

Knickerbockers in Smithville Flats, NY

And the story of Alvin Knickerbocker

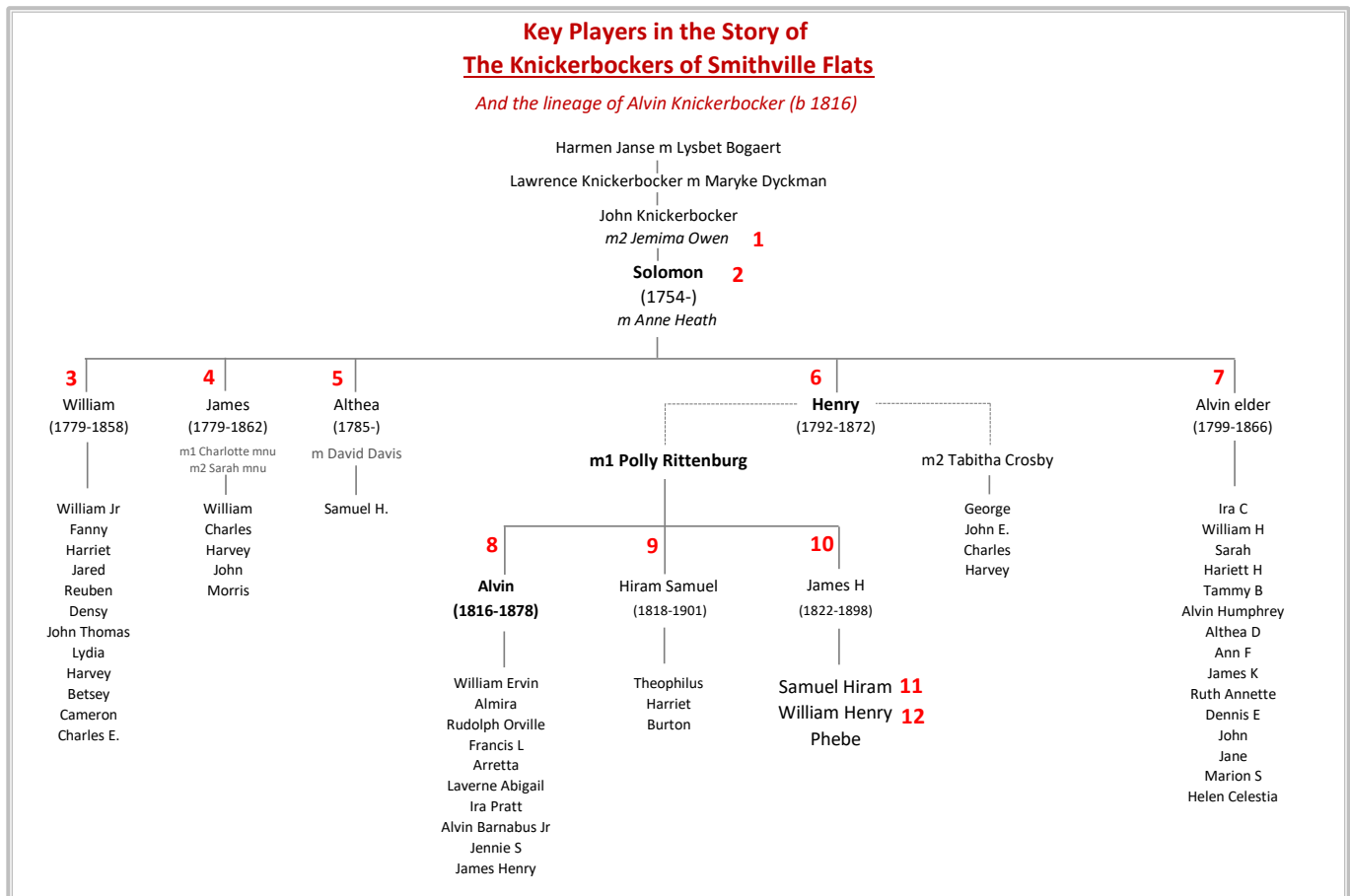
Bryan Knickerbocker
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30 July 2018

This is the story of the Knickerbocker families of Smithville Flats, Chenango County, New York.

We begin with Solomon Knickerbocker and his wife Anne Heath of Salisbury, Connecticut. Solomon and his family moved to Greene County, New York, in the 1790's.

There were multiple Knickerbockers in Greene County, New York, who later moved to Smithville Flats in Chenango County. These Knickerbockers were a close-knit tribe, and it appears that the families were all descended from Solomon.

The story gets more complex after about 1850. However, we have enough pieces to support the tree that is shown below.



The numbers, from 1 to 12, will be used throughout this report when referring to the key players.

The Last Full Measure of Devotion

Solomon Knickerbocker lost four grandsons and two great grandsons in the civil war.

Alvin Knickerbocker (person number 7) appears to hold the record for any Knickerbocker family in any war. Alvin lost four sons in the Civil War:

- William H. Knickerbocker served in Company K of the 141st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. He was killed at the Peach Orchard at Gettysburg on 2 July 1863. He left six children some of whom were raised in an orphanage.*
- Alvin H. Knickerbocker served with the 191st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry and died 28 June 1865 in North Carolina after leaving a confederate prison. He left three children.*
- James K. Knickerbocker served with the 35th and 6th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry and died 6 Nov 1862. He may have died as a result of wounds from the battle of Antietam.*
- John Knickerbocker also served with the 141st Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry and he was killed at Chancellorsville on 4 May 1863.*

James H. Knickerbocker (person 10) lost his son:

- Samuel Hiram Knickerbocker (person 11) died at Spotsylvania in 1864.*

Alvin Knickerbocker (person 8) lost his son:

- Francis Knickerbocker died in March, 1864, in a brigade hospital in Washington, DC. He was 16 years old.*

In addition, there is William H. Knickerbocker, who shows up in the files of the notorious prison camp at Andersonville, Georgia. William survived Andersonville, and returned home. His military records mention Crawford, PA, and Erie County, PA. This was probably the son of James Knickerbocker, our person 4.

As far as we can tell, no other line of Knickerbockers was as directly affected by the Civil War.

The Earliest Knickerbockers

Harmen Knickerbocker in Dutchess County, New York

Harmen Janse was from Holland, but settled along the Hudson River in the 1680's.

Through a series of odd events, he adopted the last name "Knickerbacker." He was the first person to ever use this as a last name.

Harmen lived, for his last few years, in Dutchess County, in the area now called Tivoli, New York. Court records show that he died there in about 1714.

Land records show that Harmen died and was buried on land later owned by Cornelius Knickerbocker. The area around his grave was later set aside as a quarter acre burial ground for Knickerbockers.

The approximate location of Harmen Janse' grave is indicated by the red star on this satellite photograph of the Tivoli shoreline.

Unfortunately, Harmen's tombstone is long gone.



From Google Earth

Lawrence Knickerbocker in Dutchess County, New York

Lawrence Knickerbocker was the second son of Harmen Janse. Lawrence lived his adult life in Dutchess County, near Tivoli. His property was just to the east of the map shown above.

Lawrence served in the New York militia with or under a man named Johannes Dyckman, and married Johannes' daughter Maryke Dyckman.

Lawrence died in 1766, and was originally buried in the family burial ground, near his father. Lawrence's tombstone was later moved.

During the early 1700's, residents of the Hudson River Valley began looking eastwards towards Connecticut.

In the early 1720's, Lawrence Knickerbocker and Johannes Dyckman were among the Dutchmen who received land grants in Connecticut.

Lawrence Knickerbocker in Dutchess Co.

Dutchess Co. NY

Litchfield Co. Connecticut

Land Grant in Salisbury

4

Lawrence Knickerbocker's 50 acre grant was along the Housatonic River, near the mouth of Salmon Kill Creek.

Lawrence's son John quickly expanded these land holdings. The satellite photos shown here attempt to illustrate the scope of John's land purchases in Salisbury.

John Knickerbocker also purchased land south of the Sharon town line, just off the bottom of these satellite photographs.

This is the area where Solomon lived for about the first 50 years of his life.



The Will of John Knickerbocker

John Knickerbocker died in 1786 and left a will. The will named the 12 people shown in the table below. The table also shows how each person was described, and examples of what they inherited.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Example of Inheritance</u>
1	Jamime	Wife	Half of house & barn
2	Abram	Eldest son	Land
3	Lawrence	Second son	Land
4	Isaac	Fourth Son	Land
5	John	Harmon's John, so-called & my grandson ★	25 acres, the house his father built, & other land
6	Mary Hogaboome	Eldest daughter	Land
7	Jane Jackson	<i>no description was given</i>	Land
8	Sary Griffin	Daughter	Land
9	Solomon	Fifth son ★	Land (including The Grant)
10	Bartholomew	Harmon's three children not mentioned before in this will. Rachel and Thankful are called "twins"	1 pound 10 shillings
11	Rachel		1 pound
12	Thankful		1 pound

Like his siblings, Solomon's inheritance consisted of land, but no cash.

The other person that we have highlighted is Solomon's nephew, who was known as "Harmon's John." John is discussed in the appendix to this report. (Some of John's descendants later moved to Cincinnati NY, near Smithville Flats.)

Solomon Knickerbocker (person number 2)

We will now focus on Solomon Knickerbocker.

Solomon Knickerbocker was not a wealthy man. He began selling his inherited land soon after his father's death. He eventually left Connecticut, perhaps in search of a place with a lower cost of living.

During Solomon's time in Salisbury, the births of five of his children were recorded in town records.

Van Alstyne's genealogy of the Knickerbocker Family (NYGBR, 1908/1909) is normally treated as a main source for Knickerbocker family information. In this case, though, we will go to a publication from 1916. The names and dates are identical to Van Alstyne, but this 1916 publication includes additional information.

*Historical Collections Relating To the Town Of
Salisbury Litchfield County Connecticut
Volume II (1916)*

The vital records of Salisbury which were published in the first volume of "Collections" comprehended approximately the period 1730-1767 and were taken from Vol. I Land Records and the First Book of Town Meeting Records, etc. The instalment in this volume takes up the work where it was left in the last issue and carries it through the second volume of Town Meeting Records and Births, Marriages and Deaths, to what is approximately the year 1800.

- *** Knickerbacor, Althea, d. of Solomon and Anne, b. in Sal., Feb. 2, 1785
 - *** Knickerbacor, David, s. of Solomon and Anne, b. in Sal., Aug. 7, 1777
 - *** Knickerbacor, James, s. of Solomon and Anne, b. in Sal., May 19, 1787
 - *** Knickerbacor, Walter, s. of Solomon and Anne, b. in Sal., Aug. 7, 1782
 - *** Knickerbacor, William, s. of Solomon and Anne, b. in Sal., Aug. 4, 1780
- *** Entered Feb. 26, 1790 and certified by Jemima K. Bacer and Benj Marble.

First, notice the description of how these records were assembled. The entries that we are seeing are second-hand, at best, and were transcribed and put into alphabetical order.

Second, notice the footnote. These were recorded in 1790, instead of at the time of the birth. This explains why a girl named Hannah Knickerbocker is not on this list. Hannah died in 1776, at age 1, and was buried in the Lime Rock Cemetery. Hannah's tombstone says she was the daughter of Solomon and Anna Knickerbacor. Hannah's birth was apparently never recorded.

We don't know how many other Knickerbocker births went unrecorded.

In the footnote, one of the people certifying the dates was "Jemima K. Bacer." This is person number 1 in our listing of key players. This was Solomon's mother, who occasionally shortened Knickerbocker to K. Baker. Jemima was about 75 years old when the births were recorded. We hope she was quoting the dates from a detailed family bible, but, even then, we need to be worried about second hand information.

Jemima was the second wife of John Knickerbocker. Solomon was her only son. These were her only Knickerbocker grandchildren, as of 1790. Perhaps she wanted to make sure they were recorded, for posterity, before she faded from the scene.

It is important to realize that recordkeeping was sloppy and was sometimes considered optional.

Solomon Knickerbocker eventually left Salisbury.

We see in tax records that he was listed throughout the 1780's, but stopped paying taxes in 1792.

<u>Tax Assessments for Solomon Knickerbocker</u>		
<u>Salisbury, Connecticut</u>		
1784	Solomon Knickerbocker	30 15 00
1785	Solomon Knickerbocker	22 00 00
1786	Solomon Knickerbocker	26 00 00
1787	Solomon Knickerbocker	59 19 00
1788	Solomon Knickerbocker	67 01 06
1789	Solomon Knickerbocker	63 12 06
1790	Solomon Knickerbocker	66 12 06
1791	Solomon Knickerbocker	74 00 00
1792+	No listings for Solomon Knickerbocker for 1792 or following years	

Solomon also sold multiple pieces of property in Connecticut in early 1792. Solomon's next land transaction involved the sale of some inherited land in Connecticut. At the time, Solomon was living in Freehold, "Albany County."

