island, contain material about Winthrop Sargent Gilman Sr.'s Land Company and about the three partners who lived in Providence, Goddard, Brown, and Ives, who took the records back there, probably after Mr. Gilman's death in 1884. These are all well-known families in Providence. When I wrote to inquire, Mr. Robert H. I. Goddard sent me some material, but he said the rest had been sent to the Providence Historical Society.

### **Who Was Mrs. Charles Kinsley Taylor**

A pretty problem which probably does not directly concern this village, but which interests us all because of the



The St. Charles African Methodist Episcopal Church of Zion in Sparkill, designed by architect George Williams and dedicated on May 1, 1898. To the right is the parsonage, first built for Mrs. Charles Kinsley Taylor.

charm of the story is the identity of Mrs. Charles Kinsley Taylor, the benefactor of the St. Charles African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Sparkill. This is the successor of the "Mountain Church" in Skunk Hollow. In between was the "Swamp Church" on the road between Tappan and Sparkill. Both of these are shown on a map in Beers' **Atlas of the Hudson River Valley** of 1891. In the late 1890's the congregation bought land in the heart of Sparkill and started to build. An old lady, Mrs. Charles Kinsley Taylor, used to drive with her husband to the New York train, and then stop and watch the building. When the money ran out, as it often does under such circumstances, she noticed with concern that the building had stopped. Her husband had died at about that time, and when she heard that the congregation had run out of money she made them an offer. If they would build a parsonage next door first and let her live in it, she would pay for both that and the church. The grateful congregation accepted and named the church after her husband — St. Charles A.M.E.Z. One likes to think of the benevolent old lady rocking on the front porch and watching the church go up next door.

The story is part of the church history; but nothing more is known about the identity or previous dwelling place of Mrs. Taylor. Frances Sisco Pierson, one of the church's trustees, and Howard Durie, the researcher, have both discovered in the 1892 census for Orangetown three Taylors living in the same household with a Charles Kinsley and two other Kinsleys. The answer must be here somewhere.

## Appendix Number 35

### The Lawrence Family

According to Thomas Lawrence's **Historical Genealogy**

**of the Lawrence Family**, there were three brothers of the Lawrence family who settled in Long Island in the seventeenth century.

The eldest, John, born 1618, and his brother William were among the original patentees of Flushing, L.I. John had no Lawrence descendants. He moved to New York City, and was Mayor in 1674 and 1691.

William, born 1623, was a magistrate under the Dutch, and had a military commission under the English. After his death in 1680, his second wife, Elizabeth Smith, whose family gave its name to Smithtown, L.I., married Sir Philip Carteret, Governor of New Jersey, in 1681, and during his absence administered the colony. Elizabeth, New Jersey, was named after her. Carteret died in 1682, and she later married Col. Richard Townley. One of her seven Lawrence children from her first marriage was the ancestor of the **Cliffside** Lawrences and the Tonettis.

Thomas Lawrence, born about 1620, came over after his brothers, and joined with them to patent Newtown, L.I. In 1698 he and Robert "Snelhen" were both listed as land-owners in Flushing. He was the father of a Jonathan Lawrence, who owned land in Westchester. This Jonathan is said to have given his son, another Jonathan, a farm on the banks of the Bronx River in 1723. All the land in Phillipse's Manor was only on leasehold, however, so in 1749 the son Jonathan crossed the river to buy five hundred and four acres and the **Big House** outright from the Ludlows.

This Jonathan Lawrence (called on his tombstone "The Elder Senior"), was to live and die in "Rockland"; and since he and the three successive descendants of the same name who followed him are of particular interest to this history, they will be referred to as Jonathan the first, second, third, and fourth in order to distinguish one from another.

Before the fourth Jonathan died in 1883, William Effingham Lawrence, of the other branch, had built **Cliffside**; and his family have been identified with the village ever since.



## Appendix Number 37

### Early Snedens

The Lawrence genealogy is particularly difficult to straighten out. One reason is that most of the Lawrences had large families and repeated the same names in every branch and every generation. Another complication is that there are too many sources and that they do not all agree. Bolton's **History of Westchester**, Thomas Lawrence's **Historical Genealogy of the Lawrence Family**, MacKenzie's monumental collection of genealogies in manuscript, and Patia L'Hommedieu's manuscript in the New York Public Library all seem comprehensive; but when they get to the Lawrences in this village, they are not to be depended on. Mr. Gilman is much better; but because he didn't see a copy of Jonathan Lawrence, the "Elder Senior's," actual will, he missed the names of five children who had died before the will was made in 1773, especially Ellison, who married John Sneden, and Samuel, who probably was the one who married Mary Sneden. The tombstone inscriptions are also helpful, although it is not certain that Doughty's list is infallible.

In 1950, when he was stationed at Fort Dix in New Jersey, Major Robert de Treville Lawrence came to Palisades to copy old records and to photograph the Big House and the Lawrence tombstones. His article on **"Family Bibles of Lawrence Brothers of Charleston"**, published in the South Carolina History Magazine, Vol. 53, No. 2, April 1952, page 77, is dependable about the three sons of Thomas Lawrence of "Rockland" who went to Charleston before February, 1774, and about their ancestors and descendants.

The accompanying genealogy represents the best guesses as to which authority to believe.

(The James Lawrence, 1732-1804, who with his wife Ann Jardine, owned large tracts of land in "Rockland" in the eighteenth century, is not mentioned in this genealogy. He was a great-grandson of Thomas through his son William, as Jonathan Lawrence the second was through William's brother Jonathan, according to MacKenzie).

Many authorities, such as Riker and Bailey, maintain that the Snedens in the United States are descended from the Jan Snedich (or Sudeich) who came from Holland on the **St Jan Baptiste** in December, 1657, with his wife and two children and brother Claes, as listed in O'Callaghan's **Documentary History of New York**, Vol. III, page 52. Howard Durie, however, who is an experienced researcher, says that he has found no evidence that Jan's only son, Carsten, ever married or had children.

Claes, Jan's brother, on the other hand, is known to have settled in Flushing, Long Island. He was called Nicholus Snathan (O'Callaghan, II, page 461, tax list for 1675) probably because most of the other settlers were English. (One of the other settlers on the same list, by the way, was Thomas Lawrance (sic), the ancestor of our Jonathan Lawrences.) Mr. Durie has found a record of Nicholas Sneden's will, referring to his wife, Mary, and, among other children, his son Robert, and saying that he had died before December, 1677. O'Callaghan, I, page 664, lists in Flushing in 1698 as "ffreemen-men" Tho: Lawrence and Robert Snelhen. Mr. Durie has found Robert Snething, house carpenter, buying land on Long Island in 1697 and 1704; and then in 1713 Robert Sneathing and his wife Sarah Senathan sold three tracts of land on Long Island, and a few months later bought land in the town of Eastchester in Westchester County.

His name is found in the Records of the Town of Eastchester as serving in many capacities from 1715 through 1729. Finally in 1734 he sold or gave to his sons Robert Snedden, Junr., carpenter, and Samuel, several tracts of land, and died, unrecorded. Robert Junior was the one who married Mollie Sneden (who may have been Maria Dobbs) and came across the river around 1740 to be the founder of the Snedens of the Landing.

Sneden seems to have a particularly difficult name to spell. From Mr. Durie's and other documents we have: Sudeich, Snedich, Snelhen, Snealling, Snethen, Snathen, Snethin, Senethen, Senathen, Sneathing, Snething, Sneddon, Snedden, Seneaden, Snedin, Snedings, Snedinx, Snyder, Snedon, Sneadon, Sneedan. Gary Putnam, a descendant of Abraham Sneden, supplies a novel spelling, "Abraham Smethkins." Mrs. Ebmeyer, the postmistress, adds other remarkable spellings. Snedens Landing is of course not a postal address; but the authorities are obliging enough to have forwarded to Palisades letters addressed to Sneezers Landing, Snyders Laundry, Stevens', Snede's, or Snide's Landing. Newton Sneden, of the "Snedens of the Field," in a manuscript in the New City Library, adds a few other variations: Snieden, Snuden, Sweden, Smeden. He also points out that Snedens is a palindrome, spelled the same forward and backward.

## Appendix Number 40

### The Search for R. K. Sneden, the Artist

(Connection with the early Snedens is given on page 211)

In 1978 the New-York Historical Society asked our library if we had any information about a Richard K. Sneden, who was a painter. They had acquired a number of water color paintings signed "Sneden del.", and had found in Beers' *Atlas of New York and Vicinity* published in 1867 several drawings of houses signed R. K. Sneden. In their copy of W. S. Gilman's *Story of the Ferry* they had found a reference to a Richard K. Sneden who had visited Palisades (then Rockland) in 1851; and they had brought these three findings together, and were trying to place the artist.

We searched our Sneden genealogies, which were rather extensive, thanks largely to Howard K. Durie, and could find no Richard K. Sneden living at the proper time.



The Sneden Coat of Arms. This is the one Robert K. Sneden obtained and gave Mr. Gilman in 1901. (L.H. 104). On the back is written "A copy from 'The Herald College' The Hague, Holland, 1880. 4 brothers emigrated from Amsterdam to New York A.D. 1651. Arms: 3 wool choppers on a shield and one as crest." The same unprovable story of the four Sneden brothers, probably added by Robert K. Sneden.

One fact that struck us was that the "Richard K. Sneden" who visited Captain Larry Sneden in 1851 had left an account of four mythical Sneden brothers who arrived in America in 1683, one of whom, John, came to Snedens Landing, (actually the first John Sneden here was Robert's son, born in 1738), and another, Lawrence, went to Nova Scotia in 1783. The only other references to this rather crazy story were on the back of a copy of the Sneden coat of arms, which turned out to be signed R. K. Sneden (Local History, p. 104), and in a letter from Robert K. Sneden of Monsey, N.Y., written on July 26, 1901 (Local History, p. 105A). An attentive reading of Robert Sneden's letter explained this: "The New York Sneden whom you mention in your letter in 1851, this was probably my father, John Anthony Sneden, who visited "Capt. Larry" with me at that time at "the Landing", for I know that they compared notes and made memos which I never could find among his papers when he died." He added "Am 69 years old now, but am lively enough yet." At the end of his letter he said he was making a copy of the Snedens Arms, and would send Mr. Gilman a copy. This is pretty good evidence that the "Richard" was a mistake, probably on the part of Captain Larry.

A later letter from Robert K. Sneden, on August 15, 1901, (Local History, p. 127), told more about him: "I think seriously about moving away from this miserable slow town [Monsey] in possibly Feb'y. 1902. As an architect I cannot make a living here, as the carpenters built what little there is to be built. which is no more than **one** house a year. I have built 2 School Houses here and 2 dwellings in 5 years."

These new facts about Robert Sneden, the architect, did not of course prove that he was also R. K. Sneden the

painter; but a letter from Mrs. Jessie Straut, who was the step-daughter of Arthur Durant Sneden, a well-known architect, brought more information about our Robert K. Sneden: "It was Robert K. Sneden, my step-father's uncle, who was cited in the Civil War, and who may have been R. K. Sneden the artist. It comes back to me that there **was** a celebrated artist in the ancestry. The framed citations on our wall were hand-painted — maybe by R. K. himself? . . . I note the name of Anne Knox of Halifax, who married John Anthony Sneden."

Mrs. Straut was tracing the genealogical background of the Sneden family, among others, for the sake of her nephew, Arthur Durant, who was at the time prospecting for oil in Nigeria. She and we hoped that when he returned and examined the family papers in his possession we would have definite proof. In 1983 he did return, but has been so busy with his prospecting trips in the United States that he has not had time to investigate the family papers. The last word from Mrs. Straut was that he was tow-boating on the Mississippi.

At this stage of our enquiry we were electrified to receive a telephone call from Lynn Beman in Nyack, who as director of the Trisdonn Gallery was preparing a collection of Rockland County artists for an exhibition at the Hopper House in September, 1984. She asked for information about "Richard K. Sneden," because the exhibition was to include a watercolor painting recently acquired by the New-York Historical Society, the subject of which is a house in **Monsey**, New York!

This could well be considered sufficient proof that our Robert Knox Sneden was the artist; but we are hoping for more if Arthur Durant ever gets to his family papers.

## Appendix Number 42

### The Post Family of Palisades

The first Post known in Palisades was Jacob, of Dutch descent, who bought a farm of ninety acres from James Lawrence in 1765. This he bequeathed to his son Abraham, who was born about 1741, and who married Rebecca Gracey in 1761.

Their first child, Daniel, was baptized in Philipsburgh in Westchester County in 1762; but the next six, and their mother Rebecca, are listed in Cole's **History of Rockland County** as having been baptized together in Tappan on March 8, 1775. Of these six, Gracey, born 1764, married Nicholas Gesner; Elizabeth, or Betsy, born 1776, married Abraham Scudder, and was mentioned often in Gesner's Diary; Jacob, born 1768, married Peggy Graham and had eight children, including Abraham, whose progeny are listed in the accompanying chart; and Abraham, born 1770, married "Widow Gesner" and lived in Haverstraw.

The Abraham (or Abram) whose progeny are listed, and his wife Euphemia (or Famiche) Eliza (or Elizabeth) Willsey (or Willse) come into local history in many ways. The arithmetic exercise book of Abram Post for 1823, when he was nine, was given to the library by Mrs. Harold Miggins, the daughter of Mrs. Van Blarcom, his great-granddaughter. In addition, a neighbor bought from Mrs. Miggins a beautiful old blue and white reversible coverlet made by David Haring in 1833 for the marriage of Eupheumie (sic) Eliza Willsey and Abram Post. (See appendix number 45).

Mrs. Van Blarcom has described her great-grandparents' schooling. She said that when they were young, there was often no school, because there was no teacher, and the children had to go to private schools elsewhere if they wanted an education. Her great grandfather went to the Academy in Tappan, "on a little road off where the

Catholic Church [she must have meant the Reformed Church] now is,"\* which used to close in strawberry time; and her great-grandmother, Famiche Willsey "to a school at the New Landing (now Piermont) on the river side, a few houses beyond Fort Comfort." Some of her neighbors of that generation, Mrs. Van Blarcom said, never learned to read or write, because they couldn't afford the tuition.

