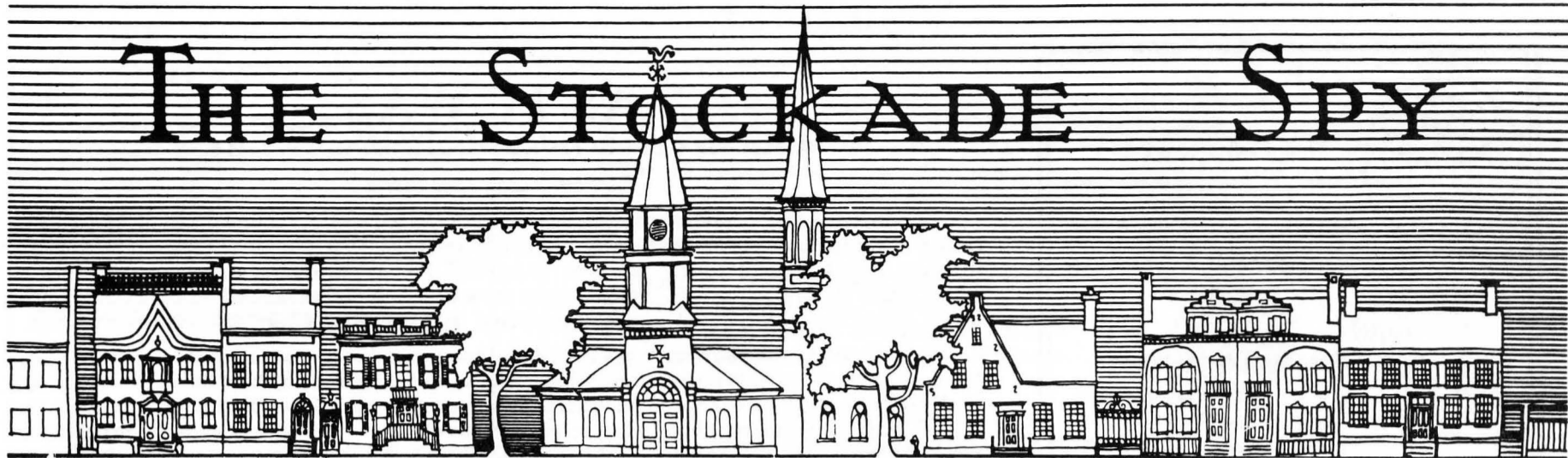


THE STOCKADE SPY



JUNE/JULY 1979

Published by The Stockade Association

Vol. XIX, Number 7

Historic Vacations A Tankful Away

In view of the current shortage of gasoline. *The Spy* has gathered suggestions for nearby vacation trips, which may be of special interest to Stockade preservationists:

Albany Bus and Walking Tours, conducted by Albany Institute of History and Art (518/463-4478) and Historic Albany Foundation (518/463-0622), offer highlights of areas of the second oldest city in America that have retained their historic and architectural integrity.

Founded in 1802, the United States Military Academy at West Point houses the largest general military collection in the Western hemisphere, including links from the iron chain that stretched across the Hudson River during the Revolutionary War.

Across the Hudson is Boscobel, dating back to the early 1800's and one of the grandest expressions extant of the New York federal style of domestic architecture in the Hudson Valley. The mansion contains rare and elegant furnishings and is surrounded by 36 acres of formal gardens.

Beekman Arms, one of the oldest hotels in America, is located in Rhinebeck, about midway between Albany and New York City and near the Vanderbilt Mansion and Hyde Park home of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who traditionally spent election eves on its front porch.

The Adirondack Center Museum and Colonial Garden in Elizabethtown is operated by the Essex County Historical Society and features an authentic replica of an 18th Century garden.

The entire village of Essex, New York, on the shores of Lake Champlain has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Most of the buildings are in the Federal and Greek revival style, including the rare octagonal school house built in 1826. A short ferry ride across the lake takes visitors close to the Shelburne Museum and Burlington, Vermont, where the Vermont Mozart Festival will be held from July 15 to August 4.

The Bennington Museum houses the works of Grandma Moses and a superb collection of American glass and Revolutionary War memorabilia. Nearby are the Bennington Battery and the Bennington Monument, which marks the Revolutionary War victory of the Green Mountain Boys.

