



The FERRYMAN

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DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
12 Elm Street, Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522 (914-674-1007)

SEPTEMBER 1998

Annual Meeting to Feature Ogden Fire Company

A history of Ogden Engine Co. No. 1, with exhibits of firefighting equipment used over the years will be the main attraction of the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society's annual membership meeting. The meeting will be called to order at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, September 25, 1998, at Our Lady of Pompeii Parish Hall, Palisade and Chestnut Streets.

The Engine company's history will be presented by the volunteer firefighters now protecting our lives and property. The company, which operates out of the firehouse at 199 Ashford Avenue, celebrated its 100th anniversary six months ago.

At the business part of the meeting preceding the program, new Trustees will be elected by the members present who are in good standing; that is, those who have paid their dues for this membership year, which ends on September 30. Members who are in arrears for the current year may pay this year's dues at the door, if they wish to vote. Members will also vote on a proposed amendment to the Society's By-Laws, the rules governing the Society's activities and operations.

Non-members are invited to attend both the business part of the meeting and the engine company's history program, but they are not eligible to vote. They are also invited to join the Society for the next membership year, which begins October 1.

Six Trustee candidates have been nominated by the Society's Nominating Committee for three-year terms ending September 30, 2001: Mavis Cain, Warren

Gardner, Marianne "Maz" Hogan, Julia Rokicki, Fred Staats and Jock Thornton. Ed Berry, recently appointed to the Board to fill a vacancy, has been nominated for a one-year term ending September 30, 1999.

The proposed amendment to the Society's By-Laws would involve only the Board of Trustees. The amendment would be an addition to "Article IV, Board of Trustees; Section 3, Meetings." It reads as follows with the new material in italics:

"Section 3. Meetings. The Board of Trustees shall meet not less than four times a year. It shall meet at the call of the President, or by request of a majority of the Trustees. *It shall be the responsibility of each Trustee to attend these meetings. If a Trustee is unable to attend a specific meeting, it shall be his/her responsibility to advise the President before the meeting. If a Trustee is absent from three Board meetings in one membership year, the Board, in its majority discretion, may ask for the resignation of the Trustee.*"

The reason for the amendment is that in the past, occasionally a Trustee was absent from too many Board meetings. Ideally, all 18 Trustees should attend all Board meetings. But, understandably, family needs, work assignments, illness, vacations, schedule conflicts or other circumstances make it impossible for some to attend all Board meetings. The amendment is *not* intended to make attendance compulsory. It simply gives a majority of the Board the *discretion* to ask for a Trustee's resignation after three absences, especially if the absences are unexplained or unexcused.

-- Hank Walter



Firefighters parade for Ogden's 100th Anniversary.



Ashford Avenue neighbors cheer firefighters from Lutheran Church wall.

NORTH RIVER
(HUDSONS)

IRVINGTON

TOWN OF

Wm. DURCHER
215 Ac.

Isaac Buckhout

School
John Buckhout
JOHN JEWEL
285 Ac.

Jon^o Odell
Tavern

JONATHAN ODELL
163 Ac.

DANIEL WILSIE
329 Ac.
J. Stormes

JACOB STORMS
279 Ac.

John Storms

Rich^d DUSENBURY
220 Ac.
320

Geo. DIETERICH
292 Ac.