It was this Abram who gave the land on Post Row to his children; and it was he who gave a reception in his old house on Closter Road, after the patriotic ceremony at the inauguration of the flag pole in 1861.

## Appendix 45

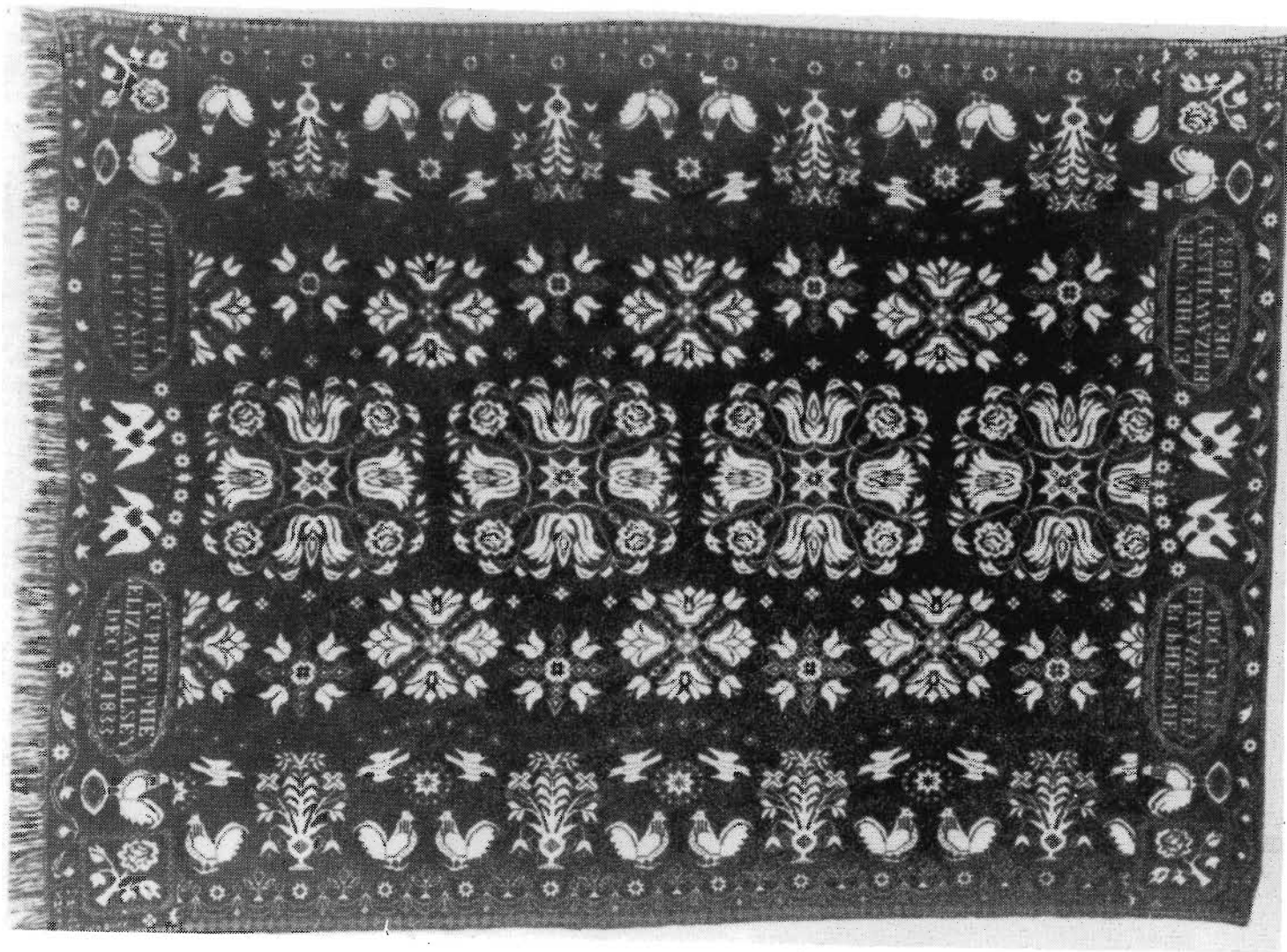
### Famiche Willsey's Beautiful "Blanket"

When Famiche Willsey married Abram Post in 1833, she brought with her a beautiful coverlet, or "blanket" as it was called, woven and signed by David Haring, with a reversible design in dark blue wool and white cotton. This was handed down in the family, to her daughter, Julia Post Denike, and then to Mrs. Denike's granddaughter, Adeline Denike Van Blarcom, whose daughter, Alma Miggins, sold it to a private collector in the vicinity.

There are a number of these interesting coverlets, made in Bergen County in the 1830's and 1840's, and preserved

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\*In April, 1982, the Tappantown Historical Society announced that the Academy "which was built in 1843, on land leased from the church (across the road) as a private school by Pastor Isaac Cole" was about to be restored with monies raised by the Tappan Reformed Church. (It could not have been in this building that Abram Post went to school in 1823. Perhaps Pastor Cole had had his school somewhere else before this was built.)



Famiche Willsey's "Blanket". The dark is dark blue wool, the light, white cotton.

in museums. The introduction of the Jacquard loom, or Jacquard attachment for existing looms, made it possible for weavers to produce all sorts of elaborate designs and to add names and dates for identification. (Safford and Bishop have a good description of the Jacquard coverlet, page 245.)

David Haring, the weaver, lived in Northern New Jersey, in what is now Norwood. His loom was narrow, so that there was a seam in his blanket. He bought the white cotton thread, but sheared the wool for the weft from his own sheep, and dyed it himself with indigo. According to Gillian Moss, "his daughter Maria later told her grandchildren that as a young girl she had to wash the fleece in the brook across the road and help in the carding and spinning."

Blankets woven by him and signed and dated cover only the years 1830-1837. Moss suggests that perhaps he stopped because "another weaver with a large Jacquard loom capable of weaving seamless coverlets in one width came to the area and took the trade away from Haring. The new weaver, who did not sign his name to his coverlets, signed the name of his client. [He] wove a coverlet for Haring's daughter Maria in 1841, the year before she married Jacob Bogert." On the other hand, perhaps Haring found other interests. When he died in 1889, he was a wealthy man.

An interesting sidelight is the statement by Anthon Temple Gesner in **The Gesner Family**, page 25, that "Nicholas Gesner invented a loom for weaving the Dutch double-faced blankets and bed covers." Perhaps when his diary is transcribed, there will be more information about this.

## Appendix Number 49

### The Gesner-Concklin Burying Ground

(Most of the information on the Concklin family comes from

an unpublished article by Reginald McMahon on the Jacob Concklin house in Rockleigh, N.J.)

The burying-ground set aside by John Gesner, probably when his wife, Famiche Brower, died in 1788, was sold to his son-in-law the second Jacob Concklin in 1796, and was used for burials of both families until 1852. (The three Jacob Concklins are confusing, since the first two were called in turn Jacob Sr., and the second and third in turn Jacob Jr. The first Jacob, 1718-1787, was buried in the "Lawrence Burying Ground," now the Palisades Cemetery, before the date of the first grave in the Gesner Burying Ground.)

It was just over the border in New Jersey on a hill to the east of Piermont or Carteret Road, between Willow Road and Oak Tree Road. There is very little of it left. Only two intact tombstones, those of Jacob Concklin and Elenor Cooper, and pieces of Mary Quidor Concklin's survive; but when Mr. Gilman saw it at the end of the nineteenth century there were "eleven well-marked graves, all the stones standing erect except that of Elenor Cooper, which is broken and lies in a hollow." Luckily he made a list and a diagram and photographed it. (Local History, pages 56, and 75-77).

The graves on Mr. Gilman's list, in chronological order, were as follows:

Famiche Brower, wife of John Gesner, born 1722, died Feb. 10, 1788, aged 66 years. (Supposed descendant of Anneke Jans).

Cornelius Gesner, born Feb. 1, 1761, died Sept. 7, 1790, aged 29 years. (Son of John and Famiche Gesner).

Jacob Concklin [3], died June 22, 1811, aged 44 years, 11 months, 7 days. (Grandson of the first Jacob Concklin and of John Gesner, husband of Mary Quidor).

John Gesner, died July 6, 1811, aged 87 years, 1 month, 11 days. (Husband of Famiche Brower).



Elenor Cooper, died Dec. 25, 1813, aged 50 years, 10 months, 2 days. (Not related to the local Cooper family, but made her home with the Concklins).

Famicha, wife of Peter Willsey, died Feb. 9, 1821, aged 62 years, 10 months, 9 days. (Daughter of John Gesner, grandmother of "Captain John" Willsey).

Elizabeth, wife of Jacob Concklin, died Aug. 8, 1825, aged 79 years, 8 months, 2 days. (Oldest daughter of John Gesner, wife of second Jacob Concklin).

Jacob Concklin [2], died Feb. 21, 1827, aged 83 years, 9 days. (Son of the first Jacob Concklin, son-in-law of John Gesner, husband of Elizabeth).

Phebe Concklin, wife of Jesse Trenchard, died March 30, 1827, aged 25 years, 2 months, 6 days. (Daughter of Famiche (Phebe) and David Concklin).

Mary Quidor, wife of Jacob Concklin, Jr. [the third Jacob], died Jan. 6, 1838, aged 63 years, 9 months, 17 days. (Nicholas Gesner wrote of her unexpected death and hasty burial, which was outside the cemetery wall).

David Concklin, Jr., died Jan. 23, 1840, aged 46 years, 9 months, 15 days. (Son of Famiche (Phebe) Concklin and brother of Phebe Trenchard).\*

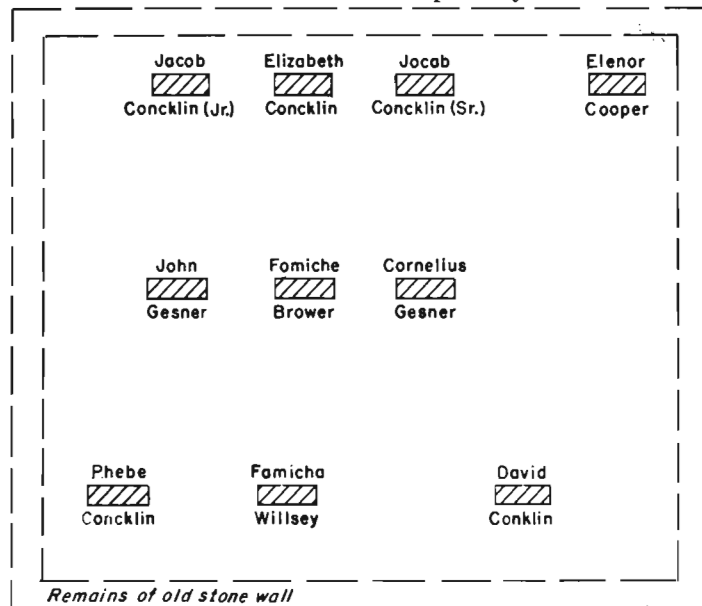
Another record of the burial ground was made in 1911

\*In Cole's list of baptisms in his **History of Rockland County**, he includes David, born Apr. 15, 1793, and Phemije, born Jan. 24, 1801, parents David Concklin and Femmetye, or Phemije Concklin. The age of death in neither case agrees exactly with the distance between the dates of birth and death, but the differences do not seem significant — 7 days in David's case, exactly one year in "Phemije's." As for the mother's name, the will of Jacob Concklin mentions his daughter Phebe, wife of David Concklin. (Will Book C, page 180, Hackensack). (It is interesting that "Famiche" can also be a nickname for Euphemia, as in the case of Famiche Willsey Post).

by John Neafie and W. B. VanAlstyne, and published in the **Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society**, 1912-13, page 23. This agrees with Gilman's in almost every detail, and adds information about some unmarked stones, as follows:

2 small brown stones for infant children of Jacob Concklin,

WINTHROP GILMAN'S DIAGRAM OF THE GESNER-CONCKLIN BURYING GROUND. From "Local History", page 76. Copied by Charlotte Carlson.



WINTHROP GILMAN'S DIAGRAM OF THE GESNER-CONCKLIN BURYING GROUND. From "Local History", page 76. Copied by Charlotte Carlson.



**Tombstones of Nicholas Gesner's Parents. Formerly in Gesner's Burying Ground, now gone. Photograph from A. T. Gesner's *The Gesner Family*.**

Jr., one marked P. C. [for Peter Concklin] and the other R. C. [Rachel Concklin].

2 small stones not marked at all for infant children of David Concklin.

1 rough stone not marked for David Concklin, who died 1851 or 1852.

1 rough stone not marked for his wife, Famica who died 1845 or 1846.

Antho Temple Gesner, in ***The Gesner Family***, published in 1912, wrote also of the cemetery, and it was he who supplied the names of Peter and Rachel for two of the babies. Since he mentioned the name of James W. Gowdey, husband of a granddaughter of Mary Quidor Concklin, and

owner of the cemetery, it seems likely that it was from Gowdey that he and Neafie learned of the unmarked graves. Gesner also included photographs of the tombstones of John and Famiche Brower Gesner, which have since disappeared.

## Appendix Number 51

### John Quidor, the Artist

John Quidor, the artist, was an interesting member of one of the local families. His grandfather, Peter Quidor, a French Huguenot, is said to have left New York City abruptly when the British came in 1776, leaving his dinner on the table, and to have settled on the "High Palisades" (Skunk Hollow), on land later owned by the Heiders. The death of "old Peter Quidor" is mentioned in Gesner's *Diary* on March 13, 1832.

Peter's brother George is said to have lived and died in New York City; but his son George Jr. came out and built a house on Tappan Road (now Oak Tree Road) in 1837, just after the road was put through. This is still standing in greatly modified form. George's great granddaughter, Emma Quidor, was the beloved librarian in the Palisades Library for fifty years, from 1891 to 1941.

Peter's son, Peter Quidor, Jr., built a house in "Rockland" to the east of Ludlow Lane, where Mr. Coles' house later stood. It was probably in this house that John Quidor was born on January 26, 1801; he was baptized the next month in the church in Tappan. In about 1811, when John was ten, the Peter Quidor Jrs. moved to New York City. They probably came out to Rockland occasionally to see John's grandfather, and the family of his Aunt Mary, who had married Jacob Concklin, and other relatives.