Example of Land Transactions for Solomon Knickerbocker

Date	Seller	Description (excerpt)
January 1792	Solomon Knickerbocker	Assigned lease on part of the Grant to James Johnston
Feb 1792	Solomon Knickerbocker (of Salisbury)	Quitclaim to ten acres owned by his late father John Knickerbocker
March 1792	Solomon and Anna Knickerbocker (of Salisbury)	2 acres, part of estate of estate of her late father Bartholomew Heath
January 1799	Solomon & Anna Knickerbocker of Freehold, Albany County	Two pieces of land in Sharon from the estate of Bartholomew Heath, "our father"

Freehold is now in Greene County, which split off from Albany County in 1800. The boundaries of Greene County have changed slightly since then, but those changes do not affect our story.\

Based on the above discussion, we estimate that Solomon left Connecticut in 1792 or shortly thereafter. This is an important detail, since we will later discuss children born in 1792 or later.

Census Records for Key Descendants of Solomon

Our story now moves into the 1800's. Census records are a critical piece of this puzzle.

Unfortunately, many people were missed during each census. Even some of those who were included had their names so badly misspelled that it can be hard to find the records.

Shown below is a listing of the key Knickerbockers in this study. A green box shows that we found the census records. A yellow box shows that the census record cannot be found.

Census Records for Key Knickerbockers

	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1855-NY	1860	1865-NY	1870	1875-NY	1880	1892-NY
Solomon	Greene Co NY	Delaware Co NY	Salisbury, CT										
William		Smithville NY	Smithville NY	Smithville NY	Smithville NY	Smithville NY	Smithville NY	deceased					
Althea (& husband)		Delaware Co NY	Smithville NY	Smithville NY	Tioga Co NY	Missing	Wisconsin						
Alvin (elder)	Living with Solomon?	Missing	Smithville NY	Bradford Co PA	Bradford Co PA	Not in NY State	Bradford Co PA	Not in NY State	Bradford Co PA	Not in NY State	Bradford Co PA	Not in NY State	deceased
Henry			Smithville NY	Missing	Tioga Co NY	Cayuta NY	Not in NY State	Barry Co MI	Not in NY State	Barry Co MI	Not in NY State	deceased	
Alvin (1816)		Living with Henry?		Age 24; Not with Henry	Broome Co NY	Missing	Missing	Scio NY	Scio NY	Marathon NY	deceased		
Hiram Samuel		Living with Henry?		Age 22; not with Henry	Missing	Missing	Scio NY	Scio NY	Scio NY	Scio NY	Scio NY	Scio NY	Scio NY
James Henry				Age 18; not with Henry	Tompkins NY	Not in NY State	Barry Co MI	Not in NY State	Barry Co MI	Not in NY State	Barry Co MI	Not in NY State	
William Henry					Tompkins NY	Not in NY State	Barry Co MI	Not in NY State	Allegan Co, MI	Scio NY	Missing		

It is unfortunate that Alvin Knickerbocker (born 1816) is only found in 4 census records. Finding the remaining records would be very useful.

Surprisingly, one of the most useful census records is for a minor player in our story. This was William Henry Knickerbocker, the son of James Henry Knickerbocker. William's location in the 1875 census was the final piece of the puzzle.

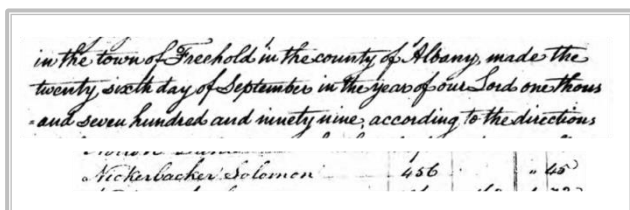
We will build up the story, one puzzle piece at a time.

Whenever possible, we will also show other records, such as military records and tax records.

Knickerbockers in Greene County, New York, circa 1800

In the period from about 1800 to 1810, the family of Solomon Knickerbocker was based in Greene County, New York. There are records for three of the children born before 1790 in Connecticut (Althea, James, and William). There are also records for two other Knickerbockers (Henry and Alvin) who must be among Solomon's extra children who were born after 1790.

The activities were centered around Freehold and Durham.

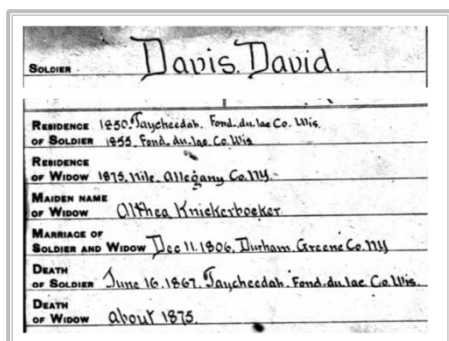


Solomon Knickerbocker was a taxpayer in Freehold in 1799.

Solomon is in the 1800 census for Freehold. He had three boys under 10, and a girl under 10.

This proves that Solomon had multiple children born after the town records witnessed by Jemima Bacor, which ended in 1790.

1800, Freehold, Greene County, NY			
<i>Warren County</i>			
<i>Solomon Knickerbocker</i>			
	1	2	3
Males	Under 10	3	
	10 thru 15	1	
	16 thru 25	2	
	26 thru 44	1	
Females	Under 10	1	
	10 thru 15	1	
	26 thru 44	1	



Solomon's daughter Althea (person 5) was born in 1785, according to the list from Salisbury. She was 15 in 1800, which accounts for one of Solomon's daughters in the 1800 census.

Althea married David Davis, in Durham, Greene County, in 1806.

One of Solomon's young boys must have been Alvin (the elder) Knickerbocker (person 7).

When Alvin (elder) enlisted, he gave his birth location as Durham. Alvin enlisted on September 1, 1814.

RECORDS OF MEN ENLISTED IN THE U. S. ARMY													
NAME.	ORGANIZATION.			DESCRIPTION.						WHERE BORN.			
	RANK.	REGIMENT.	COMPANY COMMANDER.	HEIGHT.		EYES.	HAIR.	COMPLEX-ION.	AGE.	OCCUPATION.	TOWN OR COUNTY.	STATE.	WHEN.
				Feet.	Inches.								
Knickerbocker, Alvin	Rec.	27th Reg.		5	4	gray	dark	light	18		Durham	N.Y.	Sept. 1/14

Another of those boys must have been Henry Knickerbocker (person 6). Again, we surmise this based on military records. Henry Knickerbocker served two different stints during the War of 1812. One of Henry's enlistments was in Durham.

We will discuss Henry's military records later.

James Knickerbocker (person 9) was in the 1820 census in Greene County

1820, Durham, Greene County, NY													
Betsy White						1			2	1	1	1	
→ James Knickerbocker	3	1				1			2		1		2
Alfred Knickerbocker											1		1
Harvey Cole	2					1		3	1		1		1
Jeremiah Morris	2					1					1		1
Caroline Chapman									3	1			

New York, NY *Spectator* legal notice
Tuesday, January 30, 1821:

"James Knickerbocker in right of his
wife Charlotte" of Greene County NY"

We know that James Knickerbocker was in Greene County in 1821, and that his wife's name was Charlotte.

William Knickerbocker (person 3) was in the 1803 tax records for Greene County.

Stentland William J	725	112	2	18
Prop Ebenezer	880	80	2	40
→ Knickerbocker William	392	-	1	1
Stentland Richard	690	-	1	80
Stentland David Jr	530	-	1	30
	910	90	-	71

To summarize: Greene County had several Knickerbockers in the period from 1800 to 1820. We know from census and other records that they all left Greene County shortly thereafter.

We haven't yet shown any evidence that all of these Knickerbockers knew each other or were related; that comes in the next sections.

This still leaves us with two mysteries. Solomon showed 3 young sons under 10. We can identify Alvin and Henry, but the third one is a mystery. Solomon also showed a daughter under 10; she is also a mystery. Those mysteries will have to wait; we will not address them here in this report.

Solomon Leaves his Children Behind?

Solomon apparently left Greene County sometime around 1803. We base this on the fact that William has a tax record for 1803, but Solomon does not.

In the 1810 census, Solomon then shows up in Sydney, Delaware County.

1810, Sydney, Delaware County, NY

Thomas Davis	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
William Knickerbocker	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
William Knickerbocker	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eva Wheeler	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
David Davis	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Abigail Davis	9	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

(Three doors away from Solomon was a family headed by David Davis. This could be Althea and her husband.)

In 1810, Solomon had only one youngster in the house, a male between 10 and 15. That was probably Alvin (the elder), who was born about 1799.

Later, Solomon may have returned to Connecticut. There was a Solomon Knickerbocker in Litchfield County, CT, in the 1820 census.

Solomon apparently left his children behind. As we will see, several of the children wound up in Smithville Flats.

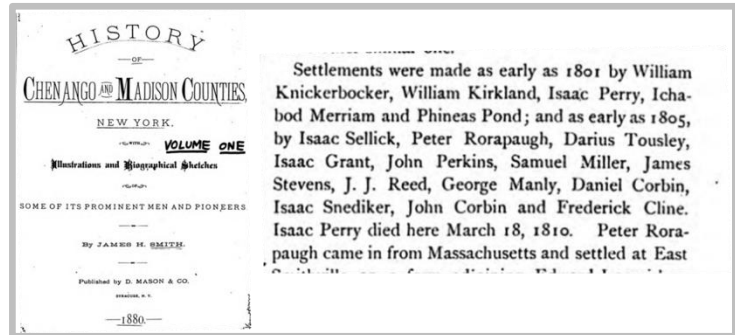
William Knickerbocker in Smithville Flats

We will now begin our discussion of Smithville and Smithville Flats.

William Knickerbocker (person 3) was the patriarch of the major line of Knickerbockers in Smithville Flats. He remained in the area for his entire adult life.

One author claimed that William Knickerbocker arrived in Smithville around 1801. This appears unlikely. William was still paying property taxes in Greene County.

It is more likely that William arrived as part of the 2nd wave, perhaps in 1805.



William Knickerbocker's first appearance in the census was in Smithville in 1810. The census taker's sheet is shown here.

1810, Smithville, New York

Shiles Dodgehip	1	2	1	"	1	2	1	"	"	1
Phancy Tyler	1	1	"	1	"	1	"	"	1	"
Simon Chas	1	3	1	1	"	1	"	1	1	"
Isaac Snediker	"	"	"	1	"	1	"	"	1	1
→ William Knickerbocker	1	"	2	1	"	2	"	1	"	"
Constant Chapman	2	"	2	"	1	1	1	2	"	1
John Metch	1	"	"	1	"	2	"	"	1	"
Isaac Sanford	1	"	"	1	"	2	"	"	1	"
Jose Mott	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	1	"

For William Knickerbocker, the entry in the third column is a scribble that looks like a zero scribbled over top of a 2. This column is for young men aged 16 to 25. For William's own nuclear family, this would be a zero. (William was only 31, and could not have had children over the age of 16.) On Ancestry, this census entry has been transcribed as a 2. If this scribble really is a 2, then William may have had his brothers Alvin and Henry living with him in 1810. This would fit nicely with our story.

However, look at the census taker's style. Like most census takers, this one loved to use ditto marks down through the columns. The next household that the census taker visited, after William Knickerbocker, was Constant Chapman. Constant Chapman really did have two young men in his house. Directly below the "2 or zero" scribble, the census taker wrote a 2, instead of using ditto marks. This suggests the scribble is actually a zero.

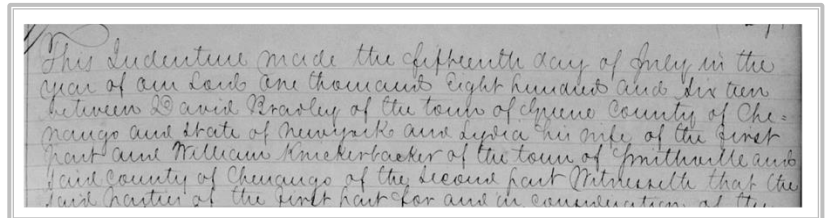
Therefore, in the end, we do not think that William had extra young men living with him in 1810.

William Knickerbocker was in every Chenango County census from 1810 until his death. We will not review all of those records here.

We don't know exactly where William Knickerbocker lived when he first arrived in Chenango County.

The Knickerbockers in Smithville made numerous land transactions over the years.

The first Knickerbocker purchase may have been in 1816, when William Knickerbocker bought 50 acres of land.



However, this deed reminds us about how casually some people treated their land purchases. William bought this property in 1816, but didn't record the deed until the 1850's. It appears he only recorded the original purchase so that he could sell the property to somebody else.

