

# The Knickerbockers of Pine Plains, NY

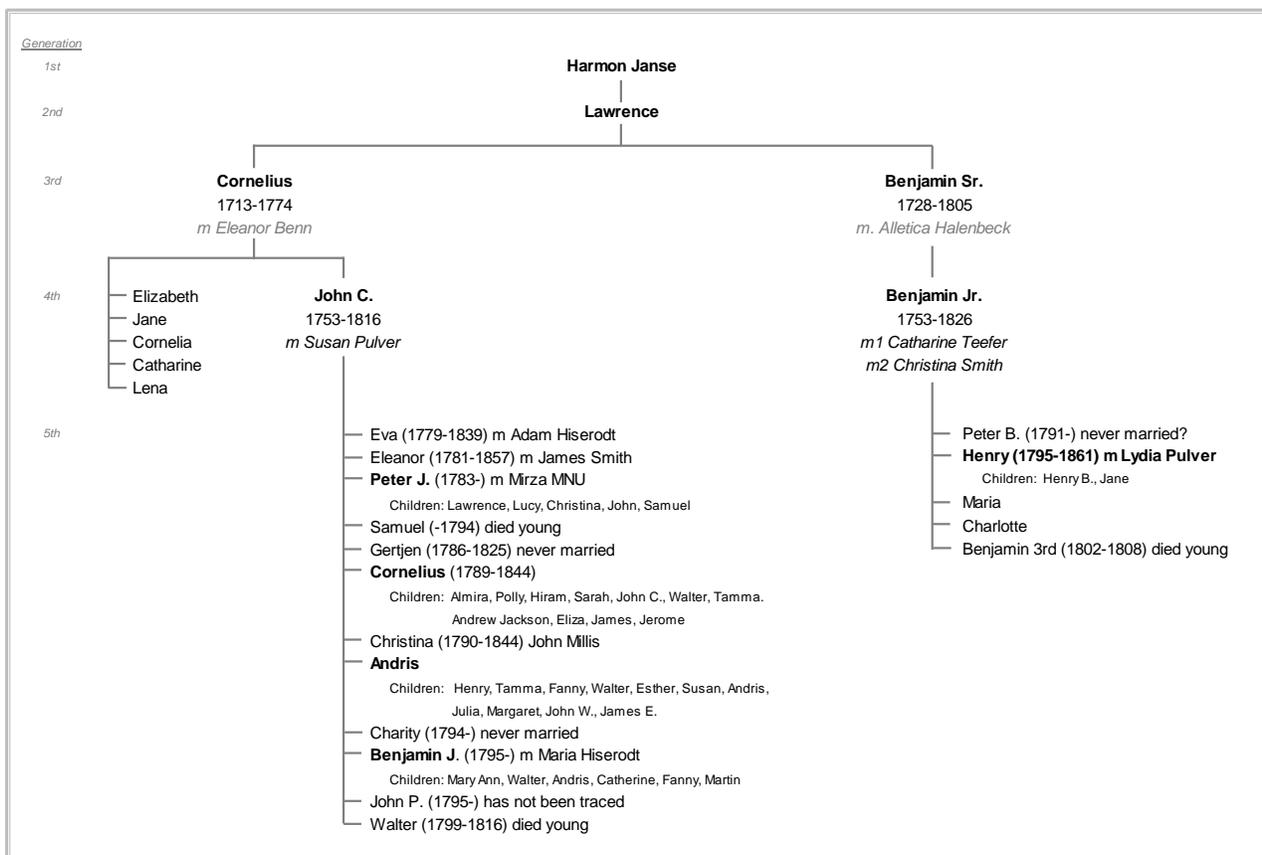
## *Lawrence's sons Cornelius and Benjamin*

Bryan Knickerbocker  
1 February 2019

Most “Knickerbockers” alive today are descended from Lawrence Knickerbocker (1684-1766). This is because Lawrence had many sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons.

This report is part of a larger series, attempting to identify Lawrence's descendants.

Two of Lawrence's sons – Cornelius and Benjamin – settled in Pine Plains, Dutchess County. They are the main focus of this report. The tree below shows their children, with emphasis on the men who carried on the Knickerbocker family name.



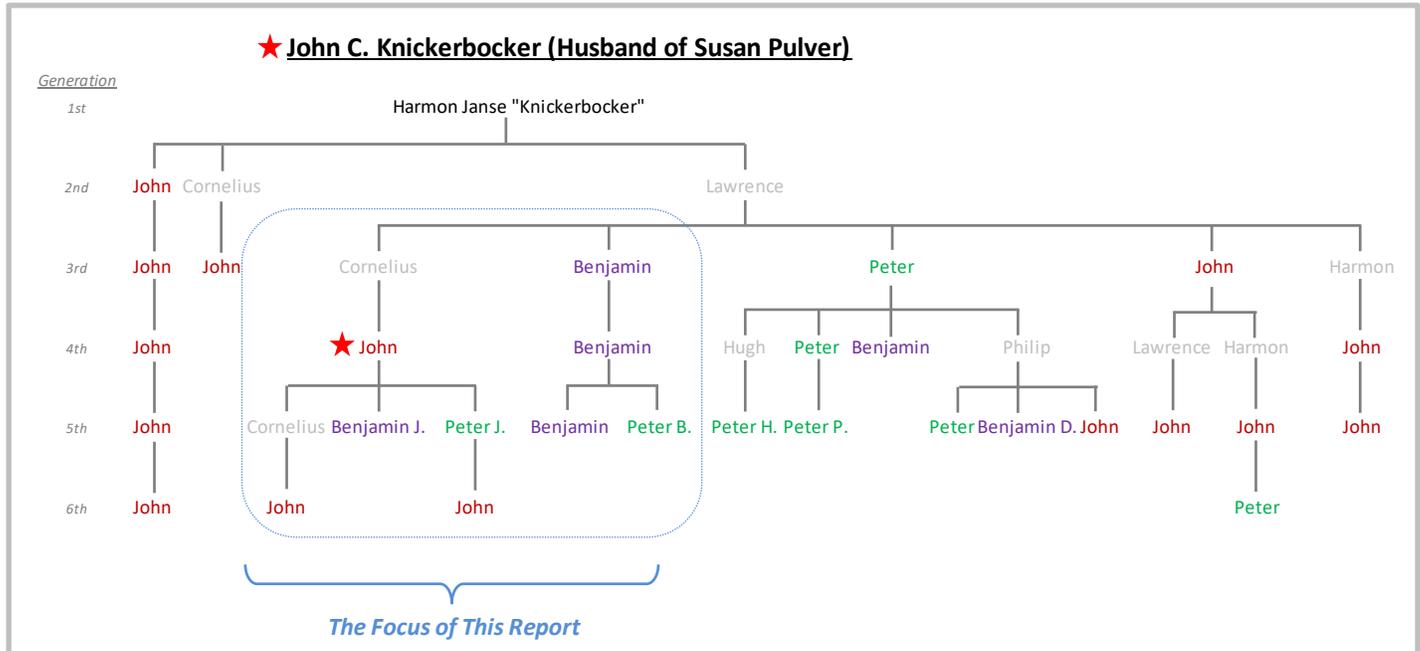
This report is long. There are many puzzle pieces involved.

Some parts of this story are very simple. However, other parts are very complex. We will devote much of our attention to the complex issues, such as the men named Benjamin J. Knickerbocker, Peter J. Knickerbocker, and Peter B. Knickerbocker.

## Background: Too Many John Knickerbockers

The early Knickerbockers were not very creative when it came to first names.

For example, consider this partial family tree. To keep things simple, we have used standard English spelling for the names ... John instead of Johannes, Peter instead of Petrus, and so on.



This tree includes a total of 16 men named John Knickerbocker. It can be hard to tell them apart

We have added a red star to John C. Knickerbocker of Pine Plains, who married Susan Pulver. John C. Knickerbocker is a key player in our story.

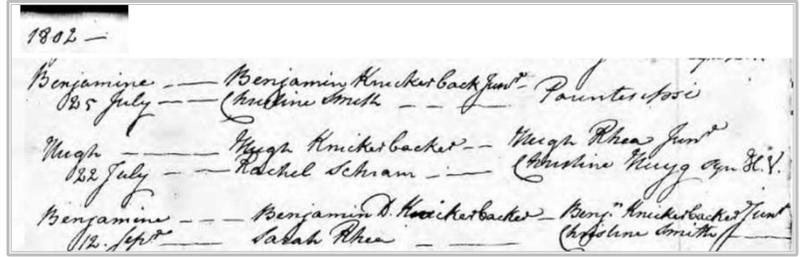
John C. Knickerbocker had a son named Benjamin. This tree also includes a total of 6 Benjamin Knickerbockers.

John C. Knickerbocker also had a son named Peter. This tree includes a total of 8 Peter Knickerbockers.

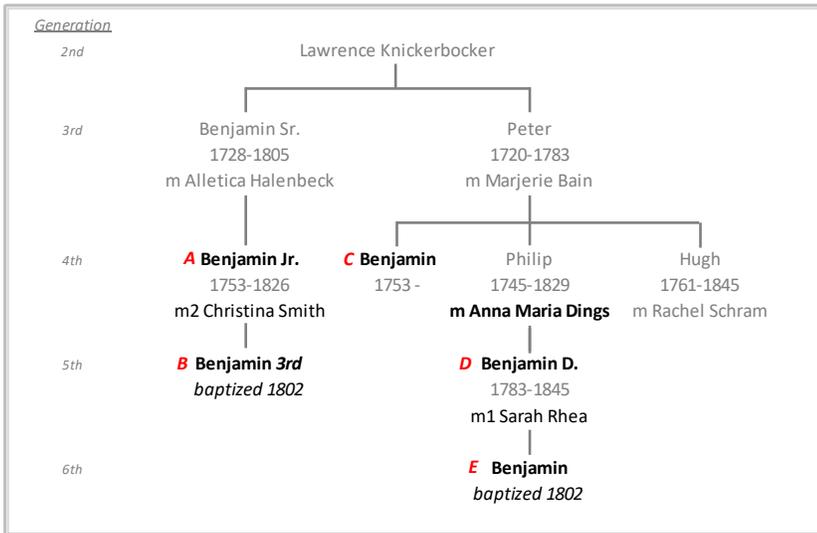
This constant re-use of first names is the hardest part of this study.

We also face a challenge because most of Lawrence's descendants lived in close proximity to each other. There are several times in our story when the Pine Plains Knickerbockers interact with their various cousins.

Shown here is an example of our challenge. This is from a single page of church records from 1802. It shows three baptisms, two of whom were for infants named Benjamin Knickerbocker.



Both baby Benjamins had fathers named Benjamin. And, one of the sponsors was named Benjamin.



Shown here are 5 men named Benjamin Knickerbocker.

Four of them are mentioned in the baptism record.

The fifth one may have a minor role in the story.

The five men in this tree are:

- A. Benjamin Junior. Shortly after his second marriage, he had a son.
- B. Benjamin the third, the son of Benjamin Junior, was baptized in 1802.
- C. Benjamin, son of Peter, is the wild card, even though he doesn't appear in the baptism record. This man is hard to trace. We suspect that his middle name was Peter, in honor of his father.
- D. Benjamin D. Knickerbocker used his middle initial – D – in multiple records, including this baptism record. We suspect his middle name might have been Dings in honor of his mother. (Middle initials often honored the father, but, in this case, the name Benjamin Peter Knickerbocker had already been claimed by person "C".)
- E. Benjamin, son of Benjamin D, was baptized in 1802. His sponsor was Benjamin Junior.

(Sadly, both of the Benjamin Knickerbockers who were baptized in 1802 died young.)

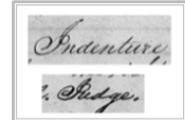
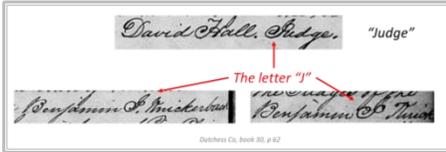
The story on this page is an example of a simple puzzle.

The rest of this report is a much larger puzzle.

## Middle Initials and Hard-to-Read Documents

At several points in this report we will focus on somebody's middle initial. This can get tricky when we are dealing with old documents.

Consider the man who we will call "Benjamin J. Knickerbocker." The snapshot on the left has Benjamin's name and the word "Judge." It appears that Benjamin's middle initial was "J". However, the snapshot on the right has "Indenture" and "Judge" from the same deed. It is hard to tell I from J.



The snapshots shown above are from deed in 1822. The judge who witnessed Benjamin's signature was from Steuben County. Thus, there was man named Benjamin "J or I" Knickerbocker in Steuben County in 1822.

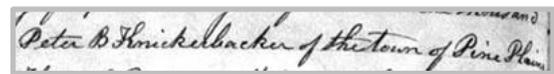
Now let's use both Ancestry and FamilySearch to search census records. Both search engines claim that Benjamin J. Knickerbocker and Peter I. Knickerbocker were in Steuben County in 1820. Benjamin's middle initial was supposedly different from Peter's.



However, look at the handwriting in the original census sheets. The middle initials are indistinguishable. There is no basis for claiming these men had different middle initials.

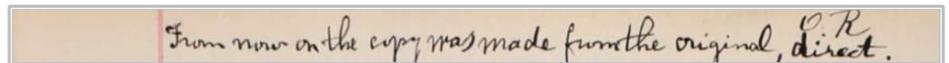
As we will discuss later, the two men in Steuben County were probably sons of John Knickerbocker. We believe their middle initials were probably "J". However, we don't want to nit-pick between "I" and "J". The more important point is that we need to be aware of the uncertainties involved in reading old documents.

Sometimes we get lucky. This deed is from 1827. This handwriting is very clear. This was Peter B. Knickerbocker. He was obviously a different man from Peter "J or I" Knickerbocker.



The above snapshots show the original handwriting, as recorded by a judge, a census taker, and a county clerk, respectively. However, sometimes we don't have the original documents.

For example, consider the church records from the Holland Society. If the old books were disintegrating, the Holland Society transcribed everything onto brand new notebook paper. Holland Society notebook paper is easy to spot, because it had a distinctive red vertical line at the left margin. Anytime we see this red line, it means that we are looking a copy, or even a copy of a copy. (Holland Society records are sometimes vague about whether they were was transcribing from an original as opposed to making a copy of a copy.)



We will show the original handwriting for key documents, whenever it is possible.

## The Descendants of Lawrence Knickerbocker

We will briefly review of Lawrence Knickerbocker and his family.

Lawrence lived most of his adult life along the Hudson River, near Tivoli. However, by the 1720's, Lawrence had purchased a second property – “The Grant” – along the Housatonic River, in Connecticut. The route between Lawrence’s properties is shown on the map below.

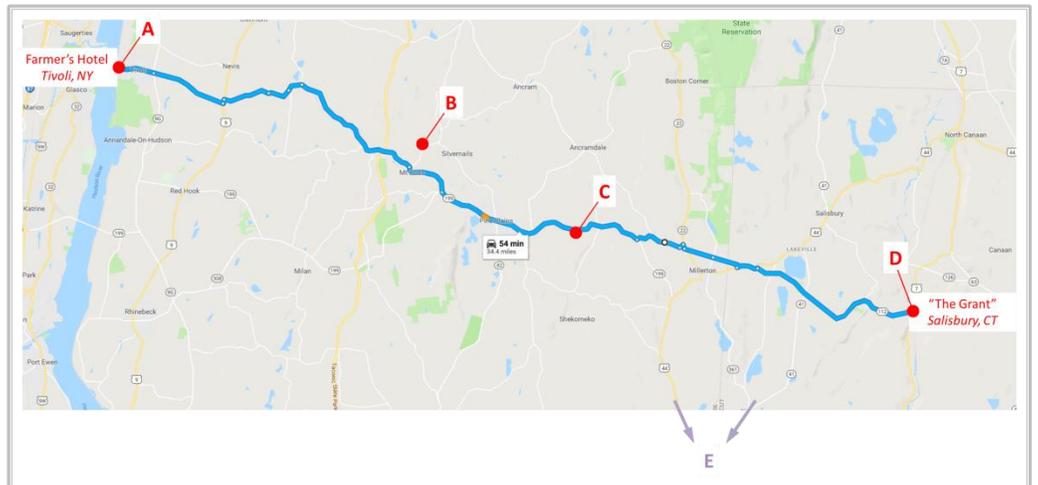
Lawrence Knickerbocker had 5 sons and 4 daughters. In the table below, we have ranked the boys according to where they are buried. The right hand column shows how far each child was buried from the Knickerbocker Burial Ground in Pine Plains.

<u>Name</u>		<u>Location of Grave</u>	<u>Map Point</u>	<u>Distance To Pine Plains</u>
Lawrence	1684-1766	Tivoli	A	
Cornelius	1714-1774	Pine Plains	C	0
Benjamin	1728-1805	"	C	0
Peter	1720-1783	Gallatin Reformed Church	B	7 miles
John	1710-1786	Salisbury CT	D	14 miles
Harmen	1712-1805	South of Wassaic	E	20 miles
Jane (Belden)	1721-1799	Dover Plains		
Elizabeth (Dutcher)	1720-1793	Dover Plains		
Catherine (Van Alstyne)	1731-1806	Kinderhook		
Maritje (White)	1727- ?	?		

On the map below, the blue line is the route from the Hudson to the Housatonic. This route hasn't changed much in the last 300 years. In upstate New York, nobody wants to go up and down the steep hills during the long winter season. As a result, our modern paved roads have the same twists and turns as the dirt trails that our ancestors used.

The labels on the map show the burial locations.

Lawrence (a), Peter (b), Cornelius (c), Benjamin (c), and John (d) were all buried along the route from Tivoli to Salisbury.