John Quidor was a painter of fantastical pictures, some

of them illustrating Washington Irving's legendary tales. Marshall Davidson described them in **American Artists**, pages 146-7: "Colorful adventures into the world of Quidor's imagination, in a wierd mixture of horror and humor." His first picture was dated 1823, the last 1867. He studied with John Wesley Jarvis\*, and in 1828 showed three pictures in the newly formed National Academy of Design. His work was too strange to be popular, however, and he was forced to

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\*There is a story, which cannot be verified, that Quidor's father, dissatisfied with his son's progress under Jarvis, sued the teacher. On the day of the trial, Jarvis brought one of Quidor's paintings as exhibit; and the jurors, impressed, denied the suit. (T. B. Thorpe: *New York Artists Fifty Year Ago*. **Appleton's Journal**, May 25, 1872, p. 574).

paint signs and panels for fire engines in order to make a living. "One of these panels," said Davidson, "showing a half-naked Indian maiden saying farewell to her lover, brought toppers out of bars to cheer the engine as it was pulled through the streets." None of these panels seems to have survived.

After John Quidor's death in 1881, at the home of a daughter in Jersey City Heights, his paintings became, in a modest way, collectors' items. Finally, in 1942, the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences set up in the Brooklyn Museum the first exhibition of his paintings, with a scholarly catalogue by John I. H. Baur, telling in detail everything that was known about his life and work. Now his paintings are owned by some of the great museums, and he has taken his place among recognized American painters.





**John Quidor's painting, "The Return of Rip Van Winkle," now in The National Gallery of Art, in Washington, D.C.**

Walter Dobbs, a Mariner of Barren Island, Flatlands, married Mary Merritt, b. 1632 in England, d. 1737, age 104 (her survivor was her sister, Sarah Merritt Meeks Crabbe, age 102, who was listed in the Orange County Census for 1702)

<u>Margery</u> m. Michael Ryers	<u>William</u> lived in N.Y.	<u>John or Jan</u> b. 1675, got leasehold in D.F. c. 1700, Wysquaqua	<u>3 others</u>
---------------------------------------	------------------------------------	---	-----------------

m. (1) Elizabeth (Hyatt)

m. (2) Abigail

John  
lived  
in N.Y.

William, bp. 1706.  
First ferryman  
In 1729 m. Lea  
Van Waert (bp. 1712)  
Owned Dobbs Tavern  
in D.F., 1760.  
Sold Ferry House  
to Jasper Stymus,  
1769.

Maria  
bp. 1709  
(Maybe  
Mollie  
Snedden)

Thomas  
bp. 1712  
d.y.  
Thomas  
bp. 1714

Walter  
bp. 1716  
Lived in  
Croton.

Abigail  
bp. 1718

Michael  
bp. 1721  
(Sloats have a receipt  
signed by him in 1752,  
in Sneden family papers)

Abraham  
bp. 1730  
m. Jane Leviness  
Took over ferry.

Belitje  
bp. 1732  
and  
Abigail  
In 1759 m.  
Lucas  
Cornell.

Jeremiah  
lived in N.Y.  
Had son Jeremiah  
of Piermont, who  
m. Jane Fowler.  
Ancestor of  
Palisades Dobbs.

William  
m. Rachel Retan,  
2 children bp.  
in Tappan. One,  
Leah, m. Jacobus  
Bertholf.

Information from Margaret Travis Lane  
Dobbs Genealogy, 1979. MS.

Martha  
b. 1750

Peter  
b.c. 1752  
m. Jenny Lefurgy,  
whose cousin,  
Jasper Stymus,  
bought ferry house.

Mary  
m. Daniel Odell  
in 1782

Jeremiah  
b. 1757  
m. Sarah Bull  
d. 1812

Baptismal records from  
Sleepy Hollow Church  
North Tarrytown, N.Y.

#### Abbreviations

b - born  
bp - baptized  
d - died  
d.y. - died young  
m - married

John  
1775-1847  
m. Deborah Lawrence,  
Had 10 children.  
Ancestor of Margaret  
Travis Lane.

Amos  
1781-1856  
m. Cornelia  
Van Tassell  
Ancestor of  
Palisades Dobbs.

Nathaniel  
1783-1870  
m. Abigail  
Leviness

Descendants of Amos Dobbs

(In W.S. Gilman's Local History, page 115. Information from Albert T. Sneden, May 9, 1900)

<u>Amos Dobbs</u> , b. Dec.10,1781 d. May 1, 1856 (Son of Peter, great-grandson of William, first ferryman)				married	<u>Cornelia Van Tassell</u> , b. June 7, 1789			
<u>Henry</u> b.Jan.28, 1807 m.Sarah (D)	<u>Hannah</u> b.Nov.6, 1809 m.Jacob Lynt (D)	<u>Jane</u> b.June 22, 1812 m.Benjamin Lynt (D)	<u>Susan</u> b.Nov.23, 1814 d.Mar.30, 1853 m.Benjamin Bennett (D)	<u>William</u> b.Apr.29, 1817 m.Mary McCabe She d. 1887 (L)	<u>Martin</u> b.Mar.9, 1820 d.1891 (T) m.Jane Maria Willsey 1822-1895 (L)	<u>John</u> b.Apr.18, 1822 m.Abigail Ann Willsey b.1824	<u>Levinus</u> b.May 2, 1825 d.Apr.28, 1867 (T) m.Mary E. 1836-1866 (T)	<u>Peter Perry</u> b.Feb.24,1828 d.Dec.17,1877 (T)
<u>James Bennett</u> m.Emma Brinsley		<u>Richard Amos</u> b.Feb.10,1851 m.Anna Elizabeth Whipfall, b. Dec.4,1854		<u>Sarah Cornelia</u> m.Alonzo Jewell				
<u>Evelyn Sophie</u> b.Jan21,1877 m.Albert T. Sneden, b. Nov.23,1869 (See "Snedens in the Field")		<u>Mildred Mary</u> b.Feb.6,1879 m.Henry Meyers		<u>Another Branch of the Dobbs</u> (Gilman: Local History, page 137)				
Sneden children				<u>Jeremiah Dobbs (Jerry)</u> married <u>Jane Fowler</u> , daughter of of Piermont, b.c. 1781, Josiah (LH) or son of Jeremiah of D.F., Vincent (H) grandson of William, the ferryman)				
<u>Helen Alberta</u> (Lives in Closter, saw her in 1978)		<u>Ethel Evelyn</u> m.J.Knox, d.1974 2 children		<u>Frederick Fowler Dobbs</u> b. D.F., 1800, d. 1854 in North Bergen, N.J. )H) m.Leah Carling, she d.1888 He was a shad fisherman				
<u>References</u>								
D - Howard Durie				<u>Thomas J.</u>				
H - Harvey's Genealogical History of Hudson & Bergen Counties, N.J.				b.Mar.7,1841				
L - Margaret Travis Lane				m.Eliza Wiley				
LH - Gilman's Local History				1880 (H)				
T - Tombstone				<u>Henry</u> b.c. 1837 d.1908 in Port Monmouth, N.J. Capt. "Hen" Dobbs				
				Henry Dobbs (D)				

References

- D - Howard Durie  
H - Harvey's Genealogical History of Hudson  
& Bergen Counties, N.J.  
L - Margaret Travis Lane  
LH - Gilman's Local History  
T - Tombstone



Robert Sneden  
Son of Robert and  
Sarah Sneden of  
Eastchester (R).  
Died before 1756 (R)

married

BC 69, No. 215

Abraham, Boatman, of N.Y.C. (D)  
M.B.says m.Rachel Swartout,  
Nov.3,1759, then m.Susannah  
Knap, May 16,1763. Children  
by Susannah: Abraham,b.3/3/1768,  
Daniel,d.1856,age 88. Also 5  
girls (Putnam letter).

Charity

Dennis  
b.Dec.24,1735 (T)  
d.June 16,1824 (T)  
Ferryman. Never  
married. Lived with  
his mother.

John (The Patriot)  
b.1738 (T), d.Apr.1,1822 (T)  
m.Ellison, daughter of  
Jonathan Lawrence, 10/25/1762  
(MB). Second wife, Margaret  
Riker, b.1754, d.1828 (T)

By first wife, Ellison Lawrence, daughter of Jonathan Lawrence  
(Listed in L.W.) She died before 1773 (L.W.)

By second

Richard  
Must have died  
young because  
second wife  
had a son called  
Richard

Lawrence  
d.Nov.16,1842 (G)  
Wife, Leah, d.  
Dec.7,1820 (G)  
Lived in Joshua  
Martin's house (B)

John, Jr., "Boss"  
b.Aug.10,1770, d.  
Sept.18,1829 (T).  
m.Phoebe Gesner in 1796.  
b.Mar.15,1779  
d.July 14,1857 (LH 109)  
Had shipyard in Slote

George Washington  
b.Apr.15,1781 (C), d.1865 (K)  
m.Rachel Bogert in 1805.  
Moved away before 1822.  
For children and grand-  
children, see K.

LH 109-111

Samuel J.  
b.Jan.12,1797 (T)  
d.Apr.28,1847 (T)  
m.Maria Verbryck,  
Dec.29,1821.  
b.June 17,1798 (C)  
d.June 24,1867 (T)  
Seven children listed  
by John A. Sneden from  
Tappan church record.

Elison  
b.Sept.7,1798  
d.Feb.17,1884  
m.Peter Westervelt.  
Lived in Mollie  
Sneden house.  
Drowned in Slote  
(PN 132)  
"Survived her hus-  
band 30 years"

Lawrence J.  
"Capt. Larry"  
b.Sept.3,1800 at  
Tappan Landing.  
d.Apr.30,1871.  
m.Nancy Taulman  
in 1825. 1803-  
1883 (T).

Ann  
b.July 18,1802  
m.John Waldron  
who had shipyard  
north of Stone House.  
He died Jan.23,1855,  
aged 53 years (T).

John  
b.Oct.23,1804  
d.Nov.23,1826

LH 109

Mary Neal  
b.May 7,1826 (SP)  
d.Oct.24,1909 (SP)  
b.in Wm.Sneden House (B)  
m.1.Isaac Tallman,1823-  
1853 in 1847. One child,  
Maria, 1853-1905. She  
married D.W.Kipp (SP)  
m.2.William Coates  
1832- in 1859. One  
child, Ella Sneden Coates  
1861-1949.

Joseph Warren  
b.July 17,1828  
d.Feb.25,1859  
m.Sarah Mansell.  
Two children,  
Agnes and Ella,  
died young.

Charles  
1830-1833

Clara Hugle  
b.in Capt.Larry S. House (B)  
1837-1913.  
m.Jenkins Sloat in 1860  
1828-1905

Sloat Children

Charles Edwin  
1865-1892  
m.Mary Comings in 1891

Daisy F.

Joseph Elting

Florence Sloat Shepherd  
b.at Old Closter, 1892

William E. Sloat  
Norwood, N.J.  
Has Sneden papers

Mary ("Mollie") (Maybe Maria Dobbs - R)  
 b. Jan.13,1709 (T)  
 d. Jan.31,1810 (T)

<u>Mary</u> b.May 28, 1739 <u>m.Samuel</u> <u>Lawrence</u> June 7,1765 (MB). He was probably son of J.L.,I.	<u>Robert</u> m.Miriam Fowler, May 28,1782 (MB) Pilot for Brit. ships in Rev. Grantee of St. John, N.B. in 1783 (Sabine)	<u>Jesse or Jesper</u> m.Sarah Berrian (D). Listed in NYC Directory as Mariner, 1802-1809 (D).	<u>William</u> Went to Shelburne, N.S. (BC 34)	<u>Samuel</u> Carpenter (R) Went to Shelburne, N.S. during Rev. m. Mary, had son Samuel and daughter Mary, b. 1784 (PN 40). It may have been Samuel who came back to marry Eliz. Concklin and founded "Snedens of the Field."
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Wife, Margaret Riker (LH 107) 1754-1828 (T)

<u>Elizabeth</u> b.May 10,1783 (C) d.Sept.9,1870 (T) <u>m.Leonard B. Rice</u> 3 daughters, one m.David S. Blauvelt	<u>Richard</u> b.Nov.23,1785 (C) m. Eliz. Wood. Lived in N.Y.C. See LH 111-2 for 6 children.	<u>Mary "Polly"</u> b.July 18,1787 (C) d.July 20,1867 (T) <u>m.Stephen Hagen</u>	<u>Robert</u> b.Nov.16,1788 (C) d.Feb.2,1874 (T) m.Jane Crum 1788-1868. Their daughter, Eliza m.Peter Van Orden, May 28,1831 (C).	<u>Rachel</u> b.Dec.18,1790 (C) <u>m.Benj.Gravestine</u>  <u>Abraham</u> b.Dec.7,1792 (C) d.Feb.25,1829 (T)  <u>William</u> b.Sept.5,1795 (C)
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<u>William</u> b.July 6,1807 (T) d.June 15,1871 (T) m.Peggy Concklin b.Sept.1,1806 (T) d.June 1,1866 (T) Painter, lived in Stone House. He was also a surveyor.	<u>Mahala</u> b.Oct.4,1809 (T) d.Sept.27,1866. "An idiot", PN 139.	<u>Emaline</u> <u>Juliet</u> Twins b.Mar.16,1815 "These twins were excellent singers" LH 107. Emaline married Dr. J.E. Smith of Nyack. Juliet married John J. Lawrence of Sparkill.
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<u>Sherman</u> 1838-1869 (T)	<u>John Newton</u> Ferryman in 1870, S. of F.	<u>Horton</u> b.Mar.2,1840 (T) d.Mar.28,1886 (T) S.of F. says he was ferryman, 1875-1886. Lived in Stone House.	<u>Mary Frances</u> <u>m. Henry Post</u> He was b.1842. (LH 74A lists 7 children)
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#### References

B - Bailey, Pre-Rev. Dutch Houses  
 BC - Budke Collection  
 C - Cole's History - Baptisms  
 D - Durie - Personal Communication  
 G - Gesner's Diary  
 K - Kakiat Patent, Durie  
 LH - Local History, Gilman  
 LW - Will of Jon. Lawrence, 1773  
 MB - N.Y. Marriages (Mar. Bond)  
 PN - Palisades Notes, Gilman  
 R - Relics, Durie  
 Sabine - American Loyalists  
 S.of F. - Story of Ferry, Gilman  
 SP - Sneden Papers, Sloats  
 T - Tombstones, Doughty  
 Letters from John Sneden and Gary  
 Putnam are in Sneden notebook.

