

## **A Walking Tour of The Chestnut Street Historic District And Neighborhood**

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**Sponsored by the  
Friends of Historic Kingston**

**“Up on the Hill.”** As the village of Rondout prospered and grew, some of its leading citizens began to build homes along the ridge overlooking the village.. Near the highest point, in about 1850, James McEntee built the first home, in the style now sometime called “Hudson River Bracketed.” McEntee had arrived in Rondout in 1825 as a young man fresh from working on the Erie Canal, with a new job as resident engineer for the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company. In 1848, after a series of work enterprises, he bought 52 undeveloped acres overlooking the village and laid out a street with building lots. The street and lots first appeared on a map in 1851. On an 1858 map, it was first called Chestnut Street.



**Looking down Chestnut Street hill**

Among McEntee’s first neighbors were Dr. Abraham Crispell, a physician who had fought the cholera epidemic of 1849 from his office in the Mansion House Hotel downtown; James Van Deusen, who with his brother, Columbus, made patent medicines advertised to cure almost everything; and Henry Samson,

who came to Rondout after making a small fortune in leather tanning.

By the turn of the century, McEntee’s house was overshadowed by the large mansion built on part of the McEntee homestead by Samuel D. Coykendall, President of the Cornell Steamboat Company. Like some other ll-to-do residents, Coykendall enjoyed being close to work; in the morning, he and his sons walked down the hill to the Cornell Building (in the evening, they were driven back up the hill by carriage).



**James McEntee**

By 1920, postcard views show a “mature” street shaded with graceful maples and elms. Families in the larger homes maintained gardens, though none more tastefully than that of Edward Coykendall’s wife, Isabel. From a carefully arborescenced doorway, visitors could view the church-spired village below and the creek and river beyond.

Invariably, the houses on the street changed with the changes in Rondout’s fortunes and those of its leading families and also as the result of new building style preferences. By 1970, the Coykendall mansion, long vacant, had been torn down to make room for a small development of ranch style houses; several of the larger houses had become multiple-unit dwellings; and some of the shade trees had been lost. Yet, much of the streetscape remains as it was at the turn of the century. Most of the homes, many now restored, remain to remind us

of the domestic life of the people who ran the industries and owned the businesses down the hill.

The last long block at the western end of West Chestnut arose as a separate development, beginning about 1870. Many of the residents in this block of middle-class homes worked in the transportation and other enterprises owned by the residents at the wealthier end of the street.

**The Self-Guided Tour** starts in Kingston at the fork of Broadway and Delaware Avenue and continues to East Chestnut, Livingston, and Stuyvesant Streets, and then to the end of West Chestnut. It takes about an hour (though probably longer if accompanied by a guide). An optional visit to Montrepose Cemetery is described.

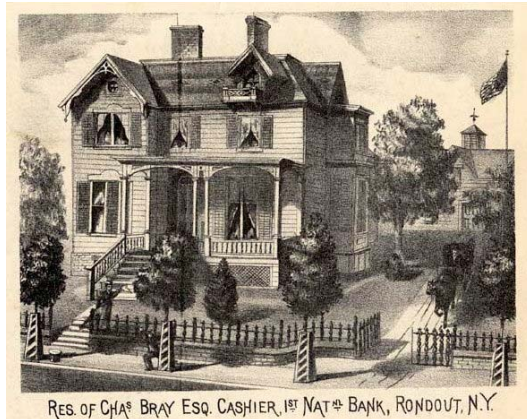
**Broadway at Delaware.** It takes some imagination to envision these busy thoroughfares as the rude paths they once were, likely in use by native Americans long before Europeans arrived in the 1600s. River travelers could disembark at what is now Kingston Point and come up the path known today as Delaware Avenue toward the fertile settlements along the Esopus floodplain (near uptown Kingston). Or they could make a more sheltered landing up Rondout Creek and come up the path we know as Broadway. On October 15, 1777, British General Henry Clinton's troops came up the road from the "point" on their way to set fire to Kingston. By 1819, this road had become the first part of a proposed Ulster and Delaware Turnpike intended to go as far as the Delaware River in Chenango County. The turnpike venture failed, but the "Delaware" part of the name stayed on local street maps.

In 1820, a house with a tavern sign stood about where the present-day convenience store is located. Except for

a frame house further down Broadway (where St. Mary's church would be built), there were no other dwellings until you got close to the Creek.

An early local map shows Broadway as "the Strand road" (meaning the road to or from the strand, a Dutch word for "beach" or "landing"). In 1850-51, wood planks were laid down for what was then called the Union Plank Road. By 1875, now known as Union Avenue, the planks were up and a horse-drawn trolley carried people between Rondout and uptown Kingston.

**262 Broadway.** About 1870, near the peak of Rondout's prosperity, the Cashier of the First National Bank of Rondout, Charles Bray, moved into this substantial house. In 1875, the house was depicted in Beer's *Atlas of Ulster County* with fashionably dressed men and women strolling along this part of Union Avenue. Rondout and Kingston had combined under a single city charter and, by 1885, Bray was serving as Mayor.



**The home of Charles Bray in 1875**

The plans for Bray's house may have been taken or adapted by a local carpenter from published designs by style-makers such as Alexander Jackson Davis, Andrew Jackson Downing, or Calvert Vaux. These building designers found ideas in picturesque European models and adapted them for American

materials and convenience. The most prevalent model for larger homes in the 1850-1880 period was the Italian villa or country house, and the Bray house, like others built in Kingston in this period, shows the influence of what architectural historians would someday call the "Italianate." In the Bray house, the Italianate is evident in the small octagonal window under the front gable, the bay window on the side, and the unusual balcony on the front dormer. The decorations around the windows may have been the builder's own inspiration. Far from looking like a villa in Italy, this house shows how optimistically American a few European ideas could be made to look.

The same local limestone used to build the early Dutch houses in uptown Kingston is used here to support an ornamental cast-iron fence.

**261 Broadway.** Across the street, the mansard roof is associated with another popular style of the period, the French Second Empire. Other elements of the house seem Italianate. The iron tethering post in front may be a later addition, but it reminds us that the sounds and smells of horses, carriages, and wagons were once an important part of life in this neighborhood.

**251 Broadway.** Also built about 1870, this Italianate town house has an ornamental cornice and brackets covering the front of the building.

**249 Broadway.** Probably built in the 1880s, this front-gabled frame house represents the less expensive house of the period and is a modest example of what has been called "Folk Victorian." The plan was probably from a standard pattern book for houses. The gable trim and decorative porch spandrels possibly came pre-cut from a local mill. The garage is a later addition.

**NW Corner of Broadway and Chestnut.** Recently rehabilitated, this brick house appears on an 1851 map and has had several additions. Decorative verge board under the roof line and a front porch have unfortunately been removed.

**254 and 250 Broadway.** Built about 1900, these two houses represent two approaches to the style known as Colonial Revival. During the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, Americans were reminded of the best of their earlier, classical styles in architecture (Georgian, Federal, and Greek Revival), encouraging a new interest in classical ideas and motifs that became the predominant new style for houses by 1900. **254 Broadway**, with a semicircular window in the front gable and front porch with single columns, exemplifies the typical in frame house construction in this style. The Terpening family, local ice cream makers, once lived here. **250 Broadway** seems a revival of the Federal style of 1810-30 with its matched dormers, spaced dentil molding in the cornice, and balanced configuration. The Italianate is seen in the side bay window. (The front porch has been modified.)

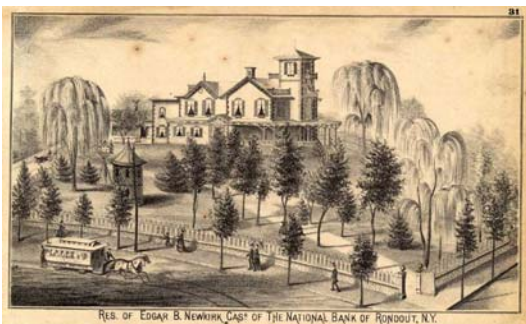
**NE Corner of Broadway and Chestnut.** Not all the houses built in this neighborhood have survived and a few houses replace earlier ones. Until about 1900, a sizable house stood on this now vacant lot. Behind it, on East Chestnut, stood another house, no longer existing, owned by Captain David Abbey, who piloted steamboats on the river for Thomas Cornell.

**Bluestone Sidewalks.** Like other older neighborhoods of Kingston, Chestnut Street retains its distinctive bluestone sidewalks and curbstones. The bluestone likely arrived in a horse and

wagon after being prepared in yards along the Rondout. The quarries were located in Hurley and other nearby communities.

**11 East Chestnut.** Built about 1906, this is an early example of the Tudor style that was widely popular by the 1920s. This style shared common roots with the Craftsman style, which emphasized simplicity and the value of hand-work (evident in the carpentry details in this house's interior). Tudor often included, as this house does, stucco walls with decorative half-timbering, steeply pitched roofs, and a gabled doorway. The first residents were Dr. George Chandler and his family. Chandler, a founder of Kingston Hospital, was rather more remarkably also the founder of the New York State Police.

**17 East Chestnut.** Also built about 1906 in a Colonial Revival style, an early resident was Grove Webster, who owned a livery stable in Rondout. Webster served terms as county Sheriff and as Kingston's Mayor. The carriage house in the rear may have been built earlier by Captain Abbey.



**Edgar Newkirk house in 1875 with cupola**

**10 East Chestnut.** This substantial residence, of which the rear is seen from East Chestnut, was probably built by Edgar B. Newkirk in about 1860. Newkirk was Cashier of the Rondout

National Bank and a land developer in Rondout. In Beers' 1875 atlas, the Italian villa style house is shown with a prominent cupola along with gazebo, birdhouse and weeping willows. A later owner was Dr. David Kennedy, a patent medicine manufacturer ("Dr. Kennedy's Favorite Remedy") who was also Mayor of Kingston in 1892-95. A later resident, Jay Klock, published the *Kingston Daily Freeman*.

**Emmanuel Lutheran Church** was built in 1870 for a German-speaking congregation. The spire was added in 1880. For many years, the church conducted a school in its adjacent building. The bell in the tower is one of several that have run for the past hundred years from churches in the neighborhood.

**Vacant Lot across from the Church.**

Here was the home of John Dillon, partner in McEntee and Dillon. Their iron works in Rondout, located on the Strand, made some of the cast-iron storefronts for commercial buildings on lower Broadway and the Strand. Dillon's wife, Julia, acquired a reputation as a skilled painter of still life and was a cousin and close friend of another Chestnut Street painter, Jervis McEntee.

**18 Livingston.** Until recently, this unusual clapboard and shingle house with three front-facing gables had never been painted. Built about 1885 for Guilford Hasbrouck, who owned a boot and shoe business in Rondout, the house has a number of elements of the Queen Anne style. Hasbrouck was a grandson of Abraham Hasbrouck, the farmer and sloop owner on whose land much of commercial Rondout was built.

**29-31 and 33-35 Stuyvesant.** Built about 1890, these houses show the Queen Anne style influence in their use of decorative shingles and ornamental carving under the gables.

**End of Stuyvesant Street.** Before the recent creation of the 9-W bypass highway, Stuyvesant Street continued down the hill into the neighborhood of Ponkhockie.

**34 Stuyvesant.** An early resident was Absalom Eltinge Anderson, who had succeeded his father, Absalom Lent Anderson, as Captain of the Hudson's best-known steamboat, the "Mary Powell." Obscured by asphalt shingles for a number of years, the clapboard exterior has been carefully restored by the present owners. The interior has also been restored to the 1885 period.



**34 Stuyvesant Street with historic 1885 colors**

**32 and 28 Stuyvesant.** These Second Empire style brick town houses were probably built in the 1870s. In 1895, Conrad Hasbrouck lived at 28. A brother of Guilford, Conrad owned a hardware business on the Strand.

**18-24 Stuyvesant.** P. J. Flynn, a successful merchant of "groceries, provisions, and liquors" down the hill, lived here with his large family as early as 1885. This splendid example of the Second Empire, built about 1865, has a not uncommon cupola with its own mansard roof. Noteworthy are the dormers with double windows, the decorative lintels about paired-arch window panes, and the coupled support columns on the front porch. Until

recently, fancy ironwork decorated the crest of the cupola and main roof.



**Porch and window details at 18-24 Stuyvesant**

**8-12 Stuyvesant.** The original front porch (which had been removed) and other features of this Queen Anne style house have been partly restored. In 1895, Michael F. Larkin, Jr., owner of a grocery and liquor store at 30 Ferry Street, lived here.

**Site of Chambers Street.** Until the 1880s and possibly later, Chambers Street came through to Stuyvesant just before the vacant lot on the corner of Broadway. (The house that was formerly on the vacant lot burned down during an attempt at restoration.)

#### **Looking Up West Chestnut.**

Chestnut Street first appears on a map in 1851, though unnamed at that time.



(What became East Chestnut was then called "Suydam Street." The rest of the street would later be designated West Chestnut.) In 1851, only one house stood on the street, that of James S. McEntee, who in 1848 had purchased 52 acres, including all of the hill or ridge down to Broadway. In prior years, the land, which originally had been part of a village "commons," had belonged to Cornelius Van Buren and was either

farmland or unused. McEntee, an engineer, may have laid the street out himself; about this time (1850-51), he was also supervising the building of the Union Plank Road (on what is now Broadway). He also subdivided the land along Chestnut Street into the lots on which the present houses are built. McEntee's development ended where Augusta Street intersects West Chestnut today; the farther end of Chestnut was developed separately.

***“The Weinberg.”*** The ridge along which West Chestnut runs was sometimes known in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as “the Weinberg” (Dutch for “wine hill”). Perhaps (no one today remembers) this was because of the wild grapevines that infested the trees on the side of the ridge toward the Rondout. In the summer, looking up from McEntee Street on the downhill side of Chestnut, some vines are still in evidence.

**12 West Chestnut.** Built in 1900 (the cornerstone can be seen from the street), this solidly upper-class home attests to the prosperous economic status of the residents who lived on this end of West Chestnut (which we might well think of as an affluent, close-in suburb of Rondout). Its 14 rooms, six bathrooms, six fireplaces, and maid's quarters were home in 1905 to Amos Van Etten, a lawyer with an office on Ferry Street, his wife, at least three children, and a live-in maid. A later resident, Howard Lewis, an executive with American Motors, commuted to and from the city in his Nash.

**15 West Chestnut.** In 1875, when this Second Empire style house was new, it was the home of Hiram Roosa, who sold insurance and real estate from his office in the Mansion House. In 1875, a gazebo stood on the downhill side. A bay-window on the front left and an open porch on the front right of the house have been replaced by the present closed porch. A later resident, George Coykendall, lived here before moving to a more impressive house at 77 West Chestnut.

**18 West Chestnut.** This imposing stone house in the Colonial Revival style was built about 1904 by George Hutton, one of several brick manufacturers who lived on West Chestnut. The Hutton brickyard was started by William Hutton, George's father (see 32 West Chestnut). Colonial Revival style houses in stone are unusual. The dormer with a broken pediment is characteristic of houses in this style built about 1900. Like other homes on this side of the street, an elaborate garden was maintained in the rear with hired gardeners.

**19 West Chestnut.** One of the first people to buy a house lot from Janes McEntee must have been John Gill, a local builder, who lived here and probably built this distinctly Italianate home. Notable are the arched windows, low-pitched roof, bay windows, and stone quoins at wall corners and in windows. From about 1885 until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this house was the home and office of Dr. Abraham P. Chalker, a homeopathic physician.



**Gill-Chalker house at 19 West Chestnut**

**30 West Chestnut.** The late 1960s split-level ranch style house was built on the site of the George Washburn house, which burned down in recent times. Washburn was another prosperous brick manufacturer. His house, built about the same time as the George Hutton house next door, was an elaborate specimen of the Colonial Revival and was pictured on a local postcard about 1913.

**Welles Lane.**

Owners of houses at this end of West Chestnut generally had carriage houses (which later became “garages”) in the rear or downhill side of the house. The Chalker family kept a horse and wagon in the building presently behind 19 West Chestnut on Welles Lane, a street built specifically to reach the carriage houses back of the houses on this side of West Chestnut (even before Orchard Street was laid out). In the 1915-18 period, the Washburns still kept a horse or two in their garage on Orchard Street at a time when Mr. Washburn was driven to work daily in his red Pierce-Arrow. (See also the carriage houses on Augusta Street.)



**Henry Samson house at 32 West Chestnut**

**32 West Chestnut.** Probably the builder and first resident of this house was Henry Samson, who purchased the land from James McEntee in 1857. The house appears on French’s Ulster County map of 1858 as one of only four houses on the street. The architect of this distinctively Italianate or Italian villa style house is unknown, but it has been compared to similar houses by Ithiel Towne of New Haven and to those of Calvert Vaux (see 99 West Chestnut). The square cupola, widely overhanging eaves with decorative brackets, and arched windows with elaborate crowns are all “classically” Italianate. The use of local bluestone as the primary material makes this house further remarkable.

Henry Samson made his fortune in the once prosperous (if environmentally disastrous) industry of leather-tanning in the Catskills. When he was about 50, he moved to Rondout from Samsonville, a community that he had built for his tannery. In Rondout, he became a part of civic life and the General of a local militia before it went off to the Civil War. In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the house was called “Evergreen Manor,” this was the home of William Hutton, a prominent lumber dealer and brick maker.

**27, 35, 39, 45, and 49 West Chestnut.** All built in the 1865-1875 period, these five houses share the prevalent Italianate

style. All have variations of the arched windows with some elaboration. Three have bay windows. (The brick house at 45 has a Second Empire mansard roof but is otherwise Italianate.) The porch on the frame house at 35 formerly had fancier trim. The brick house at 39 had a large porch that has been removed. The house at 45 originally had a wide front porch.

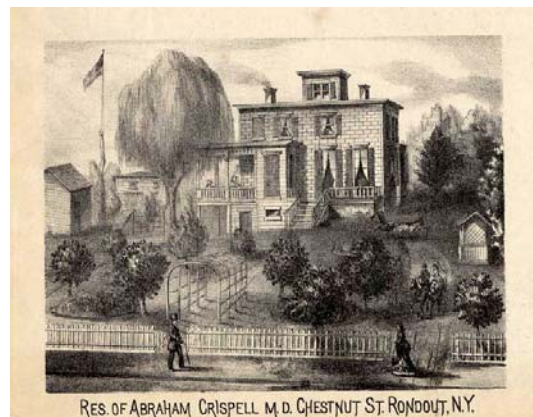
The early residents were all associated with the Rondout building and transportation industries or other Rondout businesses. At 27, E. W. Knapp owned a wholesale drug business. At 35, Francis M. Hoysradt was a foreman with the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company. At number 39, Jansen Hasbrouck, Jr. owned a hardware business. At 45, Peter Phillips worked, in different years, as a boat inspector and as superintendent of shipping for the canal company. At 49, John A. Larter was the canal company's Paymaster. A more recent resident, Thomas Feeney, built boats on the creek, a business that today continues as a barge repair company.

**44 and 48 West Chestnut.** These two brick houses were built at about the same time (about 1885) and have apparently always shared the same circular driveway. Number 44 was the home of Charles Cantine, a lawyer in Rondout. Another early resident was Charles Shultz, a brick manufacturer whose yard was north of the Hutton brickyard on the Hudson. An early resident and possible builder of number 48 was another brick maker, Frank Van Deusen. The cast-iron hitching post near the street in front of 44 dates to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



**44 and 48, the homes of brick makers**

**60 West Chestnut.** The second house built on West Chestnut (and the oldest remaining), this was the home of Dr. Abraham Crispell by 1858. A physician who began his practice in 1849 during a local cholera epidemic, Dr. Crispell later served in hospitals during the Civil War. The original house with its Italian villa style cupola appears in Beers' atlas of 1875. The cupola can be seen from the sides of the house looking toward the rear (not easy to do in the summer). In 1919, Robert J. Dwyer, a partner in Dwyer Brothers, ship chandlers in Rondout, modified the house, creating a new façade in an Italian Renaissance style including Palladian windows. A Spanish tile roof has since been replaced. The new version of the house appeared in an ad in the May, 1925 issue of *House and Garden*.





**Dr. Crispell's house at 60 West Chestnut in 1875**

**55 and 63 West Chestnut.** Built about 1900, these houses represent two general approaches to the Colonial Revival, the symmetrical (55) and the asymmetrical (63). Henry Crispell built the house at 55. As the son of Dr. Abraham Crispell, he had grown up in the house across the street. After working for Van Deusen Brothers, wholesale druggists, he opened his own firm. J. Townsend Johnson, owner of a hardware store in Rondout, built the house at number 63.



**James Van Deusen house at 70 West Chestnut**

**70 West Chestnut.** The large house with the tower and a rich display of windows was known as “Cloverly” when it appeared in De Lisser’s *Picturesque Ulster* in 1896, not long after it was built. James L. Van Deusen, partner in a firm that made “Van Deusen’s Ready Remedy” and other patent medicines, built this house to replace an earlier house on this site that he and his wife had built in the 1860s. (The original carriage house, behind the main house, survives.) After he died, his son-in-law, Frederick B. Hibbard, General Passengere Agent in Rondout for the Hudson River Day Line, lived here. Later residents include James Dwyer, President of the Rondout

National Bank and partner in a ship chandler firm in Rondout. Dwyer’s father had walked the barge-towing mules along the D&H canal.

This house seems to combine the formality of the Colonial Revival with the adventurousness of the Queen Anne style. The gambrel roof in front, repeated over the three-story front porch, seems intended as a tribute to the Dutch colonial heritage.

**65 West Chestnut.** Absalom Eltinge Anderson, who succeeded his father as Captain on the Hudson’s best-known steamboat, the “Mary Powell,” is believed to have lived for several years in an earlier house on this site. The present house is a later variation of the Colonial Revival that suggests Craftsman influence. Successive owners have included Alva Staples, a brick manufacturer; B. Morss Tremper, a wholesale grocer; and John Hildebrant, a boat builder.



**George Coykendall house at 77 West Chestnut**

**77 West Chestnut.** About 1897 George Coykendall, then President of the Stony Clove Railroad, moved up from 15 West Chestnut to this impressively constructed house of red brick and sandstone. Almost across the street stood the even more imposing home of his brother, Samuel, wife Mary, and their children (see **Evidence**). At 77, the round tower

and use of bricks of different color are characteristic of the Queen Anne style. The iron post by the curb appears to be the only surviving gas lamp post in Kingston. The carriage stone in the driveway seems to be in its original position. The garage in the rear, a recent addition, was designed to match the materials and style of the house.

***Site of the First House on West***

***Chestnut.*** Built about 1850, the James McEntee “homestead,” which included the main house, a barn and several other outbuildings stood across the street opposite Girard’s house with the main house probably back near the western end of Dietz Court.



**The McEntee family homestead**

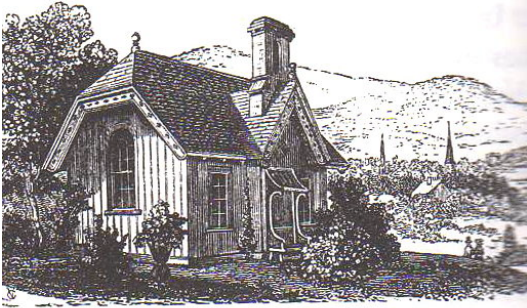
Born in 1800, James McEntee seems to embody the century’s energy and restlessness. At 19, he was an “axe-man,” helping to survey land for the Erie Canal. After working on several other canals, McEntee, still a young man, was appointed Resident Engineer for the new Delaware and Hudson Canal from the Hudson to Port Jervis. Several years later, he became one of the first to mine coal in Pennsylvania. He later owned and operated the Mansion House Hotel in Rondout, built docks for the local lighthouses, quarried cement stone, and laid out railroad tracks for the Hudson River Railroad. On at least one occasion, he captained a steamboat. In 1845-46, he supervised the building of the island

dock in the Rondout for the canal company.

McEntee’s home, a large Italianate house of light brown stucco, sheltered an interesting family. In addition to Jervis, the family included Girard, who at 13 went off to serve as a drummer boy in the Civil War, and Maurice, who served on one of the iron-clad ships during the War and later was a reporter for the *Rondout Freeman* and a writer of children’s stories. Daughter Sarah earned a medical degree in New York City and had a practice in Kingston. Augusta married Calvert Vaux who, with Robert Olmsted, designed Central Park in Manhattan and Prospect Park in Brooklyn. For Vaux, who had come from England, the house on Chestnut Street became a second home. Lucy married John Andrews, an Army captain who promptly took her away to his assignment at Fort Apache, Arizona.

The main house on the McEntee homestead was home for Dr. Sarah in her later years. After she died in 1903, the house seems to have been torn down.

***Site of Jervis McEntee’s Studio.*** In the early 1860s, Calvert Vaux designed a house for Jervis and his wife, Gertrude, that sat further east on the McEntee homestead property (approximately at the eastern end of Dietz Court). A drawing of the house is shown Vaux’s *Villas and Cottages* of 1864. Jervis and Gertrude played host to some well-known figures of the day, including the writer Bret Harte, the actor Edwin Booth, and the artist Frederic Edwin Church (with whom Jervis had studied). In 1890, Jervis sold the property to Samuel Coykendall, who removed the house to make room for his mansion.



DESIGN FOR AN ARTIST'S STUDIO.

**A drawing by Calvert Vaux for Jervis McEntee's studio**

In 1879, Jervis McEntee, an acclaimed member of what came to be known as the Hudson River School, removed several trees near his studio-house (to the right of 70 West Chestnut; no longer existing but probably about where Melvin Drive meets Dietz Court). His new view inspired a painting of the Catskills at twilight. Almost the same view can be seen on a clear summer evening from the lawn at number 77, looking northwest.



**Sunset from Jervis McEntee's studio**

In the journal he kept, McEntee described much of his life at home on Chestnut Street trimming the shrubs, repainting the carriage, laying down a new carpet. In the winter, McEntee and his wife, Gertrude, lived in New York City, where McEntee maintained a professional studio and a wide friendship with the leading artists of the day.

**Evidence of the Samuel D. Coykendall Mansion.** About 1895, Samuel D. Coykendall, principal owner of the

Cornell Steamboat Company, and his wife, Mary (Thomas Cornell's daughter), moved into a substantial three-story brick mansion on West Chestnut. Coykendall had acquired the property from Jervis McEntee and his new home probably stood near the location of McEntee's studio-house (which had been removed).



**Postcard view of the Coykendall mansion**

By early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the mansion was pictured on postcards with a broad lawn and a four-story castellated tower covered with ivy. By the late 1950s, the building was vacant and then sold to make room for the present development of ranch-style houses and the streets of Melvin Drive and Dietz Court (the latter street named for Kingston native Robert Dietz, killed in World War 2 and posthumously awarded a Medal of Honor). The Coykendall mansion stood about where Melvin Drive meets Dietz Court. In front of the houses at 80 and 84 West Chestnut are a few remaining traces of the Coykendall lawn - at 80, a length of corrugated bluestone and two round stones mark the former entrance to the driveway and, at 84, another two round stones mark the former entrance to the walkway up to the mansion.

**83 West Chestnut.** This solid and well-preserved example of the Colonial Revival was built about 1900 for Peter Schoonmaker, treasurer of the Kingston city trolley line.

**End of the Historic District.** Number 83 marks the western boundary of the

Chestnut Street Historic District. However, a number of noteworthy houses and sites lie further down West Chestnut and on Augusta Street. We invite you to continue your self-guided tour.

**99 West Chestnut.** The vaguely Gothic Revival house at the intersection of West Chestnut and Orchard Street was the home of Girard McEntee, son of the original developer of the street, James McEntee (and Jervis's brother). There is evidence in Jervis's journal that a portion of Jervis's studio was added to Girard's house (probably on the right side). Notice that the second story levels are different on each side of the house.

**102, 106, and 112 West Chestnut.** These Queen Anne style houses, now "modernized," were built about 1892-93. In 1895, Frank Dewey, Cashier of the First National Bank of Rondout, lived at 102. John C. Van Etten, a prominent Kingston lawyer, lived at 106. Marvin C. Crosby, partner in a dry goods emporium in Rodout, lived at 112.

**The Site of 124 West Chestnut.** The property behind the stone wall was until recently the site of a mansion only somewhat smaller than that of Samuel Coykendall. The mansion, which had been converted into a bed-and-breakfast, was recently destroyed by a fire. Originally, it was the home of George D. Smith, a cigar manufacturer whose company once employed 1,000 workers, mostly young women, in its factory in midtown. Smith, who served a term in Congress, built the 26-room house in about 1895. A later resident was John D. Schoonmaker, who quit the Cornell Steamboat Company to start his own ice company. Later, he built barges on Rondout Creek. His wife, Alberta, had a walled-in sunken garden that rivaled the garden of her friend and neighbor, Isabel Coykendall.

**Augusta Street Carriage Houses.** The rustically picturesque carriage houses at 12 and 20-22 Augusta Street once stored the carriages and horses and later the family automobiles for the Coykendalls. The chief caretaker and chauffeur lived in the house at number 20. The family monogram can be seen in the copper weathervane at 12. At 20-22, a pivoting turntable facilitated parking. A local resident remembers a Mercedes-Benz, a Cadillac, and a Pierce-Arrow.



**The Coykendall carriage houses on Augusta Street**

Across the street at 19 Augusta, John D. Schoonmaker kept a Cadillac, his chauffeur living above the garage. The original main door has been bricked up and the building is now a residence. 27 Augusta and its present brick garage in the rear are believed to have been the carriage house and caretaker's residence for John Van Etten (106 West Chestnut).

**166 West Chestnut.** Now the center of an apartment complex, the formal building with a marble entrance, classical window pediments, and decorative roof railing was the home of Edward and Isabel Coykendall. Samuel's son Edward built this house in 1919 shortly after his marriage. Isabel created a formal garden in the rear with statues, fountains, and artfully arranged views of the Hudson. As a young man, Edward helped run the family enterprises; later, for many years,

he managed the Ulster and Delaware Railroad.



**A view from Isabel Coykendall's garden**

**194 West Chestnut.** West of the apartments and overlooking the Rondout is a large house built in about 1887, probably by Frank Griffiths, who owned a large flour and feed business in Rondout. His daughter, Anna, and her husband Arthur Sheldon, a founder of Rotary, lived here for many years. Mrs. Sheldon was locally famous as a sponsor of musical soirees and once ran a dancing school for the sons and daughters of her neighbors.



**Students at Ulster Academy circa 1896**

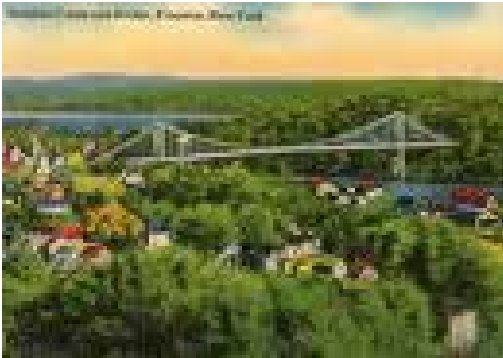
**Ulster Academy and Number 2 School.** At the corner of Montrepose and West Chestnut stands the former Ulster Academy, a public school, and later to become the Number 2 School, an elementary school. With 900 students, Ulster Academy was once Ulster County's largest school. Built in 1870, it had a library of 1,500 volumes that could be borrowed by local residents. The building was the temporary first home of Ulster County Community College. The building has been turned into several condominiums, each of which comes with a blackboard.

**The Last Block on the West End of West Chestnut.** The middle-class neighborhood at the end of the street developed separately from the McEntee part of West Chestnut during the 1880-1895 period. Many early residents of this block were independent trades people or craft workers or worked in the local transportation businesses. A notable resident was Dick Johnson, a major league baseball player in the 1880s. The Benedictine Hospital was started in the brick house at the very end of the street on the right. This house was later the home of Samuel Coykendall's legal counsel, Harry Flemming. His son, Arthur, who grew up in the house, later became Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in the Eisenhower administration.

**"The Ups and Downs."** Until recently, the land beyond the turnaround was an uneven, wooded area known as "the Ups and Downs" by local children who used it as an unauthorized playground. Paleontologists have found evidence suggesting the area may have served as a camping ground for visitors as far back as 12,000 years ago. The area has recently been subdivided for possible building lots.

**The View from the Turnaround.** Theodore Roosevelt is said to have

admired the view from here when he visited Harry Flemming during a Presidential campaign, and it has been popular with painters over the years. Resting here is the 1874 cornerstone from the Presbyterian Church of Rondout, which stood at the corner of Wurts and Abeel.



**View from the West Chestnut turnaround  
circa 1940**

**Montrepose Cemetery.** If you walk back now to Montrepose and then one block north, you'll see the entrance to the cemetery where most of the early residents of the West Chestnut Street neighborhood are buried. The cemetery is an outstanding example of the 19<sup>th</sup> century cultivatedly natural landscape made popular by Andrew Jackson Downing. The cemetery was formed in 1850 by Rondout's leading citizens. Thomas Chambers, one of Kingston's early settlers (1652), has been reburied not far from the entrance on the right. The Coykendall family members are buried near a wooden pergola atop a large central knoll. William Brown, John D. Schoonmaker's African-American chauffeur, shares a place in the family plot. Calvert Vaux is buried among the McEntees.



**The McEntee family plot in Montrepose**

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*Map of the City of Kingston, NY.*, no date (circa 1880-1885). An aerial view of the city. A copy is located in the Kingston City Clerk's office and reprints are available from the Friends of Historic Kingston.

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### **Interviews**

Some of our information is based on interviews with people who have lived and worked in the Chestnut Street neighborhood.

### **CREDITS**

This walking tour would not have been possible without help from the following people:

George Allen and Carolyn Matzen, who provided access to the Kingston Library’s local history collection, and Pat Carroll, who provided similar help at Ulster County Community College.

Edwin Ford, Kingston City Historian, and Jane Kellar, Executive Director of the Friends of Historic Kingston, for general and specific support.

Emily Thing, who improved the appearance of this tour.

Many former residents or visitors to Chestnut Street neighborhood who were interviewed including George Betts, William Buddenhagen, Montgomery Burhans, Edward Diamond, James Dwyer, Peter Dwyer, Marian Feeeney, Rose Feeeney, Fred Gerhardt, George Hutton, Scrappy Lewis, Jack Matthews, Norman Luedtke, Patricia Murphy, William O’Reilly, William Rylance, Dr. William Rhoads, Louise Rutski, Ed Schupp, Jr., John Shults, Herb Shultz, John Nicholas Stock, Elizabeth Thompson, and Mary Agnes Whelan. We apologize to those whose names we have failed to include!

***Ongoing Research.*** If you have additional information about the history of the Chestnut Street neighborhood, please contact Lowell Thing (331-4985) or Jane Kellar at the Friends of Historic Kingston (339-0720).