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A Documentary Study of Farming
on the Schuyler Estates

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Historic Site
Albany, New York
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There was another side to his farming endeavors. In a 1777 letter to John Jay Schuyler wrote; "My hobby horse has long been a country life..."³ This motivation is easily understood when one considers the many problems he faced as a political, financial, and military leader.

That career has long overshadowed Schuyler's agricultural activities. Because the farms and gardens were an undramatic aspect of everyday life, no comprehensive account of them was ever made. Bits and pieces of the story are scattered throughout the familys correspondance, travellers journals, and other sources.

It is the intent of this paper to let those scraps of evidence speak for themselves. This is by no means a complete collection. Undoubtably many other references are waiting to be found. Most of the letters and reçipts used are from the collections of the New York Public Library, New York State Library, and Sleepy Hollow Restorations - Rockefeller Archives center. Credit for the laborious detective work of transcription must go to other researchers, including, but not limited to, Kristin L. Gibbons, Mary Ellen Grimaldi, and Steven Strach.

Hopefully, by bringing these scattered details together, a clearer picture of life on the Schuyler farms should emerge.

3. Quoted in Don R. Gerlach; "After Saratoga, The General, his Lady, and Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne", New York History, January 1977, V.50 No.1, p.21

I. The Early Years: 1765-1777

Comparitively few references to agriculture exist for this eriod. The two most interesting documents, hint that part of the estates' gardens were under the authority of Catherine Schuyler instead of Phillip.

1765

Account of Lord Adam Gordon (describing Saratoga Estate);

"On this land...[Schuyler]...produces hemp, from six to ten feet high, and for two crops running" (Quoted in Gerlach, "After Saratoga" New York History, V50, #1, p12)

July 6, 1768

Reciept from Lebbeus Ball;

Albany 6 July 1768

Received of Phillip Schuyler the sum of Thirty eight pounds Six Shillings and eight pence in Full for one Hundred Sheep.

Lebbeus Ball

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 2, Reel 1)

February 23 1769

Phillip Schuyler's "Common Place and Reciept Book";

This book contains miscelaneous small notes which Schuyler wished to remember. Most are quotes regarding such lofty topics as religion, virtue and happiness but among them are several "reciepts" of a practical nature, including this one; Poultrice for wounds of Horses & etc.

Take of upland willow the Root, Scrape of the outer coat, of hich make a decoction Apply the boiled root by Way of poultrice &bath with the liquor.

Or take of linden or lime tree the roots or leaves, used
and applied as the former. (N.Y.S.L. #13806. Copy in files of
Schuyler mansion State Historic Site)

March 25, 1772

Letter from John Cochran to Phillip Schuyler;

New Brunswick March 25th; 1772

Dear Sir

I send you a Box with willow Cuttings put up in Earth, as
they will by that means be kept more moist, and be more apt to grow
they should be set out in a moist place about nine inches or a foot
in the ground. They are of quick growth and when you cut any to
transplant, the larger pieces the better.

.....Walter & Cornelia with your sister join in Love
to you, Mrs. Schuyler & Family, with D Sir yours most Affectionately

John Cochran

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 24, Reel 12)

October 17, 1775

Letter from Dr. Samuel Stringer to Phillip Schuyler;

This reference does not prove that the Schuyler garden con-
tained rhubarb, but it suggests why it might have;

"[I am] very sorry to learn that your legs are diminished;
perhaps the Rhubarb in small quantities may be of much service..."

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 12)

April 7, 1777

Letter from Richard Varick to Phillip Schuyler, in Philadelphia;

"Mrs. Schuyler begs the favor of you to procure some of the
large Strawberries from Mr. Robert Morris Merchant in the City of

Philadelphia...." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 15)

These strawberries are probably intended for planting, not eating, due to the time of year.

April 10 1777

Letter from John Cochran to Phillip Schuyler;

[Gertrude, (Catherine Schuyler's sister) sends] "some of the Roots of the Tuberoſe, which ſhe promiſed her when at Albany together with ſome flower ſeeds..." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L. Box 38)

Websters New World Dictionary, (Simon and Schuster, 1982), defines tuberose as "a perennial Mexican plant of the agave family with a tuberous rootstock and white, sweet scented flowers."

When the laſt two letters were written the country had been t war for two years, but the buſineſs of planting and gardening ſeems to have gone on as uſual. This was not to laſt.

II. The Ravages of War: 1776-1779

Ironically, the most revealing glimpses of the Schuylers' farming activities are the result of a crises: the Revolutionary War. In 1777 a British invasion destroyed the Saratoga property and threatened Albany. Fortunately, the invasion ended with the capture of the British force and its commander, General John Burgoyne. While Burgoyne visited the Albany mansion as a prisoner-guest, Phillip Schuyler stayed in Saratoga to rebuild his ruined estate.

The British were not solely responsible for the disruption of Schuyler's farming career. Many of the crops at Saratoga had been destroyed by American troops to keep them from enemy hands. These losses were compounded by the depredations of the soldiers guarding Burgoyne in Albany.

In 1777 and 1778 Schuyler was busy trying to control the damages and pick up the pieces. These problems generated a flurry of letters and documents. This correspondence contains many intriguing details about the Schuyler farms.

Crises also brings opportunities and Schuyler was too skilled a businessman not to recognize this. Several documents suggest that he sought reimbursement for his losses and that the wartime government was a customer for his farm produce.

Although the war played havoc with Schuyler's "Country life" it has provided us with the best accounts of his farming.

