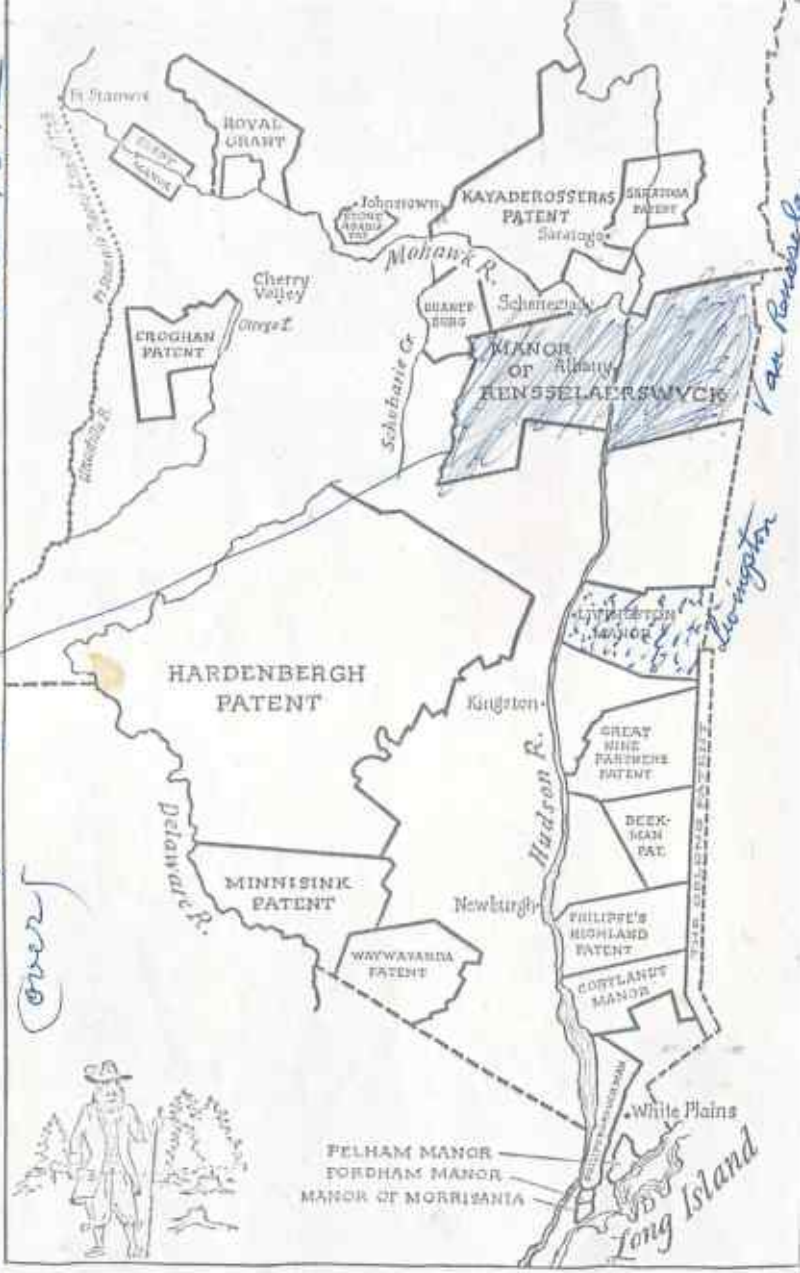


Map 3. Land pattern of colonial New York. Only the major grants and patents are shown.

Pg 462 – On 10-19-1780 families huddled in Fort Klock during "Battle of Klock's Field" 1 mi S W. where Genl Van Rensselaer + 1500 militiamen encountered 700 raiders under Sir John Johnson

Pg 627 – Albany Rural Cem. contains grave of Stephen Van Rensselaer (1764–1839) last of Patroons, patron of science + founder of "Rensselaer Polytechnic Institution"

1777 which either prevented efficient administration or checked the popular will. Gradually the transplanted Yankees of upstate and the common people in New York City rebelled against restricted suffrage and the Council of Revision, which frequently vetoed popular legislation. The upsurge of democratic feeling in New York State was a part of the tidal wave sweeping the northern and western states.

During a period of some forty years the Council of Revision, which was composed of the five judges of the Supreme Court, the chancellor, and the governor, disallowed 118 laws. Some of these were repassed over its veto by a two-thirds vote of the legislature. The Council was intended to check hasty and foolish laws, but unfortunately it tended at times to reflect Federalist thinking of a purely partisan nature. The Council checked the legislature's attempt to change the charter of Columbia College, a citadel of Federalism, and during the War of 1812 it curbed Tompkins' efforts to enact conscription and drastic property taxes. When the Council in 1820 rejected a popular bill calling for a constitutional convention, the public was aroused and the Republicans demanded the Council be abolished.

On August 28, 1821, a constitutional convention finally assembled at Albany. It was a body of distinguished men and included practically all the outstanding political figures of the time. Among the small group of remaining Federalists were such able men as Chancellor James Kent, the most determined defender of the status quo; Peter Augustus Jay, gifted son of the principal author of the first constitution; Jonas Platt; Abraham Van Vechten; Elisha Williams; and Stephen Van Rensselaer, III, scion of the old and wealthy landholding family. They tried to salvage as much as was possible in face of the Bucktail demand for reform, but their cause was hopeless. Out of 126 seats the Bucktails controlled 110. These Republicans were not men of limited experience and ability. Among their ranks were Daniel D. Tompkins, who presided over the convention, the astute Martin Van Buren, the distinguished Peter R. Livingston, and Erastus Root, a master of sarcasm.

The convention quickly abolished both the Council of Appointments and the Council of Revision, despite the somewhat perfunctory protests of the Federalists. It gave the governor the veto power, but a two-thirds vote in each house could override his veto. The appointing power was distributed in a fashion more democratic but not necessarily wiser from the standpoint of improved administration. The chief officers of the state, such as the secretary of state, the attorney general, and the comptroller, were to be elected by the legislature, whereas lesser officials were to be appointed by the governor with the consent of the Senate. The convention also revised the judiciary system by creating a new Supreme Court consisting of a chief justice and two associate justices and by

Pg. 169. Congressmen Stephen Van Rensselaer III cast the deciding vote which among other things gave N.Y. State to Adams in Presidential Election 1824

providing for the establishment of from four to eight judicial districts, in each of which would be a district judge.

The changes in the suffrage, however, aroused much more controversy and proved far more significant. The old constitution prescribed the possession of a twenty-pound freehold or the payment of a yearly rent of forty shillings as qualifications of voters for assemblymen. To vote for senator and governor the citizen had to possess still more property. To the dismay of the Federalists, the Republicans advocated clauses permitting voters to qualify by payment of taxes, by service in the militia, by work on the roads, or by established residence. In short, the Republicans were proposing the equivalent of universal manhood suffrage for white voters.

Abraham Van Vechten stated the Federalist case succinctly. "Life and liberty are common to all, but the possession of property is not. Hence the owners of property have rights which, in relation to those who are destitute, are separate and exclusive." The most eloquent defense of the old order came from Chancellor James Kent, who warned of the dangers in extending the suffrage:

> The growth of the city of New-York is enough to startle and awaken those who are pursuing the *ignis fatuus* of universal suffrage. In 1773 it had 21,000 souls, in 1801 it had 60,000 souls, in 1806 it had 76,000 souls, in 1820 it had 123,000 souls.
>
> It is rapidly swelling into the unwieldy population, and with the burdensome pauperism, of an European metropolis. New-York is destined to become the future London of America; and in less than a century, that city, with the operation of universal suffrage, and under skilful direction, will govern this state.

Nor was it safe to adopt universal suffrage as an experimental measure, said the chancellor:

> Universal suffrage once granted, is granted forever, and never can be recalled. There is no retrograde step in the rear of democracy. However mischievous the precedent may be in its consequences, or however fatal in its effects, universal suffrage never can be recalled or checked, but by the strength of the bayonet.

The Federalist appeal was dashed aside by Erastus Root, who replied: "We have no different estates, having different interests, necessary to be guarded from encroachments by the watchful eye of jealousy— We are all of the same estate—all commoners; nor, until we have privileged orders, and aristocratic estates to defend, can this argument apply." The Federalists were inundated by the democratic tide. Although property qualifications were retained for Negroes virtual universal suffrage was established for white males. A few other minor changes

decade of the 1790's. Again in 1811–1812 tenant farmers petitioned the legislature to investigate the title of the Livingston family and bedeviled the sheriffs who tried to enforce rent payment.

The death of Stephen Van Rensselaer, the "last of the patroons," on January 26, 1839, symbolized the passing of an era. The spectacle of a landed gentleman living in semifeudal splendor among his three thousand tenants was anachronism to a generation which had become acclimated to Jacksonian democracy. Van Rensselaer's leniency toward his tenants created a serious problem for his heirs, who were instructed by his will to apply the back rents (approximately $400,000) toward the payment of the patroon's debts. As soon as the rent notices went out, the farmers organized committees and held public meetings in protest. Stephen Van Rensselaer, who had inherited the west manor (Albany County), refused to meet with a committee of antirenters and turned down their written request for a reduction of rents. His brusque refusal infuriated the farmers. On July 4, 1839, a mass meeting at Berne called for a declaration of independence from landlord rule but raised the amount the tenants were willing to pay.

The answer to this proposal was soon forthcoming. The executors of the estate secured writs of ejectment in suits against tenants in arrears. Crowds of angry tenants manhandled Sheriff Michael Archer and his assistants and turned back a posse of five hundred men. Sheriff Archer called upon Governor William Seward for military assistance. Seward's proclamation calling on the people not to resist the enforcement of the law and the presence of several hundred militiamen overawed the tenants. The tenants, however, persisted in their refusal to pay rent. Of course the sheriff could and did evict a few, but he could not dispossess an entire township.

By 1844 the antirent movement had grown from a localized struggle against the Van Rensselaer family to a full-fledged revolt against leasehold tenure throughout eastern New York. Virtual guerilla warfare broke out. Riders disguised as Indians and wearing calico gowns ranged through the countryside, terrorizing the agents of the landlords. In late 1844 Governor William Bouck sent three companies of militia to Hudson, where antirenters threatened to storm the jail and release their leader, Big Thunder (Dr. Smith A. Boughton in private life). The following year Governor Silas Wright was forced to proclaim Delaware County in a state of insurrection after an armed rider had killed an undersheriff at an eviction sale.

The antirenters organized town, county, and state committees, published their own newspapers, held conventions, and elected their own spokesmen to the legislature. The success of candidates endorsed by antirenters in 1845 caused politicians in both parties to show a "wonderful anxiety" to "give the Anti-renters all they ask." The legislature abolished the right of the landlord to seize the goods of a defaulting tenant and taxed the income which landlords derived from their rent. Shortly thereafter, the constitutional convention of 1846 prohibited any future lease of agricultural land which claimed rent or service for a period longer than twelve years. Yet neither the convention nor the state legislature was willing to disturb existing leases.

The antirenters played politics with remarkable success in the years between 1846 and 1851. They elected friendly sheriffs and local officials who virtually paralyzed the efforts of the landlords to collect rents. They cleverly threw their weight to the candidates of either major party who would support their cause. The bitter rivalries between and within the Whig and Democratic parties enabled the antirenters to exert more influence than their numbers warranted. As a result they had a small but determined bloc of antirent champions in the Assembly and the Senate who kept landlords uneasy by threatening to pass laws challenging land titles. The antirent endorsement of John Young, Whig candidate for governor in 1846, proved decisive. Governor Young promptly pardoned several antirent prisoners and called for an investigation of titles by the attorney general. The courts eventually ruled the statute of limitations prevented any questioning of the original titles. Declaring that the holders of perpetual leases were in reality freeholders, the Court of Appeals outlawed the "quarter sales," i.e., the requirement in many leases that a tenant who disposed of his farm should pay one-fourth of the money to the landlord.

Assailed by a concerted conspiracy not to pay rent and harassed by taxes and investigations of the attorney general, the landed proprietors gradually sold out their interests. In August 1845 seventeen large landholders announced that they were willing to sell. Later that year Stephen Van Rensselaer, IV, agreed to sell his rights in the Helderberg townships. His brother, William, who had inherited the east manor in Rensselaer County, also sold out his rights in over five hundred farms in 1848. Finally, in the 1850's, two speculators purchased the remaining leases from the Van Rensselaers.

