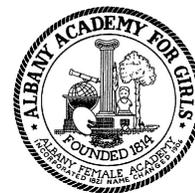




THE ALBANY ACADEMIES

Archives and Collections
135 and 140 Academy Road
Albany, New York 12208

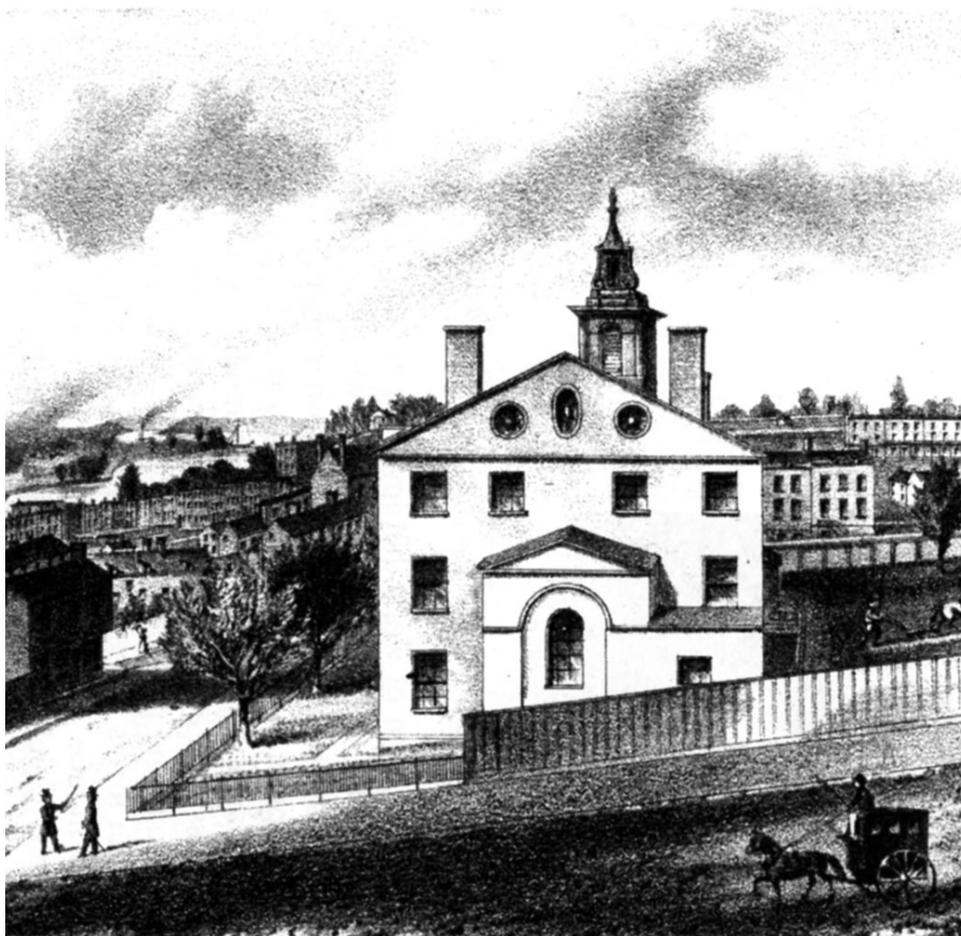


April 6, 2011 (links updated 2/26/2020)

Leadership for Health and Education

An inquiry into the shared founding leadership
of the academies and medical institutions
of Albany, New York

John T. McClintock II, M. Ed., Archivist



1843 lithograph of the former Lancaster school, the first site of Albany Medical College (1839)
picture is from Beebe, p. 23 and is owned by Albany Public Library

Contents

Introduction	3
Abstract	5
Albany – Late Eighteenth Century	6
Albany’s Schools - Early Nineteenth Century	6
New York’s Colleges - Early Nineteenth Century	9
Early Medical Schools	10
Organized Medicine in Albany	12
T. Romeyn Beck	17
Thomas Worth Olcott	21
Thomas Hun	25
Amasa J. Parker	29
William L. Learned	33
Bibliography	36
Appendices and Attachments	39

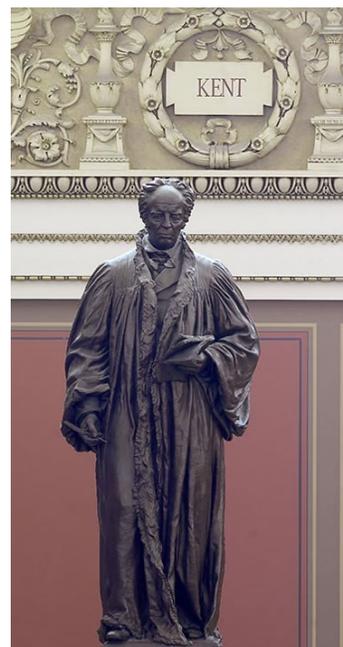
Introduction



Of all the persons of the nineteenth century connected with the academies in Albany, only one, Joseph Henry, made a contribution that was unprecedented and original, the discovery of the mutually inductive properties of electricity and magnetism. From that discovery, electricity ceased to be a laboratory novelty and was harnessed for motors and the telegraph, in which Henry had a direct role, and countless applications from the transformer to the telephone and onward where his role was that of a collaborator, promoter from the secretariat of the Smithsonian Institution, or merely inspirational scientific pioneer, forever honored in the unit of induction, the henry.

James Kent and T. Romeyn Beck, whose gifts to the world were not original, were, nevertheless, men so prodigious and important in their contributions, that they, too, have a high place of honor in the western world: Chancellor Kent for his legal compendium, Commentaries on American Law, Dr. Beck for his monumental Elements of Medical Jurisprudence.

Beck carries over to this narrative as one crucially important to the teaching of medicine, its proper application to legal forensics and the treatment of the insane, and as one of the truly great educators and promoters of science and literature in New York state in the nineteenth century.



With him on this stage, the health and educational welfare of the city of Albany, are four others: banker and philanthropist, Thomas W. Olcott; eminent physician, professor, and educational leader, Dr. Thomas Hun; and Supreme Court Justices and civic leaders, Amasa J. Parker and William L. Learned.

These five saw opportunities to create institutions in Albany that had American origins in the larger cities, but no permanent presence in Albany, the new gateway to the west, the ninth largest city in the United States for the first half of the nineteenth century. An academy for boys was not at all new, but Beck made Albany's into a regional powerhouse after which college-bound young men needed only two more years of study to earn their bachelor's degree. Nor was an academy for girls unique, but one unaffiliated with a single church, and which offered the same curriculum available to boys, foreshadowing colleges for women, was indeed rare. Olcott saw to it that the vision of its parent founders and of its first president, Kent, would not fail. Moreover, Olcott threw his weight into the founding of an Albany University, of which an astronomical observatory, a medical college, and a law school were the first manifestations.

Thomas Hun lent his encyclopedic knowledge, professional medical expertise, and strong leadership to the new medical college founded by Drs. Alden March and James Armsby and to Albany Hospital which followed. The accomplished lawyers and New York Supreme Court Justices, Amasa J. Parker and William L. Learned, played a large role in seeing that the schools, colleges and hospital, begun in the early part of the century, thrived to the century's end.