1776

Extract from an undated receipt;

The Public to Major General Schuyler DR(?)
to 7 teams of 2 yoke of oxen employed
in the public service from the 25th

March to the 1st December 1776 @ 10/ L878..10
 1776
 ovr 29 to 23 Waggon Loads of Indian
 corn in husk @50 57..10..
 to 7 Do in the ear @60/ 21.--..

By the above mentioned 77 boxes of turnips which are charged
 to Mr. Avery

(Phillip Schuyler papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 1 Reel 1)

July 6, 1777

Letter from John Graham to Phillip Schuyler;

Saratoga July th 6 - 1777

Sir

We this Day begin to mow grass: & would have begun before
 ut Did not finish plowing teel Saturday last & as several of our
 negros are sick & has been this three weeks past & not yete able
 fore sarvice the general will please to order us 4 or 5 of the
 Batteaumen other ways I am afraid the busness will suffer. The
 Garden is over run with weeds in Such manner that I Should be
 Sorry the Genl or maddam Should See it teel Such times as we have
 it in better order. We have our Corn & potates on hand & a fence
 to make round the turnips ground which must all be done before
 harvest. the ground which the french people Cleared it will not
 be worth Labour to fence it as there is not over half an acare
 of it. we have about four acars besids it
 from your humble Sarvent John Graham

To the Honourable major General Schuyler

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 33, Reel 16)

August 1, 1777

Estimate of damage;

Estimate of the Damage Sustained by the Hon.ble Genl. Schuyler by Hay Grain Al being Destroyed by the Army of the United States of America at Saratoga made by James Hogeboom on the Part of Genl. Schuyler and Ephraim Van Veghten Esqr. ADQM Genrl. on the Part of Colo: Udney Hay DQM Genrl.

204 Bushels wheat Sowed Calculated	Bal. 2040
40Do PeaseDo	320
20Do OatsDo	310
4 acres flax sowed	600 lb
2 acres of Beans & Squashes Planted	
2 Acres of Hemp Sowed	400 lb
100 Bushels Potatoes Planted	4400
Acres of Corn Planted	600
400 waggon loads of hay	200 Tun

Saratoga August 1.1777 this is to Certify that the above apprisement is Just and True to the best of our knowledge.

James Hogeboom

Ephm Van Veghten ADQMG

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 1, Reel 1)

September 16, 1777

Letter from Richard Varick, (In American camp at Stillwater) to Phillip Schuyler;

By Good fortune I have laid my hands On one of Mrs. Schuyler's s Yesterday, Genl. Gates's family claimed her; however I believe I have established my Right & shall keep her here for two good

reasons, the one is to have her milk & the other least she be
Taken from the person I should send down with her when I return
shall order her to be brought to Albany by Horton(?).

Be so Good as to Make my best Respects to Mrs. Schuyler,
Miss Peggy & young Gentleman

I am Dear General Very Affectionately

Yours

Richard Varick

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 33, Reel 16.)

October 24, 1777

Letter from John Lansing Jr. to Phillip Schuyler;

... The Rifle-Men and Light Infantry being encamped on the
Hill back of the House render the Tenure on which the potatoes
held exceeding precarious. Mrs. Schuyler has detained the
servants for the purpose of securing them. The servants will be
sent up to Morrow. Your fencing on the Hill is mostly appropriat-
ed by the Troops and applyed to sheltering them, and all that can
be obtained from the officers is a promise that they will not
suffer the Materials to be burned or destroyed..... General Bur-
goyne Suite and visitors have entirely discomposed the Oeconomy
of the Family and have given no small degree of trouble to Mrs.
Schuyler. They intend to stay till Wednesday.

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

October 28, 1777

Letter from Richard Varick to General Horatio Gates;

... The scandalous depredations comitted on the property of
General Schuyler, as well as the insufferable destruction by the
troops under Major Dearborn of his fences, oblige Mrs. Schuyler to

make application to you for a remedy. She requests that you will issue your order for preventing the shameful burning and taring to pieces of board fences in the vicinity of her house, and that the troops may be further removed to prevent their robbing her of her poultry, garden stuff, etc.

(Horatio Gates Papers, New York Historical Society, Quoted in Gerlach, "After Saratoga", New York History, Jan. 1971, V. 50 No. 1)

October 30, 1777

Letter from Richard Varick to Phillip Schuyler;

.... Great Part of Gates army is still here, they have destroyed almost all the Fences in the Vicinity of the Town. Among others you have a great show of loss Mrs. Schuyler's Poultry & gardens have suffered in Defiance of Every Order or Threats.

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

This letter and the four previous ones do more than tell us about the appetites of Continental soldiers. They offer proof of Catherine Schuyler's important role as overseer of the family's gardens, livestock, and household affairs. Her contribution should not be overlooked when interpreting farming at the Schuyler estates.

November 7, 1777

Letter from John Lansing Jr. to Phillip Schuyler;

.... Mary is much at a loss as to the Disposition of the Milch Cows, which are daily milked by some Rascal before the Men she sends for that purpose get to them. She requested me to beg Mrs. Schuy-

's Direction on the Subject. Mary thinks it best to put them in pasture before the House. I shall send over a Couple of the Guard to watch the cows all Day and try to detect the thieves.