The antirent movement was more than a selfish campaign to escape rent payment. It was a ringing protest by democratic farmers against the aristocratic clique which had dominated New York for so many decades. By dramatizing the evils of land monopoly, the antirenters also helped to arouse the nation to the importance of granting free homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain.

Undoubtedly speculators in urban real estate were making more money in this period than developers of backcountry lands. The rapid

The remaining colonial aristocrats, such as Van Rensselaers and —

the Livingstons, admitted some recruits to the inner circle. William Cooper of Cooperstown and Peter Smith of Peterboro married daughters of the Livingston clan. Alexander Hamilton married Elizabeth Schuyler despite his questionable family origin. The landed aristocracy sometimes sent younger sons to administer their frontier tracts, spreading the principles of federalism and the Episcopal church into the wilderness. The old aristocracy found able defenders among property-minded newcomers such as Alexander Hamilton, James Kent, and James Fenimore Cooper. No Livingston ever defended the old regime of landed wealth more vehemently than James Kent at the constitutional convention of 1821 or James Fenimore Cooper in his antirent novels.

By 1825 the merchant-shipping families were competing for social eminence with the landed aristocrats. Their wealth enabled them to live luxuriously and to cultivate genteel manners. Some Manhattan merchants erected suburban homes farther up the island and sent their wives to Saratoga Springs for the summer season. Tutors taught the daughters French and etiquette and prepared the young men for Columbia, Yale, and Harvard.

Lord Chesterfield set the standards of propriety for New York's upper classes, but French ideas in dress prevailed. The influx of hundreds of French refugees from Santo Domingo and France resulted in the spread of French tastes in cooking, ballroom dancing, and music. During the 1790's, when George Washington held "court" at New York, the gentlemen wore smallclothes, silk stockings, and silver buckles. And when the terrorized nobles of France disguised themselves in workingmen's pantaloons, Americans adopted similar attire. By 1825 only a few diehards retained the old style. In the 1790's women in the upper classes also shifted toward simplicity in dress, discarding whalebone and heavy petticoats. By 1820 the trend was reversed and the ladies went back to stays, bustles, and stomach boards.

Keeping house was a full-time occupation for the wives of the aristocracy as it was for all housewives in that period. The problem of securing reliable servants became even more difficult after the decline of slavery and indentured servitude. Few domestics, moreover, could be trusted to supervise the endless round of household duties. Carrying in water, keeping the fireplace supplied, cleaning the iron pots, pans, and kettles, and making candles, soap, and carpets were only a few of the tasks.

Below the aristocracy of birth and of wealth were the members of what we loosely call the middle class. Independent farmers formed the most numerous element in this group, and their manner of life has been indicated in the chapter on pioneer agriculture. The middle class in the villages and the cities included shopkeepers, clerks, tavern keepers, skilled artisans, manufacturers, and most of the professional people. From this

group came most of the future leaders of the cultural and business life of the state.

The lower classes included farm laborers, apprentices, slaves, and, later, free Negroes, day laborers, and the most recent immigrants. Life for these people was grim but somewhat relieved by the hope that the way upward was not entirely blocked for the most able and for their children.

Although many social and civic problems, such as the education of the young and the control of fires, faced village and city trustees in this period, only a few tentative steps toward improvement were taken by 1825. The trustees of Rochester, who required that each householder keep a bucket for every two fireplaces, placed chief reliance in the volunteer brigades. Public health measures were virtually nonexistent. Citizens drew water from springs, wells, or cisterns or bought their water from street carriers. Pigs and cows roamed the dirty unpaved streets despite the legal bans. The new cities found it necessary to establish markets in order to get farmers' wagons out of the streets. In 1822 Rochester ordered property holders along the commercial blocks to build a twelve-foot sidewalk to protect pedestrians from the filth.

The problems of antisocial behavior, ill health, and intemperance affected both urban and rural New York. The transient population along the wharves and the canals and the rough men patronizing the grog-houses and taverns provided most of the criminal elements. Municipal authorities strengthened the night watch, but no uniformed police had appeared by 1825. The sheriff maintained order in the countryside, calling out his posse when necessary.

Life expectancy in this period was a fraction of its present figure. Disease ravaged the population almost completely unchecked and little understood. Disorders almost unknown today were commonplace. Smallpox left its ugly scars on thousands, while tuberculosis filled ten times as many graves in proportion to the population as it did in 1952. Malaria, sometimes called the "shakes" or "Genesee fever," riddled the frontier population. Typhoid and many other contagious diseases struck every community, and cholera hit the seaports. Only one-half of the children reached their fifth birthday—a sobering statistic in the light of modern advances.

Medical attention, if available, was practically worthless. The results of the common practice of bleeding the patient were often worse than the diseases themselves. Anesthetics were unknown and gangrene followed many of the operations performed by inexpert surgeons with primitive instruments. Toothaches were universal and dentistry primitive. Travelers noted that few adults had a full set of teeth. The real burden of maintaining health in the family fell upon the overworked housewife, who fed molasses and sulphur to her children and acted as

midwife to her neighbors.
Hard drinking was the custom to an extent that might shock a broad minded modern.
Cider was favorite of all classes. Poorest farmers had rum & applejack whiskey was cheap. Intemperance was not confined to drinking. A typical breakfast—

"Sausage w boiled fish - eggs - dried Beef - dried mutton - slices of ham - tongue - bread - butter. Cheese - short cakes - buckwheat Cakes - sweetmeats of various sorts, and many other things make up the breakfast - are a dish of beef steaks is frequently added."

Page - 119. Philip Schuyler wrote John Jay re: Gen. Clinton "His fame & connections do not entitle him to so distinguished a predominance - yet he is virtuous & loves his country, has abilities & is brave" Schuyler accurately reflected the sentiments of the old aristocratic families of N.Y. who believed reins of gov. should be in hands of wealthy men of established fame. Such persons they felt were best qualified by reason of integrity but had an enormous personal stake in welfare of the country.

ing lay trustees, in hitting back at nativists, and in setting up new chu
Hughes was particularly determined to reassert the traditional po
the priesthood and bishops in church government. After several
versies, especially with German congregations, Hughes asserted
thority. The legislature in 1863 agreed to pass a church incorpora
ensuring control by the clergy. The law provided that a church corp
for the Catholic communion was to consist of the bishop, the vicar g
the pastor, and two lay trustees.

The common school system of New York City was not accept
Bishop Hughes for several reasons. The Public School Society, admi
ing the schools for the city, was dominated by private directors
nounced Protestant views. Furthermore, many teachers and te
were unsympathetic to the Catholic church, and the daily reading
the King James Version of the Bible were anathema to good C
Church leaders organized a parochial school system in which C
doctrine as well as secular subjects were taught. But the shortage of
ings and trained teachers prevented the church schools from taki
of all the children of Catholic parentage. In 1840 Governor W
Seward recommended that schools be established in which ch
"may be instructed by teachers speaking the same language with
selves and professing the same faith." Catholic citizens of New Yo
immediately petitioned the Common Council for a share of the
school money. This action irritated the Public School Society
backers, and in 1841 Samuel F. B. Morse ran for mayor on a Nativ
ican ticket. Bishop Hughes countered with the organization of a
party, called the Carroll Hall ticket, which held the balance of po
1842. A new law of that year compromised the issue: the church
received no public money, but the Public School Society made
the publicly managed school system in New York City.

Nativism continued to harass the Catholic church throughou
period. The workingmen's fear of immigrant competition was th
important factor, but pauperism among immigrants and the politi
exercised by the church in city elections were also influential in stim
native Americans to organize secret societies, such as the Know-N
of the 1850's.

The Jewish synagogue, like the Catholic church, was a unifyi
for its people. For most Jews life revolved around the congregation
administered dietary laws, directed charitable and educational
ties, and conducted the ceremonies associated with birth, marria
death. The Jewish community, centering in its one synagogue
gradually split up into several congregations, each ministering
of differing backgrounds. It has been estimated that in 1860 New
City had twenty-seven synagogues.

The strange enthusiasms and peculiar cults of upstate New York have ..inated succeeding generations, but their importance has been greatly ..ggerated. For example, Oneida Community and the Mormon church ..olled only a few hundred people within this state. One must repeat ..t these unusual movements do not compare in importance with the .. spectacular but far more significant work carried on by the major ..ominations in organizing and maintaining churches for frontier farm- ..and city dwellers.

The Church of the Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) was the most im- ..tant new sect originating in New York, but its later development took ..e almost entirely outside the state's borders. Joseph Smith professed ..the angel Moroni appeared to him in Palmyra and told him that the ..Men Plates of a new Bible lay buried near by. After digging up the ..es, Smith (behind a curtain) dictated the Book of Mormon, which ..ported to describe the history of America from its settlement by one ..e tribes dispersed at the Tower of Babel. Smith's miracles, prophecies, ..revelations impressed a few neighbors, but most remained skeptical. ..ies of lawsuits and other troubles, combined with the attractions of West, caused Smith to move, in 1831, to Kirtland, Ohio. Subsequently Mormons moved to Illinois and Missouri and finally to Utah. In the ..'s and 1850's Mormon missionaries toured western New York and ..ited several hundred candidates to live in the Desert Zion. The Mor- ..church, however, never took firm root in New York.

Another station along the broad "psychic highway" across central and ..ern New York was Oneida Community, world famous for its experi- ..s in communal living. Its success is wrapped up in the figure of ..Humphrey Noyes, a genius at organization and leadership, who ..ed the community for several decades. He stated:

> ..warfare is an assertion of human rights: first the right of man to be ..ied by God and to live in the social state of heaven; second the right ..man to dispose of her sexual nature by attraction instead of by law and ..e and to bear children only when she chooses; third, the right of all to ..h the labors and increase the advantages of life by association.

..inly these ideas were radical for his, or any, generation!

..rfectionism" had won adherents in villages in central New York ..g the early 1840's. Its believers preached that true Christians could ..without sin. In 1848 Noyes came to Oneida in central New York ..Putney, Vermont, where his "Bible School" had shocked the neigh- ..by sharing everything in common, including the women.

..neida Community was unique among "communitarian" communities ..n New York because it was an economic success and ..e it

lasted for almost four decades. Fortunately for the group, Sewall Newhouse's trap for small animals provided the community with a steady income to supplement what they earned from farming. Outsiders were shocked by the system of "complex marriage" in which every woman was theoretically the wife of every man. Less controversial was the care of the children in the community nursery. The perfectionists at Oneida adopted other advanced ideas. Women were granted equality, wore bloomers, and bobbed their hair. As criticism mounted, the leaders of Oneida Community gradually abandoned their unusual practices. They permitted individual marriage and in 1879 divided the property among the members of the community.

The doctrine that Christ will return to the world to usher in the millennium has attracted Christian enthusiasts ever since the first century. In the 1830's and 1840's several thousand New Yorkers, as well as others in the northeastern part of the United States, adopted the views of William Miller, who preached that the world would come to an end in 1843 or 1844. After service in the War of 1812, Miller returned to his home in Washington County determined to prove that the Bible was pure revelation. He was a sincere, humble man, convinced that the symbols in the book of Revelations indicated that the world would come to an end about 1843. At first, few people were interested, although many Christians had a vague belief in the imminence of the Second Coming. Gradually Miller attracted more followers by his lectures and writings. As the date approached excitement grew. Thousands came to the tent meetings held in Rochester in 1843. Miller enjoyed a great triumph when Elon Galusha, the most prominent Baptist in the state, endorsed his conclusions.

As March 21, 1843 approached, the Millerites gathered together in protracted meetings to hail the millennium. Some neurotic individuals attached themselves to the movement and displayed hysterical behavior. Although nonbelievers have perpetuated a good deal of folklore about scandalous orgies, ascension robes, gatherings on hilltops, abandonment of business, and insanity in connection with the movement, the opponents of Miller showed the worst behavior by their attacks on Adventist meetings. Some followers slipped away after the fateful day passed without any cataclysm, but most of them accepted Miller's revised date of 1844. The stubborn continuation of the world after March 1844 naturally caused numerous defections, but the more resolute continued to hold on to their faith with some modifications. They decided to live as though the "Bridegroom" were coming at any moment. In 1845 Miller and his associates formed in Albany, an Adventist organization which later suffered much internal strife. Another group of Adventists in western New York made a loose tie-up with the Seventh-Day Baptists of Maine and followed the westward-moving pioneers to the Middle West.

The religious history of N.Y. between 1825 & 1860 is one of most fascinating chapters in history of Christian expansion. Seldom have so many religious talents been a work in such a short period of time. Roll call contains such impressive names as Charles Finney & eccentric figures such as John Humphrey Noyes.

People of N.Y. were def. more religious minded in 1860 than 1825.

The rise of spiritualism provided the main religious excitement of the 1850's, as Millerism had in the 1840's. The latter had appealed to the orthodox, but spiritualism tended to attract religious liberals, such as the Universalists. The liberals had drifted far from a literal interpretation of the Bible and had seized upon scientific theories as the most fruitful explanation of the universe. Strangely enough, the mystical ideas in the highly abstruse writings of the Swedish philosopher, Emanuel Swedenborg, furnished the basis for a revival as emotional as earlier manifestations.

Swedenborgianism combined many of the liberal religious doctrines with the new sociological ideas of the time. By 1848 these concepts had deeply penetrated the thinking of the Universalists and some of the Quakers. But until the Fox sisters allegedly made communication with the dead it was too highly intellectual to appeal to the public at large. In March 1848 the two daughters of John Fox of Hydesville reported strange rappings at night. More remarkable was their claim that they had communicated with a spirit who had answered their questions. The news of the phenomenon spread rapidly after the two girls were introduced to Rochester society. The spirits demanded public séances, and thousands of people were convinced that the barrier between the quick and the dead had been breached. Soon crowds were witnessing such phenomena as table moving and the "speaking in tongues." Subsequently the Fox sisters admitted that they made the rapping sound by cracking the joints of their toes, but the spiritualists claimed that the recantation had been made under duress.

Spiritualism won many converts even among educated classes. William Cullen Bryant, Horace Greeley, and Robert Dale Owen were inclined to believe the phenomena of presentiments, second sight, and dreams. Intellectuals trained in the Swedenborg tradition received messages from the great men of the past. These usually turned out to be platitudinous homilies upon the necessity of following the rules of common sense. For many people spiritualism was a way station to so-called free thought or "modernism" in religion. The common people, however, looked for a direct message from loved ones no longer on earth, and to fill this need there sprang up a tribe of mediums, some of them obvious frauds and charlatans. Some spiritualist leaders encouraged experiments in unconventional practices and as a result public opinion turned against them.

By 1855 the spiritualists claimed over a million converts throughout the world, with perhaps a third of them in New York State. They published over a score of magazines and had established centers in several parts of the state. One legacy of the spiritualist movement is Lily Dale, a camp meeting ground on the shores of Chautauqua Lake.

The "burned-over district," a term applied to the region of central and


FILÿP PIETERSEN SCHVÿLER
COMMISSARIS
1656.

substance. The corner-stone was laid by the oldest magistrate, Rutger Jacobsen, with the usual ceremonies of modern times, in presence of the authorities and the assembled inhabitants. The patroon contributed one thousand guilders, and the village authorities fifteen hundred. The congregation subscribed twenty-five beavers for the purchase of a pulpit in Holland, to which was added seventy-five guilders by the West India Company, who also presented a bell "to adorn the little church." The pulpit and a fragment of the bell are yet preserved by the Dutch Church of Albany.

For the purpose of adding to the "church adornments," some of its richer members were permitted to have their armorial bearings painted upon its windows. Among them were the Patroon Van Rensselaer, Wendel, Schuyler, and Andries Herbitsen Constaple Van der Blaas. The arms of the latter covered twelve lights of a large window. Schuyler's were painted on one large central light of another. When the church was demolished, the paintings were put into the new one. When this was taken down, in 1806, the arms were preserved by the families to whom they belonged. I saw the Schuyler arms in 1877. The glass had been broken by a careless artist, who was making a copy. The pieces had been carefully arranged and held in place by cement. It was in the hands of a lineal descendant, who valued it highly. Some two years afterward it was broken by an accident into minute fragments, some of which were lost, so that it could not be reconstructed. Happily copies had been made, and the accompanying woodcut gives an exact representation. These paintings could scarcely have been done in Albany at that early day, when there were no artists, or appliances to finish the work. The name underneath, "Filip Pietersen Schuyler," seems to prove that it was done abroad. Schuy-

1672 the 2 January is born our fourth daughter named Margritta May the Lord god let her grow up in virtues to her salvation Amen.

A° 1683 The 9 mAy old style at 3 o'clock in the afternoon Capt. Philip Schuyler died in the Lord and is the 11 ditto Buried in the church of Albany

NOTE. The MS. written in old Dutch letters is undoubtedly the autograph of Philip Pieterse Schuyler, deceased 1683. The annotation of the marriage of his daughter Alyda is added to it by another hand in type or printing letters.[1] And the annotation of his death is written in the more modern, or Italian characters. S. A."

The following genealogical table shows a group of remarkable men and women. One who is acquainted with the early history of New York will see at a glance that few families, if any, in those early days, included so many members who were destined, in the near future, to assume positions as to wealth and political influence equal to theirs. Several of them laid the foundations of vast estates, which in the hands of their grandchildren proved a source of great power. Fortunately their descendants were not aristocrats, and although they formed some aristocratic associations, and in society were on intimate terms with the English governors and their official retinues, were not blind to the oppressions of the English Government. In the Revolution they espoused the popular cause, and threw the whole weight of their power and influence on the side of liberty. But for them the independence of the country could not have been so early accomplished.

[1] The record of the marriage of Alyda was probably written by her mother. Her name attached to the wills is in the characters described. G. W. S.

from "Colonial N.Y." Vol I
by Geo. W. Schuyler 1885
Library F. 122 - S 39 - Sutro

INTRODUCTION.

I.

NEW NETHERLAND AND THE PATROONS.

After the discovery of America by Columbus in 1492, England and France sent out exploring ships in charge of experienced navigators to make further discoveries, but for more than a hundred years neither country made any systematic efforts to colonize the newly found countries. Spain was left almost unmolested to pursue her conquests, and to continue the subjugation of the West India Islands, Mexico, and parts of South America. Near the middle of the sixteenth century, the French made some attempts at settlement in Canada and in Florida, but nothing effectual was accomplished, on account of the rigor of the climate on the one hand, and the interference of enemies on the other. In 1603 Champlain made his first voyage to the river St. Lawrence, and the next year, after his return to France, organized a company for the purpose of settling the countries he had explored. The adventurers were a motley crowd, made up of noblemen, merchants, priests, laborers, and good-for-nothings. They sailed in two ships, which touched on the eastern shore of Nova Scotia, rounded Cape Sable, penetrated the Bay of Fundy, and finally moored at an island in the mouth of the river St. Croix, where the emigrants landed and built their huts. The next spring they abandoned this spot and removed to

Ref. Schuyler ♦
Van Rensselaer families ♦
others founding families

from "Colonial N.Y." Vol I
by Geo W. Schuyler
1885

Re: Schuyler
family
Van Rensselaer
Robt Livingston
+
others

GENEALOGICAL TABLE.

PHILIP SCHUYLER'S CHILDREN.

1. PHILIP SCHUYLER, d. May 9, 1683, m. December 12, 1650, *Margarita Van Slichtenhorst*, d. 1711.
2. GYSBERT, b. July 2, 1652, d. y.
3. GEERTRU, b. February 4, 1654, d. about 1719.
   m. September 10, 1671, *Stephanus Van Cortlandt*, d. November 25, 1700.
4. ALYDA, b. February 28, 1656, d.
   m. 1, February 10, 1675, Rev. *Nicolaus Van Rensselaer*, d. November, 1678.
   m. 2, 1679, *Robert Livingston*, d. about 1728.
5. PETER, b. September 17, 1657, d. February 19, 1724.
   m. 1, 1681, *Engeltie Van Schaick*, d. 1689.
   m. 2, September 14, 1691, *Maria Van Rensselaer*, d.
6. BRANT, b. December 18, 1659, d. about 1702.
   m. July 12, 1682, *Cornelia Van Cortlandt*, d.
7. ARENT, b. June 25, 1662, d. about 1731.
   m. 1, November 26, 1698, *Jeanette Teller*, d. 1700.
   m. 2, January, 1703, *Susanna Van Duyckhuysen*, d. 1723.
   m. 3, 1724, *Maria Walter*.

(Over)

Cont'd

8. Sybella b 11-12-1664 - [illegible] Young

9. Philip b-2-9-1666 -
d-5-24-1724 ⊙
⊙ m-7-25-1687 Elizabeth De Meyer
⊙ " -5-19-1719 ② Catherine Debevoise
widow of Robert Brouwer

10. Johannes b 4-15-1668
d 2- 1747
m 1695 Elizabeth Stoothoff
(widow of Johannes Mandel)
she died 6- 1737

11 Margaret b 1-2-1672
d-5-15-1745
⊙ m-9-8-1691 Jacobus Vanderbeek
② 11-2-1701 ② John Collins
d. 1720
d-4-13-1728

Note: This is the Story of the Van Rensselaer family of N.Y. & Holland as taken from "Colonial New York" Vol I by Geo. W. Schuyler - 1885. According to Cousin Martha Warnock dau of Aunt Minnie Warnock (nee Julian) we are relatives of Van Rensselaer family Roosebury (Bur) J -

THE VAN RENSSELAER FAMILY.

Nicolaus Van Rensselaer was the first husband of Alyda (Alida as she wrote it), second daughter of Philip Schuyler, married February 10, 1675. He was the fourth son of Killian Van Rensselaer, the third by his second wife, and came to Albany in the fall of 1674. The colony established by his father had been visited by three of his own brothers, two of whom had returned to Holland, and the third, Jeremiah, who had superintended the affairs of the colony sixteen years, had just died. As Jeremiah's children were too young to be in charge of the large estate, in which they held only one-sixth interest, his arrival was opportune.

The Van Rensselaers were an old, and in their time well-known, family of Gelderland, from the neighborhood of Nykerk. Rensselaer, the manor from which the family took its name, lies about three miles southeast of Nykerk, and was originally a *riddergoed*, or estate the possession of which conferred nobility, but is now a mere farm, inhabited by a peasant, who has pulled down the old gables and weathercocks, which even twenty years ago bore the family crest. But even before the establishment of the colony in America, the seat of the Van Rensselaer family had been the Crailo, a large and productive estate near the fortified town of Naarden, on the Zuyder Zee, not far from Amsterdam. The Van Rensselaer arms,[1] either

[1] These arms are a silver cross molines on a red shield. The crest is a basket from which issue flames.

There Pages from "Colonial N. York" by Schuyler - 1885 - Vol I

alone or quartered with others, appear frequently on house-fronts and tombstones in Arnhem, Zutphen, Deventer, and other neighboring towns, and show both the position of the family and its frequent alliances. There has been a constant tradition that the family was related to that of Olden Barneveldt, the famous patriot and statesman. Contemporary portraits of John of Olden Barneveldt, and of his wife, Marie of Utrecht, were preserved as heirlooms in the family until the sale of the Crailo, in 1830. The original Manor of Olden Barneveldt is close to that of Rensselaer, about six miles south of Nykerk, and between Nykerk, Amersfoort and the manors of Stoutenburg and Groeneveld, which were erected into noble domains for Barneveldt's two sons.

The first historical mention is of Johan Van Rensselaer, a captain of a hundred men, who did good service in Friesland for the King of Spain, in the early part of the sixteenth century.[1] Captain Herman Van Rensselaer was grievously wounded at the battle of Nieuwport, in 1602, and died in the following year, according to the inscription on his tomb in the Church of St. Jan at Amersfoort. In the same church is a tablet of the consistory of the church, on which Dom. Harmanus Van Rensselaer is mentioned, in 1636. By far the most interesting memorial of the family in Holland is the fine picture of the first regents of the orphan asylum at Nykerk (which was founded in 1638, and opened in 1641), painted by Breecker, in 1645, containing full-length portraits of Jan Van Rensselaer, the Jonkheer Nicolaus Van Delen, Ryckert Van Twiller, and three others. The last male member of the family in Holland was Jeremias Van Rensselaer (who was also a regent of this orphan asylum), who died in Nykerk, April 11, 1819. He had

[1] Arent Van Slichtenhorst, Geldersse Geschiedenissen, Book

married Judic Henrietta Duval, but had no children, and in his will stated that besides his wife he had no heirs except the Van Rensselaer family, living somewhere in America.

