

The
Courier

Bi-Monthly Newsletter

of the

Lansingburgh Historical Society

April 2015

From the desk of the Acting President

The trustees of the Lansingburgh Historical Society have named John Ward, Acting President and Mary Ellen Ward, Acting Vice President. Liz VanBuren continues as a trustee. There will be an election of three trustees and one officer at the May meeting of the society.

Book Review

Vaver, Anthony, *Early American Criminals: An American Newgate Calendar, Chronicling the Lives of the Most Notorious Criminal Offenders from Colonial America and the New Republic*, Pickpocket Publishing Co., Westborough, MA, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-9836744-2-9. Available as a paperback or e-book.

This book describes the most notorious crimes and the criminals who committed them in early America. Counterfeiters, pirates, murderers, and other offenders are described. There is an explanation of how prosecution, sentencing and punishment evolved in colonial America. Sentences and punishments were often public events where the accused were held up as examples of what happens to people who violate the law. Public execution (hanging) for capital crimes, like murder, were well attended much as contemporary

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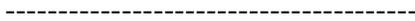
The Flynn Family of Lansingburgh



Flynn Brothers Brush Company occupied a three story brick factory at the southeast corner of Fifth Avenue at 111th Street. In addition, the family owned residential buildings in the same block down to 110th Street. There were other residential properties throughout the Burgh and a 40 acre farm in the Town of Brunswick owned by family members. Some of the residential buildings were investment properties not occupied by family members. James Flynn 1st was an Irish immigrant born in 1801 who initially lived in New York City.

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people would attend a rock concert or football game. Crimes against property were punished with practices intended to subject the offender to public ridicule and physical abuse, whipping or being locked into stocks. It's amazing that at a time without wire or radio communication, the tracking of criminals and their apprehension could be so efficient. Strangers in a community were noticed. People who saw something would say something. One wonders how many innocents were suspected without cause and apprehended just because they were new in the neighborhood and not accompanied by family. One has to hope that identifying criminals was more accurate than has been the case in recent time.



Upcoming Events & Programs

April 9, Thursday, 7:00PM – Michael Barrett, Executive Director of the Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway will talk at the Forty-One Sports Bar & Grille, 41 112th Street (between 5th and 6th Ave.) on **Troy in the Civil War**. Please plan to come early (by 6:00PM) if you plan to order a meal off the Forty-One menu. We need you to email lhssecretary@gmail.com or call 235-3501 (leave message) the historical society by **April 2**, if you plan to order food, so we can have a head count and help Forty-One plan. You will be charged for your meal by Forty-One. This talk is free but we ask you to consider making a tax deductible donation to the historical society. See last page of this newsletter for the address.

April 11, Saturday, 10:00AM to Noon, Open House at Melville House – Volunteers will be present to show the house, discuss its history, talk about Lansingburgh people, and tell about Herman Melville and his life here.

May 2, Saturday, 10:00AM to 4:00PM, Lansingburgh Village Burying Ground and the Old Catholic Burying Ground at 107th Street and Third Avenue, Cemetery Cleanup – Please come

James and his wife Ann produced six sons – Patrick, Michael, James Jr., John, William and Andrew.

Patrick started a brush making business in one room on Greenwich Street in Manhattan in about 1857. Brothers James and John became junior partners. Michael and John Flynn both served in the Union Army during the US Civil War. They served at a barracks in Nashville, Tennessee until it was seized by Confederate troops in 1862. The brothers returned to Lansingburgh at war's end. Michael was ill at that point and succumbed in 1865. John went to join Patrick and James Jr. in the brush business now moved to Lansingburgh.

James Flynn Jr. and wife Mary Burke were childless. He became a traveling representative for the firm selling its brushes and purchasing raw material. Hog bristle was mainly obtained in Germany and Austria. His frequent travel companions included nephews and other young family members who enjoyed the advantage of seeing with him a world beyond Lansingburgh and the northeast.

John Flynn and wife Elizabeth Lemay had ten children, sons James H., John F., William M., Orville J., and Andrew George Flynn. The daughters were Clarissa who married Peter M. Frandsen, Rose T. who married attorney Owen Connally, Lavina E. who married James A. Wallace, Anne and Clara. Many of John's children and grandchildren were involved in the brush business to some extent. When John died, his brother James Flynn Jr. and daughter Lavina Wallace became executors of his estate. Lavina had grown to know the brush business well, having been office and business manager for her father John and "Uncle Jimmie" Flynn.

James H. Flynn, John's son, was a physician at the original Leonard Hospital when it was located in the block from 114th St. to 115th St. between 6th and 7th Avenues (now the Lansingburgh Apartments). He graduated from Lansingburgh Academy in 1896,

with a rake, gloves, pruners, lopper, water and a few plastic contractor bags (the real heavy weight ones). We hope to see students, adults and anyone in the community who would like to help.

May 9, Saturday, 10:00AM to Noon, Open House at Melville House – Volunteers will be present to show the house, discuss its history, talk about Lansingburgh people and talk about Herman Melville’s life here.

May 16, Saturday, 11:00AM to 4:00PM, Tour of Lansingburgh Houses – Eight of Lansingburgh’s beautiful historic homes will be open for tours.

Register by May 15 by email to lhssecretary@gmail.com or phone 235-3501 (leave message). Tickets for those who have registered will cost \$20 and will be available for pickup at Melville House starting at 11:00AM on May 16th. You may purchase a ticket at Melville House on the day of the tour but the cost will be \$25. The tour is self-directed. When you collect your ticket you will be given a map of the homes on the tour. You must have a ticket to see any of the homes. A trustee of LHS will greet you at each house and ask to see your ticket. An owner of the home will be present to show the house.

June 4, Thursday, Lansingburgh Veterans Club, An Evening with Sgt. Rice Bull, NY 123rd Volunteer Infantry – Robert Mulligan, a retired NYS Museum Curator, will impersonate Rice C. Bull, a Union soldier who fought at Chancellorsville and with Sherman’s march through Georgia which devastated every railroad, bridge, town, village, and plantation from Atlanta to Savannah in the US Civil War.



Sgt. Rice C. Bull

the current library building on the north side of 114th Street at the corner of 4th Avenue. He attended Union College and Albany Medical College. He was Commissioner of Health for the City of Troy for fifteen years. Dr. Flynn and his wife made their home at 193 Fifth Avenue. Their son, also named James H. Flynn, was a graduate of Albany Medical College and had a practice in Albany following his US Army service in World War II.

FLYNN BROS..
MANUFACTURERS OF
ALL KINDS OF BRUSHES.
IMPORTERS OF
BRISTLES, HORSE HAIR, &c.
TROY, N. Y., U.S.A.



Owen Connally, John Flynn’s son-in-law, was a prominent attorney in Troy and Lansingburgh for many years. He did legal work for the brush business and was a Flynn family attorney.

Orville and Andrew Flynn became important players in the production end of the brush factory after their father’s death in 1917. It is said that much of the Flynn Brothers brush drawing continued to be done by hand long after their competitors had employed drawing machines. As a result their productivity lagged behind competitors and was complicated by a shortage of hog bristle during and following World War I. The business declined into the 1920’s.

William Flynn, the fifth son of James and Ann Flynn, was a professional baseball player in the 1870’s. He was nicknamed “Clipper” Flynn and played for the White Stockings, forerunner of the Chicago White Sox. Locally he played for the Troy Haymakers and also for the Washington (DC) Olympics. He was a first baseman and a right fielder. William and his wife Bridget married after his stint as a baseball player and had children Lucy, William Jr., John, George A. and Anna T. Flynn. Except for the few years he was a professional baseball player, William and his family lived in Lansingburgh. He died in the Burgh in 1881.

Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and a chance to see the baskets offered at 6:00PM. There will be a sit down dinner at 7:00PM with choice of roast beef, chicken or haddock. Rice Bull will tell his story at 8:00PM. The basket raffle will follow at 9:00PM to end the evening. You must make and pay for your reservation by May 27. The \$30 reservation fee covers dinner and the entire evening. No tickets will be sold at the door. The basket raffle will offer a variety of tempting palatables and comestibles, books, entertainment items, and collectibles. Only persons who have paid reservations may participate in the raffle. Raffle winners must collect their items at the end of the evening. Send payment for reservations, including dinner choices, to Lansingburgh Historical Society, PO Box 219, Troy, NY 12182-0219.

June 13, Saturday, 10:00AM to Noon, Open House at Melville House – Volunteers will be present to show the house, discuss its history, talk about Lansingburgh people and talk about Herman Melville's life here.



Melville House



William "Clipper" Flynn

Andrew A Flynn, the youngest son of James and Ann, married Hester Rafter in October 1882. They had two sons, William Michael Joseph and Andrew



A. Jr. Their six daughters were Ella, Anna, Livinia Elizabeth, Mary, Ester and Loretta. William Michael Joseph Flynn lived his adult life in New York City and New Jersey. He was a police officer in New York City and retired in Monmouth County, NJ. He and his wife Emma had one son, William Jr. Andrew A. Flynn died in 1931. Mary died in 1930.

The graves of most of the Flynn family who lived locally are in St. John's Cemetery on Cemetery Road in Lansingburgh.