Lawrence’s son Harmen was buried the farthest away. Harmen’s movements may have been influenced by his wife, Catherine Dutcher. Some of the Dutchers moved from the Hudson River to the Housatonic River, and then to the Wassaic area.

**Propagating the Knickerbocker Name**

Most “Knickerbockers” who are alive today are descended from Lawrence.

As shown in the table below, Lawrence had 5 sons, 18 grandsons, and 64 great grandsons who carried on the Knickerbocker family name.

Great Grandsons of Lawrence Knickerbocker (following only the male lines)  
*Preliminary list*

Sons of Lawrence	Grandsons of Lawrence ***	Great Grandsons of Lawrence ***	Contribution to List of Great GS
Benjamin	Benjamin Jr.	Peter B., Henry	2
Cornelius	John C.	Peter J., Samuel, Cornelius, Benjamin J., John P., Walter	6
Harmanus	Lawrence	Lawrence Jr, David, Benjamin	13
	Ruliff	Harmanus, Tobias, Cornelius	
	John H.	Richard W., John J.	
	Harmanus	Eli, Larry, John, William, Harmen	
John	Abraham	Thomas, Darius, Solomon	17
	Lawrence	Samuel, John, Salmon	
	Harmen	John, Bartholomew	
	Isaac	Cornelius, Jeremiah, Reuben	
	Solomon	David, James, William, Walter, Henry, Alvin	
Peter	Philip	Petrus, John, Philip Jr., Benjamin D.	26
	Lawrence	William, Peter L., John L., James	
	Peter	Abraham, Peter P., David, Isaac, Jacob	
	Benjamin	Unknown	
	James	Peter , Hugh, James	
	John P.	John, Henry	
	Hugh	Peter H., John H., Valentine, Hugh Jr., Frederick, Benjamin, Henry, William	
<b>5 sons</b>	<b>18 grandsons</b>	<b>64 grandsons</b>	

\*\*\* This table only considers the male lines – the men whose name was “Knickerbocker”

(Notice that we have only included males named Knickerbocker. For example, Elizabeth Knickerbocker’s sons are not included, because their last name was Dutcher.)

By 1800, roughly three quarters of all the Knickerbockers on Earth were descended from Lawrence. This is because Lawrence had so many sons, grandsons, and so on.

For example, consider Lawrence’s older brother Johannes. Johannes only had 4 great grandsons named “Knickerbocker” (William W, Harmen, John, and Abraham).

In terms of propagating the Knickerbocker family name, Lawrence outperformed Johannes by a score of 64 to 4.

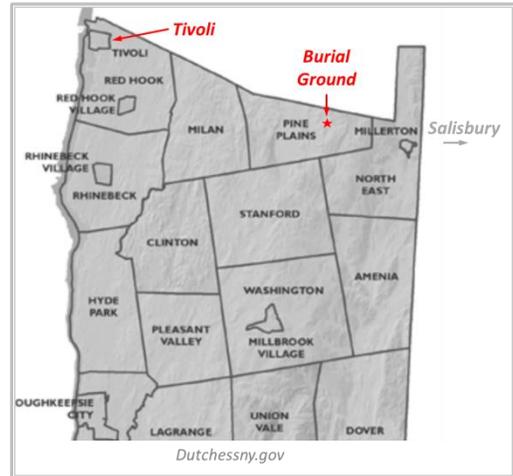
This is a highly simplified analysis, but it illustrates why so many of us are descended from Lawrence.

## An Introduction to Pine Plains

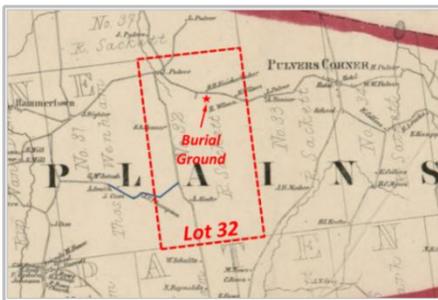
We will use three maps to give a general overview of Pine Plains. We have added the location of the “Knickerbocker Burial Ground” to each map.

This map shows today’s boundaries for Pine Plains and the nearby townships. The boundaries on this map have evolved over the years. For example, Red Hook was part of Rhinebeck until 1812. Pine Plains was part of North East until 1823.

This map shows the *Township* of Pine Plains. The township includes a small downtown area that is known as the *Village* of Pine Plains. The Knickerbocker Burial Ground is often described as being about 2.5 miles “east of Pine Plains.” To be precise, the burial ground is within Pine Plains *Township*, but is 3 miles east of Main Street in Pine Plains *Village*.



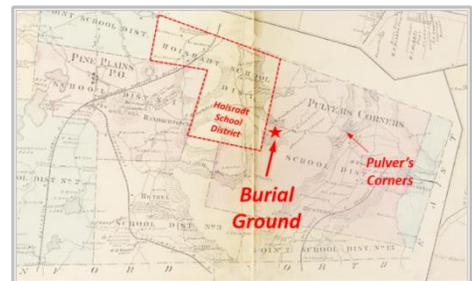
(In this report, we will use “Pine Plains” to refer to the township.)



Pine Plains was originally part of the Little Nine Partners land grant. The Burial Ground is within what was originally called Lot 32. (Shown here is a map from 1858, available from the Library of Congress.)

This map shows that a man named H.B. Knickerbocker owned land across the road from the burial ground. We will mention H.B. Knickerbocker again later.

Additional details about Pine Plains are found in the 1876 directory of Dutchess County. (A high resolution image is available from the NY State Library.) We have noted Pulver’s Corners and the Hiserodt School District. These locations take their name from two families that play a role in our story.



The burial ground is on Route 199. The modern road follows a much older trail which the settlers called the Salisbury Road. This has always been the main east-west route through the area.

Lawrence Knickerbocker was probably familiar with the Pine Plains area when his sons were still toddlers. Lawrence made his first trips to Salisbury sometime around the 1720’s. The journey was long: 35 miles through the wilderness. The area that we now call Pine Plains was about the halfway point.

## The Knickerbocker Burial Ground in Pine Plains

Cornelius and Benjamin were buried in a cemetery that is commonly called “The Knickerbocker Burial Ground.”

The burial ground is on Route 199 (the Salisbury Road).

The Connecticut state line is 6 miles to the east.



In 1913, a group of volunteers recorded the inscriptions in the burial ground. Their work was eventually included in the 1924 book, *Old Graveyards of Dutchess County*. This is the most reliable list of burials in this cemetery.

(Unfortunately Findagrave has significant errors, and needs to be treated with caution.)

The tombstones in Pine Plains include several families that have roles in our story, including the Pulvers, Hiserodts, Millius and Stickles families.

The 1913 list – as reproduced in the 1924 book – showed eleven people with the last name Knickerbocker.

31. Keeler, John A., d. 1815, Jan. 20, in 6th y.
32. Knickerbocker, Benjamin, d. 1805, Sep. 28, a. 77-4-14.
33. Knickerbocker, Benjamin, s. of Benjamin & Catharine, d. 1808, Oct. 3, a. 6-2-8.
34. Knickerbocker, Benjamin, d. 1826, Oct. 27, a. 73 y. 27 d.
35. Knickerbocker, Catharine, w. of Benjamin, Jr., d. 1797, June 16, a. 32 y.
36. Knickerbocker, Christina, w. of Benjamin, d. 1833, May 1, a. 65 y.
37. Knickerbocker, Captain Cornelius, d. 1774, Mar. 20, a. 60 y.
38. Knickerbocker, John C., d. 1816, Aug. 13, in 64th y.
39. Knickerbocker, Lawrence, s. of Peter I. & Moiza, d. 1809, Mar. 20, a. 91 y. 10 m.
40. Knickerbocker, Rosina, w. of John C., d. 1825, June 18, in 63d y.
41. Knickerbocker, Samuel, d. 1794, July 3, a. 91 y.
42. Knickerbocker, Walter C., s. of John C. & Susanah, d. 1816, Oct. 30, in 17th y.

Although this is the best available accounting, it still has problems. One mistake is clear: the tombstone of Lawrence Knickerbocker was transcribed incorrectly.

The 1913 transcription claims that Lawrence, son of Peter I. Knickerbocker, died 1809, “age 91.” It would be very hard to explain the existence of any such person.

In reality, the tombstone says “AE 9m”.

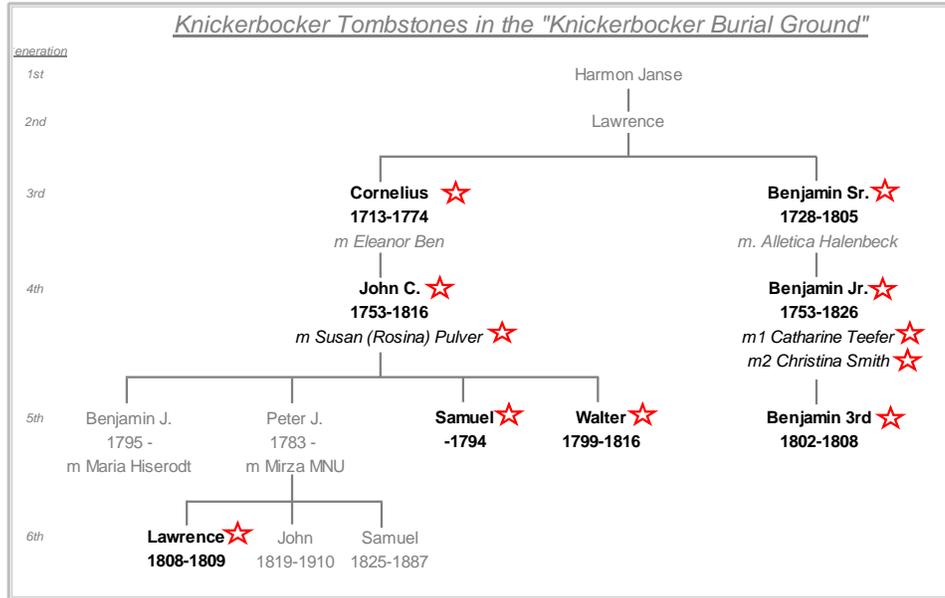
(Thanks to Melissa Stickles for the pictures.)



Pictures from Melissa Stickles

We suspect that the transcription for Samuel Knickerbocker has a similar error. The listing shown above claims that Samuel was 91 years old, which would be very hard to explain. It more likely that Samuel was either 9 months or 9 years old, and was a young son of John and Susan.

Shown below is a tree for the eleven people with the last name Knickerbocker:



It appears that this burial ground primarily served its immediate neighbors. It was not associated with a church, and the people buried here seem to come from a pretty tight circle of families.

Consider this small section of the first U.S. census, in 1790. This shows two Knickerbocker families living near families named Milius, Hyserodt, and Pulver. (This census record is from the North East, which was originally very large. Pine Plains wasn't split off until 1823.)

1790 Census for North East (which included Pine Plains)

Jacob Milius	1	1	5	.	.
Henry Hyserodt Senr	2	4	2	.	.
Peter A. Pulver	1	1	2	.	.
George Spence	1	1	1	.	.
John Knickerbocker	3	2	5	.	.
Benjamin Knickerbocker	3	.	3	.	6
Andrew Pulver	3	1	5	.	1

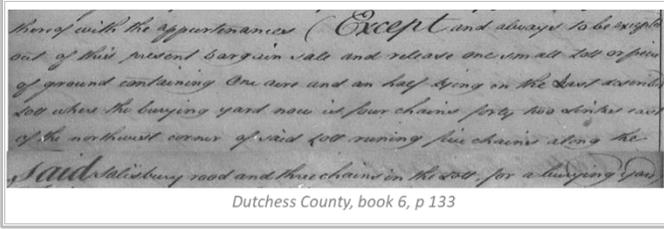
Five of these seven people are buried in the Knickerbocker Ground (Jacob Milius, Henry Hyserodt, Peter Pulver, John Knickerbocker, and Benjamin Knickerbocker.)

This census sheet also indicates the close proximity of the families of Cornelius Knickerbocker and Benjamin Knickerbocker. In 1790, John Knickerbocker (Cornelius' only son) was in the adjacent household to his uncle Benjamin Knickerbocker.

(Cornelius died before the 1790 census. His younger brother Benjamin was still alive.)

**Why is it called the Knickerbocker Burial Ground?**

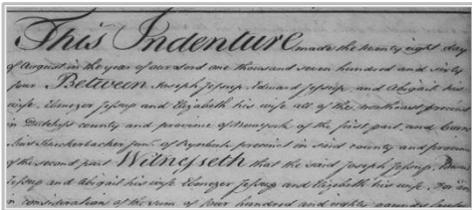
This is a very old burial ground. It appears that it was established before the Knickerbockers arrived in the area.



An early mention of the burial ground can be found in a deed from 1764. The burial ground did not have a name.

The description in this deed gives the location (so many chains and rods from the corner of Lot 32, along the road to Salisbury, etc).

This deed proves the burial ground was established prior to 1764. It's clear that none of the original tombstones have survived. (Cornelius Knickerbocker, who died in 1774, was one of the oldest surviving tombstones in the 1913 listing.)



This same 1764 deed appears to mark the arrival of Cornelius Knickerbocker in Pine Plains.

When Cornelius bought the land, he was described as being "of Rynbek precinct." Thus we suspect that Cornelius had been living somewhere near Tivoli.

In the deed shown above, Cornelius was described as "Cornelius Junior." This might seem confusing. Back then, though, "Junior" simply meant that there was an older man with the same name. There are several other examples of this in Knickerbocker-related records. In this case, Cornelius Knickerbocker "Senior" was Lawrence's brother, while "Junior" was Lawrence's son.

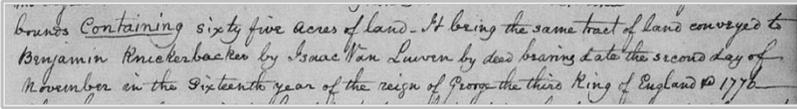
The above deed is lengthy, and describes two properties that Cornelius purchased. One property was north of the Salisbury Road, and doesn't affect our story. The second property, near the cemetery, is more interesting.

Here we are showing the approximate location of Cornelius Knickerbocker's second property, just east of the burial ground.



There is a stream that crosses Cornelius' farm. It's the only stream along this stretch of the Salisbury Road. Lawrence Knickerbocker probably watered his horses there, 40 years before Cornelius arrived.

We believe that Benjamin Knickerbocker arrived in Pine Plains at around the same time as his brother Cornelius. Unfortunately Benjamin's original deeds appear to have been lost. All we have is indirect evidence.

A snippet of a handwritten deed in cursive script. The text reads: "lands containing sixty five acres of land - It being the same tract of land conveyed to Benjamin Knickerbocker by Isaac Van Lueven by deed bearing date the second day of November in the Sixteenth year of the reign of George the third King of England 1776".

In 1822, Benjamin (Junior) and his wife Christina sold a piece of land in Pine Plains. The deed says that the land had been

conveyed to Benjamin Knickerbocker by Isaac Van Lueven by deed bearing the date November 2, 1776. Thus we know that Benjamin arrived before 1776.

(Unfortunately record keeping was scattered in the 1700s. Many deeds were never officially recorded in the county books. For example, there is no official record of any land deals between the Van Lueven and Knickerbocker families in the years around 1776.)

Based on the history shown here, we suspect that the name "Knickerbocker Burial Ground" was eventually adopted because Cornelius owned the adjacent land.

The Knickerbockers didn't establish the burial ground, and weren't the first ones buried there.

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*In 1908 / 1909, Van Alstyne published "The Knickerbocker Family" in the NYGBR. It was a great piece of work.*

*However, Van Alstyne never mentioned the burial ground in Pine Plains.*

*It appears that Van Alstyne never visited the burial ground, and never saw a list of the tombstones.*

*(The tombstone listing that we showed earlier wasn't prepared until 1913, which was 4 years after Van Alstyne finished his study.)*

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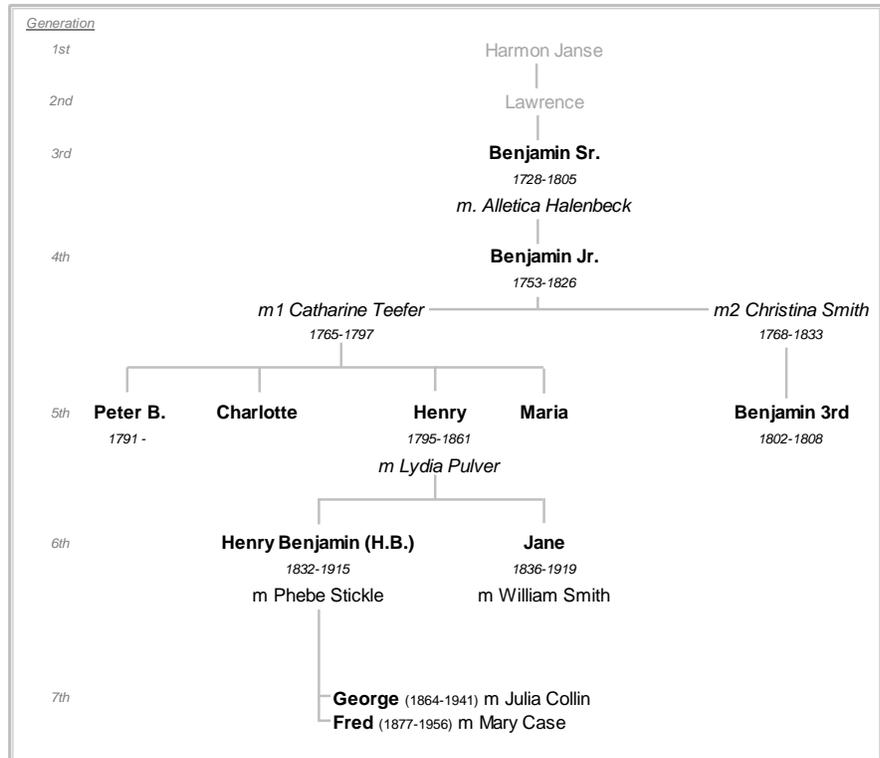
## Benjamin Knickerbocker Senior, son of Lawrence Knickerbocker

For the next few pages we will focus on Benjamin Knickerbocker, the youngest son of Lawrence Knickerbocker. He is buried in Pine Plains.

Benjamin's story is straightforward.

We will present a few key details to show why we are confident in this lineage.

(Later, we will mention two prior studies, published in the 1890's and early 1900's. Those earlier studies have major errors.)

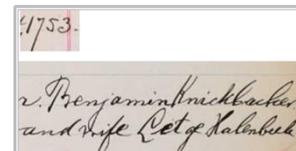


[Monday, October 10, 1785]:  
Benjamin Knickerbocker } —His father was Lawrence Knickerbocker, never heard of a claim till Mr Livingston began to build the Mills—sometime before the former trial; does not know how long.  
57 years old }

*Law Practice of Alexander Hamilton, Volume 3*

In 1785, Benjamin Knickerbocker (senior) testified in a court case. He stated that he was the son of Lawrence, and that he was 57 years old. Thus, he was born in 1728. This matches the tombstone in the Knickerbocker Burial Ground.

Church records show the name of Benjamin's wife as Letge Hallenbeck.



I Benjamin Knickerbocker of the town of North-east  
"my well beloved wife Alletica."  
Benjamin Knickerbocker Senior who now resides on my farm.

The will of Benjamin (senior) was proved in 1806. He left his estate to wife Alletica and to Benjamin Junior.

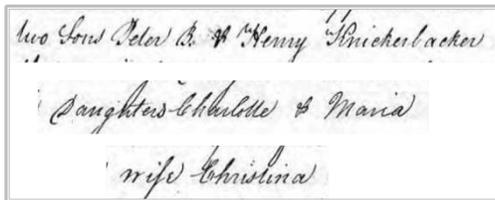
Benjamin (junior) was married twice, to Catharine Teefer and then to Christine Smith. Both wives are buried in the Burial Ground.



The maiden names of the wives can be found in baptism records for their children.

If we look at the tombstones, the order of death was (1) Catherine Knickerbocker, then (2) Benjamin senior, then (3) Benjamin junior, and then (4) Christine Knickerbocker.

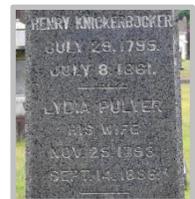
It makes sense that Catherine's tombstone says "wife of Benjamin Junior." Catherine's died early, while Senior was still alive. Thus, her husband was still being called Junior. It also makes sense that the tombstone of second wife Christine does not include the word Junior, because that moniker was no longer in use.



The will of Benjamin (junior) was proved in 1826. Benjamin left most of his estate to his wife Christina, his daughters Charlotte and Maria, and his sons Peter B. and Henry.

We will discuss the oldest son, Peter B. Knickerbocker, later.

The younger son, Henry, is easy to trace. He stayed in Pine Plains and married Lydia Pulver. (Thanks to Melissa Stickles for the tombstone photo.)



Henry and Lydia had one son: the man we have been calling H.B. Knickerbocker, who eventually lived across the road from the cemetery. In 1850, was living with his parents, Henry and Lydia [Pulver].

HB's full name was Henry Benjamin Knickerbocker. To avoid confusion, we will continue to call him HB in this report. This is only for our convenience. There's no evidence that he was ever called "HB" during his life.

As we've already shown, maps show that HB Knickerbocker eventually lived across the road from the Knickerbocker Burial Ground.

HB is easy to trace, because his mother Lydia lived with him after Henry's death.

1870 Census, Pine Plains

Knickerbocker Henry	38	M	W
- Phebe	37	F	W
- George	7	M	W
- Lydia	76	F	W



HB Knickerbocker married Phebe Stickle. Henry and Phebe had two sons, George and Frederick.

When Phebe died in 1913, her obituary said that son Frederick was still living on the farm two miles east of the village of Pine Plains.

Frederick Knickerbocker sold the farm in about 1933 and moved to the village. Frederick died in 1956.

It has only taken a couple of pages to show the lineage from Harmen Janse Knickerbocker (who died in 1714) through Benjamin Knickerbocker, and then to Frederick Knickerbocker (who died in 1956). We have covered a span of over 200 years.

This is one of the easiest Knickerbocker lines to trace, thanks largely to the fact that they stayed in the same area, near the burial ground.

## Earlier (Incorrect) Genealogies for Benjamin Knickerbocker Senior

The story told above is straightforward and supported by many records. However, it differs from earlier published works by Isaac Hunting and by William Van Alstyne

Isaac Hunting published his book *Little Nine Partners* in 1897. Isaac Hunting was a newspaper reporter, not a genealogist or historian. Unfortunately his stories appeared in local newspapers over a long period of time, so his mistakes have been influencing amateur genealogists for many years.

We will not show Mr. Hunting's entire discussion of the Knickerbockers here; it was too full of errors. Among other things, Mr. Hunting had trouble distinguishing between the descendants of Lawrence's sons Benjamin (who settled in Pine Plains) and Peter (who settled in the Gallatin / Milan area).

For this report, the key error in Mr. Hunting's work involves HB Knickerbocker. Hunting claimed that HB Knickerbocker was the son of Benjamin Knickerbocker. Mr. Hunting then presented a full lineage for HB. It was wrong.

(As we have already shown, it is very easy to prove that HB Knickerbocker was the son of Henry Knickerbocker and Lydia Pulver.)

The other erroneous genealogy was from William Van Alstyne. This one is more difficult to explain. Mr. Van Alstyne was a very serious genealogy, and did groundbreaking work.

Unfortunately, though, Mr. Van Alstyne made a significant mistake regarding Benjamin Knickerbocker.

Here is what Van Alstyne said about Benjamin Knickerbocker and Aletteka Halenbeck.

14. BENJAMIN\* KNICKERBOCKER (Laurens,\* Harmen Jansen'), m. about 1732, Aletteka Halenbeck.  
5 Oct., 1766, Domine Fryemont received into membership of the Red Hook Reformed Church from the church on the Flatts Benjamin Knickerbocker and wife Aletta Halenbeck.  
Benjamin Knickerbocker and Aletta Halenbeck may have had a child:  
41 i. Laurentz,\* b. about 1733; m. Margerie Bain (Ben).

Shown below is the baptism record that caused the problem. This baptism was in 1753.



1753.  
Benjamin. Laurentz Knickerbocker. Benjamin Knickerbocker  
Margerie Ben. and wife Lett. Halenbeck

The first column shows the child's name. The second column is the parents. The third column is the sponsors.

For some reason Van Alstyne assumed the sponsors of the child were also the grandparents of the child. This is very strange.

Mr. Van Alstyne was an expert. It is very unclear why he would have miss-read this simple baptism record.

This mistake caused Mr. Van Alstyne to think that Benjamin must have been married by about 1732. In reality, Benjamin was only 4 years old in 1732. This has thrown off other genealogists ever since.

The story that we have told is clear, and is backed up by multiple records.

Thus: Mr. Van Alstyne was wrong.

### The Wealth of Benjamin Knickerbocker, Senior

Benjamin Knickerbocker was a wealthy man. Our focus is genealogy, so we wouldn't normally pay attention to wealth. In this case, though, we will discuss two aspects of his wealth.

#### Benjamin Left Money to his Nieces and Nephews

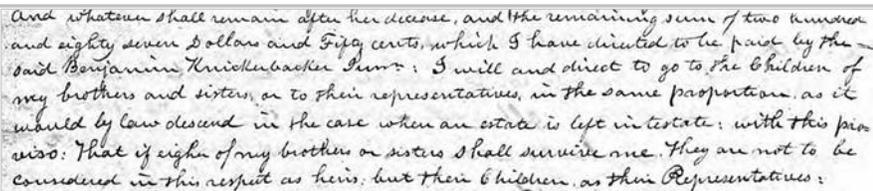
Benjamin was the youngest of Lawrence's five sons, but must have viewed himself as a patriarch to all of his "Knickerbocker" his nieces and nephews.

As we've already said, Benjamin Senior left most of his land to Benjamin Junior. He also made provisions for his wife, Alletica. This seems typical.

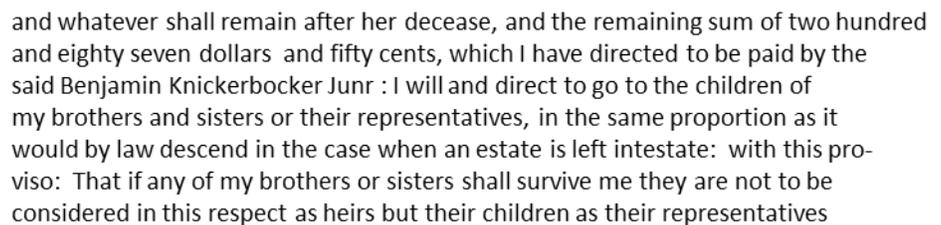
What's interesting about Benjamin's will is that he set aside part of his estate to be split among all of his nieces and nephews.

To be specific: He left an inheritance for all of his Knickerbocker nieces and nephews.

(Susan Pulver's nieces and nephews were not included.)



And whatever shall remain after her decease, and the remaining sum of two hundred and eighty seven Dollars and Fifty cents, which I have directed to be paid by the said Benjamin Knickerbocker Junr: I will and direct to go to the Children of my brothers and sisters, or to their representatives, in the same proportion, as it would by law descend in the case when an estate is left intestate: with this proviso: That if either of my brothers or sisters shall survive me, they are not to be considered in this respect as heirs, but their Children, as their Representatives:



and whatever shall remain after her decease, and the remaining sum of two hundred and eighty seven dollars and fifty cents, which I have directed to be paid by the said Benjamin Knickerbocker Junr: I will and direct to go to the children of my brothers and sisters or their representatives, in the same proportion as it would by law descend in the case when an estate is left intestate: with this proviso: That if any of my brothers or sisters shall survive me they are not to be considered in this respect as heirs but their children as their representatives

Benjamin's generosity might suggest that Benjamin had received special attention from his father Lawrence.

## Benjamin Knickerbocker and his Slaves

Another indication of Benjamin Knickerbocker's wealth was that he owned slaves.

We need to put genealogy aside for a moment, and devote a few words to slavery in New York State.

The Dutch settlers along the Hudson were familiar with slavery long before 1776. (Holland didn't outlaw slavery in its colonies until 1863.) The settler's tolerance of slavery persisted after the Dutch left. (England allowed slavery in its colonies until 1833.)

After the Revolutionary War, northern states within the United States outlawed slavery one at a time.

According to the Columbia University website:

*The first gradual emancipation law in New York was passed in 1799. New York State was the second-to-last Northern state to pass an emancipation law, reflecting the enormous economic strength of slavery in New York in this time period. This law provisioned that all children born into slavery after July 4, 1799 in the state would be free when they turned 25 (for women) or 28 (for men). These age qualifications ensured that slaveholders would be compensated for their loss of property with the labor of their slaves' most productive years. A further law, passed in 1817, granted eventual freedom to slaves born prior to 1799, but it delayed their emancipation for ten years. Slavery in New York State did not come to a complete legal end until July 4, 1827.*

In 1790, slavery in Dutchess County was very scattered. The census district of North East had 3,272 free white residents, and 80 slaves. That's a ratio of 1 slave for each 40 free whites. (By contrast, the Confederacy eventually had a ratio closer to 1 slave to 1 free white.)

Benjamin Knickerbocker owned six slaves.

This made Benjamin one of the largest slaveholders in North East.

1790 Census:  
North East, Dutchess County

Census Sheet

	Free White Males 16+	Free White Males <16	Free White Females	All other free persons	Slaves
2	Phillip Spencer	4	1		6
3	Joshua Perkins	4	4		7
3	Benjamin Knickerbocker	3	3		6
5	Augustine Graham	2	1	3	6

(Benjamin wasn't the only slaveholder on the Salisbury Road. In 1790, Andrew Pulver owned one slave. Andrew Pulver lived next door to Benjamin Knickerbocker.

In the entire 1790 census, we have identified four Knickerbocker households that owned slaves. Two were from the Johannes line in Schaghticoke. The other two were from Lawrence's line in Dutchess County.

Knickerbockers who owned slaves in the 1790 census

	Name	Location		Lineage
1	John Knickerbocker	Schaghticoke	9 slaves	HJ / Johannes / John
2	John Knickerbocker, Jr	Schaghticoke	9 slaves	son of person 1
3	Benjamin Knickerbocker	North East	6 slaves	HJ / Lawrence / Benjamin
4	Margery Knickerbocker	North East	1 slave	Widow of Petrus (HJ / Lawrence / Petrus)

Benjamin mentioned his slaves in his will. He freed two of them, but left his other slaves to his heirs.

*one hundred and twenty five Dollars, to Elizabeth Vanderburgh, wife of John Vanderburgh Fifty dollars; to Elizabeth Pulver, wife of Peter A. Pulver, twelve Dollars and fifty cents, and to my negro man Peter twenty five Dollars*

*two sheep. I give to the said Lawrence Van Alstyne my negro girl Degan. I give to the said Benjamin Knickerbocker Junior my negro man named Harry, and my negro woman named Ann. I give to Philip Knickerbocker, a negro boy now in his possession named Jake, all which I give last bequeath, immediately after my decease, and I further give to my said negro man Peter, and his wife Marie their freedom and a horse equally as good as the one which he now calls and is known by his horse, &c.*

to my negro man Peter, twenty five dollars

I give to the said Lawrence Van Alstyne my negro girl Degan. I give to the said Benjamin Knickerbocker Junior my negro man named Harry, and my negro woman named Ann. I give to Philip Knickerbocker a negro boy now in his possession named Jake, all which [scribble] bequeth immediately after my decease, and I further give to my said negro man Peter, and his wife Marie their freedom and a horse equally as good as the one which he now calls, and is known by his horse

## Peter B. Knickerbocker, son of Benjamin Knickerbocker Junior

We have told the simple part of Benjamin Knickerbocker's story. Now we come to the hard part: Peter B. Knickerbocker, the son of Benjamin Knickerbocker, Junior.

We have already shown that Peter B. Knickerbocker was mentioned in his father's will. The middle initial "B" is distinctive.

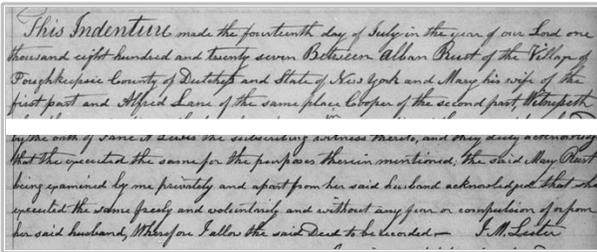
Peter B. Knickerbocker is not easy to track. Based on what we can find, though, it is possible that he never married, and might never have had any children.

The strongest evidence related to Peter B. Knickerbocker is based on the concept of dower rights, the way they were defined in olden times:

### Dower Rights

*If a husband owned property, his spouse had the right to a partial interest in that property.  
If the husband sold the property, his wife was asked to sign a release of her dower rights.*

Dower rights were a very early form of joint title or community property. They protected the wife against the possibility of the husband selling the family farm and skipping town. Early deeds from New York State clearly reflect dower rights.

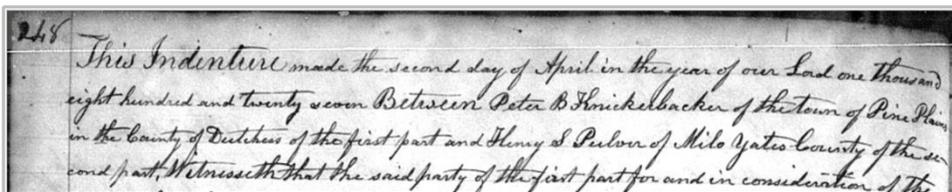


Here is an example of how dower rights were handled. This was a sale by Alban Rust and his wife Mary. At the end of the deed is a statement by the county clerk that he interviewed Mary Rust privately, and that she confirmed that she entered into the sale freely and without any form of compulsion. This is from Dutchess County (book 38, page 249.)

The "without compulsion" language in the above deed was repeated in many other deeds throughout New York State.

The above example has nothing to do with the Knickerbockers, but we picked it for a reason. One page earlier in the deed book is a sale by Peter B. Knickerbocker (book 38, page 248).

In 1827, Peter B. Knickerbocker sold his half interest in a property formerly owned by Benjamin Knickerbocker. The buyer was Henry S. Pulver of Yates County.



Peter was listed by himself. The deed does not mention Peter having a wife.

Peter B. Knickerbocker made three different land sales in Dutchess County. The years were 1827, 1830, and 1833. None of the deeds mention a wife. This covers Peter from ages roughly 34 to 40.

Peter might have been married earlier, when he was in his 20's. His wife might have died. However, if he had children, he typically would have re-married very quickly. It was hard for a single parent – male or female – to raise children while also running a farm or business. Yet here we see a man who apparently didn't have a wife, at least from age 34 to age 40.

We can't identify Peter in census records in 1840, or any of the earlier years.

By 1850, Peter B. Knickerbocker was living in the household of Henry S. Pulver in Yates County.

1850, Milo, Yates County				1855, Milo, Yates County			
Henry S. Pulver	54 M		Farmer	Henry S. Pulver	56 M		
Eliza Pulver	53 F			Eliza Pulver	54 F		Wife
Miriam Pulver	28 F			Maria Pulver	33 F		Wife
Charity Pulver	24 F			Angela Pulver	27 F		Wife
Napoleon B. Pulver	17 M		Farmer	Walter Pulver	21 M		dead
Lehman Pulver	13 F			Coplain Pulver	21 M		Wife
Peter Knickerbocker	52 M		Lebanon	Peter B. Knickerbocker	52 M		Lebanon
				Philp Pulver	28 M		dead
				Caroline Pulver	21 F		Wife
				Albina Pulver	6 F		Wife
				Radie Pulver	4 F		Wife

Peter B. Knickerbocker

In 1855, the census taker recorded Peter's middle initial. The census taker's handwriting was very clear.

This was Peter **B.** Knickerbocker.

There is also a note in military records saying that Peter **B.** Knickerbocker of Yates County received reimbursement for expenses incurred during the War of 1812. (Military records are discussed again later.)

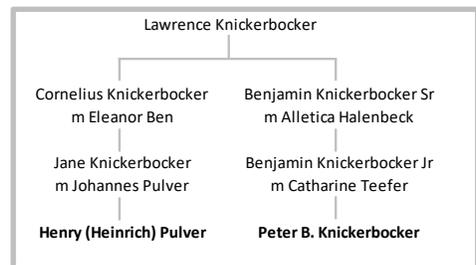
In 1860 and 1865, there was still a Peter Knickerbocker in Yates County. His age was about right, but the census taker didn't record a middle initial. Peter was in the county poor house. (Under NY state law, each county was required to run a poor house that served as a combination nursing home, asylum, detox center, etc.)

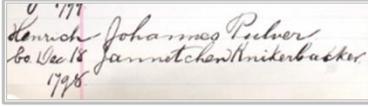
In the state census of both 1855 (while living with the Pulvers) and 1865 (in the poor house), Peter Knickerbocker gave his birth location as Dutchess County.

These four Yates County census records (1850, 55, 60, and 65) cover the years when Peter was roughly 57 to 72.

The above records prove that Henry S. Pulver had some sort of connection with the Knickerbockers.

We believe that Henry Pulver was Peter Knickerbocker's second cousin.





Church records show that Heinrich Pulver was born in December, 1798.

Henry (Henrich) Pulver and his mother will be mentioned again later.

To summarize the most important point: So far there is no evidence that Peter B. Knickerbocker left any descendants.

If anything, Peter B. Knickerbocker might have had a child who either:

- (a) Was adopted by Henry Pulver and his wife Jane [Knickerbocker] Pulver, or
- (b) Married into the family of Henry Pulver

However, even that seems to be a stretch.

Unless some new information becomes available, we will assume that Peter B. Knickerbocker never had children.

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This concludes our discussion of Benjamin Knickerbocker, the son of Lawrence Knickerbocker.

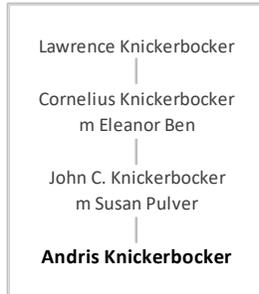
Benjamin's story is simple. It only took about 10 pages.

Now we come to a much more complex story: Benjamin's brother Cornelius.

(Cornelius and Benjamin each only had one son. However, Cornelius had many more grandsons and great grandsons.)

## Cornelius Knickerbocker, the son of Lawrence Knickerbocker

Now we turn to Cornelius Knickerbocker, son of Lawrence Knickerbocker.



Some parts of Cornelius' story are very easy, and very well documented. For example, Cornelius left a detailed will.

We are also lucky that a man named Andris Knickerbocker left a long chain of records.

(Andris was Cornelius' grandson.).

There are a few parts of Cornelius's story that are complicated. We will focus much of our attention on the complicated pieces.

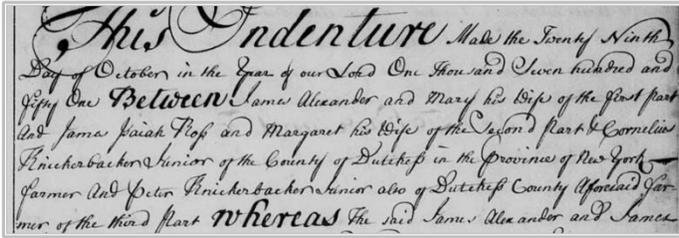
The easiest way to start this story is to go back to the *Knickerbocker Family* from 1908/1909, as published in the NYGBR. William Van Alstyne's work has an excellent summary for Cornelius Knickerbocker.

Cornelis Knickerbocker m. Eleonora Ben, bap. 7 Jan., 1722, at Kingston, N.Y., daughter of Hugo Ben and Elisabeth Schot. On the 1 May, 1768, they became church members at Mount Ross, N.Y. Cornelis Knickerbocker of North East Precinct made his will 7 Jan., 1774, proved 22 Jan., 1789, and recorded at Poughkeepsie in Book of Wills, vol. A, p. 124. In it he mentions wife, son John and daus. Caty, Catarina, Genne, Lana, Margree, Elizabeth, wife of Benjamin Van Leuveren, and Mary, wife of Tobias Miller. He appoints his wife and brothers Benjamin and Peter Knickerbocker executors.

Children:

- i. Elizabeth, bap. 15 Feb., 1747, at Germantown, N.Y.; spon.: Peter Benn and Johanna Lescher; m. Benjamin Van Leuven.
- ii. Marika, bap. 2 Oct., 1748, at Germantown; spon.: Peter and Meseri Knickerbocker; m. Tobias Muller (Miller).
- iii. Laurentz, bap. 3 Feb., 1751, at Linlithgo, N.Y.; spon.: James and Elisabeth Bean; probably d. young as he is not mentioned in his father's will.
- iv. Johannes, b. 12 Nov., 1752; bap. at Rhinebeck, N.Y.; spon.: Jhan and Antje Ben; m. Susanna Pulver.
- v. Cathrina, bap. 8 May, 1757, at Linlithgo; spon.: Benjamin Knickerbocker and Aletteka Halenbeeck, his wife; m. John Schermerhorn.
- vi. Lena, b. 11 July, 1761; bap. at Rhinebeck Flatts, N.Y.; spon.: Johannes Van Wagenen and Geertrui Scott; m. Johannes Hilligass.
- vii. Margaretha, bap. 26 Aug., 1764, at Germantown; spon.: Philip and Maria Knickerlaocker.
- viii. Genne (Jane), m. Johannes Pulver.
- ix. Cornelia, m. Simon Milius. Cornelia probably belongs to this family but is placed here without proof.

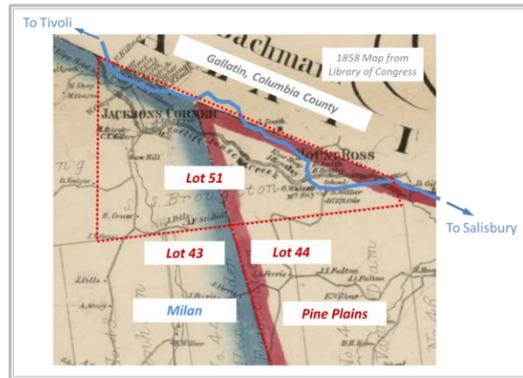
The first land record for Cornelius found so far is from October, 1751. It is a deed for a property near Mt. Ross. (Dutchess County book 2, page 405.)



In this deed, both Cornelius and Peter were described as “Junior.” As discussed earlier, the use of “Junior” was a way to differentiate them from their elders. (Lawrence’s brothers Cornelius and Peter were “Senior.”)

The property was near the intersection of Lots 43, 44, and 51.

The land was within about a quarter-mile of the route from Tivoli to Salisbury.



This property is about a mile and a half of where Peter was eventually buried, in Gallatin. We suspect that this purchase was driven by land speculation. Perhaps Peter lived on this property at some point, but we don’t think Cornelius ever lived there.

We don’t know when this property was sold.

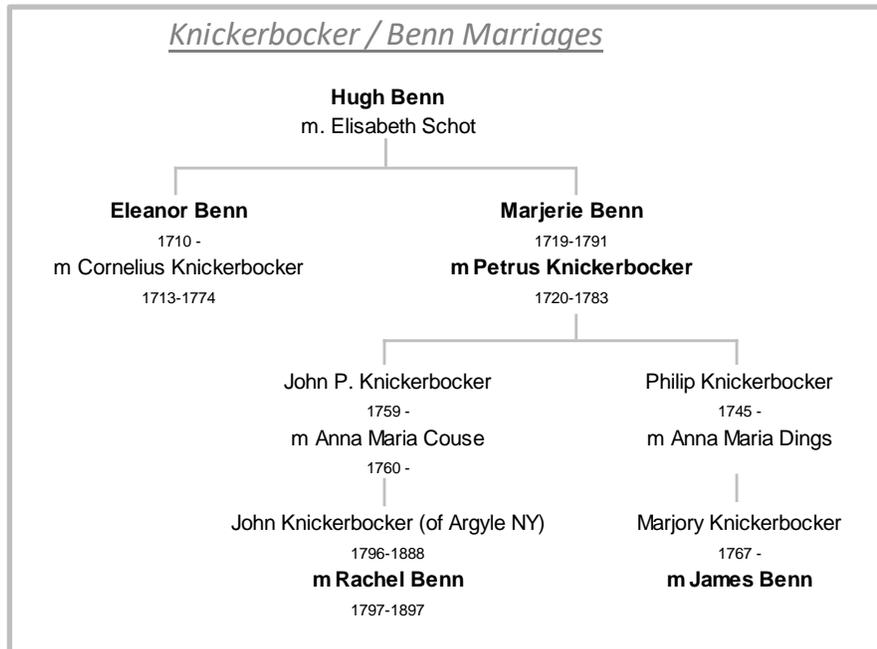
As already shown, Cornelius Knickerbocker Junior “of Rynbek precinct” bought land in Pine Plains in 1764. This fits with Cornelius joining the Dutch church in Mt Ross in 1768, as reported by Van Alstyne. (The Mt Ross church was about 6 miles from Cornelius’ farm in Pine Plains.)

We don’t know what Cornelius was doing in the years immediately prior to 1764.

## The Benn Family

Eleanor Benn was the wife of Cornelius Knickerbocker. She was the daughter of Hugh Benn.

The exact spelling of the last name is unclear; it was sometimes Ben, and sometimes Bain. In the court records, the name was spelled Benn. We will use that spelling here. Hugh Benn had a large family. Two of his daughters married Knickerbockers. This can be pieced together from church records, and is stated in the court records in the Alexander Hamilton book.



There were other marriages between the Knickerbocker and Benn families a couple of generations later.

John P. Knickerbocker married Rachel Benn. We will mention John P. Knickerbocker again later.

Margery Knickerbocker married James Benn. They will not be discussed here.

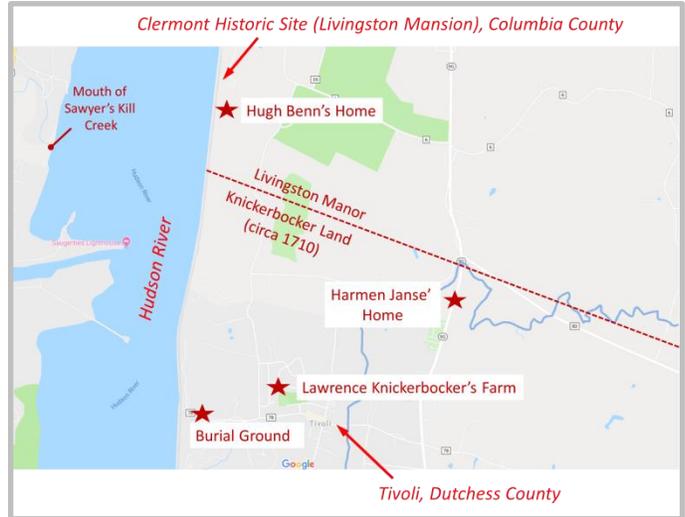
We are not sure how Rachel and James Benn were related to Hugh Benn.

In the 1700's, members the Knickerbocker and Benn testified in the court cases. The records provide useful information. See the book *Law Practice of Alexander Hamilton, Volume 3*. The book discusses a series of court cases that ultimately helped decide the boundary between Dutchess County and Livingston Manor (the predecessor Columbia County).

According to the court records, Hugh Benn was a neighbor of Harmen Janse Knickerbocker and his sons in the early 1700's.

Hugh Benn's house was described as being north of the Knickerbocker property line, along the river, near the spot where the Livingstons would later build their manor home.

(On this map, the boundary of the Knickerbocker land is approximated by the diagonal red line.)



We know the general location of Harmen Janse' house from land surveys.

In 1708, surveyors started at the Hudson and made their way southwest along the property line. They passed the trail to Harmon Janse' house near where the property line crossed the creek.

The surveyors said that there were multiple crossings of the creek, which makes sense. We don't know which creek crossing was closest to Harmen Janse, but this still brackets his location to within a half-mile or so. He was on the south side of the property line, near the creek.

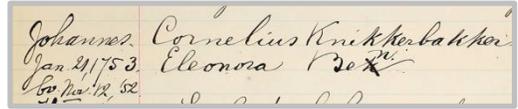
The Benn family eventually moved across the river to Ulster County. (Marjerie Benn married Petrus Knickerbocker in 1742. The marriage record showed Marjerie Benn as being born in Dutchess County, but residing in Kingston, Ulster County. Petrus was born in, and residing in, Dutchess County.)

As a side note ... at one point in the court records, the Benn family is referred to as being "Scots". This fits with statements made on various genealogy sites: Hugh Benn was Scottish.

**John C. Knickerbocker, the son of Cornelius Knickerbocker**

John C. Knickerbocker was the only son of Cornelius Knickerbocker.

John (Johannes) was born on November 12, 1752.



John married Susan Pulver on November 2, 1777.



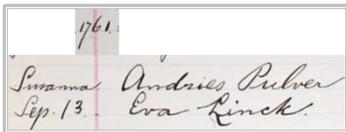
(On the same day, John's sister Jane Knickerbocker married John Pulver.)

There are several church records for John and his wife Susan (Susanna).

As we will show later, Susan's full name was Susan Christine Pulver. (See the bible entries, and Andris Knickerbocker's reminisces, towards the end of this report.)

The 1913 tombstone transcription claimed that Susan Pulver's first name was Rosina. This was probably a transcription error. The tombstone is gone, so we can't be sure.

John Knickerbocker was 25 when he married Susan. This *might* have been John's second marriage. If so, his first wife died shortly after they were married. (There is no record of a first wife.)

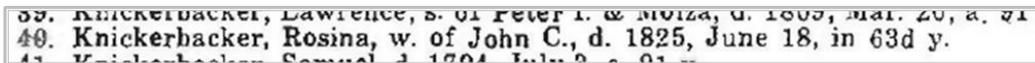


Church records show that Susan Pulver, daughter of Andries Pulver and Eva Link, was baptized on September 13, 1761.

This suggests that Susan was barely 16 when she got married. This would have been very unusual, but it's supported by the records that we have shown.

The transcription of her tombstone says that she died on June 18, 1825. This is 63 years and 9 months after she was baptized.

According to the 1913 transcription, her tombstone said she was in her 63<sup>rd</sup> year.



This is a slight inconsistency. Based on the baptism record, she was already 63 when she died, so she was actually in her 64<sup>th</sup> year.

In either case, she was very young when she got married.

John and Susan had a large family, including a son Andris.

Andris knew a lot about Knickerbocker genealogy.

In 1873, when he was 80 years old, Andris Knickerbocker said this about his siblings:

I had five brothers Peter, Cornelius, Andris (myself) Benjamin, Walter, and John. I had four sisters Eve, Elinor, Christine, Charity who was dumb. Eve married Adam Hoysrodt. Elinor married James Smith (the laziest man in New York.) Christine married John W. Mills. All were married in Dutchess Co. All of my family are dead except myself.

(The full transcript of his reminisces from 1873 is attached at the end of this report.)

We do not have the original handwritten version of Andris' reminisces, but most of this transcription makes sense. One slight exception is that Christine's husband was John Milius, not John Mills.

Andris described his brother-in-law James Smith as the laziest man in New York. Andris also mentioned another brother-in-law, Adam Hiserodt.

According to the above list, John and Susan had six boys and four girls. We believe that there was at least one more child, who died young.

Baptism records show a "Gertjen" who was baptized in 1786. Then, in 1825, there is a probate record for "Gitty" Knickerbocker, with the executors being James Smith and Adam Hiserodt.

This might be an extra child, but it also might be the have been the dumb (deaf?) girl who Andris called "Charity."



There may have been a son named Samuel who died very young, possibly aged 9 months. His tombstone, in the Knickerbocker Burial Ground, was discussed earlier.

## The Pulver Family

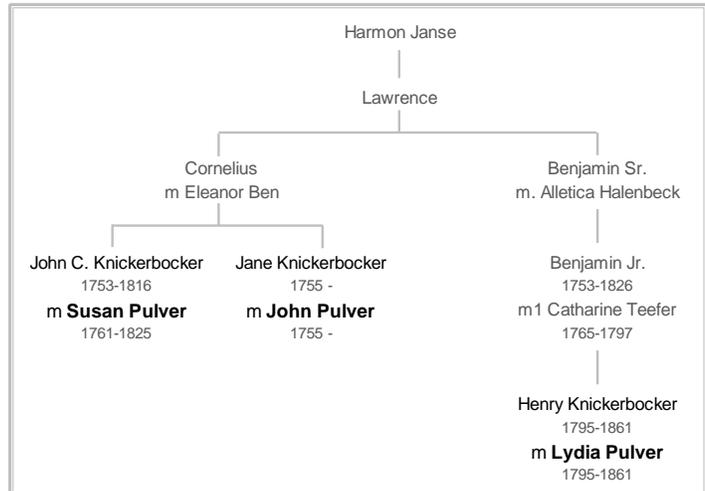
The Pulver family had a large presence in Pine Plains. There is still an area known as Pulver's Corner, east of the Burial Ground.

The Pulvers may have been part of the Palatine group that originated in Germany. The Palatine people became refugees. In the early 1700's some of the Palatines wound up in camps along the Hudson.

If the published histories are correct, several of the Pulvers migrated from East Camp (Germantown, Columbia County) to the area that became known as Pulver's Corners.

Cornelius and Benjamin Knickerbocker were just west of Pulver's Corners.

There were three marriages between the Knickerbocker and Pulver families.



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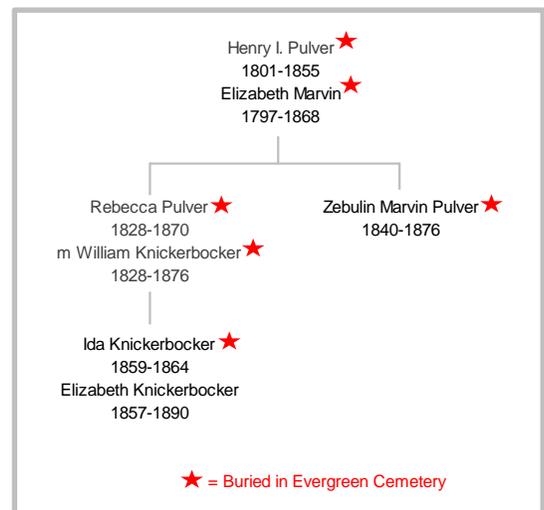
We will briefly mention one more marriage between the Pulvers and Knickerbockers. This one is not part of our main story line.

William Knickerbocker, Rebecca [Pulver] Knickerbocker, and their infant daughter Ida are buried in the Evergreen cemetery in the village of Pine Plains. (Evergreen is 3 miles from the Knickerbocker Burial Ground.) We believe that William Knickerbocker was descended from Lawrence's son John. John's line was concentrated in north-western Connecticut, near the Massachusetts state line.

The story of how William Knickerbocker wound up in Evergreen Cemetery appears to hinge on the movements of Rebecca's father, Henry. Henry Pulver of Ancram, Columbia County had a large family. It is easy to trace their movements thanks to a son with a unique name: Zebelin Marvin Pulver.

Henry Pulver and his family left Ancram in the mid 1840's and moved about 20 miles east, to Sheffield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts. In the 1850 census in Massachusetts, the family included their daughter, Rebecca Pulver. By 1855, the Pulvers were back in Ancram, minus their daughter Rebecca. Rebecca Pulver married William Knickerbocker sometime around 1852

William and Rebecca moved to Connecticut, where they later died. Their bodies were brought to the village of Pine Plains. William and Rebecca's only connection to the village of Pine Plains appears to be that her parents were buried there.



**Andris Knickerbocker, son of John Knickerbocker and Susan Pulver**

Andris Knickerbocker is the hero of this genealogical story. He left an extensive trail of records.

In tracing Andris' descendants, it is important to notice that this man never called himself "Andrew." His name was "Andris." We will say more about that in the next section.



Tracing Andris' children is very easy. We will only give a few highlights here. Details can be found in numerous family trees on Ancestry or any other genealogy site.

In January 1873, when he was 80 years old, Andris Knickerbocker said this about his family:

My name is Andris Knickerbocker. I reside in Oakfield. Genesee County, NY. I am 80 years old. Oct. 2 was my birthday. I was born in the town of North East, now Pine Plains, Dutchess County. I came to Genesee County on May 24 1824, having started from Dutchess Co. on May 10, 1824.

I have 11 children now alive, 5 sons and 6 daughters namely Henry, Tammia, Fanny, Walter, Esther, Susan, Andria, Julia, Margaret, John W. and James B. in the rotation of their respective births. The first four were born in Dutchess Co. Pine Plains. The others were born in Elba, Genesee Co.

Andris died on April 12, 1873. His death was mentioned in the Buffalo Daily Courier.

Andris left a detailed will, which is available on Ancestry.

Even more useful was the probate notice that was issued after his death.

This listed his sons, the married names of his daughters, and all of their locations.

This makes it relatively easy to construct a tree of Andris' descendants.

Julius Knickerbocker	your petitioner	his daughter	Oakfield	Genesee County	New York
Fanny Head		do		Same place	do
Walter Knickerbocker		Son	Genesee	Genesee County	Michigan
Fanny Knickerbocker		Son		Same place	do
James Knickerbocker		Son		Same place	do
John W. Knickerbocker		Son		Same place	do
Andria Knickerbocker Jr.		Son	Phelps	Genesee County	do
Margaret Smith		daughter	Marshall	Cattaraugus County	do
Esther Conroy		daughter	Bradford	Genesee County - Ontario	Canada
Susan Austin		daughter	Datona	Genesee County	New York
Tammia Pettis		daughter	Saratoga	Niagara County	do

In his reminisces in 1873, Andris never mentioned his wife.

We know from other records that Andris was married to Margaret Hiserodt. For example, her name was given on the death certificate of Andris, Junior, who died in 1921 in Michigan.

Henry Knickerbocker was born in Pine Plains, Dutchess Co., N. Y., Aug. 24, 1815. He was the son of Andrus and Margaret (Heisrodt) Knickerbocker, who had a family of eleven children,—five boys and six girls. The elder Knickerbocker was a native of Columbia Co., N. Y., where he was born in 1792. He followed the calling of a farmer. He served in the war of 1812 as a private soldier. After the war he returned to the farm, and in 1825 removed with his family to Genesee County, where he died in 1873, in the eighty-second year of his age.

Some additional information can be found in the 1879 *History of Genesee County, Michigan*.

(As we said: this family is easy to trace.)

This Michigan book mentions that Andris served in the war of 1812.

Here are brief details for the 11 children of Andris Knickerbocker. We have added the locations of the Knickerbocker men for the 1850 census.

Henry (1815-1874) spent his adult life in Genesee County, Michigan. He married Sarah Morrow and had two children: Margaret [Webster] and Andris. (Henry Knickerbocker was still in Oakfield, Genesee County, NY, for the 1850 census.)

Tamma (1820-1893) married William E. Pettis and moved to Medina, Orleans County, NY.

Fanny (1822-1894) married William Heal and remained in Oakfield, Genesee County, NY.

Walter (1824-1907) was married twice. His first wife was Caroline Morrow, who died in 1854. (Walter and Caroline were in the 1850 census in Thetford, Genesee Co, Mi.) Walter and Caroline had 2 sons, James and Charles. Walter's second wife was Mary Abrams. Walter and Mary had several children, including: George, William, Jenna, Julia, Mary, Mary, Anna, Walter, and Herman.

Esther (1826-1920) married Samuel Goodridge and moved to Ontario, Canada.

Susan (1827-1904) married Fayette Austin and remained in Genesee County.

Andris Junior (1829-1921) married Mary Sophia Bauder and moved to Isabella, Michigan. They had at least three children: Emma Cornelia, Eugene, and J. Edward. (Andrew is hard to identify in the 1850 census.)

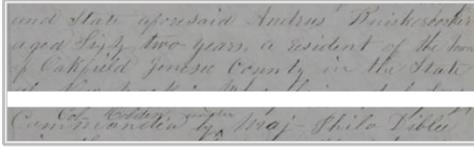
Julia (1833-1920) never married, and remained in Genesee County, New York.

Margaret (1835-1904) married twice. Her first husband, Jacob Rhykerd, disappeared during the Civil War. Her second husband was Orlando Smiley. They moved to Calhoun County, Michigan.

John W. (1836-1914) married Almira Rachel Cooley and moved to Pontiac, Michigan. They had at least 4 children: Adell, Henry, Lewis, and Harvey. (John was living with his parents for the 1850 census.)

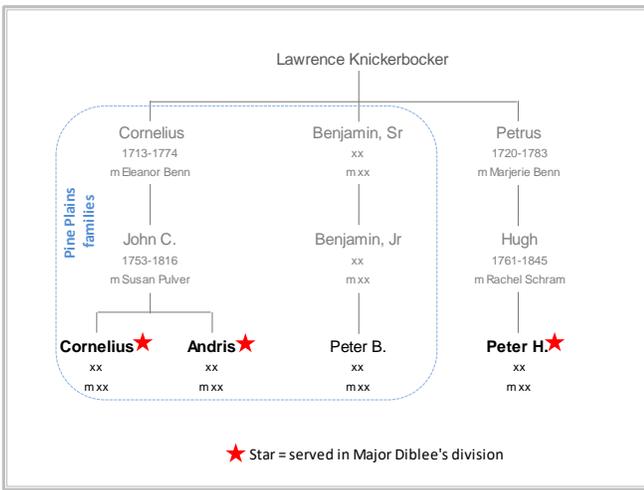
James E. (1837-1895) married and later divorced Medea Torrey. They had one daughter, Jane. (James was living with his parents for the 1850 census.)

The War of 1812



Fold3 has detailed information about Andris Knickerbocker's service in the war of 1812. For example, his commander was Major Philo Diblee.

Shown here are the index cards for three Knickerbockers who served under Major Diblee. (On one card, somebody incorrectly transcribed Andris' name, and called him "Andrew." There is no doubt about this being Andris, thanks to his detailed file.)



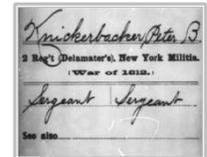
This tree shows the three Knickerbockers in Major Diblee's unit.

Peter H. Knickerbocker and Andris Knickerbocker enlisted on the same day.

All three of these Knickerbocker men eventually moved to western New York. Andris died in Oakfield, Genesee County. Peter H. Knickerbocker died 5 miles away, in Elba. Cornelius died about 20 miles to the east, in Monroe County.

Peter B. Knickerbocker of Pine Plains served in a different division.

So far we have three military records related to Peter B. Knickerbocker. This index card is the first. The second shows that he was living in Yates County when he was reimbursed for his military expenses. The third record for Peter B. Knickerbocker is a confusing entry related to bounty lands.

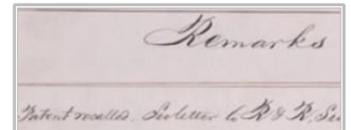


Abstract of Military Bounty Land Warrants Act of March 3, 1835, which have been located - most of them granted for military services, the which are to the issue and Commission of such patents

No. of Patent	Issued	Name of Beneficiary	Where Located	State of Location	Name & Residence of Locator	When Patented	In whose Service was Beneficiary	Date of Commission	Date of Issue of Patent
14978	120	Peter B. Knickerbocker				Dec. 17/35	Command of the 2nd Reg't N.Y.	1812	1835

The bounty lands entry implies that somebody in Virginia initially thought that Peter B. Knickerbocker should be awarded land in Council Bluffs, Iowa. However, Peter's award was rescinded, along with many others.

There's no reason to think that Peter actually moved to Iowa.



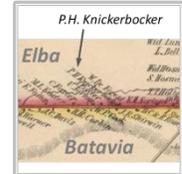
## Orlando Smiley and the Knickerbockers

We will pause for another example of the close connections between the descendants of Lawrence Knickerbocker. This story involves descendants of Cornelius and Petrus.



In the 1820 census, Peter **H.** Knickerbocker and his brother John **H.** Knickerbocker were shown on the same page of the census. Both men were in North East, Dutchess County. (At that point, North East included Pine Plains.)

By the mid 1840's, Peter **H.** Knickerbocker and John **H.** Knickerbocker had moved 300 miles to the west, to Elba, Genesee County, New York.



So far, this story is not very interesting. Two brothers moved to the same town.

It gets more interesting when we consider that Andrus Knickerbocker also left Pine Plains. He moved about 305 miles, to Oakfield, Genesee County. Andrus was about 5 miles west of Peter H. and John H.

We could argue that this was a coincidence. Many families were leaving Dutchess County for "the west."

In this case, though, it's clear that the families knew each other very well. For example, Andrus and Peter **H.** served in the same unit during the war.

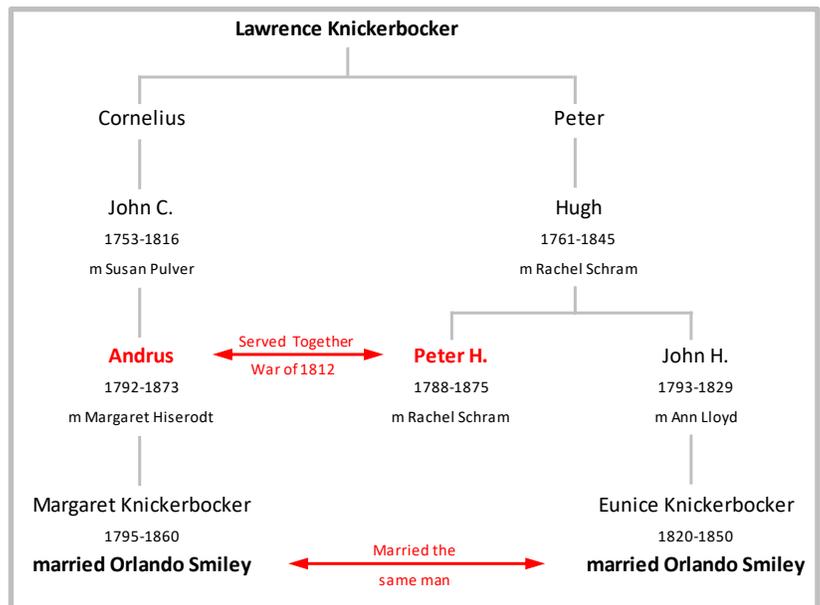
Now we come to John **H.** Knickerbocker's daughter, Eunice.

Eunice Knickerbocker married Orlando Smiley, who also lived along Town Line Road.

Unfortunately, Eunice died at the age of 30.

Orlando Smiley then married Margaret Knickerbocker, the daughter of Andrus Knickerbocker.

Thus, Orlando Smiley had the honor of marrying two great-great-granddaughters of Lawrence Knickerbocker, both of whom were from Pine Plains.



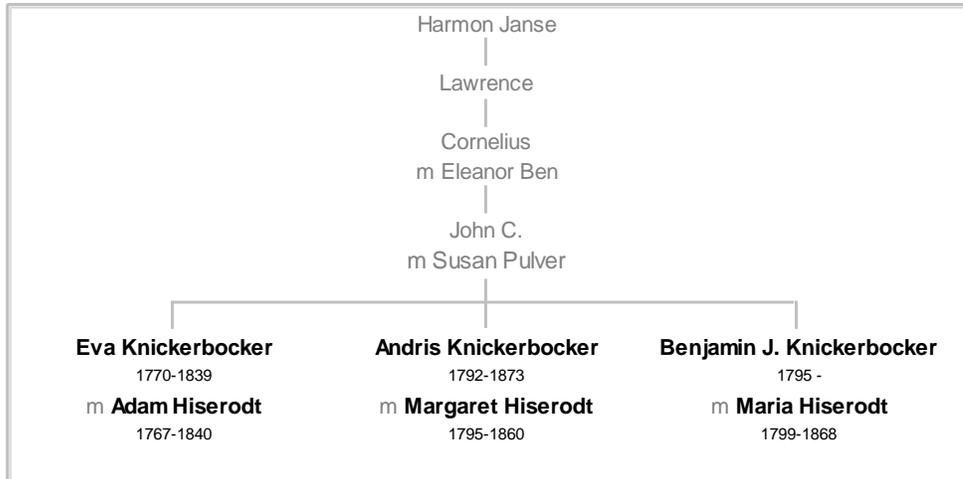
Orlando and Margaret eventually moved to Michigan ... along with dozens of other descendants of Lawrence Knickerbocker.

## The Hiserodt Family

The Hiserodt family had a large presence in Pine Plains. By the mid-1800's there was a school district named after them. (See the 1876 map shown earlier.)

In the early 1800's it appears that the Hiserodts lived just west of the burial ground, closer to the village.

There were at least three marriages between the Knickerbockers and the Hiserodts:



Margaret and Maria Hiserodt were sisters. Both of them were the daughters of Henry Hiserodt, who apparently lived very close to the burial ground. (Margaret and Maria Knickerbocker were both involved in real estate transactions involving the estate of Henry Hiserodt. The deeds describe them as Henry's daughters.)

Adam Hiserodt might have been the son of a man named John Hiserodt, who lived just to the north. (Adam was involved in a real estate transaction after John died.)

Adam Hiserodt was one of the executors for Susan [Pulver] Knickerbocker's estate in 1826. This will be discussed later.

The book *Little Nine Partners* by Isaac Hunting contains a brief discussion of the Hiserodt family. We view this book as unreliable, but interested readers can find the book via Google Books.

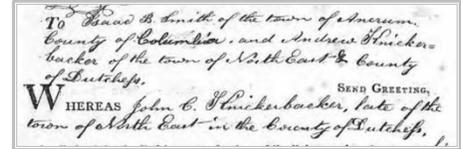


## Probate Records for John Knickerbocker and Susan Pulver

In this section we will discuss the probate records for John Knickerbocker and his wife Susan.

Neither John nor Susan left a will.

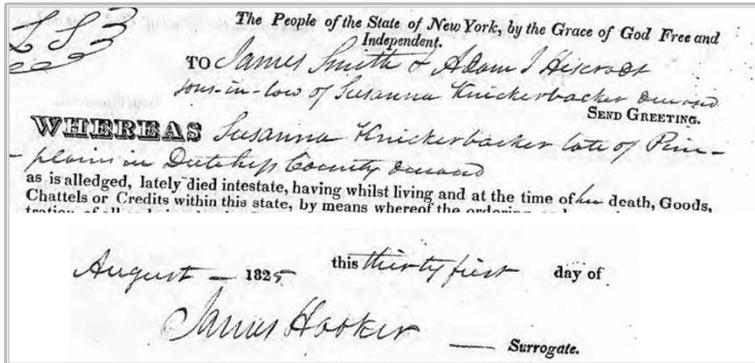
John's probate record doesn't tell us anything useful.



However, Susan's probate records are a goldmine.

We can tell from the records that something went horribly wrong during Susan's probate. The case lasted for more than 20 years. (She died in 1825, but her probate case was back in court in 1845.)

This is good luck for us, as genealogists.



After Susan died, her executors were Adam Hiserodt and James Smith. They were both sons-in-law of John and Susan Knickerbocker.

Adam Hiserodt died in 1840. Apparently the probate process still wasn't finished, so James Smith would have been the responsible party.

Late in life, Andris Knickerbocker described James Smith as the laziest man in New York. The probate of Susan [Pulver] Knickerbocker's estate probably had something to do with this.

Andris Knickerbocker was back in court in 1845, 20 years after Susan died. We don't know exactly why, but we speculate that there must have been issues with tangible property, such as a farm. Soft possessions, such as clothing or furniture, could never have caused a 20 year probate process.

The booklet *Ancestors and Descendants of Lucy Knickerbocker* (1960) contains a partial transcription of the 1845 probate file. The booklet is available at the Albany library.

*The following petition for a compulsory accounting, dated Sept. 30, 1845, in the matter of the Estate of Susannah Knickerbocker, Box 1130, Dutchess County Surrogates Office. The petition reads in part:*

*“that Susanna Knickerbocker, late of the said town of Pine Plains, departed this life on or about the 18<sup>th</sup> day of June A.D. 1825, leaving no last will and testament, and leaving a large amount of personal property: etc-“*

*That the said Susanna left her surviving eight children, to wit:*

*Eve Hiserodt wife of said Adam, who has since died leaving about eight children.*

*Cornelius Knickerbocker, who has since died leaving about 11 or 12 children and among them one John C. to whom he (Cornelius) assigned all his property before his death.*

*Andris Knickerbocker, your said petitioner*

*Peter I. Knickerbocker of Kinderhook, Col.Co.*

*John P. Knickerbocker of Claverack, Col. Co.*

*Benjamin I. Knickerbocker of – Yates County.*

*Eleanor Smith, wife of said James, of Claverack, Col. Co.*

*Lucretia Miller, wife of said John W. Miller of Yates, Orleans Co.*

*being the only persons entitled to an interest in her estate.”*

*“and your petitioner further shows that as such heir and next of kin of his said mother and also an attorney for his two brothers Peter I. and John P. Knickerbocker and his nephew John C. Knickerbocker he has a just and legal demand against said surviving and more than eighteen months having elapsed, etc.”*

The above information seems reasonable.

However, we have different feelings about the following claims, which are also in the booklet:

*Peter I. Knickerbocker married Mary (Maiza) Ferguson; record of marriage not found; see marriage record of his dau. Lucy.*

*Children:*

*Lawrence, died Mar 20 1899 (?) ae 91-10, buried Pine Plains Cemetery*

*Henry, from grave stone records of Knickerbocker Family Pine Plains Dutchess County, N.Y.*

*John, ditto*

*Charlotte, ditto*

*\* Lucy, born Dutchess County, Dec 12, 1811, married Cornelius Matratt, died at Waterford, N.Y., Aug 19, 1868.*

*\* Family bible. In possession of compiler*

The list of children is ridiculous. There is absolutely no basis for claiming that there are tombstones for Peter's so-called children, Henry, John, and Charlotte. This false information raises doubts about all of this additional information.

For this report, we will ignore these additional claims, and focus instead on the probate information. Our next topic is the Benjamin Knickerbocker who lived in Yates County.

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History of Yates County and Schuyler Counties

We are about to discuss historic records in Yates, Steuben, and Schuyler Counties.

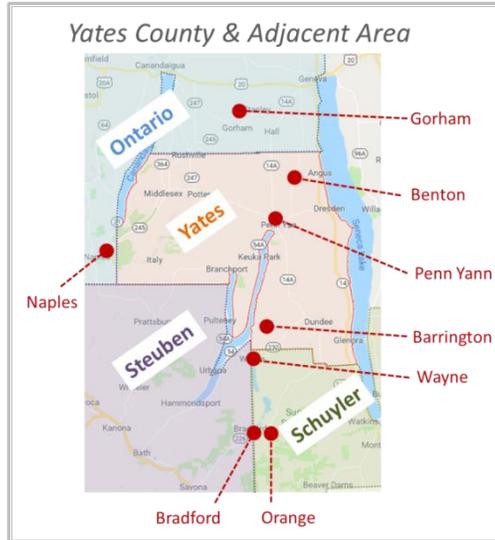
First, though, we need to review some history.

Shown here are the current boundaries of Yates County, and the names of some of the towns in the nearby area.

In the past the map was very different.

For example, Yates County didn't even exist at the time of the 1820 census.

(Yates County was initially formed in 1823.)



For the 1820 census, the northern part of Yates County part of Ontario County. For example, Benton shows up in Ontario County in the 1820 census, but Yates County in 1830.

The southern part of Yates County was originally part of Steuben County. For example, the town of Bennington didn't exist in the 1820 census. Instead, the 1820 census included a very large town called "Wayne" in Steuben County. By the 1830 census, Wayne was much smaller. Barrington and other new towns had been created and had moved to Yates County.

Schuyler County was created in 1854, and, once again, Steuben County got smaller. For example, the area around the town of Orange was originally part of Steuben County.

As we will discuss, some of the Pine Plains Knickerbockers wound up in the areas near Wayne, Bennington, Orange, and Benton.

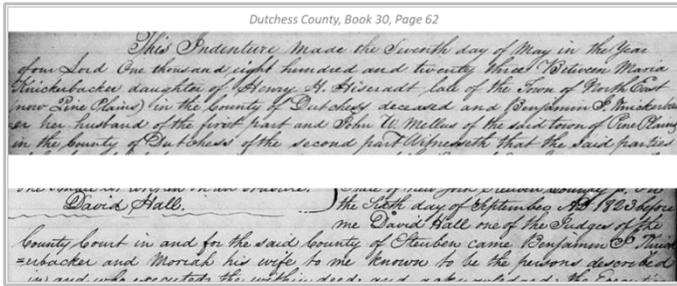
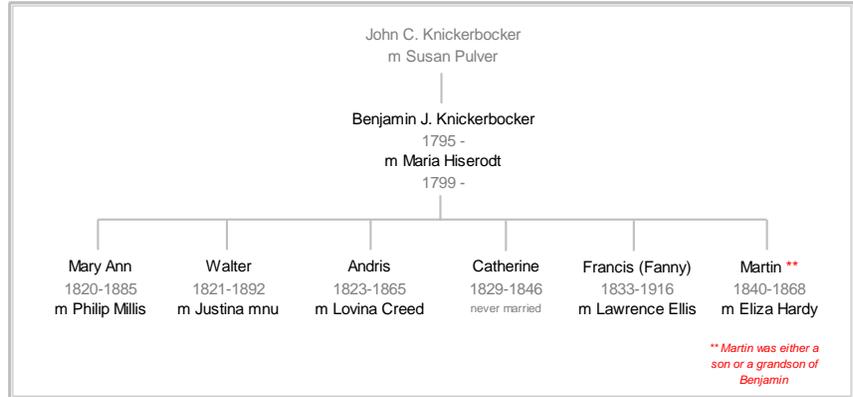
(There was a different line of Knickerbockers in Ontario County, in the area around Gorham. They were descended from Lawrence's son Harmon. They are outside the scope of this report.)

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**Benjamin J. Knickerbocker, the son of John C. Knickerbocker**

There is no doubt that Andris had a brother named Benjamin Knickerbocker. His middle initial was "J" (or possibly "I".)

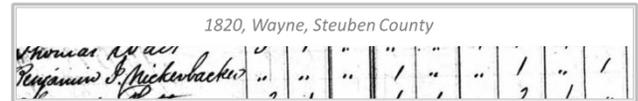
We finally have enough information to tell at least part of Benjamin's story.



Dutchess County records show that Benjamin J. Knickerbocker and his wife Maria Knickerbocker sold land inherited from her father, Henry Hiserodt. The deed was in May, 1823.

To sign the deed, Benjamin and his wife appeared before a judge in Steuben County.

In the 1820 census, Benjamin J. Knickerbocker was in Wayne, Steuben County. The two adults were aged 16 to 25. The household had 1 female under 10 (Mary Ann?). The fact that there was a child in the house means Benjamin J. Knickerbocker was probably born before 1800. Thus we can bracket Benjamin's birth between about 1795 and 1800.



If we look at his neighbors in 1820, we see something interesting. By 1830, several of his neighbors were in Barrington, Yates County. We don't think that all of these people physically moved to the new county. Instead, we believe that these people were already living in the area that was part of the Steuben-to-Yates land transfer.

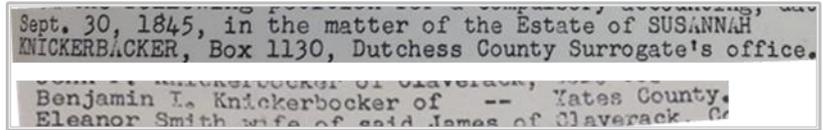
Thus, we believe that Benjamin Knickerbocker was in the Barrington area in 1820. (Unfortunately, there isn't any record that Benjamin Knickerbocker ever owned land in Yates or any surrounding county.)

By 1830, it appears that Benjamin physically moved about 15 miles north, to Benton, Yates County. The family had two adults, aged 30 to 39. This fits with Benjamin being born around 1795. There were two males aged 5 to 9 (Walter and Andris?) 1 female under 5 (Catherine), and 1 female 10-14 (Mary Ann?).



This 1830 entry doesn't have a middle initial, but we think it's the right man. The ages fit, and, as we will discuss soon, Benjamin's children had ties to Benton.

The 1845 probate records for Susan Knickerbocker show that Benjamin was in Yates County.



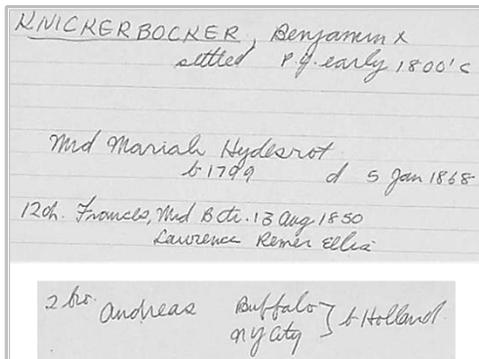
More details of the 1845 petition were shown earlier. Andris did not claim power of attorney for Andris, and might not have known exactly where Benjamin was living.

The above information gives us a solid foundation for tracing Benjamin J. Knickerbocker, and his wife, Maria Hiserodt.

Now we will turn to FamilySearch, and the collection of called "Swann Vital Records." The term "Vital Records" is a bit of an exaggeration. This is an informal collection of index cards and newspaper articles that summarize whatever was collected by the town historians, including Frank Swann.

There are several pertinent records in the Swann collection.

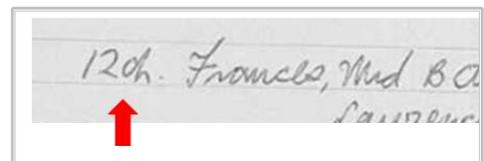
We will start two index cards with some scribbled information. These index cards serve two purposes. First, this is key information about Benjamin Knickerbocker. Second, this illustrates that these "Vital Records" need to be treated with some caution.



According to these index cards, Benjamin Knickerbocker settled in Penn Yann in the early 1800's.

Benjamin's wife was Mariah Hydesrot, who was born in 1799, and died on 5 January 1868.

The Swann records have scribbled text that appears to say something like "12dh." Unfortunately we don't know what this scribble means. It might say "12ch" and mean that Benjamin had twelve children. That would be difficult to explain.



Next we see that Francis married Lawrence Remer Ellis in Benton Center, on 13 Aug 1850.

The second index card says that Benjamin had 2 brothers: Andreas in Buffalo, and an unnamed brother in New York City. Supposedly Andris and his brother were born in Holland.

The "b Holland" scribble clearly shows that these "records" need to be treated with caution. Whoever gave this information to the county historian had no clue about the early history of the Knickerbockers.

We are lucky, though. The hints contained in these two index cards are enough to get us started. We will show several different puzzle pieces. Taken together, these puzzle pieces tell a convincing story.

**Mariah, wife of Benjamin**

Mariah [Hiserodt] Knickerbocker died in Clinton County, Michigan on 5 January 1868.

To the Hon. Secretary of State of Michigan:						
Return of Deaths Recorded in the County of <i>Clinton</i>						
<i>Feb</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>1868</i>	<i>Wm. King Scott</i>	<i>W. King</i>		
<i>Jan</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1868</i>	<i>Mariah Knickerbocker</i>	<i>W. King</i>	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>64</i>

Mariah was buried in St Johns Cemetery. The cemetery is close to the line that separates Clinton County from Iona County. The cemetery is also near Hubbardston, which straddles the county line.

1850 Census for Bradford, Steuben Co.

<i>98</i>	<i>William Knickerbocker</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>M</i>
	<i>Maria</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>97</i>	<i>Walter</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>M</i>
	<i>William</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>F</i>
	<i>James</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>M</i>
	<i>Mary</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>F</i>
	<i>John</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>M</i>
	<i>Bartholomew</i>	<i>05</i>	<i>F</i>

In 1850, Maria was in Steuben County. (Benjamin Knickerbocker was gone by 1850.)

Mariah was living next door to Walter Knickerbocker. We will discuss Walter later.

In 1860, Maria was in the newly formed Schuyler County.

She was four households away from Walter Knickerbocker.

This census record, from June 1860, shows Martin Knickerbocker living with Mariah. We'll discuss Martin later.

1860 Census for Orange, Schuyler Co.

<i>83</i>	<i>Walter Knickerbocker</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>M</i>
	<i>Austina</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>F</i>
	<i>Louis</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>M</i>
	<i>Mary</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>F</i>
	<i>John</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
	<i>Bartholomew</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>F</i>
	<i>Sarah</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>F</i>
	<i>Henry</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>M</i>
<i>87</i>	<i>Mariah Knickerbocker</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>F</i>
	<i>Martin</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>M</i>

**Mary Knickerbocker Millis, the daughter of Benjamin and Mariah**

Several of the children of Maria [Hiserodt] Knickerbocker are easy to trace because of their proximity to their mother.

Near the Michigan grave of Mariah Knickerbocker, we find Mary Ann Millis, the wife of Philip Millis.

Mary is easy to trace.

The death certificate of daughter Helen shows that Helen was born in Walworth County, Wisconsin. It also shows that Mary's maiden name was Knickerbocker.

ARIZONA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH		STANDARD CER
		State 1
2. FULL NAME <u>Helen Klida Hyde</u>		
(a) Residence, No. <u>Marana, Arizona</u>		
9. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) <u>Walworth County</u>		
(State or country) <u>Wisconsin</u>		
10. NAME OF FATHER <u>Philip Millis</u>		
11. BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (city or town)		
(State or country) <u>Unknown</u>		
12. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <u>Mary Ann Knickerbocker</u>		
13. NEWBORN AGE AND SEX		

1850 Census for Wisconsin

in Walworth Dist. 10 in the County of Walworth Wis.

<u>Philip Millis</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Mary Ann Millis</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>F</u>
<u>Alfred C. Millis</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Oliver C. Millis</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Wagon C. Millis</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>F</u>
<u>Thomas C. Millis</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Phil S. Millis</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Charles C. Millis</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>M</u>

The Village of And Wisconsin in the County of Jefferson

<u>And</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Emma</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>F</u>
<u>Emily</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>F</u>
<u>Joseph</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Louise</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>F</u>

In 1850, when Mary lived in Wisconsin, she was about 10 miles from the family of Andris Knickerbocker.

Mary moved to Michigan in about 1855. (She was in Clinton County for the 1860 census.)

Mary had a son named Hiram.

<u>Hiram S. Millis</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Clinton County Mich</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>Yates County, N.Y.</u>
<u>Emma S. Clark</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>Clinton " "</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>Yates County, N.Y.</u>

When Hiram Millis of Clinton County Michigan got married, he listed his birth place as Yates County, New York.

Thus, Mary [Knickerbocker] Millis had roots in Yates County, and was buried in the same Clinton County cemetery as Maria Knickerbocker.

### Francis Knickerbocker Ellis, the daughter of Benjamin and Mariah

Francis [Knickerbocker] Ellis was married to Lawrence Remer Ellis. Francis and Lawrence were mentioned in the Yates County Records that were shown earlier.

Francis is buried in Hubbardston, Iona County, Michigan.

The Swann Vital Records have this to say about Lawrence Remer Ellis:

Jacob and Mary Ellis, had 7 children, among them Lawrence Remer, mrd. Miss Knickerbocher Moved to Iona, Michigan.

1860 Census for Hubbardston

<u>Lawrence R. Ellis</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Fanny</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>F</u>
<u>Karotta</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>"</u>
<u>Charles L.</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>George</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>"</u>

Francis and Lawrence are easy to trace in census records.

It appears they arrived in Hubbardston in around 1856.

**Andris Knickerbocker, the son of Benjamin and Mariah**

We've already shown that there was an Andris Knickerbocker in Wisconsin in 1850. His occupation was listed as "Sawyer" which means he worked in a saw mill.

