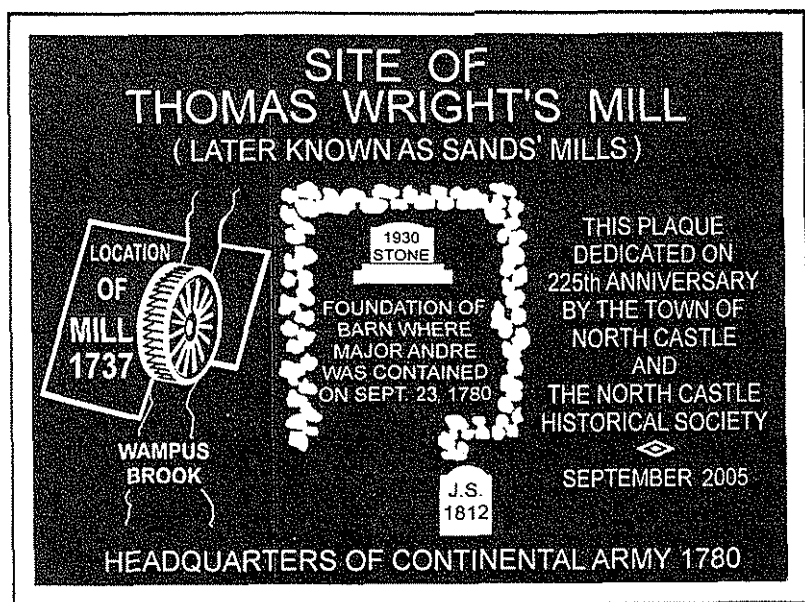


NORTH CASTLE HISTORY



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

**2005 MEMORIAL PLAQUE
DEPICTING THOMAS WRIGHT'S
MILL SITE BUILDINGS OF 1780**

THE NORTH CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 32

--

2005

North Castle Town Historian, Doris Finch Watson, designed the plaque pictured on the front cover as a memorial marking the 225th anniversary of the containment of British Maj. John Andre in North Castle.

During the American Revolution Maj. Andre worked with the infamous American traitor Benedict Arnold. Maj. Andre acted as a spy, was captured in Tarrytown, contained in a barn at Thomas Wright's Mill in North Castle and later hanged in Tappan, New York.

The plaque shows the 1780 Thomas Wright's mill site buildings. Elements include the mill wheel and the date 1737, indicating the first recorded reference to a mill at the site. Also included is a depiction of the stone foundation outlining the barn, which served as headquarters for Lt. Col. John Jameson of the Continental Army and in which British Maj. John Andre was contained in 1780. Depicted beneath the stone foundation appears a stone with the initials "J. S." and the date "1812" representing John Sands. It is believed that the stone may have been a gate stone at his home, built in 1812 across from the mill. A fourth element of the plaque is a symbol of the 1930 monument stone erected by the Armonk Business Men's Club memorializing the 150th anniversary of the containment.

Peacock Memorials of Valhalla, New York executed the plaque. Bruce Barnard, Chairman of North Castle Parks and Recreation, and John Fava, Chairman of North Castle Conservation Board and Vincent Tannone, Peacock Memorials, arranged for its installation on a stone selected by Mrs. Watson from the mill site.

Please forward any corrections or additions to the information presented herein and/or your constructive suggestions for improving this publication to your editorial board at The North Castle Historical Society, Historic Smith's Tavern, 440 Bedford Road, Armonk, New York 10504. If you would be willing to research and/or author an article, please let us know. Different writers and diverse perspectives are vital.

Reprints of North Castle History may be ordered from

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Table of Contents

President's Letter	2
A Special Day for Hon. John A. Lombardi	3
35 Years Ago in the <u>North Castle News</u>	6
A Special Ship – and Banksville by Doris Finch Watson	7
50 Years Ago in <u>The North Castle Sun</u>	11
The Old North Castle Church by Sharon Tomback	12
Kensico Dam	26
John Howard Quinby by Richard N. Lander	28
Trustees of The North Castle Historical Society	33

Photographs, Drawings and Maps

2005 Memorial Plaque Depicting Thomas Wright's Mill Site Buildings of 1780	Front Cover
North Castle Town Board, 1966	3
John A. Lombardi and Doris Finch Watson	5
Alexander Smith, Donna Coombs and Martha Gilmartin, 1970	6
Mrs. George Kamen; Billy, Walter and Phoebe Watson and Bruce Desmond, 1970	6
SS Clarence F. Peck, A Liberty Ship, 1945	7
Christening the SS Clarence F. Peck, 1945	8
Clarence F. Peck, Banksville, 1939	9
Truckload of Dress Goods Gets Bath in Kensico Lake	11
The Rev. James Wetmore	12
Old North Castle Church Site Map, Circa 1860	16
Old North Castle Church Cemetery and 1929 Monument	17
The 1781 French Camp at North Castle	20
Two Views of Old St. Mark's Church Building	21
The Historic Mills and the Area of the Rock with the Letter 'C'	22
The 1930 John Andre Monument at The Historic Mills	23
North White Plains – Kensico Dam Area, 1937	26
Two 1920s Views of Kensico Dam	27
Moses Quinby House, 1976	32



Smith's Tavern
Society Headquarters
Listed in The New York State
and National Register of Historic Places

The North Castle Historical Society

440 BEDFORD ROAD ARMONK, NEW YORK 10504

February 2006

Friends,

I can't believe that it has been 3 years – the time has passed so quickly. I must thank the remarkable people who make up our Board of Trustees. Nothing that we do or have done over the last 3 years could have been accomplished without the work and support of these dedicated volunteers.

Together we continue to protect the four buildings and their holdings of permanent exhibits and furnishings. We established the PPP Fund to preserve and protect these holdings, and continue to add to it through our fundraisers – the Malcolm Pray Antique Car Exhibit and the Annual Advertising Booklet. We host many educational programs, like our Colonial Crafts Days for the 4th graders from Byram Hills and Valhalla Schools and an additional school this year from the Bronx. We started a relationship with the Pre-School Association and led programs for our younger historians. We have established a closer working relationship with the Armonk Library. We presented many programs (International Automobile Race of 1908); celebrations (225th Anniversary of Major Andre's Containment) and dedications (Wright's Mill) -- just to name three. We've had metal detecting on the property, located an old cemetery and continue to rediscover our past through letters, diaries and old photographs. Membership support has increased. AND through it all we still have our dedicated Docents who show our complex on Wednesdays and Sundays.

I sincerely appreciate all the help, mentoring and tutelage I received from everyone. I especially thank Dorrie for her gentle-yet-firm hand and perceptive guidance; Judy for her presidential "heads-up" and assistance and Sharon for always keeping me on track and her wise counsel, as well as ALL of the other trustees and volunteers who do their jobs and run their committees with diligence and professionalism. This is the unique chemistry and camaraderie that makes The North Castle Historical Society GREAT. I feel privileged to have led these past three years and to be a part of the continuing success.