Down Ferry
George Knox
Tavern

PHILIP LIVINGSTON
233 Ac.
Thomas Hyatt

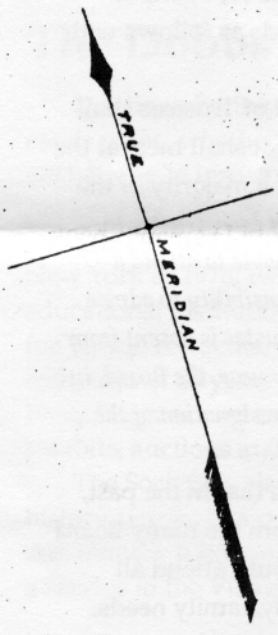
Down Ferry A Post

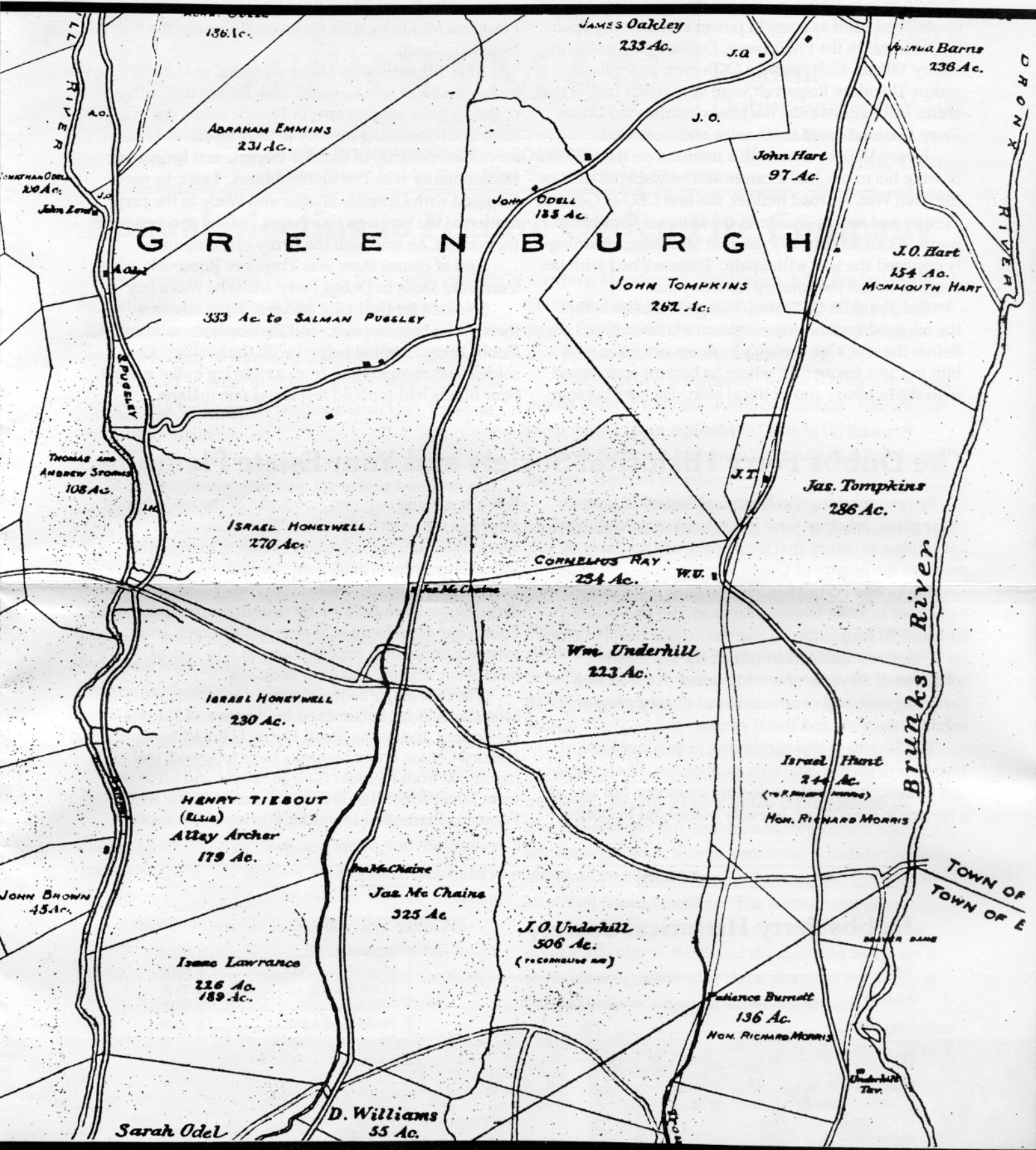
JAS DE CLARKE
225 Ac.

Jas Clark

Peter Post
286 Ac.

School House





In 1785 Residents Buy Large Tracts of Land Confiscated From Tory Philipse

After the Revolutionary War ended, Frederick Philipse, the third Lord of the Manor, who was loyal to the King during the conflict, had his huge land holdings confiscated by the New York State Commissioners of Forfeiture. Sizable parcels were put up for sale, and tenants, many of whom were soldiers of the Revolution, had the opportunity to buy the land that they formerly rented.

The illustration at left is part of the larger map of Philipsburgh Manor showing Dobbs Ferry and surrounding villages, and was traced from an original map prepared for the Commissioners by John Hills in 1785. The tracing was done by M. J. Couzens, Civil Engineer and Surveyor, and dated May 1, 1880. Additional information was included on the tracing. A check of sales from the Abstracts of Sales prepared by

the Commissioners shows the names listed on the maps to be correct, and the acreage fairly accurate.

