THE QUARTERLY BULLETIN

of the

WESTCHESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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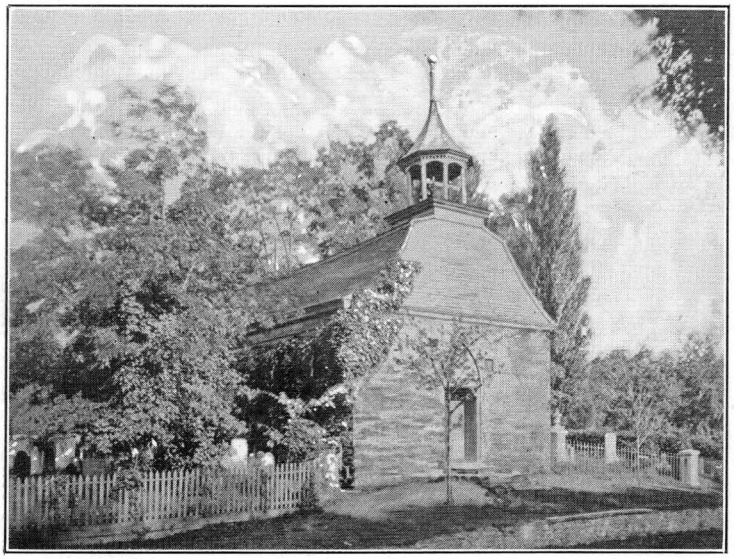

The Old Dutch Church, at Sleepy Hollow, described on page 10.

White Plains, N. Y.

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The temporary headquarters of the Society is Room 601, County Court House, White Plains, where the library is located and the documents and exhibits forming the beginning of our museum, can be seen. Mrs. Spaulding is in charge. The room is occupied jointly with, and through the courtesy of, the Westchester County Bar Association.

Address all contributions and communications to Richard Webber, Corresponding Secretary, 109 Hamilton Avenue, New Rochelle, N. Y.

A CIVIL WAR ISSUE OF MOUNT VERNON, N. Y.

By RICHARD WEBBER

Corresponding Secretary of the Society

(The following article appeared in *The Numismatist* for May, and is here reprinted with the accompanying cut by kind permission of the editor of that publication.)

Among the fractional currency paper put in circulation by trades people and others at the beginning of the Civil War to relieve the scarcity of small coin was one or more issues of 25-cent and 50-cent notes put out by J. S. Van Court, a grocer, of Mount Vernon, N. Y.

In 1862 Mr. Van Court put forth notes under the style of "The Peoples Exchange at Mt. Vernon," undertaking to pay on demand 25 and 50 cents in merchandise. The extant notes are 6½ in. x 2⅞ in. and are lithographed on the usual thin but strong stock, being the work, presumably, of the plant of "Geo. C. Mann, Stationer, 141 Fulton St., N. Y.", whose name and address appear on the paper.

The accompanying illustration gives an idea of the appearance of these notes. The drawing at the upper center of the notes is a picture of the Van Court place of business, with his name on the building, and one of his delivery wagons. At the lower center is portrayed a metal-bound box guarded by a watch-dog with his fore paws upon the key to the box, a conventional combination of its time. The large figures and seal on either side of them are a green underprinting.

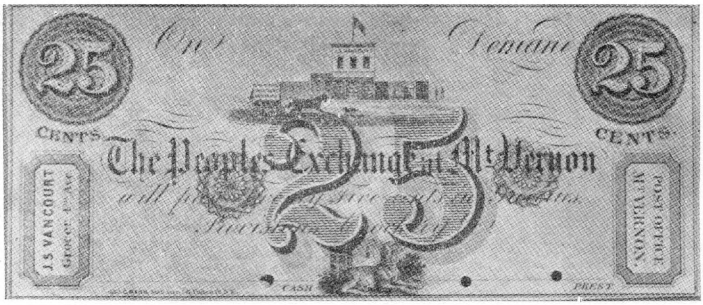
The notes read: "On demand The Peoples Exchange at Mt. Vernon will pay Twenty Five [*or* Fifty] cents in Groceries, Provisions, Crockery, &c." There are thin lines at the lower left and right for the signatures of cashier and president. In the vertical box on the left: "J. S. VAN COURT, Grocer, 4th Ave."; in the box on the right: "POST OFFICE, MT. VERNON."