By 1860, Andris Knickerbocker had moved back east. He was in Tioga County, Pennsylvania, which is just south of the NY state line. He was now listed as a foreman in a saw mill.

1860 Census for Chatham, Tioga County, PA

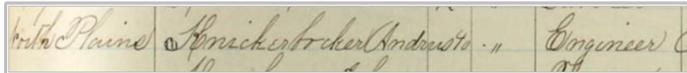
1240	Andris Knickerbocker	31	m	Foreman in Saw Mill	700	300		
	Lovina	27	f					
	Emma	18	f					
	James	16	m					
	Lucretia	11	f				His	
	Eathea	5	f				W. G.	
	Charles	3	m					
	Elizabeth	40	f				Pa	
	Simon Oakley	28	m	Foreman in S. mill			W. G.	
	Jesse Spencer	27	m	Sawyer	✓			
	Martin Knickerbocker	17	m	"	✓			
	Eathea Jackson	18	f				Pa	
	Jeanette Bently	16	f					

Andris' household in 1860 was complicated. It appears that his own family was listed first, including his daughter Lucretia who was born in Wisconsin.

Next are a series of people who apparently worked in the saw mill.

Among those listed here is Martin Knickerbocker, age 17, who was a Sawyer.

The date of the Chatham census was July 31, 1860. We suspect that the "Martin Knickerbocker" shown here is the same person shown with Maria Knickerbocker in June of 1860. (We will discuss Martin later.)



By 1863, when he registered for the Civil War draft, Andris was living in North Plains, Michigan. (North Plains is the township that contains the village of Hubbardston.)

We don't know when or where Andris died, but his widow Lovina was still in the Hubbardston area in 1870.

**Martin Knickerbocker, a descendant of Benjamin J. Knickerbocker**

As we have shown, in 1860 Andris and his family were just south of the New York State line, in Tioga County, Pennsylvania. One of the boarders is a man named Martin Knickerbocker.

Moving forward, we can easily trace Martin Knickerbocker's fate. He enlisted in the Union Army at Elmira, New York, which is just north of Tioga County, PA. Martin wound up being a patient in the Union hospital near Louisville, Kentucky. He married Eliza Hardy, one of the nurses. He and his wife moved just across the state line to Madison County, Indiana. (This was her hometown.)

Martin's war records show that he was born in Benton, New York (which is in Yates County).

Knickerbocker, Martin										762
ENLISTED					MUSTERED IN					
YEAR	DAY	MONTH	YEAR	WHERE	YEAR	DAY	MONTH	YEAR	WHERE	REMARKS
1862	11	August	1862	Edwina	1867	13	August	1867	Pvt. at Louisa	

LEFT THE ORGANIZATION									
HOW	YEAR	DAY	MONTH	YEAR	WHERE	REMARKS			
M.O.	13	June	1867		Pvt. at Louisa, Ky.				

Born Benton, N.Y. Age - years, Occupation (Military), Medicine, Engineer, Surge, Dist. By: Blood, Hair, Color, Complexion, Length, 5 ft. 5 in. high, Cr. Sub. Dist.

Martin died in 1868. In his will, Martin Knickerbocker of Indiana mentioned owning property in Tioga County.

As we have already shown, there is some confusing information about Martin Knickerbocker in 1860. It appears that Martin was recorded twice in the census. In June, he was living with Maria Knickerbocker. In July, he was living with Andris Knickerbocker. This appears to be the same man.

We cannot positively identify the father of Martin Knickerbocker, but he is clearly from this line. We have shown him as a son of Benjamin Knickerbocker, but he might have been a grandson.

**The other Martin Knickerbocker**

There was another man named Martin Knickerbocker who is sometimes confused with the man we have been discussing.

Martin B. Knickerbocker served in the Michigan infantry during the civil war. He died in 1906 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
 Department of State - Division of Vital Statistics  
 398  
 COUNTY OF Grand Rapids  
 TOWNSHIP OF Grand Rapids  
 CITY OF Grand Rapids  
 FULL NAME Martin B. Knickerbocker  
 SEX Male COLOR White DATE OF BIRTH (Month) August (Day) 18 (Year) 1862  
 AGE 63 years, months, days  
 SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED widower  
 AGE AT MARRIAGE \_\_\_\_\_ (If married, age at first marriage) 24 years  
 NUMBER OF CHILDREN (Total of 2, children, if none, 1, are living)  
 BIRTHPLACE (State or country) Conn.  
 NAME OF FATHER Philo Knickerbocker  
 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country) Unknown  
 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Hannah Green

Martin B. Knickerbocker is easy to trace because of his death certificate.

Martin B. Knickerbocker was born in Connecticut. His father was Philo Knickerbocker.

Martin B. Knickerbocker's lineage was Harmen Janse / Lawrence / John / Salmon / Philo / Martin.

Martin B. Knickerbocker was not the man who died in Indiana, or the man with connections to Yates County.

**Walter Knickerbocker, the son of Benjamin and Mariah**

Walter Knickerbocker (1820-1892) was almost certainly a son of Benjamin and Maria.

Walter apparently thought of himself as a Yates County native. For example, Walter reported in the 1855, 65, and 75 census that he was born in "Yates County." (To nitpick: this is impossible, since Yates County didn't exist when Walter was born.)

1850, Bradford, Steuben County				
98	Walter Knickerbocker	6-1	F	
	Maria do	10	m	
07	Walter do	30	m	J Farmer
	Esther do	20	F	
	Lucas do	8	m	
	Mary do	6	f	
	John do	3	m	
	Catherine do	0-1	F	

In 1850, Walter lived next to Maria Knickerbocker.

In 1855, Walter was 3 houses from Maria. In 1860, Walter was 6 houses from Maria.

Walter Knickerbocker remained in Schuyler County when the rest of his family went to Michigan.

At some point, though, some of Walter's descendants spent time in Michigan. Walter's grandson, Henry Ward Knickerbocker (1892-1984) was born in Michigan before returning to Schuyler County NY.

This report will not attempt to trace Walter's children.

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***The Other Walter Knickerbocker***

*There were two men named Walter Knickerbocker who were born in about 1820. Both of them had mothers named "Maria."*

*We have described the Walter Knickerbocker who was the son of Benjamin and Maria [Hiserodt] Knickerbocker, and lived in the Yates / Steuben / Schuyler area.*

*The other "Walter Knickerbocker" was baptized in 1820 in Columbia County. His parents were John and Maria [Kilmer] Knickerbocker. His full name was Walter Philip Knickerbocker. In 1849, Walter P. Knickerbocker was charged with passing counterfeit bills in Hudson, Columbia County. Walter P. Knickerbocker then moved to Massachusetts, and later to Rhode Island.*

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### **Catherine Knickerbocker, probably a daughter of Benjamin**

We have one more Knickerbocker in Yates County who is probably part of Benjamin's line.

The only thing we have is an obituary from Findagrave. (Thanks, Kathleen Oster.)

*Northern Christian Advocate – 1846*

*Catherine Knickerbocker died in Benton, Yates Co., at the house of Caleb Legg, March 11, 1846, aged 17 years and 2 months. The disease that terminated fatally, was supposed to be a partial inflammation about the head; and which deprived its victim of consciousness for a portion of the time*

We do not know why a young lady named "Knickerbocker" was living with Caleb Legg. The Swann Vital Records show that Caleb Legg was married to Elizabeth Henderson in December, 1828, in Milo, Yates County. Census records show that Caleb was born in about 1806.

Since Catherine was only 17, and living with a family that wasn't made up of Knickerbockers, it is possible that her father had already died. This might fit with Benjamin J. Knickerbocker.

### **When Did Benjamin Knickerbocker Die?**

We are about to close our discussion of Benjamin Knickerbocker.

To summarize: we have shown that there were four Knickerbockers (Mariah, Mary, Francis, and Andris) in the area of Hubbardston, Michigan. All four had connections to Yates County, New York. Thus, we believe that Mariah was the wife of Benjamin. Mary, Francis, and Andris were children of Benjamin and Mariah. Walter Knickerbocker and Martin Knickerbocker also fit into this line.

Before ending this discussion, we need to explicitly state that we don't know where or when this Benjamin Knickerbocker died.

The 1820 and 1830 census records, plus Maria's travels, are a nice tight story. Unfortunately, though, the last record that we have is when Andris claimed that Benjamin was still in Yates County as late as 1845.

By 1850, Mariah Knickerbocker was a few miles south of Yates County. Benjamin was gone.

It is possible that Benjamin died sometime between 1845 and 1850. The Swann records are silent about this.

It is also possible that something else happened. Divorce was very rare in those times, but we cannot rule it out.

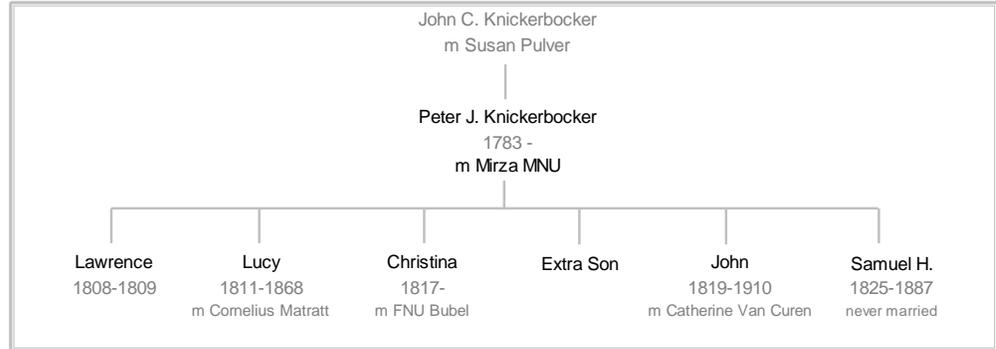
We will discuss some interesting possibilities in the next update of the report called "Many Benjamin Knickerbockers."

**Peter J. Knickerbocker, the son of John C. Knickerbocker**

We know from the probate record that Andris had a brother named Peter I (or J), and that Peter was living in Kinderhook in 1845.

We will show some puzzle pieces for Peter J. Knickerbocker.

We believe that he had 6 children, though we can only identify 5 of them.



Name:	Petrus Knickerbocker
Gender:	Male
Christening Date:	18 Jan 1784
Christening Place:	REFORMED CHURCH, WEST COPAKE, COLUMBIA, NEW YORK
Birth Date:	05 Dec 1783
Father's Name:	Johannis Knickerbocker
Mother's Name:	Susanna Pulver

FamilySearch has a transcription of Peter's birth record, from December, 1783.

In the fall of 1805, Peter J. Knickerbocker was a witness during the probate of Benjamin Knickerbocker (senior).



In 1809, Peter Knickerbocker and his wife buried their son, Lawrence, in the Knickerbocker Burial Ground in Pine Plains.

Peter's wife name appears to be "Mirza."

In the 1810 census, Peter J. Knickerbocker was heading a household near Benjamin Knickerbocker. (John C. Knickerbocker was still alive, but was no longer a head of household. We don't know where John was living.)

Peter had a very large household that is hard to decipher. The household probably including some siblings.

In 1820, there is a Peter J. Knickerbocker in Wayne, Steuben County. He might have been in the area that later moved to Yates County.

We are basing the 1820 identification on the middle initial.



## John Knickerbocker (son of Peter J. Knickerbocker)

We believe that Peter's son John Knickerbocker died in 1910 in Tompkins County, New York. His obituary is shown here.

ITHACA DAILY NEWS, MONDAY EVENING, AUGUST 15, 1910.

### GUNMAKER OF 91 FALLS INTO SLEEP

Aged John Knickerbocker  
Never Had a Doctor but  
Once — Worked on First  
Hammerless Gun.

John Knickerbocker, who died at 1 o'clock Sunday morning at the home of his son, Frank Knickerbocker at 212 East Railroad Avenue, had reached the age of 91 years. He is survived by a son, Frank, of this city, an employe of the Ithaca Gun Company, and a daughter, Mrs. Mary Schultz of Merrifield, N. Y.

The funeral will be held at 2:30 o'clock tomorrow afternoon from the residence. Interment will be in Lake View Cemetery.

The death of Mr. Knickerbocker removes one of the oldest, if not the oldest, persons of the city. Henry B. Lord, for many years cashier of the First National Bank and a trustee of the university, will be 90 years of age in a few months.

Mr. Knickerbocker was a tool-maker by trade. He had been employed in a number of gun factories of the east. He never worked in the Ithaca factory, as his health for several years had prevented active occupation. He had been a widower for 40 years, and for that time had lived with his children, for the most part.

The story of Mr. Knickerbocker's life as told by his son at his residence this morning deals with the early history of the state. To go back to the beginning, one must begin with the Wyoming Valley massacre, in 1778. After this massacre a young man, named Pulver, all of whose family had been killed, sought shelter with the Knickerbocker family, near Hudson, and lived with the family for some time. He finally married one of the daughters, and as a result of his description of that fertile country, Mr. Knickerbocker's grandfather moved into the Wyoming Valley. Here he settled, and he gave to his sons such a farm. It was here, on Oct. 6, 1819, that John Knickerbocker was born.

Of his father's early life, the son Frank can tell but little. He knows that he went to Iowa when that state was young, and settled. He has heard his father tell about going to the spring and finding wild cats taking their morning drink.

Frank Knickerbocker says the aged man married his mother, who was a Miss Van Kuren, near Hudson; but he does not know the exact date. It is of his father's experiences as a tool-maker that the son can tell most. Early in his career John Knickerbocker worked for the Colts at Hartford. Then he went to Bridgeport, where he was with the Wheeler-Wilson company. Next he went to Providence, where he was employed by Pratt & Whitney and Brown & Sharp. He worked for the Providence Tool Company until the panic of 1873, when he bought a little truck farm, which he worked for about eight years, finally returning to his trade, to work for the Lamphrey firm at Phoenix, R. I. From there he went with the Harrington-Richardson Company and worked on the first American hammerless gun. After this he was employed in Syracuse, in Ilion, in Batavia and Cortland.

After he ceased work at his trade, Mr. Knickerbocker came to live with his son, with whom he died. He was a vigorous, hardy man up to the last years. He was wont to declare, until a few years ago, that he had never been under the doctor's care but once. That was when he had the small-pox, in Hartford.

About two years ago Mr. Knickerbocker suffered an attack of the grip and since that time his health had failed rapidly. For a number of months his mind has not always been clear. About two weeks ago he took to his bed.

In the parlor at 212 East Railroad Avenue hangs an enlarged picture of John Knickerbocker, made from an old daguerreotype. It shows him as a man of about 35 years. He is dressed in the high collar and stock of the period. His hair is parted on either side and brought up in a little swirl in the middle. At the time of his death he was of slight build. He wore a moustache, whereas at the time the early picture was made he had chin whiskers.

The aged man's death was calm and peaceful, the family said this morning. He seemed not to suffer at all, but simply went to sleep and did not waken.

This obituary appears to include both fact and fiction.

In the obituary, John's wife, Miss Van Kuren, doesn't have a first name. This is a red flag.

The obituary does not give the names of John's parents. This is another red flag.

And then we have the sentence "of his father's early life, the son Frank can tell little." The scary thing is that the "we can tell little" sentence was preceded by a long, fantastic story about the Wyoming Valley massacre, an orphaned veteran named Pulver, and a description of country that was so fertile that it caused the Knickerbockers to migrate.

The Wyoming Valley massacre was a real event, but we don't have any indication that any Knickerbockers or Pulvers were involved.

We also don't have any evidence that a Knickerbocker or a Pulver was and early settler of the Wyoming Valley.

Furthermore, it is hard to resolve the claim that John's grandfather was in the Wyoming Valley with the claim that John was married near Hudson, New York.

In the end, we are skeptical about John Knickerbocker's obituary, except for (a) his vague connection to somebody named Pulver, and (b) his marriage somebody named Van Kuren near the town of Hudson, New York.

FamilySearch has the marriage record for John Knickerbocker and Cath. Amelia Van Curen. They were married September 27, 1851, at Valatie, Columbia County. (Valatie is adjacent to Kinderhook, and 15 miles from Hudson, NY.)

John and his wife moved several times, but are easy to follow in census records.

Knickerbocker John	48	M	W	Mechanic
— Catherine	37	F	W	Keeping House
— James	18	M	W	Gun Smith
— Mary	12	F	W	
— Frank	3	M	W	
— Samuel Ho.	44	M	W	Sailor

John's brother Samuel was living with him in 1870.

Samuel was a sailor. We will discuss him next.

Years later, we see John Knickerbocker in Ithaca. He was living with his son. The son had apparently moved to Ithaca because he found a job, not because of a deep family connection to Tompkins County.

### Samuel Knickerbocker (brother of John Knickerbocker)

Samuel Knickerbocker was a sailor with ties to the whaling industry in Massachusetts. Sailing records show that Samuel Knickerbocker listed his residence in 1851 as Kinderhook, New York.

<a href="http://www.whalingmuseum.org/o">//www.whalingmuseum.org/o</a>				
Samuel Knickerbock	Hope II	Ship	1851	27
<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Rig</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Height</b>	<b>Skin</b>
Hope II	Ship	27		Light
<b>Hair</b>	<b>Eye</b>	<b>Residence</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Brown		Kinderhook		

This is almost certainly the Samuel Knickerbocker who died in 1887, and is buried in the Sailors Snug Harbor Cemetery on Staten Island.

It appears that Samuel never married.

**The Confusing Lives of the Two Peter Knickerbockers**

We are about to end our discussion of the Peter J. Knickerbocker. Earlier, we discussed Peter B. Knickerbocker.

Before we move on, we need to acknowledge how confusing this story is.

There is no doubt that there were two Peter Knickerbockers in Pine Plains. One was the son of Benjamin Junior. The other was the son of John's C.