We do not have the same open-ended opportunities today that men and women forged in the nineteenth century. Our challenges are those of contraction, repair, support, and, yes, creating new tools of innovation. Their world was new, developing and expanding. An old town grew into a regional metropolis. An important port became the seat of state government. Canals and railroads thrust through the barriers removed by the American Revolution. Clipper ships rounded Cape Horn en route to the Orient. It was a perfect era for men and women of vision to marshal their mastery of the classics, literature, history, and science, to apply the wealth of their positions, to fulfill their broad liberal views of the future in order to make of Albany's institutions for health and education the best that they could be, worthy to be admired and emulated as the world expanded, even unto India, Japan, Korea, and China.

As we shall see, there was no pairing of the men of this study to one institution. They all applied their support and leadership widely, marking them as true civic leaders, intent on seeing their city on a hill not only prosper in commerce, but lead in the arts of learning and healing.

Abstract

An analysis of the members of the five founding boards of three Albany schools, Albany Medical College, and Albany Hospital, as well as of the names of the board presidents throughout the nineteenth century, indicates that five men were important to the founding of the Medical College and Hospital who also were critical to the success of one or more of the schools.

The schools are:

Albany Lancaster School (1812 to 1841)

Albany Academy (1813 to present)

Albany Female Academy (1814 to present; first called Union School to 1821, then Albany Academy for Girls from 1906)

The men are:

T. Romeyn Beck, born Schenectady 1791, died Albany 1855

- Lancaster School trustee, 1813
- Principal, Albany Academy, 1817-1848
- President, Albany Academy, 1848-1855
- Professor, Albany Medical College, 1840-1854
- Incorporator, Albany Hospital, 1849

Thomas W. Olcott, born Hudson 1795, died Albany 1880

- President, Albany Academy, 1876-1880
- Trustee, Albany Female Academy
- Incorporator, Albany Hospital, 1849
- President, Albany Hospital, 1860-1874

Thomas Hun, born Albany 1808, died Albany 1896

- President, Albany Academy, 1886-1896
- Founding Professor, Albany Medical College
- Dean, Albany Medical College, 1875-1896
- Founding staff, Albany Hospital

Amasa J. Parker, born Sharon, CT 1807, died Albany 1890

- President, Albany Female Academy, 1855-1879
- President, Albany Medical College, 1876-1888
- Incorporator, Albany Hospital, 1849

William L. Learned, born New London, CT 1821, died Albany 1904

- President, Albany Female Academy, 1879-1904
- President, Albany Academy, 1900-1904
- President, Albany Medical College, 1899-1903

Albany – Late Eighteenth Century

Early Albany, nurtured by trade, was embraced by the huge van Rensselaer domain extending on both sides of the Hudson. Albany's Dutch and New England inhabitants developed a business acumen that encouraged and supplied the explosion in westward resettlement that occurred after the American Revolution.



Return of Experiment, courtesy L. F. Tantillo

Adventurous and enterprising newcomers from New England joined Albany's established aristocratic families, tradesmen, and outlying farmers. They came to the Hudson River Valley to facilitate financial exchange, survey the land, build the infrastructure and write the contracts of a new era: bankers, lawyers, engineers, school masters, printers. After 1797, when Albany became the state capital, government officials added to the growing social complexity of the old river town.

Albany's Schools - Early Nineteenth Century

Little schools had ebbed and flowed throughout the pre- and post-revolutionary period. None became permanently rooted in Albany until the national academy movement coincided with the burst of Albany's commercial and civic development and its new status as gateway to the west. To give sons the knowledge to serve the professions and run the businesses, and to give daughters an education akin to that for husbands and future sons, Albany citizens, leading in position and prosperity, organized themselves to create a grammar school and two academies.

In 1812, the City discharged its obligation to provide free elementary education to the public by establishing a Lancaster School, a franchise, if you will, of the Scottish monitorial model by which one teacher instructs up to 1,000 pupils by enlisting the oldest pupils who had the best weekly scores to staff a hierarchical structure that delivered rote learning from the

teacher to the benches. Visual aids played a big role. The subjects were reading, writing, needle-work, and arithmetic. The founders and trustees had connections to both Albany and Albany Female Academy. The city commissioned Philip Hooker to design a building for the Lancaster School. It was finished on Eagle Street in 1817, for a total outlay of \$23,929. In 1839, it became the first home of the Albany Medical College. At least one room remained available to Lancaster School students until 1841.

1812-13 Citizens collaborated with Mayor Philip S. Van Rensselaer and the Albany City Council to found a school on the academy model (*Classics and Math and Science*). On March 4, 1813, The Regents of the University of the State of New York granted a charter, incorporating the school and naming its board of trustees.

principal	Benjamin Allen, LL.D.	1815-1817
president	Stephen Van Rensselaer LL.D	1813-1819
treasurer	John W. Yates, Esq.	1813-1828



Stephen Van Rensselaer

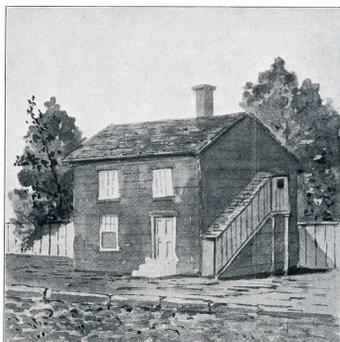
1815 Mayor Philip S. Van Rensselaer laid the cornerstone for a magnificent school building designed by Philip Hooker in Academy Park, between Lafayette and Elk, above Eagle street. Students began classes September 11, 1815 in a frame building owned by Killiaen Van Rensselaer at State and Lodge streets. Principal Benjamin Allen, LL.D., taught mathematics and natural philosophy; Rev. Joseph Shaw, LL.D. became the classical master, a post he held until his death in 1824.



1817 The school occupied the completed Hooker building in September. There were 100 students. T. Romeyn Beck, M.D. succeeded Allen as Principal. Beck was the first great headmaster. He ran a tight ship until 1848. While principal, Beck published his widely recognized *Elements of Medical Jurisprudence*.

1814 On February 24th, a group of parents, representing the middle class and new aristocracy of Albany, prominent merchants and professionals, organized a modest school for their daughters:

We, the subscribers, agree to send to Union School in Montgomery street, under the tuition of Horace Goodrich, the number of female scholars affixed to our names for the space of one year, from the first day of May next, and we agree to pay to Ebenezer Foot twenty-four dollars for each scholar, in four equal quarterly payments, the first payment to be on the first day of August next.



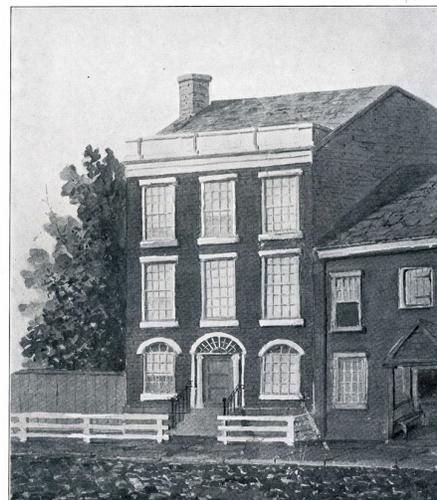
THE ORIGINAL BUILDING, 1814

The founders built a wood-frame building on Montgomery street on the new section laid out after the 1797 fire, north of Columbia. Montgomery--known as “quality row” in the period--was one block east of Market Street (Broadway), north of State Street, and was a residential area in these pre-canal, pre-railroad days, “unusually pleasant and retired from the ordinary confusion and noise of the city.” The school was a great success. It opened with 35 girls. In just two years, a second floor (shown in the picture) was added to the Union School building to accommodate 70 students.