There were at least two issues of the Van Court notes, as two varieties of underprinting are found. In one instance circular seals stand apart from the figures, and in another those of oval design encroach upon the numerals.

Many of the Van Court notes extant are unsigned. At least one—in possession of O. Hufeland, of Mount Vernon—is signed by J. A. Harper as cashier and J. S. Van Court as president. Joseph (Joe) Harper was an employee of Mr. Van Court. He married a daughter of the latter and entered the ministry.

In 1912 Mr. Van Court gave several of his shinplasters to Mr. Hufeland, when he said that he had redeemed practically every one issued. Other specimens are in the possession of Julius Guttag, of New York City and New Rochelle, N. Y.; Mrs. William L. Coleman and John Bull, of Mount Vernon, and probably others.

James S. Van Court went to Mount Vernon in the early fifties of the last century, being one of the founders of that place



and one of its first merchants. For many years he conducted a grocery. His store was on the east side of Fourth Avenue, a little south of First Street, and he was the local postmaster from March, 1861, until September, 1866, which explains the mention of post office on his notes.

Mr. Van Court exchanged trade for real estate. About 1880 he practically retired from active business but continued to personally care for his property and other interests. He assisted in organizing several banks of Mount Vernon, and was an officer in at least one. Mr. Van Court married three times and died in 1916 in the 98th year of his age.

SOME HISTORICAL BUILDINGS IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY

The following partial list of the more interesting historical buildings in Westchester County has been compiled by the Committee on Sites and Markers of the Society. A list of sites will follow. It is thought that members might desire to visit some of these places during the summer months. In various localities, complete lists of marked and unmarked buildings and sites are being compiled.

1. *Bedford Academy*, Bedford, New York.
   East side of green. Built in 1807. Noted for its educational standing. Since 1903, the home of the Bedford Free Library.
2. *Old Court House*, Bedford, New York.
   Opposite north end of green (cupola and columns). Built 1787. Used for upper shire of Westchester County until 1868.
3. *Bedford Museum*, Bedford, New York.
   Old stone school on green. Erected in 19th century. Contains interesting collection of colonial and revolutionary relics. Open Saturdays during summer.
4. *St. Paul's Church*, Eastchester (now Mt. Vernon), N. Y.
   Along old line of Boston Post Road near New York City line. Built 1761-1765. Used as hospital during Revolution. Can be inspected.
5. *Fay's Tavern.*
   Opposite St. Paul's Church (foregoing) kept by Billy Crawford during the Revolution. British deserter hung to its sign post.
6. *Haviland Tavern*, Rye, New York (now used as Town Hall).
   Washington, Lafayette and Adams stopped at this old inn. Open for inspection.
7. *Putnam's Headquarters* in Revolutionary War, Portchester, N. Y. (Recently purchased for village park purposes.) Known as Bush homestead.
8. *Besly Tavern*, New Rochelle, N. Y.
   Northeast corner of Huguenot Street (Old Boston Post Road) and North Avenue (now a store). Pre-Revolutionary. Scene of trials and town meetings.
9. *Pintard House*, New Rochelle, N. Y.
   Northeast corner of Pintard Avenue and Marvin Place. Home of Louis Pintard, Revolutionary patriot. Built about 1760.
10. *Rochambeau Headquarters.* near Hart's Corners.
    Known as Odell house; headquarters in 1781.
11. *Thomas Paine House*, New Rochelle, N. Y.
    Southeast corner of North and Paine Avenues. Occupied by Thomas Paine after the Revolutionary War. Contains interesting museum. Headquarters for the Huguenot and Historical Association of New Rochelle. Open afternoons from 2 to 5 o'clock except Mondays.

