



Hudson-Mohawk Vernacular Architecture

Jan – Mar 2026

Newsletter

Vol. 5, No. 1

2025—The Year in Review

Another successful year of tours and conviviality! Hope to see you in 2026!



Figure 1. Lunch after the Annual Meeting in Red Hook, 15 February 2025.

For contact information please visit www.HMVArch.org



Figure 2. Getting into a tight space in Saugerties, Ulster County, 19 April 2025.



Figure 3. Mead's Corners Barn, Barn tour of Town of Bethlehem, Albany County, 19 July 2025.



Figure 4. HMVAers visit the Longstreet Farm in Holmdel, Middletown, Monmouth County, NJ on 16 August 2025. We had previously visited this great site in May 2011.



Figure 5. Inside the New World Dutch Barn at the Longstreet Farm.



Figure 6. Tours can be exhausting. HMVAers take a reading break, 18 October 2025.



Figure 7. Visiting the Knickerbocker Mansion in Schaghticoke, Rensselaer County, 15 November 2025.



Figure 8. Holiday dinner at Rob and Eddy's house, 13 December 2025.



Figure 9. More holiday diners, 13 December 2025.

The History of an Early Farm below the Helderberg¹

by Christopher Albright

It is unfortunate that many of the farmsteads that once occupied the landscape of the Town of New Scotland in Albany County no longer exist. These farm complexes, consisting of a house, barns, and outbuildings that early settlers of the town would have painstakingly constructed to survive, could have provided valuable information about our history. One such farm complex of which little to nothing survives was located near the intersection of Picard Road and Tygert Road (Figure 1). As you are driving over Tygert Road and come to the intersection of Picard Road one might notice the remnants of a stone foundation near the top of the steep bank on the opposite side. Most of the year, the foliage covers it, but in the fall through spring it can be seen. That is the foundation for a hop house (Figure 2). On top of the bank was a farm that was established in the last decade of the 18th century. Today, there is a modern house situated there and next to no evidence of the other structures that formerly occupied the site.

The First Settler: Doctor Elias Day

The Farm Surveys at the Albany County Hall of Records provide excellent information on the early settlers of Rensselaerswyck Manor. The surveys were done after the Revolution by employees of the patroon to more accurately identify leases. One survey documents the farm of Doctor Elias Day who leased 131.2 acres from the patroon on 6 August 1791 (Figure 3). The farm was situated between today's Tygert Road and Martin Road near the base of the Helderberg escarpment. About half of the farm was occupied by the large wetland on both sides of Tygert Road and along Picard Road in this area (Figure 4). The 1791 dated survey included the following remarks:

*In the Swamp are two small pieces of meadow formerly in possession of Jacob Coopers. The northernmost part is poorly timbered with shabby farm, but the southernmost part is considerably well timbered with Black Ash. It is low and cold and, in my opinion, very little will ever be fit for any other use but for the food that is on it. The upper land is poor and very stoney and but indifferently timbered.*²

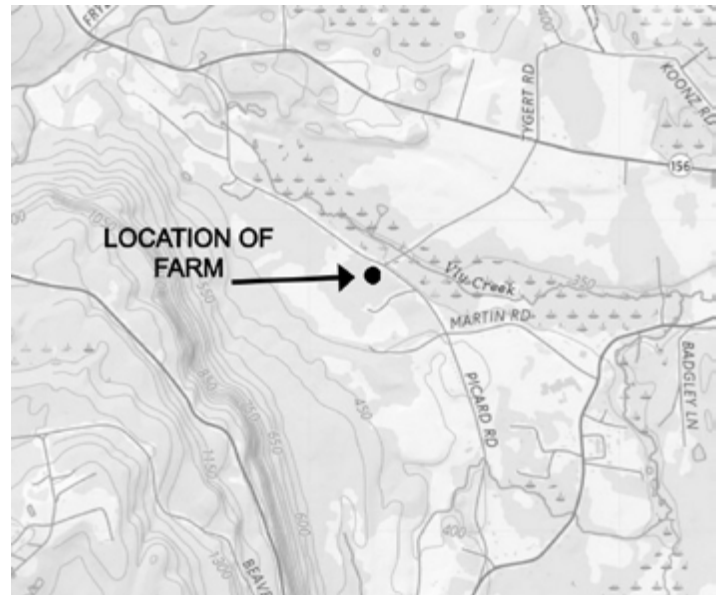


Figure 1. Location of the farmstead on a USGS map showing its site at the intersection of Tygert and Picard roads.



Figure 2. Hop house on the Martin farm (Collection of Tim Albright).

It would appear that the surveyor did not think highly of the farm.

Information on Dr Day is limited. His wife was Sarah Cooper, born 29 August 1756. She was the daughter of Jacob Cooper, who leased the adjacent farm in 1766. While Day was not included in the 1790 census, he was listed in the 1800 and 1810 census. That, along with the date of the lease and survey, suggests that he probably settled on the farm in 1791. The farm survey does not show a house on the farm, only three houses on adjacent farms. An entry in the "Old Town Book of

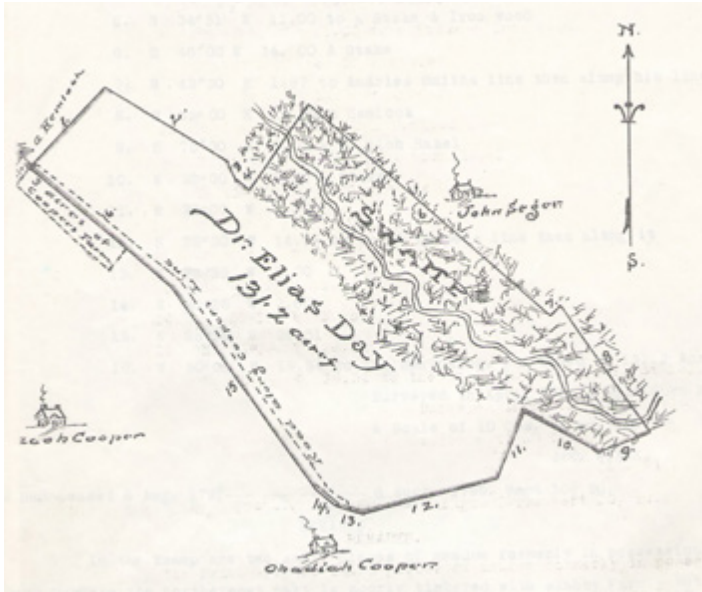


Figure 3. A copy of the original farm survey made in 1919 by Theodore C Hailes. The house depicted on the left side of the survey is that of Jacob Cooper. Part of his first name has been cut off.



Figure 4. A ca. 1945 aerial photo with the 1791 Doctor Elias Day Farm Survey overlayed upon it. This shows the approximate boundaries for the farm. The intersection of Picard Road and Tygert Road is almost in the middle of the property.

Bethlehem" dated 16 August 1796 mentions Elias Day; this suggests that there was a house on the property occupied by him at that time.³ An entry in the records of the New Salem Reformed Church, dated 3 May 1805 states that Elias and Sarah "had their marriage renewed acknowledging all the children they had together legitimate." It is believed that they had six children: Amy Elizabeth, Elias Baulden, Jacob, Josina, Thomas, and Sarah. Elias Day died in 1813 with no will. His daughter, Amy Elizabeth and her husband, Calvin Cheesman became the Administrators of his estate (Figure 5). Elias' widow, Sarah, continued to live on the farm until 1820 when she transferred ownership to her two sons, Elias B. and Thomas.⁴ On 27 March 1821, Elias B. and Thomas sold the farm to Jacob C. Hallenbeck for \$1,000.⁵ On 6 April 1821, Hallenbeck sold the property to Henry Martin for \$500.⁶ It is unknown why Hallenbeck sold the property for half what he had purchased it for less than a month earlier.

The Martin Family Ownership

Henry Martin was born in 1783 and died in 1848. His wife was Catherine Becker (1790-1849). Both are buried at the Prospect Hill Cemetery in Guilderland. When Henry died, he left the farm to his son Jacob H. Martin. Jacob was born on 8 December 1813 and

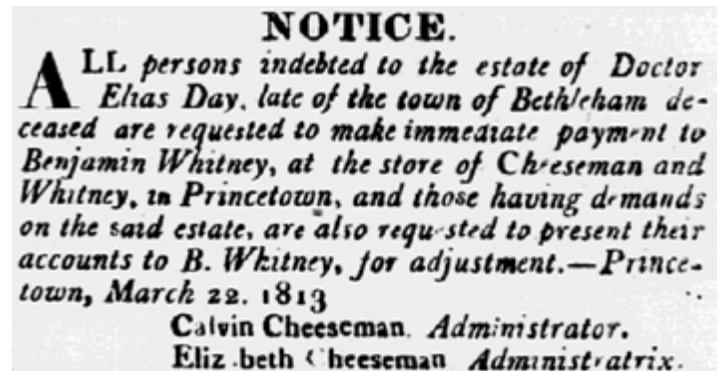


Figure 5. "Notice" published in *The Cabinet* (Schenectady, NY), 24 March 1813.