Horace Goodrich, generally counted as the first principal, was the first teacher. He was a young man, just out of Union and hailed from Milton, in Saratoga County. His intentional profession was not education, but law, for at the same time he started at Union School, he began reading law in Ebenezer Foot’s office. According to the semi-centennial account by Eben Stearns, he also lived with the Foot family. Sadly, Goodrich’s constitution was not up to the stresses of both occupations and he died of consumption in 1815. Lebbeus Booth was then appointed.

principal	Horace Goodrich, A.M.	1814-1815
	Lebbeus Booth, A.M.	1815-1817
	Rev. Edwin James, A.M.	1817-1818
	Lebbeus Booth, A.M.	1818-1824
president	Hon. James Kent, LL.D.	1821-1824
treasurer	Asa H. Center	1821-1827

A second building was built at 11 Montgomery Street in 1821, the same year the school was incorporated by the state legislature as Albany Female Academy. “Here for thirteen years, in an aristocratic part of the city, with trustees of unusual importance, with principals graduated from Union and Harvard, the daughters of Albany’s most substantial citizens gathered daily to receive instruction in solid branches of learning.”



THE SECOND BUILDING, 1821

Gideon Hawley, Secretary of the State Board of Regents, drew up the legislation, the Hon. Charles E. Dudley, State Senator, supported it, and Governor Dewitt Clinton, the great



exponent of education in this state, signed it. James Kent was named president of the board of trustees. He was chief justice of the Supreme Court of New York and chancellor of the state, then the highest judicial office. Other trustees included John V. Henry (lawyer and recent comptroller), Hawley, and Rev. John Chester (pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church), Joseph Russell (paints, oils, and dyes), Asa Center (printer), Peter Boyd (merchant), William Fowler (fur buyer, leather manufacturer, merchant), and Tunis Van Vechten (lawyer).

New York's Colleges - Early Nineteenth Century

There were 100 colleges founded before 1839 in the American Colonies or in the United States. In the eastern part of the country, there were 42. In New York, eight, and just four of these, Columbia, Union, West Point, and Hamilton were founded before Albany's two academies.

Columbia was the eighth college founded in the American colonies following:

Harvard College	1636	1	Cambridge
College of William and Mary	1693	2	Williamsburg
Yale College	1701	3	New Haven
Academy of Philadelphia	1740	4	Philadelphia [U. Pennsylvania]
Bethlehem Female Seminary	1742	5	Bethlehem [Moravian] (1 st for women)
College of New Jersey	1746	6	Elizabeth, Newark, Princeton [Princeton]
Augusta Academy	1749	7	Lexington, Virginia [Washington and Lee]
King's College	1754	8	New York City [Columbia]

Union was the thirty-sixth college, following (in proximity to Albany):

C. Rhode Island & Providence Plantations	1764	9	Warren, Providence [Brown]
Queen's College	1766	10	New Brunswick [Rutgers]
Dartmouth College	1769	11	Hanover
Dickinson College	1773	14	Carlisle, Pennsylvania
U. Vermont and State Agricultural College	1791	30	Burlington
Williams College	1793	31	Williamstown
Bowdoin College	1794	34	Brunswick, Maine
Union College	1795	36	Schenectady

Its location made Union the most logical source of degree holders to staff the two academies in Albany. Among founders who were degree holders, the first ten colleges in America were bound to be most prominent.

By 1839, when Albany Medical College was started, the following comprised all the colleges in New York State:

Columbia University	1754	New York
Union College	1795	Schenectady
United States Military Academy	1802	West Point
Hamilton College	1812	Clinton
Colgate University	1819	Hamilton
Hobart College	1822	Geneva
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	1824	Troy
New York University	1831	New York

Looking further afield, these colleges were available to Albanians through 1839:

Middlebury College	1800	Vermont
Amherst College	1821	Massachusetts
Trinity College	1823	Connecticut
Wesleyan University	1831	Connecticut
Gettysburg College	1832	Pennsylvania
Haverford College	1833	Pennsylvania
Mount Holyoke College	1837	Massachusetts (women)

Early Medical Schools

There is, on the one hand, a parallel development of the first medical schools with the first colleges. On the other hand, quite a few medical schools were established in rural areas to bring medical education and practice closer to remote populations. These latter faded away at mid-nineteenth century when medical colleges benefitted from proximity to hospitals in large cities.

In early American history, hospitals were established temporarily in any vacant buildings to serve soldiers wounded in local battles or victims of epidemics. Before anesthesia (Morton, 1846) and antiseptic protocols (Lister, 1867), medical treatment of the sick was safer, more pleasant, and more efficacious in the home. There would be no reason for a mother to give birth, or a sick person to be treated in a hospital rather than home until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Travel would have been too difficult and procedures would have had no less risk. Until then, apart from the battle field, barbers and dentists performed routine (minor) surgeries. According to Richard M. Beebe, M.D., Sc.D., there were only three major hospitals in existence in the United States in mid-century: in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston.

An accurate version of the order of the founding of medical schools may be found on website answers.com. (Institutions outside the northeast are omitted here. A historical sequence number is given if the school still operates.)

1765 [1]. Medical Department of the College of Philadelphia (now the School of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania)

1767 [2]. Faculty of Physic of King's College, New York (now the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University)

1782 [3]. Medical School of Harvard College (now Harvard Medical School)

1797 [4] Medical Department of Dartmouth College (now Dartmouth Medical School)

1809 Medical School of Fairfield Academy (re-established 1812 as the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of the State of New York; dissolved in 1841)

1811 Brown University Medical School (dissolved 1831)

1810 [6] Medical Institution of Yale College (now Yale University School of Medicine)

1818 Castleton Medical Academy, Vermont (later, Vermont Academy of Medicine; dissolved in 1861)

1820 Medical School of Maine of Bowdoin College (dissolved 1921)

1822 [8] University of Vermont Medical Department (now University of Vermont School of Medicine)

1823 Berkshire Medical Institution of Massachusetts (dissolved 1869)

1824 [9] Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia (now Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University)

1824 Auburn Medical School, Cayuga County, New York (dissolved 1839)

1826 Rutgers Medical College in the City of New York (re-affiliated 1827 as Rutgers Medical Faculty of Geneva College, dissolved 1830)

