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THOMAS T. THOMSON — PINCKNEY'S ENIGMA —Raymond Beecher

In three paragraphs in *Sketches of Catskill* (Harmony Lodge Papers), published in 1868, James Pinckney creates an aura of mystery around the person of Thomas T. Thomson (1778-1821) — the tropical experience, acquired wealth, a Creole mistress, slave servants, and the affliction with a disease rumored to be leprosy. This Catskillian, Thomas T. Thomson, left an extensive written record of activities; a number of his personal papers are in the NYS Library; others are in the possession of a descendant, Mrs. Edith Cole Silberstein. The latter collection was studied and catalogued this past winter by this author.

"I have not yet entered into any active business — have completed my buildings at Catskill where I shall sit myself down for the present — hope one of these days to have the pleasure of entertaining you there . . ." The writer of this October 22, 1816 letter was Thomas T. Thomson; the buildings referred to were his brick mansion and its dependencies at Catskill once known as Cedar Grove and more lately as the Thomas Cole Estate.

Thomas T. Thomson had returned to Catskill in the year 1815 a wealthy man; he immediately began the assemblage of several plots of land in the second division of the Lindsey Patent on which he built his country seat. The land ran from the Hudson River westward and was later joined with purchases in the CorlearsKill Patent on the northwest. He never returned to South America but rather, in a state of poor health, spent the remainder of his life in the Catskill region. Even in death he was an individualist, being interred in his private vault on his own land, a site now near the approach to the Rip Van Winkle Bridge. (His remains later in the nineteenth century were reinterred in the Catskill village cemetery and the vault torn down but for many years the acreage was termed the vault lot.)

As one of the six surviving children of Dr. Thomas and Sarah Thomson, originally of the Manor of Livingston and later of the Village of Catskill, Thomas T. Thomson received a limited local education and then removed to New York City where he found employment with William and John Radcliffe (Radcliff), import-export merchants. When that firm

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KLINKENBERGH, AN ANCIENT DUTCH BOUWERIJ: A RECORD OF EARLY OWNERSHIP

—Sidney Phoenix Thomas
(Pensacola Beach, Florida)

The old Dutch bouwerij or farm named Klinkenbergh was established about 1665 on the west bank of the Hudson River. The property originally encompassed a large area, including portions of the present towns of Coxsackie and Athens. Specifically, it ran from a point opposite Little Nutten Hook south to about one mile north of the outlet from Murderer's Creek, bounded east by the Hudson River and west by Murderer's Creek.



Old Post Card View of Klinkenbergh

The old Homestead still exists, bracketed by additions made over the intervening years, and still bears the ancient name. It is located in the township of Coxsackie at the southern end near the Athens line, just north of Four Mile Point. Originally one room and attic, it now is a sizeable and lovely old home. It commands a spectacular view of the Hudson, placed as it is only a few yards from the water's edge on the three remaining acres of the original farm. The current owners, Drs. Harold and Isabelle Oaklander, are restoring the house to its former condition and are furnishing it in a manner appropriate to the early times.

The author's interest in Klinkenbergh derives from an item in "The Phoenix Family of New York", a genealogical chart of the descendants of Alexander Phoenix who came to the New Netherlands in 1643. This chart was prepared by Stephen Whitney Phoenix of New York City and Newport, R. I., and published in 1880. The chart reference to Jacob Phoenix, son

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THOMAS T. THOMSON (continued from page 1)

was faced with a serious financial loss from a protested bill of exchange, Thomson was persuaded to sail for Demerara, British Guiana, to collect the debt. Brother James Harvey Thomson, also working at New York, saw him off on the sea voyage, but not without personal hazard as he would write in a letter dated November 1, 1803:

Dr. Brother I catch the opportunity of writing pr. Capt Ripley a few lines not knowing where they will find you but Capt R has been kind enough to promise to forward to you if he does not overtake you at Barbados.

I Flatter myself you are safe arrived by this time at your first Port of destination, as we watched every days Wind & weather since you left us, we calculate you had pleasant weather – I felt much mortified in not being able to see you the day you set sail after I came on Shore and I concluded you could not see the struggle I had in a sail Boat, which I got to get on Board of you intending to have gone down to the Narrows with you – in Boating up for you I was Run down by a Ferry Boat & had like to have been sunk, indeed it was with difficulty I could make the shore by working hard till one o'clock.

I have just heard from Catskill they are all well but I am sorry to inform you of the Death of a good Friend of yours, Coll. Fay who was carried off last week with the yellow fever after escaping till just the last of it. He had only three days of illness – the City seems now to be perfectly Healthy again – & Citizens pouring in Rapidly indeed the Houses are all nearly opened again.

I must curtail my letter for want of time. I shall write you again by the Brig *Olive Branch* which goes to Demerara in a few days by which Mr. Radcliffe is to write also, he had too short notice of Capt Ripley's sailing to write by him.

Wishing you every success in your enterprises I bid you adieu with Love to you from Eliza & your Brother

This trip to Demerara would turn into a decade's stay. At first Thomson acted as a representative of the Radcliffes but soon established himself as a trading merchant in his own right. Coffee, sugar, rum, molasses, hides, dyewoods and miscellaneous agricultural products were shipped to both England and the United States. In turn he imported fish, lumber, shingles and textiles from the United States. His English factors, Little, Humberston and Company of Liverpool, sent a wide variety of textiles – calico, figured muslins, silk, linen, Russia sheeting, quilting and osnaburg; mosquito netting; minor items of clothing such as cotton caps, braces, gloves, stockings and socks; thread and ribbons; glassware of all sorts; crockery; soap and indigo; and an assortment of jewelry – coral, finger rings, gold buttons, earrings, smelling vials with silver tops, and locket; also silver pap spoons and plated teaspoons.

British Guiana, frequently spelled Demerary in the earlier years of the 19th century was actually three small territories – Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice. The chief settled placed was Georgetown at the mouth of the Demerara River, the capital of the

colony. (In recent years it is remembered for the Jonestown tragedy). The British had occupied the area in 1796 but had relinquished control to the Dutch in 1802. The following year it again passed into British hands and by the terms of the treaty of 1814, it was retained by that country.

During his decade of trading activities at Demerara, Thomas T. Thomson lived under British rule, apparently having little trouble during the War of 1812, enemy alien though he was. A surviving inventory of his trading complex indicates Thomson prospered without trading in slaves, although he used such help at his trading compound. (Slavery was not abolished in that colony until 1834.) We have the names of his blacks – Jack, Sam, Figaro, Timon, Toney, Suida and Chloe. Pinckney's *Sketches of Catskill* (Harmony Lodge Papers) mentions Thomson's 1804 departure as being accompanied by his two American slaves, Josephus and Caesar. In Thomson's surviving papers we do find an official permit for Josephus to land at Demerara from the brig *Phebe*; that document is dated December 14, 1804. No mention is made of Caesar. Josephus is presumed to be the same individual manumitted and set free by Thomson at Catskill in the year 1818; he was then twenty-four years of age.

The Thomson mercantile establishment at Demerara was situated on two waterfront lots, numbers 8 and 9. On the latter was Thomson's two and a half story dwelling house, measuring forty by twenty feet, with a seven-foot gallery along one side. (One conjectures if his later Catskill house style was influenced by this Georgetown residence.) The house was well-furnished with mahogany and other exotic wood pieces – a sideboard, dining table, set of 12 chairs, bottle stands, sofa, chamber chair, bedstead, toilette table, looking glass and two iron chests for the safekeeping of valuables. In addition, he owned a quantity of silver, china and glassware. It is obvious Thomas Thomson enjoyed the life of a prosperous merchant.

The same lot, in addition to his residence, contained a dock facility, storehouses and other outbuildings, one containing numerous new and used puncheons, water butts and other wood containers.

On the adjacent lot was a dwelling converted from a cooper shop, furnished with a counting house desk, copying machine, as well as household furnishings. This combined office – residence housed Priscilla Anderson and her children. Pinckney mentions a Creole mistress and this is substantiated by Thomson's surviving papers. She lived in separate quarters, owning certain personal property in her own right including slaves. At least two children, boys, were born of this connection.

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It was a very active trading establishment as evidenced from the running account with the New York firm of Radcliffe Brothers. Between the years 1804 and 1810 over 45,000 pounds value is recorded. The brigs *William Tell*, *Phebe* and the *Julia H. Ellison*; the schooner *Active*; and the ship *Grace* were used to transship goods to and from New York. The English account with Little, Humberston and Company must have been for at least an equal amount. Thomson also arranged for ship passenger fares and sold various lottery tickets.

At the close of the War of 1812, Thomson and his family departed for England, leaving his Demerara trading interests in the hands of Playter & Leach. The sea voyage commenced in April of 1814. Shortly after the Thomsons arrived in England, Playter and Leach wrote:

Your esteemed favor of 27th June we received by Express Packet – and sorry are we indeed to learn what a miserable passage you had – all your Friends here condole most Sincerely with you on the loss of your Boys – it must indeed have been distressing in the Extreme to commit them to the Ocean. We trust your subsequent steps have been marked with happier events – Priscilla [Anderson] we suppose will be out in the first fleet – Depend upon our friendly offices toward her.

C. Humberston of the Liverpool firm, factors for Thomson, provided him with sound advice as to method of travel to London – tipping charges, places to see and the best hotels and coffee houses for food and lodging. English factors had long provided such services as a good will gesture to visiting merchants from their colonial possessions:

This being your first Journey to London I will venture to give you some advice – I would recommend your leaving the mail at the post office, taking your luggage with you & going direct to the Bedford Hotel, Covent, London, where you will give the letter to the Chamberlain . . . at the Bedford Hotel you will only get a bed, the next House, the Bedford Coffee House, will furnish you with a Breakfast & any other meal you may wish & if you mention my name to John the Head Waiter you will meet with good attendance – at leaving, Mr. Ivy will tell you what you ought to pay the Chamberlain, Waiters, Boots, etc. . . . In the way of sights you must go to Westminster Hall and Abbey, St. Pauls, The Tower – Vauxhall and all the fine places. . . .

Thomson had no major medical problems during his decade of residence at Demerara but on board ship during the trip to England he suffered from a skin eruption, a medical problem which was to plague him for the remainder of his life. For a time he took the sulphur waters at fashionable Cheltenham Spa and assumed he had been cured. (The medical problem was not leprosy as rumored in Catskill in later years.)

In October, 1814, Thomas T. Thomson sailed from England to the United States by way of the West Indies and Amelia Island. He traveled overland from the southern states and reached New York City on February 15, 1815, a “tedious journey” he would note. In one of his first letters he would write: “I have now the pleasure of addressing you from my native land.”

Thomson was soon at Catskill for a reunion with his brother, John Alexander; his sisters, Catharine, Harriet and Maria, as well as his nieces and nephews. Six years of his life remained.

Surviving documents seem to indicate Thomson dabbled with the importation of English manufactured goods but never actively operated any commercial establishment. One large shipment of English pottery and porcelain, both tableware and ornamental pieces, was partially directed to Catskill where his brother, John Alexander Thomson, was operating a retail store on Catskill’s Main Street.

Astride the Greene-Schoharie county line, Thomson also owned and operated the Stout Farm, land possibly inherited from his father, Dr. Thomas Thomson, the land speculator. Here, for several years after the death of Stephen Bartow of Upper Canada, Thomson provided a home for his sister, Maria Thomson Bartow and her several children. In later years four daughters of Maria and Stephen Bartow were invited by John Alexander and Catharine Thomson to take up residence at Cedar Grove; here young Maria Bartow would eventually meet and marry Thomas Cole, the founder of the Hudson River School of Art.

The disease or medical problem contacted on board ship from Demerara to England in 1814, continued to affect Thomson’s health. He sought a cure at the Saratoga Spa, and for a period of several weeks placed himself in the hands of a Doctor VandenBergh at Geneva, New York. That doctor’s case history survives and provides a convenient time-outline for Thomson’s adult life.

Thomas T. Thomson’s will, probated in 1821, the year of his death, left his real estate at Catskill and elsewhere to his surviving brother, John Alexander, and to his two sisters, Catharine and Harriet (Mrs. Mark Spencer). Several nieces and nephews were remembered with legacies of one thousand dollars each. The Bartow children had to waive any claims to real estate once owned by Dr. Thomas Thomson, their grandfather. The inventory of personal property both at Catskill and at the Stout Farm reveal a wealth of personal possessions. At the latter place was a large variety of yard goods, probably left over from Thomson’s commercial years.

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THOMAS T. THOMSON (continued from page 3)

It would seem that the wealth accumulated by Thomas T. Thomson would have provided a generous income for the surviving heirs, especially John Alexander and Catharine. But legal difficulties continued to surface as old claims were reactivated against Thomas T. Thomson's estate, especially in the light of the Radcliffe and the Graham bankruptcy proceedings. In the final years of his life, John Alexander Thomson found himself faced with an adverse court decision to the amount of \$10,000. Not having any surplus capital, he mortgaged the Catskill real estate, an action which for many years would burden Maria Bartow Cole and her three sisters, the eventual inheritors of the Thomson-Cole land and buildings on Spring Street.

Maria Thomson Bartow fades from sight in later years and current research has yet to reveal much concerning her final place of residence. Thomas T. Thomson did provide for a life tenancy on the Stout Farm. There is no evidence she ever came to Catskill to reside with her brother and sister, and her four daughters.

—Greene County has two National Historic Landmark sites — the Bronck Houses and Thomas T. Thomson's Catskill estate. In the latter case that prestigious award came about because Thomas T. Thomson's niece, Maria Bartow, married Thomas Cole. Cedar Grove became their home until Cole's death in 1848. The site is presently under study for a potential Cole Memorial.

OTHER NEWS OF INTEREST

□◇ Scrapbooks and family diaries are the main components of an extensive collection of regional historical material recently presented to the Greene County Historical Society by Robert A. and Edna H. Mack of Greenport, Columbia County. The material dates from the mid 1850's into comparatively recent times. The collection bears the name of Arthur C. Mack, father and father-in-law of the donors. Older members of the society will recall that the late Arthur C. Mack, who had an intense interest in local history on both sides of the river, was a trustee and a president of this organization.

□◇ The class of 1980, Catskill School District, has donated a current copy of their yearbook, a gesture much appreciated.

□◇ Mrs. Mabel Brokaw of Nutley, New Jersey continues to augment the library holdings — the latest gift being manuscript material relating to the Jennings-Story families.

□◇ And our dedicated trustee, Florence Hunter of Jefferson Heights, greatly strengthens the print collection with the recent gift of the Hudson River Series (Bank of New York); a portfolio of prints of presidents of the United States, and the black and white second series of Hudson River views.

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KLINKENBERGH (continued from page 1)

of the immigrant Alexander, includes the statement: "He purchased 2 Nov 1685 the bouwerij known as Klinkenbergh, behind the present village of Athens, N. Y. and on 11 Jan 1686, a house . . . [in New York City]."

Aside from the natural interest in Klinkenbergh as the residence of an early Phoenix ancestor, there is the intriguing question as to why Jacob should buy a farm at Athens, N. Y., and just seventy days later purchase a house in New York City some 135 miles away. Jacob was not thought to be a wealthy man so it has been presumed he sold Klinkenbergh before moving. With little information and such questions in mind, this study of early ownership of the property was undertaken.

Ancient Klinkenbergh was part of the so-called Loonenburg Patent covering a tract of land purchased from the Indians 20 April 1665 by Jan Clute, Jan Hendrickse Bruyn and Jurian Teunise. The land thus purchased is described as a parcel of land "lying on the west side of the North [Hudson] river, over against the Claverrack, near Fort Albany . . . called Caniskek; in magnitude stretching along the river side from the land of Pieter Bronck to the vale which lies on the point of the mainland . . . named Mackawamick, and so running into the woods, both on the south and the north, even to the Katskil path; . . ." A study of these boundaries was made by William S. Pelletreau and presented in *History of Greene County*, published in 1884 by J. A. Beers & Co. He identified the southern limit, Mackawamick, as a point then [1884] called Black Rock, a projection into the river at the south end of the village of Athens. The Catskill Indian path forming the western limit ran along the eastern foot of the Kalkberg hills. The northern line extended from the river on the east at the level of the present village of Coxsackie, to the west at a point where the Indian footpath crossed Stony Kill.

A patent confirming title to Clute, Bruyn and Teunise was granted by Governor Richard Nicolls 25 May 1667.

Summarizing William Pelletreau's findings as to disposition and sequence of ownership:

24 August 1670 Jurian Teunise sold his one-third to Abraham Staats and Johannes Provoost

7 August 1675 Jan Hendrickse Bruyn sold his one-third to Myndert Frederickse

7 April 1681 Jan Clute sold his one-third to Peter Bosie and Jan van Loon except the north part of the patent which Clute, Frederickse and Teunise sold 28 March 1681 to Marte Garritse van Bergen [Fountain Flats] and excepting the land conveyed this same date to Wyntje Harmense

30 October 1685 Myndert Frederickse sold the portion

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KLINKENBERGH *(continued from page 4)*

bought 7 August 1675 to Cornelis Machielis who then sold it to Jacob Caspersen Hallenbeck, Dirck Van Vechten, Jans Caspersen Hallenbeck and Jochem Collier

Pelletreau also states: "June 18th 1867 [*sic*] [1687] Cornelis Machielis sold to Teunis Tappan, son of Jurian Teunise, 'all that tract of land over against Claverack called Klinkenberg, stretching southward and westward as far as Murderer's Creek, and northward til over against the Little Nutten Hook . . . except the place called 'Korst Veloren' belonging to the heirs of Major Abraham Staats.' " He continues: "This tract was sold by Teunis Tappan to Jacob Caspersen Hallenbeck September 6th 1694, and was the original seat of the family of Hallenbecks, now so widely scattered. Klinkenberg (or Echo Hill) is a well-known eminence not far from Four Mile Point."

Thus, according to Pelletreau, the sequence of ownership is straight-forward, but he seems to have missed or omitted certain complicating records. Another author, William Berkenmeyer, in *The Albany Protocol* published in 1971, has this to say: "From a mass of conflicting evidence in the records available, one concludes that this place [Klinkenbergh] is that tract on the river bank chosen by Jurian Teunise presumably for his own use when he and his partners Bruyn and Clute bought from the Indians the area later known as the Loonenburgh Patent . . . Jurian seems to have sold his entire share of the Patent to Myndert Frederickse. From him it passed through the hands of the other and more temporary owners in a curious set of circumstances." Although Berkenmeyer's facts seem to be in error, he does recognize the existence of "other and more temporary owners."

A lack of consistency is evident in the above quotations. They are shown here as a rather lengthy introduction in order to record portions of the only two historical sources known to this author which have considered the problems of identifying early ownership of this tract.

The present study considers two lines of evidence in resolving the matter of ownership of Klinkenbergh from the date of the original purchase from the Indians 20 April 1665 until the sale to Jacob Caspersen Hallenbeck 6 September 1694. One line is the recorded deeds; the other is court records, notarial records and other such evidence given under oath. After an extended study of these records, it is the author's conclusion that many of the deeds were written and recorded well after the fact, quite probably to give a continuous series of recorded deeds and thus "quiet title."

The original owners of the Loonenburgh Patent bought as partners. It is apparent that each chose a

particular portion on or near the river as his own, the remainder seemingly held in common. No deed has been found to define this partition, but the later deed from Jan Clute to Wyntie Harmense dated 7 April 1681 leaves no room for doubt:

"-- the worthy Johannes Clute --- grants, conveys and makes over a true, rightful and free ownership to and for the behoof of Wyntie Harmense, daughter of Harmen Thomasse van Hun, a certain parcel of land twenty morgens [40 acres] lying upon the Moordenaers [Murderer's] kill, stretching south and north, called the Rondeel of the Moordenaers kill, with a homestead over the kill next the great swamp all which he out of a singular affection and love has given and granted in the form of a donation to said Wyntie Harmense, as per the instrument thereof dated the 18th of July 1673, which he now conveys, being a part of his portion of the land which Jan Hendrick Bruyn and Jurian Teunise and he owned heretofore, according to the patent granted to the three of them by Rich: Nicolls, late governor, under date of the 25th of May 1667, which part of Jan Bruyn, Myndt. Frederickse bought, and whereas Jurian Teunise and Myndt. Frederickse have taken possession each of a place on the river bank, therefore he, the grantor, with the assent and approval of his associates, has given this piece of land to the aforementioned daughter instead of such possession; ---"

The above deed not only indicates that each owner took a portion of land for his own, but also that Myndert Frederickse bought the portion of Jan Hendrickse Bruyn and not that of Jurian Teunise. This shows Berkenmeyer's statement, quoted above, to be in error. In fact, the only transfer to Myndert Frederickse uncovered in the present study is the one dated 7 August 1675 from Jan Hendrickse Bruyn and mentioned by Pelletreau:

"Mr. Jan Hendrickse Bruyns . . . declared that he, in true rights, free ownership, has granted, conveyed and transferred, as he by these presents does grant, etc. to and for the behoof Myndert Frederickse Smit, here in Albany, his just third part of land to him belonging, in company with Jan Clute and Juriaen Teunissen, with all the rights and title which he, the grantor, therein has, according to patent thereof from the right honorable Governor General Nicols, of date the 25th of May, A. D. 1667, whereto reference is made; ---"

The actual transfer of ownership from Bruyn to Frederickse quite probably occurred much earlier, for on 4 April 1670, Myndert Frederickse leased to Harmen Tomasse "a certain parcel of land lying on the west bank [of the Hudson] opposite the Claverack;" the lessor "to deliver with said land a house of one board in length, a barn thirty feet long and a rick, provided the lessee dig a cellar under the house and likewise help rough-hew the timber for the house, barn and rick . . ." Also to be furnished to the lessee were certain animals and items of farm equipment. This land is most certainly part of the patent.

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COLE'S GROVE - A FAVORITE

“Workmen have begun tearing down the pavilion in Cole’s Grove this week. The other buildings will also be razed.” The *Examiner*, in announcing the end of this popular summer park on the Hudson at Catskill, in the spring of 1901 would further comment: “Cole’s Grove for many years has been popular not only with Catskill people who have used it as a picnic ground but excursions from places along the river have been coming here for a long time.” Slocum Howland, for \$10,500, had purchased the grove land roughly “bounded on the south by the public road (High Street) and the lands of the Catskill Water Works, on the east by the waters of the Hudson River, on the north by the lands of the Catskill Water Works and on the west by Colewood Avenue, including the riparian rights.”

Photographs from the Florence Cole Vincent Memorial Collection — Greene County Historical Society



Incline Walk to Pavilion



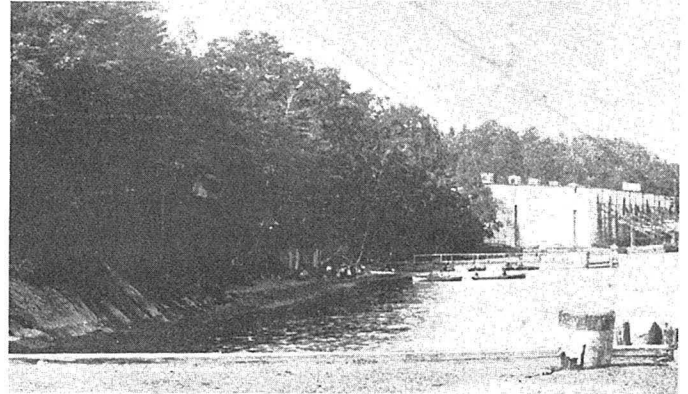
Never-Failing Spring

Cole’s Grove was a pleasant scenic spot with its pine woods, the never-failing spring, its river beach, as well as the wooden pavilion and the bathhouses. The steamboat dock was an added convenience for visitors who came by water. Manager Theodore Cole had added electric lights for the 1896 season, with current supplied by the Catskill Illuminating and Electric Power Company.

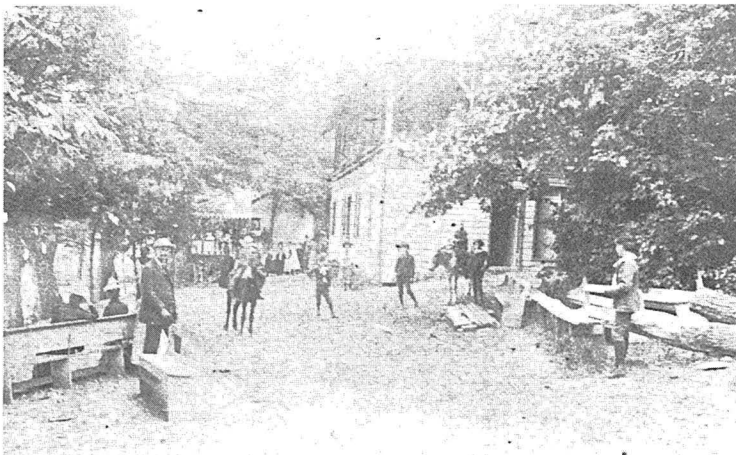
Few activities at Cole’s Grove missed the reporting staff of the *Examiner* and the *Recorder*. They would note the use of the steamboat dock by the *W. W. Whitney*, the *Isabella*, and the barge *A. M. Church*. These boats brought excursionists from as far away as Troy on the north and Poughkeepsie on the south. The season at the grove usually opened July 4, a day reserved for the use of local residents. But thereafter Theodore Cole scheduled reservations for numerous groups, while providing music for dancing, selling refreshments and supplying other family attractions.