The fifth season of the Glimmerglass Opera Theatre, which professionally stages operas in English, opens in July in Cooperstown, also the home of the Baseball Hall of Fame.

To the east and only one hour away is Williamstown, Mass., home of Williams College, which was chartered in 1785 and is the site of the oldest observatory in the country and the Van Rensselaer Manor House, moved from Albany. Also in Williamstown is the stunning Clark Art Institute, which houses a treasure of Impressionist art.

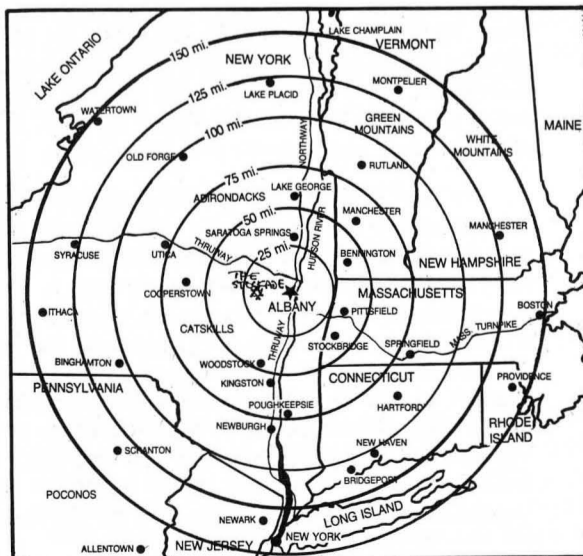
Sherwood Elected

At the May general meeting of the Stockade Association, James M. Sherwood was elected to succeed T. Gregory Sauer as President. Sherwood, a retired Marine Colonel, is a resident of Front Street, and his first message as association president appears in this issue of *The Spy*.

A resolution was passed at the meeting praising Sauer for the lasting contributions to the Stockade he made during his two-year term, which included expansion of Stockade boundaries, establishing The Heritage Fund to enable the Stockade Association to purchase endangered buildings for re-sale, opening lines of communication with the G.E. Plot, Schenectady's only other Historic District, and his leadership in the successful fight to prevent a change to commercial zoning on College Street.

Along with Lavinia Shanklin of Union Street and Larry Naylor of North Ferry Street, Sauer was then elected to fill vacancies in the Association's Board of Trustees.

Our sincere thanks to Rich Brown and all those who so ably assisted at the annual picnic. It was a great success. We admire Rich's uncanny ability to second guess the weather.
J.M.S.



Kerr - FROM THE NEW YORKER

"We live a few miles from here in an architecturally significant former gas station."

What's Happening

- SPAC - Saratoga Performing Arts Center begins its summer season with the New York City Ballet performing in July and the Philadelphia Orchestra in August.
- Photos of Saratoga Springs and New York State by Walker Evans, July 6 - August 31 (for further information, call Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation).
- Arms & Armor at the Schenectady Museum, June 14 thru September 9.
- Annual Stockade Outdoor Art Show, Saturday, September 8, 1979.
- 20th Annual Stockade Walkabout - A tour of Schenectady's Historic District, Saturday, September 29, 1979.

Today

By Emily Polachek

Today is a special day filled with fun and laughter, and the fun will all begin at five after.

I am going on a trip, in an imaginary ship.

I will sail on the calm blue sea, and bring Susan D., along with me.

We will venture through a land, and rest on the summer sand.

We will run and play together, forever and ever and ever.



THE STOCKADE SPY

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The President's Column

By James M. Sherwood

In this first of the President's Columns' which I will be writing during the coming two years let me start by expressing my thanks for your trust and confidence. I am honored to be included among the worthy group who are my predecessors and can only hope that I will measure up to their exemplary standards. I am mindful, particularly, of my immediate predecessor, T. Gregory Sauer, who has served the Association and the neighborhood in an outstanding manner. We are all very much in his debt for his sterling leadership during a period that was often turbulent, but full of inspiration and tireless effort on his part. I am particularly happy that he will continue his involvement in the Association as a member of the Board where his enthusiasm and managerial acumen will continue to benefit us all.

The next two years promise to be full of challenges for our neighborhood, and your Association will endeavor to be an effective instrument in helping to meet them. I have in mind, for one, the economic upheaval engulfing the nation and reflected in the energy crisis and interacting double digit inflation. As heating fuels become more dear we will all be striving to make our houses more thermally efficient. At the same time increases at the gas pumps is bound to have its affect in increasing the trend to move back into the city where one can live within walking distance of the work place and the shopping place or, at least, have easy access to the resurging public transportation system. This will create new pressures for increased population density downtown, and, undoubtedly, the Stockade will feel its share of the pressure. Similarly, close-in recreation desires should stimulate new interest in the city parks, not the least of which is our own Riverside Park, enticingly located next to the Mohawk River with its new potential for aquatic forms of recreation. We will want to have a voice in minimizing any negative affects of these possible developments.

Another set of challenges will undoubtedly arise with the impending change in our form of city government. With the institution of a "strong mayor" it is likely that we will see a change to the city council with elected representation from each Ward. While the impact on the neighborhood may not be particularly significant, it will create different avenues of approach to the city government and will, no doubt, alter the Association's method of problem solving. It is a situation that we will have to monitor carefully and be prepared to adapt to.

AS IT WAS

Arendt Van Curler II: The Realization of the Dream, 1644-1662

By Dr. Susan Jane Staffa

In our last article we saw how the young Van Curler coped with the complexities of managing the colony of Rensselaerwyck and we quoted his description of his first glimpse of the great Schenectady flat from the letter he sent to his great-uncle, the patroon. Twenty years were to pass, however, before he would found the city. In this article we will trace the maturation of the man and the development of his career during the critical decades which culminated in the granting of the Schenectady patent.

In his letter to the patroon, Van Curler also announced that he was engaged to be married. His bride, whom he married in the summer of 1644, was Antonia Slaghboom, the widow of Jonas Bronck, the Dane, who was the first to settle in the area now known as "the Bronx." He had met this lady when, in 1642, he had gone to the southern part of the province to assist in making a peace between the Indians there and the Dutch. It is probable that Bronck had been killed in one of the raids at about that time. The peace talks were held in the Bronck House. Shortly after his marriage, Van Curler left alone for Holland, forseeing a short absence and not wanting (as he said) to subject his bride to the dangers of the sea. As circumstances arose which necessitated a more lengthy stay, however, he later sent for his wife who arrived in Holland in 1646.

He had been away from his home town of Nijerk for seven years and there was much business to be transacted there. The event which caused his stay to be prolonged was the death of Kiliaan Van Rensselaer, the old patroon, in 1646. The heirs appointed a new director for the colony but retained Van Curler as commissary or chief trading agent, a change which must have been a relief to the young man as the population of the settlement had grown considerably and with it the popular discontent with the feudal restrictions. Concentrating his attention upon trade, he could make the best use of his knowledge of the Indians for which he was already becoming known. While at Nijerk, he was the distinguished guest of many families there who must have been impressed with the stories he had to tell. Shortly after his marriage in New Amsterdam, he had sold the Bronck estate, and in Holland he raised 2,000 guilders by selling his share of his own family's estate. Subsequently he obtained from the heirs of the patroon a lease of a farm about four miles north of Albany called "the Flatts," where, before his departure from the New World, he had had a large farmhouse built. (This house, interestingly enough, stood until the 1960's and became the early family home of the Schuylers in the 1670's. See "Schenectady's Phillip Schuyler," *Spv*, September, 1978.

In the fall of 1647, Arendt and Antonio returned to Rensselaerwyck where they settled down on their farm. Soon after his return he was appointed a member of the patroon's court and in 1651, he was the first of forty-five men to sign an oath to maintain, support, and defend the manor. Not that he sympathized to any great extent with the feudal order, but a conflict had arisen between the local interests of the colony on one hand and those of the Dutch West India Company on the other. The problem was that Fort Orange (Albany) came under the jurisdiction of the company and there were frequent clashes between its commandant and soldiers and the settlers and Indians of the surrounding territory. In terms of personalities, it was a conflict between the iron-willed director of the colony, Brandt Van Slichtenhorst, and the formidable governor of the province, Peter Stuyvesant. (The issues were not settled until 1686 when Albany finally became a city and all questions of jurisdiction were finally settled by a charter.) It was a troublous time, a time when men sought friends and made alliances. Few facts are known about Arendt's activities and associates during those days but there is evidence that he was the proprietor of a brewery, as indeed, was one of his best friends with whom he later founded Schenectady, Arendt Bradt.