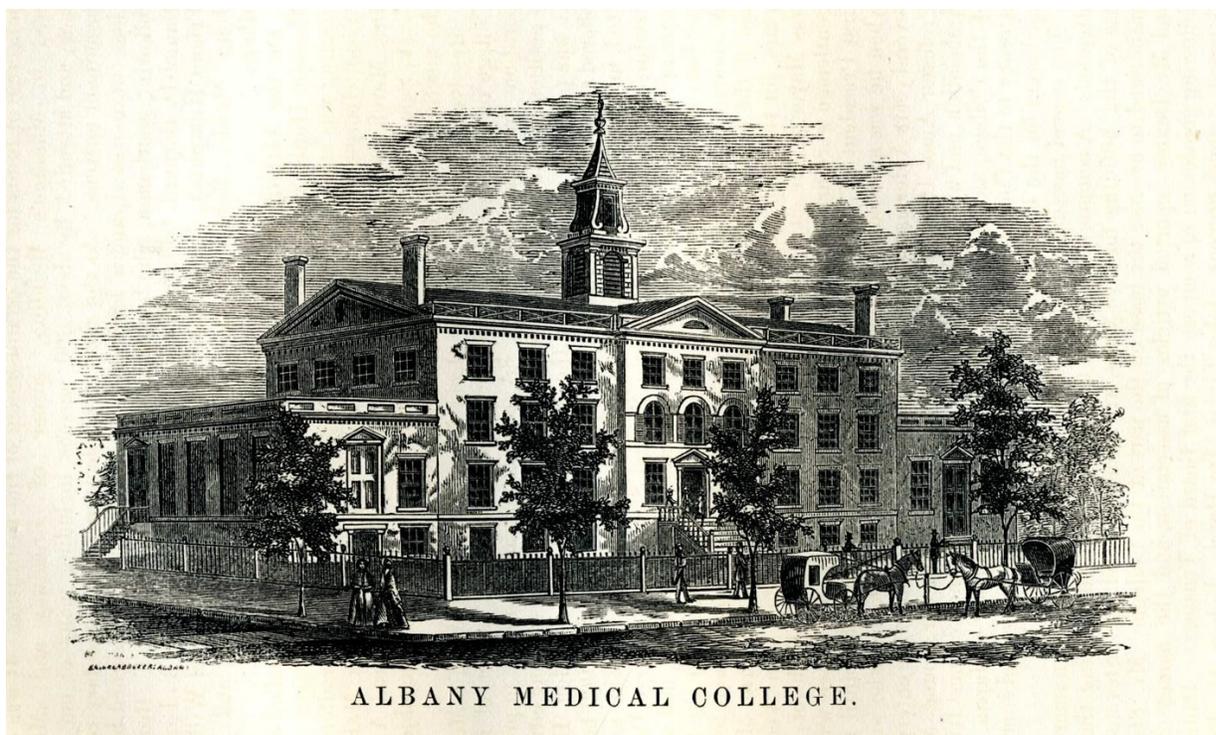
1827 Clinical School of Medicine, Woodstock, Vermont (later Vermont Medical College, dissolved 1856)

1831 New York School of Medicine (dissolved 1833)

1834 [16] Medical Institution of Geneva College (now SUNY Upstate Medical University)

1838 Founding of Albany Medical College, the fourth in New York State and the nineteenth in the Colonies and U.S. It was preceded in New York State by Medical Faculty of King's College (1767), Medical School of Fairfield Academy (1809), Auburn Medical School (1824), and Medical Institution of Geneva College (1834).

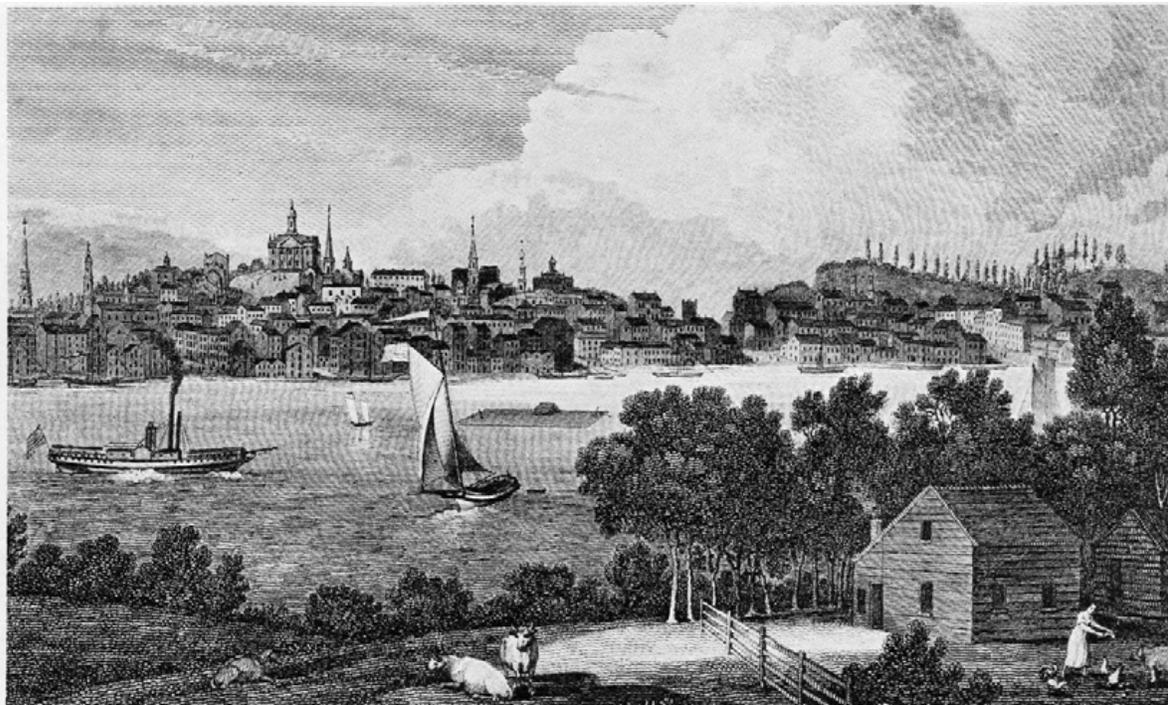
Prominent among the founders were Dr. Alden March, who first proposed it, his associate, Dr. James Armsby, Erastus Corning and other prominent Albany men, the City (which granted five years free use of the Albany Lancaster School building) and the Legislature. T. Romeyn Beck was prominent in the selection of the college's valuable library.



(Munsell, Collections, vol. 2, p. 221)

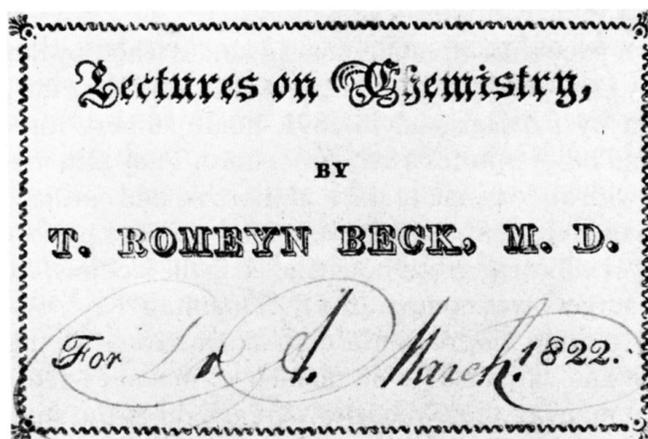
Organized Medicine in Albany

1806 In response to State action regarding regulation of medical practice, doctors in Albany, Schenectady, and Bethlehem organized the Albany County Medical Society. Through most of the nineteenth century, the state and local medical societies shared with the Board of Regents and the medical colleges the responsibility for physician licensing and specification of good practices. Knowledge of Latin and chemistry were prerequisites for the pursuit of medical study.



ALBANY FROM ACROSS THE RIVER IN 1840

1807 Upon his graduation from Union College in 1807, T. Romeyn Beck came to Albany to join the offices of Drs. Low and McClelland. William McClelland was one of the doctors who organized the Albany County Medical Society in 1806. Beck undertook formal medical education under the eminent David Hosack, M.D. at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, getting his medical degree in 1811.