What had once been the sole property of Frederick Philipse was divided into large tracts. Jonathan Odell, for example, bought 463 acres; Daniel Wilsie, 329 acres; Jacob Storms, 279 acres; Richard Dusenberry, 320 acres; James DeClark, 225 acres; John Brown, 45 acres; Thomas and Andrew Storms, 108 acres; Jonathan Odell, 230 acres.

The map shows Dobbs Ferry Public Landing -- and on Broadway, the George Knox Tavern.

During the Revolution Dobbs Ferry was largely farmland and was supposed to be a neutral zone. In fact, it was far from peaceful and was raided by both sides for supplies. After the war, claims were filed with the State for provisions seized by the American Army.

-- Bill Blanck

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society thanks the Westchester Historical Society for permission to use a portion of a map shown at left.

We also wish to thank Ruth Neuwirth for her help in researching this project.

The document below records the transfer of property to Jacob Storms.

December 6th 1785

Sold to Jacob Storm of the County of Westchester Farmer for Eight hundred and thirty seven pounds -- All that certain Farm of Land situate lying and being in the Manor of Philipsburgh and County of Westchester. Bounded Westerly by the Hudsons River and Northerly by Land now or late in the possession of Abraham Storm Easterly by Land now or late in the possession of John Bruce and Southerly by Land now or late in the possession of Richard Dusenbury containing Two Hundred and seventy nine Acres more or less as the same was formerly possessed by John Storm ^{Deceased} Forfeited to the people of the said State by the Attainder of Frederick Philipse late of the said County Esquire --

A copy of Abstract. Entered this 15th August 1788
J. Richard Hatfield blc



The Peaceful Visit of The Rose

In 1776, residents of Dobbs Ferry enamored with the cause of Revolution weren't happy to see the *HMS Rose* sail up the Hudson. If you weren't a Tory, it could mean trouble.

But on Friday, May 22, before this past Memorial Day Weekend, Dobbs Ferryites gathered in Waterfront Park to enjoy the spectacle of the tall ships, including a replica of the *Rose*, sail up the river in celebration of Rockland County's Bicentennial.

Spectators watched the *Rose*, the tallest of the tall ships, dock across the river at Piermont. The present-day *Rose* is a scaled-down version of the original British man of war that in 1776 battled Washington's retreating army from the East River as well as the Hudson River.

Even before the Revolution erupted, the *Rose* caused residents of Newport, Rhode Island no end of trouble. In 1774 she was sent to stop the smuggling of molasses from the French West Indies. Newporters were rum distillers, and the imposed blockade caused mass unemployment. In response, the Rhode Island General Assembly created the first State Navy in June 1775. Later -- in October 1775 -- the Continental Navy was created.

In 1776 the British sent the *Phoenix* and the *Rose* on a mission up the Hudson that was partly reconnaissance, partly to encourage the loyalists, partly to disrupt the flow of supplies to Washington in New York, and partly to raid the countryside for supplies if they were not willingly provided by those loyal to the crown.

Watching the *Rose* dock at Piermont was of special interest to author/historian Jean Fritz. Jean, who is a trustee of the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society, wrote about the *Phoenix* and the *Rose* in the July 1994 and the April 1997 issues of *The Ferryman*. Her July article describes the gauntlet of shore batteries and sunken ships that Washington established in the lower Hudson to bar passage of the British.

Jean wrote: "On August 3, two British men of war, the *Phoenix* and the *Rose*, together with three tenders, sailed right through the barricade up to Tarrytown, where they anchored fairly close to the shore and prepared to harass the countryside. Anyone familiar

with these waters would have known that those ships would be aground as soon as the tide went out. So it is safe to say that Robert Sneden, one of the Tory Snedens from Dobbs Ferry West, who often acted as a pilot for the British, was not along this time.

"Seeing that the British ships were sitting ducks, Americans rushed five galleys and a whale boat to the scene, but they weren't fast enough. By the time they arrived, the tide had changed and the British ships were safely afloat again. Still, the Americans, mismatched though they were, could not bear to leave without an exchange of shot. There was a two-hour battle in which an American reported repeated "hullings" on both sides. Two Americans were killed, fourteen wounded, but the rest were not disheartened. 'We hope to have another touch at these pirates,' the American concluded."

Throughout the Revolution British ships raided the lower Hudson but were never able to gain full control of the river and split New England from the southern states. In a review of Lincoln Diamant's book "Chaining the Hudson", Jean Fritz points out that the massive chain at West Point was never challenged by British men of war.