All four died young, probably of consumption.

(Samuel was perhaps the grandson of Mollie Sneden. (Had a brother in N.Y.C. (G)

Samuel Sneden  
b.Apr.17,1775 (T)  
d.Oct.10,1863

married

Elizabeth Conklin  
b.Jan.13,1778

(Elizabeth was the daughter of Jacob Conklin and Elizabeth Gesner, older sister of Nicholas.)

Jacob, b.Nov.27,1796 (C)  
d.May 25,1862 (T)  
m.Cornelia Ann Rudd  
1805-1901

Elizabeth, b.Nov.10,1798 (C)  
m.1.Leonard Beasley in 1816  
2.Daniel Durie (SSSP)(Duryea?)

Elizabeth Beasley, m.  
Abner Concklin, son  
of Matthias.

Samuel S., b.Dec.15,1800 (C)  
d.June 18,1877, m. Maria  
Onderdonk in 1823, who  
was b. June 11, 1804.

11 children-see Dauphine  
Taylor's Family Bible.

Phebe Ann, b.May 1,1804 (C)  
m.John Moore, d. before  
1863. Children Jacob &  
Samuel (SSSP)

Mrs. R.N. Sneden's Rudd Family Bible

(MPR said there were 4 Kates - Kate Newt, Kate Wat, Kate Len, and Kate Wes)

Elizabeth Rudd  
1828-1880, m.  
Abraham Riker

Cornelia Ann  
b.1830, d.before  
1863, m.Weyant,  
son, Alfred F.  
(SSSP).

Jacob  
1833-1891

Moses Taylor  
b.1835, m.  
Maria Haring  
1837-1887

Nicholas H. Delphine, m.  
John Durie.

Robert Newton\*  
b.Sep.6,1840,  
m.Kate Terhune  
in 1869.

Samuel Watson  
1843-1892, m.  
Sarah M.,  
1849-1879  
(Must have  
remarried to  
a Kate).

Leonard Beasley  
b.1846, m.  
Catherine Evans  
in 1881 (D)

John Wesley  
b.1848, m.  
Catherine Ann  
Smith

Albert, Harvey, and Robert were all presidents of financial institutions

Albert Terhune  
b.1869, m.Evelyn  
Sophie Dobbs,  
b.1877

Percy, m.  
Elsie Aitken  
4 children

Harvey Towt  
m.Martha,  
"Mattie"  
Durie, John's  
sister, 2  
children.

Robert Newton II\*  
m.Ann Janette  
Aitken, 1904 (D)

Helen  
Alberta  
AMH talked  
to in 1978.

Ethel  
1896-1974  
m.John T. Knox  
Her daughter,  
Janet, m. E.W.  
Frederick. AMH  
talked to in 1982.

Robert Newton III\*  
1907-1975  
m.Elmira Weaver  
AMH talked to in  
1978.

John Aitken  
m.Jean Mackey  
AMH met in 1980

Frank, a  
carpenter,  
m. Maud

Oscar & Roy  
in 1st W.W.

Marietta  
"Mamie", AMH  
talked to in  
1973, when  
she was 88.

Rudd  
m.Pauline  
Klinck

#### References

AMH - A.M. Haagensen  
C - Cole, Baptismal Record  
D - Durie Research  
G - Gesner Diary  
MPR - Mildred Post Rippey  
SSSP - Will - Samuel S. Sneden's Petition  
T - Tombstone

\*All three R.N. Snedens buried  
in South Church Cemetery,  
Bergenfield, N.J.

John Aitken, Jr.  
Visited AMH in 1980  
with his mother. For  
wife & children, see  
his letter of Feb.4,1980.

Annie  
(feeble  
minded)

Rudd II  
m.Grace  
Hilton  
Ferryman.

Joe  
m.Miriam  
Hill "Sis"

Nancy, m.  
Stanley  
Zaczkowski

Jackie

Joseph Wm.  
"Bill"

Robert  
Leland  
"Lee"

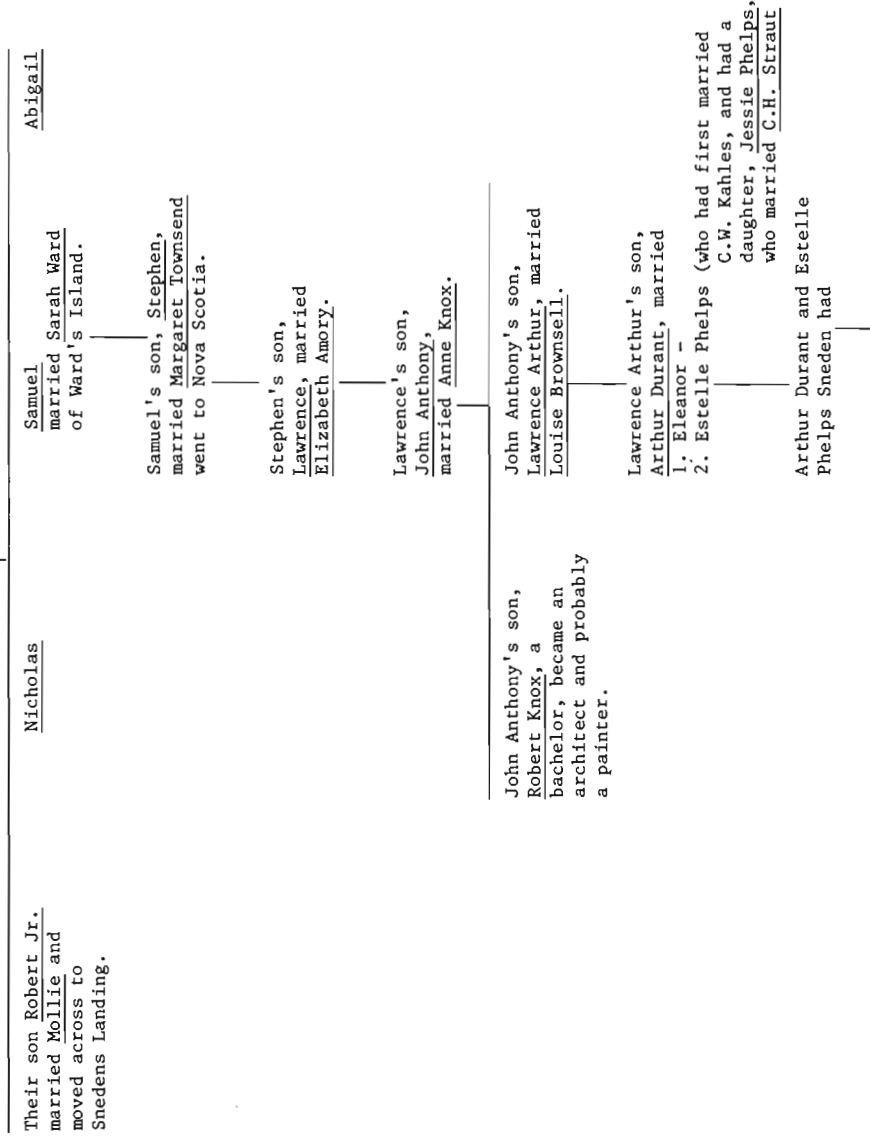
(These four went to school in Palisades in the  
40's.)

EARLY SNEDENS

CONNECTION WITH R.K. SNEDEN, THE ARTIST

Claes, or Nicholas Sneden married Mary

Their son Robert, born 1675 or earlier, married Sarah.  
Moved to Eastchester about 1713, when he is known to have bought  
several tracts of land.



<p><u>Elizabeth Phelps</u> who married 1. <u>H.B. Zinner</u> and had one son, <u>Arthur Phelps</u> <u>Snedens Zinner</u>, who now has taken the name of <u>Durant</u>.</p>	<p>2. <u>A. Perito</u>, &amp; had 3 sons.</p>	<p><u>Arthur Phelps</u>, who was killed in the war in 1944.</p>
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(1) Jonathan Lawrence "The Elder Senior" (T) married Mary Betts of Newtown, L.I. (LG)  
1695-1777

J.L.'s will lists 12 children.

(L'H lists another, Richard, who died unmarried in West Indies.)

<u>Thomas</u> 1718-1780 (T) m. Helener 1725-1797 (T) (Eleanor Leggett). Businessman in N.Y.C. Moved to Rockland during Rev. Died in what was later <u>Heyhoe</u> . (LH 12c)	<u>Isaac</u> 1729-1781 (LG) m. Mary Ann Hampton (LG) Son, <u>Jonathan</u> <u>Hampton L.</u> 1763-1844 (L'H)	(2) <u>Jonathan</u> 1720-1808 (DAR) m. Eliz. Van Kleek, 1729- 1816 (DAR)	3 sons who lived at home with no trade (JLW) <u>Daniel</u> , m. <u>Phebe</u> (LH 102) <u>Nathaniel</u> (unmarried) <u>David</u> , m. <u>Eliz.</u> <u>Poppino</u> (Mac)	<u>Mary</u> m. <u>Samuel</u> <u>Betts</u> (LH 102)	5 children dead before 1773 (JLW) <u>Samuel</u> prob. m. <u>Mary</u> <u>Brower</u> <u>Snedden</u> . See S. of L. gen. His children were <u>Mary</u> and <u>Samuel</u> (JLW)	<u>William</u> m. <u>Rachel</u> <u>Brower</u> (Mac) sons: <u>John</u> & <u>William</u> (JLW)	<u>John</u> m. <u>Cath.</u> <u>Riker</u> (L'H) daughter <u>Eliz.</u> (JLW)	<u>Ellison</u> m. <u>John</u> <u>Snedden</u> See S. of L. gen. for children.	<u>Anna</u> 4 children (JLW)
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Mackenzie

(3) <u>Jonathan, Jr.</u> 1759-1802 (T) m. l. <u>Jennette</u> <u>Neale</u> , d. 1790 age 23 (T) m. <u>2. Mary Mann</u> 1763-1835 (T)	<u>Catherine</u> 1767-1844 (T) m. <u>David Mann</u> 1768-1852 10 children	<u>Elizabeth</u> m. <u>Alex</u> Young (L'H)	<u>Thomas</u> bp. 1771 m. <u>Sarah</u> <u>Smith</u> (L'H) d. 1850
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References

CAR - Letter from Mrs. Carlisle, 1981  
DAR - Graves of Rev. Soldiers  
JLW - Will of Jonathan Lawrence  
LG - Lawrence, T.: Historical Genealogy  
LH - Gilman's Local History  
L'H - L'Hommedieu's MS in NYPL  
Mac - Mackenzie's MS genealogies  
MB - New York Marriages (Marriage Bond)  
PN - Gilman's Palisades Notes  
R.de T.L. - R.de T. Lawrence: Family Bibles  
T - Tombstone Inscription, Palisades Cemetery

By Jennette Neal

<u>Charles</u> L'H says m. <u>Eliz. Lowden</u> & became potter in NY	<u>Herbert</u> m. <u>Sarah</u> <u>Martin</u> (L'H) Shipbuilder in NY	<u>Eleanor</u> 1789-1868 (T) m. <u>J.J. Wilde</u> 9 children (LH 103)
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By Mary Mann

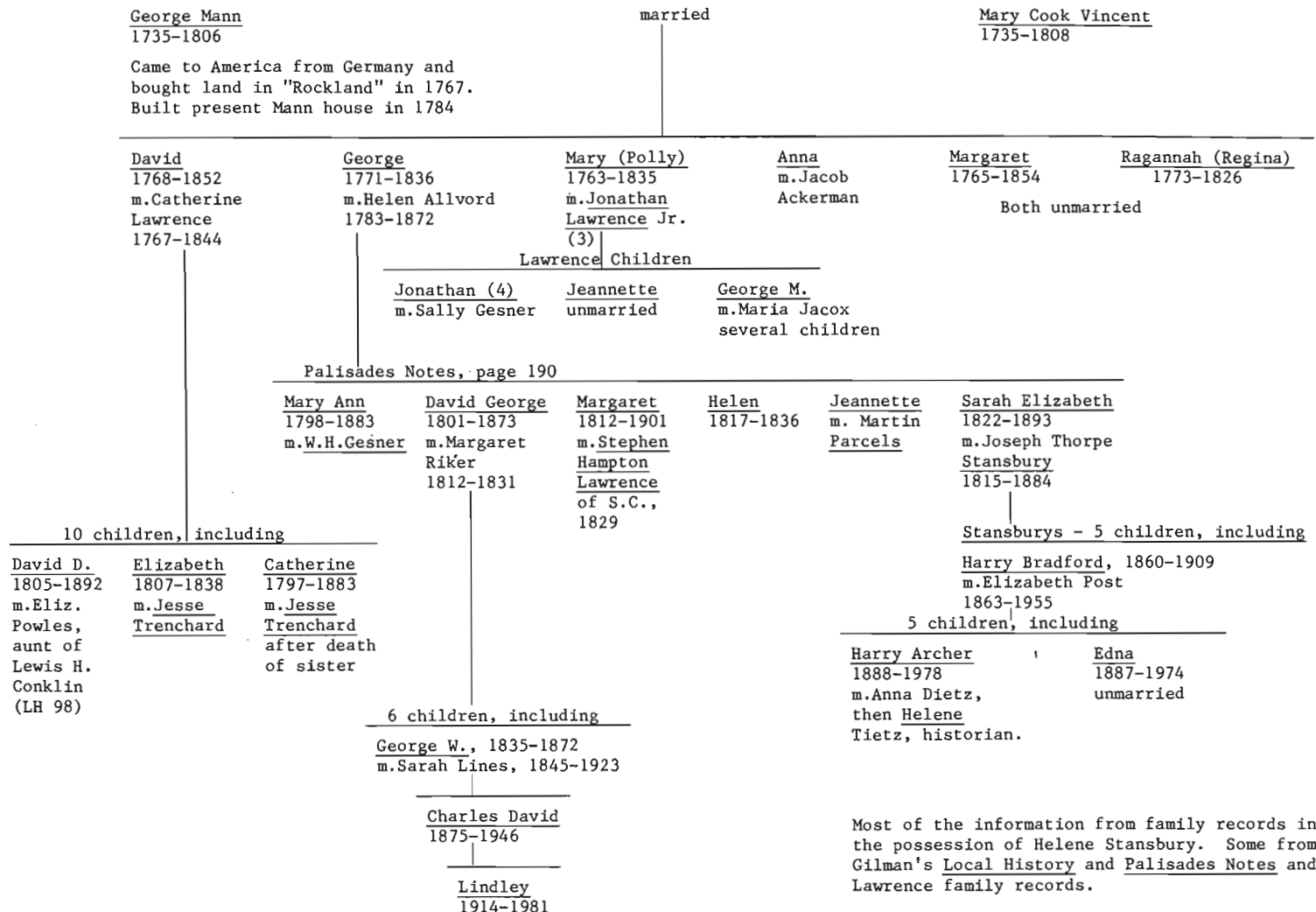
(4) <u>Jonathan</u> 1795-1883 (T) m. <u>Sally Gesner</u> 5 children (LH 103) Daughter <u>Mary Sparks</u> burned some of G's Diary.	<u>Jeannette</u> 1797-1870 (T) unmarried	<u>George M.</u> 1799-1872 (T) m. <u>Maria Jacox</u> (Gesner Diary) first postmaster several children
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PN page 97 and Mackenzie

<u>Jonathan</u> 1748-1782 (RdeTL) Moved to S.Car. Wife <u>Sarah</u> , plaque on house, <u>Charles-</u> <u>ton</u> (CAR). Ancestor of S. Carlisle.	<u>Thomas</u> b. 1753 (Mac) m. <u>Sarah Fowler</u> "Very much of a lady" (Mrs. Willsey, PN 198)	<u>Richard</u>	<u>Stephen</u> b. 1758 (Mac) Moved to S. Car. (Mac) Ancestor of R. de T. Lawrence (m. Jane Givens)	<u>Samuel</u> 1761-1810 Moved to S. Car. Son, <u>Stephen</u> Hampton, ret. & m. <u>Marg. Mann</u> (LH 190)	<u>John</u> "Uncle Johnny" 1764-1844 (T) Lived in Palisades.	<u>Isaac</u> died young	<u>Mary</u> 1769-1840 m. <u>John Van Kleeck</u> "A very fine woman, rather nervous, was thought a good deal of." Mrs. Stansbury, (PN 190)
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PN 199, 12 children (LH 100), including

<u>Sarah</u> b. 1783 m. <u>Zeb Woolsey</u>	<u>Mary</u> b. 1787 Maybe the "Polly" who married <u>Henry Storms</u>	<u>Helena</u> , b. 1796 m. <u>Isaac Lyon</u> . Her daughter, <u>Mary</u> , married <u>John G. Willsey</u> "Capt. <u>John</u> ." Sold Wash. table to <u>W.S.G.</u> for Library (LH 47)
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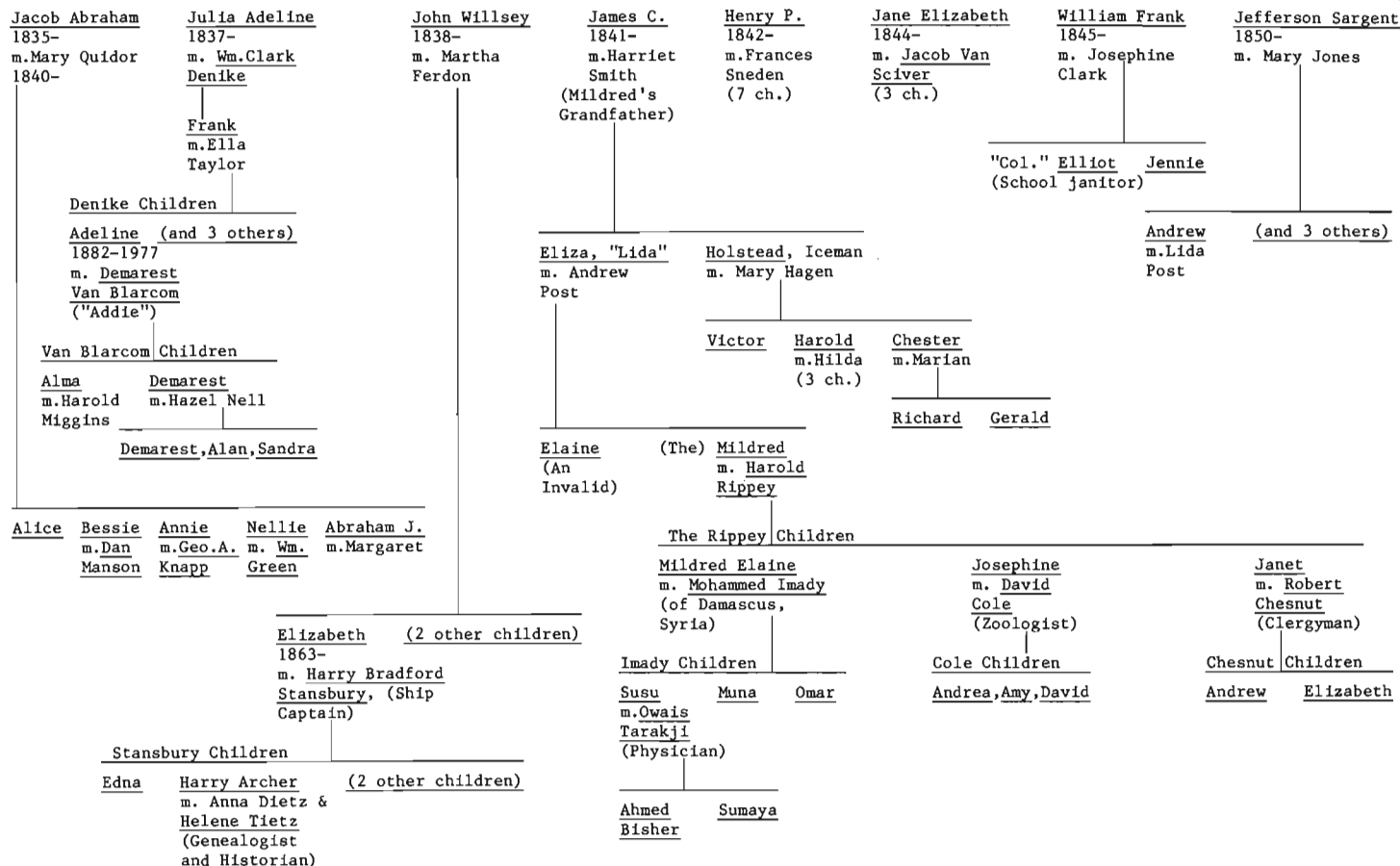
**The Abraham Post House on Closter Road (now gone)  
with a Family Group (in 1860's)**

There was a Post house on Closter Road before the Revolution, but its location is in doubt. The house shown in this picture seems to date from the Federal period. It was burned down some time after the picture was taken. Shown in the picture are: standing by the corner of the house Famiche Eliza Willsey Post and her husband, Abraham; left to right, son Jefferson in sulky; grandchildren: Abraham, son of Jacob, Sherman, son of Henry, Frank Denike, son of Julia and father of Addie, Lida, daughter of James and mother of Mildred, Elizabeth, daughter of John and mother of Archer Stansbury; sons, Frank Post by oxen, Jacob, near barn door.

## THE POST FAMILY OF PALISADES

Abram (or Abraham) Post married Euphemia (or Famiche) Eliza (or Elizabeth) Willsey (or Willse)  
 1814-1872 in 1835 1814-1896

## Local History, page 74



THE WILLSEY FAMILY OF PALISADES

The first American Willsey was Hendrick Martensen Wiltz, born on the Atlantic on the way from Holland in 1623. He married Maria Meyarts, had 5 children. One son, Jacob, born 1676 in Newtown, L.I., married Abigail Ferguson. They had 8 children, including Jan, born in Phillipsburgh, N.Y., in 1712. He married Hannah Odell of Tappan, and their 5 children were recorded in Tappan. One of these, Jacob, born 1734, married Abigail Farseur, had 4 children, and later signed the Patriotic Association in 1774. His son, Peter, was the last in the family to speak Dutch.

(1767-                      Peter Wilse                      married                      Famiche (Phebe) Gesner                      (1768-1821)

<u>Abigail</u> b.1790 (C)	<u>John</u> 1792-1855 (T) m.Elizabeth Hendrix. Lived in "Bolting" house, torn down for parkway	<u>Elizabeth</u> b.1795 (C)	<u>Famiche</u> b.1798 (C)	<u>Peter</u> b.1800 (C)	<u>Jacob</u> b.1802 (C)	<u>Isaac</u> b.1805 (C)	<u>Henry</u> b.1808 (C)
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Local History, page 211

<u>Famiche (Euphemia)</u> <u>Eliza (Elizabeth)</u> 1814-1896 m. Abraham (Abram) Post. See Post Genealogy.	<u>Henry Peter</u> b.1816	<u>Catharine. .</u> <u>Lent</u> , b.1818 m. <u>Daniel</u> <u>Vervalen</u>	<u>John</u> Gesner, "Capt." 1821-1897 (T) m. <u>Mary Lyon</u> in 1842. First to live in Capt. John's house on Closter Road.	<u>Jane</u> b.1822 m. <u>Martin</u> <u>Dobbs</u>	<u>Abigail</u> b.1824 m. <u>John</u> <u>Dobbs</u>	<u>Rachel</u> b.1827 m. <u>Daniel</u> <u>Adriance</u>	<u>Andrew</u> <u>Jackson</u> b.1832 m. <u>Virginia</u> <u>Noe</u>	2 girls, b. 1829 & 1834, died young.
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<u>Charles</u> 1846-1930 m. <u>Christina</u> <u>Buchanan</u> in 1874 by Henry Ward Beecher.	<u>John</u> b.1851 m. <u>Eva Quidor</u> <u>Briggs</u> . She m. Wm. later	<u>Marietta</u> b.1854 m. <u>George</u> <u>Sparks</u>	<u>William</u> b.1860 m. <u>E.Q.B.</u> <u>Willsey</u>	<u>Laura</u> b.1862 m. <u>Frank</u> <u>Lawrence</u>	<u>Ada</u> b.1868 m. <u>John</u> <u>Beasley</u>
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Helen Barry

Reference: A genealogy compiled by Helen Barry.

THE CONCKLIN, OR CONKLIN FAMILY OF PALISADES

Jacob Concklin (1) (1718-1787-T) married Hester Barhyte (1720-1785-T) Came from Westchester.  
Bought property stretching from Sparkill Creek to the "Mountain" in 1748. Built house, now gone.

Several children, listed in Cole, including

Jacob (2) Called Jr., then Sr. 1743-1827 (GB)  
m. Elizabeth Gesner, daughter of J.H.G., sister of Nicholas.  
1745-1825 (G.B.)

Jacob (3)  
July 15, 1766-June 22, 1811 (GB)  
m. Mary Quidor (Polly)  
1775-1838 (GB)

Phebe, or Famiche  
b. Feb. 18, 1773  
m. David Concklin (C)  
b. 1772, son of Abraham (C)

Elizabeth  
b. Jan. 13, 1778  
m. Samuel Sneden  
Apr. 17, 1775-Oct. 10, 1863 (T)  
(See Snedens in the Field  
for descendants.)  
Inherited Jacob Gesner house.

Elizabeth  
b. 1798 (C)

Phebe, or Femijs  
b. 1801 (c) d. 1827 (GB)  
m. Jesse Trenchard

David, Jr.  
1793-1840  
(GB)

Jacob (4)  
1794-1832 (ATG)  
m. Elmira Stephens  
(ATG) or Stephenson.  
1 son, died young.

John G.  
b. 1796 (C)  
m. Madelaine Fortier

Peter  
b. 1799  
(C)

Elizabeth  
b. 1801 (C)  
m. Joseph Dubois

Mary Ann  
1803-1880  
m. Albert (Obb) Cooper  
1804-1866  
(See Cooper  
Genealogy)

Phebe  
b. 1806 (C)  
m. Richard Van Wickel  
Several children  
including Jesse.

Rachel  
b. 1808  
(c)

Nicholas  
b. 1811 (C)  
Inherited Old  
Gesner House.

Louis Henry Fortier,  
b. 1822 (ATG)  
m. Jane Fowles

Mary Elizabeth Ephraim  
b. 1832  
m. James Gowdy  
10 children (ATG)  
(Gowdys later owned  
Burying Ground)

References

ATG - Anthon Temple Gesner  
C - List of Baptisms in Cole's History  
GB - Gesner Burying Ground  
T - Tombstone in Palisades Cemetery

Reginald McMahon, in his articles about  
houses in Rockleigh, N.J., gives the best  
account of the Concklin family.

## THE COOPER FAMILY OF PALISADES

Lucas, son of Henry Cooper from Holland married Tyne Cooper, daughter of Peter Cooper,  
 Called "Old Cooper" (perhaps Henry's brother), ATG calls her Caroline.  
 (Diary called her "Old Miss Cooper")

## Local History, pages 13, 83, and 84

<u>Peter</u> b.1789 m. <u>Maria</u> <u>Westervelt</u> 5 children.	<u>Henry</u> b.1792 A traveler.	<u>James</u> " <u>Cose</u> ", m. <u>Wynchy</u> , had daughter, <u>Tyney</u> .	<u>Margaret</u> " <u>Peggy</u> ", 1798-1872 (T) m. <u>George Quidor</u> 1789-1870 (T) See Quidor Genealogy.	<u>Richard</u> b.1801.	<u>Albert "Obb"</u> 1804-1866, m. <u>Mary Ann Concklin</u> , d. of <u>Jacob C.</u> b. 1803.	<u>Elizabeth</u> " <u>Bets</u> ", b.1807, m. <u>Jacob</u> , son of <u>Nicholas Gesner</u> .	<u>Hannah</u> , " <u>Nautchy</u> " b. 1812
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## Local History, page 13

<u>Elizabeth Ann</u> b.1827, m. <u>John R. Woolsey</u> , son <u>Albert</u> .	<u>George H.</u> b.1829	<u>Jacob A.</u> b.1831	<u>Nicholas L.</u> b.1834	<u>Mary C.</u> b.1837 m. <u>Jacob</u> <u>Sneden Moore</u> .	<u>Sarah Jane</u> " <u>Old Sal</u> ", b.1840 m. <u>John W.</u> <u>Hagen</u> .	<u>James P.</u> b.1844 m. <u>Sarah Ann</u> <u>Concklin</u> , from Alpine.
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## References

ATG - Anthon Temple Gesner  
 T - Tombstone

Johan Hendrick Gesner, Millwright, a Palatine, 1681-1745, and wife, Elizabeth Ann Smith, came on ship Lyon in 1710 (AHA).  
Bought 56 acres in Tappan from Johannes DeVries, Yeoman, in 1725 (Accordion File).

John Hendrick Gesner married Famiche Brower, supposed descendant of Anneke Jans  
May 25, 1724 - 1722-1788 (GB)  
July 6, 1811

Local History, page 19 (Most of them in Cole too) ATG has many details about them.

<u>Elizabeth</u> b.Dec.6,1745 m. <u>Jacob</u> <u>Concklin</u>	<u>John</u> (ATG 20) 1749-1833. m. <u>Antye Onderdonck</u> 10 ch., incl. <u>Phebe</u> , m. <u>John</u> <u>Sneden</u> , <u>Henry</u> who built ship <u>Orange</u>	<u>Jacob</u> b.Dec.23,1751 m. <u>Ann Briggs</u> (ATG) Lost at sea (G) Went to Nova Scotia.	<u>Isaac</u> b.May 15,1754 Tailor m. <u>Joanna</u> <u>LaFarge</u> (ATG) Went to Nova Scotia.	<u>Henry &amp;</u> <u>Abraham</u> twins b.Nov.10,1756 H.d.Oct.13,1850. Both went to Nova Scotia, and each had 12 children (ATG). Ab. m. <u>Eliz. Steadman</u> (AHA).	<u>Cornelius</u> Feb.1,1761- 1790 (ATG). m. <u>Catherine</u> <u>Conklin</u> (AHA)	<u>Nicholas</u> Dec.10,1765- May 20,1858. m. <u>Gracey Post</u> Diarist.	<u>Famiche</u> b.March 31,1768 d.Feb.9,1821 (GB) m. <u>Peter Willsey</u> b.1767 (LH 20)
--	---	--	--	--	---	--	---

8 Willsey Children, incl.

John, 1792-1855 (T)  
Captain on coasting  
ships. (S.o.F. 13). m.  
Eliz. Hendrix, 1812.

Local History, page 22 - Concklin Children

<u>Jacob</u> 1766-1811 m. <u>Mary Quidor</u> She d.1838 (G) and is probably the "P" (for Polly) that Gesner often refers to.	<u>Famiche</u> b.1773 (Phebe) m. <u>David</u> (See Snedens Concklin. in the Field)	<u>Elizabeth</u> b.1778, m. <u>Samuel Sneden</u> (See Snedens Concklin. in the Field)
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Several children, incl.

<u>David</u> d.1840 (GB)	<u>Phebe</u> m. <u>J. Trenchard</u> d.1827 (GB)
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LH 22 - Eight Concklin Children, incl.

<u>Jacob</u> 1794-1832 m. <u>Elmira</u> <u>Stephens</u> 1 ch. d.y. (ATG)	<u>John G.</u> 1796, m. <u>M. Fortier</u> , daughter m. <u>Mary m. J.</u> <u>Gowdey</u> (ATG)	<u>Mary Ann</u> 1803-1880 m. <u>Albert</u> or "Obb" <u>Cooper</u>	<u>Phebe</u> 1806 m. <u>R. Van</u> <u>Wickel</u> 3 ch. incl. <u>Jesse</u>
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Local History, page 78

<u>Wm. Herbert</u> m. <u>Mary Ann Mann</u> had 10 children. One, Matilda, m. <u>Abraham Van Wart</u> . Another <u>Wm. Nicholas</u> was shipbuilder. Wrote WSG, LH 79A.	<u>Nicholas</u> 1794-1820	<u>Sally</u> 1796-1854 m. <u>Jon. Law</u> IV, had 5 ch., one, <u>Mary</u> , m. <u>Wm. Sparks</u> .	<u>Jacob</u> 1801. m. <u>Eliz. Cooper</u> , then <u>Henrietta</u> <u>Clark</u> , had 10 children (ATG).
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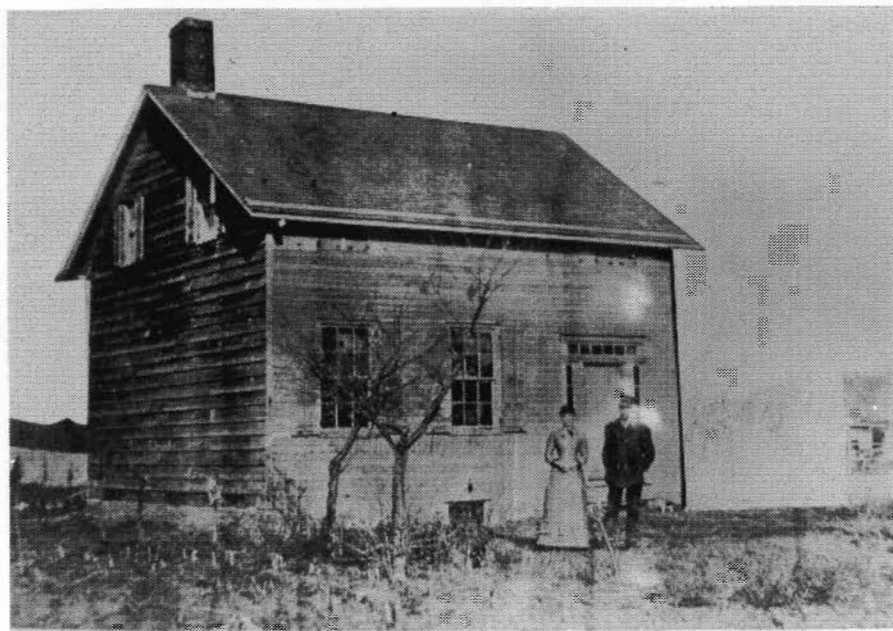
Local History, page 21 - Ten Willsey Children, including

<u>Famiche</u> or <u>Euphemia</u> , <u>Eliza</u> , or <u>Elizabeth</u> 1814-1896 m. <u>Abram Post</u> (See Post Family Genealogy)	<u>Catherine L.</u> 1818 m. <u>D. Vervalen</u> .	<u>John G.</u> 1821-1897 "Capt. John" m. <u>Mary Lyon</u> (See Lawrence Family Genealogy)	<u>Jane</u> 1822-1895 m. <u>M. Dobbs</u> (See Dobbs Family Genealogy)	<u>Abigail A.</u> 1824 m. <u>J. Dobbs</u>	<u>Rachel A.</u> "Ratie" 1827- m. <u>D. Adriance</u>
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#### References

AHA - Alfred H. Abbott, letter to Journal-News, Mar.19, 1979.  
ATG - Anthon Temple Gesner's The Gesner Family  
Cole - Baptisms in Cole's History of Rockland County  
G - Gesner Diary  
GB - Gesner Burying Ground  
LH - Local History, by W.S. Gilman





**Quidor House, 1845. George and Peggy Cooper Quidor in front.**



**Quidor House, 1885. Madame Lydia Lefferts Quidor, Evelyn Lieval, Emma Quidor, Paul Lieval.**

George Quidor, came from France in the XVIIth Century, married Marie Saindou.

French Huguenot (LH)

Peter Quidor, married Elsie Truman.  
Left N.Y.City during Revolution and  
came to live on the "High Palisades."  
Died Mar.30,1832 (G). Land sold to  
Henry Heather (LH).

Eight children, including

Mary  
Mar.19,1774-  
Jan.6,1838  
m.Jacob Concklin,Jr.  
in 1792. He died in  
1811. She was a friend  
of Nicholas Gesner.

Peter Quidor, Jr.  
b.Feb.9,1771  
m.Maria Smith in 1797.  
Lived east of Ludlow  
Lane. Moved to N.Y.C.  
in 1811 (B).

Eight children, including

<u>Jacob</u> 1794- 1832.	<u>John G.</u> b.1796	<u>Mary Ann</u> b.1803 m.Albert "Obb" <u>Cooper</u> d.1880	<u>Phebe</u> b.1806 <u>m.Richard</u> Van Wickel. "Old Peter" died in her house (G).
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Four children, including

John Quidor, Artist  
Jan.26,1801-1881  
Wife Eliza (G)

George Quidor, married Sarah Marsh

George Marsh Quidor  
1789-1870 (T)  
m.Margaret Cooper  
1798-1872 (T)

Sarah  
m.Kellogg  
moved to  
Wisconsin

Nine children, including

Mary  
b.Jul.20,1840  
m.Jacob Post

Warren Quidor  
Jul.2,1835-Jul.13,1900  
m.Lydia Lefferts, a Quaker  
(Called Madame Quidor)

Frank  
1859-1883  
(T)

Emma Jane  
1863-1955  
Librarian in  
Palisades for  
fifty years.

Evelyn  
1867-1953  
m.Paul Lieval  
(His brother,  
Joseph L., was  
the father of  
Constance Lieval  
Price)

#### References

- B - Baur's Booklet about Quidor  
Genealogy in Quidor folder in library  
G - Gesner Diary  
LH - Gilman's Local History, pp. 60-63 & 116  
T - Tombstones in Cemetery

<u>Benjamin Ives Gilman</u> married <u>Hannah Robbins</u>		<u>Francis Doremus, 1787-1876</u> (died in Palisades)		
<u>B.I. Gilman, Jr.</u> m. M. Miles in 1837		<u>Winthrop Sargent Gilman, Sr.</u> m. Abia Swift Lippincott		
<u>Thos. Poynton Gilman</u> (Cousin Tom)		<u>Charles Frederick Park</u> 1816-1865 (Wholesale Grocer) (LH 31)		
13 children (Local History, page 81) including		<u>Caroline E. Doremus</u> 1820-1894 Her second husband was <u>William Mulligan</u> .		
<u>Theodore</u> b.1841 Owned property in Palisades.	<u>Emily</u> b.1854 m. <u>C.P.Noyes</u> St.Paul,Minn. (Genealogist)	<u>Benjamin Ives G.</u> b.1852, Asst. Curator, Fine Arts Museum, Boston	<u>Winthrop Sargent Gilman, Jr.</u> 1839-1923	m. <u>Anna</u>  <u>Charles Francis Park</u> m.l. Katherine 2. Julia Cleveland VanWyck Swift 1861-1928 d.1880
<u>Bertha de la Vergne</u> b.1863, m. <u>Anthony</u> <u>Bleeker</u>	<u>Charles Winthrop G.</u> b.1865, unmarried	<u>Anna Park</u> 1872-1955 m. <u>Robert C. Hill</u> in 1894. No children. (Gardener and Writer)		
<u>Bleeker Children</u>				
<u>Anthony Lispernard</u>	<u>Helena</u>	<u>Winthrop Gilman</u>		
Information from Gilman's Local History and from Mrs. Helen Park Stockman. Also from Mr. and Mrs. C.P. Noyes' writings.		<u>Katherine VanWyck</u> m. <u>Hervy Studdiford</u> (Lived in "The Lodge," Palisades. b.1875.	<u>Elizabeth de la</u> <u>Vergne</u> b.1879 d.at 21	<u>Charles Francis, Jr.</u> His mother died at his birth. 1880-1945. m. Gertrude Beecher.  <u>William Beecher Park</u>  <u>Charles F. Park</u>
<u>Julia, m. John</u> <u>L. Vanderbilt</u> (Teacher at Dwight Jr. School, Englewood) b.1885	<u>Caroline</u> <u>Doremus</u> , m.Lawrence Whittemore b.1888	<u>Eleanor, m.</u> <u>Edward Benner</u> (Lived in "The Lodge," Palisades.) b.1890	<u>Marian</u> <u>Swift</u> m. <u>Dudley M.</u> <u>Humphrey</u> b.1892	<u>Helen Caldwell, m.</u> <u>Henry C. Stockman</u> b.1894 (Wrote her recollections for AMH.)  <u>Pamela (Mrs. J.C.Proctor)</u>

Henry Effingham Lawrence married Lydia Underhill (Her sister was "Aunt Annie Underhill")  
 d. 1890 d. 1912

b. 1830

Edith  
 m. George Chisholm

b. 1864-

Margaret  
 Unmarried  
 d. 1931

Joseph  
 d. 1898

Mary  
 1868-1945  
 m. François Tonetti, d. 1920

Tonetti children

Anne E.  
 b. 1903  
 m. Eric Gugler.  
 Lives in Snedens,  
 of course.

Joseph  
 Lived in Texas  
 m. Susan Hyde

Lydia  
 b. 1905, d. 1943  
 m. Robert Hyde  
 divorced.

Marie (Chrissie)  
 b. 1907, d. 1973  
 m. 1. John Ratcliff-div.  
 5 Ratcliff children,  
Lydia, Alix, John, Gail,  
Tony.  
 m. 2. Alan Sheldon.

Alexandra (Alix)  
 b. 1910  
 m. Harwood White  
 5 boys. Lives in  
 Santa Barbara.

Joseph, m.  
Anne Sweeney  
 Lives in  
 Snedens.  
 3 children,  
Susie, Joey,  
Kate.

Mary, m.  
Henri Doña  
 Lives in  
 Santa Barbara.  
 2 daughters.

Robert  
 and John

Hyde children

Anne Gail (Angie)  
 m. Lloyd Bjorklund  
 4 children. Lives  
 on West Coast.

Joseph (chef)  
 m. Gail Wrenn  
 (divorced)  
 3 children,  
Anne, Philip,  
Bartholomew  
 (Barry).

François  
 m. 1. Elizabeth Walden (div.)  
 2 children by E. Walden,  
Johanna, Howard.  
 m. 2. Joyce

## NOTES

(References are completely detailed in the bibliography, page 233. Just enough information is given here to identify the sources. A list of loose-leaf notebooks or binders containing copies of source material is given at the end of the bibliography.)