(Beebe, p. 25)

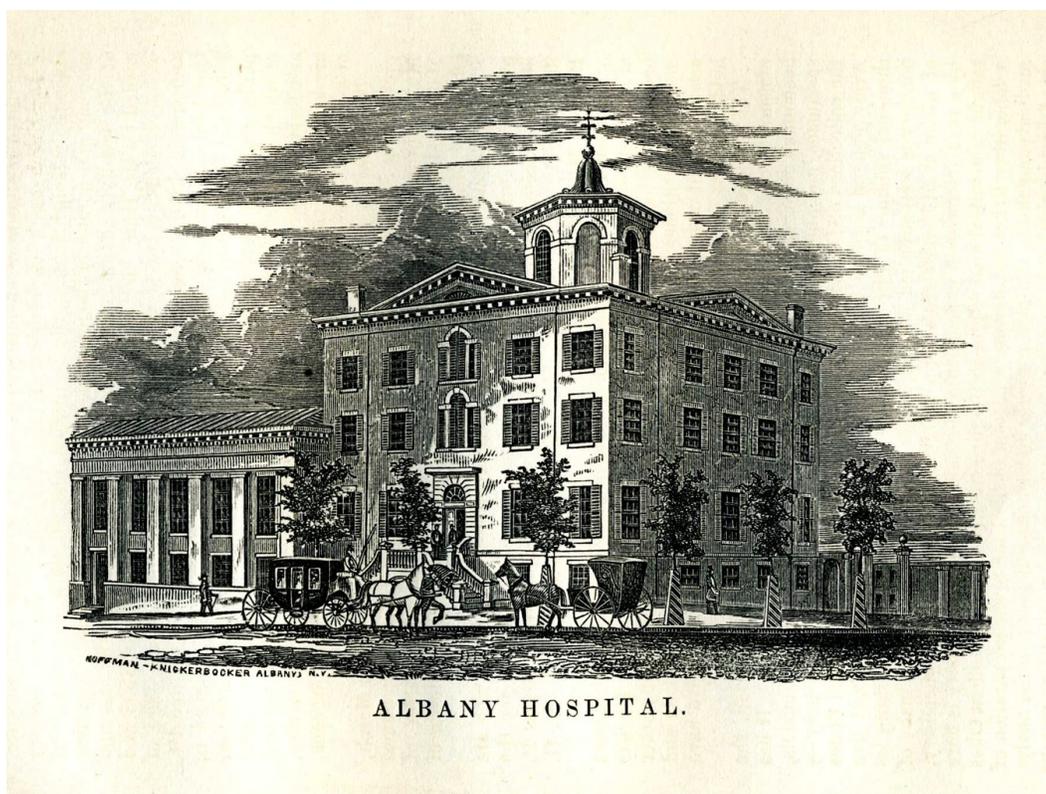
1830 Dr. Alden March (b. 1795) first proposed establishment of a medical college as well as a permanent hospital in Albany. He was then Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at Vermont Academy of Medicine. He earned his medical degree at Brown University in 1820 and came to Albany in 1821. He started a medical school, but it was not organized as a

college. (Coincidentally, as Union School moved to its second building as Albany Female Academy, Dr. March put his medical school in the wood-frame building its founders had built on Montgomery street.) A member of the Albany County Medical Society, March held the office of president in 1832 and 1833. Prescient in his vision, he reasoned that a hospital would improve treatment of the indigent as well as afford experience for doctors in training.

1832 Cholera epidemic sickens 1,147 and kills 422 in Albany. A second epidemic sickens 124 and kills 78 in Albany in 1834.

1838 Founding of Albany Medical College. It opened in the refurbished Lancaster School building and featured a museum of medical specimens for the benefit of the students, but also open to the public, who enthusiastically thronged the exhibits for months. The museum did much “to dispel the prejudice, which has so long existed against the dissection and preservation of the human body for purposes of medical education. This museum by constant and unremitting efforts of the faculty has become the most extensive and valuable in this country, and is excelled by few in Europe.” (Munsell, Collections, vol. 2, page 223)

1849 New York State Legislature incorporated Albany Hospital. The first corporate meeting was December 24, 1849. In 1851, seventy-one subscribers elected a Board of Governors. The first hospital building opened in 1851 at the corner of Dove and Lydius [Madison] streets. The second opened in 1854 in the former jail (renovated for the hospital after its purchase in 1852) on Eagle (east side) and Howard streets, opposite the college building on Eagle (west side) and Lancaster streets. This second building remained in use for the rest of the century.



(Munsell, Collections, vol. 2, p. 227)

1851 New York State Legislature incorporates University of Albany. This was the dream child of Amos Dean LL.D., Dr. James H. Armsby, Thomas Worth Olcott, and Robert H. Pruyn. They envisioned a graduate complex including the Albany Medical College, a law school, and departments of science. The Legislature incorporated a board of trustees in 1851. While the idea did not take a unified physical form, Albany Law School and Dudley Observatory joined Albany Medical College in the city as separate entities. See Munsell, *Collections*, Volume II, page 230ff., and note the entry for 1873 below.

1852 Dr. James H. Armsby, Alden March's close associate, noted in an address to the Albany County Medical Society, that the conjunction of a medical college with a hospital afforded advantages of expertise to the hospital and practical experience for the medical students.

1859 Sarah Lamb Cushing, Class of 1840, Albany Female Academy, enrolled in Starling Medical College in Ohio after the passing of her husband. She received her medical degree in 1859. She was one of the first women licensed to practice medicine in New York State and at first worked in New York City with Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman in the United States to get a medical degree (Geneva, 1849). Cushing later practiced medicine in Lockport, New York for forty years. Niagara County Historian Catherine Emerson writes that Sarah had some singular convictions, abstaining from caffeine, milk, and bread, eating only meat, potatoes, and cocoa. She died at in her 101st year. At her service, the hymn she selected was recited, for she was opposed to any singing. She set aside a trust fund which still supports the Women & Children's Pavilion of Lockport Hospital.

1865 Lillias Stirling Horton left Albany Female Academy after two years when her family moved to Chicago. She earned her medical degree at Women's Medical College (now part of Northwestern University), went to Korea as a missionary doctor in 1888, and married Horace Grant Underwood in 1889. She served as personal physician to Empress Myunsung. See http://underwood.yonsei.ac.kr/eng/un_bf2.html and *Fifteen Years Among the Top Knots, or, Life in Korea*, which she wrote.

1873 New York State Legislature incorporates Union University, an aggregation of Union College, Albany Medical College, Albany Law School, and Dudley Observatory. Among those involved the formation of the university were Thomas W. Olcott, Dr. James Armsby, and Henry R. Pierson.

1875 Dr. Thomas Hun succeeds Dr. Armsby as Dean of Albany Medical College, a position he held to 1896.

1896 Drs. Henry Hun, Albert Vander Veer, and C. S. Merrill submit to the Board of Governors an analysis of the inadequacy of the crowded and antiquated hospital building and the unsatisfactory state of nurses' training. Wheels started turning immediately. Land was acquired from the Commissioners of Washington Park in 1897, the cornerstone of the present hospital building was laid in mid-1898, and the transfer of patients began in 1899.



The old hospital (converted jail), 1854 – 1899; picture (1897) from Ritter, p. 53



**Albany Hospital, from 1899, Albert W. Fuller, architect
picture (~1900) from Reynolds, Albany Chronicles, p. 742**

T. Romeyn Beck



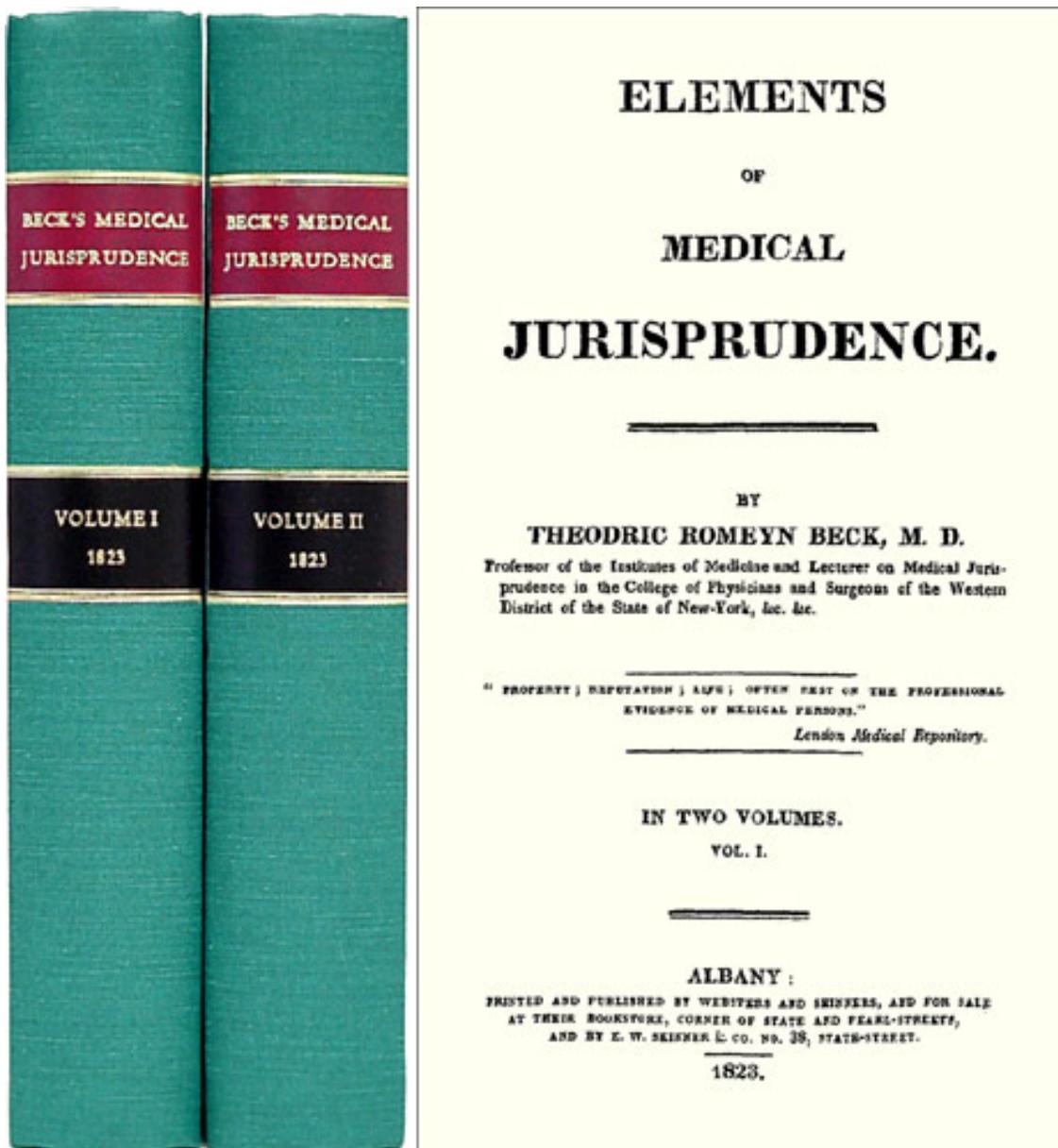
In August, 1817, the Board of Trustees of The Albany Academy named one of their members, T. Romeyn Beck, to be Professor of Mathematics and Principal. Beck was the second principal, the first having served two years. At the time of his appointment, he was a practicing physician in Albany, recording secretary of the Society for the Promotion of Useful Arts, and secretary of the Albany Lancaster School Society. He was 26. He served as Principal from 1817 to 1848, and continued on the Board of Trustees thereafter until his death in 1855.

Dr. Beck's background and knowledge of science enabled him to build a science and mathematical department. In 1819, he purchased demonstration apparatus. He invited the public as well as students to attend scientific lectures. In the academic year 1819-1820, chemistry was introduced as a regular Academy subject. By 1826, the Academy offered as good a mathematical and scientific education as many of the colleges of its day. Eliphalet Nott, president of Union College, called the Academy a "college in disguise." Indeed, Joseph Henry, who undertook no other degree beyond the Academy's diploma, later rated the curriculum as parallel to that of Yale and "more exacting in its requirements than...many of the smaller colleges." Academy graduates could easily enter the junior year of the recognized colleges, or alternatively, start college after their fifth form (eleventh grade) year.

Beck was descended from Dutch and English lines. His maternal grandfather, the Rev. Dirck Romeyn, D.D., was pastor of the First [Dutch] Reformed Church in Schenectady and was instrumental in the founding of Union College where Beck graduated in 1807 at age 16. Beck studied medicine at College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York (M.D., 1811) and became a practicing physician with advanced views on the treatment of the insane. As physician to the alms house in Albany, Beck understood the needs of the indigent and the suffering of the elderly in the arms of death. Still, his brilliant mind and industrious spirit drew him to teaching and research.

In 1815, he was appointed to professor of institutes [fundamentals] of medicine and lecturer on medical jurisprudence at Fairfield Medical College (Herkimer County), a post he held to 1840. He took a position at the newly chartered Albany Medical College (1840-1854) and was largely responsible for the development of its library. He wrote (1813 to 1823) a text on the legal and forensic questions that might require testimony from a doctor in a court of law, such as of sexuality, rape, death by unknown causes, mental illness, poisoning, etc. It was called Elements of Medical Jurisprudence and remained the authoritative work in its field for a century. In its review, *the Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal* panned all previous works on the subject and praised Beck's as having "presented us with a comprehensive

system, which embraces almost every valuable fact or doctrine relating to it. Each of its diversified departments has been investigated so minutely, that few cases can occur in practice, on which it will be necessary to seek elsewhere for further information.” The contents of the work are presented in Appendix A.



Beck, an indefatigable scholar, reviewed all the European and American literature before writing his work. His goals were not limited to legal procedures, rather, to review the scope of current medical knowledge in its entirety. In his introduction, Beck wrote:

The general arrangement is thus, I apprehend, not a matter of great moment, but on taking up a distinct topic, the first question which I have proposed to myself, has been the following: *How can the examination of this point come before a judicial tribunal?* Having ascertained and stated this, I proceed to notice the physiological, pathological, or chemical facts, that are necessary to be known in the supposed case—advert to the difficulties to be encountered in the investigation—and offer, if necessary, some observations on the conformity of the law to the present state of medical knowledge. A collection of detached essays of this description (for they evidently are detached in their subjects and in their application,) must prove in a great degree useful, both to the lawyer and the physician, since it enables them, in their respective capacities, to review the information that is immediately applicable to a particular instance before them. If, in the opinion of enlightened men of these professions, I have effected this in some tolerable degree, my highest ambition will be gratified.*

Beck was President of the Medical Society of the State of New York (1829-1832), of the State Lunatic Asylum (on the board from 1842, President in 1854), of the Albany Institute, and Secretary of the Board of Regents (1841 to 1855). He supported the Albany Institute, the New York State Library, and conducted public lectures in chemistry, geology, and meteorology. As principal of the Academy, Beck took Joseph Henry under his wing and launched him upon his path to world renown as scientist and mentor of scientists. From 1850 to 1855, Beck edited the *American Journal of Insanity*.

The centennial publication of Union College, in lauding Beck, quoted a contemporary's praise of his leadership of the state medical society: "his suggestions were constantly such as might become a physician, a philanthropist, and a statesman; that they were not utopian is proved by the fact that very many of them have been adopted as measures of State policy and general hygiene."

Beck was one of the key leaders and administrators of the New York State Geological Survey. In the dedication for one of its volumes we find, "Your whole life has been assiduously engaged in promoting the advance of science and the spread of popular education, and the published results of your scientific and literary labors, may be referred to as reflecting an honor on your native state."



It was in the role of secretary of the Board of Regents that Beck annually compiled and published reports on the condition of all the colleges and academies in the state. The State Library and State Cabinet of Natural History were also under the authority of the Regents. Dr. E. H. Van Deusen wrote about the "unrivaled" state library, for which "the State of New

York is almost entirely indebted to [Beck's] extended and complete knowledge of the history of literature and science, in which he has no equal in this country, if indeed anywhere."

Pursuant to the requirements of the Regents, Dr. Beck supervised regular meteorological observations. He may in fact have been partly responsible for the Regents' interest in this field. Dr. Beck and Joseph Henry compiled all the reports from the state into an annual abstract for the Regents. Henry continued this work at the Smithsonian.

The Albany Institute of History and Art started as the Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, Arts, and Manufactures in 1793 and went through several mergers and reorganizations before becoming what it is today. Beck became a member in 1812 at the age of twenty-one and was asked to deliver the annual address in 1813. In 1823, Stephen Van Rensselaer was president, and T. Romeyn Beck, vice-president. "Dr. Beck was not only one of the most active members, but it may safely be said, without doing injustice to many others who have been connected with it, that he did more to keep up its organization, to enlarge its library and collections, and generally to advance its interests, than any other person."

The scope of Beck's achievements and interests was enormous. How he ran the area's premier academy, taught its science, gave public lectures, wrote groundbreaking medical literature, and led most of the educational and scientific institutions located in Albany is difficult to fathom. A list of T. Romeyn Beck's positions and affiliations is presented in Appendix A.

Beck will never be forgotten as an important scientist and educator of the nineteenth century. His name lives on at Albany Academy in three entities that memorialize him, the Beck Literary Prize (given by T. W. Olcott in 1855), the Beck Literary Society, and now Beck House. The Union College centennial book said of him: "Truly of this great teacher and honored son of Union it may be said that in his death, which occurred in 1855, the world lost 'one of the most devoted, indefatigable, and earnest promoters of medical science.'"

Thomas Worth Olcott

Thomas Olcott was born in England in 1609. He came to America and became a founder of Hartford and an active participant in a lively and lucrative trade in tobacco and furs. One line of his descendants in the fifth generation joined the post-Revolutionary exodus of New Englanders toward the west. This was Josiah Olcott, born in 1760 and married to Deborah Worth in 1794. He moved his family to Hudson, New York, a whaling port with thriving dependent industries. Josiah owned a cordage business and resided in Hudson until his death in his 100th year. In 1810 and 1811, he was a member of the Common Council of Hudson. He and Deborah had thirteen children.

Their firstborn was Thomas Worth Olcott. He attended Claverack Academy in Columbia County for a time and first worked in Hudson in the Columbia Bank. Seeing opportunity to the north, Thomas, fourteen years of age, moved to Albany in 1811, and became a junior clerk in the new Mechanics and Farmers Bank, the third bank incorporated in the city. This is where his uncle, Gorham A. Worth, was cashier--an important administrative position. When his uncle retired, Thomas became cashier in 1817 at the age of twenty-one. In 1836, he became the sixth president of the bank, a position he held until his death in 1880.

Mechanics and Farmers Bank catered to Albany's business needs and benefitted from the deposits of State funds, including the Canal Fund and the Common School Fund. Olcott also handled the personal banking needs of many prominent Democrats.

Thomas Worth Olcott and Caroline Pepoon of Stockbridge were wed August 17, 1818, by the Reverend Doctor John Chester. Chester had been pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Hudson before he came to the Second Presbyterian Church in Albany.



Becalmed in Hudson Highlands, courtesy L. F. Tantiello



Mechanics and Farmer's Bank, first building (1814-1875)

Theodore, also son of Josiah of Hudson and thus Thomas Worth's brother, was the first of the Olcotts to attend Albany Academy. His entrance, recorded in 1819, in the fourth year of the operation of the school, put him in the group of new students with Joseph Henry. He became the first and only cashier of the Canal Bank. Theodore's son also attended. The other Olcott boys who attended the Academies were descendants of Thomas Worth. There were nineteen boys at Albany Academy six girls at Albany Academy for Girls.



Thomas Worth Olcott

Thomas Worth Olcott and his sons accumulated a vast wealth, not only from banking, but from timely investments in railroads and other enterprises. Their means enabled them to acquire the Ten Broeck mansion, where they lived, the Yates mansion, which they gave to the Albany Female Academy for a boarding department, and the Eagle street mansion, which they built, now, in modified form, the Governor's residence.

Sons Dudley and Frederic Pepon Olcott were especially supportive of the Academies later in life. After his brother John died, Frederic turned over in 1899 some real estate holdings on Arbor Hill and scattered about Albany—valued at \$50,000—(\$9 million today using GDP adjustment) to Albany

Academy, turning a serious indebtedness into a substantial endowment. The trustees wrote: "By this timely and generous act, Mr. Olcott saved the life of his Alma Mater." Dudley, trustee of Albany Female Academy for thirty-five years, served as treasurer of its Endowment Fund. Frederic gave \$25,000 to this endowment. (Frederic became a New York City banker, rising to president of the Central Trust Company of New York, one of the predecessors of the Hanover Manufacturer's Trust and the Chase Manhattan Bank, now JPMorgan Chase.)



Thomas Worth Olcott, served not only as president of the Mechanics and Farmers Bank. He served as president of numerous other important Albany institutions: Albany Law School (the fourth such school in the country), the Dudley Observatory, Albany Hospital, Albany Agricultural and Arts Association, and Albany Academy. He was a trustee of Albany Female Academy, Albany Medical College, and Union University. He was a member of the Albany

Regency, a “political clique” of Martin Van Buren and two other former New York governors (William L. Marcy and Silas Wright), with Azariah C. Flagg, Benjamin F. Butler, Edwin Croswell, and Benjamin Knower. In 1863, President Lincoln asked Olcott to become the first comptroller of the currency, a post he declined. Olcott was an investor in many of the early railroads; he served on the boards of at least three, the Albany and West Stockbridge (president), later merged into the Boston and Albany, and the Hudson River Railroad (president), later merged into the New York Central. In 1862, pursuant to the Pacific Railway Act of Congress, commissioners met in Chicago to organize the Union Pacific Railroad and Telegraph Company. Olcott was elected treasurer.