Robby Morris, President

A SPECIAL DAY FOR HON. JOHN A. LOMBARDI

December 20, 2005 was a special date for the man who had served North Castle for forty-four years. It was **JACK LOMBARDI DAY!**

Nearly 500 friends, family, business associates and well-wishers gathered that Tuesday evening in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains to pay honor to a gentleman who had led the Town of North Castle since his election to the office of Town Supervisor way back in 1961.



North Castle News, January 12, 1966 – Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

NORTH CASTLE TOWN BOARD MEMBERS 1966

[L-R] Frank Milvaney, Kathleen Baroni, Town Supervisor John A. Lombardi, Richard N. Lander and Steve Mudge

After greetings and the opening prayer, the program continued with an announcement that there was a Special Citation from New York Governor George Pataki. The Governor had expressed regrets that his numerous other commitments prevented his attendance, and General Chairman Edward Woodyard called upon North Castle Town Historian Doris Finch Watson to read the Governor's Citation. It is reproduced here as a lasting tribute to a man so truly deserving of such recognition.

State of New York, Executive Chamber Citation

Whereas, the people of the Empire State welcome the opportunity to bestow official tribute upon those individuals who have served their fellow New Yorkers with dedication and excellence, it is, therefore, most appropriate to recognize John A. Lombardi, as he concludes his long run of exemplary public service and steps down as the Supervisor of the Town of North Castle; and

Whereas, a lifelong resident of North Castle, John Lombardi began giving of himself to benefit others when, in 1943, he volunteered for military service – joining the U.S. Army and serving in the Pacific Theatre – and, continuing through to the present day, his involvement and commitment to the town never waned; and

Whereas, first elected as Supervisor in 1961, John Lombardi has distinguished himself, both personally and professionally, over the past 44 years – demonstrating a keen understanding of local needs and a common-sense approach to good government that made a positive difference for a grateful community; and

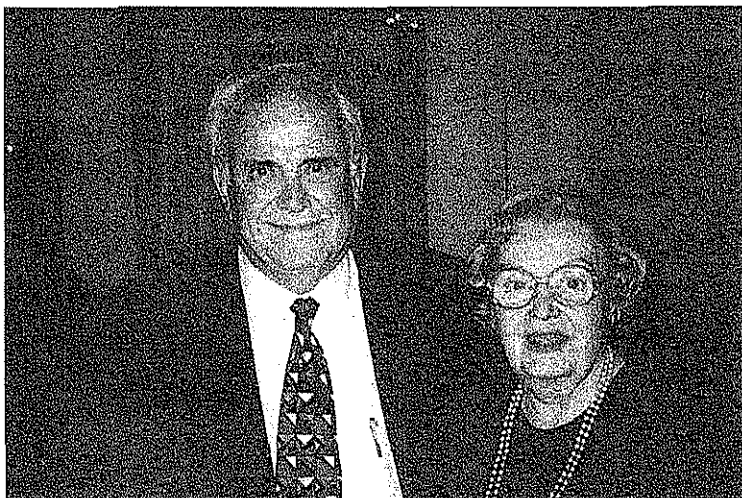
Whereas, decades of re-election victories reflect voter confidence in his effective leadership and acceptance of the responsibilities of elected office, John Lombardi enhanced the quality of life for the residents of North Castle by keeping property taxes low, initiating the town's senior citizens and recreation programs, preserving open space, and improving the area's infrastructure; and

Whereas, deeply rooted and connected to his community, John Lombardi has given generously of his time and talents through his valued participation with the Westchester County Solid Waste Commission and by serving on the boards of the Children's Hospital at the County Medical Center, the White Plains Hospital, and the Anita Louise Ehrman Recreation Center; and

Whereas, the respect and admiration that John Lombardi has earned are a testament to his integrity and kindhearted spirit,

which will be long remembered by those with the good fortune to know and work with him and are celebrated by the family, friends, and colleagues who have gathered to pay tribute to the impressive accomplishments and highlights of his life's work, I join in commending his outstanding tenure and applaud his dedication to the town that he loves;

*Now, Therefore, I, George E. Pataki, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby confer this Special Citation upon **John A. Lombardi** with expressed gratitude for the lasting impact of his meaningful contribution, and best wishes for happiness and success in every future endeavor."*



Donated to The North Castle Historical Society by Vincent Fiore, Photographer

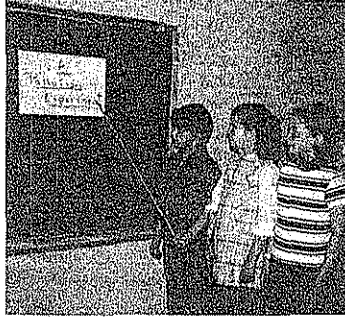
HON. JOHN A. LOMBARDI AND MRS. DORIS F. WATSON

The evening's continuing stream of tributes to Jack Lombardi was diverse and heartfelt. Chairman Ed Woodyard kept "fitting in" more and more people who asked for an opportunity to express their gratitude and appreciation. Between speeches, awards and accolades from State, County and local officials, Mr. Lombardi's daughter, Mrs. Gail Norris, surprised him with a personal and loving tribute of her own. The tears fit in with the laughter.

In closing the evening, Jack Lombardi spoke warmly of his many past challenges, his accomplishments for the good of North Castle, his plans for the future and his gratitude for the forty-four years he had spent in his leadership role. The long and standing ovation and cheers he received were well deserved.

AND NOW, MR. SUPERVISOR, WE ALL THANK YOU, SALUTE YOU AND WISH THAT YOU CONTINUE TO ENJOY LIFE AND HAVE A FULL AND WONDERFUL FUTURE.

35 YEARS AGO IN THE NORTH CASTLE NEWS
(Wednesday, May 6, 1970)



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

SUPERVISOR LOMBARDI GUIDES ANTI-POLLUTION PROGRAM
[L-R] Alexander Smith, Donna Coombs and Martha Gilmartin zero in on the pollution problem for other 4th grade students at Whippoorwill School.



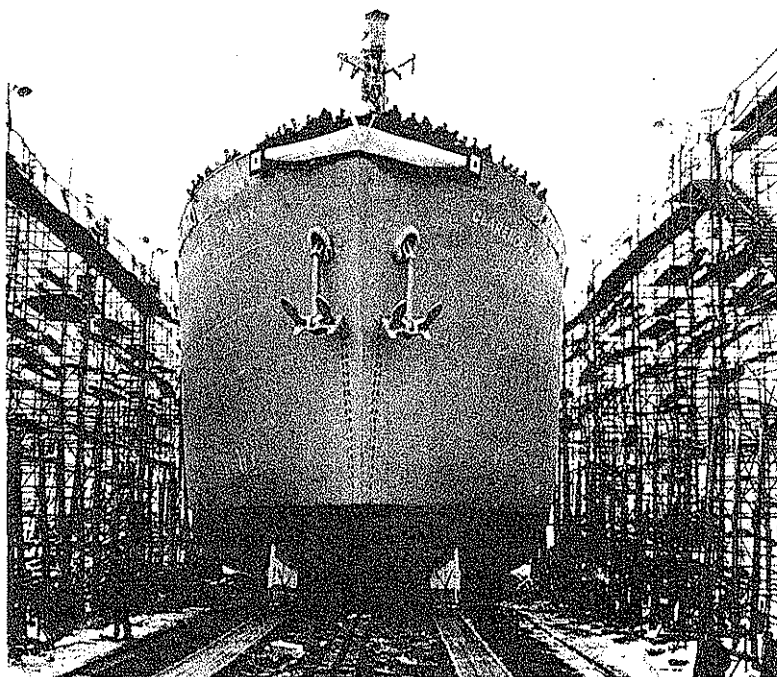
Collections of Doris Finch Watson

ANTI-LITTER DAY IN NORTH CASTLE
[L-R] Mrs. George Kamen, Billy, Walter and Phoebe Watson and Bruce Desmond start out from Finch's Country Store in Banksville on a litter-collection outing. Thirty bags of litter were collected in Banksville.