The lives of the two Peter Knickerbockers were deeply intertwined.

The most confusing aspect of this story is how the two men were connected to Henry (Henrich) Pulver. Henry was more closely related to Peter J. Knickerbocker, but he made land transactions with Peter B. Knickerbocker, and bought up part of Benjamin's old farm. Later, the 1855 census shows that it was Peter B. Knickerbocker living with Henry Pulver in Yates County. It's not clear why Henry was so tightly connected with the Benjamin Knickerbocker line.

John Knickerbocker of Ithaca probably knew the story of the Pulvers and the two Peter Knickerbockers. This is the sort of weird detail that might survive through a family's oral history.

This might be why John's obituary, mentioned that a Pulver had married one of the Knickerbocker daughters. (As we discussed, the Ithaca obituary included the name Pulver, but didn't include the name of John Knickerbocker's father, or the first name of John Knickerbocker's wife.)

In the end ...

- (a) We believe that we've shown the proper trees for the two Peter Knickerbockers, and
- (b) We're glad to set this issue aside, and move on.

## John P. Knickerbocker, the son of John C. Knickerbocker

The 1845 probate petition by Andrus Knickerbocker mentions his brother, John P. Knickerbocker.

IN 1873, Andrus mentioned his brother John, but didn't give John's middle initial. John was the last one mentioned when Andrus listed his brothers, suggesting that John was younger than Andrus.

There were actually two men named John P. Knickerbocker. As we will show, they knew each other. We are lucky that they were born several years apart.

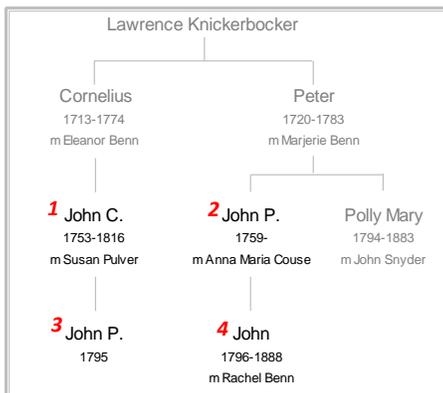
Before we proceed, we need to take a moment and discuss the first John P. Knickerbocker, who was born in 1759. Our interest in the elder John P. Knickerbocker will soon become clear.

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### Two Men named John P. Knickerbocker

The tree below shows several men named John Knickerbocker. Each one plays a role in our story. We have numbered them from 1 to 4, based on the dates of their birth.

Two of these men were named John P. Knickerbocker



John C. (1) is the man who married Susan Pulver. He was the son of Cornelius. We have already discussed him in some detail.

John P. (2) was the son of Peter. He married Anna Maria Couse. He is only mentioned briefly in this report.

John P. Knickerbocker (3) was born in 1795. This is the man we are trying to trace.

John (4) was born in 1796. We have the baptism record. He was the son of John (2).

Notice that John (3) was born within a year of John (4).

At first glance, it might seem difficult to differentiate between John (3) and John (4), who were born with a few miles of each other, and born within a year of each other.

We are lucky that John P. Knickerbocker (2) also had a daughter, Polly Mary Knickerbocker. When Polly died, her will and probate mentioned her brother John Knickerbocker, of Argyle, New York.



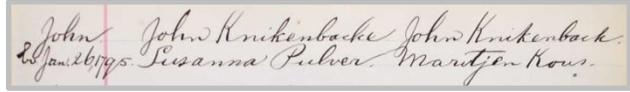
Thus, we know that the John Knickerbocker who married Rachel Benn and moved to Argyle was the son of John P. Knickerbocker and Maria Couse.

This still leaves us with a challenge: What happened to John P. Knickerbocker, the son of John C. Knickerbocker?

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Now we will turn our attention to John P. Knickerbocker (3), the son of John C. Knickerbocker.

Here is the baptism record for John P. Knickerbocker, the son of John C. Knickerbocker and Susan Pulver



The sponsors were John Knickerbocker and Anna Maria Couse. Referring back to the previous tree: John P. Knickerbocker (2) was the sponsor of John P. Knickerbocker (3), the son of John C. Knickerbocker (1).

In his 1845 probate filing, Andrus mentioned John P. Knickerbocker of Claverack, Columbia County, NY.

The search for John P. Knickerbocker (3) is difficult. We are looking for somebody named John Knickerbocker, which was a common name. We are also looking within the heart of Columbia County, which was dominated by the many descendants of Lawrence's son Peter.

The search engines on Ancestry and FamilySearch make the same suggestion: John Knickerbocker in Argyle, New York. He had about the right birth date, and was born in about the right place. Unfortunately, this is not the man we are looking for. (We proved this when discussing the first John P. Knickerbocker.)

There is a John P. Knickerbocker in Columbia County in 1850. His wife was Lydia. He was living with James M. Knickerbocker.

The John P. Knickerbocker in this record was only 48 years old, i.e. he was born about 1802. This is off by 7 years. That's a fairly large discrepancy.

1850 Census for Ancram, Columbia Co

James M Knickerbocker	26	M
Margaret "	24	F
James "	6	M
William "	5	M
Helizabeth A "	3	F
Martha S "	2	F
Angelina "	2/10	F
John P "	48	M
Lydia "	52	F

The "James M Knickerbocker" shown above was baptized in 1823. His full name was given as James Melis Knickerbocker. His parents were listed as John P. Knickerbocker and Lydia Wheeler.

This is the only lead that we have for Andrus' brother, John P. Knickerbocker, and it's not particularly promising. However, this is the only "John" of anywhere near the right age who near Columbia County.

(There were many other John Knickerbockers of about the right age, but they were nowhere near Columbia County, and their lineages have been traced.)

## Cornelius Knickerbocker, the son of John C. Knickerbocker

Cornelius Knickerbocker was mentioned in two records related to his brother Andris.

In the 1845 probate petition that we've already shown, Andris said:

*Cornelius Knickerbocker, who has since died leaving about 11 or 12 children and among them one John C. to whom he (Cornelius) assigned all his property before his death.*

In his reminisces in 1873, Andris said:

*Cornelius died in the town of Greece, Monrow County aged about 58 years.*

Basic information about Cornelius Knickerbocker and his family can be found in a biography of son Hiram Knickerbocker, and also in Hiram's obituary.



Hiram Knickerbocker, eldest son of Cornelius and Elizabeth B. Knickerbocker, was born at Northeast, Dutchess County, N. Y., October 22, 1815. His father moved to Elba, Genesee County, in 1820, and after three years removed to Riga, thence to Avon, where he hired 280 acres of land of James Wadsworth for seven years. At the expiration of the lease he removed to Wilson, N. Y., thence to Gates, Monroe County, where he died March 27, 1844. The father, of whom mention has been made, was a soldier of 1812, and was honorably discharged at the close of that war. Hiram Knickerbocker came to Bergen in 1840, where he still resides, and is by occupation a farmer. February 16, 1842, he married Polly, daughter of Charles S. and Amy Wilcox, Sr., who were originally from East Guilford, Conn. Mr. Knickerbocker has been prominently connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church for over 40 years, filling the position of class leader in the Sunday-school and in the district.

*Gazetteer and Biographical Record of Genesee County, New York (1890)*

Cornelius Knickerbocker married Elizabeth Stickle.

Elizabeth [Stickle] Knickerbocker (1789-1860) is buried in Clarendon, Michigan.

Ancestry has a family bible for Cornelius and his descendants, as part of the Van Duzer-Randolph bible collection. Here is the bible image. We have numbered the key sections with numbers from 1 to 8.

1. The bible was in the possession of Frank Knickerbocker of Hillsdale Michigan. (He was the son of Andrew Jackson Knickerbocker.)

2. Andrew Jackson Knickerbocker once owned the bible.

3. This section lists birth dates for the family of Cornelius Knickerbocker and his wife Elizabeth. Their children included A. Jackson Knickerbocker.

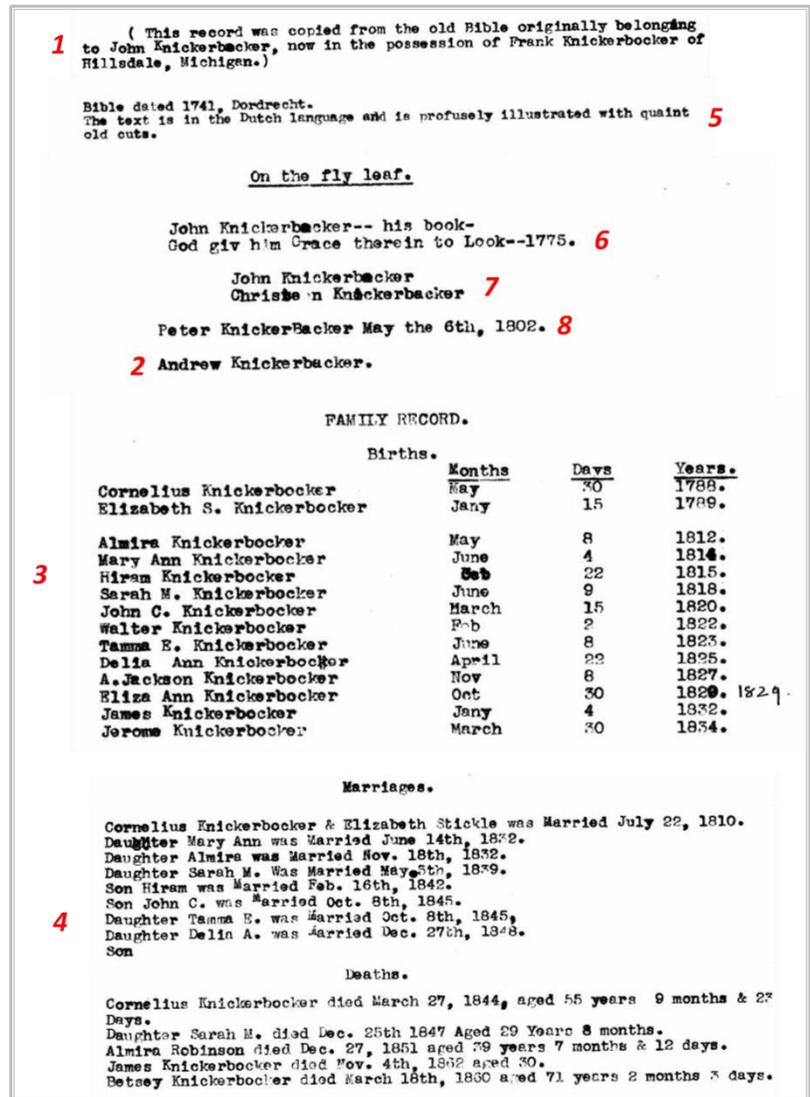
4. This section lists marriages and deaths for some of the family members.

5. This was an old Dutch bible from 1741. It would be fascinating to see if there is any other writing in the bible to identify its original owner.

6. The bible was a gift to John Knickerbocker in 1775.

7. This entry shows the names John and Christeen Knickerbocker. Andris Knickerbocker's reminisces, shown at the end of this report, give his mother's full name as Christene Susan Pulver.

8. The most confusing entry is for Peter Knickerbocker, May the 6<sup>th</sup>, 1802. Church records show that Peter J. Knickerbocker was born in 1783. Peter was still alive in 1850. Thus, we have no idea what event happened in May of 1802.



The bible entry above is helpful in assembling a list of Cornelius' children. Since one of our main purposes here is to track the propagation of the Knickerbocker name, here are brief details for Cornelius' sons.

Hiram (1815-1900) was a longtime resident of Bergen, Genesee County, NY. He married Polly Wilcox. They adopted a son named George. (Hiram was in Bergen for the 1850 census.)

John C. (1820-) married Julia Corbitt in 1845. They later moved to Hillsdale, Michigan. They had a large family, including sons Ira, Ormar, Jerry, and Hiram. (John was in Elba for the 1850 census.)

Walter (1822-1902) spent his adult years in Michigan. His wife was named Mary. They had a large family, including sons Edgar, Frank, Ezra, and Willard.

Andrew Jackson (1827-1917) lived his adult years in Michigan. Andrew married first Martha Pricilla Wheeler, who died in 1859. They had sons Frank, Arthur, and Mark. Andrew then married Adaline Cragen. They had a son Herbert.

James (1832-1862) married a wife named Sarah, and had a son James Byron. James died in Michigan, but his son James Byron returned to western NY.

Jerome (1834-1909) married Barsheba Jane Prior in 1859, in Hill, Michigan. They had a son, Ervin.

## Andris Knickerbocker's Knowledge of Knickerbocker Genealogy

Just before he died, Andris dictated his recollections. Andris knew quite a bit about his ancestors. His story was told in a rambling fashion.

**Michigan Bible Records and  
Genealogical Notes, Part 2**  
(ancestry.com)

*Copied from a paper in the possession of Chas.  
Knickerbocker in Flint, Mich. in the spring of 1933.  
Chas. is a grandson of the Andris who wrote it.*  
Jan. 19, 1873

My name is Andris Knickerbocker. I reside in Oakfield. Genessee Co. N. Y. Am 80 years old. Oct. 2 was my birthday. Came in Genessee co. on May 24. 1824 having started from Dutchess Co. N. Y. May 10, 1824.

Have 11 children now alive, 5 sons and 6 daughters namely Henry, Tammia, Fanny, Walter, Esther, Susan, Andria, Julia, Margaret, John W. and James B. in the rotation of their respective births. The first four were born in Dutchess Co. Pine Plains. The others were born in Elba, Genessee Co.

I was born in the town of North Ea--, now Pine Plains Dutchess Co.

I had five brothers Peter, Cornelius, Andris (myself) Benjamin, Walter, and John. Cornelius died in the town of Greece, Monrow County aged about 58 years.

I had four sisters Eve, Elinor, Christine, Charity who was dumb. Eve married Adam Hoysrodt. Elinor married James Smith (the laziest man in New York.) Christine married John W. Mills. All were married in Dutchess Co. All of my family are dead except myself.

My great grandfather was Harmon Knickerbocker. Was born in New York City. He had 3 sons born in New York City. One settled in Dover, Dutchess Co. His name was Lawrence. He had a large family of boys, they were called the Dover Knickerbockers. Harmon Knick child Bu –  
[section missing?]

John settled in Conn (Salisbury or Corneau) I think Cornelius and Peter in what is now called Milo. Benjamin the youngest also in Milo, Dutchess Co. Lawrence had several girls one, Jennie married a Belden, another Dutchess and more I cannot say. Another settled in Phil. Penn.

Harmon himself came to Red Hook Dutchess Co. and was called Harmon the farmer. Cornelius, the son of Harmon was my grandfather. Cornelius married Elinor Boyne whom father was born in Glasgow Scotland. He her did not marry a scotch woman.

Cornelius and Peter married sisters, Elinor and Margaret Boyne. Live in Columbia Co. now and are a wealthy family and are of noble blood they have told me my father claimed 1/4 scotch blood.

Cornelius had 6 or 7 girls and one boy John C. my father, who married Susan Pulver of good family and they (John and Susan) were very well to do farmers indeed. Susan Pulver had 7 sisters and four own brothers, Christine Susan (my mother) Katrine (Cartri in English can't spell the name) Mary and Lena (twins) and Eve. The boys were Peter, Wendell, Andris and Nicholas. They all settled in Columbia Co.

Cornelius died in 1760. Was a captain, so on his tombstone. His son Lieut. John C. Knickerbocker was an officer in the Revolutionary war and also had the honor to be my father.

Old Harmon (great grandfather) settled in Red Hook and his son Lawrence settled in what was called the camp - East and west camp.

My grandfather Cornelius K's grandfather was Vandyke who was military commander of Livingston Manor in his time and they were very wealthy.

Andris' reminiscences are mixed bag. This is not surprising. After all, Andris was 80 years old, and was apparently speaking from memory.

It's surprising to see which details had made it into Andris' oral history. For example, Andris didn't know that Lawrence Knickerbocker was his great grandfather. (Andris claimed to be descended from Harmen Janse' son Cornelius. This was wrong. Andris was actually descended from Lawrence's son Cornelius.)

There is one part of Andris story that we will emphasize. It relates to "Harmen the Farmer."

### **Harmen the Farmer**

The book *Law Records of Alexander Hamilton, Volume 3* (1980) has interesting information about the early Knickerbockers.

In a court case in 1785, multiple witnesses stated that Harmen Janse Knickerbocker also went by the name Harmen Bourtie. This seems odd. Harmen Janse had been dead 71 years. Why would anyone remember his nickname?

Even more odd is that Benjamin Knickerbocker was described as being the son of Lawrence Knickerbocker, and the grandson of Harmen Bourtie. Why would anyone make a distinction between Lawrence's last name and Harmen's last name?

We have a possible explanation: What if Harmen's tombstone said Bourtie? We believe that Harmen and Lawrence were buried near each other in the small burial ground in Tivoli. Different last names on their tombstones is the sort of thing that local residents might notice, even 71 years after Harmen Janse died.

Now, fast forward to 1873. Andris Knickerbocker said that Harmen Janse was called Harmen the Farmer. It turns out that Andris might have been right. In modern Dutch, "Boer" is farmer. "Harmen Bourtie" might be translated as "Harmen the Farmer."

How could Andris Knickerbocker possibly know Harmen Janse nickname?

Again, we have a possible explanation: Andris had seen Harmen Janse' tombstone, which said "Harmen Bourtie." The memory of the strange Dutch word stuck with Andris.

Unfortunately, we have no idea what happened to Harmen Janse' tombstone. The burial ground in Tivoli has been abandoned for more than 100 years. Lawrence's tombstone was rescued, but there has never been a full accounting of what happened to the other tombstones.

We have recently been searching for any record of a tombstone that said "Bourtie." So far, no luck.

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