

## A GLIMPSE OF AN OLD DUTCH TOWN.

“Once more I stand, but now unknown, by sacred  
Hudson’s tide,  
With unfamiliar scenes around, no friendly hand  
to guide;  
For in Albany, forsooth, they’ve been working  
such a change  
With their modern innovations that the place  
looks very strange.  
All the old lanes and pasture fields, with clover  
tops so fair,  
Are lost to sight, no fences left, no shady *bouw-  
eries*\* there.  
Old places once so very dear to these old eyes  
of mine  
Are scattered like the hoar-frost by the ruthless  
hand of Time.

\* \* \* \* \*

Old things have changed so swiftly since last I  
saw the town—  
The honest old Dutch customs; and the stones  
which marked the mile  
Are lost in streets and alleys; and the roads, of  
which the cows  
Had traced the crooked outlines as they moved  
about to browse,  
Are laid in stones and pavements: the degener-  
ated race  
Have begun with their ‘improvements’ to wipe  
out the old Dutch place.  
I would not care to live and see such altered  
folks and ways,  
Since half-doors swung wide open in those palmy  
old Dutch days,  
When streets were cleaned by private hand, and  
all the city’s light  
Was furnished by the lanterns from each tenth  
house hung in sight.

\* \* \* \* \*

I fain would take before I go a hasty bird’s-eye  
view  
Of forms and places that I loved before all things  
were new.”

**A**L BANY, or Beverwyck, is one of the  
oldest of the permanent European  
settlements in the United States. In 1610  
the Dutch navigators came up the Hud-  
son, or, as the Indians had christened it,  
the Sha-te-muc, and built trading houses  
to traffic for furs with the various Indian  
tribes. As early as 1614 a stockade fort  
was erected on an adjacent island, and  
three years later was swept away by a  
freshet of unparalleled violence. A new  
fort was built in 1623 on Market Street,  
now Broadway, below State Street, and  
was called Fort Orange, in honor of the  
Stadtholder of Holland. For a time the  
village was called Beverwyck, and also  
the Fuyck, or Hoop-net; but when James,  
Duke of York and Albany, came in pos-  
session of New Netherlands, Nieuw Am-

\* Farm-houses.

sterdam became New York, and Orange,  
or Beverwyck, was known as Albany.  
In 1647 Fort Willemstadt was built upon  
the hill at the head of State Street, near  
the site of the old Capitol, and later on it  
gave place to Fort Frederick. The Indi-  
ans called Albany Pempotawuthut.\*

In Governor Dongan’s report on the  
Province of New York, in 1687, we are told  
that “at Albany there is a Fort made of  
pine-trees fifteen foot high @ foot over  
with Batterys and conveniences made for  
men to walk about, where are nine guns,  
small arms for forty men, four Barils of  
powder with great and small shott in pro-  
portion. And truly its very necessary to  
have a Fort there, it being a frontier place  
both to the Indians @ french.”

Under the Dongan charter, in 1686, Al-  
bany became a city of one mile on the  
river and three and a half miles long.  
All outside of these limits belonged to the  
Colonie Rensselaerwyck. In 1683, Al-  
bany County comprised all the territory  
north of Dutchess and Ulster counties on  
both sides of the river, and Albany was  
looked upon as the fount of authority in  
church and judicial matters.

The Albany Dutch Church, founded in  
1640, was the only one north of Esopus, un-  
til long after 1700, that had an established  
ministry, save the church at Schenecta-  
dy. In this Albany church preached the  
well-known dominies Schaats, Dellijs,  
Lydius, Van Driessen, Van Schie, Frelin-  
huysen, Westerlo, and Johnson; and here,  
also, were all the children baptized soon  
after birth, and the names entered on the  
*Doop Boek*.†

“As Israel’s tribes to Zion’s holy hill,  
Up to the courts the worshippers would come,  
From where is Saugerties; where Plattekill,  
Flatbush, Blue Mountain, Malden, Kiskatom—  
All daughters fair of mine. But passing fair  
Those faithful ones who travelled leagues to  
prayer.

Call others privileged? *They* had this much—  
The Gospel undefiled in Holland Dutch.

“I see the pulpit high‡—an octagon.  
Its pedestal, doophuisje,§ winding stair;  
And room within for one, and one alone,  
A canopy above, suspended there;  
No spire, no bell; but ’neath the eaves a porch,  
With trumpet hung to summon all to church:

\* A place of fire—a council ground.

† Baptism Book.

‡ In front of the pulpit was a socket for the hour-  
glass.

§ Baptistery—an inclosed space in front of the  
pulpit.





NEW-YEAR'S HYMN TO ST. NICHOLAS.

Till innovation brought stoves, bell, and spire,  
Floors, straight-backed pews, voorleser,\* and a  
choir."

The great festival days were Keestijd, †  
Nieuwjaarsdag, ‡ Paaschdag, § and Pink-  
sterfeest. ¶ Christmas was of little impor-  
tance among the Dutch, for New-Year  
was *the* day, and then it was that the  
right fat, jolly, roistering little St. Nich-  
olas made his appearance, sometimes ac-  
companied by his good-natured vrouw,  
Molly Grietje. ¶

Should you enter the bouwery on New-  
Year's Eve, you would see the children  
gathered round the immense fire-place  
singing in muffled voices their evening  
hymns to the good saint, as follows:

"Santa Klaus, goedt heilig man!  
Knopyebest van Amsterdam,  
Van Amsterdam aan Spanje,  
Van Spanje aan Oranje,  
En brang deze kindjes eenige graps."\*\*\*

\* The clerk who gave out the hymns, etc., and  
led the singing.

† Christmas. ‡ New-Year. § Easter.

¶ Whitsuntide. ¶ Wife.

\*\*\* "Santa Claus, good holy man!  
Go your way from Amsterdam,  
From Amsterdam to Spain,  
From Spain to Orange,  
And bring these little children toys."

Or,

"Sint Nicholaus, myn goden vriend,  
Ik hab u altyd wel gediend;  
Als gy my nu not wilt geben,  
Tal ik dienen als myn leven."\*\*

New-Year's Day was devoted to the uni-  
versal interchange of visits. Every door  
was thrown wide open, and a warm wel-  
come extended to friend and stranger.  
It was a breach of etiquette to omit any  
acquaintance in these annual calls, when  
old friendships were renewed, and family  
differences amicably settled. And here  
came the famous New-Year cake. The  
Paas eggs were the feature of Easter. The  
Pinkster festivities commenced on the  
Monday after Whitsunday, and now be-  
gan the fun for the negroes, for Pinkster  
was the carnival of the African race.  
The venerable "King of the Blacks" was  
"Charley of Pinkster Hill," so called be-  
cause he was the principal actor in the  
festivities. Charles originally came from  
Africa, having in his infancy been brought  
from Angolo, in the Guinea Gulf; and

\* "Saint Nicholas, my dear good friend,  
To serve you ever was my end;  
If you me now something will give,  
Serve you I will as long as I live."



when but a boy he became the purchased slave of one of the most ancient and respectable merchant princes of the olden time, Volckert P. Douw, of Wolvenhoeck. Charles's costume as king was that of a British brigadier—ample broadcloth scarlet coat, with wide flaps, almost reaching to his heels, and gayly ornamented everywhere with broad tracings of bright gold-lace. His small-clothes were of yellow buckskin, fresh and new, with stockings blue, and burnished silver buckles to his well-blackened shoe. And when we add the three-cornered cocked hat, trimmed also with gold-lace, and which so gracefully sat upon his noble globular pate, we complete this rude sketch of the Pinkster king.