Furthermore, the descriptions of properties in these old deeds are often not helpful, referring only to the neighbor's fence lines.

Thus, Chenango County land records are not overly useful for our purposes here.

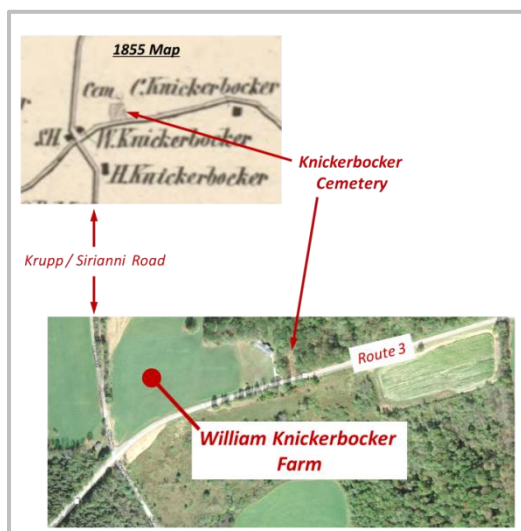
We can't decipher the early land records. However, we know the exact location of the farm where William eventually settled and lived out his life.

The farm was between today's towns of Smithville Flats and Smithville Center.

His property was along Spring Brook, which drains south into the Chenango River.

(William was not in the main north-south valley which defines the "flats." The flats are drained by the much larger Genegantslet Creek.)





A detailed county map from 1855 is available from the Library of Congress. It shows the exact location of William Knickerbocker's farm.

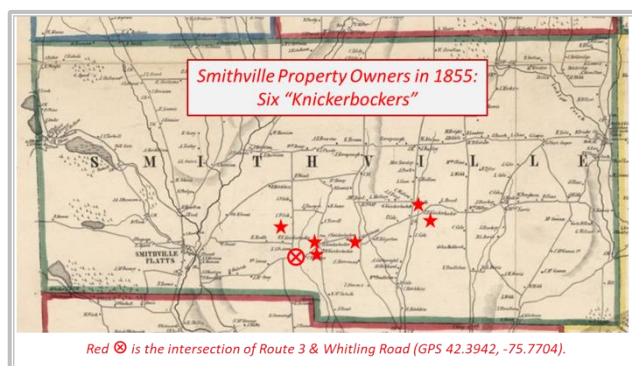
William's farm was just off Route 3, at the intersection with Krupp Road (also known as Sirianni Road).

His farm bordered the cemetery that is now called the "Knickerbocker Cemetery."

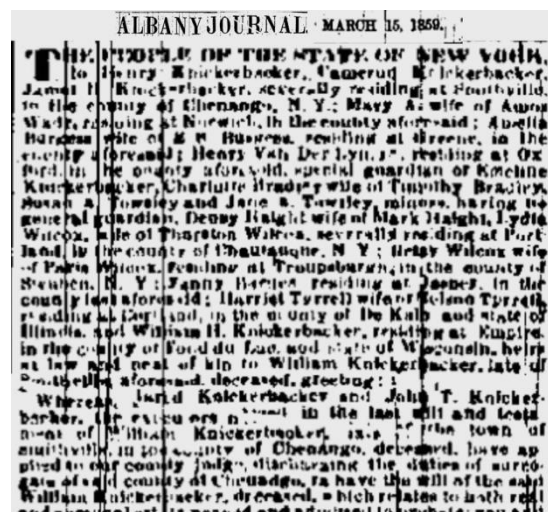
(There is no evidence of a church anywhere near this cemetery. Instead, this was a local burial ground for Knickerbockers and other nearby families.)

The 1855 map shows the locations of six Knickerbocker farms. All six were clustered along Route 3.

It appears that all of these Knickerbockers in this 1855 map were children and grandchildren of William Knickerbocker.



William Knickerbocker left several key records that help in the search for his descendants. One important record was his will, which named many descendants.



Another key record for William Knickerbocker involved the probate for his will. The probate court published a formal notice seeking William's heirs.

Thanks to the probate notice, it is possible to trace William's descendants and heirs. (We will not attempt a full listing here.)

Several of William Knickerbocker's descendants remained in the area in and around Chenango County.

Althea, Alvin, and Henry Knickerbocker in Smithville Flats

In 1820, William Knickerbocker's neighbors included Henry Knickerbocker (person 6) and David Davis (husband of Althea, person 5).

1820, Smithville, New York

William Timberlake	2		1	1	1	3	1		1		1	-
Sidney Bidwell	3	*			1	1	1		1		1	1
Henry Timberlake	2	.		1				1			1	
Polly M. Taylor	1	1	"			2	1	1	1			
Jahnes Olson	"	1	.		1		1	.	1		1	
Daniel Davis	.	3	1			1	2	1		1	1	

Alvin (elder) Knickerbocker (person 7) is not found in the 1820 census, either in Smithville, or anywhere else. He may have been living with somebody else, and thus was not enumerated as a Head of Household. (Alvin's first known child was born in 1821.)

In 1830, the Smithville census showed William Junior, William, Alvin, and David Davis all as heads of households.

1830, Smithville, New York

Page 5
→ Thomas Pitt
David Davis / 2 / /
H. Johnson / / / /

Page 9
→ Martin Myttinger all / / /
Heinrich Knechtbaum / 2 / /
Luther Bowles / / / /

→ J. H. Knapp / / / /
J. G. Reed / / / /
Wm. Knickbaun y / / / /

Page 13
→ Samuel Tuxell / / / /
Wm. Knickbaun / / / /
Elizabeth Bayly / / / /

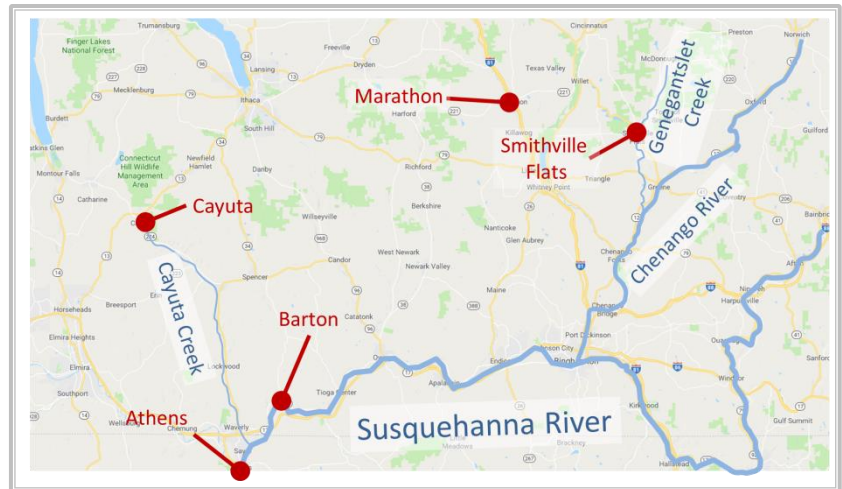
Henry Knickerbocker, person 6, is not found in the 1830 census, either in Smithville or anywhere else. One possibility is that he and his family were living in somebody else's household. Another possibility is that his family was missed.

Knickerbockers in Barton, Tioga County

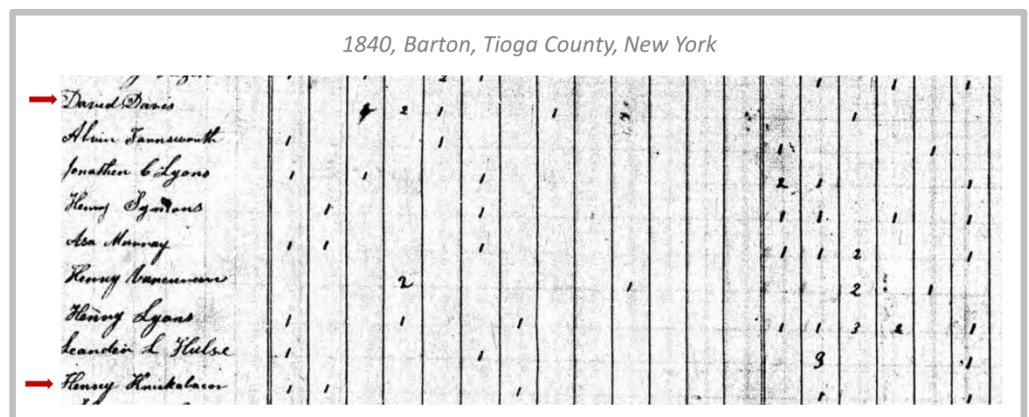
Sometime between 1820 and 1840, some of the Knickerbockers of Smithville Flats migrated downriver.

Althea Knickerbocker Davis wound up in Barton, Tioga County, PA. So did Henry Knickerbocker.

Alvin (elder) would up just across the state line in Athens, Bradford County, PA.



In 1840, Henry Knickerbocker was once again a neighbor of David Davis. This time, they were in Barton.



Althea Knickerbocker (person 5) and David Davis

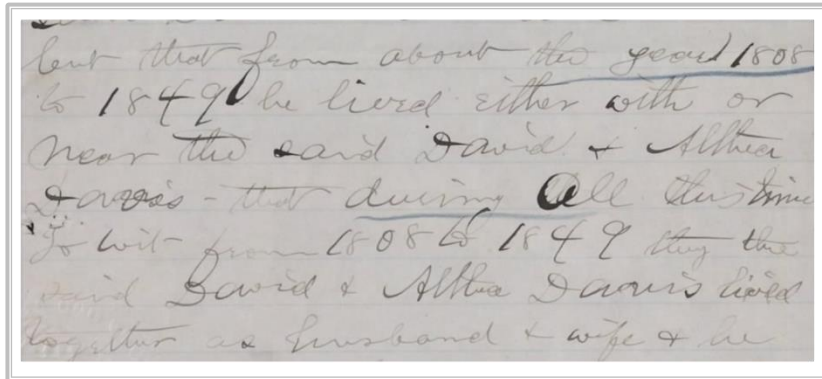
We have shown the birth and marriage records for Althea Knickerbocker. We have also shown several census records for her husband, David Davis.

Althea and David Davis remained in Barton for many years. They eventually moved to Fon Du Lac, Wisconsin, where David died. Althea then returned, moving to Nile, Allegany County, NY. (This was documented in her pension application that was mentioned earlier.)

Althea's role in this report is that she is part of the strong circumstantial evidence for the connection between Solomon Knickerbocker on the one hand, and Alvin (elder) and Henry Knickerbocker on the other.

The fact that Alvin and Henry moved in almost lock step with Althea Knickerbocker Davis, from Greene County to Smithville Flats to the Barton area is very clear in the records.

When Althea (Knickerbocker) Davis applied for a military pension, Alvin Knickerbocker of Franklin, Bradford, PA testified that he had lived with or near Althea and David Davis for 41 years.



The pension files do not contain any references to whether Alvin was related to Althea. However, they show that Alvin lived "with or near" Althea from 1808 to 1849. This confirms the census records: Several of these Knickerbocker families were a tight-knit group.

The fact that Alvin chose to mention 1808 is also interesting. Alvin was only 9 years old. Perhaps Althea helped raise Alvin after Solomon's departure.

Alvin Knickerbocker (person 7) in Bradford County, PA

Alvin (the elder) Knickerbocker went slightly further downriver than his siblings.

Alvin lived the rest of his life in Bradford County, Pennsylvania.

We will not discuss the details of Alvin (elder) and his family. They play no further role in our detective work for the Smithville Flats families.

Henry Knickerbocker (person 6)

We will now discuss Henry Knickerbocker in detail.

In the 1820 census record, Henry's household included two young sons.

1820, Smithville, New York		
→ Henry Knickerbocker	2	1
Males	Under 10	2
	16 thru 25	1
Females	15 thru 25	1

As we will discuss later, we believe these two sons were Alvin (born 1816) and Hiram Samuel (born 1818).

Henry's wife, was probably at least 22 years old, and thus must have been born before 1798. (In the 1820 census shown above, the family already had two children.)

Henry is missing from the 1830 census.

In 1840, Henry was in Barton, Tioga County. The ages of the family members suggest that (a) the wife got younger; (b) the boys from 1820 had left the house; and (c) there were additional, younger children.

1840, Barton, Tioga County, New York		
→ Henry Knickerbocker	1	1
Males	Under 5	1
	5 thru 9	1
	40 thru 49	1
Females	5 thru 9	1
	20 thru 39	1

The ages of the wife and children in 1840 were the first clues about what had happened to this family.

Henry left Barton before 1850. He travelled up the Cayuta Creek watershed, to the town of Cayuta.

Shown here are the 1850 census results. This was the first "every name" census. Henry was 58. His wife Tabitha was only 48.