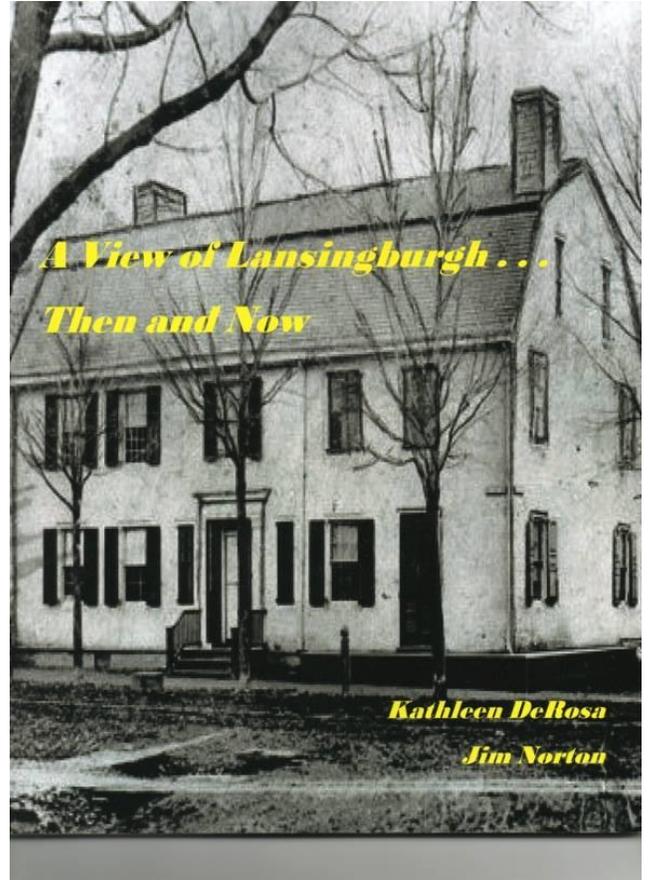
Then & Now



504–506 Second Avenue was first owned in 1872 by John Ames, a wealthy brush maker. It was bought in 1876 by Dr. Allison Hull who had his home and office here and built the carriage house behind the home on 113th Street. In 1920, the house was bought by the Bethesda House for homeless women. Today it is a residential home owned by Unity House.



A View of Lansingburgh



Kathleen DeRosa and Jim Norton have collaborated to produce a book on Lansingburgh titled, *A View of Lansingburgh, Then and Now*. It couples historic images of the Burgh with current photos showing changes through the years. It also provides a brief history of many of the properties. The book contains more than 350 photos of which approximately 200 are in color. Cost of the book is \$32 with proceeds going to the Lansingburgh Historical Society. Copies may be obtained by contacting Kathleen DeRosa at kathleen.derosa@yahoo.com or by phone at (518) 237-3924.

Lansingburgh Street Names

Old Streets Identified by Name

Until 1886, the streets of Lansingburgh, were identified by name rather than by number as they are today:

101st Street - Cemetery Avenue
102nd Street - Van Schaick Street
103rd Street - Gould Street
104th Street - Thomas Street
105th Street - Vail Street
106th Street - George Street
107th Street - Mill Street
108th Street - Middle Street
109th Street - Dianoud Street
110th Street - Catharine Street

111th Street - South Street
112th Street - Lansing Street
113th Street - Hoosick Street
114th Street - North Street
115th Street - Market Street
116th Street - Elizabeth Street
117th Street - Richard Street
118th Street - Grove Street
119th Street - Jay Street
120th Street - Canal Street
121st Street - Clinton Street
122nd Street - Mohawk Street
123rd Street - Washington Street
124th Street - Mercer Street

125th Street - Adams Street
126th Street - Waterford Street
1st Avenue - River Street
2nd Avenue - State Street and before that King Street
3rd Avenue - Congress Street and before that Queen Street
4th Avenue - John Street
5th Avenue - Whipple Avenue and before that Pitt Street
6th Avenue - Lincoln Avenue and before that Ann Street
7th Avenue - East Street
8th Avenue - Hill Street

Our membership year begins on April 1st. Those joining in January, February or March extend their membership through the next membership year. Consider upgrading your regular membership to a sustaining membership or either of those to a life membership. Encourage friends to join. Regular Membership \$15/year, Sustaining Membership \$40/year, Life Membership \$150/year, Senior/Student Membership \$5/year, Professional/Corporate Membership \$200/year.

Donations are always welcome! **Rates effective 1 July, 2014.**

Name----- Phone-----

Mailing Address----- City----- Zip-----

Email-----

Regular----- Sustaining----- Life----- Senior/Student----- Prof./Corp.----- Donation-----

Send to Lansingburgh Historical Society PO Box 219 Troy, New York 12182-0219

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