The family estate of the Crailo had passed into the hands of the female line, the last of whom, Joanna Jacoba Sara Van Rensselaer, from Amsterdam, was married to Jonkheer Jan Bowier, Member of the States of North Braband, colonel of the militia, proprietor of the Manor Coudewater, at Rosmalen, near 's Bosch. She was the mother of twelve children, and died in 1830, when the Manor of Crailo was sold. Two sons of this marriage, the Jonkheer Hugo Jan Jacob Bowier, and the Jonkheer Martin Bowier, colonel in the royal marines, and at one time commandant of the Dutch naval forces off Atchin, have been allowed by royal license to assume the name and arms of Van Rensselaer.

To return to Killian Van Rensselaer, the founder of the American family. He was married twice, first to Hildegonda Van Byler, and second, in 1627, to Anna Van Wely, of Amsterdam, daughter of Jan Van Wely the younger, of Barneveldt, residing at The Hague, and of Leonora Haukens, of Antwerp. The first and second wives were apparently cousins. Jan Van Wely, the father of the second wife, had a tragic fate. He was not only a prominent and respected merchant of Amsterdam, but the *admodiator* or administrator of the County of Buren, a domain of the Prince of Orange. In 1600 and 1601, he had been chosen by the merchants of Amsterdam as their representative with the army, that they might have sure and regular news. It was then that he received a large gold medal, representing the battle of Nieuwport, which he transmitted as an heirloom to his descendants. In 1616, Van Wely was sent for to The Hague by Prince Maurice, and brought with him some diamonds and precious stones, which the Prince wished

to purchase, worth about one hundred thousand florins. While waiting for the Prince in his cabinet, Van Wely was murdered by two officers of the guard, and his body concealed under the table until it could be taken out and buried in an ashpit.[1] This murder, though perpetrated solely for plunder, turned out in the end to have political effects. On the representation of the widow, Hans Van Wely, her eldest son, was continued in the duties and privileges of *admodiator* of Buren, and there lies before me now a letter written to him by Prince Maurice, in 1619, on the business of his office.

Whether or not Killian Van Rensselaer was associated with the business of his father-in-law (for although he married Anna Van Wely ten years after her father's death, there seem to have been previous connections of some kind), he is known to have dealt in pearls and precious stones, and to have had some reputation as a banker and general merchant.

When the West India Company was organized, he was one of its first directors, and appears on the list of the "lord-directors, who have served the Company from the beginning to the end of the year 1636," as "principal partner-director." When the Company, in 1629, adopted the charter for patroons, "Freedoms and Exemptions," he was among the first who prepared to establish colonies in New Netherland. In April, 1630, his agents purchased from the native proprietors a tract of land on the west side of the Hudson, extending from the mouth of the Mohawk River south twenty-four miles, and two days' journey (twenty-four miles) into the country, and on the east side of the river other large tracts extending twenty-four miles east. For these lands a patent was

[1] See Motley's John of Barneveldt, vol. ii., p. 51.

granted by the director at Manhattan, August 13, 1630. Nearly seven years after another tract on the east side of the river was purchased, so that the lands on the east side equalled those on the west. The entire tract was twenty-four miles north and south, and forty-eight miles east and west; and it contained over seven hundred thousand acres of tillable land. The present cities of Albany and Troy are within its limits. The patents issued by the resident-director were approved and confirmed by the West India Company, and subsequently, when New Netherland became English, by the governor and Council. The title then acquired has resisted the numerous attacks made upon it and has been held good by King's Councils, by the courts, and by legislatures. Those who question it now are tenants, who are unwilling to pay the very moderate rent demanded.

One of the conditions of the patroon's charter required that a colony of at least fifty persons above fifteen years of age be sent from Holland within four years. Capital was required to comply with this condition. Van Rensselaer, like the other patroons, formed a copartnership, October 1, 1630, with three brother directors of the Company, for the purpose of the more speedy settlement and development of his large territory. These were Samuel Godyn, Johannes de Laet, and Samuel Bloemmaert, who each had one share in the common stock, Van Rensselaer retaining two shares. It was a partnership in the soil and its products. It did not affect the rights and privileges of the patroon, which Van Rensselaer reserved to himself. Bloemmaert took two others into partnership with himself in his own share.

Previous to the date of this copartnership, Van Rensselaer had sent out twenty colonists with farming utensils, woodsmen's tools, and a few sheep. During the first two

years he sent out thirty-one people at an expense, including interest, of fourteen hundred and nine guilders, which was paid by the several partners *pro rata* according to their shares. The work of colonization continued year by year, until 1646, when it seems to have ceased, owing perhaps to the death of Van Rensselaer. The colony, however, was thoroughly established, and was now attracting emigrants, who came as freemen, to prosecute in the the new country the trades which they had learned in the old.

Killian Van Rensselaer, the projector of the colony named Rensselaerwyck, died in 1646. Up to this time the affairs of the colony had been managed with wisdom and prudence by Arent Van Curler. There had been no collisions with the Indians, either with the Mohegans, their immediate neighbors, or with the Mohawks who lived on the Mohawk River, thirty miles to the northwest. While Manhattan, under the direction of Kieft, had been desolated with war, and was in a state of unrest and fear, Beverwyck, the village of Van Rensselaer's colony had been kept in quiet and safety. Farmers cultivated their fields, and slept in their detached houses at night, apparently as safe as if in Holland. The investment had yielded no income to the projectors, but their outlays had been small, and they could afford to be patient. If not to them, to their children or grandchildren would come a rich harvest. Poor souls, when they put up their money, it was with the expectation of a speedy return, not as an investment for their posterity!

Van Rensselaer was, as has been said, twice married. By his first wife he had an only son, Johannes. By his second, he had four sons and three daughters. Johannes was yet a minor. The estate of his deceased father, both in Holland and New Netherland was in charge of execu

tors. They selected Brant Arentse Van Slichtenhorst to take charge of the colony in place of Van Curler, resigned; and instructed him to manage prudently, and make it yield some returns if possible, but more than all to maintain its privileges and rights under the charter. About the same time, Petrus Stuyvesant was appointed director-general of New Netherland by the West India Company with similar instructions. The Company had regretted its adoption of "Freedoms and Exemptions," because the patroons had interfered with their trade and diminished their profits. They had bought up all the colonies established under that charter except Rensselaerwyck. This was not in the market. Unable to buy it, the Company determined to kill or to cripple it. The differences which arose among the managers of the Company had forced Van Rensselaer out of the direction. He was now dead, and those most interested were minors. Now was the time to strike. Stuyvesant, as a military officer, knew what was meant by instructions, and obeyed them to the letter. While he was forcing Van Slichtenhorst to the wall, the Company watched their opportunity at home. This was soon presented. A minor could not exercise the functions of a patroon without a special act of the States-General. It was of the first importance for the interests of the colony, that Johannes Van Rensselaer should be rendered competent to act, and become patroon. Accordingly the executors, October 21, 1648, presented a petition to the States-General that Johannes Van Rensselaer be invested with high, middle, and low jurisdiction over the colony of Rensselaerwyck. The petition, with the accompanying papers, was sent to the West India Company for their criticism. Four weeks after, Bloemmaert, de Laet and their associates sent in a petition, praying for an accounting on the part of the executors. To this the executors made a

reply, when after the lapse of some months, the whole matter was referred to commissioners to adjudicate. Meantime complaints against the acts of Stuyvesant were received and referred. At last, April 7, 1650, the States-General resolved to grant a patent of investiture, provided the bounds of the colony were defined, in order "that they may be examined before further action is taken."

The petition of the copartners had been referred to the courts for adjudication. A verdict was given, obliging the executors to render a true and just account in detail of expenses and receipts during the life of the first patroon, and since his death; and that all the provisions of the original contract as to management be faithfully observed. This judgment was affirmed by the States-General, June, 1650, three months after their resolution of investiture. The questions in controversy between the executors and the copartners were now adjudicated, and it is presumed a just accounting was made to the satisfaction of all concerned. Two years afterward we find Johannes Van Rensselaer (now termed patroon) uniting with Johan de Laet, son and heir of Johannes de Laet deceased in 1649, and the heirs of the other partners, in a petition to the States-General for a redress of grievances inflicted by Petrus Stuyvesant, which was referred to the West India Company. Other memorials complaining of the acts of the Company were addressed to the States-General and had the usual reference. After 1653 there were no petitions. A settlement of some kind seems to have been made, probably by Jan Baptist Van Rensselaer, after he had assumed control as director of the colony. There were evidently concessions on both sides, and the two jurisdictions worked more in harmony. Before leaving this subject I shall once more refer to the action taken by the Company in 1674.

New Netherland, after being in the possession of the English nine years, was recaptured by a Dutch fleet on August 9, 1673, and possession was taken in the name of the States-General. The West India Company, still in existence, saw the opportunity to make up some of its losses. To do this more effectually, there must be no side issues. Old controversies must not be revived, and least of all that with the colony of Rensselaerwyck. On April 2, 1674, two members of the Company, duly authorized, appeared before a notary of Amsterdam, and made a declaration in favor of the colony of Rensselaerwyck, that having examined the patent of the colony, and other papers and documents relating thereto, they declare in the name of the Company, that the patroon and copartners have been in rightful possession of Beverwyck since 1630; that the possession taken by Director Stuyvesant did not impair their title; that the Company has no right or pretension thereto; and that therefore they conceded the true ownership to the patroon and his associates.

The first patroon had carefully watched over the affairs of the colony. He had secured in 1642 the services of a minister, one of the most eminent divines of the Dutch Church in America, Rev. Johannes Megapolensis. He had built a church, and had provided a schoolmaster. It is a tradition that he visited the colony to become more familiar with its situation, wants, and future prospects. It is only tradition. There are no recorded facts to authenticate it. His cousin, Arent Van Curler, managed its affairs about sixteen years, having come with the emigrants of 1630. Van Slichtenhorst, his successor, was perhaps as well adapted to the place as anyone whose services could be secured. The executors of Van Rensselaer were well aware that the Company was hostile to the colony, and sought its suppression. Hitherto they had been unable

to inflict any serious injury owing to Kieft's unhappy administration. But now that he was recalled and a soldier of Stuyvesant's character appointed to the place, they were well aware that the strife must begin. Van Slichtenhorst, with his trained mind and strong will joined to honesty of purpose, was the man for the place. The inevitable contest between the right on the one hand, and the determination to win, right or wrong, on the other, soon began; with what results we have seen. While the controversy was going on, and Van Slichtenhorst was a prisoner in New Amsterdam, Jan Baptist Van Rensselaer, the second son of the deceased patroon, arrived in 1651. His brother, Johannes, had been made patroon by the act of the highest authority in Holland, and as his representative, he came to advise with Van Slichtenhorst, and when necessary take his place as director. Among the first measures now adopted was to require the inhabitants of the colony to take the "Burgerlyke oath of allegiance," that is, "to support offensively and defensively, against every one, the right and jurisdiction of the colony." This oath had been heretofore required of the officers, but not of the colonists.

Jan Baptist Van Rensselaer's commission as director is dated May 8, 1652. Whether he entered immediately on his duties does not appear. It is, however, probable that Van Slichtenhorst discharged the duties of the position until about his return in 1655. Stuyvesant had separated the village of Beverwyck from the colony, attached it to Fort Orange, set up an independent jurisdiction, and farmed out the excise. The first collision between Van Rensselaer and Stuyvesant occurred in 1656, when an attempt was made to collect the excise, which Van Rensselaer resisted. He voluntarily visited New Amsterdam to effect some arrangement. He remonstrated against the

acts of the director-general as in violation of their charter, and presented a strong argument on behalf of the colony, which Stuyvesant pronounced "frivolous." He was required to give bonds that no further obstruction should be made to the collection of the excise, or remain at New Amsterdam under arrest. The bond was given, and he returned to his duties. He could not contend against the power and unreason of the director-general. He seemed to have had a more delicate organization than his predecessor, and a nature too sensitive to endure the worry of his position. He retired, and was succeeded in 1658, by his brother Jeremiah, who was in charge of the colony for sixteen years, until his death in October, 1674. He seems to have submitted quietly to the injustice of the Company as inflicted by their director-general, and to have made the most of the situation. The reign of the Company was drawing to its close. The last nine years of his directorship were under another government, and were more quiet. From the time Jeremiah Van Rensselaer became director, up to 1664, Stuyvesant had so much else on his hands, that he gave less attention to Rensselaerwyck, and was more frequently obliged to ask assistance from the persecuted colony, than in the years of Van Slichtenhorst. He treated Van Rensselaer with some consideration, and when the province was threatened by the English, he invited him to come to New Amsterdam and preside over the convention assembled to take measures for defence.