As discussed below, Tabatha was Henry's second wife.

1850, Cayuta, Chemung County, New York		
H. Knickerbocker	58	m
Tabatha	48	f
George	18	sw
John	12	m
Charles	7	m
Harvey	4	m

The oldest child, George, was 18, meaning that Henry was 40 when George was born. Henry's older children had already moved out.

Henry then moved to Yankee Springs, Barry County, Michigan.

His family was in the 1860 census in Yankee Springs.

1860, Yankee Springs, Barry County, Michigan

Henry Knickerbocker	58	M	laboring	350	200	P/W
Tabitha	54	F				hermant
Charles	18	M				P/W
Henry	14	M				do
Mary	12	F				do

Henry died in 1872, and was buried in Barry County, Michigan.

We can find details about Henry's wives in the military pension application that was filed after Henry died. The pension claim was filed in 1880 by Henry's second wife, Tabitha. As part of the pension process, she was required to discuss any previous marriages.

Here is an excerpt from the records on Fold3.

She further states that she was married to the said Henry Knickerbocker, at the city (or town) of Smithville, in the county of Chenango, and in the State of New York, on the about 22 day of October, A. D. 1822 by one (10) erry Smith, who was a (11) Justice of the Peace; and that her name before her said marriage was Mrs Tabitha Coates; and she further states that (12) bluinnant, and her husband Henry Knickerbocker both had been previously married bluinnant former husband and that her said husband (13) Henry Knickerbocker, died at at Yankee Springs in the State of Michigan, on the December 29 day of December, A. D. 1872.

This is a gold mine. It says that the Henry Knickerbocker at Yankee Springs had lived in Smithville NY. It also says that Tabatha and Henry had each been married before. Henry's first wife, Polly, died at Smithville. Henry's second marriage, to Tabatha, was in 1829.

On a separate form, Tabatha provided a last name for the first wife, Polly. We are showing a blowup of the image here, because this shows Polly's maiden name.

Polly Rivenbush

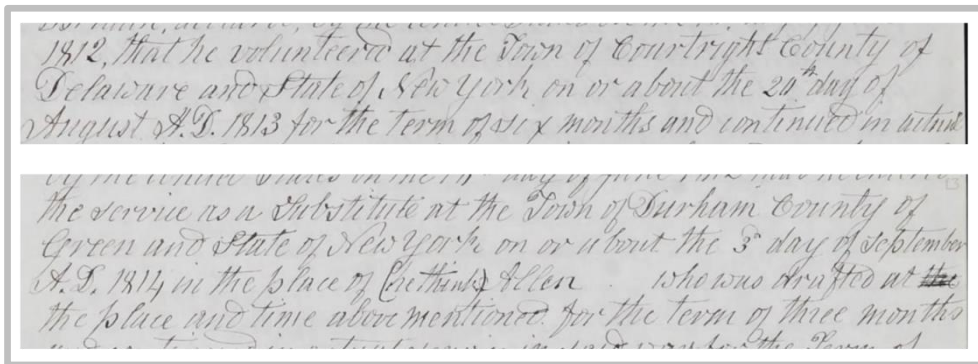
The above image appears to give Polly's last name as Rivenbach or Rivenbush. As we will show later, another record suggests her last name was Rittenburgh. We need to keep in mind that these names – Rivenbach or Rittenburgh or whatever – were all recorded perhaps 50 years after Polly died. These records are only a starting point for figuring out Polly's actual last name.

In her affidavit, Tabitha stated that she thought that Henry had volunteered in Smithville. This turns out to be incorrect.

The Fold3 pension file has an earlier statement that was taken directly from Henry Knickerbocker in 1851, when he lived in Cayuta NY.

Henry had applied for bounty lands as compensation for his service. Henry's application was apparently found among old records by a government clerk, and then used as part of the evidence that was used during his wife's pension application. That's a lucky break for us.

The key parts of Henry's description of his military service are shown here:



Henry served two brief stints during the War of 1812.

He enlisted in 1813, at the town of "Courtright" in Delaware County.

The town of Kortright is about halfway between Freehold, Green County, and Sydney, Delaware County. (Freehold was the area where Solomon lived in 1800. Sydney is where Solomon was in 1810.)

Henry enlisted a second time, on September 3rd 1814, in Greene County, NY. This was 2 days after Alvin elder Knickerbocker had enlisted.

James Henry Knickerbocker (person 10)

James Henry Knickerbocker was the son of Henry Knickerbocker.

At first, James did not go to Michigan with his father. James was in the 1850 census in Tompkins County, NY.

James had two sons in the household, Samuel and William H (persons 10 and 11).

1850, Enfield, Tompkins County, New York

55	56	James H. Knickerbocker	28	M	
		William H.	2	M	
		Samuel	7	M	
		William H.	2	M	

Both sons are discussed later.

James later moved to Yankee Springs, Barry County, Michigan, the same town where his father was living.

When James died, his death certificate listed his mother as Polly Rittenberg.

Thus, James was a son of Henry Knickerbocker and his first wife, Polly Rittenburg (or Rivenbach or Rivenbush).

Full name James H. Knickerbocker Date of death April 8 1898

Place of death if in city Yankee Springs, Mich. Sex M Color W

Single, married, widowed or divorced Married

(If married, age at first marriage 19 years. Age 75

Parent of 5 children, of whom 2 are living. Birthplace (State or country) New York

Occupation Farmer

Name of father Henry Knickerbocker Birthplace of father (State or country) N.Y.

Name of mother Polly Rittenburg Birthplace of mother (State or country) unknown

Certificate of Report: The personal and family particulars herein given relative deceased are true to the best of knowledge and belief. Witness hand this 9th

Note, though, that James was born in 1822. James was not one of the two young sons from Henry's 1820 census. James must have had two older brothers who were born before 1820.

Samuel Hiram Knickerbocker (person 11)

Tompkins County NY and Yankee Springs, Michigan

James Knickerbocker had a child with a very interesting name: Samuel Hiram Knickerbocker.

Samuel Hiram Knickerbocker appears to have gone back and forth with respect to his first name. Sometimes he was "Samuel" but other times he was "Hiram".

Samuel was killed during the Civil War. His military record describes him as "Hiram S. Knickerbocker, alias Samuel Knickerbocker."

It is interesting that there was a Samuel Hiram Knickerbocker in Michigan. As we will discuss later, there was a man named Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker in Scio, Allegany County, New York.

William Henry Knickerbocker (person 12)
Tompkins County NY and Yankee Springs, Michigan

William Henry Knickerbocker, person 12, was the son of James Knickerbocker.

We will discuss William Henry Knickerbocker in some detail. He left a string of records. One of these records is crucial to our story.

In the 1850 census already shown, James Henry Knickerbocker had a 2 year old son, William. In 1850, William was living in Tompkins County, New York.

William had a complex life and apparently moved around. He was married at least twice.

In tracing William Henry Knickerbocker, it is helpful to remember that he was born in Tompkins County, where Ithaca is located.

William's first marriage was on October 6, 1867 in Allegan, Michigan. We're sure that this marriage record is for our William because it listed his birth location was listed as Ithaca, Cayuga County. (The Michigan county clerk was a little confused about New York geography.)

Oct. 6 1867	Allegan Mich.	Wm H Knickerbocker (M)	Rutland Barry Co. Mich.	19	Ithaca Cayuga Co N.Y. F
		Thankful Reed (M)	Allegan Allegan Co. Mich.	19	

William and his young family were in Allegan Michigan for the 1870 census.

1870, Monterey, Allegan County, Michigan

29 30	Knickerbocker Wm H 22 20 M	Farmer Laborer
	— Viola 22 5 W	Helping House
	— Emma 1 2 M	
	— John 1/2 2 M	

William divorced his first wife sometime around 1875. By 1880, his two children, Ernest and James, were living with their grandfather, James Henry Knickerbocker.

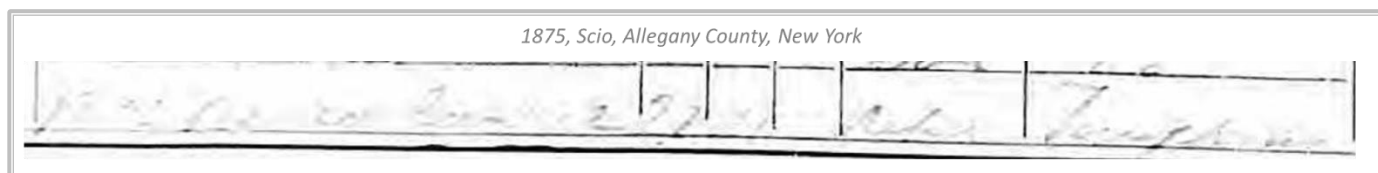
William's second marriage (or perhaps third) was Anna Belle Davis on June 2, 1897, in Petersburg, Virginia. This location seems odd, but once again we are sure this is the right man, because he listed his birth location as Tompkins County NY.

Time of Marriage, June 2 nd 1897	Place of Husband's Birth, Tompkins County New York
Place of Marriage, Petersburg Va	Place of Wife's Birth, Prince George, Va
Full Names of Parties Married, William H Knickerbocker	Place of Husband's Residence, Danville Va
Anna Belle Davis	Place of Wife's Residence, Prince George, "
Color, White	Names of Husband's Parents, James H & Julia Ann Knickerbocker
Age of Husband, 47 Years	Names of Wife's Parents, Alfred & Virginia M Davis
Age of Wife, 19	Condition of Husband (widowed or single), Widowed
Condition of Wife (widowed or single), Single	Occupation of Husband, Farmer

William's travels between the 1870 census in Michigan and his 1897 marriage in Virginia are not clear.

However, we now come to William's important contribution to this report: He shows up in the 1875 state census in New York.

Shown below is blow-up of the 1875 census image, which is a little hard to read:



This census entry is for W H Knickerbocker age 27, nephew, who was born in Tompkins County. Thus, we know that William returned to New York to live with his uncle. (There isn't any other W H Knickerbocker, from any other line, that fits this census entry.)

This 1875 census record is from Scio, New York. Thus, we will now shift our focus away from Michigan, and back to New York.

Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker (person 8)

Scio, Allegany County

Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker of Scio, New York, is easy to find in records. He showed up in six successive census listings, in Scio. Hiram also had a son with a unique name, Theophilus, which is also easy to track.

In five of the six census entries, Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker was called Hiram or Hiram S. Knickerbocker. That's also how he shows up in some land records.

However, there are other records for Samuel H Knickerbocker in Scio. There are also land records referring to him as Hiram S. and Samuel H.

We will take a moment to discuss the 1865 NY state census. In this record, he was called Samuel Knickerbocker. This is obviously the right family, since son Theophilus is in the household.

1865, Scio, Allegany County, New York

Samuel H. Knickerbocker	36	Mc	Child	Change
Emily Knickerbocker	34	Mc	Wife	Scio
Theophilus Knickerbocker	10	Mc	Child	Scio
Harriet Knickerbocker	7	Mc	Child	Mc
Barton Knickerbocker	3 1/2	Mc	Child	All

There is a lot of information in these 1865 census entries. Hiram was born in Chenango County in about 1818. His wife Emily was born in Tioga County, in about 1826. His oldest son Theophilus was born in Tioga County in about 1855.

Thus, if we wanted to search for the father of Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker, we need somebody who lived in Chenango County in about 1818, but then lived in Tioga County by the 1840/1850 timeframe.

Based on nothing more than the above census listing, we would assign a high probability that Henry Knickerbocker was the father of Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker.

Now we will jump ahead 10 years, and look at the 1875 state census for Scio NY.

We have already shown the bottom portion of this entry, when we discussed William Henry Knickerbocker (person 11), who was born in Tompkins County NY.

1875, Scio, Allegany County, New York

Hiram Knickerbocker	7	11	Chenango
Emily Knickerbocker	3	11	Tioga
Prof. Knickerbocker	9	11	Scioto
John Knickerbocker	7	11	Scioto
William Knickerbocker	3	11	Scioto
William Knickerbocker	3	11	Scioto

This census entry shows that W H Knickerbocker, born in Tompkins County New York in about 1848, was the nephew of Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker of Scio New York.

Thus, Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker was the son of Henry Knickerbocker. Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker (person 8) was the uncle of Samuel Hiram Knickerbocker (person 11).

Hiram was one of the two young sons in Henry Knickerbocker's 1820 census entry in Smithville Flats. Hiram probably moved to Tioga County with his father, but left the household prior to 1840. Hiram apparently reached adulthood, married, and started a family, all while living in Tioga County.

Hiram and his young family later moved to Scio, in Allegany County.

Hiram did not leave many descendants. For example, the oldest son, Theophilus, had issues. For example, he wound up marrying a 13 year old (probably because he had to) and later attempted suicide by taking opium. After 1880, there is no trace of Theophilus or any descendants.