A SPECIAL SHIP – AND BANKSVILLE

By Doris Finch Watson
North Castle Town Historian

The champagne bottle shattered ... and the huge ship lurched, then gently glided down the long launching ramp until it dipped into the waves. Emblazoned on it were large white letters proudly spelling out the name CLARENCE F. PECK.



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

LAUNCHING OF THE CLARENCE F. PECK, 1945 (Note the crew looking down from the ship)

That was the scene at The New England Shipbuilding Corporation in South Portland, Maine. That wartime date was February 10, 1945. But the story relating to that great ship had begun years before.



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

CHAMPAGNE CHRISTENING OF THE CLARENCE F. PECK
Mrs. Eva Freeman, wife of Captain Ernest L. Freeman, USN, Port
of Portland, Maine christened the ship on February 10, 1945.

A Different Time

The United States was at war. Thousands across the United States were signing up and a young Banksville man named Clarence F. Peck also wanted to serve his country. And he served proudly, always remembering the quaint little hamlet, divided by the state line between Connecticut and New York, where his family lived. Before entering service, Clarence had lived with his two brothers, Stanley L. and Lester who resided on Banksville Avenue. His third brother Charles lived in California. Their parents were deceased and buried with generations of the family in Banksville's Middle Patent Rural Cemetery.

The community scene that Clarence left behind when he entered service was one that differed greatly from the Banksville of today. Sixty-three years ago there was just one general store (Finch's, established in 1860), two churches, a community house (in an old farmhouse), three gas stations (pumps only) and two taverns. The fire department did not exist, and most homes did

not have telephones. At the north corner of his property, Mr. Walter S. Finch, who served as head Air Raid Warden, had permitted the Town of North Castle to erect a very small building with an emergency telephone. As police cars of that day had no means of communication, the policeman on duty would stop there and call headquarters for reports and instructions. Next to the little building there was a device for signaling an "Air Raid." It consisted of a railroad tie bent into a circle and suspended from huge posts, and beside it was the sledgehammer used for striking it. The sound radiated across the valley, and all the required blackout shades had to be drawn closed when it was sounded. The device was struck again for the "All Clear" signal. There were reminders everywhere that it was wartime. Neighbors were close and caring, and there was a real sense of community. It was a different world.



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

CLARENCE F. PECK, July 20, 1939

**(The Steger home is in the right background of the photograph.
Note the old car going down the dirt road -- Banksville Avenue.)**

The Message

Everyone in Banksville knew Clarence and his brothers, and when the dreaded news arrived, Banksville was in mourning. Word came that the S.S. Carrabulle was torpedoed in the Gulf of Mexico on May 25, 1942. On board was a young Banksville son, Clarence F. Peck, U.S. Merchant Seaman, who lost his life in that torpedoing. The Maritime Commission in Washington, D.C. announced that a Liberty ship would be built and named in his honor.

More Heartache

Clarence was just one more in a long list of men and women going off to war who would never come home. Just a year later, in 1943, oldest brother Stanley buried Lester in the old family plot in The Middle Patent Rural Cemetery.

Understandingly, Stanley and his friends wanted to attend the launching of the SS Clarence F. Peck. More disappointment was in store. A saved and tattered letter dated February 13, 1945 from the New England Shipbuilding Corporation was intended as a type of apology. It told Stanley, "We did everything in our power to communicate with you by telephone to advise you ... Unfortunately our efforts failed." Another paragraph reads, "Uncertain weather conditions prevented us from knowing until the last moment the actual time of this launching." Enclosed were a set of photographs taken the day of the launching. Nothing else.

Stanley died on July 2, 1958. Neighbors found his body leaning peacefully against a tree beside a babbling spring surrounded by green foliage. Perhaps that was the way he wanted it. He was buried near his brother Lester, his parents and his ancestors.

Thankfully, a neighbor of the Pecks, Jane Steger, carefully preserved the ship's photographs and the letter following Stanley's death. She graciously gave them to the author several years ago. They are the saved memories of a young Banksville man who died in the service of his country.

The Liberty ship SS Clarence F. Peck, United States Maritime Commission Hull Number 3,101¹, was one of 120 Liberties named for deceased heroes of all ranks of the American Merchant Marine. According to "Wikipedia," the electronic encyclopedia, the SS Clarence F. Peck was sold privately in 1947 and scrapped in 1967.

Liberty ship was the name given to the type of ship designed for "emergency" construction during World War II by the United States Maritime Commission. Liberty ships were given the nickname "ugly ducklings" by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

There were 2,751 Liberty ships built; they were mass-produced, pre-fabricated throughout the country in 250-ton sections and welded together in about 70 days. The Liberty was 441 feet long and 56 feet wide. A Liberty could carry 2,840 jeeps, 440 tanks, or 230 million rounds of rifle ammunition. Her five holds could carry over 9,000 tons of cargo, plus airplanes, tanks and locomotives lashed to the deck. Liberty ships carried a crew of about 44, and 12 to 25 armed men.²

50 YEARS AGO IN THE NORTH CASTLE SUN

(November 20, 1936, Volume XX, No. 33)



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

TRUCKLOAD OF DRESS GOODS GETS BATH IN KENSICO

Harold E. Atwood, 22, chauffeur for a Great Barrington, Massachusetts trucking firm, said he didn't know how it happened, but the truck dived off Route 22 into Kensico Lake with about \$10,000 worth of print dress goods. Sergeant J. C. Hergenhan and Patrolman William Orman of the North Castle Police were worried over Atwood until he telephoned from New York. A derrick retrieved the truck and cargo several hours after its thrilling plunge.

¹ Liberty Ship Nomenclature at website "www.armed-guard.com"

² United States Merchant Marine at website "www.usmm.org"

THE OLD NORTH CASTLE CHURCH

by Sharon Tomback

On the 24th of March, 1693, by an Act of General Assembly of the Province of New York, it was ordered, that "*there shall be called, inducted and established, a good, sufficient Protestant minister, to officiate and have the care of souls, within one year next, and after the publication hereof, that is to say: In the city of New-York one; the county of Richmond one; in the county of Westchester two; one to have the care of Westchester, Eastchester, Yonkers and the manor of Pelham; the other to have the care of Rye, Mamaroneck, and Bedford....*"¹ North Castle became a mission of the Parish of Rye.