In the beginning of the Esopus war, 1663, Stuyvesant wrote to the magistrates of Fort Orange that he had been informed that they had detained fifty to sixty volunteers who were ready to render assistance against the savages. La Montagne and Van Rensselaer immediately asked for names and proof. Stuyvesant replied that he did not lack for proof, "if the cabbage was worth the soup." To this

they rejoined, that after investigating the accusation, it was not worth their while to concern themselves further about it, "so that we too leave the soup with the cabbage." A passage in the letter is worth quoting:

"God and we ourselves know, how gladly we would see our friends helped, and what efforts we are making in this direction, with which you yourself have expressed satisfaction. We wish we could do more; but we have to consider besides the golden lesson of Christ, that we, who live here quietly, surrounded by heathens and barbarians without being able to get assistance from any source in times of need, are obliged first to take care of our own houses, and especially not to get involved in quarrels and troubles."

When the English came into possession of the province, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer took the oath of allegiance to the British crown. According to the terms of surrender, he was left in quiet possession of the colony, as then circumstanced, the village of Beverwyck being still under control of the fort. He conducted its affairs without the interference of the government and acquired an enviable reputation as an executive officer. It was his policy to preserve the peace between the colonists and the surrounding Indians, a policy which had been inaugurated in the beginning, and was pursued until the Revolution. He secured the confidence and respect of the Indians by a just and humane treatment. They appreciated his kindness, and guarded his colony from the assaults of hostile Indians as carefully as their own castles.

When, in 1673, the province was again possessed by the Dutch, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, after a personal interview with the Dutch admiral and captains, delivered a brief petition, soliciting that the colony of Rensselaer-

wyck might remain undisturbed in his possession as agent of the family. This was granted for one year, in which time he was required to have the matter adjudicated in Holland. It was adjudicated, and resulted in the declaration of the West India Company heretofore quoted.

It soon became known that the province would be surrendered to the English by the treaty of peace, when the members of the Van Rensselaer family then residing in Holland sent a petition to the Duke of York, praying that he would direct his governor, Andros, to investigate their title to the colony, and report to him, to the end he might grant them letters-patent, which in his judgment he should think fitting and just. The duke, after careful examination, referred the papers to Andros, with instructions to investigate and report. Andros' report was submitted by the duke to his lawyers, on whose opinion Andros was directed to issue a patent for Rensselaerwyck, including the village of Beverwyck, which Stuyvesant had potentially taken from them, reserving only the ground occupied by the fort. The inhabitants who had been obliged to take out patents from Stuyvesant were not to be oppressed, but for thirty-one years were to pay a nominal rent, after which they and the proprietors were to make their own terms. Why Andros did not issue a patent according to instructions is not manifest. It is probable he did not wish to involve himself in the trouble it would occasion him, but preferred rather to let matters drift. His warrant to draw the patent is dated London, June 7, 1678. Rumors as to the duke's intentions had reached Albany and were creating some excitement. To allay them Andros wrote to the magistrates, saying, that although the duke intended to give the Van Rensselaers their just rights, such as they had enjoyed before 1652, it should be

done without injustice to others. He cautioned the courts and officers to preserve the peace, and keep the inhabitants from useless expense merely on rumors. But whatever may have been the reason, Andros did not issue a patent.

Colonel Dongan succeeded Andros. Application was made to him for the patent, on the warrant of the king. He declined to grant it, because, as he says, he did not think it "convenient that the second town in the government should be in the hands of private men." He conceived it to be more for the public interests that Albany should be detached from the colony and be made an independent town under the government of the province. He negotiated with Van Rensselaer, and, after securing his object, in 1685 he issued a patent to Killian, son of Johannes Van Rensselaer, deceased, and Killian, son of Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, deceased, erecting the colony into a manor, and creating Killian, son of Johannes, its first lord. Hereafter the colony of Killian Van Rensselaer, first patroon, is a manor governed according to English usage. The following year the old village of Beverwyck received a city charter, by name of Albany. Its limits were one mile north and south on the Hudson, and sixteen miles in a northwest direction. It was a proud day for the inhabitants when the charter was received. They were now under the provincial government, and the quarrels about jurisdiction were ended. The Van Rensselaers were wise in making the concession. It had its influence ever after in preserving their title to the rest of their lands from successful assault.

It will be remembered that Johannes de Laet was one of the copartners of the first patroon, owning one share, or a fifth of the whole. After his death, in 1649, his son Johannes acted for himself and coheirs. His sister Jo-

hanna owned one-half of her father's share, or one-tenth of the manor. She married Johannes de Hulter, who with his family and servants sailed from Amsterdam, May, 1653, for the colony. This was after the decision of the suit instituted for an accounting. He was the first and the only one of the copartners who thought it worth the expense to visit his American possessions. He came prepared to establish a manufacturing business, meanwhile keeping watch over the affairs of the colony. He lived less than four years, and after his death his widow sold her brick and tile kilns, her houses and lots, preparatory to a settlement at the Esopus, where her late husband had purchased five hundred morgens (one thousand acres) of land. She afterward married Jeronimus Ebbing, a prosperous merchant of New York. In 1673 she petitioned the Dutch admiral, who had recently conquered New York, to require Jeremiah Van Rensselaer to render an account of his administration of the colony, a thing which had not been done in twelve years. The admiral summoned Van Rensselaer before him, and learning from his own lips that Mrs. Ebbing's statements were true, he required him to render an itemized account within two months, to be recorded in the secretary's office. Van Rensselaer may perhaps have made the account, which convinced the Ebbings there was little profit to be expected from their share in the colony. Soon after, at all events, they sold their interest for a bouwery on the east side of the Hudson, the price of which was fixed at 5,762 florins currency. They afterward sold the farm, in the deed for which it is expressed that it represented one-tenth of the colony of Rensselaerwyck. The farm afterward came into the possession of Philip Schuyler, whose heirs sold it in 1711 for 1,241 pounds currency. The heirs and representatives of the other copartners in 1685 sold their interests to the Van Rens-

selaers for 3,600 florins, Holland money. The entire property was now in the Van Rensselaer family. The original patroon and all the copartners were dead. Johannes, the eldest, and Jeremiah, the third son, were also deceased.

Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, who had had charge of the colony since 1658, died October 14, 1674, N.S. His brother, Nicolaus, arrived soon after, and the next year petitioned the Governor and Council to be appointed director of the colony in the place of his brother Jeremiah. To this appointment opposition was made by the widow of Jeremiah, a daughter of Olof Stevense Van Cortlandt, and her brother Stephanus. It was finally arranged, giving Nicolaus the directorship, the widow to be the treasurer, and her brother bookkeeper. Three hundred bushels of wheat were set apart for their salaries, of which the director was to have one-half, and the other half divided between the treasurer and bookkeeper. The death of Nicolaus, November, 1678, left the widow in charge of the colony. She was advised by her brother; but as he resided in New York and had his own large business and employments, he could render her little assistance. Her health was impaired, and she was obliged to use crutches. The labor and responsibility of watching over so large an estate, not only of lands and tenants, "but of grist-mills, saw-mills, and others on an ever-running stream" near her residence, were too much for her. She longed for the arrival of her late husband's youngest brother, Richard, from Holland, whom she expected, but who never came. Her eldest son, Killian, was yet too young to afford her much assistance. Yet she managed to supervise the tenants and keep the wheels of her mills in motion. She lived long enough to see her son and his cousin receive an English patent securing the large estate to the family.

to the former of all right and title to the land in Holland known as the Crailo, and another tract of land in Gelderland. They also agreed to deliver the titles to three farms in the manor, reserving the tenths, and to pay in addition seven hundred pieces of eight. They also released all claims on personal property in Holland, as well as on certain expectations from relatives on their decease. Bonds were exchanged between the cousins for the faithful performance of the contract, and the work was complete.[1] At last the estate of the old patroon was settled, and the colony he founded in 1630, with its territory of twenty-four by forty-eight miles, was in the possession of one family, consisting of Killian, Johannes, Hendrick, Maria, wife of Peter Schuyler, and Anna, the wife of William Nicoll. Besides the manor, they owned another tract of land containing sixty-two thousand acres, known as the Claverack patent, and sometimes called the "Lower Manor." The province was now under English law. The eldest son was heir-at-law of the real estate belonging to his father. As regards the manor, and other real estate now come into the possession of the family, the law could not give it to the eldest son, but in its division he seems to have had much the largest share.

On May 20, 1704, a patent was granted to Killian, eldest son of Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, deceased, for the entire manor, including the Claverack patent. His brother Johannes having died without issue, there were only three others interested. How were they secured for their interests to which they were justly entitled? To Hendrick,

[1] Richard, the only living son of the old patroon, came to the colony with his brother, Jan Baptist, 1652. He resided here twenty years, during which time he was a magistrate of Beverwyck several terms. He occupied the farm called the Flatts, which, on his return to Holland, was sold to Philip Schuyler.

his brother Killian conveyed the Claverack patent, and about fifteen hundred acres on the east side of the river, opposite Albany, now known as Greenbush, June 1, 1704. To his sister Maria or her heirs, he gave a farm of a few hundred acres adjoining the Flatts. To his sister Anna or her heirs, he gave a farm larger in extent, but at that time no more valuable, lying on the west side of the river in the town of Bethlehem.

Killian Van Rensselaer, second lord of the manor of Rensselaerwyck, or patroon the fourth, married his cousin Maria, daughter of Stephanus Van Cortlandt, October 15, 1701. Much of his life was devoted to the public service. He was an officer of the militia, and one of the magistrates of the city. He represented the manor in the Assembly from 1693 to 1704. In October, 1704, he was appointed to the Council, of which body he was a member until his death in 1719. Indian wars retarded the settlement of the manor and prevented its growth. It was also diminished in extent. His grandfather's old miller, Barent Pieterse Coeymans, who came out in 1636, purchased from the Catskill Indians, in 1673, a tract of land eight miles on the river by twelve miles deep, which was within the manor. It was not unusual for Indians to sell the same land as often as they found men willing to buy. Staten Island was bought and paid for at least three times. The grandfathers of these Catskill Indians had sold the Coeymans tract to Van Rensselaer in 1630, and it was included in all their patents. It had not been improved, and the Indians were allowed to occupy it. Coeymans had been a miller and farmer in and about Beverwyck thirty-three years. He was attracted to the place by its fine water-power, and not knowing that it was within the limits of the manor, he bought it of the Indians, and procured a patent from Governor Lovelace, April, 1673. There was a long contest

between the rival owners, which was not settled until 1706, when Van Rensselaer gave a deed for a "competent sum of money," and nine shillings annual rent in acknowledgment of the rights of the lord or patroon. Politically it was still attached to the manor, and represented in the Assembly.

Killian Van Rensselaer had three sons, two of whom survived him, and were successively patroons. Two of his daughters, Anna and Gertrude, married brothers, sons of Arent Schuyler, of Belleville, New Jersey. His sons were minors at the time of his death, and the manor was again in charge of administrators for several years. Jeremiah, the eldest, came of legal age in March, 1726. Little is known of his administration of the estate. He represented the manor in the Assembly from September, 1726, to September, 1743. We catch a glimpse of him in Canada, in 1734. The Canadian governor reports that the "Patroon, Lord of Albany, in company with another influential gentleman, had visited him, under pretence of a tour." Their errand seemed to be rather to arrange for the preservation of the peace between the two provinces, in case of a rupture between England and France, then threatened.

Jeremiah was the third proprietor of the manor, or the fifth patroon. He died unmarried, in 1745.

Stephen, the second son of Killian, succeeded his brother to the lordship of the manor, and by his Dutch friends was termed Patroon VI. His constitution was not robust, and he never took an active part in public affairs. Only two years after his succession he died, at the age of forty. He left two sons and a daughter. The eldest, Stephen, was only five years old, and until he attained his majority the manor was again in the hands of trustees. The second son, John Baptist, represented the manor in the Assembly some years, and died a bachelor. The daughter married General Abraham Ten Broeck.

Stephen, the second of the name, proprietor of the manor, and the seventh patroon, was baptized on June 2, 1742. Soon after he came into possession of his ancestral estates, he married Catherine Livingston, daughter of Philip Livingston, of New York, in January, 1764. He did not live long to enjoy his patrimony, but died in 1769, leaving two sons and a daughter. His eldest son, Stephen, was born November 1, 1764, and was five years old when his father died. Philip, the second son, was mayor of Albany for several years, and died in 1824. The daughter, Elizabeth, married John Bradstreet, eldest son of General Philip Schuyler.

Again the large estate was watched and cared for by a trustee. Now, however, it was in the hands of an energetic man, General Abraham Ten Broeck, uncle by marriage of the boy patroon. For sixteen years he superintended the large property with eminent success, so that he was enabled to deliver it into the hands of its next proprietor in an improved condition.

Stephen Van Rensselaer, third of the name, after his father's death, was much of the time in New York, with his grandfather who had charge of his education. When prepared for college he was entered at Princeton. But as the War of the Revolution rendered Princeton unsafe, the college courses were suspended. He was then transferred to Harvard, where he graduated in the nineteenth year of his age, 1782. He returned to Albany, not yet legally qualified to take possession of the manor and occupy himself with its affairs, and married a daughter of General Philip Schuyler.

The Revolution destroyed some of the usages and institutions of the past, and the legislation of the State was in harmony with the Declaration of Independence. Lordships and manors were abolished, as were also the rights of

She was a remarkable woman, and deserves to be held in grateful remembrance by her posterity.[1]

Although the name of the estate was changed from a colony to a manor, the jurisdiction of the lord was about the same as that of patroon. Its owners did not change their title, and were always called patroons.

Johannes Van Rensselaer, the second patroon, never visited the colony. He died at an early age, leaving a son and daughter. His son, Killian, when of age, came to Albany, and received naturalization papers from the English colonial government. He married his cousin, Anna, daughter of Jeremiah Van Rensselaer. Less than two years after the first English patent was issued, he died without

[1] In the journal of the voyage of the Labadist missionaries, Dankers and Sluyter, to New York in 1679-80, we find an interesting mention of this lady.

"*27th, Saturday.*—We went to call upon a certain Madam Rentselaer, widow of the Heer Rentselaer, son of the founder of the colony of Rentselaerwyck, comprising twelve miles square from Fort Orange, that is, twenty-four miles square in all. She is in possession of the place, and administers it as patroness, until one Richard Van Rentselaer, residing at Amsterdam, shall arrive in the country, whom she expected in the summer, when he would assume the management of it himself. This lady was polite, quite well informed, and of good life and disposition. She had experienced several proofs of the Lord. The breaking up of the ice had once carried away her mansion, and everything connected with it, of which place she had made too much account. Also, in some visitations of her husband, death, and others before. In her last childbed she became lame or weak in both of her sides, so that she had to walk with two canes or crutches. In all these trials, she had borne herself well, and God 'left not himself without witness' in her. She treated us kindly, and we eat here exceedingly good pike, perch, and other fish, which now began to come and be caught in great numbers. We had several conversations with her about the truth, and practical religion, mutually satisfactory. We went to look at several of her mills at work, which she had there on an ever-running stream—grist-mills, saw-mills, and others. One of the grist-mills can grind one hundred and twenty scheppels of meal in twenty-four hours, that is, five an hour. Returning to the house we politely took our leave. Her residence is about a quarter of an hour from Albany, up the river."—*Memoirs of the Long Island Historical Society*, i., 316. 1877.

children. He left a will in which he appointed his wife sole executrix. He owned considerable property in Holland, as well as a share of the manor, of which he left a liberal portion to his sister, "Nelle Marya," then living in Amsterdam. He divided his estate among his relatives, and in conclusion directed his executrix and sister to "decently provide for his honored aunt, called Petronella Van Twiller, during her lifetime." He died soon after, February 22, 1687. Killian, son of Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, was left in the management of the manor for account of the heirs of the first patroon until 1695. At this date all the children of Killian Van Rensselaer, the projector of the colony, were dead except two, Leonora and Richard. The latter was treasurer of Vianen.[1] The estate was not yet divided among his heirs, but for nearly fifty years had been held in common. Besides the manor, there was a large estate in Holland (the Crailo), and other property. The time had now arrived for the heirs to make a settlement. Controversies had arisen among them, and to end the disputes, Killian Van Rensselaer (son of Jan Baptist Van Rensselaer) was delegated by the heirs in Holland to visit America, and, if possible, make a complete settlement with the children of Jeremiah, the only heirs in this country. Killian, eldest son of Jeremiah, was appointed by power of attorney to act for the family. The cousins met, and, after a prolonged discussion, in which, as usual, both lost their temper, they at last came to an "amicable agreement to their mutual satisfaction." The indenture is dated, New York, November 1, 1695. The heirs in Holland released to the heirs in Albany all right and title in the manor, which was reciprocated by the release of the latter

[1] To a late date Vianen was a legalized asylum for criminals. The States-General appointed its officers.

primogeniture. Before the war Stephen Van Rensselaer, had he been of legal age, would have been acknowledged by the English as sixth lord of the manor of Rensselaerwyck, and by the Dutch as eighth patroon. Now he was simply Mr. Van Rensselaer, but was always by courtesy addressed as patroon. He had a splendid estate. Although somewhat diminished in its original extent, there were yet several townships on each side of the river. His culture, his descent from a long line of ancestors, his wealth and his connections, combined with a gentle temper and unassuming manners, made him a gentleman, and gave him a high position. He now entered upon the work of improvement with zeal and intelligence. Large tracts of the manorial lands were yet without inhabitants. Various causes had prevented their development. The antagonism of the West India Company, the frequent Indian wars, the long French wars, the war of the Revolution, but chiefly the often-recurring periods when, for many years at a time, the estate was in the hands of trustees or administrators, had retarded the growth of the colony and prevented immigration. He now offered inducements to farmers to settle on his lands. Rentals were placed so low that they yielded only one and two per cent. on a fair valuation. In many instances farms were offered rent free for a term of years. On such easy terms he found little difficulty in securing tenants. The country had just emerged from an exhausting war, and many of its inhabitants were too poor to buy farms of their own. The best lands of the State were in the hands of large proprietors, or were held by speculators at high prices, or were still in possession of the native owners, so that people able to buy were precluded. Under such circumstances, farms offered on the terms of Van Rensselaer's were quickly taken up, and it was not long before the

greater part of his lands on both sides of the river were under cultivation.

Having secured an income sufficient for his moderate wants, and placed his business in the hands of careful agents and clerks, he had leisure to devote to other objects. He united, in 1787, with the church of his fathers, of which he was an active and conscientious member, and for many years an officer. In the militia, in 1786, he was a major of infantry, and two years after was promoted to a colonelcy. In 1801 he was made a major-general of cavalry.

In politics he was a Federalist. He was elected to the Assembly of 1789, and from 1791 to 1796 was a State Senator. In 1795 he was elected Lieutenant-Governor, and again in 1798. At the last election he had no opponent, having been nominated by both parties. In 1808-9-10 he was again Member of Assembly. The question whether the lakes and Hudson River could be connected by a canal had for many years received attention. In 1810 the Legislature appointed a commission to explore the route and report at the next session. Mr. Van Rensselaer was a member of the commission, and with others made the tour on horseback in the summer of 1810. The report interested the Legislature, and another commission was appointed to consider all matters relating to inland navigation, of which also he was a member. The war of 1812 occurred, and delayed the project.

When war was declared he was offered the command of the army on the northern frontiers. Although opposed to the war as premature, he promptly accepted. He was quickly at his post, and proceeded to organize the army. This was a difficult task. It was composed of militia, not of regular soldiers. Difficult as it was, he soon had a force sufficient in numbers to have overrun the province of

Upper Canada, had it been officered with men of courage and military knowledge. The battle of Queenstown was fought and won; but ultimately lost, because the militia in large numbers refused to fight. The early victory later in the day was turned into a serious disaster. Van Rensselaer resigned his command, and retired to private life.

After the war was closed he was again placed upon the canal commission, and was appointed its chairman. The Legislature of 1816 inaugurated the work on the canals—the Erie and the Champlain,—and they were completed in 1825, during which time Van Rensselaer was president of the board.

He was twice nominated by his party for governor of the State, in 1801 and in 1813. The last time he was defeated by less than four thousand votes. Had he been as well known in other parts of the State as at Albany, his home, the result would have been different. He was member of the Assembly in 1818, and elected to the Congress of the United States in 1823, to fill a vacancy, and twice re-elected for full terms. At the close of his last term, March, 1825, he retired from political life. In 1819, he was elected Regent of the University of the State of New York, and was subsequently its Chancellor until his death. Interested in agriculture, he promoted the interests of the State Agricultural Society, and was its president in 1820. He caused a geological survey to be made along the line of the canal from Albany to Buffalo; and on another line commencing in Massachusetts. From the information and data collected on these surveys, he was convinced there was need of more technical education. To supply the deficiency he established the Rensselaer Institute at Troy.

He was a liberal patron of the various benevolent so-

cieties of the day, in many of which he held official positions. His private charities were large, and were yearly increasing to the close of life. There were few men who were so liberal with their means in all directions, as Stephen Van Rensselaer, the last of the patroons. His life was full of activities and good works. In all positions, as a large landed proprietor with tenants counted by the thousands, as a politician, and leading member of a strong and respectable party, as an officer in the church, as a private citizen, he proved himself a man of honor and a Christian gentleman. In social life he was greatly respected, and in his family much beloved.

Margaret Schuyler, his first wife, died in March, 1801. In May, 1802, he married Cornelia, daughter of Judge William Patterson, of New Jersey. He died, January 26, 1839, at the ripe age of seventy-five years. His second wife, and ten children survived him. Of these, seven were sons, the eldest, Stephen, was by his first wife. His will is dated April 18, 1837. To this time, the manor proper had devolved upon the eldest son. Its large extent had been somewhat diminished, first, by the cession of Albany; second, by the Coeyman's tract, eight by twelve miles; third, by a strip from the east side, four by twenty-four miles, ceded to Massachusetts when the boundaries were adjusted; fourth, by the sale of several farms along the river to relatives; and lastly, by the sale of one township, Stephentown, in the southeast corner. But it was still of large extent. The time had now come for a division. The laws of entail had been abrogated by the Revolution, and the last patroon was free to return to the usages of the land of his fathers—free to divide his property among his children, in equal proportion, if he wished. The lands of the manor were mostly under life, or perpetual leases, which yielded a small income compared to their value.

The other property of the estate, acquired by the sale of Stephentown, and surplus revenues, was large and available. He gave the lands belonging to the manor on the west side of the Hudson, to his eldest son, Stephen, and those on the east side, to his second son, William. His lands in St. Lawrence County were given to his son Henry. His other property, consisting of lands in Hamilton County, real estate in the cities of New York and Albany, and elsewhere, and stocks in banks, turnpikes and insurance companies, were divided among his other seven children. He gave no legacies to benevolent societies, to which his benefactions had been flowing in a constant stream. He now left them to the care of the living.

In less than fifty years after his death, the seven hundred thousand acres originally in the manor were mostly in the hands of strangers. By the vicissitudes of fortune, William Van Rensselaer's portion passed from his possession. The anti-rent troubles, which sprang up soon after the death of the last patroon, induced Stephen Van Rensselaer to sell his townships to a relative who had the nerve to maintain his rights.

We have followed the elder branch of the American Van Rensselaers and their manor without any allusion to the younger branch or their fortunes. The history would not be complete without some notice of them, and of the Claverack patent.

Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, son of the first patroon, it will be remembered, died in 1674, leaving three sons, one of whom, Johannes, died unmarried. Killian and Hendrick, his other sons, were the ancestors of the numerous families of Van Rensselaer in America. It would be more pertinent to say, that the greater part are the descendants of Hendrick, for while the elder branch possessed the family wealth, the younger contributed most to the population

and to public wealth. A Van Rensselaer family chart brought down to 1847, and prepared with much care, shows the descendants of the elder branch in the direct line to number only thirty-one; of the younger, they number two hundred and nineteen.

Hendrick Van Rensselaer received as his portion of his grandfather's estate, the Claverack patent, containing about sixty-two thousand acres of land, and fifteen hundred acres out of the manor proper, lying opposite the city of Albany. On the latter portion he erected a substantial brick house, constructed as a fort for defence against attacks of hostile Indians coming from Canada. This he made his permanent residence. He erected another house at Claverack, still standing, for temporary sojourns while superintending the settlement of his lands.

Like his brother Killian, he was employed in the public service, and held several responsible positions. He was an alderman of the city, commissioner of Indian affairs, and representative of the manor in the Assembly for several terms. He did not suffer his official duties to interfere with his personal interests. He attended to his business affairs with assiduity and success. When he saw an opportunity for a safe speculation he did not let it pass unimproved.

The Schaghticoke Indians had a larger tract of land than they required, and being thriftless and poor, they offered a portion of it for sale. The city of Albany agreed to purchase a few hundred acres, but was not prepared to consummate the bargain. Hendrick Van Rensselaer saw his opportunity, and bought a tract six miles square lying on the Hoosac River, for which he procured a patent from the governor. The city saw its mistake, but sought to remedy it by the purchase of Van Rensselaer's interest, and generously offered him what it cost him. The offer

was declined with thanks, but he would sell for two hundred pounds. The city fathers were indignant, and appealed to the governor. The controversy became a State affair, for Bellomont reported it to his government for instructions; but before his letter was despatched the matter was settled.

Subsequently it was the cause of another flurry in the Common Council. Patents and deeds for real estate were passed from hand to hand, much the same as coupon bonds. The mayor was the custodian of those belonging to the city. When he retired from office he handed them over to his successor. It happened, in the course of time, that the outgoing mayor, a relative of Van Rensselaer's, did not pass over this particular patent, with other papers. The new mayor reported the fact to the board of aldermen, who promptly appointed a committe of investigation. The committee called on the ex-mayor and had no difficulty in securing the document. It had been an oversight. The city dealt in real estate just as individuals. The profits helped pay the municipal expenses, and reduce taxation. It held this property nearly a century, letting it in small parcels on long leases, or selling it, reserving an annual quit-rent. In 1770, the city sold to Johannes Knickerbaker, whose father, Johannes, was one of the first settlers, all the land not heretofore sold within certain described bounds, "for which the said Knickerbaker is to find the said corporation and their successors with Meat, Drink, and Lodging once a year at his house at Schactacook." It would be interesting to entertain the present board in the old mansion, now occupied by a Knickerbaker, and filled with memorials of the past. It is a charming place. Its proprietor is an unmarried man. He has no other love than his farm with its old house and surrounding grounds. The ancient furniture and relics

are kept so bright and shining, that a Dutch housemaid, who gets on her knees and picks out particles of dust hidden in crevices with her hair pin, would have no fault to find.

A controversy arose between Hendrick Van Rensselaer and Robert Livingston, as to the division line between their properties. It was settled satisfactorily to both, and a surveyor was employed to mark it with more intelligible words than those contained in the Indian deeds. The Massachusetts line was advanced four miles west from the eastern line, by which the estate lost a portion of its broad and fertile acres.

The wife of Hendrick Van Rensselaer was a granddaughter of the well-known Anneke Jans, through whom his descendants became "heirs" to the Trinity Church farm. It is amusing to learn what numbers of them, about forty years ago, appeared in Albany to search the records of the church for proofs of their pedigree and "heirship." He had nine children, four sons and five daughters, all of whom but one had large families. His eldest son was, by law, heir to his landed property. Before his death, however, he made over to his other eight children, a fair proportion of his property, leaving the residue, including the "Crailo" estate, or Greenbush, to his eldest son, Johannes. He died in July, 1740, and was buried near his house on the banks of the Hudson. Railroads, and the growth of the village, some twenty years since, have disturbed his resting-place. His dust, together with that of a multitude of others, his posterity, has been removed.

John Van Rensselaer, as heir of the Claverack patent, inherited perplexity and trouble. At one time people from Massachusetts settled upon his unoccupied land and claimed them as their own. The governor and the

intervened, but their proclamations and verdicts were disregarded. Officers sent to arrest the intruders, were captured and sent to the Springfield jail. The sheriff of Albany was one of the victims. A year or two afterward, another sheriff with a posse undertook to arrest the leaders, but was met by an armed mob, who killed one of the posse, and dangerously wounded others. At another time some English officers, who were to be retired and given lands for settlement, petitioned that their farms might be located at Claverack. Van Rensselaer stoutly resisted these encroachments, and at last was allowed to enjoy his inheritance in peace. His wife was Engeltie Livingston, a granddaughter of Colonel Peter Schuyler. One of his sons married Elsie Schuyler, and a daughter, Catharine, married Philip Schuyler, the Major-General. His son Robert, commanded the militia who pursued and defeated Sir John Johnson when on his famous raid in the Mohawk valley, 1780.

Killian, another of Hendrick Van Rensselaer's sons, married Arianantje Schuyler. Two of *his* sons were officers in the Revolutionary army, and acquitted themselves with credit. One was wounded at Fort Ann in Burgoyne's campaign, and carried the ball in his person thirty-five years, to his death. The family of Hendrick was so large, and soon became so numerous, that it would exceed my limits to follow them further. I shall have occasion in the progress of my narrative often to refer to individual members. Sufficient now to say, that among them may be found many eminent men in all the walks of life, mechanics, farmers, lawyers, doctors, divines, statesmen, and warriors; of the latter, General Solomon Van Rensselaer was the most celebrated.

Hendrick's estate, like that of his brother's, is now mostly in the hands of those who do not bear his name, and are

not of his lineage. Here and there only, a farm is owned and occupied by a Van Rensselaer, or a relative of another name. The city of Hudson occupies the landing-place of the ancient Claverack. The village of Claverack, four miles east of Hudson, has lost its importance since the days of railroads, and is chiefly interesting because it was the ancient family seat, and where, in the cemetery attached to the old church, are the graves of descendants for several generations.

In the Revolution, the Van Rensselaer families were almost to a man on the patriot side. They served as officers or in the ranks, many of them without pay or emolument. Themselves and their large estates, they devoted to the cause of popular liberty, as did their fathers in their long wars with Spain.

It is time to return to the personal history of Rev. Nicolaus Van Rensselaer, fourth son of the first patroon, who married the second daughter of Philip Schuyler. He received a liberal education in the schools and universities of Holland with the intention of becoming a minister of the Word, but began his tour of Europe before he took his theological degree. In England he was received with kindness and consideration. He had an audience of King Charles II., who presented him a snuff-box containing his miniature. This was done in memory of their acquaintance in Holland when the king was an exile. Van Rensselaer had cheered him by declaring, on one occasion, that he would be restored to the throne of England. This was interpreted as a prophecy, the fulfilment of which he now witnessed.

His visit in London was prolonged. He had more liberal theological opinions than prevailed in the established Church of Holland, and esteeming the Church of England to be equally orthodox, he sought ordination to

This Xeroxed from "New York - A Guide to the Empire State"
Anaheim Library 974-7 - W956
These pages re: Van Rensselaer family - last of great land owner patroons
Cousin Martha Warnock said were relatives of ours Researching this.

IN 1609, Samuel de Champlain, a Frenchman, explored southward along the valley of the lake later named for him, and Henry Hudson, an Englishman in Dutch employ, sailed northward up the river later named for him. These two expeditions, occurring within two months of each other and penetrating to points only about 100 miles apart, prefigured a century and a half of struggle for control of a North American empire.

In 1614 Fort Nassau was built by the Dutch on Castle Island, south of the present city of Albany, to serve as a fur-trading post; after it was destroyed by a spring freshet in 1617, a new fort, Fort Orange, was erected on the west bank of the river near the present site of Albany. In 1621 the West India Company came into being. About 30 families, mostly Walloons, were transported in 1624 to New Netherland, as the area was called, and a majority of them formed the first permanent Dutch settlement at Fort Orange. The first substantial settlement on the island of Manhattan was made the following year; and after a fort was built there, the families at Fort Orange were moved down temporarily to enjoy its protection.

In order to encourage colonization, in 1629 the West India Company offered a large estate, or patroonship, in the new colony to each of its members who within four years would settle 50 colonists on the tract assigned to him. The only patroonship to survive Colonial times was Rensselaerswyck, a large area on both sides of the upper Hudson, of which the site of Albany was the approximate center; it was settled by its absentee owner, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, with Dutchmen, Germans, Danes, Norwegians, Scots, and other nationals. The nonresident patroon, through his agents, enjoyed complete suzerainty over his domain and retained ownership of the land, letting it out principally on leases. He financed the settlers and was repaid slowly over a long period. The Fuyck, enjoying the protection of Fort Orange on the west bank of the Hudson, became the principal settlement. A quarrel over jurisdiction was ended in 1652 by the establishment of a new court at Beverwyck, which included Fort Orange and the Fuyck. This tribunal immediately overshadowed and finally absorbed the patroon's court in 1665. Other settlements in the upstate area were made during the Dutch period at Wiltwyck (Kingston) and several other points along the Hudson, and at Schenectady on the Mohawk. The settlement on Manhattan Island was designated as the city of New Amsterdam and given burgher government in 1653.

The Dutch West India Company, in common with other early trading and colonizing groups, looked upon its colony as a source of dividends. It bound the settlers by contracts that prohibited trade, change of residence, and the transfer of property; and it imposed heavy taxes, including taxes on imports, that discouraged enterprise, aroused antagonism, and insured minimum returns. It shirked all obligations of a social character, throwing on the Dutch Reformed Church the burden of education and care of the sick and the poor. This shortsighted policy, aggravated by the greed and ineptness of its officials in the Colony, brought the company to virtual bankruptcy. The Directors General of New Netherland—Minuit, Van Twiller, Kieft, Stuyvesant—had trouble, much of it of their own making, with the company's business agents, with the clergy of the Reformed Church, with Van Rensselaer's agents, with the New Englanders encroaching in Westchester and on Long Island, and especially with their own people, who demanded an effective voice in the government and wider freedom.

In 1664, when Colonel Richard Nicolls at the head of a British fleet demanded the surrender of New Amsterdam, Director General Stuyvesant found himself with little support and was obliged to capitulate. The Province and the principal settlement were renamed New York, Beverwyck became Albany, and Wiltwyck, Kingston. In 1673 the Dutch recaptured the Colony, but in 1674 it was restored by treaty to the English, who promptly resumed their sway.

The terms of surrender in 1664 were highly favorable to the Dutch. Land titles were confirmed, including that of Rensselaerswyck; toleration was granted to the Dutch Reformed and other Protestant churches. Transition to English political institutions was slow; in the Albany district and along the wharves of New York City the Dutch language persisted for generations. In 1683 the Province of New York was divided into 12 counties, two of which, Dukes and Cornwall, later passed to Massachusetts and Maine; the boundaries of Albany County extended north, west, and east without fixed limits. In 1686 charters were granted to the cities of New York and Albany.

The forced abdication of James II and the accession of William and Mary (1688-9) brought discontent to the surface. Following the lead of New England, Jacob Leisler, with strong support from the common people, seized power in New York City and governed, though in Albany his

Remember

Probably on Grandmother Beach's side through Livingston over grandmother Betsy Humphrey (Beach) family. Need filling Marts

Grandma Emma Beach had a Cousin Judge Van Rensselaer

of more fundamental developments. In that year Staats Morris Dyckman erected handsome Boscobel House just south of Peekskill. Here the wide central hall with its superb divided stair leading to the large upper parlor, the projecting rooms, and the two superposed porches with slender columns and lambricated architrave indicate a new and freer solution of classic elements. Even more remarkable is The Hill, south of Hudson, begun by Henry Walter Livingston in 1796, just after his marriage to Mary Peter Allen. Certainly Mrs. Livingston had visited Woodlands in her native Philadelphia, and, admiring the two elliptical salons there, ordered for her own home two similar rooms placed side by side, masked in front by a two-story portico. The stucco walls, massive columns, curved bays, and secondary projecting wings declare an architectural liberation from Colonial forms and indicate a growing interest in authentic Roman classical detail.

If the post-Colonial manner symbolized the Anglophilia of the Federalists, the Roman Revival found its patrons in Jefferson and his Republicans, who, in romantically identifying the new Republic with the ancient prototype, decreed Republican architectural togas for the government buildings in Washington, D.C. In New York State, an unexpected and unique example of the Roman Revival appeared in the grand plan for Union College in Schenectady, drawn in 1813 by Joseph Jacques Ramée, a trained architect and refugee from Revolutionary France, brought to America to build along the St. Lawrence the vast frontier estate of the Parish. Ramée's noble disposition of college buildings surrounding a small, dominated by a classical rotunda, and flanked by fine formal gardens has been unjustly overshadowed by Jefferson's later University of Virginia. Romanized Palladianism is further apparent, first, in the Holland Land Office in Batavia, built in 1801 by Joseph Ellicott, then Joseph's own house (now the Goodrich House) in Buffalo, built in 18[illegible], and in several Geneva homes built in the 1820's by settlers from Virginia.

Between 1800 and 1830, knowledge of classical Greek architecture disseminated by such works as Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* came to be increasingly applied to new buildings in Philadelphia and Washington. Completed in 1826, both Latrobe's Bank of the United

Tuthill House
Cleverick
1790

Steam House
Rensselaerville
1829

Rider House
Rensselaer

States at Philadelphia and the Lee Mansion at Arlington by George Hadfield immediately captured popular imagination. Aroused by the Jacksonian revolution, fired by democratic dreams of another Periclean Golden Age, stimulated by sympathy for the contemporary Greek struggle for independence against the Turk, excited by the rapid commercial and industrial expansion following the opening of the Erie Canal, and fortified with Minard Lafever's *Modern Builder's Guide*, New York State went Grecian with a vengeance, literally lining the water level route with rustic Parthenons. Troy, appropriately enough, led off in 1827 with the Rensselaer County Courthouse, a Sing Sing marble Theseum now unfortunately demolished. Well-preserved, however, are the grave Doric First Presbyterian Church (1836), the graceful Ionic First Baptist Church (1846), numerous houses, large and small, and several business blocks. In the truly monumental four-story Doric portico of the Utica State Hospital (1839-42), New York possesses probably the grandest single work of the period, rivaled only by Robert Mills's Patent Office in Washington. An Ionic work of similar scale is Newburgh's American Reformed Church (1835). In the old State Office Building (now the Court of Appeals Building), built in 1830 in Albany by Henry Rector, a fashionable Sing Sing marble exterior encloses an interior noteworthy for its fire-resisting vaulted floors.

Typical large residences are General Aaron Ward's marble house (1833) at Ossining, and Rose Hill, southeast of Geneva, built of wood about the same time. Every hamlet had its temple-fronted cottage, but the General Herkimer House (1840), in Mohawk, proves that the style could achieve flexibility both in plan and mass. Especially amusing are vernacular examples that sing the ancient modes off key, such as Child's Folly in Rochester (1837), with its extraordinary portico of five buxom Lysicratean columns. Possibly the finest residence of the period was Beverwyck, the manor house of William Paterson Van Rensselaer, built in 1839-43 in what is now Rensselaer. Its well-organized plan, refined detail, and dignified brown stucco exterior signalize the professional competence of its English trained architect, Frederic Diaper.

A third romantic revival was Gothic. Since the late eighteenth century,

Academy
Wc

Engelmen House
Conger Park
1794

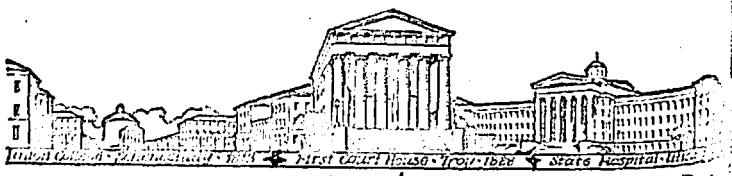
N. W. Livingston House
nr. Hudson
1796

pointed arches, wiry pinnacles, and crude tracery had been applied superficially to Anglican buildings which were fundamentally Georgian. An example of this 'Georgian Gothic' was the second Trinity Church, built in 1788 in New York City. St.Luke's (1824), Rochester, and St.Paul's (1827), Troy, represent more successful attempts to approximate medieval forms. In secular building, the 'castellated' style derived from English Tudor castles was preferred. Typical are Colonel James McKay's Castle (1837), Buffalo, the fine West Point Library (1841), and Lyndhurst, the Philip R. Paulding mansion, built in 1840 in Tarrytown by Alexander Jackson Davis, that prodigious peer of eclectic architects. Hyde Park's St.James Episcopal Church (1844), designed by the amateur, Augustus Thomas Cowman, shows further improvements.

It remained for the Englishman, Richard Upjohn, to introduce America to authentically designed and executed Gothic. In the third Trinity Church (1839–46) he achieved an effect of such dignity that Gothic soon replaced Greek as the popular style. New York State is particularly rich in Upjohn's work, outstanding examples being St.Paul's Cathedral (1851), Buffalo, and Albany's St.Peter's (1859). Especially worthy of note are Upjohn's charity jobs, the board-and-batten chapels sprinkled throughout the State; St.Paul's (1851), Kinderhook, is one of the most charming.

Since England was the fountainhead of New York State Gothic, it is not strange that John Ruskin's Victorian Gothic, based on the medieval buildings of northern Italy, quickly made its appearance here. Half Gothic, half Romanesque, the Nott Memorial Library of Union College, Schenectady, built in 1858–76 by Edward Tuckerman Potter, displays the salient features of the style in its polychrome masonry and polygonal domed mass, inspired by the Baptistry at Pisa. Calvert Vaux and Frederick Withers, English architects who came to America to assist Andrew Jackson Downing, celebrated landscape architect of Newburgh, built in 1866–72 one of the most pretentious and costly Victorian Gothic monuments in New York, the Hudson River State Hospital, north of Poughkeepsie.

The pattern books of Downing and Vaux, which guided American house



design in the forties and fifties, peddled every variant of the historic architectural styles. Taking their cue from George Harvey's romantification of Irving's Sunnyside in 1835, these volumes portrayed Tudor cottages, Italianate villas, Swiss chalets, and other homes in the 'American Bracketted Style.' Of all the buildings constructed under this influence, perhaps the most exotic examples are Renwick Castle, Syracuse, an unbelievable Norman hodgepodge built in 1851 by James Renwick, and the Persian villa which Frederick E. Church, leader of the Hudson River school of landscape painters, built overlooking the river opposite Catskill.

In the 1850's New York witnessed an interesting structural innovation in the development of commercial and industrial buildings whose walls, columns, and floor beams were entirely of cast iron. The new system aimed to secure greater fire resistance than the prevailing masonry-wall, timber-floor construction. The ease with which the prefabricated sections were cast encouraged an unusually profuse application of ornament.

In New York State as in the Nation, the close of the Civil War inaugurated an unprecedented expansion in population and industry; but despite a tremendous building boom, America remained an architectural province of Europe. The restless, picturesque Victorian Gothic continued in use for schools and churches. In commercial and governmental buildings, however, the English Renaissance gave way to the ostentatious bombast of Napoleon III's Second Empire style, the prestige of which was established by the reconstruction and expansion of the Louvre, 1852–68, and the building of the Opera, 1861–74, in Paris.

New York enthusiastically developed this new mode into an exuberant expression of its economic prosperity. One of the earliest Second Empire buildings in the State was James Renwick's Main Hall (1861–5), at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, a somewhat ungainly and reduced brick version of the Louvre, complete with mansard roofs, superposed orders, and pavilion accents. A surer application of the same elements was begun in 1867 by Thomas Fuller and Augustus Laver in the incredibly expensive New York State Capitol in Albany, but the building was completed with unfortunate stylistic admixtures. In Rochester, the Powers Building (1870), by An-

feudalism. The Dutch West India Company parceled out the land in enormous patroonships, and the British confirmed and extended the manorial system. Most important on the east bank of the Hudson were Rensselaerswyck, Livingston Manor, Van Cortlandt Manor, and Philipsburgh. The tenants who cultivated these estates were restless under the semifeudal system of long-term leases. In 1769 a real estate speculator on his way to his lands along the Mohawk kept a diary that reveals the unrest pervading the countryside. A tenant of Philipsburgh complained that his rent was seven pounds a year for 200 acres and that 'on his demise or Sale his Son or Vendee is obliged to pay to the Landlord one Third of the Value of the Farm for Renewal of the Lease.' A little farther north another said that he and his neighbors were planning to migrate because they had to pay seven pounds a year for 'about 100 acres including Rocks and Mountains.'

The hope of improving their economic lot made these tenants eager fighters in the rebellion against the Crown; but the political settlement after the Revolution did not break up the huge estates. After the Revolution, in a movement that reached its peak in the thirties and forties, tenant farmers took matters into their own hands and by the threat of force tried to prevent sheriffs from serving eviction notices for nonpayment of rent in arrears. In these 'antirent wars' the tenants often disguised themselves as Indians; and the old ballad relates that:

> The moon was shining silver bright;
> The sheriff came in dead of night;
> High on a hill an 'Indian' true
> And on his horn this blast he blew:
> Keep out of the way, old Bill Snyder;
> We'll tar your coat and feather your hide, sir.

These outbreaks were quelled by the militia; but wide popular disapproval and the opening of abundant cheap land in the West caused the breakup of the leasehold system. The tenants turned to political action and won their greatest victory in the adoption of the constitution of 1846, which abolished all feudal tenures in land and limited agricultural leases to a twelve-year period.

The industrial revolution caused another change in the cultural character of the valley. As new fortunes were made in finance, land and real speculation, manufacturing, and trade, the Hudson Valley became a fashionable suburb of New York City. Everyone who made money wanted a country place where he could live in the style of the English gentry. The descendants of the old landed aristocracy set the tone of living in a tight little society of their own, to which newcomers were admitted only after they had shown in long years of residence that they understood and accepted the code. The city mansions of these gentry served as town houses, used during the winter social season and when business required that the head of the household be near his offices. Stages, carriages, boats, later the railroads, and finally the automobile provided transportation.

The Hudson reached its peak of fashionable importance in the decade

following the Civil War; since 1900 that importance has dwindled steadily. The young people of today still dutifully go up the river for family reunions; but when the members of the older generation die, the heirs, preferring to live near the gay casinos and beaches of Long Island, sell the estates or give them to the State as public parks or to religious organizations or schools. So many of the places are being transferred to tax-free bodies as family memorials that the tax burden on the remaining property, especially in the case of farmers with small holdings, is becoming serious.

ALBANY, 0 *m.*, US 9 unites with US 20 (*see Tour 8*).

RENSSELAER, 1 *m.* (20 alt., 10,818 pop.), technically a separate municipality but actually a suburb of Albany, contains division shops of the New York Central and the Boston & Albany Railroads, and the waterfront is part of the Port of Albany, used particularly for lumber. Behind the wharves are factories producing dyes, chemicals, felts, and woolen goods. The city, formed in 1897 by the union of the villages of East Albany, Greenbush, and Bath-on-the-Hudson, stands on ground that was part of Rensselaerswyck, most successful of the patroonships.

FORT CRAILO (*open 10–4, adm. 25¢, children under 16 free*), Riverside St., south of Columbia, is a much restored brick dwelling now maintained as a public museum. The front or river block is believed to have been built by Hendrick Van Rensselaer in 1704, shortly after he received the Claverack tract and the Green Bush farm from his brother Kiliaen, the patroon. Within are huge hewn beams, large fireplaces, and broad floor boards. The interior of the rear wing, erected in 1762, illustrates, by contrast with the earlier structure, the progress of half a century: rooms are more spacious, paneling is more extensive, and double-hung sash supplant casements.

This building is also known as the 'Yankee Doodle House.' In 1758, while Abercrombie was preparing to attack Ticonderoga, Dr. Richard Shuckburgh, a British army surgeon, sat on the Fort Crailo well curb watching the provincial militia drill and wrote the derisive words of 'Yankee Doodle,' which later became the marching song of the Revolution.

RIVERSWYCK, Washington Ave. opposite intersection with Eighth St., was built between 1840 and 1843 as the manor house of William Paterson Van Rensselaer, younger son of Stephen Van Rensselaer, upon the subdivision of the patroonship after the latter's death in 1839. The mansion was laid out on a truly aristocratic scale by Frederic Diaper, young English architect well known for his suave Italianate Fifth Avenue mansions and Wall Street banks. Stucco-covered brick to approximate cut stone, broad pilasters framing the triple windows, low attic, and one-story Greek Ionic porch produce a monumental effect. In the interior, a spacious hall with cantilevered stone stairs leads to the fine library with mahogany cases and Italianate ceiling painting in false-perspective. William resided here only a few years after completion of the house in 1843, since the estate was broken up as a result of the antirent wars. The Order of St. Francis bought the place in 1912 and established a monastery and training school here.

Page 534 - N.Y. - a guide to Empire State" (Writers Program)
at So. City Limits of Ogdensburg are ruins of V. Rensselaer mansion built 1832 by Henry V. Rensselaer, heir of Hudson Valley patroon family.

Page 406 - V. Rensselaer Manor House - Claverack - at E. Village line - an L-Shape Bg. with long shingled roof sloping unbroken to first floor level to form a porch - to a conglomeration of additions to original 2 room dwelling - built ca 1712. The lower manor was presented 1704 by the 4th Patroon to his bro. Hendrik Van Rensselaer.

Page 182 1614 on Castle Island (Van Rensselaer Island) now part of Albany Christiaensen built Ft. Nassau - used as trading post for 4 yrs, etc