Both he and his followers were covered with Pinkster *blummies*—the wild azalea, or swamp-apple. The procession started from "young massa's house" (82 State Street, where now stands the large seed store of Knickerbocker and Price), and went up State Street to Bleecker Hill, on the crown of which was the Bleecker Burying-ground. In front of the king always marched Dick Simpson and Pete Halenbeck, the latter the Beau Brummel of his time. The last parade was in 1822. The king died two years later. During Pinkster-day the negroes made merry with games and feasting, all paying homage to the king, who was held in awe and reverence as an African prince. In the evening there was a grand dance, led by Charles and some sable beauty, to the music of Pete Halenbeck's fiddle.

Although King Charley often boasted of his bravery, his master and fellow-servants would twit him with cowardice, and call out to him, "Saratoga"—a most sensitive point with him, which is thus explained: His master was *en route* to join the army at Saratoga, and Charles was following him on horseback as body-servant. It was moonlight, and he saw moving with the wind a quantity of Indian salt, commonly known as sumac, which, when ripe, presents a red appearance. Charley, supposing it to be the red feathers of the enemy, cried out, "*Heer, ik zag een vyand*,"\* and putting spurs to his horse, he rode in hot haste for home, proclaiming that his master had been captured, and he, after hard fighting, had escaped.

\* "Master, I saw the enemy."

The majority of early settlers used no surnames, and it was customary to prefix the child's to the father's Christian name, terminating in *se* for a girl and *sen* for a boy. *Ke, je, or ken* added to a name signified little so-and-so. But one name was given in baptism. The *Jufvrouw*\* had the privilege of resuming her maiden name at pleasure to show her descent, and on other occasions she would affix her husband's first name to hers, adding *se*. The use of surnames increased among the Dutch from the time the province was occupied by the English, in 1664, and after the first quarter of the following century few names were written without the addition of the family name.

The houses in Beverwyck were very neat without and within. They were built chiefly of brick or stone, and covered with white pine shingles, or tiles from Holland. Most of them had terraced gables fronting the street, with gutters extending from the eaves beyond the sidewalk to carry off the rain-water; hence the streets were almost impassable during a heavy storm of wind and rain. The streets were broad, and lined with shade trees, with here and there a bit of pavement. The houses were generally but a story and a half high, and well spread out on the ground-floor. Each bouwery had its grass-plot, and garden in the rear, where vegetables were produced in great abundance. Mrs. Grant, in her *Memoir of the American Lady*, says, "The Schuylers and one or two other families had very large gardens laid out in fanciful European style." The "stoops" of the houses were raised above the street, and shaded by trees planted in commemoration of some event, or the birth of some member of the family, and here gathered the young and old at twilight. Every family had its cow pastured in a common field at the end of the town, and it was a picturesque sight at evening to see each animal going home of its own accord to be milked, the tinkling bells hung round its neck heralding its approach.

At eight o'clock the suppaant† bell was rung, a signal that work was over for the day. And here just a brief glance at the interior of the Dutch home. The kitchen fire-places were enormous—large enough

\* Wife.

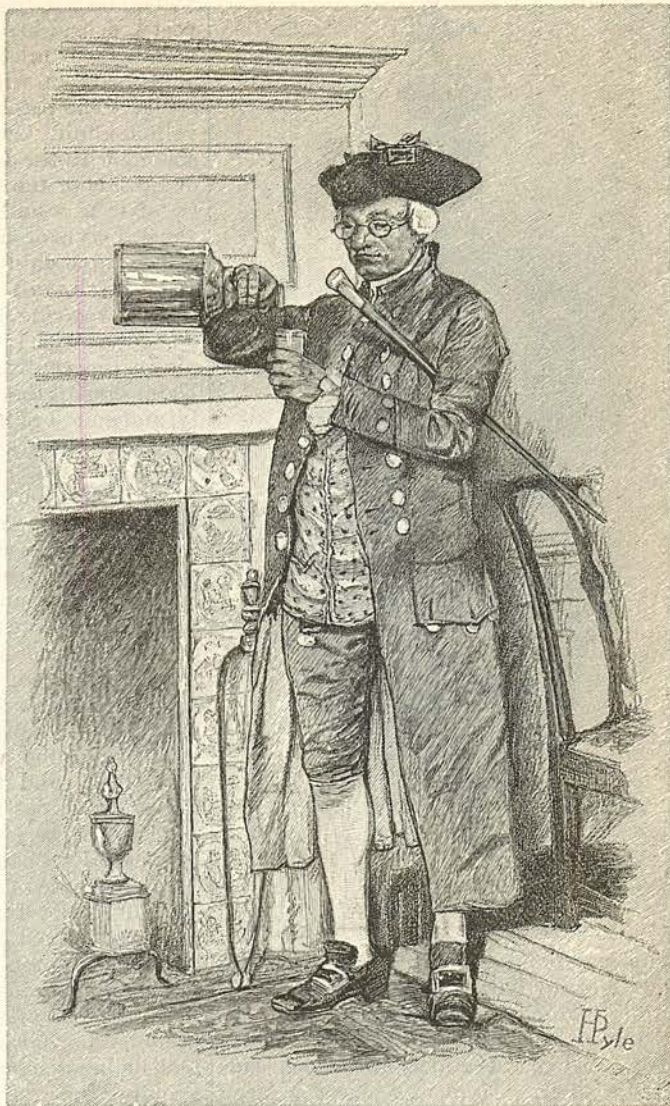
† Corn meal boiled in water until a smooth paste, and then eaten with milk and salt.