baptized at the New Scotland Presbyterian Church. He lived his whole life in New Scotland and most of it on the farm that he inherited from his father. He married Sarah Beebe, probably about 1835. They had at least four children: Catherine, Henry, Joel, and William.

Jacob was in some way involved in the Anti-Rent War, also referred to contemporaneously as the "Helderberg War" (1839-1845). In April 1842, Jacob and his cousin's husband, George Chesebrough were "indicted for assault and battery, on an officer, and for a riot and affray. This is one of the many complaints that have been made to the grand jury of this county, growing out of the 'Helderberg War'."⁷ The jury found Jacob guilty and acquitted Chesebrough. He was fined \$250 and sentenced to 30 days in county jail, or in default of payment of the fine,

he was to be imprisoned for five months in addition to the 30 days. One can only imagine what the strain of the fine or imprisonment would have been on the young family (Figure 6).

After the death of Jacob H. Martin in 1873, the farm passed to his oldest son, Henry. Henry Martin was born in 1844, and he married Lydia Schermerhorn on 24 November 1866. They had eleven children. Recorded in the Agricultural Statistics for the 1875 New York State Census, Henry Martin reported 95 acres of improved land and 35 acres of wood & timber land. Of the improved land, he reported 53 acres plowed, 12 acres for pasture and 35 acres in meadow.⁸ Twenty-five apple trees were reported with a yield of 100 bushels in 1874. Henry also produced 800 pounds of honey. Livestock included three milk cows, four horses and ten swine.

Henry continued to farm the land and expanded it with the purchase of an adjacent 93 acres from the James McCollum estate in 1907. By 1913 Henry's health may have been declining as Lydia began to auction off equipment and livestock.⁹ Henry died in 1915; three years later the farm was scheduled to be auctioned off for unpaid taxes.¹⁰ Through an unknown transaction, Henry and Lydia's son, Hiram B. Martin, came into possession of the farm by 1924 (Figure 7).

On 20 September 1924, Hiram B. Martin sold the farm to Arthur A. Perkins. Perkins was a retailer of silks in Albany and it is doubtful that he ever lived on the farm. Two years later, in 1926, Perkins sold the farm to John Heere and his son William. John and William had just emigrated from Germany the year before. The Heeres farmed the land but in 1932 they sold it back to Arthur Perkins in that year. The Heeres may have had a mortgage through Perkins which they were unable to pay. Perkins in turn sold the farm the same day to the Troop B Horse Company.

Troop B Horse Company Incorporated

The Troop B Horse Company was incorporated in 1930 to

...maintain the esprit de corps of the Troop B, 121st Calvary, or its successor organization. It also proposes to assist Troop B in all possible ways and cooperate with organizations to arouse and maintain a spirit of unadulterated Americanism and comradeship among its members.¹¹

The 121st Calvary was a part of the National Guard of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Virginia that was formed after the end of the First World War.

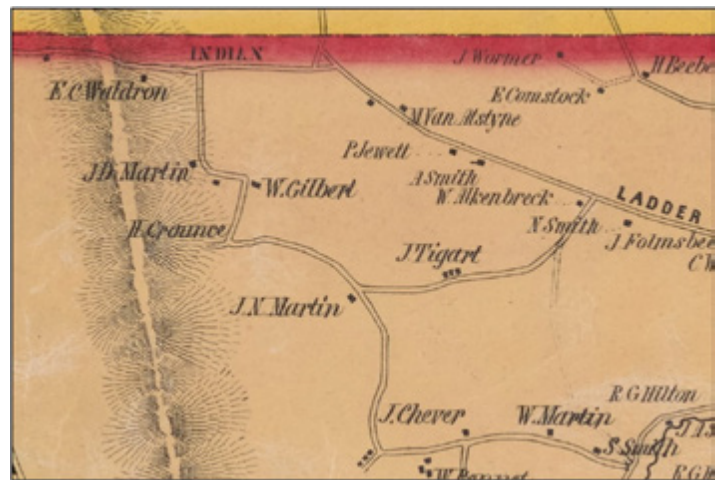


Figure 6. Portion of a map (J. C. Sidney, *Map of Albany Vicinity and Troy*. Troy, NY: W. H. Young, 1851), showing J. N. Martin's (sic) house at the intersection of today's Picard Road (County Route 307) and Tygart Road.