SPOT ON THE HUDSON RIVER

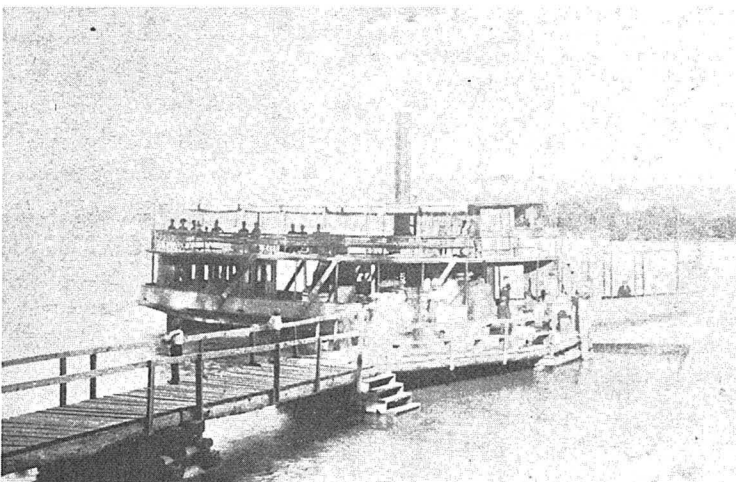
COLE'S GROVE,
Situating on the Hudson River, one mile above
Catskill Landing.
Boats Land at Waterworks Dock at Grove.
Unsurpassed for Excursions, Picnics, Etc.
Will be Let by the Day to Respectable
Parties Only.
No Intoxicating Drinks Allowed on Grounds.
For further particulars apply to
THEO. A. COLE,
Catskill, N. Y.



Cole's Grove – River View



The Pavilion – (Note Donkeys)



Steamboat Landing

This river site was especially popular with Sunday School superintendents who brought their church groups from Athens, Hudson, Newburgh, Albany, Wappingers Falls and elsewhere. Private parties also contracted for the use of Cole's Grove for special affairs. William and Helen Phillips entertained their friends with a dancing party; the Ladies Guild of St. Luke's Episcopal Church at Catskill held a strawberry festival one year, receipts totaling \$110. During the summer of 1895, YMCA religious services of the "open air" variety were held on Sunday afternoons. Speakers included the Reverend R. H. Collins, the Reverend Lester Leggett and the noted female evangelist, Maggie Newton Van Cott.

The river presented a limited hazard to Grove users. On a Saturday in August, 1897, Miss Grace Kline of Hudson had a narrow escape from drowning when she fell from the gang plank of the Steamer *Isabella*. Captain Sherwood Whitbeck made a daring plunge overboard and succeeded in keeping her above water until a rowboat was pushed around to his relief. Into this the young woman was assisted; later she was placed aboard the little steamer . . . taken home, not much the worse for her unpleasant experience.

But by May 1, 1901 it was all a matter of history – the land was taken over for private purposes, the buildings were gone, and families and organizations were forced to look elsewhere for a favorite picnic spot.

(Research by Editor Raymond Beecher)

On 26 April 1671 Myndert Frederickse joined with Jan Clute and Jurian Theunise in granting the northern portion of the patent to Marten Garritse [Van Bergen]. This would indicate that Bruyn had sold his one-third to Frederickse prior to this date. As a matter of interest, an incomplete and unsigned portion of a deed with this precise wording is recorded in chronological order next after a document dated 6 Sept 1670. It is probably true, then, that Myndert Frederickse took possession of Jan Hendrickse Bruyn's one-third of the patent on or before 4 April 1670, the date of his lease to Harmen Thomassen Hun. As noted above, the deed was recorded five years later.

The first recorded use of the name "Klinkenbergh" occurs in a lease dated 11 April 1673 from Myndert Frederickse to Jan Helmsen of "his farm called Clinkenbergh."

Myndert Frederickse and Pietertie his wife sold their entire interest in the patent, conveying by deed to Cornelis Michielse on 31 Oct 1685, a certain farm or bowery called Klinkenbergh ". . . being ye third part of ye patent granted by ye late Govern.r Rich.d Nicholls to John Hend: Bruyn, Jurian Teunise and John Cloet, which said part was transported to ye said Myndert by John Hend: Bruyns ye 7th of Aug 1675 . . ." In this case, also, the actual transfer of possession occurred much earlier as shown by court records. In a lawsuit bought by Jacob Phoenix against his business partner, Cornelis Michielse, a witness, Jan Bronck, on 7 Nov 1682 stated that "at a certain time in the summer, now about 4 years ago [underlining added] he came to Klinkenbergh and Jacob Phoenix and he were going to swim in the shoal which lies in the river." Bronck reported that Michielse also was present at the house. The date of this incident is thus put at the summer of 1678. In another instance, the record for 1682 reads: "Myndert Frederickse, appearing in court . . ." It thus appears certain that the actual sale by Myndert Frederickse to Cornelis Michielse occurred at least three – and quite possibly seven or more – years before 30 October 1685, the date of the recorded deed.

The above analysis shows that by 1682 and quite probably before 1678, Cornelis Michielse owned an entire one-third of the Loonenburg Patent, being that portion constituting the original interest of Jan Hendrickse Bruyn including the bouwerij or farm called Klinkenberg on the shore of the Hudson River. The bouwerij was occupied in 1678 by Michielse and his partner, Jacob Phoenix. The extent and nature of this partnership is not known but quite possibly was

limited to the ownership of Klinkenbergh. Michielse was a baker by trade. Phoenix, in later life, was a ship captain and perhaps he was a mariner during the time he lived at Klinkenbergh. At some point in this period Jacob Phoenix bought from Cornelis Michielse a one-half interest in the property. No record of the original transaction has been found. However, a confirming deed dated 2 Nov 1685 is recorded whereby John Becker, attorney for Cornelis Michielse, sells to Jacob Fenis [Phoenix] "ye half or moyety of a Certain farm or Bowery called klinkenbergh, lyeing upon Hudson's River over against Claverack, together with ye moyety of ye house and Barn and all appertenances thereunto belonging, with ye half off all his Right and Title wh [ich] he has there, which was a third part of ye Patent granted by ye late Govern[o]r Rich[ar]d Nicolls to John Hendrick Bruy, Jurian Teunise and John Cloet (Except ye Land of Marte Gerritse conveyed to him by John Cloet, Jurian Teunise and Myndert Frederickse ye 28th of March 1681) which said Third Part was conveyed to ye said Cornelis Machielse by Myndert Frederickse & Pietertie his wife on ye 30th day of Octob. 1685, all which with ye half of Ye Right and Title of Ye said Cornelis Michielse is transported to ye said Jacob Fenix, his heirs and assigns . . ."

As a result of the lawsuit mentioned earlier, Michielse and Phoenix dissolved their partnership and disposed of their interests in the property. On 2 April 1683 Jacob Fenix sold to Teunis Pietersz and Broer Jansz his interest in a certain farm called Klinkenbergh "being the entire half of everything, as well of the house, barn, rick and land as of the orchard, just as he, the said Jacob Fenix heretofore bought the same of Cornelis Michielsz and has hitherto had the use of . . ."

On 5 August 1684, Cornelis Michielse sold to Jurriaen Teunissen Tappan "all his interest in the land from the Klinkenbergh to the Moordaener's Kill, extending . . . north and south along the river; likewise his interest in the house, barn two orchards and the old land along the shore and all that is fenced in and still to be fenced . . ." This sale is obviously limited to the bouwerij since the western boundary is Murderer's Creek and no mention is made of any portion of Michielse's one-third interest in the original patent. Further, only one-half of Klinkenbergh could thus be conveyed as that had been the extent of Cornelis Michielse's interest for many years. The other one-half, owned by Jacob Phoenix, had been sold 2 April 1683 to Teunis Pietersz and Broer Jansz.

Finally, two months later on 16 October 1684,

(continued on page 10)

CURATOR'S CORNER

—Shelby Kriele

Recently Bronck Museum was pleased to acquire two items with strong Greene County connections which had spent the past few years in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The first, and earliest item, the Conine-Spoor pewter teapot is of the type in use shortly after the Revolution. Family tradition indicates the teapot first belonged to Annie Conine from whom it descended in the Spoor family of Coxsackie. The teapot was certainly in use in the Spoor household when Catharine Spoor was born in July of 1819. Catharine who was to become the next owner of the little pear shaped teapot was the original owner of the second item, a coverlet bearing her name.



Val Kriele Photos

The Spoor coverlet, the second signed example in the Bronck Museum collection, is an indigo blue and white, wool and cotton coverlet. Made for Catharine in the 1830's before her marriage to Aaron Hallenbeck in October of 1838, the coverlet reflects the early Victorian taste for ornate floral patterned bed coverings. Coverlets such as Catharine's were the production of professional weavers who employed the new jacquard loom. Very often the wool for the jacquard coverlet was still grown, dyed, and spun in the home before being sent off to the weaver. Catharine probably had a part in making the yarn in her coverlet.

Catharine Spoor Hallenbeck died in Troy, N. Y. in January of 1883. The teapot and coverlet then passed from generations in the Hallenbeck and Lampman families until they became the "treasures" of Mabel Lampman Korotev from whom the items were acquired by the Society.

The Spoor coverlet was accessioned through the generosity of the family and friends of the late Paul E. Ackerman, of Hannacroix, an active participant in Greene County Historical Society affairs and member of its Board of Trustees.

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VEDDER LIBRARY NOTES

□◇ By the will of the late F. Van Loon Ryder of Coxsackie, the Society has received his extensive collection of material relating to the steamboats on the Hudson as well as elsewhere in the United States. It will be known as the F. Van Loon Ryder Memorial Collection.

□◇ Everything is coded these days. The Vedder Memorial Library is now SAN 311-0990 to the American Library Directory.

□◇ Vedders, Palens, Kings, Pecks and Tremains are the subject of a typescript booklet compiled by Mary Vedder Kamenoff of Brockton, Massachusetts. The title is *Miscellaneous Family Connections*.

□◇ The atlas collection is enhanced by a reprint copy of F. W. Beers' *Atlas of the Hudson Valley*. The volume is the gift of Mrs. Frances Adams and Mrs. Ellen Whitbeck.

□◇ Added to the reference collection: H. G. Jones — *Local Government Records, An Introduction to Their Management, Preservation, and Use*. Also courtesy of our good friend Harvey R. Goslee of Wilton, Conn., we have a copy of Schellenberg's — *The Management of Archives*.

□◇ *The Autobiography of Frederick Nelson DuBois*, a privately written account of the life and times of this astute businessman (summer home in Catskill), has been catalogued; it is the gift of Mrs. Ruth Lindsey of Leeds.

□◇ Mrs. Harry M. Ketchum, Sr., of Greenville, has provided us with copies of certain Mountain Top cemetery records. The research is by courtesy of the Johannes Hardenbergh Chapter, NSDAR, Lexington, New York. Also, from Mrs. Clare T. Mullaly has come a final instalment of material relating to the later descendants of the Salisbury — Newkirk families (Sager and Hunter). This gift comes through the same NSDAR Chapter.

□◇ Jean McGonigle of Enumclaw, Washington, has provided us with Britt—Lawrence material.

□◇ A letter, dated May 18, 1881, from the United States Consulate, recommending Cornell Vosburgh, has been given by Mildred Carrington of Vosburgh's Nurseries.

□◇ Some visitors to the library have commented very favorably on Edna Ingalls Adams' *Early Teamsters in the Town of Greenville*. She reports receiving substantial help in her research from William Gedney, Scott Ellis and Leona Ingalls Rundell. Thanks to these individuals more local history is preserved.

□◇ Nineteenth century court dockets have come from Mrs. Anna J. Bernhard of West Coxsackie.

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Cornelis Michielsz sold to Andries Hansz "all his right and title to the great flat called Loonenburg, likewise all his interest eastward to the [Murderer's] Kill, and south and northward, as well woodland as otherwise, to wit, the sixth part of said land." This was confirmed by deed dated 23 October 1685 from Jan Becker and Pieter van Wooglums, attorneys of Cornelis Michielse.

A strict interpretation of the three deeds described above would indicate that Phoenix and Michielse sold more interest in the property than they possessed between them! It is reasonable to believe, however, that the contract of sale from Jacob Fenix to Teunis Pietersz and Broer Jansz covered one-half of the bouwerij only, as the document mentions only that property which Fenix "has hitherto had the use thereof" and does not identify it as half the land purchased by Michielse from Myndert Frederickse. The deed of 2 November 1685 by Michielse's attorney which purported to convey a one-half interest in his share of the patent to Jacob Fenix, could be in error in this respect. If so, there should be a court determination in the records of a later date.

For the present, it is assumed that Jacob Phoenix sold his one-half of the bouwerij to Jurriaen Teunissen Tappan; and Michielse sold the remainder of his interest in the patent, identified as "the great flatt of Loonenburg", to Andries Hanse. All interest of Cornelis Michielse in the Loonenburgh Patent was extinguished by a quitclaim dated 1 November 1696 in which he conveys to Jan van Loon all of "Micheilse's remaining claims in Loonenburgh which are outside of the purchases of Juriaen Teunissen and Andries Hansen and Jacop Fricken [Jacob Fenix?].

Jacob had to go to court 1 July 1684 to obtain first payment under the contract for sale to Pietersz and Jansz dated 2 April 1683. His claim was against Teunis Pietersz alone, not jointly with Broer Jansz, for the full amount of the payment due. This could indicate that Teunise Pieterse had by then acquired Broer Jansz' share of the contract in addition to his own.

At this point, the original question of Jacob Phoenix's apparent purchase of Klinkenbergh so soon before moving to New York City can be answered. Contrary to evidence of the deed of 2 November 1685 transferring an interest from Cornelis Michielse to him, Jacob had lived at and quite certainly owned a one-half interest in Klinkenbergh as early as 1678. His ownership extended from then until 1683 when he sold his interest under contract to Teunise Pietersz and Broer Jansz. His occupancy of the farm may have continued until mid-November 1685 when the last

payment was due him. This would tie in nicely with his having bought a house in New York City on 11 January 1686.

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SOCIETY ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT FOR 1980-1982 TERM

Following in the footsteps of half a century of former presidents, Val Kriele was elected to that major administrative position at the June meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Kriele was born at Jackson Heights, L. I., but removed with his parents to Purling where he attended and was graduated from Cairo Central School. Earning his Bachelor of Science degree (psychology major) at the State University of N. Y. at Albany, Mr. Kriele continued advanced studies. He now holds a master's degree in Curriculum Development and Administration as well as a permanent principal's license.

Since 1970 Mr. Kriele has been employed in educational work with the NYS Dept. of Correctional Services at Coxsackie. Mrs. Shelby Kriele, his wife, is our museum curator. Our new president and his wife reside in the village of Coxsackie where they recently purchased an older home which they are restoring and furnishing with antique pieces.

The retiring president, Rubén García, filled two terms of office during which period funds were raised to restore the historic house structures. Other highlights of his administration include the historic home tours, the lecture series, and other physical improvements to the museum's grounds and buildings.

Readers are reminded that such individuals as Mr. García and Mr. Kriele serve unsalaried, with very limited expense accounts. And one must give them the proverbial "pat on the back" for taking on a heavy administrative burden, one which requires much time and patience. The reward is gained in the more effective interpretation of regional history.

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