Hiram's other children married, but, so far, no living descendants have been identified.

This is unfortunate, as any living descendants would be good candidates for DNA testing.

Was Althea's Son Named Hiram Samuel Davis?

We have shown that Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker of Scio, Allegany County, New York was the son of Henry Knickerbocker.

We have also shown that Samuel Hiram Knickerbocker of Tompkins County NY was the grandson of Henry Knickerbocker.

The unusual name supports the lineage that we have discussed.

Interestingly, there might have been another "Hiram Samuel." There are claims on many Ancestry trees that the full name of Althea's son, Hiram S. Davis was Hiram Samuel Davis.

So far, though, we cannot confirm Hiram S. Davis' middle name.

(Early on during this research, the name of Althea's son seemed important. Now, though, the name of Althea's son is just a curiosity item.)

James Knickerbocker (person 4) in Crawford County, PA

Solomon's son, James Knickerbocker, does not play a large role in this story.

James stayed in Greene County after his siblings moved to Smithville Flats. James apparently then moved to Crawford County in far western Pennsylvania.

James Knickerbocker showed up twice in census records for Crawford County, PA.

In 1850, James' birth location was listed as Connecticut.

In 1860, his birth location was New York, but this might have been a mistake by the census taker. James' name appeared directly below his granddaughter, Harriet. Her birth location was shown as CT, which is very unlikely. The census taker might have miss-understood what he was told, and written CT in the wrong box on the form.

1850, Crawford County, PA		
James Knickerbocker	67	Connecticut
1860, Crawford County, PA		
John Knickerbocker	44	N.Y.
Harriet	15	-
Sarah	12	Penn'a
Harriet	1	CT.
James	80	N.Y.
Sarah	63	-

Crawford County, Pennsylvania, was a remote location. There was never any mass move of Knickerbockers to that area. Instead, James seems to be the patriarch of the local families. For example, we have already shown James' entry in the 1820 census in Greene County, New York. James had three sons under 10, and one son 10-15. The Knickerbockers who later appear in Crawford County perfectly match this age distribution. In 1820, Charles, Henry, and John Knickerbocker were under 10. William Knickerbocker was 10-15.

Thus, there is no indication that James had any extra sons who might have a role in the history we are telling here.

We need to briefly discuss the wives of James Knickerbocker. As already shown, in Greene County, James' wife was listed as Charlotte. As shown above, by 1860 his wife was named Sarah, and was much younger than James.

There are no records anywhere that suggest that James Knickerbocker was ever married to anybody whose first name was Dorcas. Unfortunately, though, this myth has propagated on genealogy sites like Ancestry. The next section will discuss the myths around "Dorcas Knickerbocker."

Dorcas Sisson, the mother in law of Ira Knickerbocker

We will pause for a moment to discuss Dorcas “Knickerbocker.”

This is an example of the worst feature of Ancestry. One person’s sloppy work suddenly propagates to the point where people believe that it must be true. The result is that most of the family trees on Ancestry are worthless.

In this case, the widely available hints on Ancestry are wrong. Dorcas was not the wife of James Knickerbocker, or the mother of Ira Knickerbocker, or the mother of Alvin Knickerbocker.

In fact, Dorcas “Knickerbocker” wasn’t even a real person. We will demonstrate using three census records, in reverse order.

1870, Athens, Bradford County, Pennsylvania

Sisson, E. P.	40	m	Pa	26	Y	
Sisson, Dorcas	40	f	Pa	26	Y	
Sisson, Margaret	18	f	Pa	14	Y	
Sisson, Charles	16	m	Pa	12	Y	
Sisson, William	14	m	Pa	10	Y	
Sisson, John	12	m	Pa	8	Y	
Sisson, Mary	10	f	Pa	6	Y	
Sisson, David	8	m	Pa	4	Y	
Sisson, Elizabeth	6	f	Pa	2	Y	
Sisson, George	4	m	Pa	0	Y	
Sisson, Susan	2	f	Pa	0	Y	
Sisson, Henry	0	m	Pa	0	Y	

In 1870, Dorcas Sisson was living in Athens, Bradford County, PA. She was living with her son, E. P (Ephraditus) Sisson, and her granddaughter, who was also named Dorcas.

In 1865, Dorcas Sisson was with the same family, across the river, in Tioga County NY.

Sisson family researchers know this woman as Dorcas Bartlet Sisson, the widow of Wright Sisson. Dorcas was the mother of E.P. Sisson and Margaret Sisson. Margaret Sisson married Ira Knickerbocker, the son of Alvin (the elder) Knickerbocker.

1865, Nichols, Tioga County, New York

E. P. Sisson	40	m	Pa	26	Y	
Dorcas Sisson	40	f	Pa	26	Y	
William A. Sisson	18	m	Pa	14	Y	
Sarah Sisson	16	f	Pa	12	Y	
Charles Sisson	14	m	Pa	10	Y	
Edward Sisson	12	m	Pa	8	Y	
Carry Sisson	10	f	Pa	6	Y	
Betty Sisson	8	f	Pa	4	Y	
Sarah Sisson	6	f	Pa	2	Y	

1850, Barton, Tioga County, New York

E. P. Sisson	35	Y	
Julia	30	Y	
Mary A.	14	Y	
Dorcas	9	Y	
Margaret	7	Y	
Ira Knickerbocker	4	Y	
Margaret	2	Y	
Dorcas	61	Y	

The problem comes from the 1850 census. Dorcas Sisson was living with the same family, but the census taker got careless. Instead of writing down Dorcas’ last name, the census taker used a set of ditto marks.

Dorcas 61 Y

Despite the claims of many Ancestry trees, there are zero records where Dorcas was shown with the last name Knickerbocker. Instead, there is only this one record showing her as Dorcas DittoMarks. Unfortunately, though, the mythology around Dorcas DittoMarks will probably live on forever on Ancestry.

We will not discuss Dorcas Sisson any further.

The Great Alvin Hunt

A man named Alvin Knickerbocker was born in about 1816. We will call this person Alvin (the younger).

It turns out that several descendants of Alvin (the younger) are genealogists. They have been researching Alvin Knickerbocker for over 20 years. Their search became known as The Great Alvin Hunt.

Alvin (the younger) is hard to track for several reasons.

One issue is that Alvin is missing from the census records several times, for example in 1860.

<u>Census Records</u>										
	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1855-NY	1860	1865-NY	1870	1875-NY
Alvin (1816)	not born yet	Living with Henry?		Age 24; Not with Henry	Broome Co NY	Missing	Missing	Scio NY	Scio NY	Marathon NY

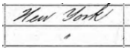
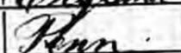
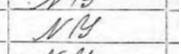
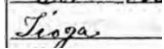
A second issue is that Alvin moved around a lot. We know that from the birth locations of his children. We will discuss that in the next section.

Another issue is that Alvin was apparently not very well off during his younger days. He seemed to have rented his property for most of his life. There are very few land records for this person.

The participants in the Great Alvin Hunt investigated almost every Knickerbocker in the southern tier of New York State in the 1800's. However, they could never quite put the pieces together.

Now, with the benefit of better technology, we can finally propose – and support – a theory about the roots of Alvin Knickerbocker. That theory is discussed below.

Alvin's birth location is unclear. The state census was focused in part on birth location, but the 1865 entry is Penn and the 1875 entry is Tioga.

<u>Census</u>	<u>Entry for Birth Location</u>
1850	
1865 – NY	
1870	
1875 – NY	

1850, Lisle, Broome County, New York

Alvin Knickerbocker	34	"	"	Laborer
Phoebe	28	"	"	
Erwin	8	"	"	
Almira	6	"	"	
Rodolph	4	"	"	
Francis	2	"	"	
Aurelia	3/12	"	"	

The first census record for Alvin (the younger) was in 1850, in Broome County, New York. This census record doesn't help much with the Alvin Hunt.

The more interesting census records are in 1865 and 1870. Alvin was living in Scio, New York. This was the same town where Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker lived.

1865, Scio, Allegany County, New York

Alvin Knickerbocker	49	M		Penn
Phoebe Knickerbocker	30	F	Wife	Broome
Almyra Knickerbocker	20	F	Child	Tompkins
Rodolph Knickerbocker	18	M	Child	Broome
Laverne Knickerbocker	11	F	Child	Broome
Erwin Knickerbocker	4	M	Child	Broome
Ira Knickerbocker	3	M	Child	Cattaraugus
Alvin Knickerbocker	1	M	Child	Broome
Marshall Horton	2	M	Child	Michigan

The state census in 1865 recorded the birth location for each member of the household. If the person was born in New York State, the census taker recorded the county where that person was born.

The 1865 census provides a hint about the complexities of Alvin's early life.

The most surprising entry from 1865 is the youngest person in the household – Marshall Horton, age 2, a grandchild, born in Michigan:

Marshall Horton	2	M	Child	Michigan
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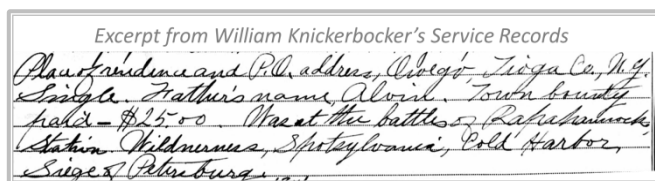
Nobody has ever figure out who this was, or how this was possible. (Did Alvin have an older daughter who somehow never got recorded in the census records? Or, did the oldest daughter, Almyra, move briefly to Michigan, and then return to New York after the death of a husband? We don't know.)

The other entries from 1865 help us to understand the family's travels:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Alvin's Location</u>	<i>Shown by the birth location of</i>
1845	Tompkins County	<i>Almyra</i>
1847	Broome County	<i>Rudolph</i>
1854	Broome County	<i>Laverne</i>
1856	Broome County	<i>Jennie</i>
1857	Cattaraugus County	<i>Ira</i>
1860	Broome County	<i>Alvin</i>

There is no record of Alvin in Tompkins County or Cattaraugus County, and yet he apparently lived briefly in each of those places.

Military records connect Alvin (or, at least, his sons) to Tioga County, New York.



Alvin's son William served in the Civil War. His military records say that he was single, and was living in Owego, Tioga County. This probably is referring to his residence in August, 1862, when he enlisted.

Alvin's son Francis was only 16 when he died while serving in the Union Army. Francis was buried in the Civil War section of Evergreen Cemetery, a small, relatively new cemetery in Owego, Tioga County.



Thus, we believe that Alvin was in Owego, Tioga County, in the early 1860's, and possibly as late as the spring of 1864, when his son was buried in Evergreen Cemetery.

Alvin is hard to trace, but census records provide a useful lead: Alvin Knickerbocker and Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker were both in the town of Scio, in both 1865 and 1870.

Ancestry has an 1869 map showing the location of various families. We know from this map that Alvin lived about two miles from Hiram. Alvin was just to the west of Scio, while Hiram lived downtown. Hiram and Alvin were the only Knickerbockers in the immediate area around Scio.

1869 Map of Scio, Allegany County, New York



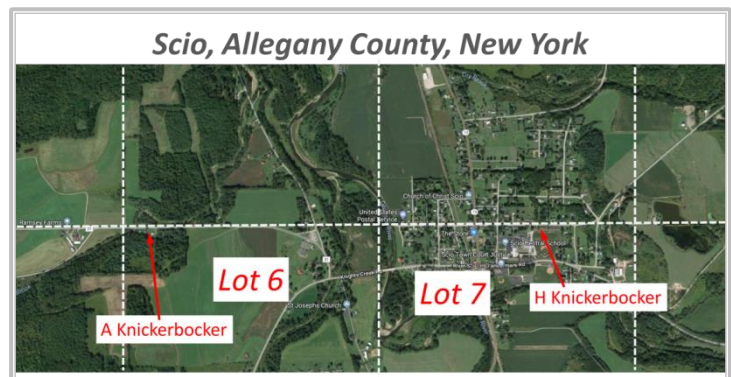
It could be a total coincidence that Alvin Knickerbocker moved to Scio, where Hiram Knickerbocker was already living.

Or, the proximity of Alvin to Hiram could be significant.

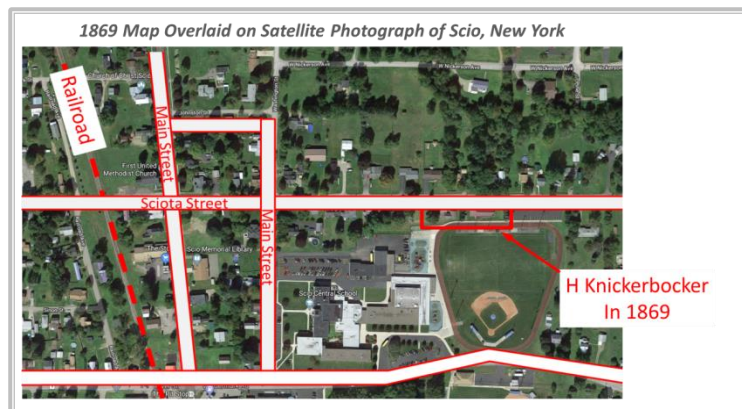
In the next section, we will discuss the locations of Alvin and Hiram in more detail.

Land Records:
Alvin Knickerbocker and Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker

Shown here is a satellite photograph of the area around Scio, New York. We have added white lines to show part of the original plot plans for Tioga County. We have also shown the locations of Alvin and Hiram Knickerbocker in 1869.



Alvin Knickerbocker's location is easily described: Alvin was in the northwest corner of Lot 6.



Hiram's location is a bit harder to describe. The image shown here is an overlay of the hand-drawn 1869 property map (outlined in red) onto a modern satellite photograph.

The overlay process is an inexact science. In this case, though, the major roads from the hand-drawn 1869 map fit very well with the location of today's major roads.

Hiram's property, just south of Sciota Street. Sciota Street was the boundary of Lot Number 7.

The above maps prove that Alvin and Hiram lived relatively close to each other. However, they don't prove that they knew each other.

In the paragraphs below, we will use a sequence of six land transactions to explain some of the movements of Alvin and Hiram, and to prove that they knew each other very well.

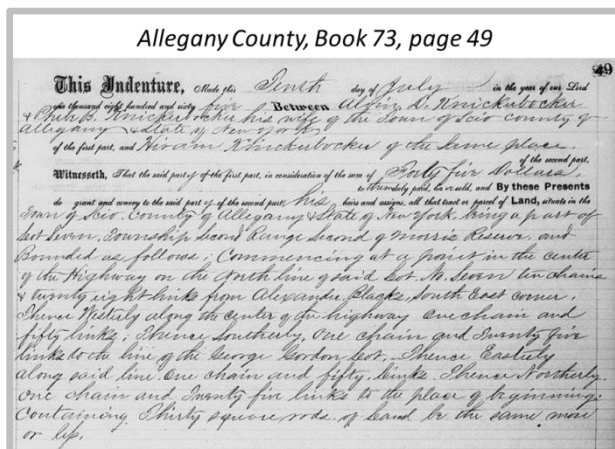
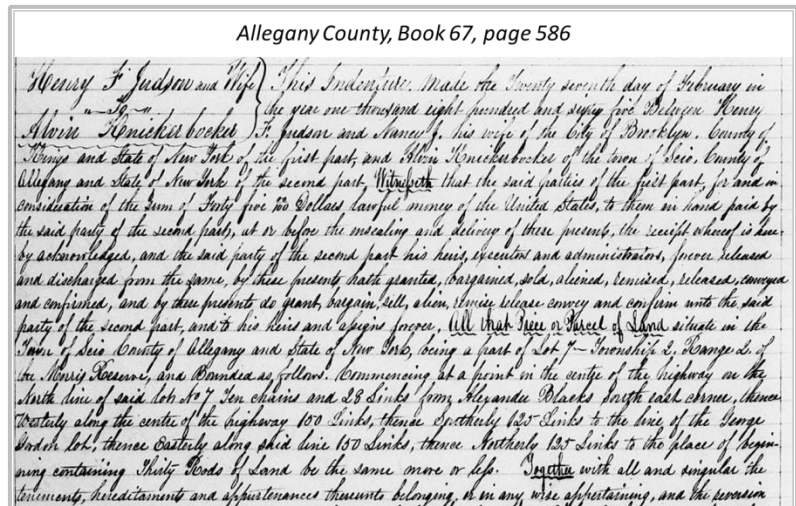
On February 27th, 1865, Alvin bought a small property containing 30 square rods, which is a little less than one fifth of an acre. The property was adjacent to the road on the northern edge of Lot 7.

Thus, Alvin was in “downtown” Scio, on the south side of Scotia Street.

The description of the property mentions neighbors Alexander Black and George Gordon.

Alvin paid \$45 for the small lot.

Thus, we can infer that Alvin’s original location was in Lot 7, on Scotia Street. However, things are not that simple.



Alvin owned the lot on Scotia Street for less than 5 months.

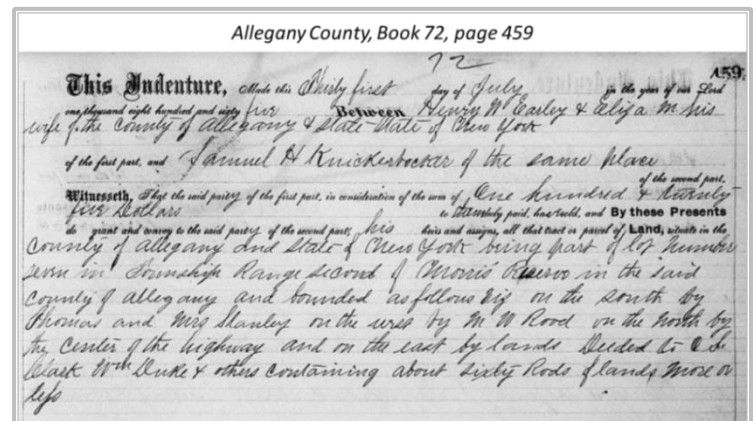
On July 10th, 1865, Alvin sold the lot to Hiram Knickerbocker.

The property description matches the first deed.

Hiram paid Alvin \$45 for the lot. Alvin didn't make a profit.

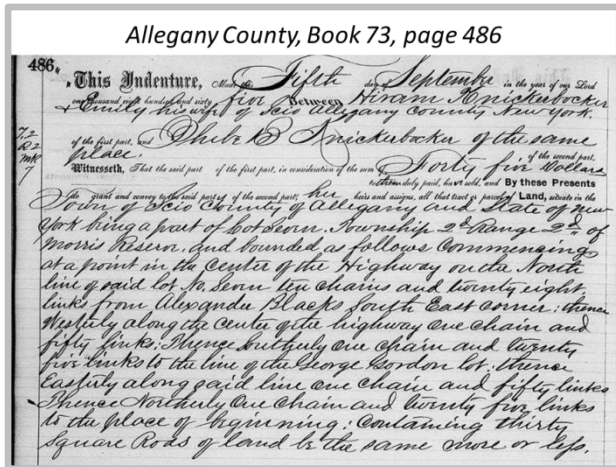
The land records get even more interesting at the end of July. Hiram apparently wasn't satisfied with the small lot that he bought from Alvin.

On July 31st, 1865, Samuel H. Knickerbocker paid \$125 for a different property, consisting of 60 rods of land in Lot 7. The deed mentions a “highway” but does not give a good description of the location. It does say that the lot bordered Clark W. Duke. In the 1870 census, C.W. Duke was living a few households from Hiram Knickerbocker. Thus we think this property, from July 31st, is the one where Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker was living in 1869, for the map that we showed earlier.



Thus, starting on July 31st, 1865, Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker owned two lots along Scotia Street: the 60 rod property, and the smaller 30 rod property.

After he bought his larger lot, Hiram must have had second thoughts about why he had ever bought the smaller, 30 rod property.



On September 5th, 1865, Hiram sold the 30 square rods back to Phebe Knickerbocker.

Once again, the price was \$45.

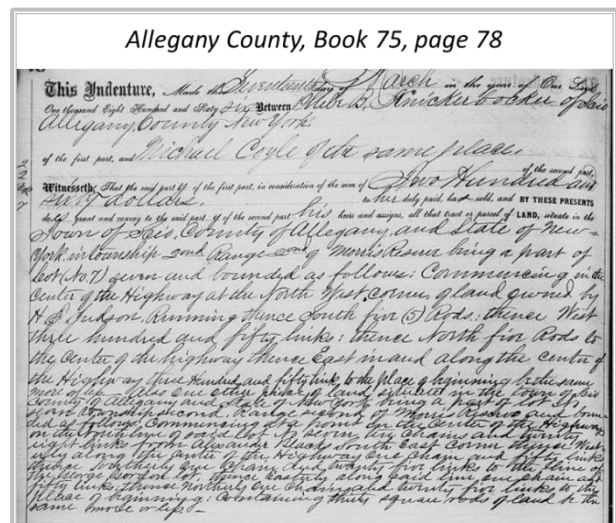
Hiram owned the 30 rod property for less than 2 months before he got his money back from Alvin and Phebe.

(Alvin and Phebe made two more land transactions in Lot 7 that we have not shown here. Alvin was either very indecisive about where he wanted to live, or was speculating on land values.)

As of September, 1865, Alvin once again owned the small property in Lot 7. However, it appears that he didn't really want it, either.

On March 17th, 1866, Alvin and Phebe sold their properties within Lot 7.

The small property with 30 square rods of land was part of this transaction. (The lot is discussed in the fine print at the bottom of this deed.)



Allegany County, Book 81, page 399

This Indenture, Made this *Sixteenth* day of *March* in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty *sevy* **Between** *Royal T. Howard & daughter his* wife of the town of Scio County of Allegany & State of New York of the first part, and *Phebe, B. Knickerbocker of the same place* of the second part,

Witnesseth, That the said party of the first part, in consideration of the sum of *Two Hundred & fifty Dollars* to them duly paid, have sold and **BY THESE PRESENTS** do grant and convey to the said party of the second part *her* heirs and assigns, all that tract or parcel of **LAND** situate in the Town of Scio County of Allegany & State of New York, being part of Lot 6 in Township Second Range Second Morris Reserve in said County of Allegany & bounded & described as follows viz. Commencing at the North West Corner of said Lot 6 Six Chains & thirty five links to a stake, Thence Easterly & parallel with the North line of said Lot Seven Chains & eighty seven links to a stake, Thence Northerly & parallel with the west line of said Lot Six Chains & thirty five links to a stake in the North line of said Lot Six, Thence westerly along the North line of Lot Seven Chains & eighty seven & 1/4 links to place of beginning containing five acres of land & no more as surveyed by J. H. S. Dec August 14th 1866

Then, On March 16th, 1867, Phebe Knickerbocker paid \$250 dollars for property on the northwest corner of Lot 6. The property contained five acres.

This 1867 deed apparently represents the land where Alvin Knickerbocker was living for the 1869 map that was already shown.

Thus: Alvin and Hiram were not just two Knickerbockers who happened to live two miles apart, by some amazing coincidence.

These were people who knew each other very well, to the point that Alvin and Phebe refunded Hiram's \$45 purchase price for the small property in Lot 7, even though Alvin and Phebe apparently didn't want the lot, either.

The simplest explanation for this close relationship is that Alvin and Hiram were brothers.

It's hard to come up with any other explanation for how Alvin wound up living in Scio, and how these two men developed such a close relationship, apparently within a few months of Alvin's arrival.

This fits perfectly with the Henry Knickerbocker discussion from earlier. Alvin and Hiram were the two young men living with Henry in the 1820 census.

Alvin Knickerbocker, born in 1816, was named after his uncle, who we have been calling Alvin (the elder).

Where was Alvin Knickerbocker Born?

Based on all of the above information, Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker must be the son of Henry, and Alvin Knickerbocker is probably the brother of Hiram Samuel.

However, we do not know where Alvin was born.

Alvin might have been born in Smithville Flats, Chenango County. Or, perhaps he was born in Tioga County, if his father made a brief move to the Tioga area around 1816.

Alvin's census entries are inconsistent with respect to his birth location, including one entry that said "Penn." Unless some new records are found, we might never know exactly where Alvin was born.

A Good Use of DNA Testing

The above discussion has used traditional genealogy approaches in order to identify the various Knickerbockers of Smithville Flats.

We have paid a lot of attention to Henry Knickerbocker, in order to clarify his connections to Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker and Alvin Knickerbocker.

Going forward, we believe that DNA testing will be a useful tool. A few descendants of Alvin have already done DNA testing. So far, their results suggest a connection between Alvin Knickerbocker and other descendants from the Connecticut families.

For example, the descendants of Alvin Knickerbocker have a strong DNA overlap with descendants of the Cincinnatus Knickerbockers. (The Cincinnatus families are discussed later in this report.)

More DNA testing is needed.

Unfortunately, we have not yet identified any living descendants from Hiram Samuel Knickerbocker (person 8), or of James Henry Knickerbocker (person 9).

The search continues.