12. *Van Cortlandt Manor House*, Croton, N. Y.
On Albany Post Road, north from Ossining immediately after crossing the Croton River. Built in 17th century. Descendants of Van Cortlandts still occupy the house. Not open for inspection.
13. *Philipse Manor Hall*, Warburton Avenue, Yonkers, N. Y.
Manor House of Frederic Philipse maintained by Historic and Scenic Preservation Society. Open for inspection.
14. *Sunnyside* (Washington Irving's Home), Irvington, N. Y.
At end of Sunnyside Lane. Admittance only by written request.
15. *Washington's Headquarters* (Miller House), North White Plains, N. Y.
On North Broadway. Occupied by Washington 1776, 1778 and 1781. Open for inspection.
16. *Wayside Inn*, Scarsdale, N. Y.
On White Plains Road. Near and on same side as the Scarsdale School. Pre-Revolutionary Inn. Scene of a skirmish. Restored and used by Women's Club of Scarsdale.
17. *Old Dutch Church*, North Tarrytown, N. Y.
On Albany Post Road on northerly side of Tarrytown. Built in 17th century. Oldest church in the county. Washington Irving buried in adjoining cemetery.
18. *Philipse Castle*, opposite Old Dutch Church at Tarrytown.
Upper mill site and property of Frederick Philipse, built about 1680. Now residence of Elsie Janis.
19. *Van Cortlandt House*, at Peekskill (Cortlandville).
Washington's Headquarters during part of Revolutionary period.
20. *St. Peter's Church* (in cemetery near the above at Cortlandville).
Used as a hospital and place of worship during Revolution.
21. *Cruger* (*Dyckman*) *Mansion*, on County Park property, near Montrose. Built 1792.

MONUMENT TO GREEN AND FLAGG AT YORKTOWN

The burial places in the cemetery of the Presbyterian Church at Yorktown of Colonel Christopher Green and Major Ebenezer Flagg of the First Rhode Island Regiment of the Colonial Army, who were killed at Yorktown in May, 1781, and of Abraham Dyckman, the Westchester guide, who was so badly wounded in 1782 at Eastchester that he succumbed, were marked some years ago by the State of New York. Through the kindness of the Rev. Harry B. Roberts, pastor of the Yorktown Presbyterian Church and local Historian for Yorktown, a picture of the imposing monument erected by the State is presented in this number of the BULLETIN. The Davenport House, the scene of the officers' deaths, was visited by the historical pilgrims of the Society on May 23.

AN OLD-TIME COPPER MINE

Any one who will go through the Westchester County parts of the State Geological Reports at Albany will there find any number of metals, some quite rare, credited to our County. But one is conspicuous by its absence—copper. Two or three lines, in as many volumes, suffice for it—apparently there is none.

But in an old pamphlet in the New York Public Library, the patient seeker will find something tangible on the subject—the prospectus of "The Westchester Copper Mine Company", incorporated according to law, April 12, 1824 (although the Secretary of State of today can find no record of it) with a capital of $50,000 and a New York office at 126 Broadway.

The incorporators were: Edward Kemeys, president; Henry Waller, treasuerer; Aaron Ward, George W. Cartwright, Amos Dunning, Thomas Jackson.

The mine is described as "located at Sing Sing, one hundred rods south of the State Prison, in the high marble cliff three hundred feet from the river." A shaft thirty feet deep was sunk in 1827, and several tons of rich ore brought up, part assaying three-fourth pure copper, and the poorest pronounced good by several Cornish miners, brought from England for the purpose. Various New York chemists and assayers agreed with them, and the incorporators solicited subscriptions to the capital stock at $25 a share.

And here—the curtain falls. Nothing further of the undertaking can be found. Did the lead peter out? Did the company—the only copper-mining corporation in our County—ever pay a dividend?

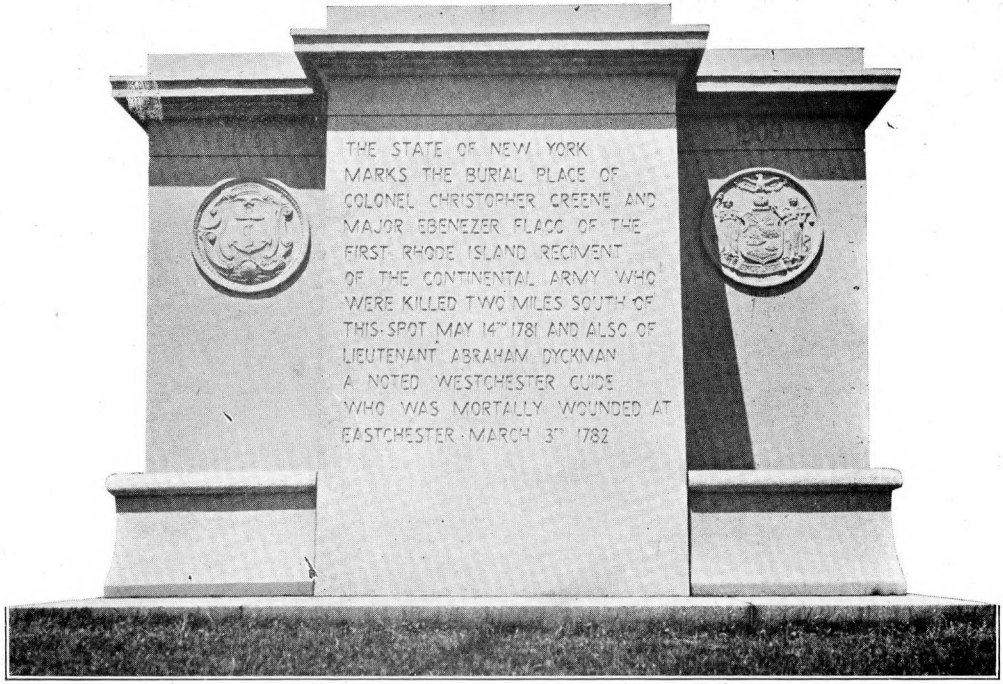
It is vaguely said that the deposit had been known before the Revolution, but nothing definite is to be discovered on that point.