As trading agent, Van Curler had constant dealings with the Indians whose confidence and friendship he seems to have won from the start. No man ever enjoyed more rapport with them than he. In the sessions of their councils recorded at Fort Orange, they began their speeches with the salutation, "Brother Corlaer," and it appears that he, like many of the bolder Dutch and French traders, contracted at least one Indian marriage. Both Van Curler and another of his best friends, Cornelis Van Slyck, had recognized children living among the tribes. This bond with the Indians proved to be of critical importance during the 1640's when, owing to the gross mismanagement and outright cruelty of Governor Kieft who ordered the massacre of whole Indian villages, the Algonquins of the south rose in unison and devastated the Dutch communities of the lower Hudson. Largely through the efforts of Van Curler, Rensselaerwyck was spared these horrors. When Governor Stuyvesant replaced Kieft, he sent first to Van Curler for advice. In 1649, with the assistance of Van Curler and two others from Rensselaerwyck, he signed a treaty with the Indians at New Amsterdam, but the threat of raids persisted. The next year the Mohawks at Rensselaerwyck reported that other Indians "have been among us and, by presents, engaged us to assist them to kill you." Arendt led a delegation to the Mohawk country where the alliance of friendship was reaffirmed and so fears were allayed. Several times, between 1650 and 1659, he applied his personal influence to maintain an atmosphere of peace and good will, and because the Mohawks dominated the tribes of the Hudson, they proved to be a wall of defense for the Dutch. Stuyvesant was the principal Dutch signatory at the conclusion of the important peace treaty at Esopus (Kingston) in 1660, signed by Mohawks and Algonquins alike, but the real diplomat and peacemaker was Van Curler.

By 1661, the time had finally come for the founding of Schenectady. Who but Van Curler, who had first conceived the dream, who had made the way safe and open by securing Indian friendship, who had won the recognition of the highest authorities of New Netherland, and who yet had always maintained the rights of settlers, should be the one to found it? Although the authorities of Fort Orange and Rensselaerwyck were still jealous of their exclusive right to the fur trade and greatly feared the establishment of a settlement nearer to the Indian castles on the Mohawk, the realization of Van Curler's dream could be postponed no longer. If the Dutch did not settle the region, it appeared that the English would. In 1659 the authorities at Boston had sent an exploratory party to Fort Orange and stated their determination to make a village at the end of Wappinger's Kill and Governor Stuyvesant had reacted by stating that "the best and safest plan would be to forestall the English by peopling the lands with some good and clever farmers." By this time also, the Mohawks who for centuries had hunted in this area and grown corn on the Schenectady flat were inclined to draw back from their old

(Continued on Page 4)

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Six Belts of Wampum

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TIDINGS

Roger Kambour of Front Street has been awarded the prestigious Coolidge Fellowship Award at the General Electric Research and Development Center for outstanding and sustained achievement in scientific research. Those selected are awarded a leave for one year to pursue individual projects and special research interests.

Sean Lane of Front Street performed Rachmaninoff's Prelude #5 and several of his own compositions at a recent spring recital. He also was pianist for the Linton High School Dinner in May.

Dr. Joseph Zoborowski, his wife Pam and daughter Jessica Marie, born in April are new neighbors on Cucumber Alley.

Jo, John and Billy Musco have moved to Washington Avenue. John is the son of Mrs. Theresa Musco of Front Street.

Suzie Smith of College Street is spending her second summer at Camp Kiniya in Milton, Vermont.

George Kranick is now making feather dusters as well as brooms at the Whitmyer Broom Factory off Front Street.

Pat Kenneally Peacock, formerly of Front Street, returned from Nashua, New Hampshire in May to visit Margaret Eighmy and the Lanes' of Front Street.

Orders for reprints of "The 1876 History of Saratoga County," which will be distributed in December, may be placed through the County Historian's Office on Woodlawn Avenue.