Appendix 1

Knickerbockers in Nearby Towns

*Cincinnatus, Cortland County, New York
Tompkins County, New York
etc.*

Note from Bryan Knickerbocker

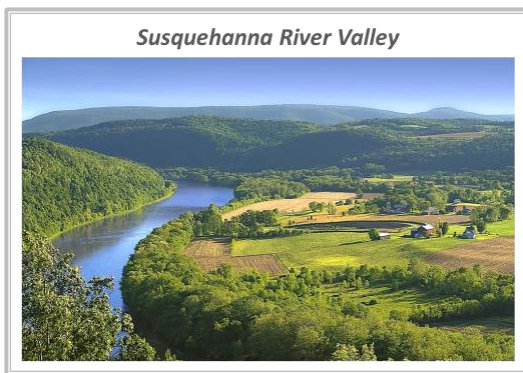
My father was born in Cincinnatus in 1930, and lived there until he was 18. He could not remember ever meeting any of the Knickerbockers from Chenango County or from Marathon, Cortland County.

My uncle was a life-long resident of Cincinnatus. He was on the school board, and was a mail carrier. My uncle remembered meeting some of the local Knickerbockers, but didn't think there was any close relationship.

The oral history within the Cincinnatus family, passed down by my grandfather Edwin Knickerbocker, was that "we are not related to those other Knickerbockers."

We will explain how that oral history might have been created.

Background: Migration Routes to Central New York



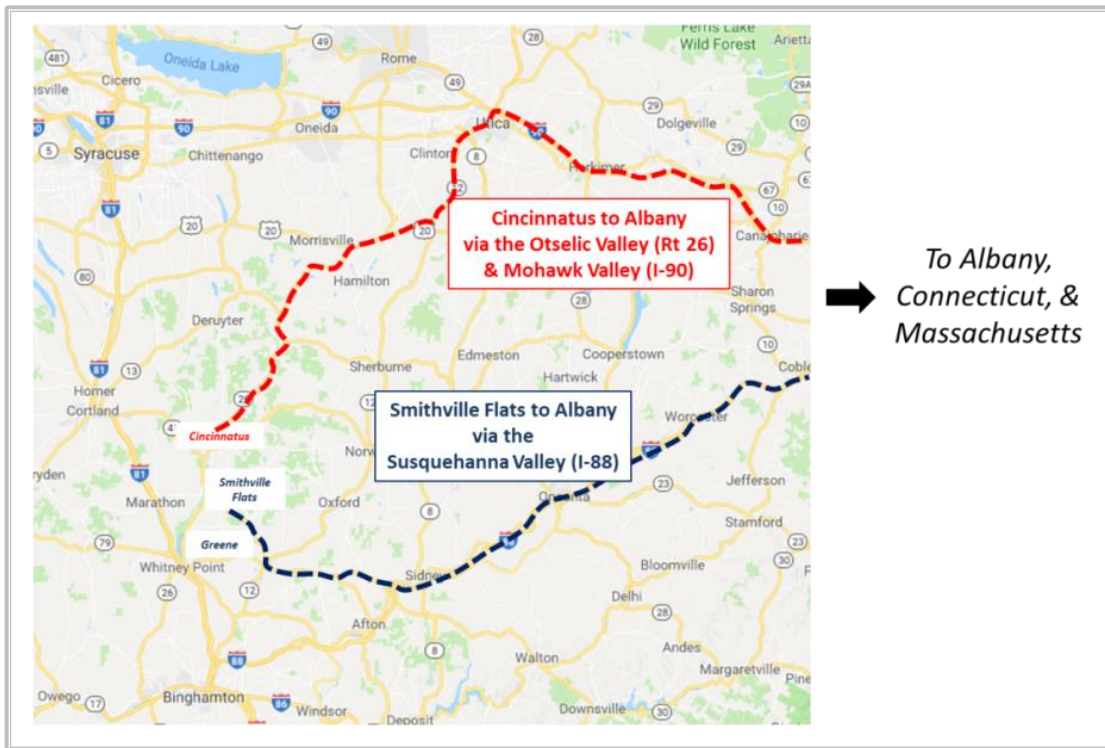
The different groups of Knickerbockers in the Cortland County area arrived at different times, via different routes. This was partly a result of the interesting terrain in central New York.

The terrain varies tremendously between broad plains and high hills. This picture of the Susquehanna River Valley is an example.

River valleys provided the easiest travel routes for our ancestors.

Even today, our transportation routes are often based on finding the easiest routes. Today's paved roads often follow much more ancient routes of travel.

For example, consider the drive from Albany to the area near Cincinnatus and Smithville Flats.



First, consider traveling from Albany to Smithville, or areas just to the south of Smithville. Much of the journey would be on Interstate 88. In the area near Chenango County, I-88 follows the Susquehanna River Valley.

This southern route appears to be the way that William Knickerbocker and his siblings migrated into the Smithville Flats area, circa 1810. They were the first Knickerbocker in the area.

Second, consider the route to get to Cincinnatus, or areas north of Cincinnatus.

From Albany, you could head towards Interstate 90, which follows the Mohawk River. (Long before freeways, this was known as the Mohawk Trail.) You would eventually go southwest on Route 26, which follows the Otselic River Valley as it passes Eaton, in Madison County, and heads towards Cincinnatus.

This northern route was the migration route for Knickerbockers to Eaton and later into Cincinnatus.

Thus, it appears that the Smithville Knickerbockers arrived via a totally different route than the Cincinnatus Knickerbockers.

The Cincinnatus Knickerbockers

Descendants of Harmon's John

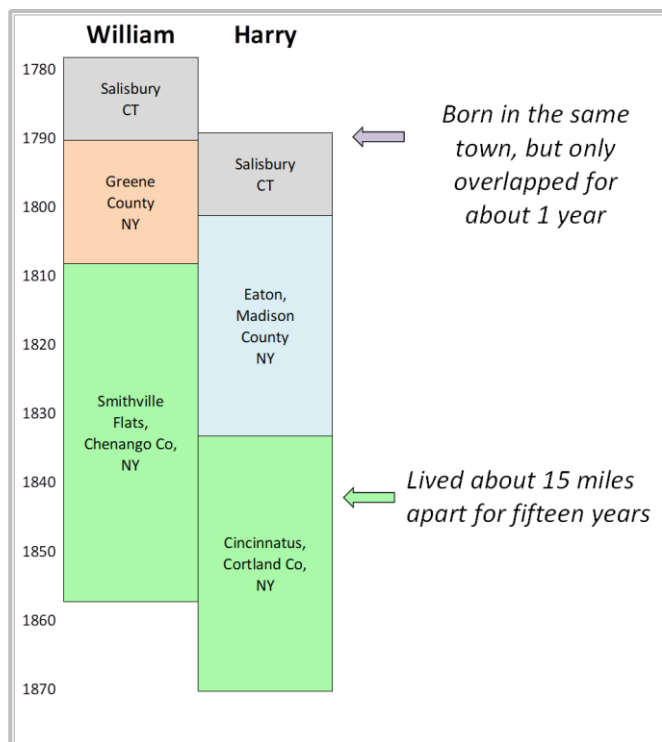
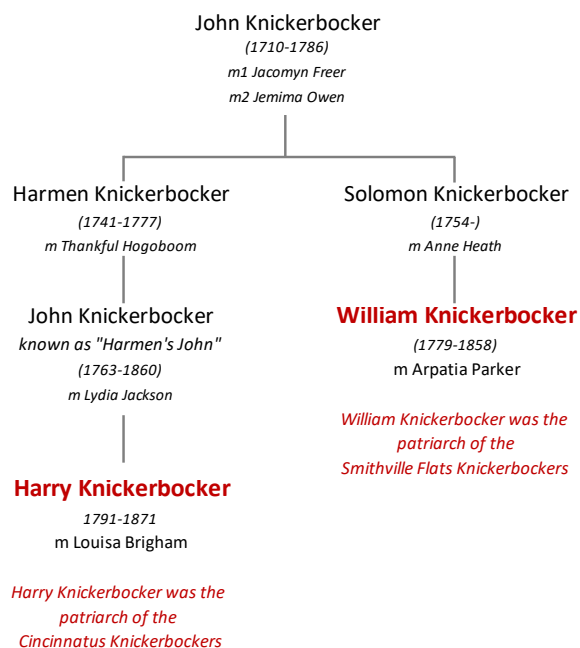
The founder of the Knickerbocker lines in Cincinnatus was Harry Knickerbocker. Harry was the son of "Harmon's John," who was mentioned earlier.

("Harmon's John" moved to Cincinnatus for the last few years of his life, and is buried in Cincinnatus, next to Harry Knickerbocker.)

The patriarch of the Smithville Knickerbockers was William Knickerbocker. William was the son of Solomon. Solomon and Harmon were brothers.

Thus, Harry (of Cincinnatus) and William (of Smithville Flats) were cousins, once removed.

Knickerbockers of Cincinnatus & Smithville



William Knickerbocker left Connecticut in about 1792, at about the age of 12.

William lived in Greene County, New York for about 16 years, and then moved to Smithville Flats. William probably came into Smithville Flats from the south, via the Susquehanna River Valley.

Harry left Connecticut in about 1803, when he was about 12.

Harry lived in Eaton, Madison County, for about 20 years. He moved to Cincinnatus in about 1832. Harry came into Cincinnatus from the north, via the Otselic River.

The Cincinnatus and Smithville families must have known of each other's existence, but it's not clear if Harry and William ever realized that they had been born in the same town.

We can imagine what sort of conversation that William might have had with John, if they ever met. Their initial conversation might have focused on coming of age in remote parts of New York State, such as Madison County and Greene County. Eventually, though, they might have said "wow, we were both born in Connecticut." However, that's the only thing that might have sparked them to explore their relationship.

If William and Harry ever did realize their relationship, that information got lost over successive generations.

A different situation applies to the Alvin Knickerbocker descendants in Marathon, New York. It's very unlikely that the link between Alvin's descendants and the Cincinnatus family would ever have come up in casual conversation between the two families.

Alvin's children grew up in far-off places like Allegany County. They only came to Marathon around 1875. Alvin's children were newcomers to the Cortland area.

Imagine, for example, a discussion between Alvin Knickerbocker Junior of Marathon (1861-1933) and Edwin Knickerbocker of Cincinnatus (1895-1986). The discussion would have been pretty short.

Edwin might have mentioned his deep roots in Cortland County. After all, Edwin's great great grandfather, John, is buried in Cincinnatus. (For most people, knowing the name of a great great grandparent is more than enough genealogy.)

Alvin Junior would have said "I grew up in Allegany County. I never even met my grandfather, who lived in Michigan. I'm not sure exactly where my grandfather is buried."

Edwin's thought, when meeting Alvin Junior, would have been "We're not related to those other Knickerbockers."

As already mentioned, that's exactly what Edwin passed down in the oral history within the Cincinnatus family.

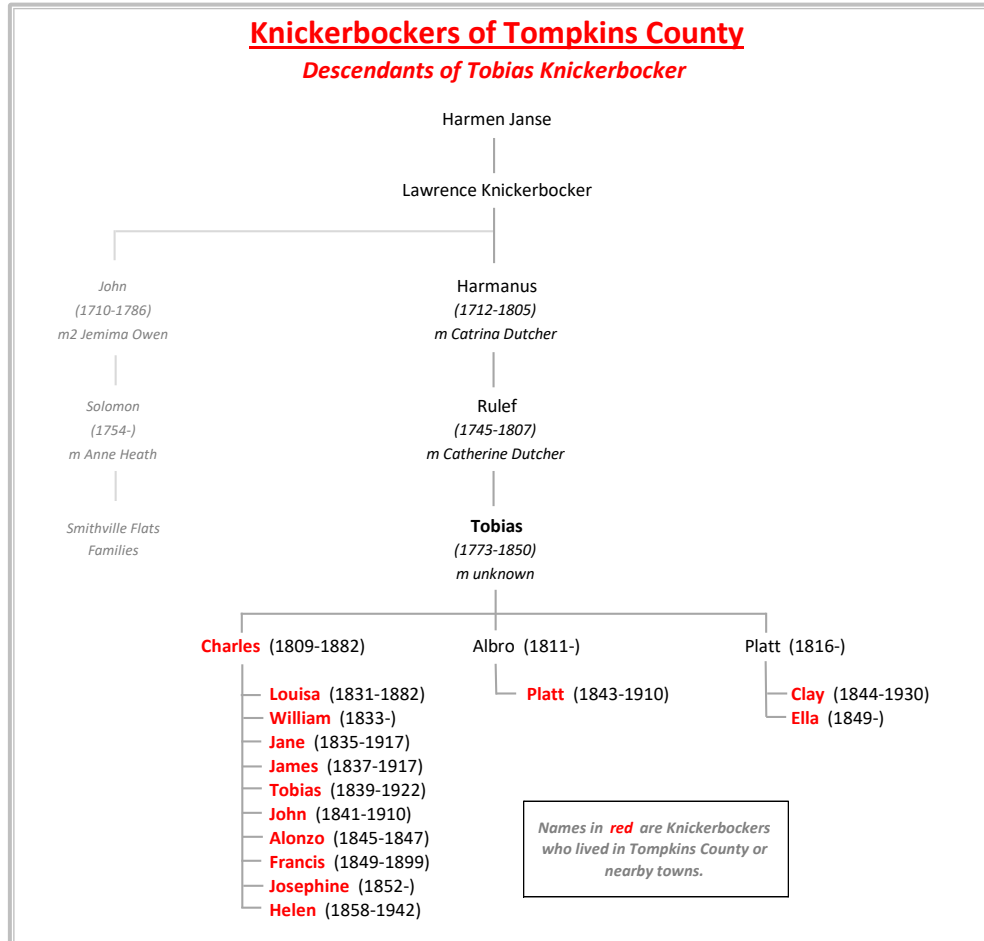
Knickerbockers in Tompkins County *Descendants of Tobias Knickerbocker*

Another line of Knickerbockers settled in the area near Ithaca, Tompkins County, New York. Ithaca is about 45 miles west of Cincinnatus and Smithville Flats.