to roast a whole sheep or hog; and over the crackling hickory logs, suspended on hooks and trammels, bubbled and hissed the large iron pots and kettles. Here the family gathered, while, by the light of the glowing fire and a tallow dip, the jufvrouws spun their linen and the burghers smoked their pipes. In the parlor, that revered apartment of state, was a similar large fire-place, with its hickory back-log, and its shovel and tongs keeping guard over the brass and-irons (or fire-dogs) and fender. The chimney jambs were inlaid with party-colored tiles of Scriptural designs brought from Holland, and were extremely quaint. The round tea table stood in the parlor, the large square dining table in the kitchen, or family living-room. In one corner stood the old Dutch clock—no doubt the grandfather's—telling the year, month, day, and hour, the rising and setting of the moon, and when each hour struck sending forth

in silvery tones some antique air. In still another corner stood the Holland cupboard, with its glass doors, displaying the family plate and china. There was the massive tankard, the richly engraved punch-bowl, the shell-shaped sugar-bowl, with provisions for the "bite and stir," and the *ooma*,\* or sifter for cinnamon and sugar. On the top stood a decanter of large size, always filled with rum, and be-

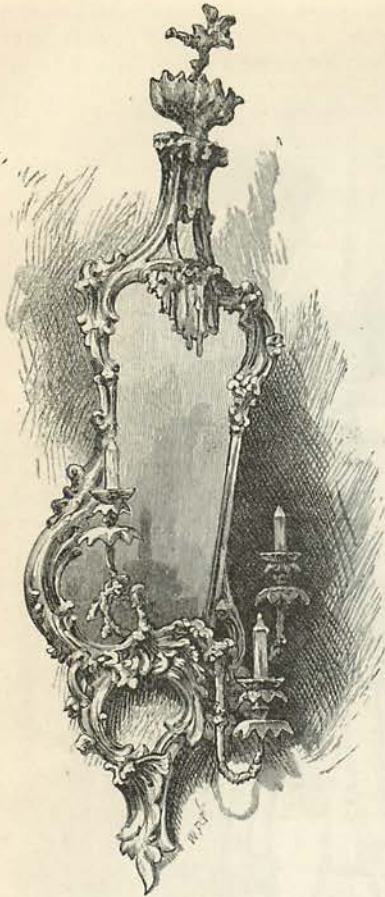
\* The Dutch *oom* means uncle, and an *ooma* was the gift of an uncle to a niece.



MYNHEER'S MORNING HORN.

side it a piece of a cow's horn, smooth on each end, and hollow, tipped with silver. And every morning before breakfast Mynheer must "take a horn" as an appetizer, hence the origin of the term. In another corner stood the huge oaken, iron-bound chest, brimful of fine linen of home production. Later this gave place to the "chest of drawers," with its brass rings and key-holes. On the wall hung the pipe-case of mahogany, with the drawer underneath for tobacco. Every house of pretension had its cock-loft in





OLD DUTCH SCONCE.

the steep roof for house slaves. In the middle of the hall was the "hoist door," through which the wheat was hoisted up by a crane and stored in the loft. Over the front door was a shelf, with steps leading up to it. Here was placed a large tobacco box, always kept filled, and for every one to help himself. On the parlor walls hung the dim portraits of relatives in the *Vaderlandt*, and "y<sup>e</sup> sconce, a hanging candlestick, with a mirror to reflect y<sup>e</sup> rays."

Chintz calico formed the curtains, which were put up without cornices. The windows were of very small panes of glass set in lead frames. The floors were sanded, with fanciful figures made in the sand with a broom handle. The best chairs were straight and high-backed, covered with hair-cloth, and ornamented with double and triple rows of brass nails. About 1700 the claw-foot sideboards, sofas,

and tables were generally used. The high-post bedstead had its heavy curtains and valance of camlet, and on it a bed of live-geese feathers, with a lighter one for covering. The patch-quilt was a most marvellous affair. Over each door was usually a stone with the date of erection and name or initials of the builder. In later times the date was built in anywhere, and the general style of architecture was altered.

The table dainties of the higher classes were *supaan en melk*,\* *hoofd-kass*,† *worst*,‡ *koolslaa*,§ and the famous Dutch *oile-koek*,|| with the chopped raisin and apple in the centre. The renowned Peter Kalm says of the Dutch: "They rise early, and go to bed late, and are almost overwise and cleanly in regard to the floor. The use of tea is general; coffee seldom. They seldom put sugar or milk in their tea, but take a small piece of the former in their mouths while sipping the beverage." They breakfasted at seven, dined at twelve, and supped at six. Sweet milk and buttermilk were used at every meal. Cheese at dinner and breakfast was grated instead of sliced. The prevailing beverages were beer and water—though, to be candid, the Dutch thought the latter somewhat injurious when taken inwardly. Fish, flesh, and fowls, preserves of the richest kind, pastry, nuts, fruits, and various wines, were used by the richer classes, especially when entertaining company. As an example of the richness of the food, an old receipt for wedding cake says it must be "mixed in a wash-tub," and contain twelve dozen eggs. Hospitality was pure and generous without formality, but nothing was allowed to interfere with household or farm duties. Every family had its brass mortar and pestle, used for grinding the grain for the household.

Each house had its *dood-kamer*,¶ where the dead were placed until the funeral. Dutch ladies were famous for their attendance on such occasions, and, if the deceased were of their sex, burnt wine was served them in silver tankards. The funeral was always a great event, and the *goedt vrouwt's*\*\* skill was spent to the utmost to load her table with choicest delicacies for the *dood-feest*,†† the most prominent dish being the *dood-koeks*.‡‡

\* Suppaun and milk.

† Head-cheese.

‡ Sausages. § Cabbage, hence our coldslaw.

|| Literally oil-cake

¶ Dead-chamber.

\*\* Goodwife.

†† Dead-feast.

‡‡ Dead-cakes.



They were thick disks about four inches in diameter, and similar in ingredients to our New-Year cakes, and were kept for years as mementos of the departed. Each burgher had a pipe of wine spiced in reserve for his funeral, and I regret to say

ken, not a whole decanter or glass left in the house, and finally the pall-bearers ended the debauch by kindling a fire with their scarfs.

Philip Livingston was the son of Robert Livingston, of the Manor. His mo-



THE DEAD-FEAST.

the mourners were often in a mournful condition after the event; and in this connection we recall an incident. A familiar name in the old Dutch times in Albany was Wyngaard. Skipper Block, in his cruise of discovery, called an island he came across, *Martin Wyngaard's Island*, *Martin Vineyard's Island*, corrupted to *Martha's Vineyard*; and likewise Wyngaard's Point is now known as *Vineyard Point*. The last in the male line was one *Lucas Wyngaard*, who died about 1756, unmarried, and leaving estate. The invitations to the funeral were general—a custom still kept up among old Dutch families in Albany—and all relatives and friends received a written invitation to be present. Of course the attendance was large, and those who attended returned, as was the custom, to the house, not leaving till morning's light. In the course of the night a pipe of wine was drunk, dozens of pounds of tobacco consumed, grosses of pipes bro-

ther was the lovely *Alida Schuyler*, daughter of *Philip P. Schuyler*, and widow of *Dominie Nicholas Van Rensselaer*. In *Robert Livingston's Bible* are the following quaint records:

"1679, I Robert Livingston was wedded to my worthy helpmeet *Alida Schuyler*, widow of *Dominie Nicholas Van Rensselaer*, in the Presbyterian church at Albany, America, by *Dom. Giddon Staats*. May God be with us and bless us!"