No doubt its projectors were "leading citizens" of their day —do any of our members remember hearing about it from their grandfathers?

BURDOCK.

NEW MEMBERS

Adams, William B. ..... Bedford Hills
Alexander, Miss L. ..... Croton-on-Hudson
Anderson, James H. ..... New Rochelle
Anderson, Mrs. James H. ..... New Rochelle
Barrett, Hana D. A. ..... Dobbs Ferry
Berges, F. H. ..... White Plains
Brown, Elliott L. ..... Yonkers
Brown, Fred L. ..... White Plains
Burgin, Frederick F. ..... New Rochelle
Cunningham, Warren W. ..... Scarsdale
Ewing, Frank ..... New Rochelle
Hanson, E. Irving ..... New Rochelle
Hanson, Mrs. E. Irving ..... New Rochelle
Harmer, Hugh M. ..... New York
Harvey, Benjamin C. ..... Mount Vernon
Hermes, Frank J. ..... New Rochelle
Hobby, J. Oakley, Jr. ..... White Plains
Hogan, Walter V. ..... White Plains
Holden, Mrs. Edwin B. ..... South Salem
Jacobus, Josephine M. ..... Peekskill
Kelley, Henry T. ..... White Plains
Lee, Anson L. ..... Yorktown Heights
Lloyd, Cyrus T. ..... New Rochelle
Madden, Frank B. ..... White Plains
McKinley, Eugene F. ..... White Plains
Medanich, Eugene P. ..... White Plains
Moore, Mrs. William A. ..... New Rochelle
Parker, Jason S., M. D. ..... White Plains
Parsons, Florence J. ..... Yonkers
Randolph, Howard S. F. ..... Bronxville
Richards, Geo. C. ..... Bronxville
Schell, Mrs. O. H. ..... New Rochelle
Sturgis, Edward B. ..... Chappaqua
Timpson, Katherine B. ..... New Rochelle
Trowbridge, E. Kellogg ..... Bedford Hills
Sowdon, Joseph Anderson ..... Yonkers
Underhill, Ralph I. ..... Scarsdale
von Hagen, Dr. H. J. ..... Lake Waccabuc
Wainwright, J. Mayhew ..... Rye
Wait, William ..... Peekskill
Westcott, Mrs. L. E. ..... Yonkers
Winslow, Thomas S. ..... White Plains
Wrenn, Allen S. ..... White Plains



Monument to Col. Green, Major Flagg and the guide Dyckman, at Yorktown.

THE OLD DUTCH CHURCH

The old Dutch Church in Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown, was erected by Frederick Philipse (or in Dutch, Vreedryk Felypsen), as early as 1699, perhaps earlier, as the bell presented by Philipse has the date 1685. It is thus one of the oldest buildings in the country and is quite worth while visiting, as well as the cemetery adjoining, where Washington Irving was buried. The Church did not originally face the road as it does now. The entrance was through a door on the south side. The old road and the bridge over which Ichabod Crane and the Headless Horseman took their fearful ride lay to the east of the present road. The Church was altered in 1837, the door changed and galleries removed. It was in one of these galleries that Ichabod Crane, according to Washington Irving, used to sing. We urge you to read the "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" again and leaving the automobile and busy thoroughfare behind, wander in and around the Church and along the Pocantico River and study out the inscriptions in the old Dutch burying ground, many of them of a very early date.