This line of Knickerbockers spent their early years in Amenia, Dutchess County. They were very near the New York / Connecticut state line.

Oddly enough, this line of Knickerbockers might also have had a connection to Connecticut.

Tobias Knickerbocker apparently lived in Sharon, Litchfield County, Connecticut, in 1800. Due to the bad handwriting of the census taker, Tobias is often overlooked in the 1800 census results for Sharon, CT. His first name in the 1800 census is often transcribed as "Sobrin," but the name was clearly "Tobias."



These Knickerbockers made their first appearance in Tompkins County in about 1839.

The patriarch of this family was Charles Knickerbocker.

Charles Knickerbocker had a son named William Knickerbocker, who was born in 1833. This is not the W.H. Knickerbocker who lived in Scio in 1875

1850, Danby, Tompkins County, New York

Charles Knickerbocker	41	m		F	Farmer
Anna Knickerbocker	35	f			
William Knickerbocker	17	m		F	Farmer
Jane E "	15	f			
James "	13	m			
John "	11	m			
John "	9	m			
Francis "	2	f			

The 1850 census shows Charles with his oldest children, living in Danby, Tompkins County.

Charles' oldest son, William, was 17 years old.

This William Knickerbocker was born in about 1833.

The 1875 census shows us that this William Knickerbocker was born in Dutchess County, New York.

1875, Newfield, Tompkins County, New York

William Knickerbocker	42	m			Dutchess
Louise	36	f	Wife		Tompkins
Cora	13	f	Daughter		"
Charles R	9	m	Son		"
Clara	5	m	Son		"
Harvey	3 1/2	m	Son		"

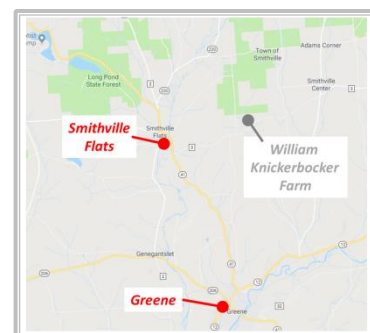
There is no evidence that anyone in the Tobias Knickerbocker line had any involvement in the events that we have already discussed.

The Other Solomon Knickerbocker 1785-1831; Died Steuben County NY

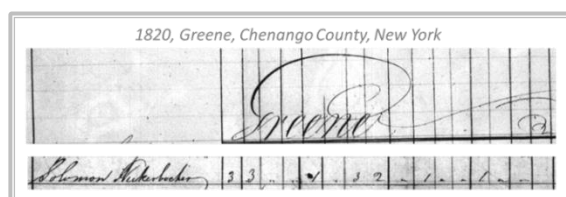
We will briefly discuss another man named Solomon Knickerbocker.

This “Solomon Knickerbocker” was in Chenango County in 1820. He was in the town of Greene, which is near Smithville Flats.

(The town of Greene should not to be confused with the county that goes by that same name.)



Given the proximity of this family to Smithville, we need to discuss whether this Solomon Knickerbocker was closely related to the families that we have already discussed.

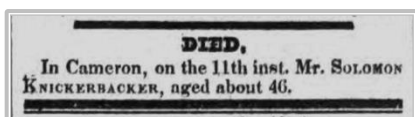
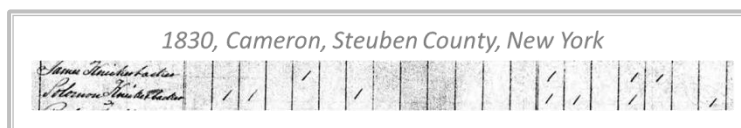


In the 1820 census in Chenango County, this Solomon Knickerbocker had 6 sons.

Tracing this man is somewhat easier thanks to his sons. New York State Census results show that Henry was born in Delaware County in 1808, and that Charles was born in Chenango County in 1820.

Thus, we know that this Solomon is the one in federal census results in Colchester, Delaware County in 1810, Chenango County in 1820, and then Cameron, Steuben County in 1830.

Solomon’s last appearance in the census was in 1830 in Steuben County.



Solomon died in 1831.

Solomon did not leave a will. However, a descendant, Gretchen Lowe, found Solomon’s probate records in Steuben County.

Solomon’s probate file mentions wife Rebecca, and children James, Henry, William, Philo, Charles, Jerusha, Fanny, Sally, Catharine, and an infant son. (We will show below that the infant son mentioned in the probate files was Solomon Knickerbocker Junior, born in 1829.)

Solomon's widow Rebecca is easy to trace, and her census records confirm the names of some of her sons.

In 1840, Rebecca was heading a household, living next door to her son James.

In 1850 and 1870, Rebecca was living with her son Solomon.

In 1860, Rebecca was living with her son Philo.

1840, Cohocton, Steuben County, New York											
Rebecca Knickerbocker	1								2	1	
Rebecca Knickerbocker	1								2	1	
1850, Rock Island, Illinois											
Rebecca Knickerbocker	20								12	2	
Rebecca Knickerbocker	20								12	2	
1860, Story, Iowa											
Rebecca Knickerbocker	20								12	2	
Rebecca Knickerbocker	20								12	2	
1870, Whiteside, Illinois											
Rebecca Knickerbocker	20								12	2	
Rebecca Knickerbocker	20								12	2	

1. Full name of deceased Solomon Knickerbocker

2. Maiden name (if wife or widow) —

3. Color White 4. Sex Male 5. Race (a) White

6. Occupation Farmer 7. Age 76 Years 7 Months 28 Days

8. Name of father Solomon Knickerbocker 9. Birthplace of father —

10. Name of mother Rebecca Knickerbocker 11. Birthplace of mother —

12. Birthplace of deceased New York 13. Married, single, widowed, divorced (b) Single

14. Name of wife Celia Knickerbocker 15. Name of husband —

16. Date of birth Dec 26 1829 17. Date of death Aug 23rd 1906

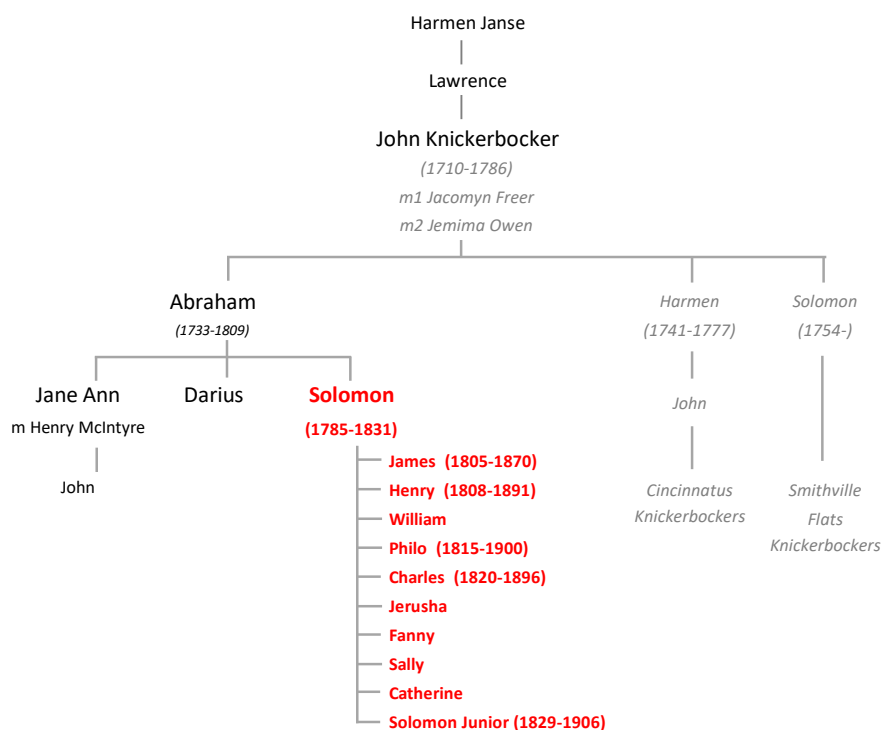
18. Residence at time of death Long Plains 19. Place of death Residence

The death certificate of Solomon Junior confirms that his parents were Solomon Senior and his wife Rebecca.

The Solomon Knickerbocker who died in 1831 in Steuben County, NY, was the son of Abraham Knickerbocker of Salisbury, Litchfield County, Connecticut:

This lineage is proven by the Revolutionary War pension records of Henry McIntire, who married Jane Ann Knickerbocker.

Steuben County Knickerbockers: Solomon (1785-1831)

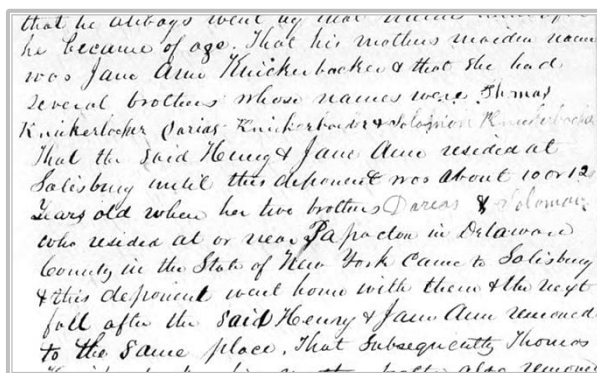


The revolutionary war pension file is lengthy. We will only show two highlights here.

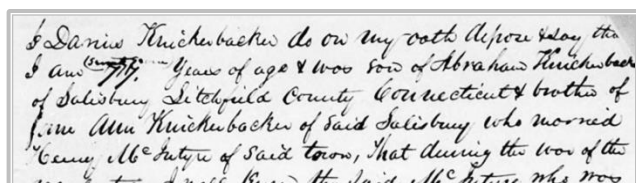
Shown here is an excerpt from an affidavit from Jane Ann's son John.

This connects John and his mother Jane Ann Knickerbocker. This also mentions three of Jane Ann's brothers: Thomas, Darius, and Solomon.

This also mentions Salisbury, Connecticut, and Delaware County, New York.



that he at that time went up near Salisbury, Conn. he became of age. That his mother maiden name was Jane Ann Knickerbocker & that she had several brothers whose names were Thomas Knickerbocker, Darius Knickerbocker & Solomon Knickerbocker. That the said Henry & Jane Ann resided at Salisbury until this deponent was about 10 or 12 years old when her late brother Darius & Solomon who resided at or near Papadown in Delaware County in the State of New York came to Salisbury & this deponent went home with them & the next fall after the said Henry & Jane Ann removed to the same place. That subsequently Thomas



I, Darius Knickerbocker do on my oath depose & say that I am ^{now} 77 years of age & was son of Abraham Knickerbocker of Salisbury Litchfield County Connecticut & brother of Jane Ann Knickerbocker of said Salisbury who married Genl. M^{rs} Butler of said town. That during the war of the

Here is an excerpt from an affidavit by Darius Knickerbocker. It mentions his sister Jane Ann, and his father Abraham.

The pension files also include affidavits from three other children of Abraham Knickerbocker, including Thomas Knickerbocker. Other parts of the pension file mention Cameron, Steuben County.

Thus, we know that this Solomon was the son of Abraham Knickerbocker, and the grandson of John Knickerbocker of Litchfield County, Connecticut.

As shown in the above tree, the Cincinnati families, the Smithville families, and the Steuben County families were all descended from John Knickerbocker (1710-1786) and the Connecticut line of Knickerbockers.

The Smithville line of Knickerbockers may have known the Steuben line of Knickerbockers. The two lines followed somewhat similar migration paths.

However, it is clear that these were different branches of the Knickerbocker family tree.

----- End -----