**Title:** Place names like Snedens do not take an apostrophe, according to the **United States Board of Geographic Names**. (See Orth, page 166).

### Chapter 1 — Introduction

#### Page 2

The quotation about the importance of the blockhouse is from Budke's **Rockland County During the Revolution**, page 149.

#### Page 4

Green's **History of Rockland County** tells about the quarries on page 164.

#### Page 5

Schuberth's **Geology of New York City and Environs** tells of the extent of the Palisades on page 143 and the course of the Hudson River on page 176.

Verrazano's discovery is discussed thoroughly in Samuel Eliot Morison's **European Discovery of America. The Northern Voyages**, page 301. He also writes about Norumbega, which is sometimes said to refer to the Palisades, but which he says positively was on the Penobscot River in Maine. (Page 464). In Morison's **Southern Voyages**, page 588, he tells about Verrazano's end.

Hudson's voyage, as described by Juet, is quoted in Van

Zandt's **Chronicles of the Hudson**, pages 7-15. On page 18 VanZandt also gives what is known of Hudson's description, quoted by DeLaet.

#### Page 7

Robert Boyle, in "**The Hudson River**", writes of the fragrance on pages 33 and 34.

DeLaet's list of the reaches is given on pages 16 and 17 of VanZandt's **Chronicles**, and Van Zandt's note about them on page 305 of the same book.

Lucini's Map is reproduced in O'Callaghan's **Documentary History of the State of New York**, at the beginning of Volume I.

The Tappan and other Indians are described in Trelease's **Indian Affairs in Colonial New York**, page 7.

Julian Salomon, author of **Indians of Rockland County**, read the part about Indians and made corrections and additions.

#### Page 10

Budke, Vol. 88, page 50, lists the goods traded to the Indians. The braves sent by the Sachem to help the British are mentioned in O'Callaghan's **Documentary History of the State of New York**, Vol 2, page 237.

Daniel Denton's remark about God's clearing out the Indians is on page 7 of his **Brief Description of New York**.

Demarest's **Last Indians in the Upper Hackensack Valley** is published in **Bergen County History**, 1975 Annual, beginning on page 73.

## Chapter 2 — Colonial Times

### Page 11

McMahon's article about Vriessendael appeared in **New Jersey History**, Autumn, 1969, pages 173-180.

Demarest's **The Dutch Mijl as a Measure of Distance** was printed in "De Halve Maen," Vol. 43, No. 2, July, 1968, page 7.

DeVries' account of his many voyages and adventures was published in Alkmaar, Netherlands, in 1655, with a twelve-line title. Jameson's **Narratives of New Netherland** has a translation of the part concerned with New Netherland.

### Page 12

The grant to Valott and his companions is reproduced in the Budke Collection, Vol. 69, No. 552.

The grant by the Indians to the sixteen farmers through Lady Elizabeth Carteret is reproduced in the Budke Collection, Vol. 88, page 50.

Dongan's Tappan Patent, listing the grantees, is given in the Budke Collection, Vol. 67, pages 64 and 65. Cole's **History of Rockland County**, pages 197-198, gives the complete text.

### Page 13

Sergeant Martin says on page 197 of his narrative: "Orangetown, commonly called by the inhabitants of those parts, Tappan (pronounced Tap-pawn)."

The quotation in Green's **History of Rockland County** is on page 39.

Cole's **History of Rockland County** gives a good account of the Orangetown Resolutions, and repeats Clinton's characterization of the Dutch, page 27.

In the back of Cole's **History** is what seems to be a remarkably accurate transcription of the baptisms in the Tappan Church from 1694 to 1816.

### Page 14

Of the persistence of the Dutch language, Cole's **History**, page 201, says: "As late as 1830 the services at the Tappan Church were on alternate Sundays held in Dutch and English."

The organizations of Orange and Rockland Counties are described by Cole, page 95, and Green, page 44.

Budke, in **The Rockland Record**, Vol. I, page 9, reproduces the clipping from the **New York Gazette** of October, 1773, telling of the destruction of the Court and Gaol at Tappan, "supposed to be done by the prisoners then confined within."

**The Minutes of the Board of Proprietors of the Eastern Division of New Jersey**, page 63, mentions Lockhart's securing stone for a prison house.

The text of the Lockhart Patent from New Jersey can be found in the Budke Collection, Vol. 67, page 39.

The sale of marsh land by Lockhart to Phillipse is recorded in the Budke Collection, Vol. 69, No. 548.

### Page 16

Dongan's Patent to Lockhart in New York is found in the Budke Collection, Vol. 67, pages 41-42. There is also a facsimile copy of the same patent sent by the Department of State, Albany, in the loose-leaf notebook "Colonial Times."

The text of the "mortgage-deed" from Lockhart to Merritt is given in the list of conveyances in the Accordion file. Howard Durie, in a personal communication, explained that "The apparent intent of such a document was to eliminate the necessity of a possible foreclosure proceeding or the like, in the event of a default." Five days after the deed was signed, Lockhart and his wife gave one-sixth of the whole tract (except for half of the salt meadow already sold to Phillipse), to their daughter, Janet and her husband John Merritt. William Merritt was present, so he must have consented. Ten years later, on Nov. 8, 1697,



the John Merritts relinquished the property. There are copies of the deeds in the accordion files. Before March 16, 1698, Lockhart had died, and letters of administration were granted to William Merritt (B.C. 67).

The street lighting mentioned in the note was provided for in the **Minutes of the Common Council, 1675-1776**, for Nov. 23, 1697.

"Cheerhall" is given as the name of the house in the deed from Merritt to Corbett, quoted below, and "Chear Hall" as the heading of a letter from Lord Cornbury.

Margaret Lane, the authority on the Dobbs family, identified Sara Crab and Edward Meek as Jan Dobbs' aunt and cousin, and therefore Merritt's sister and nephew.

Cole gives the census, page 199; Green tells of the Merritts' appointments, page 45.

Although this epidemic has been called small-pox or cholera in other accounts, Packard's **History of Medicine**, Vol. I, page 113, identifies it as yellow fever.

Lord Cornbury's letters from "Chear Hall," telling about his stay in Albany, and the "great sickness" can be found in **Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York**, Vol. IV, pages 970-76.

The records of the Council meeting at "Cheer Hall, Orange County" and the others at Kingsbridge appear in the **Calendar of Council Minutes**, pages 173 and 174.

#### Page 17

William Smith writes of Lord Cornbury in his **History**, Vol. I, pages 117-130.

The story about Lord Cornbury's wife's ears appears in Ormonde deKay's **His Most Detestable High Mightiness**. There is a copy of the deed from the Merritts to John Corbett in the Accordion File, number 11.

#### Page 19

Douglas Merritt's **Revised Merritt Records**, page 47, tells about Merritt as a pilot in his last years, as mentioned in the note.

Captain John Corbett of the ship **Beaver** is mentioned, among other places, in O'Callaghan's **Documentary History**, Vol. II, page 427. His two wives are mentioned in O'Callaghan's **New York Marriages**, pages 585 and 590.

The tradition about Corbett's living in the **Big House** and shooting deer from his front porch is mentioned in **Local History**, page 23.

Captain Corbett's will is summarized in Fernow's **Calendar of Wills**, page 60.

Mary Corbett's marriage to Henry Ludlow, and their children, are listed in Gordon's **Gabriel Ludlow and his Descendants**. Cole's **History of the Tappan Church** tells of their being received into the church. Cole's **History of Rockland County** lists the children who were baptized in the church.

Many of the deeds for property in Rockland are recorded in the Budke Collection, Vol. 69, and others are in the Accordion Files.

#### Page 20

In **Local History**, page 25, Mr. Gilman says he is sure of the date 1784 for the Mann house. Helene Stansbury, who is related to the Manns by marriage, has prepared a genealogy of the Mann family.

The story of this Mann house and Mrs. Tonetti is told in Isabelle Savell's **Tonetti Years**, page 170.

#### Page 21

Reginald McMahon's scholarly but unpublished articles about houses in the present Rockleigh, just across the New Jersey border, are brought together in a loose-leaf binder.

### Chapter 3 — The Boundary Controversy

#### Page 24

Information about the boundary dispute can be found in

James Alexander's MS, Whitehead's, Parker's, and Cook's articles, Allinson's **Laws**, Van Zandt's **Boundaries**, and Budke's Volume 29. Copies of these have been brought together in a loose-leaf notebook.

Wilfred Talman's **How Things Began**, pages 41-52, gives a good picture of local quarrels about the boundry.

**Documents Relative to Colonial History**, Vol. 6, page 775, quotes the Lords of Trade as pointing out the distinction between the provinces, and saying that it was in the interests of the Crown to support New York. Whitehead, page 168, quotes this passage.

Morris's report is found in the Budke Collection, Vol. 29, page 9.

Budke tells of the certificate by the New York surveyors, in his Vol. 29, page 7.

#### Page 26

James Alexander's MS in the N.-Y.H.S., partly reproduced in the Budke Collection, Vol. 29, pages 16-33, gives the account of this attempt.

Allinson's **Laws of New Jersey**, page 368, tells of the distance from Sneden's house. On page 372 it tells of the writing on the Station Rock.

#### Page 27

Cook's **Report on a Survey of the Boundary Line**, page 30, gives the actual latitude at the Station Rock.

Van Zandt's **Boundaries**, pages 76 and 77, gives the latest information about the controversy, in 1976.

Parker's article, 1858, describes New Jersey's grievances over the other boundaries.

### Chapter 4 — The Snedens of the Landing and their Ferry

#### Page 28

Mackenzie's **Early Settlement of Phillipsburgh** tells of Jan

and William Dobbs. Margaret Travis Lane's communications about the Dobbs' and many related families, published and unpublished, are brought together in a binder.

The suggestion that Mollie Sneden was born a Dobbs is presented in Howard Durie's article in **Relics**, issued by the Pascack Historical Society, Vol. 19, number 108, 1975. With the help of Helene Stansbury, the originals of many of the Sneden documents mentioned here, and others, have been discovered in the possession of Sneden descendants, the William Sloats, in Norwood, N.J.

The license for a tavern is mentioned in Mr. Durie's article in **Relics**.

#### Page 30

Strangely enough, the story about Mollie and the spy doesn't appear in **The Story of the Ferry**, but in Bailey's **Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families**, on page 220. **The Story of the Ferry** does tell of the hundred pigeons, on page 3.

This quotation from Freeman is found in Vol. 4, pages 638-9. Newton Sneden in a MS in the Sneden binder, and Cathleen Heslin, in the **North Jersey Suburbanite**, Feb. 11, 1976, have presented this interesting theory.

#### Page 31

The puzzle about George Calhoun is brought up in Howard Durie's **Relics** article mentioned above.

The copies of the powers of attorney from Samuel and William Sneden to their mother are given in Vol. 34 of the Budke Manuscript Collection in the New York Public Library, Manuscript Room.

The will of Jonathan Lawrence, the Elder Senior, mentions his daughter, Ellison Sneden. Their marriage is listed in O'Callaghan's **New York Marriages**.

Joseph Elting Sloat, in a paper giving the Revolutionary War service of his ancestors, says: "Capt. Wm. Coates of Snedens Landing, N.Y., told me that he had a paper

certifying that John Sneden piloted the American men-of-war on the Hudson River during the Revolution, but this paper was destroyed in the fire which burned the old ferry house at Snedens Landing some time about 1890."

## Chapter 5 — The War of Independence

### Page 34

Martha Washington's trip across on the ferry was described in detail by Wharton, pages 91-96. Force, **Archives**, 4th Series, Vol. I, page 283N, lists those who accompanied her.

Fitzpatrick, Vol. IV, page 123, mentions Baylor's escort. Her letter to her friend, S. B. Webb, is quoted in Freeman, Vol. 4, page 581.

### Page 35

Dennis Sneden's bill is copied in **The Story of the Ferry**, page 6. See Appendix Number 10.

The resolution of the County Committee is reproduced in Appendix Number 11.

In **The Story of the Ferry**, page 154, "Boss Sneden's" daughter, Ellison Westervelt, who lived in the small house in 1875, is quoted as having told Miss Ella Coates that Mollie and Dennis Sneden once lived there. In **Local History**, page 27, Mr. Gilman says that the house had been moved back from the road and altered years ago by Mr. Conklin, "the present owner." (May, 1908).

Robert Sneden's and his brothers' refusals to sign the Association in 1775 are mentioned in Force, 4th Series, Vol. 3, page 597.

Force, 5th series, Vol. 1, page 751, gives an account of the attack by the row galleys; the same volume, page 983, tells of the fire ships.

### Page 37

The exploits of the **Roebuck** and the **Phoenix** and the sinking of Bushnell's **Turtle** are described in Heath's **Memoirs**, page 61.

### Page 39

The stationing of the guard of 500 men is mentioned in Force, 5th series, Vol. 3, page 635.

Fitzpatrick, Vol. XII, p. 522, tells about the enemy landing at Dobbs Ferry before the Baylor Massacre.

The Budke Collection, Vol. 69, no. 231, gives the deed from the Ludlows to Jonathan Lawrence of Westchester. Material about the second and third Jonathan Lawrences came from the New York State Library in Albany and the National Archives in Washington, including extracts from a number of official sources. Copies of these are found in a loose-leaf notebook about the Lawrences.

Koke, page 167, quotes the testimony of Jonathan Lawrence, Jr., at the trial of Joshua Hett Smith, that he himself had "served as guard at Dobbs Ferry in the year of Independence 1776" and that "he considered Smith a friend to the country."

### Page 40

As an example of Washington's commendations, he wrote to Scammel on May 17, 1781: "You will . . . see Captain Lawrence, who commands the New York Levies near Dobbs Ferry and concert measures with him for gaining certain intelligence, etc., etc. — You will trust no officer . . . but Lawrence — he is sensible and appears discreet." Fitzpatrick, Vol. XXII, p. 94.

**The New Jersey Journal**, August 2, 1780, tells of the capture of Moody by "Captain Lawrence of the New-York state levies."

Pennypacker's suggestion is given on page 126.

The letter to Rochambeau is given in Fitzpatrick, Vol. XIX, page 325-6.