The National Bottle Museum opened in June in Ballston Spa. In addition to the exhibits of bottles, jars and other glass products having significance in American history, the museum houses a library of reference books and documents relating to glass products.

Ivory soap, patented by Harley Proctor and the oldest commercial soap in the country, is one hundred years old this summer.

A former Roman Catholic chapel on the campus of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy is being converted into a \$7 million computer center, but its Gothic arches, granite walls and stained glass windows are being preserved in the belief that traditional values are a part of modern society and important in the education of tomorrow's engineers.

The aluminum siding has been removed from the Elisha Freeman House on College Street, revealing the original clapboard which dates back to the 1850's.

Winning Cake

(Each year *The Spy* prints the winning recipe for the best tasting cake at Annual Stockade Memorial Day Picnic. This year's winner was Connie Coangelo of North Ferry Street.)

LEMON LUSH DESSERT

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1 stick oleo — softened
- 1 8 oz. cream cheese — softened

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 9 oz. Cool Whip
- 1 pkg. instant Lemon Pudding
- 3 cups milk

Mix flour, margarine and nuts. Press into 9 x 13 pan and bake 25 minutes at 325°. Cool. Mix cream cheese, sugar and 1 cup Cool Whip — spread over crust. Mix pudding, milk and spread over mixture. Top with remaining Cool Whip. If desired, top with chopped nuts and chopped cherries.



**BEFORE AND AFTER GOING INTO THE
ADIRONDACKS**

From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*,
August, 1870.

(Suggested by Arthur Polachek)

**Campsites in the
Adirondacks**



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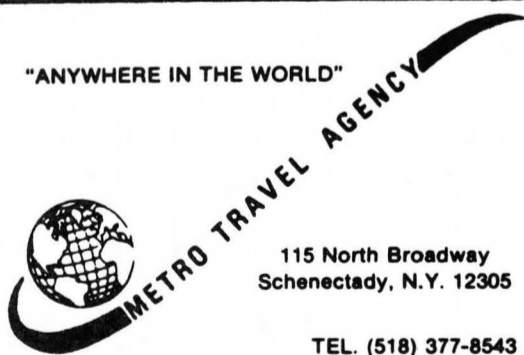
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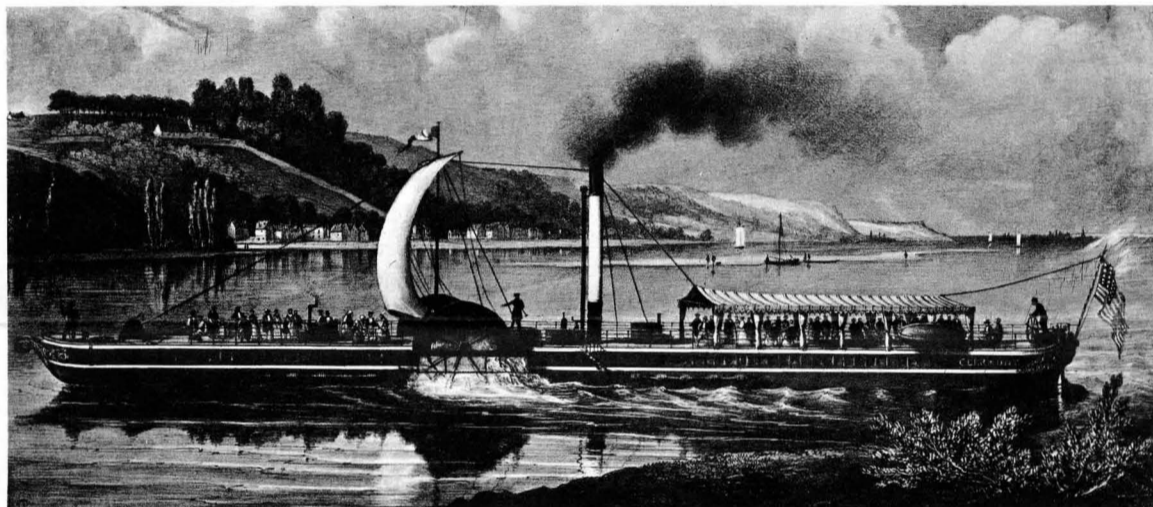
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REVOLUTIONARY WAR SITES TO VISIT IN NEW YORK STATE

1. New York City: Fraunce's Tavern, where Washington bid goodbye to his officers
2. Yonkers: Philipse Manor
3. Vail's Gate: Knox headquarters, New Windsor Cantonment and Temple Hill Monument
4. Fort Montgomery: Fort Montgomery
5. Newburgh: Gen. Washington's headquarters
6. Poughkeepsie: Clinton House
7. Kingston: First Senate House and several old buildings which stood when Kingston was our first state capital
8. Albany: Schuyler Mansion at Clinton and Catherine Streets
9. Rensselaer: Fort Crailo



10. Walloomsac (Rensselaer County): Bennington Battlefield
11. Crown Point: Crown Point historic site
12. Ticonderoga: Fort Ticonderoga
13. Lake George: Fort William Henry, Bloody Pond Road and Rogers' Rock
14. Schenectady: Historical Society can supply information as to homes and places in area which figures in Revolutionary War events. It is located at 32 Washington Ave. in city's historic Stockade area
15. Schoharie: Old Stone Fort
16. Schuylerville: Saratoga Battlefield and monuments
17. Amsterdam: Guy Park Manor
18. Johnstown: Johnson Hall and Revolutionary War burial grounds
19. Palatine Bridge: Fort Klock
20. Little Falls: Home of Gen. Nicholas Herkimer, hero of the Battle of Oriskany, and monument
21. Remsen: Steuben House
22. Oriskany: Oriskany Battlefield and monument
23. Cazenovia: Lorenzo
24. Brewerton: Fort Brewerton
25. Sacket's Harbor: Sacket's Harbor Battlefield
26. Conesus Lake (Groveland): Sullivan Monument
27. Caylerville: Boyd-Parker Memorial



In 1807 Robert Fulton introduced a new mode of travel when his side-wheeler steamship *Clermont* sailed up the Hudson River from New York City to Albany, negotiating the 150-mile distance in 32 hours. Three weeks later his steamer made regularly scheduled trips to Albany in under 29 hours.

(Continued from Page 2)

settlement on the easternmost edge of their domain. Because of the proximity of the whites, furs were becoming scarce and in 1659, a terrible epidemic of smallpox had caused hundreds of deaths in their castles along the river. Many of the Dutch settlers too, seem to have been experiencing economic hardship. Food had become scarce at Fort Orange and Van Curler implied in a letter to Stuyvesant that many were living "from one loaf to another." The Van Rensselaer correspondence of these years indicates also that Van Curler himself was in debt. Thus he sympathized with the people longing to possess land not as a fief but as a free and absolute holding. Already in 1658, the Scot, Alexander Glen, had settled in Scotia and Van Curler's friend, Cornelis Van Slyck, and his children had long had claim on the basis of Indian connections to a great many acres in the region. In fact, it is probable that the elder Van Slyck played an important role in Van Curler's securing of the Schenectady lands from the Indian families to whom they had belonged.

So, in the summer of 1661, Van Curler purchased the land from the Indians and made formal application to the authorities of New Netherland to settle on the great flat on behalf of himself and several other men, stating the 'six or eight families' were "already inclined" to take possession. A stockade and a few houses had been erected to prepare for the next spring's planting, but still concerted action was needed to overcome the opposition of jealous authorities before the right to settle was granted. In 1662 Governor Stuyvesant and the Council finally agreed on condition that at least twenty families undertake to farm the land and agree to refrain from trade detrimental to the Dutch West India Company. Naturally the applicants objected to the conditions, declared their good intentions, and begged to be treated as fairly as others had been, but they acquiesced and signed the indenture at the urging of the pragmatic Van Curler who saw that settlement was necessary for future exploitation of opportunity and that trade would undoubtedly be carried on whether it was permitted or not. In fact, over half a century passed before the fur trade in Schenectady became legal.

The founding of Schenectady took place in a time of crisis when cultures met, the field of interaction itself was new, and the rules of the game not yet laid down. Outstanding qualities of boldness and bravery, wisdom, understanding, and diplomacy were required of the man who pioneered the way. In our next article we will consider the services which Van Curler subsequently rendered to the town and the legacy of his last years.