But last Memorial Weekend, the *Rose* was on a friendly visit, and Jean Fritz's daughter Andrea, in her cabin cruiser, circled the *Rose* for photographs. In 1776 she would have done everything possible to put the obnoxious and dangerous British man of war to the bottom of the Hudson.



The Rose docks peacefully at Piermont.
-- photo by Andrea Pflieger

Dobbs Ferry's Part in the 1898 Spanish American War

When, a hundred years ago, the United States established itself as a world power by defeating Spain in Cuba and in the Philippines, Dobbs Ferry residents Henry Villard, Col. Franklin Q. Brown, and village visitor Theodore Roosevelt were very much part of the scene. And afterwards, the newly established Dobbs Ferry Hospital cared for the sick and wounded.

Henry Villard, who built a mansion on the hill now bearing his name, had a career as a newspaper man in the Civil War, railroad builder, the first CEO of General Electric and mover-shaker in the national Republican party. As an advisor to President McKinley, he strongly opposed the war with Spain. Disheartened with the conflict, he left the country for two years.

Col. Franklin Q. Brown, Village President before the mayoral system, was a veteran of the conflict. Before the war, Col. Brown's business activities took him to Cuba frequently, where he became acquainted with the business and political elite. He later became

active in the "Cuba Libre" movement and reported to President McKinley directly on conditions in the troubled island.

After the battleship *Maine* exploded in Havana harbor and war was declared, Col. Brown was active in organizing the staging area in Florida before the invasion, again reporting directly to the President. He also served temporarily in the War Department because of his familiarity with Cuban conditions. Later, he participated with Generals Shafter and Wade in the preparation of the Santiago Campaign. At the conclusion of the conflict, he was with the Army of Occupation.

And of course there was Theodore Roosevelt, who learned to shoot in Dobbs Ferry when he was a boy.

So much for the major players. As in all wars, there was a human price, and the newly established Dobbs Ferry Hospital helped with the healing. One soldier was recuperating from a right leg bullet wound. Four others had typhoid fever, and one malaria.

-- Bill Blanck

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society and Your Estate Planning

By remembering the Historical Society in your estate plans, whether your gift is large or modest, you are helping to insure that the Society will continue to preserve the history of Dobbs Ferry.

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society, incorporated in New York in 1978, twenty years ago, is a non-profit educational institution. It has provided a history center for Village residents, microfilmed the last existing collection of 80 years of weekly issues of the Dobbs Ferry Register, and conducted local history programs, exhibits, auctions and social events.

The Society is also continuing to produce local history articles in a quarterly publication, *The Ferryman*, and mailing it not only to Society members, but also as a service to the Village, to every household in Dobbs

Ferry, is making ongoing purchases of the microfilmed record of the weekly *Rivertown Enterprise*; and is continually seeking ways and events to expand the Village's awareness of its own rich history.

All this costs money and, over the past two decades, has been paid for by your annual membership dues, your attendance at Society Fundraisers, your extra tax-deductible contributions to take care of emergency repairs, and your bequests.

The first major bequest came in 1991, when the late Miss Clara Mead bequeathed her home and \$10,000 to the Society. Today, the Mead House is the Village's History Center. Other bequests have followed, including \$8,000 from member George Speyer and \$10,000 from John Ricciardi in loving tribute to his late sister, Filomena Riccardi, a founding Trustee of the Society.

IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER, PLEASE JOIN US NOW

Dobbs Ferry Historical Society

MEMBERSHIP 1998-99 [] New [] Renew

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (day) _____ (eve.) _____

[] Patron..... \$100.00
 [] Friend..... \$ 50.00
 [] Contributing..... \$ 25.00
 [] Family..... \$ 15.00
 [] Individual Adult..... \$ 10.00
 [] Student/Senior (over 60)..... \$ 3.00
 [] Junior (Students under 16)* ... No fee

Please make check payable to, and mail to:
 DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 12 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522
 Telephone (914) 674-1007 (24-hour answering)

Membership contribution..... \$ _____
 Mead House Roof/Boiler contribution..... \$ _____
 Newspaper Microfilming Project contribution... \$ _____
 TOTAL enclosed (TAX DEDUCTIBLE)... \$ _____
 [] My employer's matching contributions form is enclosed.

*Persons under 16 years of age must show parent's or legal guardian's consent for membership. Thus, if you have checked Junior membership above, please provide signature below.

_____ Date _____ Please check one: Parent _____ Guardian _____
 Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian