

North Castle History

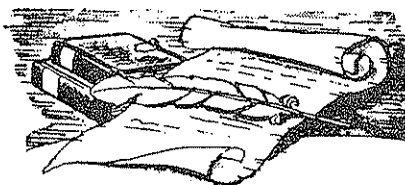


Sands' Mills taken around 1860 by Boyce Photographers. Courtesy Richard N. Lander.

The North Castle Historical Society

Bedford Road, Armonk, New York 10504

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

There is something very special about our Society, and I think it is the warmth and pleasure of the friendships formed here at Historic Smith's Tavern. With each task, with each fundraising effort and with each challenge, we continue to see and feel wonderful camaraderie which keeps spreading. Let us continue to accomplish our work with such good fellowship. And do ask your friends to join us.

Many visitors have enjoyed our rotating displays; the building has had many improvements including new exterior paint, a new heating system, new supports and a new gas hot water heater; and our plans are moving ahead.

This fall we will begin our townwide Restoration Fund Appeal. You will receive a brochure telling about the restoration and inviting you to be a part of this effort to restore some of the rooms to the period of the 1790's when Captain John Smith purchased his Tavern.

We look forward to a very exciting period in the life of Historic Smith's Tavern, and we want you to be a part of it. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Loris Finch Watson
(Mrs. William J. Watson)
President

SANDS' MILLS

by Richard N. Lander

A reprint from The Westchester County Historical Bulletin, Vol. 28, No. 4, October 1952.



Every reader of the history of Westchester County has been short and scattered references to Sands' Mills. These are especially concerned with the well known and now well told story relating to Major Andre, yet there is hardly a line in print regarding the Mills and their importance to the life story of a portion of the Town of North Castle. Here lived and wrought the Quinby, Hallock, Latting, Sands, Carpenter, and Knowlton families. Therefore, with only a brief glance at the famed British spy, this article will trace the hitherto unwritten description of the Mills covering two centuries.

The story begins on "April ye 5th 1737" at the second annual Town Meeting held by the people of the infant Township of North Castle. After electing George Dennis as Supervisor and Moses Quinby as Town Clerk as well as several minor officials there was "a vote as consent for John Hallock to build a mill on Wampuses Brook near Abel Weeks." French's County History states, "John Hallock, a skilled millright, began systematically to acquire water rights along the streams in Westchester County that has sufficient fall to admit of erecting dams and using the ponded water to drive mills at suitable sites. This man, with his associates, built many mills in various parts of this and adjoining counties. Around these mills grew up thrifty settlements, the mill serving as the nucleus; the grocery, the tavern and blacksmith shop following as a natural sequence — within the space of eighteen months (of the Town's grant) the dam 'across Wampus Brook' was finished and the mill in successful operation. The overshot water wheel with its buckets furnished the power for three hoppers and as many stones. These were large cumbersome discs and at a stated interval were 'lifted' and their grooves cleaned and deepened."

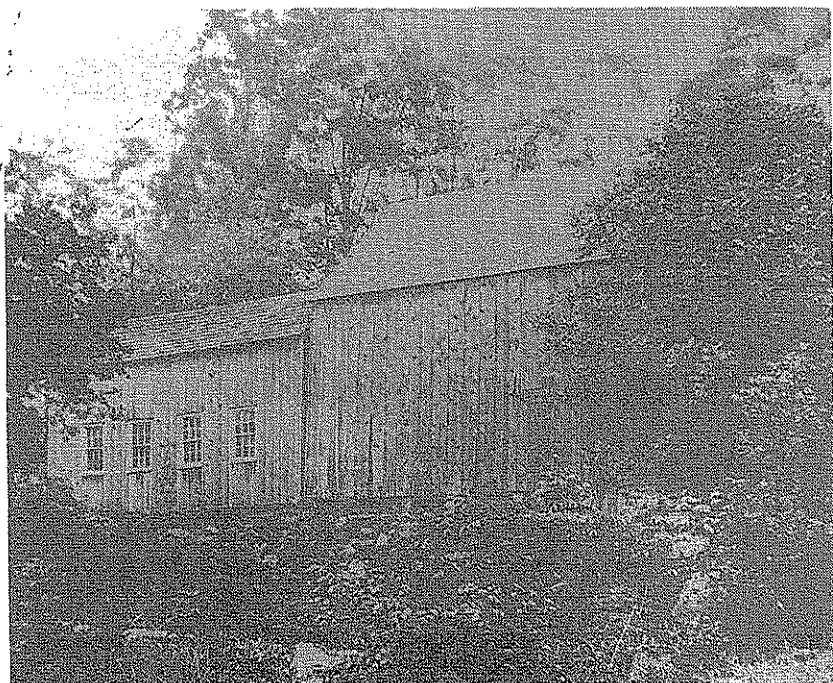
This particular mill site, a very successful one, was in that portion of the West Patent of North Castle known as "The Mile Square" — an area of more than 600 acres lying between the west and middle branches of the Byram River. The land was claimed by Josiah Quinby, and sundry persons who had made purchases from him, as his share of the one twentieth of the Patent and one half the right of John Cholwell one of the original patentees. Perhaps John Hallock, the Quaker miller, purchased his land from Quinby but the record is missing. However, it is believed that Hallock was living near the mill site having come to North Castle in the great Quaker migration across the Long Island Sound previous to 1730.

Such was the beginning of one of the oldest mills in Northern Westchester and of a business which was to last over one hundred and sixty years. In addition to his grist mill, John Hallock built a still which perhaps amply

supplemented his income. Whether he added the saw mill is not known but it existed in 1790 when the first record of deed transactions are available. In assigning Highway Masters to their districts, numerous references appear in the early Town Records to "*Hallocks Mill*", "*Hallocks Mill Still*" and to "*Mill Brook*."

For exactly twenty years the mill was run by John Hallock. He was a descendant of Peter Hallock who, according to tradition, landed at Southold on Long Island about 1640 with twelve others. They were members of a Presbyterian Church at Hingham, Norfolk County, England and were accompanied by their pastor, the Rev. John Youngs. William Hallock, the only son of Peter by his first wife who had died in England, was born in 1610, married Margaret Howell and died at West Mattituck, Long Island, in 1684. His son, John Hallock the First, born 1658, married Abigail Swazey about 1678. She was a Quakeress and with her husband was active in the Society of Friends at Setauket, despite the displeasures of her father-in-law. Their son, John Hallock the Second, married about 1700, became a preacher of the Setauket Friends Meeting and died there in 1765. John Hallock the Third was born at Setauket 1710, removed to North Castle and married Martha Quinby at the Purchase Meeting in 1731. To the couple were born eight children.

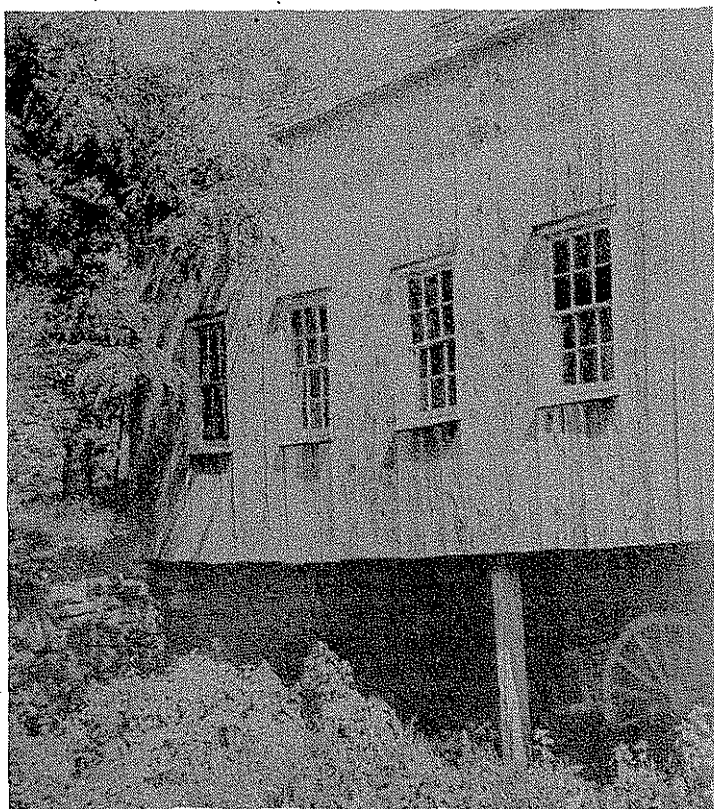
The proprietor of Hallock's Mills made his will in March 1757 — proved



The barn where Major John Andre was detained in section at left. (See story on Major Andre following this article). Picture courtesy Richard N. Lander.

April 29th of that same year — ordering all his estate to be sold at “*Public Vendue*” and the proceeds divided among his wife and six surviving children — John, James, Daniel, Samuel, Martha and Phebe. The younger children were to receive their legacies when they married “*provided they marry amongst and according to the order of friends.*”

After the Hallock Estate auction we have the only break in the continuity in ownership of the Mill and the surrounding property.* It is the theory of the author that the Mill was purchased by William Latting or, perhaps, by his father for we find members of that family next in title. They must have lived nearby and one of them, Caleb Latting, was a witness to John Hallock's will. Unfortunately lacking is detailed information as to the ownership of the Mill and the surrounding property when Major André — the prisoner of Paulding, Williams and Van Wart — was delivered to Lt. Col. Jameson on September 23, 1780. Possibly it was then called Latting's Mill but the military record designation is only North Castle.



Closeup of section of barn where Major Andre was detained.

*New information has been uncovered since this article was written in 1952. See Mr. Lander's Addenda at the end of this article.

Perhaps at this point we might pause to trace the early settlement at the Mills. Col. Jameson undoubtedly chose this place in North Castle as his headquarters because it was the first settlement of any size in front of the American lines. The original community in the valley which now comprises Armonk, according to Barrett and Horton in their chapter on North Castle in Scharf's county history, "*was a mile further up the Wampus Brook at Hallock's Mills.*" Here the Quakers held their meetings as early as 1742 and later erected their meeting house. Town records indicate that Aaron Foreman "*blacksmith*" was also nearby. By 1780 a hamlet of importance had been established.

In one of its small buildings — later used as part of a barn and a carpenter shop — not more than one hundred feet from the original mill, Andre was housed. But a story has persisted through the years that he was bound for part of the time to a large black walnut tree. Its trunk, when it was felled about one hundred years ago, furnished several pieces of furniture for the use of a local family. Be this as it may, the blundering Lt. Col. Jameson and the intrepid Major Tallmadge discussed with some heat the disposal of their prisoner and decided the fate of the nation by sending the spy not back to General Arnold involved in intrigue at West Point, but to Col. Sheldon's headquarters at South Salem.

By the year 1790 the Mill was the property of William Latting. This family, although its residence in North Castle was of relatively short duration, had an interesting and typical history. From England they landed at Boston, then to Concord, to Fairfield and across to Long Island at Lattingtown. Here in Westchester for a time and then to Pleasant Valley in Dutchess County where they lived for generations. On October 16, 1790 William and Sarah Latting conveyed to Thomas Sands "*one hundred and twenty acres of land and all the buildings and mills on the same — situated in the Town of North Castle.*" With this purchase began a seventy year tenure by various members of the Sands family. During that period the community about the Mill grew to its greatest extent. At least two generations of Sands, Carpenters and Bowrons grew up, intermarried and had great influence on the Mill property and the surrounding countryside.

The ancestor of the Sands family was Capt. James Sandys, a native of Reading in the County of Berkshire, who migrated to Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay Colony, in 1658. Two years later with fifteen others, he purchased Block Island from the Indians. His wife was Anne Walker of Rhode Island and he died in 1695 aged seventy-three years. His second son, James, born 1673, removed to Sands Point on Long Island, married Sarah Cornell of Cow Neck and died in 1731. Othniel Sands, the oldest son of this marriage, was born in 1699, married Susanna Lang of Oyster Bay, removed to Bedford 1746 and was a proprietor of "*Bedford New Purchase*" where he died 1757. His eldest son, Caleb, was born 1727, married Penniah Owen in 1756 and removed to North Castle. Thomas Sands, the fifth son of Caleb, was the purchaser of the Mills and gave his name to that locality.

On the day of the purchase, Thomas Sands and Rachel his wife, delivered a purchase money mortgage to Jacob Latting for the sum of 792pds. Within the 124 acre tract was a twenty acre woodlot lying on the west side of Wampus Pond and with that property went the privilege of raising Wampus Pond *"together with all and singular the houses, barns, mills, dams, ponds, water, water courses, streams of water and with all manner of appurtenances whatsoever the same belonging."* The mortgage was discharged on December 17, 1795.

In 1794 Thomas Sands had sold the Mill and property to his younger brother, John. Like its forerunner this deed is not of record. John Sands in his early years was a blacksmith — according to an account book found beneath the flooring of the Mill at the time of its demolition one hundred years later — but he took to milling with great zeal and added to the thriving business an oil mill, a fulling mill and a yarn factory. For the next thirty-seven years he managed the varied enterprises. He was a man of respect and influence in the community and for those times was considered wealthy. An active member of the Society of Friends, he also served as Township Overseer of the Poor 1812-13 and Impounder and Appraiser of Damages from 1813 to 1814. The nearby commodious residence, always referred to as *"The Mansion House,"* was built by him in 1809.

At his death — October 10, 1831 — aged sixty-five years, he left his wife, the former Mary Hall, six sons — Thomas, James, Benjamin, Job, William M. and John Jr. — and three daughters — Hannah Quinby, Mary Jane Bowron, and Elizabeth H. Sands. His will, dated the 26th of 1st Month 1831, directed his executors — Benjamin, John and Job Sands — to sell his estate and to place \$1,000 of the proceeds at interest for the benefit of his widow during her lifetime while the rest of his estate was to be divided into eight equal parts — each of his six sons to have one share, to his daughter Elizabeth one share and one share to be divided between his daughter Mary and the children of his daughter Hannah. On December 13, 1831 the will was admitted to probate and the efforts of the executors to carry out their father's wishes resulted in this notice from the columns of *The Westchester Spy*.¹

FARM AND MILLS FOR SALE

By virtue of the power and authority contained in the Will of John Sands deceased and undersigned, executors of said deceased, will sell at public vendue, on the 13th of the 3rd Month next, the farm and mills, late the property of John Sands, deceased, situated in the Town of Northcastle — about thirty six miles from the City of New York, about twelve miles from Sawpit Landing, and about the same distance from Tarrytown of Sing Sing. Said farm contains about one hundred and sixty acres of excellent land, suitably divided into meadow, timber, pasture and plough land, with very good orchards. There is on said premises three good dwelling houses, barns, cow-houses and other out buildings. The mills which are on a durable stream of water consist of a grist mill with an extensive custom, a saw mill, oil mill, fulling mill,

carding machines, with the necessary machinery for manufacturing broadclothes, satinets &c. The above property will be sold altogether or divided to suit purchasers. For further particulars enquire of John Sands Jr. town of Greenwich – Connecticut or of Job Sands on the premises.

John Sands Jr.
Job Sands

Executors of John Sands deceased

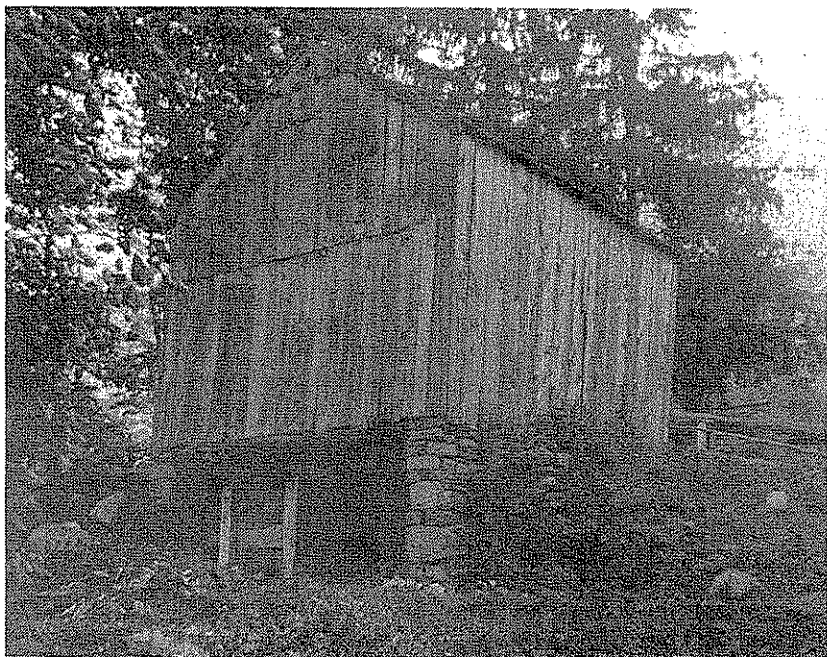
North Castle, 1st month 31st day 1832

At the ensuing auction the Executors sold for \$4,500 the major portion of the estate to their brother, William M. Sands. Included was the main parcel of the farm containing sixty-six acres "on which are standing the Mansion



The John Sands house built circa 1812, stood at the corner of High Street and today's Greenway Road facing Greenway which was not there at the time. Notice High Street to the left of the picture. Courtesy Richard N. Lander.

House, the Grist Mill, Saw Mill, Fulling Mill, Oil Mill, Dye House, Weave Shop, pond and dams." Also there was the woodlot, west of Wampus Pond, in the Town of New Castle. The deed concludes with the following recital: "Also all right, title and interest of which the said John Sands had at the time of his death in and to the waters of the aforesaid pond called Wampuses Pond situated in the Towns of North Castle and New Castle and all the lands

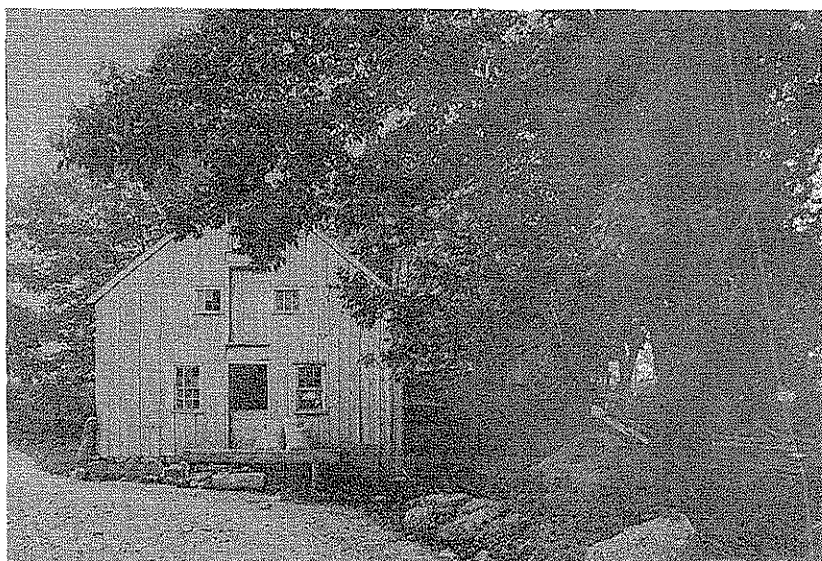


Rear view of barn that stood across from the front of the Sands house along a farm road. Its foundation could be seen until a few years ago. Courtesy Richard N. Lander.

covered by the waters of said pond up to high water mark around the edges thereof at the height of the present dam, and also of, in and to the dam at the outlet of said pond, and also the channel or stream leading from said pond, and also the channel or stream leading from said pond to the lower pond – and also to the drawing and using the waters of the said Wampuses Pond in as full and ample a manner as the said John Sands was entitled at the time of his death.”

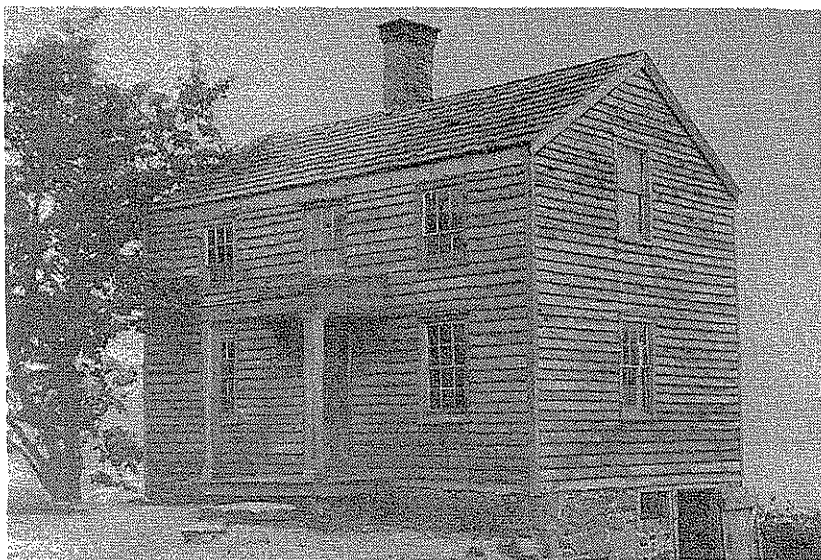
In January 1833 the remaining 100 acres, lying south along Wampus Brook in the long flat valley which stretches toward the present Armonk Village, was sold for \$3600 to the Executors’ brother-in-law William L. Bowron. This purchase was of importance to Bowron’s milk business conducted at his North Castle farm and at 23rd Street near Third Avenue in New York City.

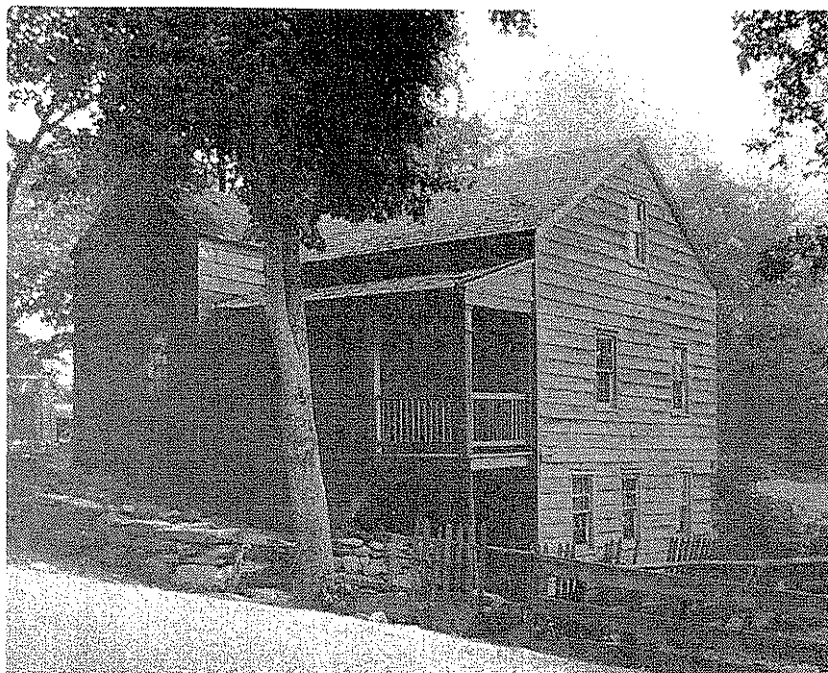
Three months later William M. Sands conveyed to his brother, Job, an equal undivided half of the Mill property thus beginning the well known partnership. The enterprising brothers managed the mills and the yarn factory as had their father. But the author believes the Mills were leased to certain persons at intervals when the brothers turned their entire attention to the manufacture of yarns and cloth. Bolton in his 1848 edition of the county history says, “A little west from the Friends Meeting House flows



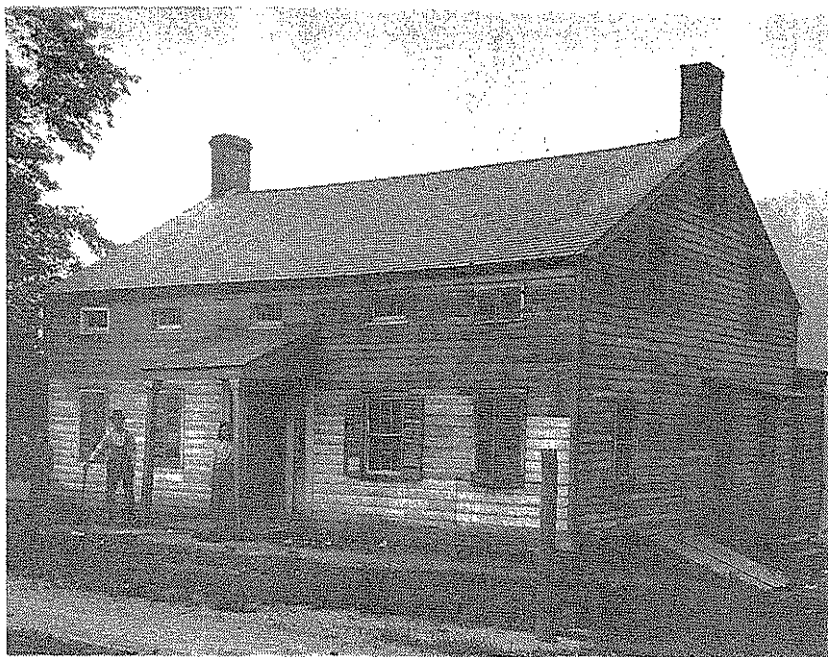
The Mill stood on the right side of the road to Mt. Kisco. Picture taken around 1900. In comparison with 1860 front cover picture notice the improvements in Mt. Kisco Rd., and the growth of the trees. Also notice the John Sands stone against the left corner of the building which can also be seen in the cover picture when enlarged. The stone and foundation can still be seen in their original location. Courtesy Richard N. Lander.

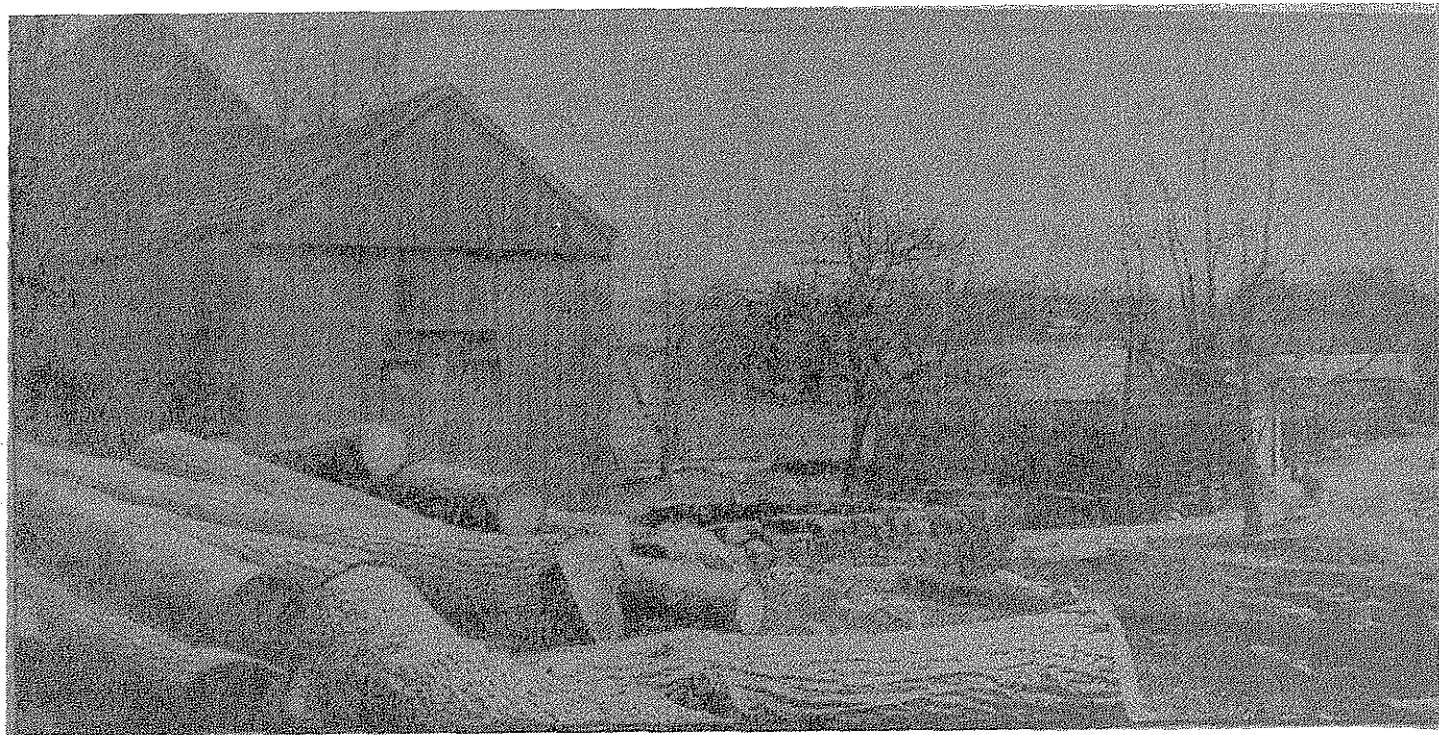
The "Pond House" on the right side of the Mt. Kisco road past the Mill. The Mill pond is in the rear. Courtesy Richard N. Lander.



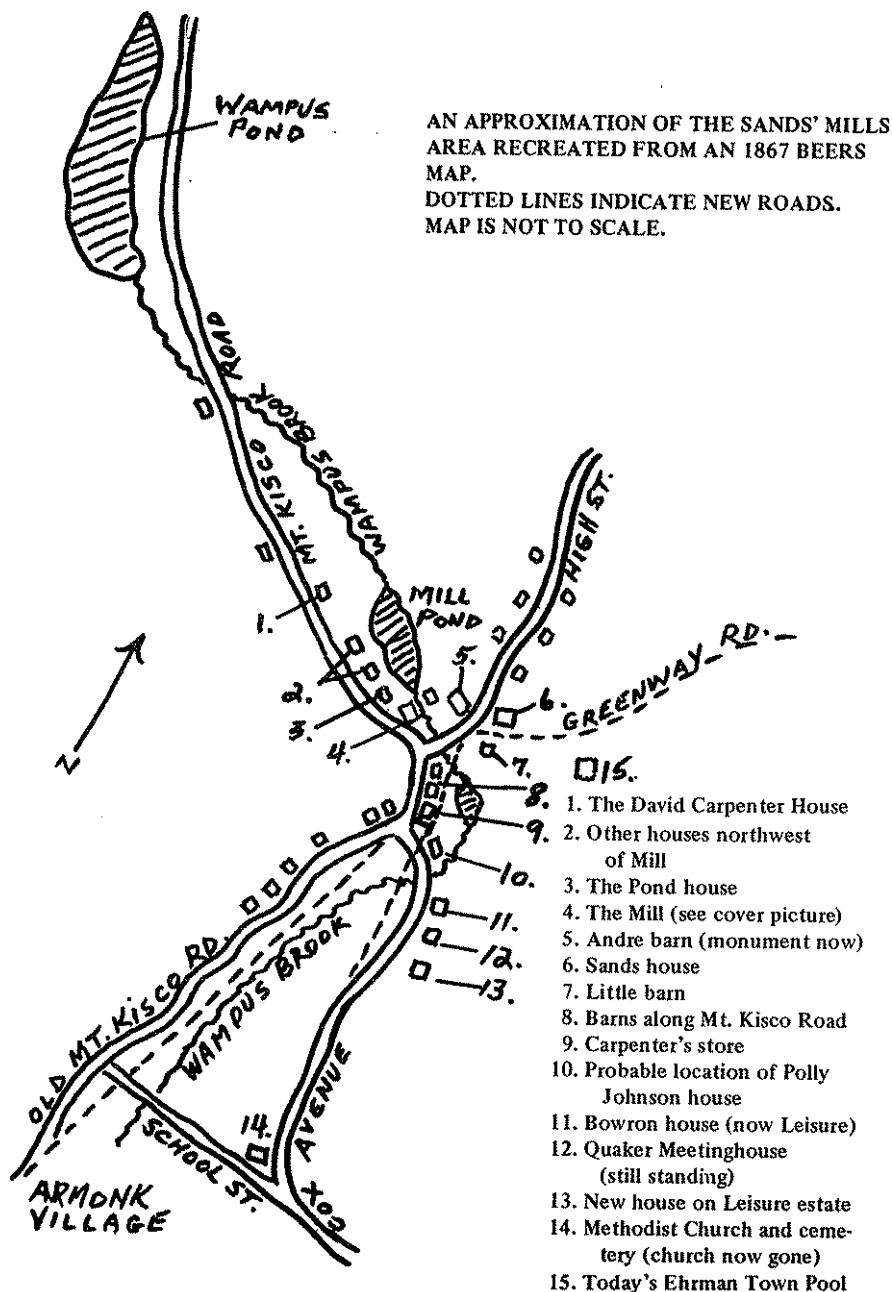


The William Cox house also stood on the right side of the road to Mt. Kisco as did the David Carpenter house below. Pictured are: John Goodhart and daughters Hazel and Irene who were tenants of Ingersoll F. Knowlton. Courtesy Richard N. Lander.

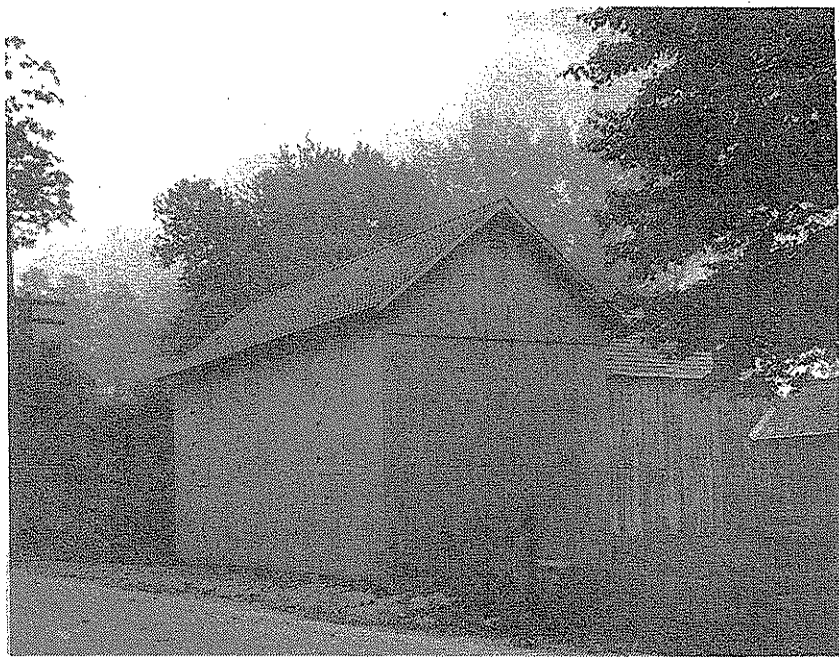




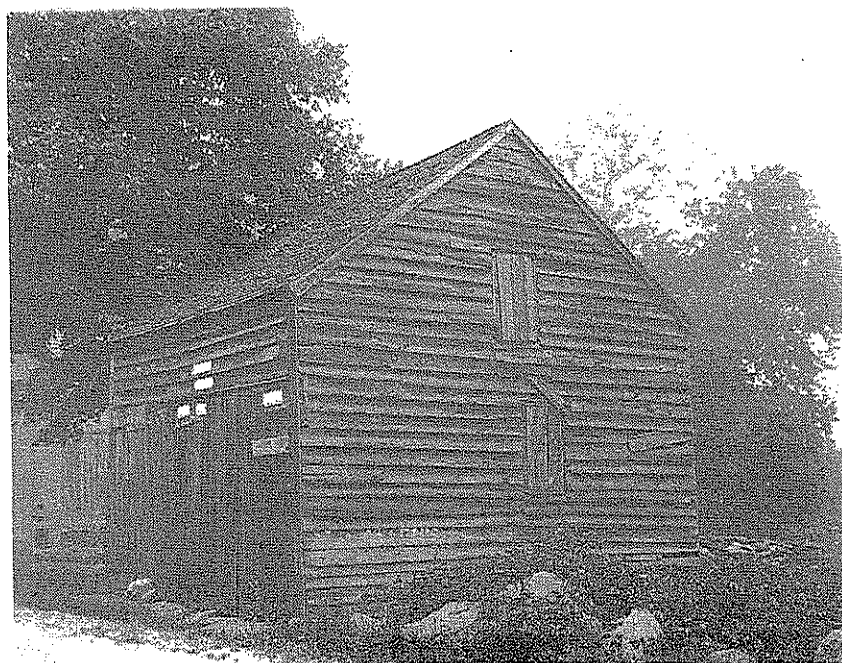
The big barn at Sands' Mills looking southeast. Major Andre was held in front section. Mill was to the left (out of picture). The Sands house stood behind barn out of view and the buildings to the right, with Carpenter's store extreme right, are shown in series of pictures on next page. Picture was taken by Lindsay Welling from an old newspaper, which explains its poor quality.

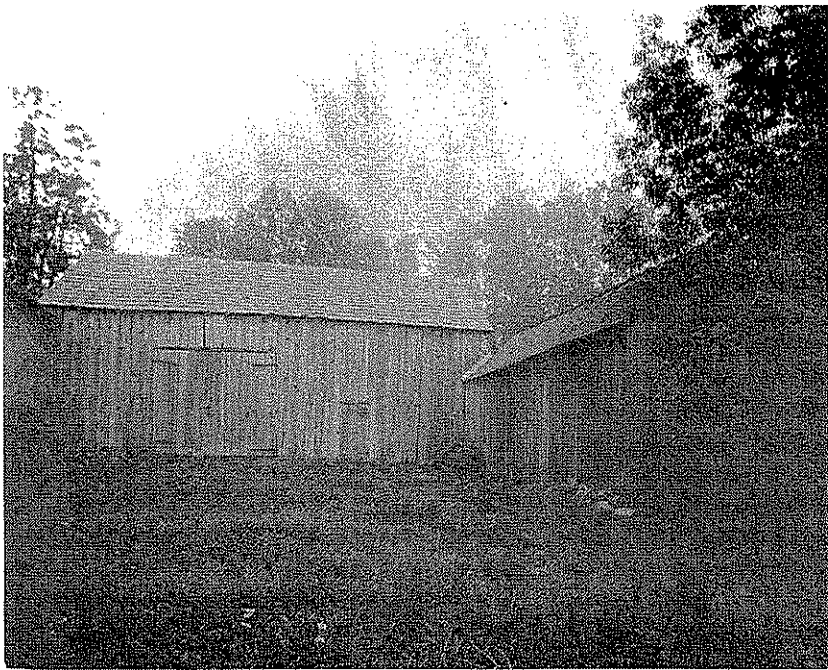


It should be pointed out that at the bend in the Mt. Kisco road in the Mill area the road today is much higher than it was before N.Y.C. took the Mill down. The road was filled in to bring it up to its present level. This explains why the Mill area seems to be in a hollow today.



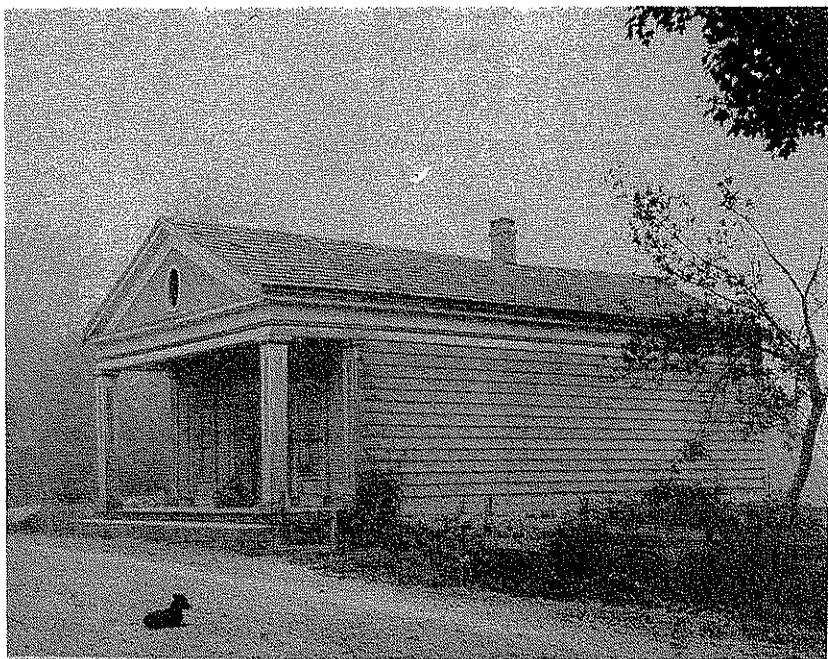
This series of pictures although showing the road going north (left) to Mt. Kisco is in a southerly sequence (going south from the Mill). Taken around 1900. Picture courtesy Richard N. Lander.

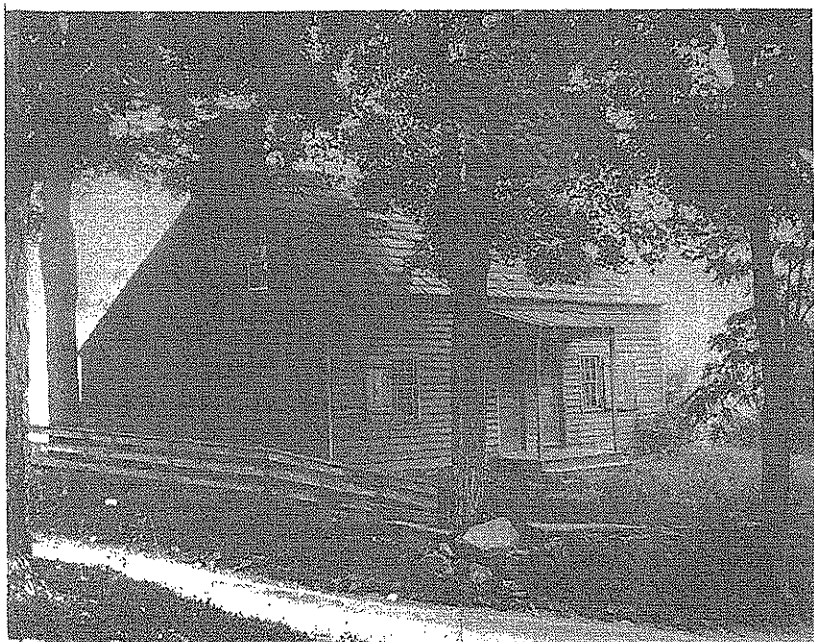




The barns behind pictures on preceding page. Courtesy Richard N. Lander.

Carpenter's Store. Courtesy Richard N. Lander.





The Polly Johnson house was on Cox Avenue which is shown in front going left toward the Mill (see probable location on map). Courtesy Richard N. Lander.

Wampus Brook, which issues out of the pond of that name. Upon this stream is the grist mill of Mr. Evans (a tenant miller), and the woollen manufactory of Job and Wm. Sands and Co."

Job Sands seems to have been the more prominent of the brothers serving as Inspector of Common Schools 1823-34, Town Sealer of Weights and Measures 1834-35, 1836-38, Supervisor 1844-45, 1846-47 and Inspector of Elections 1851-52. He was interested in local history and an authority on Indian lore. He was consulted by Robert Bolton when he wrote his chapter on North Castle for the 1848 county history for the footnotes contain references to deeds and documents collected by Job Sands. Local tradition says it was the same antiquarian who suggested the name "Armonk" derived from Indian lore meaning a-fishing-place or a-place-between-the-hills or possibly a-place-where-beaver-were-found. The new designation was necessary because the former community name was "Mile Square" duplicating another post office in the Town of Yonkers and the custom of leaving mail for that area at Smith's Tavern — now the residence of Samuel A. Datlowe² on Route 22 — proved insufficient for the growing community. So on February 10, 1851 Job Sands was commissioned the first postmaster of Armonk and the office was opened at Sands' Mills. He served for two years. On July 20, 1853 Israel Townsend — living midway between the Mills and the present Armonk Village, took over the duties. Job Sands was a useful citizen.

Perhaps as time passed business conditions at the Mills and factory were poor or perhaps the brothers, for one of whom death was not distant, wearied of their tasks, for on October 9, 1856 they leased their premises west of the road leading from Sands' Mills to Samuel Haight's (High Street) for a term of ten years to Jacob B. Carpenter at an annual rental of \$280. The terms of the lease were explicit on every possible detail — general repairs, the guilding of a new flume and raceway, whenever a new water wheel should be put in there would be deducted from the rental the sum of one hundred dollars, the cutting of timber and firewood was carefully specified, even the farming was meticulously planned with only two acres of sod ground to be plowed annually and planted with oats and corn, then wheat and rye followed by timothy and clover seed with twenty loads of manure to the acre. In 1857 the Sands brothers leased the land east of the road from Carpenter's Store to Byram (High Street) including a dwelling house and the manufactory for stocking yarns to John Q. Sands — the son of William M. (Job was a bachelor), for nine years at \$250 annually. There were the same meticulous provisions — no waste of water, wood could only be cut from the lot west of Wampus Lake and such trees as were suitable for boards or timber were to be drawn to the mill, sawed and sold provided young Sands paid the owners 37½ cents for every hundred feet so disposed of.

The Sands brothers had removed to the Town of Cortlandt where William M. was interested in burning lime for the making of plaster. This enterprise at Croton Point was the same business followed by his brother, John Sands Jr., on the old Peter Lyon farm on the North Castle-Connecticut boundary where his lime kiln may still be seen on the present property of Herbert L. Nichols. For the new venture at Croton Point the Sands brothers executed a mortgage of \$1,000 to Jacob B. Carpenter on April 1, 1857 but exactly two years later both portions of the North Castle property were sold to Carpenter for \$8,500, the mortgage was discharged and the Sands brothers disappear from the story. Job died March 13, 1861, aged sixty one years, and was buried with his parents in the Quaker Burial Ground at North Castle.³ William M. lived until October 8, 1872 and was then a resident of Ossining.

Jacob Bowron Carpenter, the new owner of the Mills, was born at North Castle in 1812, the eldest son of Rees and Sarah Bowron Carpenter. His forebears were pioneers having arrived in North Castle with the first settlers. His first American ancestor was William Carpenter, the son of Richard of Amesbury, Wiltshire, England. William came to America previous to 1636 and settled in Rhode Island with Roger Williams. Joseph Carpenter, son of William, removed to Oyster Bay on Long Island and purchased land from the Indians at Glen Cove. His son Nathaniel married Tamer Coles and removed to North Castle near where Benjamin A. Birdsall resided at Armonk (now the Agnew Farm House, residence of Arthur E. Hendry).⁴ Timothy Carpenter, son of Nathaniel, is asserted by tradition to have been the first English child born in the north county — the year being 1698. The white

baby, according to the story, so fascinated the Indians that they gave it a hundred acres of land in Byram Valley about a mile south of the lake. The tract is bounded on the west by a precipitous line of hills extending north to Brimstone Alley.⁵ This story has some foundation for the Town Records indicate Timothy had land in that region and his will — proven May 24, 1769 — shows after leaving the lands of his father near "*Bear Hole Gutter and Birdsall's Mills*" to certain sons he divided between his sons Benjamin and Timothy "*My lands at Brimstone Alley Hill.*" Upon reaching manhood Timothy married Phebe Coles and lived east of Mile Square (Armonk) and west of Smith's Tavern, here he built a log house on a commanding ridge just west of the James E. Stivers homestead (now the residence of Harry M. Brundage)⁶ the present site being near the Wagonwheel Restaurant⁷ on Route 22. He was the father of ten children of whom William, the fifth, continues our line. William Carpenter continued to live in the homestead and in 1788 married Deborah Cock, daughter of Rees Cock. Their first born, 1789, was Rees Carpenter, a mountain of a man, a farmer who held many political offices in the Town including Supervisor 1833-36 and 1838-39. He and his wife were leading spirits in the North Castle Friends Meeting. After a very active life of eighty two years, he died August 8, 1871.

The sons of Rees Carpenter were Jacob, 1812-1876, and David, 1814-1902. They grew up on their father's farm about a quarter of a mile northwest of the Mill and a short distance south of Wampus Lake. David Carpenter married Anna Bailey Owen, daughter of John Owen of Owensville (now Croton Falls) served as Town Assessor 1844-52, and as Town Clerk 1855-56, 1862-63. He prospered in business, a partner of his brother and for many years in hardware, iron and wagon makers' supplies in New York City. David's son, Reese Carpenter, was the founder and organizer of Kensico Cemetery. The older brother of David, Jacob Bowron Carpenter, married Hannah Sands, only daughter of James Sands whose farm adjoined the Friends Meeting House and was a brother of Job and William M. Sands who have been mentioned as the mill owners. Jacob was evidently a shrewd young man for early in life he seemed to possess considerable means. About 1850 he opened a general store, in partnership with his brother David, just southeast of the mills facing the road to Newcastle (Mount Kisco) near the corner of Old High Street. Ten years later he purchased the Sands Mills property. He spent most of his time at the store and the factory leaving the Mill in charge of an employee — James H. Flewellin — who served in that capacity for many years. As these affairs of Jacob Carpenter prospered, he purchased considerable land surrounding the Mill so that he had upwards of 400 acres as well as several woodlots in the Town of New Castle. These holdings were entirely free from incumbrances, he was believed to be the wealthiest man in Armonk. The 1867 business directory lists him among the merchants as "*dealer in and manufacturer of yarns.*" A search of the Town Records indicates that he shunned politics, his only town office being Sealer of Weights and Measures in 1835. At the age of sixty four years he suddenly

died on January 9, 1876. His wife had predeceased him in 1872 as well as a daughter, Caroline Sands Carpenter, the wife of Ingersoll F. Knowlton. Surviving were his son, James Sands Carpenter, and three infant Knowlton grandchildren.

Then came the shocking discovery, at first unbelieved by the community, that Mr. Carpenter had passed away "*frightfully in debt*" as one creditor remarked. His entire wealth consisted of his unmortgaged real estate which in order to purchase he had given promissory notes in sums huge for that day. Most of these transactions were with persons outside the community. Each of them believed Mr. Carpenter to be a very wealthy man with no obligations except the one in hand. Upon the surface all looked well until the various note holders began to ask for payments. To make matters worse the deceased had kept no record books in the store, the mill or the factory, transacting business from memory and slips of loose paper. The administrators — James S. Carpenter and Samuel O. Townsend — therefore had no idea of money owed him, no doubt a considerable sum of which probably only a fraction was collected. His neighbor, Thorn Sands, and his brother David spent days in the store taking inventory and sorting out the scraps of paper which seemed to have business transactions upon them. In desperation the administrators held an auction with A. B. Sarles in charge selling everything about the premises including left over boards from various sawings, hay in the barns and the entire stock on the shelves and realizing \$2,886.26. The administration of the estate cost \$2,127.51 leaving a balance of only \$728.75. Against this was the staggering sum of \$14,289.29 in unpaid debts.

A year or more passed with no apparent settlement of the estate in sight except an accounting of the personal property. Then Ingersoll F. Knowlton, father of the young grandchildren, brought suit to have his brother-in-law, James S. Carpenter, removed as administrator because he had shown himself even less a business man than his deceased father. The Surrogate held that while his motives were honest, the younger Carpenter was incapable and ordered that Administrator Townsend assume leadership. The latter, a man of integrity and the owner of a large farm south of the Mills, quickly obtained the Court's permission to sell the real estate. On February 8, 1878 a second auction was held at which all the property of the late Jacob Carpenter was sold to his sister, Hannah Carpenter Knowlton — the second wife of Ingersoll F. Knowlton — for \$13,450. James Carpenter continued to live in the James Sands homestead and became the proprietor of the Armonk-Kensico Stage Line.

The new owner of the Mills was represented by her husband, Ingersoll Farnham Knowlton, who was born in Fairfield, Connecticut on the 7th of December 1840, the son of the Rev. Farnham and Sarah Ingersoll Knowlton. At one time his father had been pastor of the Bedford Baptist Church. The younger Knowlton had been educated at the Suffield Literary Institute and for a time had taught school. On November 17, 1862 he was appointed an Assistant Navy Engineer by Secretary Gideon Welles. He served with dis-

tion under Admiral Farragut at Mobile Bay. Later his vessel captured a blockade runner loaded with cotton off Charleston Harbor and the engineer's share of the prize money is said to have been \$17,000. For his services he was voted a sword by Congress. He first married, 1863, Caroline Carpenter, 1836-1867, as we have noted. Four children were born to the couple: Sarah E., J. Everett, Jacob Carpenter and Hannah G., the last named dying in infancy. After the death of his wife he married, 1872, her aunt, Hannah Carpenter, youngest daughter of Rees and Sarah Bowron Carpenter, born 1831. With the purchase of Sands Mills, Mr. Knowlton turned from farming to milling but he closed down the yarn manufactory. The buildings stood unoccupied for some years. Old timers remember the fulling mill or yarn factory as a two storied frame building standing just under the second dam which held back the small pond known as "*The Old Oil Pond*." The ruins of this dam may be seen south of the Andre Monument, east of the



Picture taken around 1900 of Ingersoll F. Knowlton and his second wife Hannah (Carpenter) Knowlton with housekeeper Phebe White and dog Jip (or Gyp or Gip). Courtesy Richard N. Lander.

present High Street. This highway's relocation makes it difficult to visualize the "*Oil Pond*" extending back to what is now an unused stone bridge. Alvah See of Armonk when a small boy remembers playing about the factory and seeing the rusting and idle machinery inside. The old buildings rapidly deteriorated and were torn down in the early eighties.

The Mill with its "up and down" saw went on sometimes under the direction of Mr. Knowlton himself but mostly by Mr. Flewellin or young J. Everett Knowlton. It was a busy place and many local boys earned their first dollar helping with the sawing — Ellsworth Lovelett, great uncle of the author, among them. The former Carpenter store became Mr. Knowlton's feed store. In a few years the proprietor did away with the old fashioned but picturesque water wheel and installed a turbine. Charles Barnard, a neighboring farmer, did most of the work in connection with this change. The old solid mill stones were discarded in favor of cemented stone panels bound with iron bands. One of the old stones graces the property of Walter R. Wohlfeil on nearby Byram Lake Road.

In the middle nineties the City of New York extended its efforts "for the purpose of providing a pure and wholesome supply of water" to its increasing population. In the huge undertaking which involved many ponds and lakes in this and neighboring counties, the eyes of the metropolis fell on Wampus Pond and its southward flowing brook. The many surveys and reports revealed to Mr. Knowlton that his mill, store, barns, including the old Andre place of detention and seven houses with the old Mansion House of John Sands were in parcel 86 of the Wampus taking. The owner asked \$92,000 for the premises but the Commissioners — Townsend, Dillon and Tierney — would not allow so high a figure. There was lengthy litigation in the Supreme Court resulting in an award of \$37,500 in full satisfaction of all damages sustained in the acquisition, use and occupation of the real estate. However, payment was not made until November 1907 when Mr. Knowlton received \$46,837.50, the award and interest on the same from the beginning of the proceeding.

The last of the many sightseers and historians who came to the Mills and the Andre barn was William Abbatt in search of material for his great work, "The Crisis of the Revolution," published in 1899. His description of the place is of interest:

"The 'Mills' is merely a saw mill and two or three houses in the northern part of the small town (village) of Armonk, formerly called Mile Square. None of the present dwellings are of revolutionary age, the Sands house being dated 1809. Probably Sands' original dwelling and the outbuilding or annex to the barn, besides the mill, were the only ones there in 1780. The second and third are not a hundred feet apart. The mill was closed on the day of our visit but is modern at least outside. It is run by the power of Wampus Pond, a pretty little lake on the higher ground westward. To the north and west are the 'Heights of North Castle' where Washington's forces encamped after the Battle of White Plains. The famed outbuilding like most others of its time has lost its appearance of age with its ancient shingle siding effectually disguised by smooth modern boards making the old structure resemble a 'modern antique.' The frame and probably most of the floor are as when Jameson received Andre the prisoner whose real importance he so*

* [This is an error either by Abbatt or his printer and is contradicted below]

misunderstood. As this building like the Robbins house (at Kensico) is on reservoir land, it must soon be removed or destroyed and by the time these lines reach the reader will be a thing of the past."

During 1904 the local citizenry watched or helped the New York City work crews tear down the buildings. The lumber was given away or burned up—anything to clear the premises. The Mount Kisco Recorder of March 25, 1904 remarked rather ironically that there was "*a wholesale burning up of buildings in North Castle for the purpose of saving the city's water supply from pollution.*" ... "*The fine old farmhouse belonging to the David Carpenter estate was burned by order of the water shed authorities last week.*" On December 23, 1904 the Recorder's headline was "*Armonk Mill Dam Destroyed.*" The article told of the hundred year old dam behind which the waters had never been lowered with supposedly tons of fish within the area of the millpond. As Mr. Knowlton was preemptorily ordered on Monday morning the 19th to vacate his premises by noon, "*there was great interest among the natives to capture the fish when the water was freed.*" Oldtimers still tell that the pond was literally filled with pickerel. But as the water went out, the ice fell to the bottom preventing a large haul. Only a few enterprising souls—Alvah See, Willet Sniffen and some others—got any fish by cutting the large flume pipe to the turbine and screening off the end. The released water flooded the whole valley to Armonk and it promptly froze for the entire winter. The author's mother and aunt, age twelve and ten years, put on their skates at St. Stephen's Church and skated almost to the school house door, on the present School Street, a half mile away.

During January 1905, Alvah See remembered helping tear down the Andre barn and seeing the men at work on the other buildings. A goodly number of natives were always present despite the bitter weather to cart off the lumber and other spoils. Ernest C. Waterbury helped load the two beautiful cut stones—the front steps of Carpenter's store—on his father's stone boat and dragged them a mile south where they still form the horseblock in front of the present Armonk Methodist Church.

More or less tragic circumstances marked the last years of Mr. Knowlton's life. His wife died in November of 1909, both of his sons had predeceased their father—J. Everett on August 30, 1896 and Jacob C. on December 4, 1897—the victims of sad accidents. His daughter, Sarah, the wife of Thomas Peyton, died as a young woman in early 1909.⁸ Mr. Knowlton lived with his granddaughter, Hannah Peyton, about a quarter of a mile south of the Mills property until his death on November 7, 1929 in his eighty ninth year.

For some years the historical significance of the mills in the Andre-Arnold conspiracy went unnoticed. It was not until 1930, one hundred and fifteen years after the event, that Ralph L. MacDonald, a member of the Armonk Business Mens Club, proposed that the organization erect a monument on the site of Col. Jameson's headquarters. The Committee—Mr. MacDonald, chairman; Norman W. Lander, Sr., treasurer; Sidney S. Cohen,

Niles S. Hopkins, Harry J. Hunter, T. Darrington Semple, Harry Schnoor, Emil Tholl and Henry Treadwell—received permission from New York City to erect a marker. Mr. Hunter, Town Commissioner of Highways, selected a large slab of native fieldstone from the old Adolphus Reynolds mill (formerly McCrackins Mill) below Byram Lake near the intersection of Byram Lake and Byram Hill roads. Veto Merlo of Armonk constructed the base and set the stone while Mr. Orpheus F. Staples of Valhalla cut the following inscription:

Site of
Headquarters of Lt.Col. Jameson
of the
Continental Army Sept.1780
It was here that Major Andre
The British Spy
was held prisoner after
his capture, Sept. 23, 1780

On September 23, 1930 the monument was formally unveiled with a parade and appropriate addresses. Supervisor J. Hobart Cox presided and over five hundred persons were in attendance. The Westchester Historical Bulletin, October 1930, said *"The monument is substantial and in excellent taste and sets upon a level earth floor enclosed by the old foundation walls. An evergreen shrub planted on either side of the heavy base accentuates the purpose of the memorial. It reflects great credit upon those who participated in its erection."*

During the spring of 1938 Rudolph Wilson, editor of the North Castle Sun, and Dr. George B. Clark examined the Mill site in preparation for an article published in the Sun.

"A portion of the old road which leads to the mill and past it to the north, is still to be seen by the inquisitive visitor. A branch of the same road turned sharply to the west and along its southerly line up the hill. That portion of the road has been obliterated by time and the heavy hand of civilization. Up on the sloping hillside to the north-west there may still be found signs of the foundation of the farm house which was occupied by the owners of the mills. A few hundred yards to the east a little way down the brook are the remains of another old fashioned dam. This, history records, was built to furnish power for the operation of a yarn mill—one of the first industries of North Castle. A few rods to the south stood one of the two general stores, another was not far to the west. (Daniel Baker's on what is now the old Mt. Kisco Road about a quarter of a mile below the mill). A blacksmith shop stood on what is now Cox Avenue leading also past the Quaker Meeting House, now on the George S. Leisure estate, to the top of the hill where the (original) Methodist Church stood. With this knowledge the visitor can still pick out the precise location of several of these old sites. Both the old dams, constructed substantially of

large stones laid carefully in place—so carefully that the ravages of time and the fury of the elements have not disturbed them. A large stone, set up at the corner of the old mill to prevent injury to the building from the impact of wagons driven too near its walls, still stands like a sentinel. Crudely carved on its side are the initials, 'J.S. 1812,' marking the ownership of John Sands who fell heir to the property after the Revolution. That the early settlement of the Hamlet of North Castle should surround the mill was perfectly natural, says Dr. Clark, for a grist mill was one of the most imperative adjuncts to an early settlement. The dwellers raised their own wheat, corn and other grains, but before they could be consumed as food they had to be ground to a flour-like consistency. It soon was found more economical to permit one person with special apparatus to do this work for the community rather than resort to the Indian plan of grinding them with stone mortar and pestle. Since modern power plants had not yet been discovered, water was utilized as more economical than man power or animal power, hence early settlements generally formed along the banks of the most convenient stream."

An interesting coincidence was that on the day of Wilson's and Clark's visit they met T. Del Coffin of Katonah, Assistant Engineer of the New York City Water Supply, who was tracing the journey of the unhappy Major Andre during that fateful week of late September 1780.

On last January 12th [1952] the author with Norman W. Lander 3rd took a number of pictures of the main points of interest on the site of the Mills. These included the beautiful stone bridge over Old High Street, the remains of the two dams and the John Sands 1812 stone, still in its original position but, because of the change in the roads, now embedded in the grade of Route 128. On the old stone is also the date "1830" but below the initial. Most of the Mill foundations remain and in measuring them the building was found to have been thirty three feet long and twenty four feet wide. One may see in the ruins of the Mill dam two small sluices which carried off the overflow from the pond. All that remains of the three acre pond is a small puddle. The foundation of the old barn, Andre's place of detention, which surrounds the monument was discovered to be fifty by thirty eight feet. In the last forty years the entire site has grown up and is more or less wooded. The author believes that this historic ground should be more carefully conserved for as Mr. Wilson aptly wrote in closing his article, *"Such points of romantic and historic significance should be preserved for the present generation, their children and their childrens' children for they are the tangible remains of what was veritably the Cradle of Liberty."* Almost equally significant in both romance and history was the site of Sands Mills as the dwelling place for many generations of six good hard working American families.



FOOTNOTES:

1. The Westchester Spy was a newspaper published in Tarrytown, N.Y.
2. The Datlowe's sold the house to the Hillside Church who in turn sold it to The North Castle Historical Society in 1977.
3. The Quaker Burial Ground is located on Byram Lake Road opposite Roseann Dr.
4. This farmhouse formerly stood at the north gate of the Agnew Estate which is now I.B.M. Corp. property. It was donated to the Town of North Castle by I.B.M. and moved over the hill to Town owned land. It is now the Town Hall Annex.
5. Brimstone Alley is a large cliff of shear rock about ¼ mile south of Byram Lake. The bottom of the cliff is the Byram Valley through which flows the Byram River (Route 1-684 also follows the valley). The top of the cliff is in the present Byram Ridge Rd. area of North Castle Estates.
6. The Harry Brundage residence no longer stands it having been replaced by the present Yellow Barn furniture store.
7. The Wagonwheel Restaurant was at the top of the Route 22 hill just outside of Armonk between Hunter and Niles Avenues. The hill and restaurant were removed by the reconstruction of Route 22.
8. Clifford Payton who barnstormed out of Armonk beginning the era of the Armonk Airport and who was killed when his plane crashed in Armonk in 1927 was Mr. Knowlton's grandson (his daughter Sarah's son). Mr. Knowlton flew with his grandson on occasion. See *Armonk's Adventure in Aviation* by Barbara S. Massi in the North Castle History publication of 1979.

The footnotes were added to the 1980 printing of this article and were not part of the 1952 article.

REFERENCES:

The following books and records were consulted: Town Records of North Castle, Book 1, 1736-1848; Westchester County deeds in the Division of Land Records and Wills in the Surrogate's Records; inscriptions in the Fair Ridge Cemetery at Chappaqua and in the Quaker Burial Ground at Armonk; the Westchester County histories of Robert Bolton, 1848, J. Thomas Scharf, 1886, Alvah P. French, 1925 and the Biographical History, 1899; J. S. Pelletreau, *Early Wills of Westchester County*, 1898; Wm. M. Beauchamp, *Aboriginal Names of New York*, 1907; Lucius Hallock, *Descendants of Peter Hallock*, 1926; *Latting Genealogy*, N.Y. Biographical Genealogical Record, Vol. 2; The Mount Kisco Recorder for 1904 and 1905; The North Castle Sun, R. Wilson, The Mill on Wampus Brook, May 19, 1938; R. N. Lander, *Sands' Mills*, May 17, 1944; A. P. French, The Armonk Post Office, Jan. 3, 1941 (reprint of 1921 article). Westchester Co. Historical Bulletin, Oct. 1930 and Oct. 1942; North Castle Monitor, Sept. 25, 1930.

The author wishes to express his appreciation to his grandfather, Norman W. Lander Sr., and to Alvah See, Sr., Ralph L. MacDonald, Ernest C. Waterbury, all of Armonk, for recollections which aided in writing this article as well as to Mrs. Amos Struble, Curator of the Westchester County Historical Society, and to Herbert B. Howe, Editor of its Bulletin, for counsel.



ADDENDA TO SANDS' MILLS

Since the publication of the Sands' Mills article in October, 1952 new and important findings have been uncovered. Extensive research in the "MacDonald Papers" in preparations for Bicentennial writings solve the mystery of who owned the Mills at the time of Major Andre's capture and detention.

On October 30, 1848 Jotham Carpenter of North Castle, aged 82 years testified for John MacDonald, in part, as follows: "*The Mills now owned by the Sands were in the Revolutionary War owned by one Thomas Wright where great quantities of stores were kept. Robbins Mills (at Kensico)*

were then owned by one Reuben Wright."

Thus, armed with this choice morsel of information secured by Doris Finch Watson and Kenneth Mains, after extensive reading of old maps and the MacDonald manuscript, the author again checked the land records, and discovered a deed from Thomas Wright "miller" of the West Patent, North Castle to his son William Wright. The deed conveying the Mill and the 100 acre farm that surrounded it is dated January 8, 1784 acknowledged May 30, 1785 and finally recorded on June 14, 1787 in Liber K, page 55. The purchase price given in the deed is 1200 pounds.

There is no deed of record to Thomas Wright nor any deed on record from William Wright to William Latting who conveyed to the Sands in October 1790. The author presumes two things: that Wright may have been the purchaser of the Mill at the Hallock auction or shortly thereafter for in 1768 when laying out the road in the Town Minutes "*Thomas Wright's Mill*" is referred to. And secondly, the author presumes William Wright conveyed to Latting as only 2½ years elapse from the deed to William Wright to Latting's conveyance to Sands. It is also known that Latting was a speculator who repeatedly bought and sold parcels of land in Westchester County.

As in my original article I traced the history of each family who owned the Mills, a brief look at the Wright family is interesting. I am indebted to Mrs. Geraldine Wright Nichols of Madison, Wisconsin for information on her ancestors the North Castle Wrights.

The Wrights were originally from Norfolk, England and immigrated to Amenia Landing in Massachusetts Bay in 1635 one Peter Wright being the progenitor of the family. They settled first in Watertown, then Saugus and finally at Sandwich Massachusetts where the family remained until about 1654 when they removed to Oyster Bay, Long Island.

Peter had a son Adam who in turn had a son Adam II who married Mary (last name unknown). They were the parents of three sons, Reuben, Thomas and James all of whom removed from their Long Island home in the Quaker migration to Westchester County and settled in the West Patent of North Castle about 1720. The Wrights were "*ardent Quakers*" and were active in the affairs of the Quaker Society.

Both Reuben and Thomas Wright were millers and Reuben purchased the mill on the Bronx River now under the waters of Kensico Reservoir and the locality about his mill bore his name "*Wright's Mills*." Thomas purchased the Hallock Mill some 6-7 miles north. Both of them were living in their respective locations when the now historic events of the Revolution engulfed them and their families.

Mrs. Nichols' research indicates that Thomas Wright "*supposedly died on July 8, 1786*" and failing health may account for the deed from Thomas to William in January 1784. Little is known of Thomas Wright or of Mary his wife except that he served as an Overseer of Roads 1760-61, 1763-64. Before his removal to the Mill property he resided in the present Town of New Castle which was then part of North Castle, as his road district is described as

follows: *"Thomas Wright to keep the roads in good repair from Caleb Green's to Philips' line and to the middle of Shapequaw Bridge."* The son William was much more prominent. He served as an Overseer of Roads 1786-87, Assessor 1777-78, 1779-81, 1784-85, 1786-88, Town Clerk 1788-89. He also served as a private in the Second Regiment of the Westchester Militia. He married well and established himself more firmly, his bride being Sarah Lyon, daughter of Captain Roger Lyon, a large landholder and one of the great figures of early North Castle. Captain Roger, despite being blind and well past middle life was one of the patriot leaders of revolutionary North Castle.

William Wright passes the local scene when he removed after the sale of his property to Coxsackie, Ulster County where he and his wife died and are buried in the local cemetery. It should be noted that William Wright left his Quaker faith and became one of the founders and first trustees of the North Castle Methodist Society in 1788 (Armonk United Methodist Church) which was then located at the northwest corner of Cox Avenue and School Street.



THE NORTH CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OFFICERS

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| President | Doris Finch Watson |
| Vice President | Orestes J. Mihaly |
| Vice President | Barbara S. Massi |
| Vice President | Guy Papale |
| Recording Secretary | Marguerite Lewis |
| Corresponding Secretary | Thomas R. Parker |
| Treasurer | Ruth Frank |
| Immediate Past President | Richard N. Lander |
| Trustee at Large | Lindsay H. Welling |
| Trustee at Large | McKinley Battistelli |

TRUSTEES

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| William Bancroft | Ruth Frank | Thomas R. Parker |
| McKinley Battistelli | Ruth Kuhn | Guy Papale |
| Patter Bethke | Richard N. Lander | Del Pietschker |
| Arthur Brown | Marguerite Lewis | Robert Pippet |
| Nicholas Cerullo | Barbara S. Massi | Elizabeth Sluder |
| Jane Fehrs | Orestes J. Mihaly | Doris Finch Watson |
| | | Lindsay H. Welling |

EDITORIAL BOARD

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Barbara S. Massi, Ed. | Richard N. Lander | Guy Papale |
| Irene Sandford | Helen Manner | Jane Wright |

THERE IS TO BE NO REPRINT OF MATERIAL APPEARING IN "NORTH CASTLE HISTORY" WITHOUT SPECIFIC CREDIT GIVEN TO THE SOCIETY AND THE AUTHOR.



MAJOR ANDRE

THE WEST POINT CONNECTION

by Ruth N. Bartlett

Photocopied from *American Revolutionary History*
in North Castle, a Bicentennial publication

Off Route 128 in Armonk, sheltered by old stone walls and shaded by sycamores and Norway spruce, one will find a stone marker which stands as a modest memorial to a British spy who played a pivotal role in the founding of our Republic. He was held prisoner for a time at this spot while his fate was decided by American officers who had no idea of the enormity of their decisions.

These stone walls were the foundations of a barn at Thomas Wright's Mill,¹ a crude unpainted structure that found itself sheltering a Continental cavalry outpost in the Revolutionary War, 1780. In charge of this post was one Lieutenant Colonel John Jameson, a courtly Virginian serving the rebel cause far from home in an unruly territory that was governed by no firm laws of war or peace.

It was late afternoon, September 23, 1780. The fringes of the Westchester forests were yellow with turning birches and the hillside red with the glory of giant oaks and maples. Three young militiamen, John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart and David Williams, escorted a prisoner into the North Castle encampment. Van Wart, was a young married man of 20 years of age and a member of the local militia. Williams, the oldest of the group at 26 years of age, was unfit for active service because he had been wounded previously. Paulding, the only one of the three who could read, had twice been a prisoner of the British, although he was only 22 years old. One of his sons was to become an admiral in the young U.S. Navy.

The trio had set out that morning with four other militiamen to scout the area. The group split into two parties and these three were idling near a road in Tarrytown when they intercepted a horseman who was to catapult them into history.

They were quick to grasp the fact that the horseman coming toward them was no ordinary traveler.² They ordered him to halt. Thinking he was in territory occupied by the British he blundered, and told them he was a British officer on business of importance. One took his gold watch and ordered him to dismount. Realizing he was in enemy hands, he changed his tactics and showed a pass from General Benedict Arnold. Unimpressed, they searched him for money and discovered papers hidden in his stocking. The papers seemed to indicate that their captive, who identified himself as John Anderson, was a spy. So they spirited him off to the nearest military post which was at the grist mill in North Castle.³

Prisoner and documents were presented to Lieutenant Colonel John Jameson. He realized immediately that the six documents recovered from the prisoner's stocking were written by General Arnold, commander of West Point, and outlined the strength of that fort in terms of men and artillery—information that would immeasurably benefit the enemy. But that day in the barn in North Castle, only the prisoner knew about the colossal betrayal of which the papers were merely a detail.

At this state of the Revolutionary War, the loss of West Point might well have tipped the scales in favor of the British and ended the rebellion of the tired and squabbling Americans. If the English were in control of the Hudson, they could effectively isolate New England from the colonies in the South.

Even as he read the evidence, Jameson, who was an officer and a gentleman, could not conceive of dishonor in his superior, the valiant soldier, Benedict Arnold.⁴ Jameson concluded that it was his duty to report this strange business to Arnold at once.

He wrote a note informing Arnold that he was sending, in charge of Lieutenant Allen and a guard, a certain John Anderson who had been taken going toward New York with a passport and dangerous papers. However, he dispatched the documents to General Washington.



Recent photo of Andre Monument surrounded by the foundation of the barn where he was held. The monument was donated by the Armonk Businessmen's Club in 1930.
Photo by Lindsay Welling.

When Jameson's second-in-command, Major Benjamin Tallmadge, rode wearily back to North Castle from a mission at Throg's Neck and heard the tale of the prisoner and the captured plans, his suspicions were immediately aroused.⁵

He persuaded Jameson to recall the guard detachment. It was not easy. Jameson refused to imply distrust of Arnold. So, giving as a reason his fear that Anderson might be recaptured, he reluctantly sent a messenger who intercepted Allen at Pines Bridge. Allen was ordered to take the prisoner to Sheldon's Second Regiment of Light Horse headquartered in Lower Salem. Allen evidently misunderstood and returned him to North Castle. Consequently, Anderson was not sent on to Lower Salem until early morning.

Tallmadge, observing the restless prisoner, later wrote: "*As soon as I saw Anderson, and especially after I saw him walk (as he did almost constantly) across the floor, I became impressed with the belief that he had been 'bred to arms'. I communicated my suspicion to Lt. Col. Jameson, and requested him to notice his gait, especially when he turned on his heel to retrace his course across the room.*"⁶

But Tallmadge was only partially right. The prisoner had not been "bred to arms," nor was his name Anderson. It was John Andre, a man well known to a number of highly placed Americans.

Although now a British officer, Andre had been born to a Swiss merchant and his French wife who settled in England and prospered in trade. John was educated as a European gentleman and was pressed into the family business. The death of his father left him a wealthy, but bored young man and, after an unsatisfactory love affair, he bought a second lieutenant's commission in the British Army.

His charm and education (he spoke several languages) equipped him to hold several staff positions. His life and that of Benedict Arnold were intertwined long before the fateful

autumn of 1780 when he was captured. Five years earlier, when still a young captain and a novice as a soldier, Andre was garrisoned in the fort at St. John's in Quebec. The fort was besieged by Continentals led by Arnold. John Andre was among the prisoners taken. He was held briefly in the rugged frontier town of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and there learned that the Rebels were to be feared and even hated.

However, he was soon returned to the British in an exchange of prisoners and then stationed in comfortable Philadelphia. There, one of his gay social circle was a beautiful American girl with Tory sympathies, named Peggy Shippen. She later became the wife of Benedict Arnold. Historians find suggestive evidence that her feeling for John Andre was quite intense and perhaps this is why Andre became the go-between for her husband and the British.

By the time the British withdrew from Philadelphia to consolidate their forces in New York, Andre was an adjutant to General Sir Henry Clinton, commander of the British forces in America.

From the first, (almost a year before the events in North Castle) Arnold's messages to Clinton were handled by Andre. The British could never be positively sure that their negotiations were actually with the famous Benedict Arnold, because notes were delivered by messengers. Furthermore, they were in code, worded circumspectly and pseudonyms were used to disguise the identities of persons involved in the exchanges. British spies were unable to determine Arnold's whereabouts when messages were sent. But, until he was absolutely certain that the notes were from Arnold, Clinton would not commit himself to a move on West Point. A face-to-face meeting would be final proof and, not just incidentally, would guarantee Andre's promotion to the rank of major.

For the rendezvous, Andre sailed up the Hudson on the British gunboat HMS Vulture to Haverstraw. Here he went ashore to confer with Arnold. The Vulture was to wait for him. However, his negotiations with the American general were still in progress at dawn, and the two men decided to retire to the home of Arnold's confederate, Joshua Hett Smith. His two-story stone house was on Haverstraw Road, two-and-a-half miles south of Stony Point and behind the American lines. When it was safe, Andre would return to the Vulture.

Unfortunately for Andre, for the espionage venture and for the glories of the British empire, a very irritated American colonel, John Livingstone observed the Vulture sitting arrogantly in the Hudson River within range of his cannon. And, since he commanded that weapon, he proceeded to use it. It wasn't much of a cannon, an insignificant four pounder, but it served to chase the Vulture down the river. With it went Andre's means of retreat.

For this reason Andre, in disguise and carrying secret documents in his stocking, was forced to ride through enemy territory the next day. He crossed the Hudson in the company of Smith with a pass from Arnold. Near Crompond the two men were stopped by a captain of Sheldon's Regiment of Light Dragoons. The American officer suggested that they spend the night at the tavern of Andreas Miller, which they did in order to avoid arousing suspicion. It was a restless night and they were gone before dawn. After breakfast at the home of Isaac and Sarah Underhill on Pine's Bridge Road, one mile south of Crompond, Smith gave Andre directions to White Plains and left him.

Andre, trusting his own judgment, took the road through Sing Sing and by 11 o'clock was at the point near Tarrytown where he was captured.⁷

In the early hours of his imprisonment, Andre was totally unaware of his predicament. He assumed he would be exchanged. After all, he was only a soldier doing his duty for his country. He even wrote General Washington from Salem confessing everything and claiming that he had been forced behind enemy lines and was simply a prisoner of war. (It was against the rules of war for an officer to wear civilian attire behind enemy lines, unless he was an escaping prisoner.) But alas, unknown to him, his friends wrote Washington too. And their explanation for his actions was in conflict with his own.

He was convicted of being a spy in Tappan, New York, less than two weeks after his capture. He requested that he be shot like a soldier. But, he had been sentenced as a spy,

and the rules of war stipulated that spies were to be hanged. Despite the frantic efforts of British and the reluctance of the Americans, he died on the scaffold on October 2, 1780.⁸

The frightening disclosure of Arnold's plot after the capture of Andre must have severely strained the self confidence of the Patriots. The shock, the suspicions, the questions—how widespread was this betrayal? Who, besides Arnold and Andre, was involved? Hasty preparations for the defense of West Point were made immediately. Only later did it become evident that the conspiracy was not widespread and did not threaten to destroy the revolutionary aims of the fledgling Republic.

Most important perhaps, although fully appreciated only in the light of history, was the cohesion of American purpose that resulted from the event. The Patriots joined in the vilification of the traitor. Benedict Arnold had been a popular hero. Rebellion against the Crown had been entrusted to men of his stature. His traitorous disregard for the venture jolted the apathetic into a reappraisal of their own attitudes. They discovered that they were deeply committed to this new concept of liberty. Their cause became suddenly more precious because it had almost been lost. And the Americans at last realized that they were a united people.

Thus, the demand made by an alert and decisive Major Benjamin Tallmadge at a makeshift command post near Armonk's Wampus Brook was a pivotal point of the Revolutionary War.

Sacrificed to this dramatic moment in our history was the likeable young officer, popular gentleman and unsuccessful spy, Major John Andre.

FOOTNOTES

1. The building stood until 1904, when it was torn down—a part of New York City's watershed project.
2. History gives us this eyewitness vignette: He had stopped for a drink of water at the home of Mr. Staats Hammond on Crompond Road and Hammond's son, David, remembered his "light-blue swansdown cloak, with high military boots, a low-crowned and broad-rimmed hat." David said the horse of the traveler was a beautiful bay whose mane was thick with burrs. "Father pronounced the man a spy," David conveniently recalled after the fact. And when Mrs. Hammond told him Tarrytown was still three miles away, the stranger murmured "I did not think it so far."
3. We will accept the claim of the three militiamen that their motives were noble and patriotic. They did spurn the traveler's offer of a bribe; but that was after they reckoned he was a spy, and the reward for capturing a spy was substantial. As a matter of fact, the eventual reward from a grateful Congress to these three men was a monthly pension for life; in addition, the State of New York gave each a farm. The rewards were merited, for without their actions that September afternoon, the United States of America might never have become a reality.
4. Earlier, Arnold had led American forces against the British for a dramatic victory on Lake Champlain and was also a leader in the invasion of Canada at Quebec.
5. Tallmadge's suspicions were based on more than instinct. He was familiar with the systems of spying employed at this juncture of the War. He himself was involved in passing British secrets to General Washington. Shortly before Andre's detention at North Castle, he learned that British officers were discussing West Point and had received letters addressed to a Mr. Anderson. In conjunction with this, he had received a communication from Arnold himself requesting escort for a Mr. Anderson who would be coming from New York to West Point. Jameson, on the other hand, was criticized and ridiculed by his military peers and by historians for his lack of judgment. In a pamphlet *THE CAPTURE OF MAJOR ANDRE*, Edgar Mayhew Bacon wrote "Jameson's action was about as logical and reasonable as a page from Alice in Wonderland." But his actions are not inexplicable in light of his regard for Arnold and the tradition of the chain of command.
6. Johnston, Henry Phelps (ed.). *Memoir of Colonel Benjamin Tallmadge Vol. 1. Society of Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York - 1904.*
7. Meanwhile, Arnold received the message Jameson had sent him concerning John Anderson. Realizing exposure was at hand, he had himself rowed down to the Vulture and thus escaped.
8. Washington was much criticized for the execution and some even called him the murderer of Major Andre.