NOTES

In the report to the New York State Historical Association by its Committee on the 150th Anniversary of the American Revolution it was advised among other things that the Association recommend the publication of local records and similar historical material by the counties, cities, towns, and villages, and approve supplemental State aid to local expenditures for this purpose.

New Rochelle of over three-quarters of a century ago was described in the *Standard-Star* of that place of March 26, 1925, by Thomas A. Carpenter, a nonagenarian and a former resident of the town.

The first railroad station in Pleasantville—that of the New York and Harlem Rail Road, built about 1847 by Wilson Chapman—was removed in February to make way for improvements. The *Pleasantville Journal* of February 20, 1925, gave an interesting account of its history.

The Minutes of the Court of Sessions (1657-1696), *Westchester County* (138 pages), being volume two of the Society's *Publications,* has been sent out. By a resolution of the Executive Committee this has been dispatched to members who are paid up in dues. The few in arrears will receive their copies upon the payment of their arrears.

The annual historical pilgrimage of the Society was held on May 23. All points were covered as scheduled, about forty-five cars and a hundred and fifty people from all parts of the County participating. It was most successful in all respects, credit being due the County Park Commission for its cooperation and to the various speakers for their interesting and instructive talks at the sites.

A picture of the Dobbs Ferry Glee Club, an organization which was formed in 1863 and flourished for something less than a decade, has been presented to the Dobbs Ferry Free Library by Alonzo Ackerman, who recently celebrated his 85th birthday. The names of the members present when the picture was taken were noted in the *Hastings Press* for March 20, 1925. Only Mr. Ackerman and Mrs. Sweet of those in the group now survive.

"Westchester County Miscellanea," by Theresa Hall (Mrs. Robert D.) Bristol, of White Plains, is continued in *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* for July. This consists of abstracts of Liber D of Mortgages on record at the county register's office at White Plains.

Five sign posts marking historical roads of the town of Pelham were erected in April at the cost of the Town Board, through the efforts of Mrs. Joan Elizabeth Secor, town historian, and William R. Montgonmery. The *Pelham Sun* of May 1 gives the position of these signs and their legends. Both Mrs. Secor and Mr. Montgomery are members of the County Historical Society, the latter representing his town in the Society's Executive Committee.

Westchester County is represented in *Civil War Tokens and Tradesmen's Cards* by George Hetrich and Julius Guttag (1924), by three items in copper of E. E. Hasse, of Yonkers, 1863.

Rev. Chas. W. Baird, D.D., writing in 1877, said that he had records, alphabetically arranged, of some one thousand, two hundred marriages performed in Yorktown and South Salem during the latter half of the eighteenth century. These records were not found after Dr. Baird's death. It is possible that they may have come to light since 1893 when inquiry was made regarding them. If so, the Westchester County Historical Society would be glad to learn of their whereabouts as a matter of record.

The Huguenot and Historical Association of New Rochelle is seeking particulars of Badeau's and Besly's Taverns of New Rochelle, believed to be the same house under different managements. If any readers of the BULLETIN can supply references in printed or original sources, Richard Webber (109 Hamilton Avenue, New Rochelle), vice-president of the Association, will be glad to hear from them. Any early drawing or photograph of Besly's Tavern (the structure now standing at the northeast corner of Huguenot Street and North Avenue in that City) is also sought.

The history of Larchmont by William J. Moran, village historian; and that of the town of Mamaroneck, by John F. Kane, President of the Chamber of Commerce of the Village of Mamaroneck, appeared in the Larchmont-Mamaroneck real estate edition of the New Rochelle *Standard-Star* of April 29.

A movement to erect a memorial to the Revolutionary patriots of New Rochelle has been initiated by the Huguenot and Historical Association of that place.

John M. Shinn, 921 Highland Avenue, Pelham Manor, has been appointed Town Historian by the Pelham Town Board, to succeed Mrs. James F. Secor, who has resigned. Mr. Shimm also succeeds Mrs. Secor as Historian of the three villages in Pelham.

The Society wishes to obtain a copy of *The Relation of Presbyterianism to Revolutionary Sentiment in the Province of New York,* by A. R. Macoubrey, D.D. This was a paper read before the Society in 1890 and published the following year.

Alvah P. French has been appointed Town Historian for the Town of North Castle.