**THE REVEREND
JAMES WETMORE**

**Rector Christ Church, Rye
from 1726 to 1760**

Founder St. George's Church



Reprinted from St. Mark's Church – A history

Separation of Church and State

The recent social experiment excising Church from State was an alien concept in 1693 when the British governed the Colony of New York. The Church of England reigned. Missionaries, schoolmasters², and rectors were first supplied by the Church of England and later by the English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Par

¹ History of the Protestant Episcopal Church, County of Westchester, by Robt Bolton, A.M., Stanford & Swords, Publishers, New York 1855, page 135.

² Common schools were established in New York in 1812. For further information refer to North Castle History, Volume 5, 1978, page 26.

beginning in 1701. Taxes were assessed on the inhabitants and paid over to the Church Wardens for the support of the Church.

North Castle Church Taxes in Arrears by 1719

Although we know of no building until 1761, there are references to the North Castle Church as early as 1721 when the Supreme Court of the Province of New York ordered the justices and vestrymen to pay to the churchwardens "all arrearages since the year 1719 to ye last of December 1721."³ In a 1728 report to the English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts the Reverend James Wetmore wrote that there were thirty heads of families and young men upon whom the tax was levied in North Castle. He described North Castle as a new settlement between Rye and Bedford, about six miles from Bedford.

'Ignorant and Barbarous ... Loose and Irregular Living People'

Reverend Wetmore wrote of North Castle in 1728 that "this place is chiefly settled by people of no religion at all ... very ignorant and barbarous, being descendants of the Long Island Quakers ... bringing a scandal upon religion by their loose and irregular living...." He reported that he was preaching at North Castle on an average of once every five weeks.⁴

The Church's Schoolmaster

The English Society appointed Mr. Flint Dwight to teach at North Castle in 1728. He was also to serve as catechist.⁵ The Rev. Wetmore wrote of North Castle to the English Society in 1733, noting that "...Mr. Dwight continues very diligent and faithful in his school and is very well esteemed by the people there, but the great misfortunes of that place make him weary of it; more than half the people that first encouraged his coming among them, and were very zealous for the church, and desirous of preserving some appearance of religion and the worship of God among them, in that new place, are since dead or removed away and those left are so poor that they can give him but little encouragement."⁶

³ History of the Protestant Episcopal Church, County of Westchester, page 223.

⁴ Ibid, pages 530-531.

⁵ Ibid, page 252.

⁶ Ibid, pages 262-263.

Planned Location for the Church Building
'... at a certain rock ... the letter 'C' cut thereon ...'

*"On the 10th of October, 1755, John Hallock of North Castle for the sum of L\$10 conveyed to Joseph Fowler and Caleb Fowler of the same place a certain piece of land lying in North Castle bounded as followeth: beginning on the east side of the highway that leads from the said John Hallock's house to Aaron Forman's Sr. at a certain rock, which lyes at the south-west corner of the said Aaron Forman's home lot, with the letter C cut thereon, and from thence extending south 65 degrees, easterly or thereabout: along by the land of the said Aaron Forman's as the fence now stands 3 chains and 50 links (of Mr. Gunter's chain) to a stake stuck in the ground, with stones about it; from thence running south-easterly about 47 degrees 2 chains to a marked chestnut tree, standing on the edge of the brook, a little to north-end of said John Hallock's new grist mill, from thence running west 2 chains and 80 links to the aforesaid road, and from thence running something to the east of the north 3 chains and 10 links to the first bound, containing $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre, &c."*⁷

The Letter 'C' Still Visible in 1855

According to this deed quoted above in which $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre was conveyed from John Hallock to Joseph and Caleb Fowler, sometime before 1755 the letter 'C' had been inscribed on a rock on land owned by Aaron Forman. The land was located near the present-day intersection of Old Mount Kisco Road, Route 128, High Street and Cox Avenue.

*"There can be no doubt that the subject of building a church had been a long time in contemplation, before it was brought to a successful issue .. but it appears it was not determined where the building should stand because a site was selected at first for the church about five miles from the place where it was finally located. The site referred to is in the parish of North Castle, near Sands' Mills, where the letter 'C' inscribed on a rock is still legible, and marks that site as the church lot."*⁸

⁷ Ibid, page 687.

⁸ Ibid, page 536.

According to Rev. Robert Bolton and Job Sands (who possessed the original deed copy) the 'C' was still visible one hundred years later in 1855.⁹

... and The Letter 'C' Was Not Visible in 1976

According to former North Castle Town Historian, Richard N. Lander, the 'C' was not visible in 1975.¹⁰

Evidence as to the Planned Location for the Building in 1755

North Castle Town Minutes record that John Hallock obtained permission to build a mill on Wampus Brook in 1737. John Hallock's Will, made in March 1757 and proved April 29, 1757, ordered all his estate to be sold at auction and the proceeds divided among his wife, Martha Quinby, and their six surviving children.¹¹ The mill was sold at public auction in 1757 to a Mr. Birdsell who sold to Thomas Wright. In 1784 Thomas Wright sold "... ALL that farm of land situate, and being in the aforesaid West Patent of NORTH CASTLE, together with all the houses, barns, mills, orchards, meadows, mill dams and ponds..." to his son, William. The land description included boundaries of "Milesquair Line,"¹² a meadow and other land formerly belonging to Joseph Fowler, a road leading from the "Mile Squair" to Moses Quinby's crossing, land of James "Brundidge", a road leading from Thomas Wright's Mill to Timothy Carpenter's, a walnut tree and various heaps of stones.¹³

⁹ The Sands Family owned and operated mills at the present-day intersection of Route 128, Old Mt. Kisco Road, High Street and Cox Avenue from 1790 until 1876. During the American Revolution Thomas Wright owned the property and operated a mill. He deeded the property and mill to his son, William, in 1784. Refer to North Castle History, Volume 7, 1980, and Volume 21, 1994, pages 15-18 for further information. Surrounding the area are several new homes - Sands Mills, Thomas Wright Estates and Leisure Farm.

¹⁰ North Castle/New Castle Historical Records, Volume I, page 53.

¹¹ North Castle History, Volume 7, 1980, pages 4-5.

¹² A square mile or mile square is equal to 640 acres. North Castle's Mile Square (Milesquare, Mile Squair) was replaced in general usage by about 1850 with the name "Armonck", which was later changed to Armonk. Armonck was the Indian name for the Byram River. Refer to North Castle History, Volume 6, page 27.

¹³ Westchester County, New York Division of Land Records, Liber K Deeds, Page 55.

On this site St. Georges Church ('the Old North Castle Church') was erected in 1761 by the generosity of Saint George Talbot, Esq. of New York City and by the missionary zeal of the Reverend James Wetmore of Grace Church, Rye. Charles Haight, Esq. donated the land. This Church stood until 1819 and was used during the Revolution as a hospital by the American forces after the Battle of White Plains, October 28, 1776 and as a British base for Colonel Tarleton's attack on Pound Ridge and Bedford, July 2, 1779. Major John Andre as a prisoner of war twice passed along this road on September 23, 1780. Revolutionary soldiers are buried in the southeast corner of this ground. The house directly to the south of this churchyard was built in 1824 by the Methodist Society and was used for worship until 1842. Caleb Kirby, Esq. donated the land. St. Mark's stood on this site from 1852 until its present buildings were erected in 1911. This tablet was placed here by the Village of Mt. Kisco, 1929"

During the American Revolution, the Americans used St. George's Church building to house the sick and wounded and also as a guardhouse, while the grounds were used for burials. The McDonald Papers¹⁸ record the testimony of Mrs. Hannah Hoag, age 86 years, "... North Castle Church was a very large, unpainted, shingled building, which stood by the roadside where the Methodist meeting house now is. It was situated within the inclosure (sic) now occupied as the burying ground by the Methodist Church contiguous to Kirby's Millpond - was occupied as a hospital during the Revolutionary War, and was pulled down about twenty years ago." Mrs. Zipporah Davis, wife of Abraham Davis and a daughter of Elijah and Annatjie Miller,¹⁹ testified that "After the battle at Eastchester, the American wounded, or at least some of

¹⁸ John McLain McDonald and Andrew Corsa, Book III, 407 interviews between 1844 and 1852 with survivors of the American Revolutionary War, hand numbered pages 62-63. Appreciation to Christina Rae in the Historian's Office, Town of Bedford, for allowing access to the McDonald Papers.

¹⁹ The Millers were ardent patriots. Elijah and two of the Miller sons died in the Revolutionary War. The Miller homestead has survived and is located on Virginia Road in North White Plains. It is owned by Westchester County and is open to the public. Zipporah Miller Davis also testified that General George Washington stayed overnight at the Miller home.

them, were brought first to our house for some days and then to the hospital, viz. North Castle Church."²⁰

It has been reported that in 1959 when workers attempted to move the cemetery wall back so that a curve in the road could be straightened, a piece of coffin and a human bone were unearthed, and that work stopped.

On March 19, 1886, the Mt. Kisco Recorder newspaper reported, "A field on the farm of James T. Sutton is called by the gentleman 'the French Meadow' because of a French doctor having been killed there during the Revolutionary War. The doctor was on his way from Pines Bridge to the Episcopal Church at New Castle Corners (the Old North Castle Church building), which was filled with the sick and wounded of the American Army, who greatly needed medical aid, which the doctor proposed to contribute, but was prevented from so doing by being foully murdered on his way down."²¹ In support of Mr. Sutton's belief is a notation on page 63 of the McDonald Papers, book III, which reads, "The story of James Totten and the French surgeon was always considered true. Totten, in the latter part of his life, was afraid to be alone in the dark, or at night."

Comte de Rochambeau had landed at Newport, Rhode Island and was headed for Ridgebury²², Connecticut on July 1, 1781, when he received a dispatch from General George Washington dated June 30, 1781, directing him to "put your first Brigade under march tomorrow morning, the remaining troops to follow as quick as possible, and endeavor to reach Bedford by the evening of the 2nd of July."²³

A July 5, 1781 entry in the Journal of a French soldier, Louis-Alexandre Berthier, reveals that, "During the 4th and 5th (of July) the army made a halt at North Castle.... Gen. Washington came to visit the Comte de Rochambeau and passed down our line. Troops were drawn up before the camp in line of battle without arms and wearing forage caps."²⁴

²⁰ McDonald Papers, Book II, hand numbered page 130.

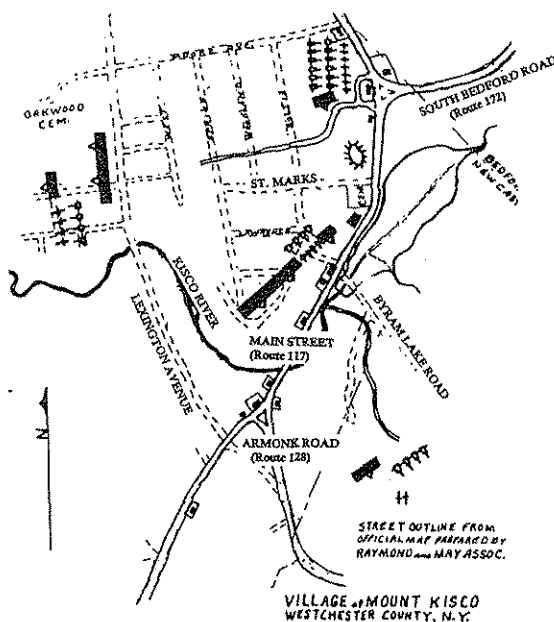
²¹ New Castle Corners of 1886 was called North Castle Corners prior to 1791.

²² Ridgebury, Connecticut lies a few miles northwest of Ridgefield, Connecticut.

²³ The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army, 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783, two volumes, edited and translated by Howard C. Rice and Anne S.K. Brown, Princeton University and Brown University Press, 1972, Volume 1, page 31.

²⁴ *Ibid*, page 249.

Mrs. Elizabeth Moseman of Bedford, New Purchase, age 73, remembered "...The French army encamped on Robert Knowlton's ridge half a mile from here and two miles from North Castle Church"²⁵



American Revolutionary History in North Castle

THE 1781 FRENCH CAMP AT NORTH CASTLE

**Now in Mt. Kisco where Routes 172 and 128 meet Main Street
Northern Westchester Hospital Occupies Some of This Site Today**

St. George's Church Building Fell into Disuse

According to Helena R. Meade's history of St. Mark's Church, the Old North Castle/St. George's Church building fell into disuse. In 1818 Godfrey Haines was appointed to sell the old frame of the Church at New Castle and with the proceeds to build a stone fence around the burying ground at that place. The Old North Castle/St. George's Church building was dismantled in 1819 and the frame sold at public auction. The timber was used to build a barn on the Hezekiah Raymond property. Northern Westchester Hospital now owns that property.

²⁵ McDonald Papers, Book V, hand numbered pages 163-164.

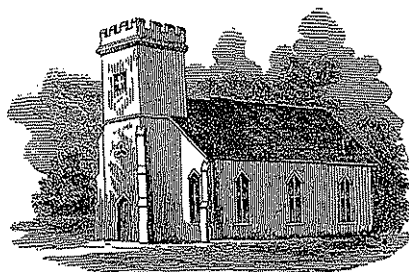
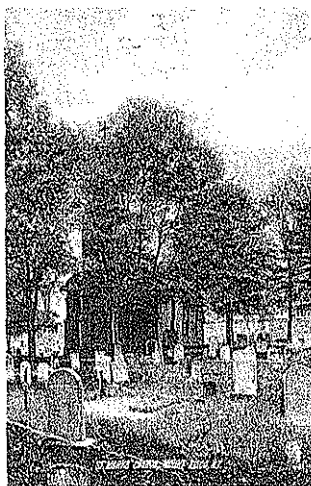
St. George's Church building was forty feet by thirty feet with galleries covered and enclosed by cedar. Charles Haight, who had donated the land, was also the carpenter who built the building.²⁶

A New Building and a New Name In 1852 St. George's became St. Mark's

After more than thirty years a new church building on the site was dedicated on January 25, 1852. It was named St. Mark's and stood within ten feet of where the Old North Castle/St. George's building had stood. It served the congregation for almost sixty years, until a new building was completed in 1911.

A New Building and a New Location in 1911

St. Mark's new building continues to serve worshippers at the corner of Main Street and Bedford Road (Routes 117 and 133) in Mt. Kisco. The name, St. Mark's, continues to live on through new generations.



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

History of the Protestant Episcopal Church

TWO VIEWS OF OLD ST. MARK'S CHURCH Site of Old North Castle Church

²⁶ St. Mark's Church – A history, published 1967 by St. Mark's Church in Mt. Kisco, written by Helena Rutherford Meade.

An Historic Event Near the
“... certain rock ... the letter ‘C’ cut thereon ...”

British Major John Andre, the spy who conspired with Benedict Arnold, passed by St. George's twice as a prisoner of war in the late afternoon on Saturday, September 23, 1780 and again on Sunday morning, September 24, 1780. Major Andre was contained in a barn at Thomas Wright's Mill, back down the road about five miles at the same area of the *“... certain rock ... the letter ‘C’ cut thereon ...”*



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

THE HISTORIC MILL AND
THE AREA OF THE ROCK WITH THE LETTER ‘C’

Let Us Remember

“It” was celebrated three different times – first in 1930 (marking 150 years); then in 1980 (marking 100 years); and then in 2005 (marking 125 years). The “it” is a happening of great national importance and you have probably recognized “it’s” location as the place on High Street where British Major John Andre was held captive back in 1780 during the American Revolutionary War.

The place itself still reflects a lifestyle of long ago where evidence of the grist and saw mills, the sluiceway, the old bridge and the foundation of the old barn remain – all are background for the well known and often told story of young Major Andre. The old buildings were destroyed when the property was taken over by the City of New York.

Back in 1930 there was an active group called the Armonk Business Men's Club comprised of leading citizens of that period ... men like Ralph MacDonald, Harry Hunter, Dr. George B. Clark, William F. MacDonald, Harold C. Crittenden and others.

The Decision

Several of the group were fascinated with, and appreciative of, the story of the capture of Major Andre in Tarrytown, and of his containment in their Town of North Castle at the old mill site. That site served as Continental Headquarters under the command of Lt. Col. John Jameson during the Revolutionary War. There was nothing to mark this historic spot, and the Armonk Business Men's Club decided to create a lasting marker to tell the story of what happened at this spot in 1780.

The huge piece of granite was brought to the site from the old McCracken Mill near Byram Lake. Vito Merle created the foundation for the monument stone. O. F. Staples of Valhalla did the lettering. The story inscribed reads, "Site of headquarters of Lt. Col. Jameson of the Continental Army, September 1780. It was here that Major Andre, the British Spy, was held prisoner after his capture September 23, 1780."



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

THE 1930 MONUMENT
Erected with the Assistance of Many Friends

They wanted it ready for a dedication program on the 150th Anniversary – and so it was. A huge crowd attended the dedication program and reception that followed. A single printed program of the event gives us an idea of the ceremony on that special day in Armonk.

An Important Discovery

Ten years after Major Andre's containment, the mill was bought by Thomas Sands and became known as Sands' Mills. Thus, historians writing of the containment of Andre referred to the location as "Sands' Mills", an error that was repeated over and over again. In 1975, while doing research projects for the Bicentennial, Mrs. Doris Finch Watson and the late Kenneth Mains discovered there were two "Wright's Mills" – one belonging to Reuben and the other to his brother, Thomas Wright. Further research in North Castle Town Minutes, early maps and the Westchester Land Records by Mrs. Watson and Mr. Mains proved beyond doubt that Major Andre was held at Thomas Wright's Mill on September 23, 1780.

The 1980 Celebration

Co-chairmen Richard Lander, then Town Historian, and Doris Finch Watson, then President of The North Castle Historical Society, sponsored the 100th Anniversary Celebration at the old mill site in 1980. The large audience included residents, guest speakers, a musical group, members of the American Legion Post 1097, as well as school children who won awards for their compositions about Major Andre. It was an historic celebration.

Then Came 2005

After 125 years "it" needed to be remembered in a special fashion. North Castle's Town Historian Mrs. Watson believed visitors to the historic site should have some way to identify various aspects of the property and the role each played in history. Thus, during 2005 she designed a descriptive plaque to be mounted upon one of the great stones that she located in the back of the property and which could be placed near the entrance. (Please refer to the front and back covers of this publication.)

Depicting the 1780 Mill Site Buildings

With the help of Town of North Castle Supervisor John A. Lombardi, Town Conservation Board Chairman John F. Fava and Town Parks and Recreation Board Chairman Bruce Barnard, Mrs. Watson's plaque was installed. It was completed with the help of Peacock Memorials, especially Vincent Tannone. The plaque was set in place in time to greet the many visitors who came to the 225th Anniversary Celebration on September 24, 2005.

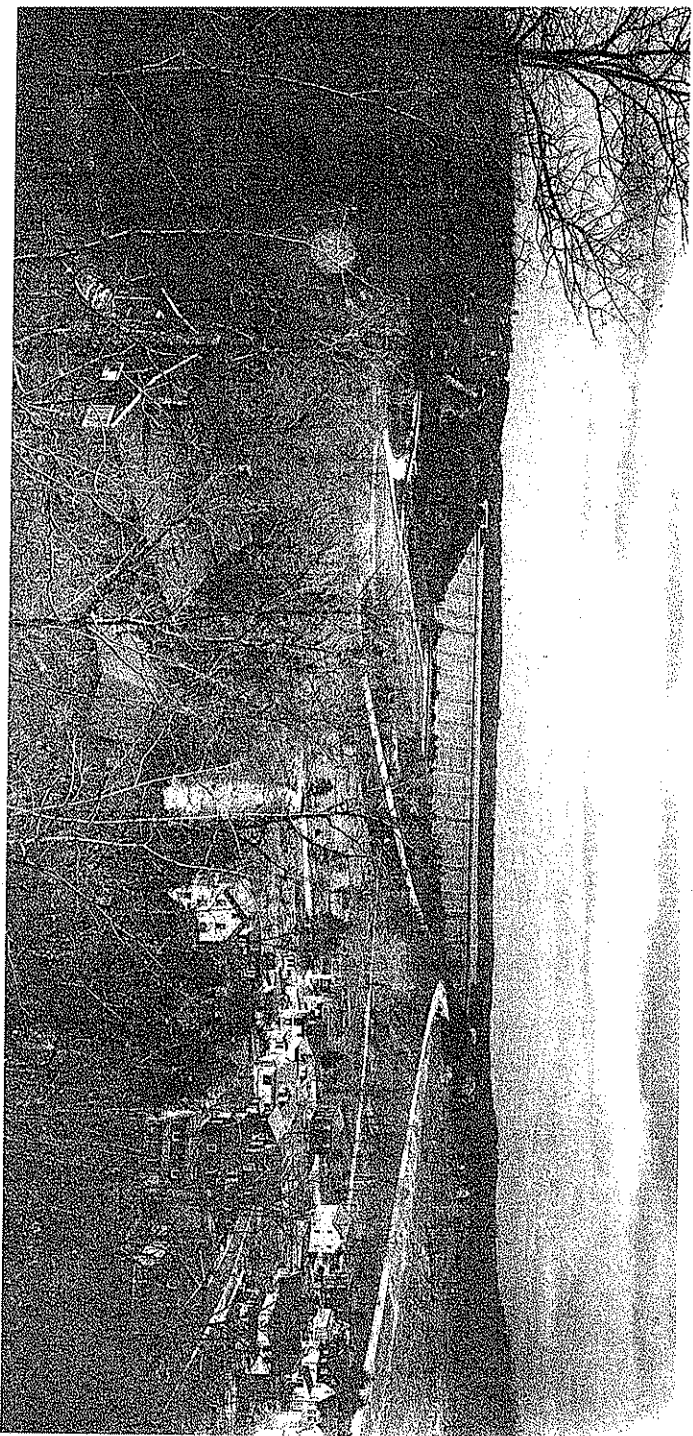
The program of commemoration marking the 225th Anniversary of the containment of British Major John Andre on September 23, 1780 at Thomas Wright's Mill (later Sands' Mills) and dedication of the commemorative plaque included:

Music by Gene Matusow and George Drapeau
Remarks by Doris F. Watson, North Castle Town Historian
Prayers by Rev. Hikari Chang, Armonk United Methodist Church; Fr. John T. Quinn, St. Patrick's Church; and Rev. Lee King, Hillside Church
Pledge of Allegiance led by American Legion Post 1097 and
Cub Scouts Pack 94, Armonk
Vocalists Constance M. Quarrie and Ernest Bolduc
Remarks from Hon. Supervisor John A. Lombardi
Remarks from Historical Society President Robby Morris
History of the Mill Site by Mrs. Watson
Unveiling of the Plaque by Walter Raymond Bell
Reading of Mr. Bell's Poem about the Mills by Barbara Massi
Remarks by Dr. James M. Johnson, Marist College
The Society's Junior Service Award Presented by Sharon Tomback

The 2005 program is reproduced here in part as a lasting record of the third celebration held in this historic spot.

Let us keep this spot safe for the generations to follow.

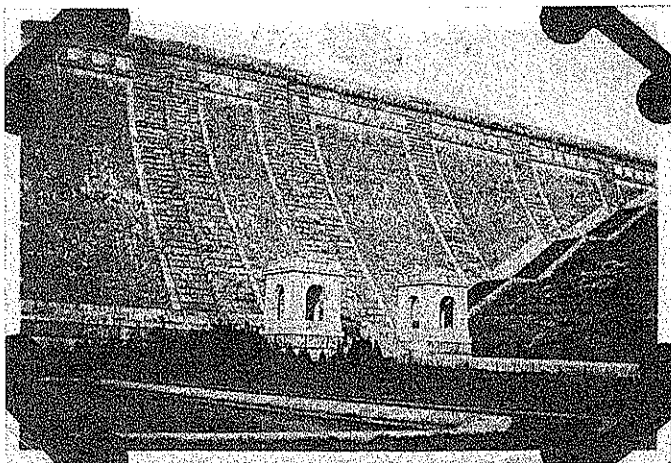
Let Us Remember.



Donated to the Collections of The North Castle Historical Society by Anthony Putia -- Con Filardi, Photographer

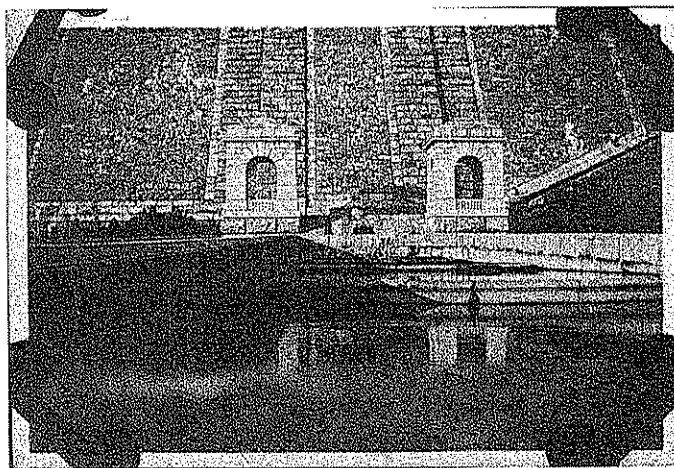
NORTH WHITE PLAINS -- KENSICO DAM -- MARCH 23, 1937

Present-day Clove Road appears in the middle of the photograph. Route 22 appears in the right upper background. North roadway going to Valhalla village is shown passing from the right, paralleling Route 22. (The Society is grateful to Anthony Putia for donating the photograph and for describing the scene. Tony's grandfather operated a dry goods store in Valhalla.)



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

KENSICO DAM, 1920s



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

KENSICO DAM, 1920s

Both photographs were taken by Pearl Higbee Ellermeyer in the 1920s.
Mrs. Ellermeyer was a Godmother to Mrs. Doris Finch Watson.

JOHN HOWARD QUINBY
A Tardy Recognition

by Richard N. Lander, Town Historian of North Castle

Few lines have been written, and those only passing notices in newspapers, of the contributions made by John Howard Quinby in the study of aboriginal inhabitants of Westchester County. Here was a man who in his youth took up an avocation which brought experts and museum curators to his door for counsel for he was recognized as the finest "arrowhead hunter" in the county. The author, [who was] fortunate enough to know "Howie", believes he is telling for the first time the entire story. Many older members of the Historical Society remember him and it is hoped that those who never had the pleasure of knowing him will enjoy this sketch of his life.

Mr. Quinby, descended from a long line of sturdy Quaker pioneers of the West Patent of North Castle, was born at Armonk, Town of North Castle, on September 3rd, 1864 the son of John Jay [Quinby] and Hannah Haviland Quinby. His boyhood was spent on a farm in Byram Valley (now the residence of Warren J. Hall¹) about a mile from the Village. Always fond of nature and the out-of-doors, he tramped the woods and fields, which surrounded his father's farm. Young "Howie" was not only a nature lover but also had an inventive turn of mind. As a boy he constructed a track from the farmhouse to a large barn some distance away and would transport things back and forth in railroad style saving much carrying by members of the family. He read everything he could find on the new telephone and with only this book knowledge constructed the first telephone line to the Village of Armonk. What at first started out as a plaything developed into a business. In 1897 he received permission to place his wires on the telegraph poles. Chester Brundage of Armonk remembers stringing wire with Lester Cox and Whitmond Sniffin for Mr. Quinby at fifty cents per day. The line

¹ The Quinby homestead, 82 Cox Avenue, Armonk, is an historic North Castle house and was designated by the 1976 Bicentennial Committee. Refer to American Revolutionary History in North Castle, The North Castle Historical Society, 1976, pages 114-115.

extended from Kensico Station (Valhalla) to Armonk and then up Tripp Street (Route 22) to Isaac R. Tripp's Post Office at North Castle. The main switchboard was first in the Quinby homestead and later in William K. Haviland's store on Maple Avenue (adjoining the old Town Hall). Among the elite who boasted phones were Flewellin and MacDonald's store, Dr. George B. Clark, Maurice M. Brundage the blacksmith, J. Hobart Cox's Hotel, Harry Davenport the noted actor and Judge Isaac R. Tripp. The local phone company was most successful with about fifteen subscribers before it was bought out by the Bell System.

Despite this inventive streak, "Howie's" first love was Indian lore and the search for implements and relics. For years in his spare time he tramped the fields, excavated likely sites and assembled one of the finest private collections of Indian articles in the east. A typical day, remembered by his friend Chester Brundage who often accompanied him, was to start from Armonk, walk over to Middle Patent, follow the Mianus Valley almost to Bedford Village, walk across to Byram Lake and thence down the Valley, home. The technique was to follow the freshly ploughed fields, especially after a rainstorm, to find the arrowheads newly turned up and plainly exposed after the rain had washed the dirt from them. The enthusiastic collector called it his "three row to win" system, walking three furrows at a time, following the center and carefully scrutinizing the two on either side. A feature writer from the *New York Evening Sun* once stated, "Quinby has camera eyes, let an arrowhead show as much as a quarter of an inch and he has it." Quinby was endowed with an almost perfect memory. He once found a half spearhead in a field, and years later, several miles away, he found another part of a spearhead. Remembering his first find, he discovered that the parts matched and formed a complete implement. Over the years Mr. Quinby covered almost all the ground of North Castle, Bedford and North Greenwich. The waters of Kensico and Rye Lakes later covered many of these acres, but on dry summers he always walked their shorelines.

His expeditions also uncovered several Indian burials. The *Mt. Kisco Recorder*, June 17th 1887, reported:

"On Saturday the 11th Mr. John Howard Quinby while out making observations of land to the southeast of Byram Lake, which area he had been studying for some time, decided to explore what he thought to be an Indian mound located in the swamp of Mr. John P. Tripp.

After securing the aid of Mr. Tripp, together with his brother, he began excavating. Entering it on the east side they proceeded not more than three feet when they unearthed the almost perfect skeletons of four Indians, which as indicated by their teeth, seemed to be those of persons from six years of age to that of a real developed man. When discovered they were in a sitting position facing the rising sun – their usual mode of burial. The largest skeleton seems to have belonged to a man powerfully built, standing 5 feet 11 inches, forehead receding suddenly to the crown, square broad chin. The frame of the last redskin unearthed had become very soft from the depth of his interment, some parts having entirely decayed. The mound is distant from any sandy soil, standing on the west bank of the Byram River and covers nearly one half acre of ground, covered partially by a sparse growth of coarse weeds. To the careful observer it would appear peculiarly located for anything but an artificial structure. In its vicinity hundreds of arrows and a great deal of perfect pottery have been found. Mr. Quinby having met with such success believes the mound contains more valuables and remains of those Indians who once inhabited this section, and who with the exception of arrowheads and other implements have left slight traces of their presence to be discovered by the white man.”

The reporter then gives a list of Mr. Quinby’s collection remarkable in size and scope – 1,000 perfect arrow heads, several thousand imperfect ones, 12 pestles, 7 mortars, 2 hammers, 16 hatchets together with several perforators, skinning knives and chronological tablets. As he continued to search for forty years more, the reader can visualize the size of the complete collection. Chester Brundage estimates he possessed over 3,000 perfect arrowheads.

As newspapers began to note his work, his fame spread and Indian collectors sought his services. In 1899 Dr. M. Raymond Harrington secured his help in making investigations on Croton Point. Nine years later when further research was made of aboriginal encampments on the Point, Mr. Quinby assisted Mr. Alonson B. Skinner of the Heye Foundation. On January 1st, 1924, Croton Point was acquired by Westchester County for a park but the search for Indian relics continued at the suggestion of President Charles J. Dunlap of the Westchester County Historical Society. The Park Commission, under the presidency of Hon. William Delavan Baldwin, a Trustee of the Society, approved an appropriation and secured the services of Mr. Quinby. Working in

November and December 1924 in the shell beds near the remains of the Indian fort "with his painstaking skill" the North Castle collector brought to light over 100 arrowheads and quantities of small implement, bone fragments and pottery.

At various times the Museum of Natural History solicited his services. He was among their party studying The Rock House now on the Paterno property on Route 22². Although generally recognized as an authority, Mr. Quinby never wrote a line about his finds or expeditions. He once told a reported he liked the walking that went with his hobby but would leave the writing for armchair collectors – a very characteristic statement. "Howie" continued his tramping and search on a limited basis until his death, aged seventy-six years, on January 14th 1940. Part of his collection was stolen from the little shop at the rear of his home on Maple Avenue shortly after his death. His widow gave the remainder to the Heye Foundation, Museum of the American Indian, in New York City.

The author's appreciation goes to Mrs. Emma (Briggs) Quinby, widow of the collector, and to J. Chester Brundage who made many a tramp through the fields in search of arrowheads.

2005 NOTE FROM YOUR EDITORS: Correspondence with Ms. Pat Nietfeld, Collections Manager for the National Museum of the American Indian, affirms that 2,052 items reside in the Museum's Howard Quinby Collection. The Collection includes items found at Big Rye Lake, Kensico Lake, Byram Lake, Wampus Pond, Byram River, Middle Patent, Heliker's Cave, Coman Pond, North Castle Rock Shelter, Leatherman's Shelter, and Upper Mianus River.

For a discussion about Finch's Rock House (in the present-day Windmill section of Armonk) and the exploration by the Museum of Natural History, refer to North Castle History, Volume 6, 1979.

Thank you to Ms. Katie Hite and the Westchester County Historical Society for permission to reprint this article.

² Finch's Rock House. Refer to North Castle History, Volume 6, 1979.



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

JOHN HOWARD QUINBY'S BOYHOOD HOME
Moses Quinby House, 82 Cox Avenue, Armonk

"During the Revolutionary period this house was owned by Moses Quinby, a nephew and apparent namesake of the first Town Clerk. The original farm was over 160 acres, and livestock was abundant. During the 1770s another house was joined to the original small farmhouse, doubling the size to eight rooms and providing for a thick double center wall. In 1797 Moses Quinby sold the house to Thomas Sands, then owner of the grist and saw mills at Mile Square. It was sold several more times before it came back to the hands of the Quinby family in the mid-1850s. About 1870 the Quinby's moved the house farther back from the road. After putting in a foundation at the new location, the house was jacked up and huge beams placed beneath it so as to slide the house to its new foundation. The beams were greased with homemade soap and, by pushing, and the use of animals, the house was moved to its present location. After this time a small addition was made to the house. The advent of Highway 684 created a dramatic change, in that several outbuildings were lost to the highway roadbed, Cox Avenue was both widened and heightened to allow for the over-pass over 684, and much of the acreage was yielded to the highway. Prior to that time Cox Avenue was a narrow, winding, tree-lined road, really a simple country lane. The hand-hewn timbers and hand carved wooden pegs are still visible in the attic of this fine early farmhouse." [American Revolutionary History in North Castle, page 115]

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