"1686, on the 9 of July, being Friday evening, at 10 of the clock, my second son *Philip* was born. God grant he may grow up in wisdom! He was named after my wife's father, and on the 25 was baptized by *Dom. Giddon Staats*; the witnesses were *Uncle David Schuyler*, and *Brother Philip Schuyler* as God Father, he was held to baptism by *Sister Corneles Schuyler*, *Brother Brant's wife*."

*Philip Livingston* married *Catrina*, daughter of *Peter Van Brugh*, and was second Lord of the Manor. He resided in New York, in a fine old house on *Broad Street*, where he died in 1749, and was buried in the family vault at *Linlithgo*, *Columbia County*. His funeral services





PHILIP LIVINGSTON.

were held at his New York house, as well as at the Manor. As usual, there was the spiced wine, and each of the eight bearers was given a pair of gloves, a monkey-spoon,\* and a mourning ring. This ceremony was repeated at the Manor, and an additional present of a kerchief was given the tenants. The cost was £500.

The Livingstons claim descent from Livingstonus, who lived in 1124, through a long and complicated line of nobility, for the truth of which we can not vouch. This love of ancient ancestry is laughably displayed by the Lewis family of England, who are said to have in their possession a picture of the Ark, with Noah emerging from it, bearing a large trunk, labelled, "Papers belonging to the Lewis Family."

This we do know, however, that the Livingstons were a remarkable family. All the daughters married distinguished men, and the sons held prominent positions in the state. Robert Livingston emigrated to America in 1674, and was first Lord of the Manor. His son Robert married Margarita Schuyler, and was head of the Clermont Manor. Another son, Gilbert, married Cornelia Beckman, and was head of the Poughkeepsie Manor. The daughter of this marriage, Joanna, married General Pierre Van Cortlandt. Of Philip Livingston's children—Sarah married Lord Stirling; Alida married,

first, Henry Hawson, second, Martin Hoffman; Catherina married John I. Lawrence; Peter married Mary, daughter of James Alexander; John married Catherine, daughter of Abraham De Peyster; William married Susanna French, and became the celebrated Governor of New Jersey, called the "Don Quixote of the Jerseys"; Robert married, first, Mary Thong, and second, Mrs. Gertrude Schuyler; Philip was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

On the corner of State and Pearl streets stood one of the oldest trees in Albany. Tradition whispers that in 1736 Philip Livingston, one of the signers of the Declaration, saved the life of this historical elm by staying the hand of a sailor who was threatening to cut it down with his penknife. The frosts of centuries had been powerless to kill the old elm; but at last Pearl Street required widening, and about two years since the venerable landmark joined the things of the past.

The margin of the river, save a landing at the foot of State Street, was overhung with willows, and the picturesque little islands below the town were covered with foliage, and bordered by stately trees. Albany was indeed Dutch—the buildings were Dutch, the people were Dutch, the horses were Dutch, and even the dogs barked in Dutch. Every house having any pretension to dignity was placed with its gable end toward the street, and was surmounted by a rooster.

The Dutch were not the most enterprising or active people; most of them possessing, by saving, snug fortunes, in their old age made use of their accumulations, and left their descendants to build up their own. There were none among them, however, very rich or very poor, learned or ignorant, rude or polished. Intercourse was so free that gossip was almost unknown. Every pleasant afternoon the worthy burgher took his pipe, and, seated in the Market-house, settled the affairs of the Colonie. When the Governor of the province, with others of rank, visited the town to hold conferences with the Six Nations, there were balls, parties, and every simple kind of amusement known. And then the Van Rensselaers, the Lansings, the Bogerts, the Schuylers, Wes-sels, Ten Broecks, Douws, Staats, Bleeckers, De Peysters, Gansevoorts, Ten Eycks, Cuylers, and other leading families, opened their hospitable doors. And speaking

\* Used for liquor, and so called from the figure of a monkey carved in solids on the handle. It had a circular and very shallow bowl.



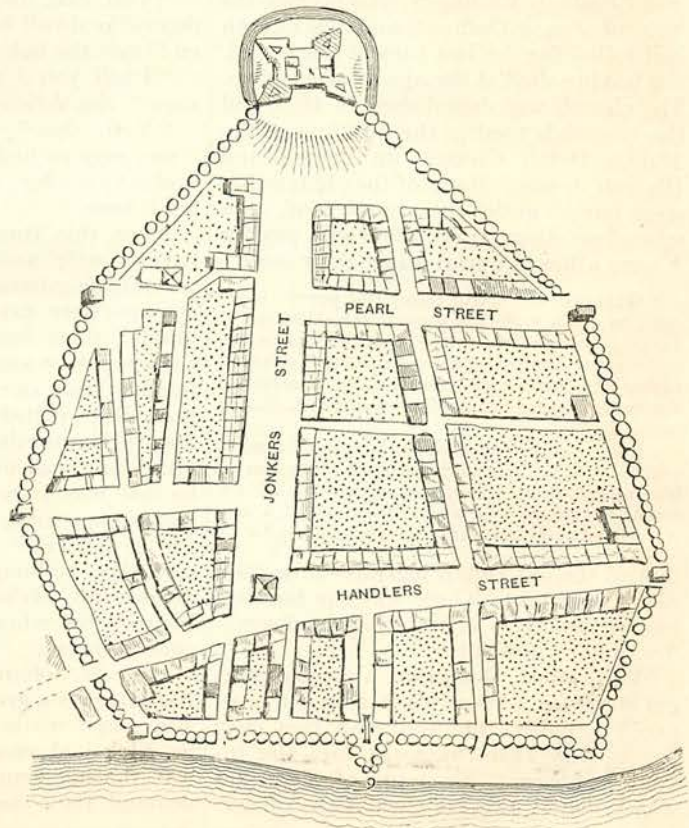
of doors reminds me of the brass knockers: why, modern bric-à-brac hunters would go into raptures over them.

In those unprecocious times the boys and girls did not grow to be men and women so soon as they do now. It would have been highly out of place for them to have thought of falling in love before they were out of their teens, or before Catrina had spun her pile of linen, and Volckert had several hundred guilders laid aside.

The fashionable dress for ladies was a colored petticoat, rather short, waist jacket, colored hose of homespun woollen, and high-heeled shoes. The Dutch gentlemen appeared in long-waisted coats, with skirts reaching to the ankles, and shoes adorned with large silver buckles, knee-breeches, and silk or woollen stockings, with cocked hats, or red-ringed worsted caps. But, more than this, they carried the turnip-shaped watch, with a heavy seal, the tobacco-box of embossed silver, on which was engraved the coat of arms surrounded by a scroll. In the pocket was the tongue-scraper, tooth, ear, and nail pick, the whole shutting within a guard or handle. The hair was worn in a queue, and was generally powdered, the front hair being brushed straight down over the forehead—a style now imitated by young ladies.