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

Novembér 12, 1777

Letter from Richard Varick to Phillip Schuyler;

....I sent Patrick last week to Livingstons Lower Manor & Rhyneck for apples and cyder but fear that the [?] & the late high Winds will prove fatal to his vessel. ... (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.y.p.l., Reel 16)

November 16, 1777

Letter from Richard Varick to Phillip Schuyler;

.... I shall send two pounds of Flax as soon as It is hetchled which with the Flax & Thread sent, will do

... Patrick returned last Wednesday or Thursday with the Cyder & Apples. (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

Apparently at this time Schuyler's own orchards were not producing enough for his needs.

November 22, 1777

Letter from John Lansing Jr. to Phillip Schuyler;

" The Flour which was to be sent from Saratoga is much wanted for the Hogs. what was sent down in the Waggon being expended. ..." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

November 26, 1777

Letter from Richard Varick to Phillip Schuyler;

" ... Agreeable to Your Request I have ordered the Horses to be shoed & send them by your servant. By him You will also recieve the Fowls...." (Phillip Schuyler Papers N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

March 10, 1778

Letter from Richard Varick to Phillip Schuyler;

"....I wrote to Mr. Lansing by Colo. Lewis or Mr. Welles to be informed what Quantity of Hay should be sent to Saratoga & what Quantity at your House here, but have not had the Pleasure of an Answer as yet I had directed Mr. Willet to send up ten slays to Saratoga, which is done, but as those Sleds do not carry full loads I fear there will not be sufficient. I have also desired him to send ten slays to the Pasture. Only four are yet sent." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

March 30, 1778

Letter from Phillip Schuyler to Henry Glen;

Saratoga March 30 1778

Dear Sir

I wrote you before I left Albany entreating you to send up the Sawyer as soon as possible, I hope he is on the way. If not, Colo: Lewis will forward him from Albany.....

I shall be greatly distressed If I do not get the pease and Oats from Major Fondas as I have only them to depend on for seed and for my horses..... If you can procure me a bushell of Flax seed pray be so good as to do it.

Ph: Schuyler

some squash seed

If you please

(Henry Glen Papers 1770 - 1801, N.Y.P.L.)

March 31, 1778

Letter from John Lansing Jr. to Phillip Schuyler;

"....I have not yet made a Collection of Garden Seeds but shall try to get a Quantity to Day. I believe few are to be had here. I shall write to Claverack for some. ..." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

April 19, 1778

Letter from John Lansing Jr. to Phillip Schuyler;

"....Captain Barhydt of the Batteauxmen will deliver you four Tierces <42 gallons> peas, the two boxes which were mentioned in your Memorandum, thirty six Bbs. potatoes, 2 barrels parsnips, a Barrel Hemp seed, a Cag with Yeast, two Spinning Wheels, four Turkies, 6 Geese and as many Ducks." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

June 12, 1778

Letter from John Lansing Jr. (at Boston) to Phillip Schuyler;

"....Mr. Carter yesterday sent a pipe of wine some Hops, nearly a Quintal of Fish and a Cask of porter in a Cart to Springfield from whence they will be forwarded as soon as possible." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

Although the letter does not specify, perhaps these hops were meant for planting.

November 25 1778

Letter from John Lansing Jr. to Phillip Schuyler;

"... The Servants are now industriously employed in conveying Manure to your pasture and spreading it. ..." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 16)

July 7, 1779

Account of money owed to Phillip Schuyler;

The Public In Account with Ph: Schuyler	Dr.
To 2040 Bushells of wheat at 10/	L 1020
320 do. pease at 12/	192
310 do. oats at 5/	77.10
600 a of Flax at 1/	30 --
400 a of Hemp at 1/	20 --
4400 Bush; of Potatoes a 4/	880 --
600 Bush of Corn a 6/	180 --
200 Tun of Hay a L 6	1200
	<hr/>
	L 3599.10

The Above Charged prices Are such as were paid In the year 1777 --

Since which time I have laid out of the money because General Gates ordered the Quarter master not to pay for any forrage that was delivered previous to his taking the Command, by which means I have not only lost the Interest but Shall Suffer by the Subsequent depreceation unless It Should be thought Equitable to make compensation for It.

Albany July 7 1779

Ph: Schuyler

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 1, Reel 1)

July 13, 1779

Certificate of John Graham;

I John Graham the Subscriber Overseer or Bow(?) Master to the arm of the Honble Philip Schuyler Esqr. at Saratoga do certify the crop sown and planted on said Farm to be as follows, at the

Time of the Retreat of the Continental Army in July 1777.

There were two hundred and four Bushels of Wheat sowed.

fortyDo.....Peas

Twenty.....Do.....Oats

Four Acres of Flax seed

Two Acres Hemp seed

Two Acres Beans and Squashes planted

Twenty Acres Indian Corn

Four hundred Bushels of potatoes

Hay on the Farm estimated at about four hundred Loads.

Albany July 13th: 1779

John Graham

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 1 Reel 1)

These documents do not indicate whether or not Schuyler actually recieved the payments he desired. However they do prove an important point. As a "farmer" Phillip Schuyler helped to feed the men and horses of the Continental Army, sometimes by sale, and sometimes unintentionaly.

III. "For Benefit of... the Yeomanry": 1783-1804

After the War Phillip Schuyler continued his involvement in politics and financial affairs, however he still found time to improve his estates and his agricultural knowledge. Many documents of this period contain usefull details of daily farm life, but several suggest a greater concern.

As a public-spirited gentleman Schuyler was interested in the economic potential of the new nation. His agricultural experience was one way he could promote this development. His advice on farming methods was often sought and freely given. For example, three differant entrepeneurs wrote him about plans to cultivate hemp within a period of four months.

In an economy that was still based largely on agriculture, Phillip Schuylers role as an advisor may have been more important than we realize.

December 23, 1783

Letter from St. John(?) to Phillip Schuyler;

New York 23d Decr. 1783

Sir

It will no doubt appear strange that I who am almost unkown To your Excellancy Shou'd Take the Liberty To write to You, & Even to become Troublesome by a reQuest; Iam Intrusted with the Care of Sending to the Super Intendant of the King's Gardens a Good Quantity of the Cones of the True Wrimouth(?), or white Pine which grows and Flourishes so well in the County of Albany, as well as those of the Balm Gilead;--the Seeds oftheSuger & Curled Maple, those of the Prikly Ash, the white & the black & the Swamp Elm. -- Mr. Franklyn was applyed to by the Minister of the Marine

Department for a Person who wou'd be Kind enough to give the Pro-
per orders that those Things Shou'd be Seasonably Gathered & Care-
fully Put up— he Pointed out to him Your Excellency. -- this must
be my apology for the present Trouble.

In Return I am Commanded To offer Your Excellency the Seeds
of Whatever Curious Plants or Shrubs the King's Gardens Contains.
The Pacquets Lately Established between L'orient & this Post offer
a Channel of Conveyance Equally Sure & Expeditious. It will give
me Singular Pleasure to Recieve Your Excellency's Command that I
may obey them; -- when Your Excellency Shall be Pleased to Inform
me what are the Charges attending & collecting those Cones & seeds,
& putting them up in Seperate Bags I will Immediately Pay the Same
to whoever You may appoint To recieve it.

I have the Honor To be With the Most Perfect Respect
Your Excellency's Most Obedient & Most Humble Servant

St.(?) John

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L. Box 35 Reel 17)

According to Schuyler Mansion, a Historic structure Report,
(1977, p.35), no evidence exists to show that Schuyler responded
to this request. It is possible however, and if this offer were
accepted, it could have affected the Schuyler farms and gardens.
This letter is interesting in that it suggests how highly regarded
Phillip Schuylers botanical knowledge was.

June 25, 1786

Reciept for mowing from Francis Bourne;

Received Albany June 25th 1786 the Sum of two pounds nine
Shillings & Sixpence for Mowing 12¹/₂ Acres of Grass at 5 per Acre

L 2.9

+ Francis Bourn for myself
and the other two (?)
that mowed with me

June 18, 1787

Letter from Phillip Schuyler to the Northern Centinel;

Saratoga, June 18, 1787

To the Publishers of the Northern Centinel

Gentlemen:

Turnips are frequently destroyed by a small fly which feeds on them while quite young, that farmers are, in great measure, deterred from attempting to cultivate that valuable root; the following Receipts, to prevent the ravages of that particular insect, have lately been published in Europe; be pleased to insert them in your paper, for the benefits of that very useful class of citizens, the Yeomanry of the country.

I am

Gentlemen

Your Most Humble Svt.

Phillip Schuyler

To a quart of Turnip-seed, add one ounce of brimstone finely powdered, put both into a bottle large enough to afford room to shake them well every day, for four or five days previous to sowing, keeping the bottle well corked.

Another Reciept

Take such a quantity of elder leaves as, when bruised, will yield juice sufficient to cover the Turnip seed you intend to sow, in which let it soak about twelve hours, the next day mix it with the bruised leaves and sow all together.

Turnip seed is generally covered with a brush harrow; Take elder bushes for this purpose, if the berries are on the effect will be increased. If not withstanding these precautions, the fly should attack the young plants, draw elder bushes gently over them.

I have found by experience, that the fly rarely attacks Turnips growing on ground from which a crop of flax has been taken the same season. I have also and with good success prevented the ravages of the Turnip fly by covering my Turnip field with straw, after it was prepared for seeding and then burnt the straw the day before I sowed.

If Turnip seed is sowed while it rains, it does not require to be harrowed in, and the young plants shoot so strongly that they soon gain strength beyond the power of the fly.

(from Northern Centinal, Troy Public Library, copy in Schuyler Mansion State Historic Site files.)

July 11, 1787

Letter from Stevens and Connelly (merchants) to Phillip Schuyler;

New York 11th July 1787

Cap'. Slouth(?) has Informed us by the advise of Col.^o Hamilton that there is a Package Aboard of his Ship (Providence) from London for you. it is said to be a Plough.

We have taken the Liberty To transmit it to you by Cap'.- the Sloop Ginny(?) and agree^d with him for Seven Shillings as he Seem^d to Expect much more. We have Paid all the little Contingencies Excepting the Freight from London hear(?). I think the Say it will be five pounds or upwards Sterling money if you Chouse We Will Settle that also.

Some time ago We honor^d your draft of fifty Pounds in favour
of Steven J. Schuyler -- and remain your

Very Humble Servants

Stevens & Connolly

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 1, Box 1)

The fact that Phillip Schuyler went to the trouble of import-
ing a plow from England indicates that it may have been an advanced
design, unfamiliar to American craftsman.

December 27, 1787

Letter from Phillip Schuyler to John Bradstreet Schuyler;

Albany December 27th 1787

Dear Child

I send Mr. Tubbs to remain at Saratoga until you return there
after having visited us.

If you are not ready to come on Friday send Tom(?) and Peter down
with each a load of Forrage either Corn or Oats.-- Let Cuff too
come as soon as you can send him, let him bring a covered Sled,
and it will be as well to let him bring corn in the ear,-- he must
(stop at Mr. Bacons and get his Oxen Shod. By Cuff I wish you to
send the white faced horse which drove in the Sulky.-- If no Oats
are thrashed let some be prepared to come with the next Sleds.

We all Join in the Compliments of the Season to you and Betsy
accompanied with our love, may you both increase in virtue that
every revolving year, and many very many do I wish you, may add to
your felicity. Adieu My Child I am Affectionately Yours &c &c

Ph: Schuyler

John B. Schuyler Esqr

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Reel 19 Box 38)

April 1, 1778

Letter from Phillip Schuyler to John Bradstreet Schuyler (at Saratoga);

"....I send you 12 half round & 3 flatt files and some cuttings of grapes...." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 38, Reel 19)

1790

Description of Gardens;

".....laid out in all the elaborate art of French landscape gardening, with here and there parterres, some of which were nicely lawned...." (Quoted in Schuyler Mansion, a Historic Structure Report, 1977, p.34. from L. B. Proctor, Historic Memories of the Old Schuyler Mansion, n.p., n.d., p. 4, thought to be a quote from entleman's Magazine, London, 1790.)

Webster's New World Dictionary, (Simon and Schuster, 1982), defines "Parterre" as " an ornamental garden area in which the flower beds and path form a pattern".

August 30, 1790

Reciept from Mott Sullivan;

Recieved Albany August 30th 1790 from Phillip Schuyler the sum of Twelve pounds and Eight pence which with two pounds Eighteen Shillings heretofore received is in full for six months wages due the fourth Instant, per my wages as his Gardiner.

L 12.. 0.. 8

Mott Sullivan

2.. 18....

14..18...8

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 3, Reel 2)

October 4, 1790

Reciept from Rebecca Slingerlandt;

Sinral Scoullar

To 17 Chikins at /9 pr Chikin - 0 - 12 - 9

To 2 Chikins at /7 pr Chikin - 0 - 1 - 2

Sir pleace to pay dis to the barar

&n(?) you will oblige your frin

Rabacca Slingerlandt

Paid the above order

October 4, 1790

(Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Rockefeller Archives Center, S989)

October 8, 1791

Letter from Phillip Schuyler to John Bradstreet Schuyler;

".... When your waggon comes down I will send you a compleat set of Philadelphia Waggon Horses to which not any thing is wanted....." (Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 38, Reel 19)

May 1, 1792

Extracts of a reciept from Conradt Ruby (Cooper);

Phillip Schuyler Esq^r to Conradt Ruby

		<u>L. S. D.</u>
1787		
June 19	To one New Churn — — — —	0 . 10 . 0
August 29	To one New milk Cooler — — — —	0 . 6 . 0
	
Novbr 29	To one New milk Cag — — — —	0 . 4 . 0
	

788

Novbr 15 To a Day worke Done that Seison on the Grape Vines

1788	to 6 Shilling per Day	—	—	1 . 4 . 0
1789				
April 10	To Trimming the Grape Vines	—	—	0 . 4 . 0
			
25	To $\frac{3}{4}$ Day Work done at the Grapevines	—	—	0 . 4 . 6
			
August 20	To $\frac{3}{4}$ Day working on the Grapevines	—	—	0 . 4 . 6
Novbr 13	To covering the Vines - $\frac{3}{4}$ Day	—	—	0 . 4 . 6
			

Recieved May 1st 1792 Five Pounds Thirteen Shillings & Six pence
in full of the above account.

Done(?) Conradt Ruby

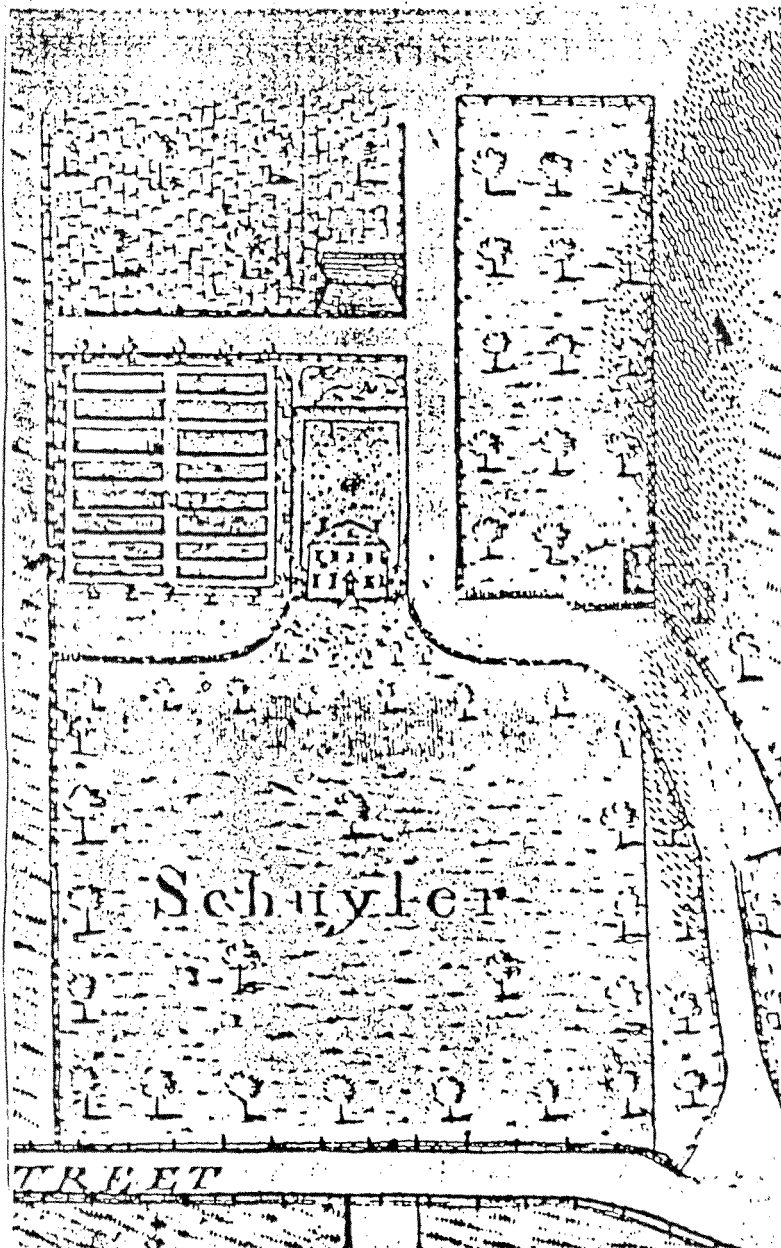
(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L. Box 3 Reel 2)

1794

eWitt Map;

The following Map detail is reproduced from Schuyler Mansion, a Historic Structure Report, (1977, p.34). It is from a map entitled, "Plan of the City of Albany, Surveyed at the request of the Mayor, Alderman and Commonality by Simeon Dewitt", the Library of Congress owns the Original.

This map clearly shows several interesting details including a large garden to the south, an orchard to the north, various types of fences, and the large barn. Perhaps the sparse area surrounding the word "Schuyler" is the "pasture before the House" referred to by John Lansing Jr. in his letter of November 7, 1777. The rectangular forms which comprise the garden may be the "parterres" described in 1790.



1795

Extract from William Strckland's Journal;

"Hemp might be cultivated to great advantage in this country, particularly in the western part of it, but it is attended with too much labour, particularly labour in winter, which the people of this country are not fond of, looking upon it as thier season amusement and recreation. The late Gen: Schuyler cultivated much of it and erected mills for breaking it near Albany, but gave

it up afterwards." (William Strickland, Journal of a Tour in the United States of America, 1794 - 1795, Edited by J. E. Strickland, New York Historical Society, 1971, p. 112)

William Strickland was a wealthy British Traveler who briefly visited Schuyler. As a farmer and an honorary member of the British Board of Agriculture he was especially interested in American Agriculture. His journal is highly informative on that subject. However in this instance he may be incorrect. Other sources, which follow, seem to indicate that Schuyler achieved a far greater success with this crop.

November 17, 1796

Reciept from Moses Sage;

Ph: Schuyler

	To Moses Sage	Dr
1796		
Nov: 17	To 1553 at 54/ ar	L41..10..7 ¹ / ₂
	1 bu<ll?>	22. ____
	1 Cow	10. ____
	2 Steers at L16	32. ____
	1 steer at L15	15. ____
		L128..10..7 ¹ / ₂
	Dr.. Cent(?)	
	322..33 (?)	128..10..7 ¹ / ₂

Recieved Albany November 17th 1796 from Phillip Schuyler the Sum of three hundred and twenty two Dollars and thirty three Cents in full of the above Account in behalf of Moses Sage Mr(?)

Dr..322.33

Franc Sage

(Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Rockefeller Archives Center, S981)

-20-
September 12, 1798

Letter from Phillip Schuyler to Phillip Jeremiah Schuyler (at hynbech");

".....The few apples I had have been chiefly pillaged, so that your mama begs you will put her up eight barrels sorted pippens, swaer(?) apples and spitzenbergs I will get Capt: bogert(?) to call for them when I am advised where he should stop for them.-
....." (Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Rockefeller Archives Center, S947)

October 18, 1798

Letter from Phillip Schuyler to Phillip Jeremiah Schuyler:

".....-Your mama dares not venture to send him(?) of Mr. Churchs pigs, as he has ordered them to be sent down, but I am rsuaded If you write to him or to your sister and mention that you will (?) him of the breed he will let you have them.-

.....

When she <Catherine> and Mr. Ten Eyck return let them come in a stage that you may not be put to the inconvenience of sending a Carriage, unless you should obtain an order for the Hogs in which case It will be best to send cairrage(?) & If you can a bag of Buckwheat meal.

.....

Your mare is stolen I have sent advertisements but apprehend She is gone to N England....."

(Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Rockefeller Archives Center, S 988)

November 24, 1798

Phillip Schuyler's "List of Real Property";

Apparently prepared for tax purposes, this document provides a detailed description of the estate, including the following agricultural structures;

".....An enclosed yard made of posts and boards, with a shed roof projecting under which is an ash hole, a small room to wash in, with one window, <a small smoak room> to mash meal in, a small flour <room> and harness room, and a lumber loft, a Fowl yard, and part of a brick neccesary is also covered by the shed.

.....

Beyond the Yard and at a distance therefrom is a <wooden> framed shed <enclosed?> for Garden seeds and gardiners implements.

Also a framed coach house of wood & boards one story high is at a distance from the yard and also a framed <wooden> ice house 12ft. by 12ft. by 12ft. deep not yet occupied or completed.

.....

On the residue of the farm is a <wooden> framed barn one story high and no other buildings."

(Quoted in Schuyler Mansion, a Historic Structure Report, (1977, pp. 28 and 35), from Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 17)

July 2, 1800

Letter from Phillip Schuyler to Phillip Jeremiah Schuyler;

Albany Wednesday July 2^d 1800

My Dear Child

I shall compleat my hay harvest about thisday week, and promise on the Monday or tuesday following to set out on a visit to you, accompanied by your Mamã and Sisters Rensselaer, &

Catherine.

I have passed a month at your Brother Rensselaers, and brought every thing into perfect order, both in and about the house, and on the farm- his crops promise well and he is now so situated that with attention to his business he may live perfectly happy....."

(Schuyler Papers, New York State Library, 9537)

August 5 1800

Recieipt from Society of Shakers;

Recieved August 8th 1800 of Gen^l Phillip Schuyler, Seventyfive dollars p^r the hands of William Root, in full for an Iron bound Waggon, Also four dollars for delivering said Waggon at Albany, for the Society of Shakers at Lebanon.- Calvin Cogswell —

\$79

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L. Box 3, Reel 2)

June 4, 1801

Rental Agreement between Samuel Bowman and Phillip Schuyler;

I will let Samuel Bowman have the house at the South East Corner of my farm, together with the land on the South side of the small stream for one year at twentyfive dollars for the year - If he finds any person stealing apples or nuts he must take them if he can, and bring them to me.

He is not to keep a tavern in the house, or sell any kind of liquor.

Albany June 4 1801

Ph: Schuyler

(From collection of Dr. Joel Sabeau, copy in Schuyler Mansion State Historic Site files.)

October 29, 1801

Letter from William Grant to Phillip Schuyler;

!....Sir

It gave those who were honrd with your acquaintance here, great pleasure to learn, that you and the Ladies of your family, had not an unpleasant Journey to Canada, and that you got home in better health than when you left Quebec. You gave me permission to write to you when desireous of that information which you so kindly impart. I took the liberty of asking you many questions About Plaster of Paris, as you lay it on your Hay, or wheat lands - Of the Culture, and prepareing of Hemp. And the manner of dispersingby grant, or Lease for Years, or life or lives of your unimproved Lands. Give me leave now to request a sample of the Plaster, whether Paris or Nova Scotia as you use it. I have tried hat is brought us from the Gulph of St Lawrence but cannot get it to boil in an iron laddle, or pot. I am thereforeapprehensive, that, I laid on my land, was of a bad quality, more especially as it had no visible effect on it. Perhaps an < ? > may offer to send me a bushel or two for which I will pay carriage &c. with much pleasure. Some Samples also of your Hemp, in the State you sell it to your Merchants, would be agreeable. I have had some water rotted, dried afterwards in the Sun and broken with the dutch or french hand brake, which appears very good. At least so say Ship Masters and others who have seen it and pretend Judgement. Sir Robt. Milnes has had samples of it, and sent them to England with strong recommendation to Government for liberal encouragement.

hope His Excy's endeavors will meet with success. Mr Clark of Montreal has taken great pains and gone to considerable expence.

I have only attempted on a small Scale What little I have seen of Mr Clarkes, had I think lost of its strength by over rotting, which the books say is a greater fault than under rotting. A little more of your advice on the subject of Hemp will enable us to become proficient in the growth of it: A copy of some of your most modern Leases will be very Obliging. We have lands in Canada, through the liberality of Government, and by purchase, and otherwise, but know not your good methods....."

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 37, Reel 18)

January 7, 1802

Letter from Isaac W. Clarke to Phillip Schuyler;

Montreal 7th January 1802

Sir

You will probably remember my informing you the Summer that I had a quantity of Hemp under cultivation near this town and my making many enquiries of you respecting the management of Hemp and that you very politely afforded me much information on the Subject.

I take the liberty now to inform you that the various pieces of Grounds on which I sowed have produced about 10 thousand bundles in general of good length, say from 6 to 10 feet, that excepting a few hundred bundles reserved for snow rotting, it has all been rotted in a Pond seemingly with Success and all dried and housed for dressing what has been broken and cleaned is of very good quality.

I found on enquiry of Mr. Platt after Mr. Cleland the Mill Wright whom you recommended that he had been dead more than a dozen years.

The breaking being too slow and expensive, I have had a horse Mill erected which with 3 Nuts seems to break the hemp well, but still it is too slow, which obliges me again to have recourse to your politeness for further information, to beg you will have the goodness to favor me with a plan of the most approved Water Mill for breaking & dressing Hemp with the dimensions of its parts and to inform me the quantity which Such a Mill will clean in a given time, what Labour is requisite to attend it and what the probable expence of erecting it may be.

I beg you to excuse the liberty I take and believe me to be with much respect

Sir your most obedient Servant

Isaac W. Clarke

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 37, Reel 18)

January 29, 1802

Letter from Daniel Foote<?> to Phillip Schuyler;

General Phillip Schuyler

Sir,

With defferance I take the liberty of adressing you, on a subject which I concieve to be of consequence to this part of the Country. As an excuse for my intruding on your time (and perhaps on business of more importance) I will call to your recollection a small acquaintance I had with you in June last on a passage from Albany to New York at which time you gave me such information, respecting the raising of Hemp, as induced me to believe that it would be a matter of consequence to introduce the raising of it in this part of the Country a Sincethat time I have mentioned it to a number of respectable farmers in this Country, who agree with me in opinion. I am now about forming a company for the purpose of

putting in a number of Acres, at the Joint expence of the Company which is merely for an experiment. I there request of you that formation which will be necessary to insure success to our undertaking) Viz. What Land will produce it, in what order of cultivation the land must be in at the time of sowing, what time is most proper for sowing what quantity of seed it will take to sow an Acre. In short all the information that will be necessary for us to receive; from the time of sowing until it is fit for market. If you should think proper to give me this information you will confer an obligation on me. And I think it will be of material benefit to this Country generally.

Sir, with sentiments of the utmost esteem and respect I am Your obedient Servent

Daniel Foote <?>

Seipio <?> Cayuga County Jany 29th 1802

(Phillip Schuyler Papers, N.Y.P.L., Box 38, Reel 19)

December 15, 1803

Reciept from Peter Furlong, (blacksmith);

Albany Dec.^{br} 28. 1802

Gen^l P.^h. Schuyler

To Peter Furlong

1803

.....

March

16th	repairing axletree of waggon	_____	0 8 0
------	------------------------------	-------	-------

.....

29	2 shoes & 3 removals	_____	0 8 0
----	----------------------	-------	-------

repairing a share _____ 0 5 0

.....

g^t 3 repairing hoe _____ 0 1 6

.....

Pd Albany December 15 1803 the sum of sixty three dollars and fifty cents by a check on the bank of Albany in full of the above account

\$ 63 ⁵⁰/₁₀₀

Peter Furlong

April 12, 1805

Phillip Schuyler's Estate Inventory;

INVENTORY of

Phillip Schuyler's Estate

^ true and perfect Inventory of all the goods, chattels & Credits
Phillip Schuyler late of the City of Albany.....

.....

Implements of Husbandry10.00

.....

Horses & furniture.....300.00

.....

Horned Cattle and Sheep.....84.00

.....

Appraised by us the day & year above written <April 12, 1805>

Jas. Van Ingen

Jerh. Lansingh

(Quoted in Schuyler Mansion, a Historic Structure Report, 1977, p. 40
om a document in the Albany County Surrogate's Office.)

IV. Other Sources

Although Phillip Schuyler was known to experiment, most of his methods would have been similar to those used by other eighteenth century farmers. Therefore, some accounts which do not directly document Schuyler's farming may still be useful. Three sources in particular, describe agriculture as it was practised by people who were close to the Schuylers. While these sources are too long to be included in this report, they deserve mention.

In 1749 famed Swedish Naturalist Peter Kalm visited Albany. His interest in botany and horticulture made him an excellent observer of the way farming was done in and around Albany. His remarks are contained in; Travels in North America, (New York, Dover, 1964). He provides many interesting details about the crops, livestock, and barns that he encountered. He relates how the produce was processed and served, along with his judgement of its quality, and even his candid opinions of his hosts.

Phillip Schuylers aunt and uncle owned an estate near Albany known as "The Flatts". This estate, its grounds and barns, were described in great detail by Mrs. Anne (Macvicar) Grant in her book; Memoirs of an American Lady, (New York, Research Reprints Inc., 1970 First printed 1808). As a young lady Mrs Grant lived at the Flatts and was well acquainted with the area's society. One point which she makes in her reminiscences seems to verify the importance of Catherine Schuyler's agricultural role: "...not only the training of children, but of plants, was the female province. Every one in town or country had a garden; a woman, in very easy circumstances, and abundantly gentle in form and manners, would sow, and plant, and rake, incessantly. These fair gardeners were

also great florists....." (Volume I, pp.39-41).

Another young Lady who knew the Schuyler family was the Mar-
ise De La Tour Du Pin. She came to The United States in 1795 as
a wealthy refugee from the French Revolution. Later she wrote
about her experiences in; Recollections of the Revolution and Emp-
ire, (Walter Geer, Editor and Translator, New York, Brentanos, 1920,
originally entitled; "Journal D'une Femme de Cinquante Ans".)

Phillip Schuyler hosted her family during thier exile, and helped
them to establish a small farm of thier own near Albany. Farming
was an intriguing novelty to the young noblewoman, so she recorded
some very helpful descriptions of such everyday tasks as, apple
cider making, butter making, and corn husking. Her comments on
the countryside, her nieghbors, and on the clothing which farming
people wore are also invaluable.

These sources provide a fascinating, though incomplete, picture
of how farming was carried out in the vicinity of the Schuyler Mans-
ion. They, and the many Schuyler documents exhibited in this report
may help those who are interested in interpreting the lifestyle of
Phillip Schuyler and his family, and the activities at thier estates.

The Schuyler familys agricultural endeavors were a source of
food, cloth, rope, and sometimes knowledge, for his contemporaries.
Perhaps today we can also benefit from some of that knowledge.

APPENDIX

Crops, Livestock, and Poultry, which are documented to have belonged to the Schuyler family, 1765-1804.

Crops

Apples	Parsnips
Beans	Peas
Buckwheat*	Potatoes
Corn (Indian Corn)	Rhubarb*
Flax	Squash
Grapes	Strawberries
Hay	Tuberose (Ornamental)
Hemp	Turnips
Hops*	Wheat
Nuts	Willow (Ornamental)
Oats	

Livestock

Bull*
Cows (Milk)
Hogs
Horses (Including "Waggon" Horses)
Oxen
Sheep

Poultry

Chickens
Ducks
Geese
Turkeys

* These items are only documented indirectly and may or may not have been raised by the Schuylers.