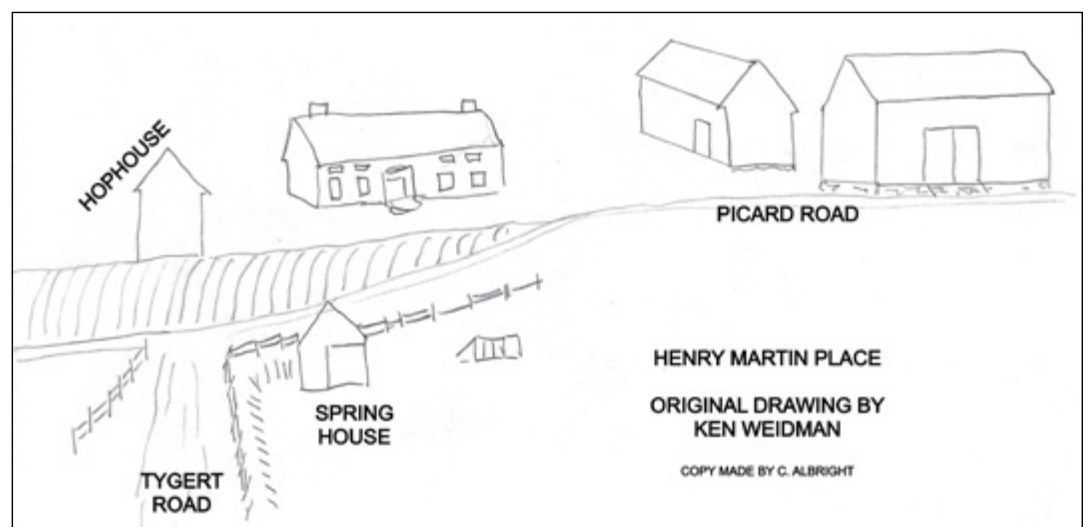


Figure 7. Copy of a drawing made by Ken Weidman (1904-1995) showing the intersection of Picard Road and Tygart Road with the location of the houses and outbuildings. Ken was married to Catherine A Ostrander (1912-2003), who was the granddaughter of Henry Martin (1844-1915). Catherine wrote the "From Kay" weekly articles in the *Altamont Enterprise* newspaper during the 1970s and 1980s.



Figure 8. Front view of the Martin house which burned sometime during the 1950s. The front doorway is in the Greek Revival style (Collection of Tim Albright).



Figure 9. Side view of the Martin house, showing the ell, which may have been the original house. The Helderberg escarpment can be seen in the background, at left (Collection of Tim Albright).

The Troop B Horse Company, Inc. group appears to have been an upper-class equestrian club. From 1931 to 1939 they held horse shows in October at the “Troop B Armory”¹² on New Scotland Avenue in Albany. A newspaper article published in 1932 stated that the “elite of horsedom and the cream of society co-operated at the Second Annual Albany Calvary Horse Show at Troop B Armory yesterday to win blue ribbons, silver first prizes and cheers from the bleachers and boxes.”¹³

The ownership of the farm by the Troop B Horse Company did not last long, for on 4 March 1936 they sold it to Aaron Myndert De LaGrange Crounse. Aaron was the son of Cyrus & Angelica LaGrange Crounse. He was also the Grandson of Henry Crounse, who was a Captain in the Civil War. Most of this farm was retained by Aaron Crounse and eventually became part of what today is the Heldeberg Workshop.

The original house was located on a 48.5-acre parcel that Aaron Crounse sold in 1939. From available early 20th century photographs, the house appears to have been a one and one-half story, wood frame structure with and ell off the right rear (Figures 8 and 9). It is possible that the ell was the original house and that the front part of the house was added sometime in the 19th century. Unfortunately, the house and its outbuildings no longer exist.

If anyone has old photos of houses, barns or outbuildings within the town, the New Scotland Historical Association would very much like to get copies. When a farm no longer exists, photographs can supply one of the few clues to its history.

ENDNOTES

¹ This article was originally printed in a slightly different form in *The Sentinel* 33:3 (Spring 2025), 5-7, published by the New Scotland Historical Association.

² Albany County Hall of Records (hereafter ACHOR), Farm Surveys, Book 17, Survey 42.

³ Florence and Peter R. Christoph, eds., *Records of the People of the Town of Bethlehem, Albany County, New York 1698-1880* (Bethlehem, NY: Bethlehem Historical Association, 1982), 228. New Scotland was part of Bethlehem until 1832.

⁴ ACHOR, Deeds L26:265.

⁵ ACHOR, Deeds L25:322.

⁶ ACHOR, Deeds L26:311.

⁷ “The Helderberg Trials,” *Albany Argus*, 29 April 1842, 2.

⁸ Note that the plowed, pasture, and meadow acreage (100 acres) does not match the reported improved acreage (95 acres).

⁹ “Auction Sale,” *Times-Union* (Albany, NY), 15 February 1913, 14.

¹⁰ “Tomb,” *The Times-Union Extra!* (Albany, NY), 3 June 1915, 13; *Albany Evening Journal*, 22 August 1918.

¹¹ “Horse Troop Incorporates,” *Times-Union* (Albany, NY), 2 September 1930, 2.

¹² “New Scotland Avenue (Troop B) Armory”, accessed online at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Scotland_Avenue_\(Troop_B\)_Armory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Scotland_Avenue_(Troop_B)_Armory) on 17 February 2026.

¹³ “Elite Horsewomen Display Their Mounts at Horse Show,” *Times-Union* (Albany, NY), 27 November 1932, B1.

Membership info

If you have been receiving this newsletter, but your membership is not current and you wish to continue to receive the HMVA newsletter and participate in the many house-study tours offered each year, **please send in your dues.**

Membership currently pays all the HMVA bills and to keep us operating in the black. **Each of us must contribute a little.**

Membership dues remains at a low \$25 per year (\$15 for Students). So if you haven't sent in your dues or given a tax deductible donation to the HMVA mission, **please consider doing so now.**

You can join or renew online at HMVArch.org using PayPal.



☐ Yes, I would like to renew my membership in the amount of \$ _____

☐ Yes, I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to help in preserving the architectural heritage of the Hudson and Mohawk valleys. Enclosed find my donation in the amount of \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Please mail checks to:

HMVA

90 Cty. Rte. 42, Cossackie, NY 12051



Figure 1. One of our readers, Eric J. Klos, a descendant of the family that owned Wolvenhoeck, contacted us with a heretofore unknown version of the view of Wolvenhoeck which was reproduced in our January-March 2024 issue. The original version of the image is attributed to Eugene Sintzenich. Written on the back of Eric's copy of the painting is "L. T. Lansing, 1912, Wolvenhoeck, Greenbush, NY." and on the frame "Presented to J. Townsend Lansing." The frame appears to date to the mid-19th century, and so this copy of the painting may predate the 1912 date recorded on the back.

2026-27 Schedule of Activities

2026

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 21 MARCH | Maggie MacDowell Lecture Series, Woodland Pond: Lecture on housing the enslaved in the New World Dutch Cultural Hearth (Wally Wheeler) |
| 18 APRIL | Tour of Schuyler Mansion, Crailo and possibly one other site, Albany and Rensselaer counties, NY (Wally Wheeler) |
| 16 MAY | Tour of Pawling and vicinity, Dutchess County (Trench Brady) |
| 20 JUNE | Schoharie Valley Tour and board meeting, Schoharie County, NY (Keith Cramer) |
| 18 JULY | Tour in New Jersey: Dey Mansion, Schuyler Colfax House, John W. Rea house (Greg Fitzgerald) |
| 15 AUGUST | Conference house and two other houses, Staten Island, NY (Carla Cielo) |
| 19 SEPTEMBER | Dutchess County Tour and board meeting (Emily Majer) |
| 17 OCTOBER | Tour of northern Town of New Scotland, Albany County (Chris Albright) |
| 21 NOVEMBER | Wynkoop House and Sally Tock Tavern, Stone Ridge, Ulster County (Rob Sweeney) |
| 12 DECEMBER | Holiday luncheon and board meeting at The Hoffman House, with possible tour of the Senate House, Kingston (Rob Sweeney) |

2027

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| JANUARY | no programming |
| 16 FEBRUARY | Annual Meeting at the Elmendorph Inn, Red Hook. |