The Dutch church, to which reference has already been made, was very small. It stood at the intersection of State Street and Broadway, commanding both streets, as a security against the Indians. The windows were high from the ground, as it was too far from Fort Orange to be protected by its guns, and hence must guard against a sudden attack. The men carried their arms to service, and sat in

the gallery, in order to be able to fire from the windows. The more venerable were seated on a raised platform against the walls, and the women sat out of danger's way in the centre. This church was replaced by a new one in 1715, and tradition says the new church was built round the old; and while the former was building, service was held in the latter, and only interrupted for two Sabbaths. The new edifice was an exact counterpart of the old, except in size, and being of stone. There was the same general arrangement and separation of the sexes. But now the congregation was a wealthier one, and several of the windows bore family arms in colored glass. There were the Schuyler, Douw, Van Rensselaer, and others. Each window had a heavy wooden shutter, fastened with a latch, and was never opened except on Sunday. The roof was very steep, and surmounted by a belfry and weather-cock. Dominie Westerlo was the loved preacher,



ALBANY IN 1696.





RENSELAER ARMS.

and called "our Westerlo" by his flock. The first child baptized in this church was Elizabeth Vinhagen, who became the wife of Jonas Oothout, and the church bell tolled for the last time at her burial, she having died at the age of ninety-two. The church was demolished in 1806, and the materials used in the building of the Middle Dutch Church, on Beaver and Hudson streets. Many of the old families were buried under the church, and, as a special privilege, those who could pay for it were allowed burial under their seats.

"Whenever any one of them" (the pews) "is vacated by death, it shall descend to the eldest son or daughter living in the county, next to a son-in-law, next to own brothers and sisters, the first occupant paying 30s. and his successor 15s. for transferring the same, in behalf of the Reformed Dutch Church in Albany."

"Every seat-holder shall be in honor bound to contribute to the minister's salary in proportion to his circumstances. No person living out of the county is entitled to a seat. In default of a successor, seats are to revert to the church," etc.\*

And the old Dutch legends—how they carry me back! There was the familiar one of the origin of the "baker's dozen." You don't know it?

Well, know, then, that close by Market Street (now Broadway) lived and prospered a baker, the first man that ever baked New-Year cakes—in fact, the inventor of them. The name of our friend was Volckert Jan Pietersen Van Amster-

dam, commonly known as Baas.\* He was Dutch from his large feet to his round bald head, and had no respect for any one or any thing that was not Dutch. He was a regular attendant at the old Dutch church, but, nevertheless, in constant fear of being bewitched. His wife, Maritje, was economical even to saving the parings of her nails, and his gingerbread babies were always made in imitation of his children. It was New-Year Eve, 1655, and Baas was in his shop dealing out cakes for small pieces of money, called wampum. He had taken an extra glass of rum in honor of St. Nicholas, when he heard a sharp rap, and in walked as ugly an old woman as ever he had set his eyes on.

"I want a dozen New-Year cookies," she screamed.

"Vell, den, you needn' speak so loud," replied Baas. "Duyvel! I ain't teaf, den."

"I want a dozen," screamed the old woman, "and here is only twelve."

"Vell, den, und vhat de duyvel is dwalf but a dozen?" said the baker.

"I tell you I want one more!" she shrieked.

"Vell, den," said he, "you may co to de duyvel und get anodder; you von't get it here."

From this time on our baker's wife and himself were made miserable. Their money and cookies were taken away by invisible hands; their bread either rose out of their sight or sank into the earth; their famous brick oven was torn down, and poor Baas pelted with his own bricks; Maritje became deaf; Baas was black and blue from head to toe; and such a life as he led was purgatory. Thrice the old woman appeared, and thrice was she sent to "de duyvel." And at last, in his agony, Baas bethought himself of St. Nicholas, who advised him, on hearing of his troubles, when he counted a dozen to count thirteen.

"Py St. Johannes de Dooper, put St. Nicholas is a great plockhead!" thought Baas; and while he was thus thinking, St. Nick had vanished, and in his stead was the old woman. She repeated her demand for "one more," and Baas, re-

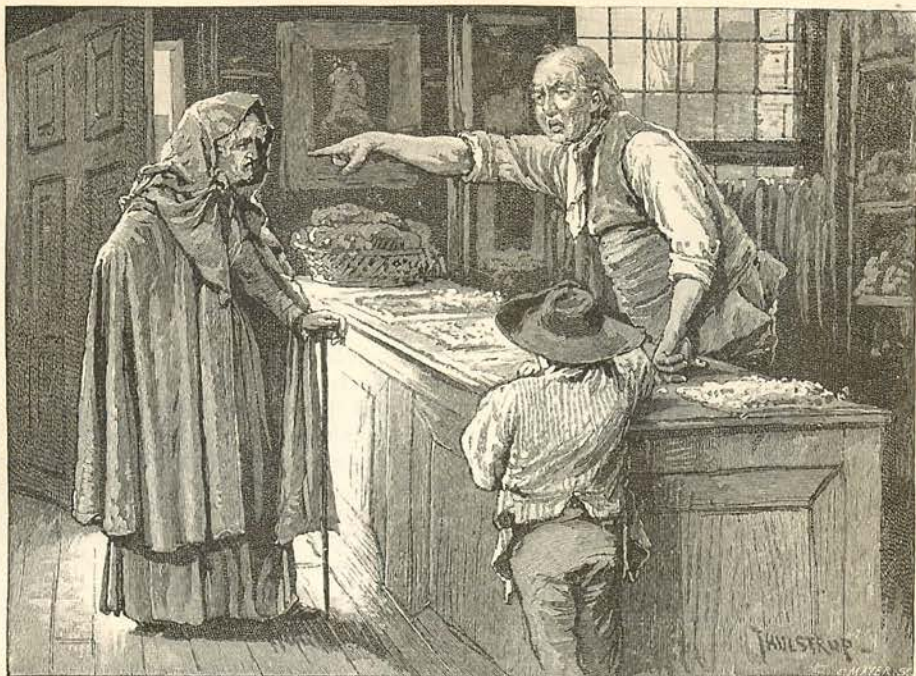


SCHUYLER ARMS.

\* Church Records, December 31, 1719.

\* Boss.





THE BAKER'S DOZEN.

membering St. Nicholas, acceded to her demand, when she exclaimed, "The spell is broken, and henceforward a dozen is thirteen, and thirteen is a dozen." And taking a cooky with an effigy of the good saint on it, she made Baas swear that ever afterward twelve should be thirteen, as a type of the thirteen mighty States that should arise out of the ruins of the government of *Vaderlandt*.