#### Page 41

One of the spies is quoted in Green's **History**, page 106. It is taken from **The Secret Papers of Sir Henry Clinton**. The other is found in the Clinton Papers in the Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan. The texts of the reports are given in Appendix Number 14. (Copies of the source material on the blockhouse are in the loose-leaf notebook on the subject.)

The pertinent part of Haring's letter is found on pages 60C and 60D in **Palisades Notes**.

Martin's remarks are on page 204 of his narrative.

Dr. Thacher tells of his dinner with Baron VonSteuben on page 208.

#### Page 42

Thacher's disparaging description of the view from Robinson's house is on page 133.

Arnold's letter is given in Sparks, Vol. 3, page 81.

Leake has General Lamb's letter to Arnold about his taking men away from the garrison. Pages 251-2.

#### Page 43

Martin writes of Arnold on pages 203-204.

Greene's letter is reproduced in Budke's **Rockland Record**, Vol. III, page 19.

Martin tells about the shots at the **Vulture** on page 203.

#### Page 44

Boudinot tells the story about André on page 85.

Gale tells of his visit to the blockhouse in his diary, of which the New-York Historical Society has a photostatic copy.

Angell's entries about the blockhouse are on page 126.

William Smith's account is on page 337 of his **Memoirs**.

#### Page 45

Washington says in a letter to W. S. Smith, Fitzpatrick, Vol. XXV, page 438, that he has seen the blockhouse; and Leiby, page 268, quotes two soldiers named Westervelt

as saying that Washington rode up to the post and commanded them to be diligent and watchful. Dr. Thacher writes of Lafayette and VonSteuben being in Tappan with Washington in early August of 1780, page 208.

The story about the shots from the **Asia** is in Gilman's **The Story of the Ferry**, page 87.

Carl Carmer writes of the **Asia** on pages 110 and 111.

#### Page 48

Mr. Hagen's cannon ball is mentioned in **Local History**, page 24.

In **The Rockland Record**, Vol. III, Budke gives much of Washington's correspondence about the blockhouse, and Fitzpatrick has more.

Budke, in **Rockland County During the American Revolution**, page 219, writes of Hazen crossing at Dobbs Ferry, and setting up a bakery at Chatham, N.J.

William Smith, in his **Memoirs**, page 431, writes of the soldiers stationed at Corbets Point.

#### Page 49

Fitzpatrick, Vol. XXIV, page 239, gives the text of Washington's order for the reception of flags.

The description of life in the blockhouse is in Thacher's **Journal**, pages 319-321.

#### Page 50

Washington's letter to Col. Greaton is in Fitzpatrick, Vol. XXIV, page 339.

Col. Greaton's letter was published by Budke in the **Nyack Journal News** of Mar. 22, 1946. He had found the account in the National Archives, but it does not appear in Fitzpatrick.

Washington's letter to Colonel Webb is in Fitzpatrick, Vol. XXV, page 295.

#### Page 51

William Stephens Smith's petulant letter is given in Budke's

**Rockland Record**, Vol. III, page 31 and 32. (See Appendix Number 14).

Captain Pray's complaint to Washington is given in Budke's **Rockland Record**, Vol. III, page 29.

Captain Pray's blunder was described by Budke in the **Nyack Journal News** of March 21, 1946.

#### Page 52

Copies of letters from Jonathan Lawrence, Jr. to Washington about his illness — probably tuberculosis — in August and November, 1782, were sent by the Library of Congress, and are in the loose-leaf notebook about the four Jonathan Lawrences, as is the communication about his land grant.

Gilman, in **Local History**, pages 22A, B, C, and D, gives the chain of title of the Big House from Jonathan Lawrence, the Elder Senior, on. The original parchment deed between "Reinier John van den Broek of the City of New York Merchant and Jonathan Lawrence, Junior of the County of Orange in the State of New York Gentleman" is in the possession of the Palisades Library. It is dated June 8, 1794.

The history of the cemetery is given in Appendix Number 5. Several first-hand accounts of the Washington-Carleton encounter are given in Budke's **Rockland Record**, Vol. III, pages 45-52.

Major Baurmeister's report is found on page 559 of his journals.

### Chapter 6 — First Half of the Nineteenth Century

#### Page 53

Dennis' coasting work is implied in the letter, dated 1784 (Appendix Number 22) which asks Dennis to pick up wood at Snedens. The fact that Mollie was still in New York in 1787 and 1788 is proved by the address to which

the powers of attorney were sent by her absent sons. (Budke Collection, No. 34.)

**The Story of the Ferry**, page 154, repeats Ellison Westervelt's statement.

**Local History**, page 27, says that the house was moved back from the road. This must have been some time after 1883, when he bought it from "Brommie" Jones.

Appendix Number 17 gives "Solid facts about the Snedens."

#### Page 58

Stephen Bradley was given the explanation of the bone factories by an old-timer, and repeats it in his **Story of Alpine, N.J.**, page 43. For other information about bone factories, see Appendix Number 19.

Mrs. Hill in her **Snedens Landing and Palisades** writes of Captain Jack Coates' cottage at the Cascade and the shad fishermen. Mr. Gilman describes them in his **Retrospect**, page 6.

#### Page 59

Ella Coates' account is the first article in **The Story of the Ferry**.

#### Page 60

Green's **History of Rockland County**, pages 209-213, and Cole's **History of Rockland County**, page 220, tell about the steamboats **Orange** and **Rockland**. Green's, page 213, describes the building of the **Warren** in New York by Sneden's and Lawrence's boatyard in New York.

Budke's **Rockland Record**, Vol. II, page 108, has an interesting article on the strawberry trade.

#### Page 61

**Palisades Notes**, page 40, quotes this letter from Samuel Sneden incidentally while discussing the water-mark in the paper. Howard Durie has made the inference that "Little Sam" might have come back to found the "Snedens in the Field."

In **The Story of the Ferry**, page 15, Mr. Gilman has an article about Gesner's **Diary** and some extracts from it. Gracy's oak tree is mentioned on page 16.

#### Page 65

John Scott's interesting and scholarly article on "The Slote, Piermont, and the Erie Railroad" was published in **South of the Mountains**, July-Sept., 1976.

Gesner in his **Diary**, and Mr. Gilman in his writings have too many references to stores and blacksmith shops to list.

#### Page 67

In "Rockland Fire Fighters" in **South of the Mountains** for Jan.-Mar., 1973, page 5, LeRoy Gates gives the history of fire-fighting in Rockland County. He gives the picture and history of the first small bucket engine.

#### Page 68

Mr. Gilman in **The Story of the Ferry**, page 114 (in an article on "Beeches"), tells about Moses Taylor's childhood in Palisades.

#### Page 69

Bailey speaks of the Mann house on the westward slope being built on the "cow path." In **The Story of the Ferry**, page 105, Gilman describes the old short cut.

#### Page 71

Mrs. Tholl's story appears in the **North Jersey Highlander** of Fall, 1971.

Buchanan's "Narrative of the Exhumation of the Remains of Major André" appears in the **United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine**, 1833, page 303. A photostatic copy is in the file on André, as is Mrs. Tholl's article. Cole writes of the removal on page 74.

Joan Geismar's thesis was published as a trade book in 1983: **The Archaeology of Social Disintegration in Skunk Hollow**.

#### Page 74

The interview by the children of the Rockland Project School

and Norman Baron with Charlie Lundstrom is in the Palisades Library. Another copy is in the folder on Skunk Hollow. Part of it is reproduced in Appendix Number 25.

#### Page 77

The ceremony for the raising of the flagpole in 1861 is described in Gilman's **Palisades Notes**, pages 145-151.

Captain Dobbs' list is given in Appendix Number 24.

Among the authors consulted about the Anneke Jans affair are Bennett, Bogardus, Munsell, and Wikoff. Zabriskie tells of the recent researches in Holland. The quotation by Fiske is cited in D. V. Bennett's article, page 32. Munsell's is on page 7 of his account.

### Chapter 7 — Mid-Nineteenth Century

This is a period when information comes from individuals rather than books. Mrs. Robert Hill, Mrs. Helen Park Stockman, Mrs. Arthur C. Munson, Mr. Archer Stansbury, Mrs. Mildred Post Rippey, and especially Mrs. Adeline Denike Van Blarcom, have shared their recollections of mid and late nineteenth century Palisades in writing or conversation. Mrs. Hill's book **Forty Years of Gardening** and Mrs. Stockman's **I Remember I Remember** provide some information about their early years in Palisades; Isabelle Savell's **Tonetti Years** supplies a good deal; but surpassing all these are Mr. Gilman's voluminous records.

#### Page 79

The stage from Tappan to Snedens Landing is mentioned in the **Rockland County Journal** of October 15, 1853, discovered by Tom Demarest.

#### Page 85

Jack Focht has written interesting accounts of Torrey's life

in Palisades, which are available in the Palisades Library.

**Page 89**

Mrs. Hill's recollections of "Cousin Tom" appear on page 8 of **Forty Years of Gardening**.

**Page 90**

The story of the church bell ringing on New Years Eve is told in Gilman's **Local History**, page 32.

Charles W. Gilman's booklet **Twenty-Five Years of the Palisades Library** is available in the Palisades Library, as is Marion Lowndes' account of **The Next Fifty Years**.

**Page 92**

The story about the date of the Big House as transmitted through "Uncle Johnny" Lawrence and Mr. Joseph Stansbury is told in Gilman's **Palisades Notes**, page 124.

**Page 94**

The monograph has the title: "Alton Trials of Winthrop Sargent Gilman, who was Indicted with Eleven Others for the Crime of Riot Committed on the Night of the 7th of November, 1837, While Engaged in Defending a Printing Press from an Attack Made on it at that time by an Armed Mob." Published 1838, republished 1969.

**Chapter 8 — Accounts of Life in Palisades**

**Page 101**

Mrs. Hill's **Snedens Landing and Palisades** can be found in a

binder in the Palisades Library.

**Page 106**

Saint-Gaudens' description of his art classes in Palisades is found in **Reminiscences**, Volume 1, page 160.

**Page 107**

Isabelle Savell's suggestion about Mary Lawrence's connection with the art classes is found in **Tonetti Years**, page 16.

**Page 115**

Barry Faulkner's description of Mary Lawrence appears on page 145.

Mr. Gilman's account of the events surrounding the Centennial Celebration is found in **Palisades Notes**, pages 5-12, 35-39, and 63-88.

**Chapter 9 — Conclusion**

**Page 117**

Mildred Rippey's speech about Mr. Gilman was printed in **South of the Mountains** for April-June, 1977.

**Page 118**

Louise Hall Tharp, in **Saint-Gaudens and the Gilded Era**, writes of Saint-Gaudens' reaction to Mary Lawrence's marriage on page 305.





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**Loose Leaf Notebooks in Possession of Alice Haagenen  
Eventually to Go to the Palisades Library**

Blockhouse  
Boundary Negotiations  
Colonial Times  
Howard K. Durie — Correspondence  
Ferry  
Margaret Travis Lane — Correspondence  
The Lawrences  
Reginald McMahon — Articles and Correspondence  
The Sneden Family



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(Questions of fact)

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- 7 First paragraph: "The Hudson" should be "The Hudson River".
- 9 Caption: "L'Aria e buono" should be "L'Aria è buona".
- 67 Second column, footnote: "century-wide" should be "country-wide".
- 86 Top Caption: "W. E. Lawrence" should be "H. E. Lawrence".
- 94 Top right caption: "Witney" should be "Whitney".
- 146 Second column, next to last paragraph: "natches" should be "notches".
- 195 Last paragraph: "William Effingham Lawrence" should be "Henry Effingham Lawrence".
- 229 Notes, first column, third item: "Martin's remarks are on page 204" should be: "on page 198".






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The Paper, acid-free, alum-free and rosin-free,  
is Softwhite Letterpress Text, 80lb., by  
**Mohawk Paper Mills, Inc.**, of Cohoes, New York

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# MAP OF PALISADES ROCKLAND CO. N.Y.

August 1874.

COMPILED BY

J.H. SERVISS C.E. ENGLEWOOD N.Y.

FROM ACCURATE SURVEYS AND VARIOUS SOURCES.

LONGITUDE TAKEN FROM U.S. COAST SURVEY MAP OF HUDSON RIVER 1865.

Scale: 300 Ft. per inch.

Scale: 300 Ft. per inch.

DESCRIPTION OF "G" MONUMENT W. OF "PARK" A MARBLE SLAB SET ON A REPERED FOUNDATION 5 FEET 10 INCHES BELOW SURFACE AND 4 INCHES FROM THE CENTER OF THE SLAB. IN THE CENTER OF THE SLAB IS A CUT ON THE SURFACE OF THE SLAB WITH THE LETTERS "G" AND "P" MEASUREMENTS TAKEN FROM ANGLE OF THE "L".

DESCRIPTION OF "L" ROCK AT W. END OF FERN ROAD A SMALL MARBLE SLAB SET IN THE CENTER OF ROAD 10 FEET 10 INCHES FROM THE CENTER OF THE SLAB. IN THE CENTER OF THE SLAB IS A CUT ON THE SURFACE OF THE SLAB WITH THE LETTERS "L" AND "P" MEASUREMENTS TAKEN FROM ANGLE OF THE "L".

DESCRIPTION OF "HEYHOE" MONUMENT ON OLD ROCKLAND ROAD A SMALL MARBLE SLAB SET IN THE CENTER OF ROAD 10 FEET 10 INCHES FROM THE CENTER OF THE SLAB. IN THE CENTER OF THE SLAB IS A CUT ON THE SURFACE OF THE SLAB WITH THE LETTERS "H" AND "P" MEASUREMENTS TAKEN FROM ANGLE OF THE "L".

OTHER MONUMENTS: "P" MONUMENTS ARE SET ON TOP OF RED SQUARES 10 FEET 10 INCHES FROM THE CENTER OF THE SLAB. IN THE CENTER OF THE SLAB IS A CUT ON THE SURFACE OF THE SLAB WITH THE LETTERS "P" AND "P" MEASUREMENTS TAKEN FROM ANGLE OF THE "L".

ORIGINAL INCHES A.C. Clark

Filed in the office of the Clerk of the County of Rockland  
Oct. 6, 1874  
Frederick C. Clark

THEREBY CERTIFY that this map is a true  
copy of the original now on file in my office  
Dated the 10th day of 1874.