It is well known how terribly St. Nicholas revenged himself upon those who set themselves up against the venerable customs of their ancestors, and refused the homage to him to whose good offices it was owing that this his favorite city has surpassed all others in beautiful damsels, valorous young men, mince-pies, *oliekoeks*, and New-Year cookies.

It has become common to speak of the *élite* of Albany as *Knickerbockers*—a name derived from *K-nik-ker-bak-ker* (pronounced as spelled), a baker of knickers.\* The *Knickerbackers* were among the first settlers of Albany, and took their surname from their trade, and their descendants who have substituted an *o* for an *a* do but burlesque their names.

\* Marbles.

Earliest among the settlers of Beverwyck were David and Philip Schuyler (or, as they wrote it, Van Schüyler), from Amsterdam. Tradition says they were wealthy merchants, and had a country-seat near Dordrecht. David was the elder of the two, and a man of great spirit. He married the blooming Catalyn Verplanck, of Nieuw Amsterdam; and it is recorded that in 1699 she petitioned for an additional piece of land to the north of her home, which was on the south corner of Broadway and Steuben Street, which was refused by the authorities because "it will reach too near y<sup>e</sup> citty stockadoes." Their son, Captain Myndert Schuyler, was Mayor of Albany for six years, and his daughter Anna married Johannes De Peyster, Mayor and Surrogate, a grandson of old Schepen\* Johannes De Peyster, of Nieuw Amsterdam. A codicil to Captain Schuyler's will directs that there be paid to his grandson Myndert Schuyler De Peyster "one good silver tankard, to be made for him," with his clothes, fowling-piece, and sword with the silver handle, "for his prerogative as being my only grandson."

\* Mayor.





VOLCKERT P. DOUW.

Philip Schuyler was a young man of great ability, and soon after his arrival became actively engaged in public affairs. He was a farmer and trader, and his bouwery was at The Flats (now Water-vliet), below the present village of West Troy. His marriage to Margarita, daughter of Brant Arentse Van Slichtenhorst, Director of the Colonie Rensselaerwyck, was performed at the old bouwery in Rensselaerwyck by Anthony De Hooges, Secretary of the Colonie, in the presence of the officers of Fort Orange, the magnates of Rensselaerwyck, and some of the principal inhabitants. Mrs. Schuyler was only twenty-two when she was married, and she survived her husband more than a quarter of a century. They had ten children, who became connected by marriage with the most prominent families of the province. Gertrude married Stephanus Van Cortlandt; Alida married Dominie Nicholas Van Rensselaer, and after his decease Robert Livingston, Lord of the Manor; Arent was the head of the New Jersey Schuylers;\* Captain John Schuyler was the father of "the American Lady" and "Aunt Schuyler"; Peter was Mayor of Albany, and no

\* His great-granddaughter married General William Colfax, grandfather of Schuyler Colfax, late Vice-President of the United States. His granddaughter married Archibald Kennedy, eleventh Earl of Cassilis. His daughter Eve married Peter Bayard, of New York. His daughter Cornelia married Pierre Guillaume De Peyster, son of Hon. Abraham De Peyster, first Treasurer of the Province of New York.

man understood better the relation of the colony with the Six Nations of Indians; and such was his zeal and energy that the House of Assembly gave their testimony to the British court of his faithful services and good reputation. His daughter Elizabeth married Alexander Hamilton; Margaret married Stephen Van Rensselaer, the last Patroon; Catherine married a son of General Malcolm, and after his decease James Cochrane, son of Surgeon-General Cochrane, of Revolutionary fame.

Mrs. Schuyler possessed great energy of character and independence of spirit, inherited from her father. After her husband's death, by her wealth and position she exercised a controlling influence in public affairs in Beverwyck. In 1689 she advanced funds to pay the troops in the city, and she made a personal attack on Milbourne, the son-in-law of Jacob Leisler, when he attempted to assume command of the fort of which her son Peter had charge.

Her great-grandson General Philip Schuyler inherited all the zeal and patriotism of his ancestors, and shed signal lustre upon the family name. He was with Lord Howe when he fell on landing at the north end of Lake George, and he was appointed to convey the young nobleman's body to Albany, and see that it was buried with due solemnities in St.



PETER SCHUYLER.—[FROM AN OLD PRINT.]

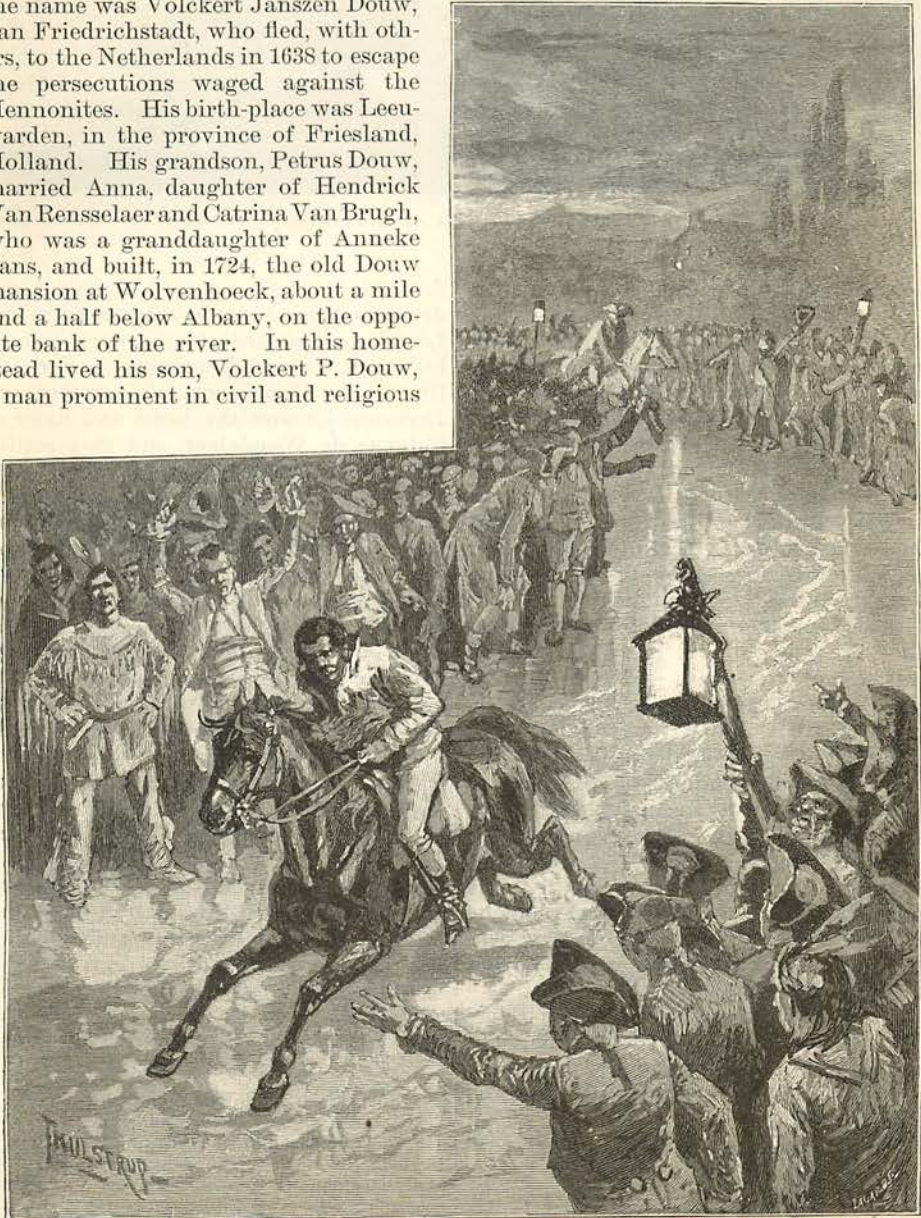


Peter's Church. To trace his brilliant and laudable career would be impossible in these few pages, for justice could not be done in so limited a space to a man to whom life meant loyalty to his country. His most intimate friend was Judge Volekert P. Douw.

The Douws were an old Dutch family, whose name is closely associated with the early settlement of Albany. The first of the name was Volekert Janszen Douw, van Friedrichstadt, who fled, with others, to the Netherlands in 1638 to escape the persecutions waged against the Mennonites. His birth-place was Leeuwarden, in the province of Friesland, Holland. His grandson, Petrus Douw, married Anna, daughter of Hendrick Van Rensselaer and Catrina Van Brugh, who was a granddaughter of Anneke Jans, and built, in 1724, the old Douw mansion at Wolvenhoeck, about a mile and a half below Albany, on the opposite bank of the river. In this homestead lived his son, Volekert P. Douw, a man prominent in civil and religious

affairs. He was Recorder and Mayor of Albany for many years, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Vice-President of the first Provincial Congress, as well as the first judge of Albany County. His wife was a daughter of Johannes De Peyster.

On one occasion Red Jacket and several Indian chiefs, with their retainers, went to the "Hoeck" to have a talk with



A RACE ON THE ICE.





WOLVENHOECK.—[FROM AN OIL-PAINTING.]

the *heer* and his friends, and smoke the "pipe of peace." It was evening, and after a convivial supper the guests grew merry, and General Schuyler offered to bet a large amount that the horse he rode in coming to the feast could beat a famous race-horse named Sturgeon, owned by Mr. Douw, which in his day had won many a purse. It was in midwinter, the ice very slushy, and raining fast. But the Indians and negroes, under Peter Van Loan, the overseer, entered into the sport, cleared the ice, and stationed themselves with lanterns across and down the river. The race was run, old Sturgeon coming in first, amid the shouts and yells of white men, Indians, and negroes, his rider being King Charles, of Pinkster fame.

Still another ancient family were the Gansevoorts, descendants of John Wessel Gansevoort (known in his day as Wessel, and "Lux Mundi"). He was an intimate friend of Thomas à Kempis, as well as of Sixtus IV. Soon after the latter was made Pope he asked Gansevoort what he could do for him, whereupon Wessel asked for a Greek and Hebrew Bible from the Vatican Library.

"You shall have it," said the Pope. "But what a simpleton you are! why did you not ask me for a bishopric?"

"Because I do not want it," was the simple reply.

His descendant, Harmen Harmense Van Gansevoort, was a brewer in Beverwyck in 1660. In 1677 he purchased the lot on the south corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane, which is still owned by his

descendants. He married Maritie Leendertse Conyn. A son by this marriage was Leendert (Leonard) Gansevoort, known by all as the *eerlijk mensch*.<sup>\*</sup> Early in life young Gansevoort, *de pronker van Beverwyck*,<sup>†</sup> won the heart and hand of Catryna de Wandelaer, and they settled on the lot where Stanwix Hall now stands; and from that homestead went forth a goodly family, whose names have been illustrious for honesty, bravery, and all those generous qualities of the now called "old school." Their son, Harmen, married a daughter of Captain Petrus Douw, of Wolvenhoeck, whose son, Brigadier-General Peter Gansevoort, was the hero of Fort Stanwix.<sup>‡</sup> General Gansevoort married Catherine Van Schaick. He was a man of noble presence, of a fearless and magnanimous spirit, undaunted courage, and inflexible integrity. His son, General Peter Gansevoort, was for some time private secretary to De Witt Clinton. His grandson, Guert Gansevoort, commanded the *John Adams* during the Mexican War, and subsequently the *Roanoke*.

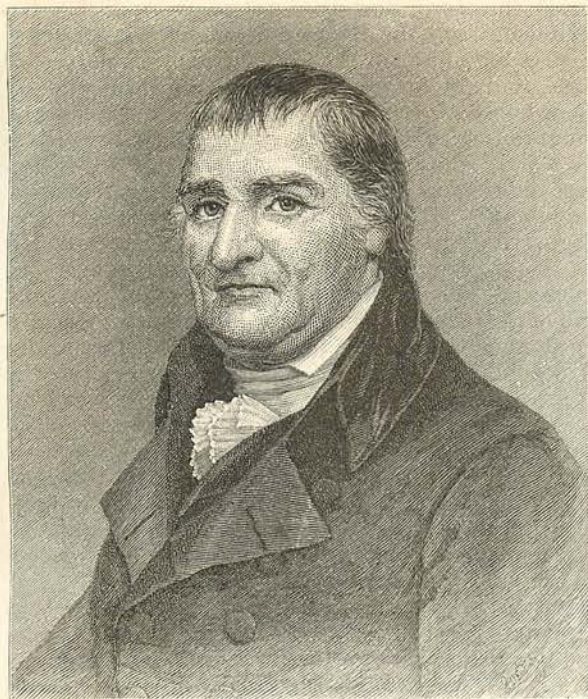
Judge Leonard Gansevoort was a nephew of Harmen Gansevoort.<sup>§</sup> He was president of the Convention which adopt

<sup>\*</sup> Honest man.    <sup>†</sup> The beau of Beverwyck.

<sup>‡</sup> Afterward Fort Schuyler, now Rome.

<sup>§</sup> A granddaughter married Judge Elisha P. Hurlburt, of the Supreme Court. A great-great-grandson, John Graham Storm, was the first president of the Lenox Fire-Insurance Company, and married a daughter of Rear Admiral Jacob Walton, of the British navy.





LEONARD GANSEVOORT.

ed the first Constitution of the State, April, 1777, and was the first Judge of Probate. His granddaughter is the widow of the late Hon. Alexander S. Johnson, Judge of the Court of Appeals.

It will be noticed that the ancestors of these old families had each his trade.

One of the great charms of the Dutch life was its simplicity. They did not materially alter their modes of living with the increase of wealth, and they found their happiness in quiet and unostentation. You would have found among them refinement of feeling and cultivated minds, with a due appreciation of things necessary to a higher life. They were as they seemed, simple and true.

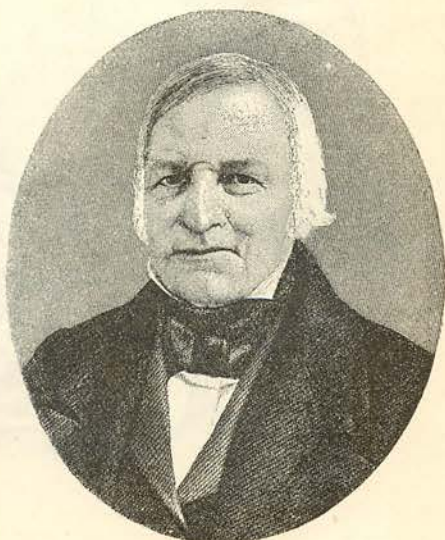
Lord Bacon says, "If it be a pleasant sight to behold a fair round timber tree, sound and perfect, or a fine old mansion, not in decay, how much more an old family that has stood against the weather and the winds!"

Most families die out in two hundred years, but the Van Rensselaers have proved an exception. The founder of the family, old Killiaan Van Rensselaer, was a rich pearl merchant in Amsterdam, who in 1631 availed himself of an offer made by

the Dutch West India Company to grant lands to any one who should fairly purchase them from the Indians and form a permanent settlement. The medium of commerce was *seawant*, better known as wampum, which was simply a number of strung shell beads. If black, these beads counted three to a *stuiver* (two cents); if the interior was white, six.

The tract of land granted was on the west bank of the Hudson, including Fort Orange, and a large number of agriculturists and mechanics were sent out to people it. Seven years later Van Rensselaer purchased from the Indians for a mere trifle an immense tract on the east side of the river. It extended twenty-four miles along the Hudson, and forty-eight miles from east to west, including the greater part of Albany, Rensselaer, and Columbia counties, and was called the

Colonie of Rensselaerwyck, of which Van Rensselaer was Patroon. That purchase made his descendants very rich, and much of the land still remains in the family. In 1664 the colony passed into English hands, who confirmed the right of



SOLOMON VAN RENSSELAER.



soil to the Patroon, but transferred the sovereignty to the British government. There have been few better transfers of real estate in the Old or New World, and it was almost as good as buying the whole of Manhattan Island for twenty-four dollars.

The privileges of a patroon were similar to those of an old English baron, and "were an odious form of feudal government."

De Heer Van Rensselaer was descended from a long and honorable line of ancestors, and was himself a refined and educated gentleman of the old school. He never saw his vast estate, but intrusted it to his agent and nephew, Wouter (Walter) Van Twiller. The Van Rensselaer name is closely interwoven with the history of the State, and of all the patroons De Heer is the one especially known as the ancestor of staunch patriots and true philanthropists. The manor-house was erected in exact counterpart of the Holland residence, and here were stored for generations the massive furniture, richly carved in quaint designs, the silver, and portraits of Dutch ancestry. De Heer Van Rensselaer, "bewindheb-

ber," died in Amsterdam in 1645. His son Jan Baptiste then took charge of the affairs of the Colonie, and was succeeded by his brother Jeremias in 1658, who administered its affairs for sixteen years, and died greatly lamented. His wife was the daughter of the Hon. Oloff Stevensen Van Cortlandt, of Nieuw Amsterdam.

His son Kiliaan Van Rensselaer married his cousin Maria Van Cortlandt, and from them was descended Stephen Van Rensselaer, known as the "old Patroon." He was born soon after the accession of George III., and graduated at Cambridge in 1782. His father, who erected the manor-house, died soon after, and his widow married Dominie Westerlo, who had come from Holland to take charge of the Dutch Church. The "old Patroon" was a member of the Congress that elected John Quincy Adams President. By his first wife, a daughter of General Schuyler, he had a son Stephen, called the "young Patroon," and the last to bear the title. His second wife was a daughter of the Hon. William Patterson. He sustained Madison in the war of 1812, and, as a general on the Niagara frontier, made his name renowned for courage and



OLD DUTCH RELICS.



gallantry. He owned over 600,000 acres in Albany and Rensselaer counties, besides 350,000 acres in St. Lawrence County, which, together with valuable estates in New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans, made him at the time of his death, in 1839, one of the richest men in the country. He was benevolent and greatly given to hospitality, but his tender point was early hours. No matter how distinguished a guest was beneath his roof, when nine o'clock struck he took his flat silver candlestick from the hall table and went to bed.

Hendrick Van Rensselaer, the sixth child of Jeremias Van Rensselaer, married a granddaughter of the celebrated Anneke Jans. His son, Colonel Killiaan, was the grandfather of the brave old patriot General Solomon Van Rensselaer, and father of Colonel Nicholas Van Rensselaer, who was with General Montgomery at the storming of Quebec, and engaged

in the disastrous battle before the city's beleaguered walls on the memorable December 31, 1775; he was also the father of Major-General Henry K. Van Rensselaer.

As an example of the ability which marked the career of this family, it can be stated that during the first forty years following the organization of the Federal Government, the district embracing Albany was represented for twenty-two years by those bearing the Van Rensselaer name.

While we recollect with honest pride the industry, integrity, enterprise, love of freedom, and the heroism of old Beverwyck, let us not forget that the truest way to honor our Dutch ancestry is to follow the example of those who knew no fear where liberty or honor was at stake; and let *me* ask indulgence on the plea that "I am a Dutchman, and so think nothing which concerns the Dutch of unconcern to me."

---

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

I WOULD that I might twine a laurel wreath  
To place upon thy brow;  
But thou art standing on Parnassus' height,  
High o'er this laurel bough.

A few are clustered on the mountain-top,  
Serenely at thy side;  
Below, a multitude are gazing up  
To where our bards abide.

Once gladly through a Castle in the Air  
Thy fellows walked with thee;  
Now, standing with white locks, they list to hear  
Thy grand Hymn to the Sea.

And they have roamed the storied Eastern land,  
Have heard its poets sing;  
And they have listened eagerly to hear  
The bell of Felix ring.

At length it rang when Felix clutched the cord;  
The sound died not away;  
Far down the changeful vista of the years  
I hear its peal to-day.

We, too, have mourned when thou hast sadly sung  
The passing of thy youth;  
Yet was there need for sorrow had we asked,  
"Can poets die, forsooth?"

Now, though I can not weave the laurel crown,  
I send on breezes fleet  
This simple leaf, plucked from the laurel bough,  
To flutter at thy feet.





THE GRAVE-DIGGER.