Neil Newton Gold, the archivist who described the gift of the Olcott papers to Columbia University, wrote:

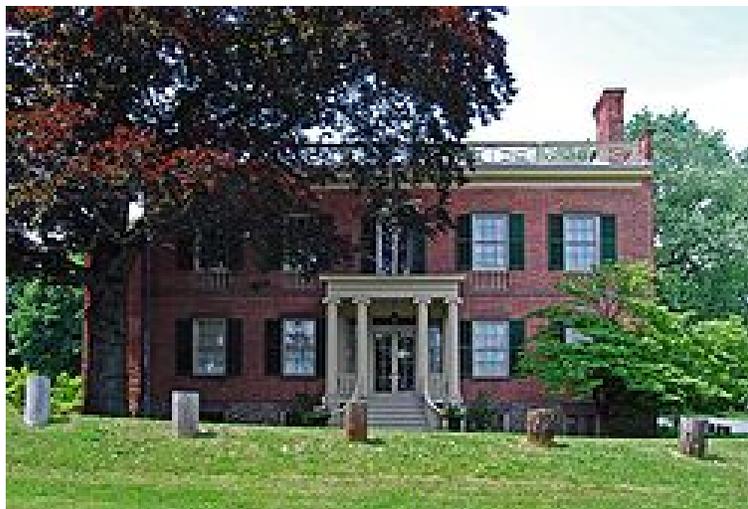
The charters of many banks in the state due to expire in the 1830s, Olcott and Joshua Forman devised a plan to stabilize the banking system [much like FDIC], that eventually put Mechanics and Farmers in the position of a central bank for New York and Olcott as the most powerful banker in the U.S. next to Nicholas Biddle, president of the Bank of the United States. As the role of the National Bank expanded, in an effort to control and stabilize the national banking system, so did Olcott’s opposition. State banks were forced ‘to redeem their notes in specie, limiting their lending capacity and reducing their profits.’ President Jackson sympathized with Olcott’s view and shifted federal funds to Mechanics and Farmers. Olcott was influential in Jacksonian banking policy in the second administration. This was the seed of the dominance of New York over the nation’s banking system to this day.

Thomas Worth Olcott, along with Dr. James H. Armsby, was a principal founder of Dudley Observatory, an early and pioneering observatory in America. Its 1852 charter was a scientific and cultural coup for Albany, a “place to see from, and to be seen,” in the words of George Wise. Olcott’s initial gift was \$10,000 and it was through his influence that Blandina Bleecker Dudley, the widow of Senator Charles E. Dudley (the same who had supported the charter of Albany Female Academy), family friends, contributed even larger sums.



The Original Dudley Observatory on Goat Hill, land donated by SVR IV

The “Olcott Meridian Circle” was a special telescopic device acquired by the observatory that could precisely map the stars. For a hundred years, this was the observatory’s principal work. Over 20,000 were plotted in Albany, contributing to the General Catalog of 33,343 Stars (not completely finished until 1950). A comet discovered by a Dudley astronomer in 1857 was initially named for Thomas W. Olcott. Joseph Henry, former Albany Academy student and teacher, Princeton professor and first Secretary of the Smithsonian, was one of the advisors to the Dudley trustees from the scientific community.



In 1848, Thomas W. purchased the Ten Broeck Mansion, renaming it Arbour Hill. After his death it remained in the family under Dudley and Robert, whose five heirs donated it to the Albany County Historical Association one hundred years later.

Thomas Worth Olcott had a particular affection for Albany Female Academy. He served as a trustee from 1834 to 1880. He subscribed liberally to the capital stock and when certain subscribers found fault with school policies, Olcott bought up their shares to reduce their influence. When the high costs of the North Pearl Street raised questions about the board's financial management, Olcott helped restore confidence by bringing men such as Greene C. Bronson (former State Attorney General and then chief justice of the State Supreme Court) and Governor William L. Marcy to the board. His greatest contribution to the school, as remarked in an essay by Principal Lucy Plympton, was in the last decade of his life. Hard times were again befalling both Academies with the opening of an Episcopal school for girls, St. Agnes School (1870), and of the first tuition-free public alternative, Albany High School (1866). Olcott encouraged Albany Female Academy to join with Miss Plympton's School for Young Ladies. Albany Female Academy was saved. Miss Plympton became principal, leading the school one decade more on North Pearl Street and one decade at 155 Washington Avenue, 1880 to 1901.

Thomas Worth Olcott died March 23, 1880. Albany Female Academy closed for the day of his funeral. The Albany Academy trustees, where he was the incumbent president, resolved in part that they "in common with all classes of their fellow citizens, deplore the loss in him of one of our most eminent and useful citizens—one who for more than half a century has taken a leading and influential part in almost every measure affecting the welfare of the city—whether in respect to business interests, its educational institutions or its benevolent enterprises."

Recalling the influence of Thomas Worth Olcott, Lucy Plympton wrote that her last interview with him was so solemn and impressive that, as the school met the challenges of the next decade, "it was largely due to the inspiration I had received from this honored man."

Thomas Hun



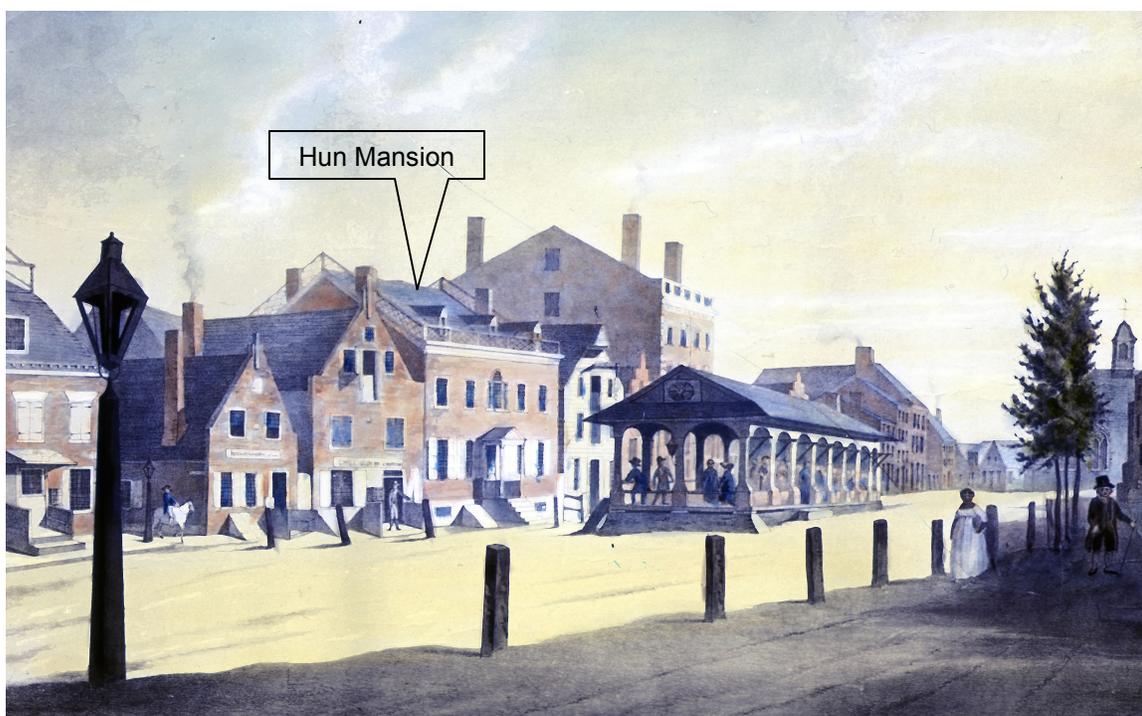
The Hun family is of Dutch descent. Harmen Thomase Hun was the immigrant from Amersfoort, Holland, to Beverwyck, New Netherland, in about 1661. The surviving son, Thomase Harmen, was born in Beverwyck in 1668. The firstborn grandson, Johannes, was born in Albany in 1695. They were all associated with the Dutch Reformed Church at the intersection of State and Court streets. Thomas Hun, son of Johannes and Anna Winne Hun, lived from 1736 to 1802. He was a surveyor and became the agent for the Patroon, Stephen Van Rensselaer.



a color positive glass slide of watercolor by or after James Eights;
 the perspective to the church is from Court Street; Market street is in the background;
 the view is from south to north

Stephen Van Rensselaer [II] married Catharina Livingston, daughter of Philip, the signer; SVR II was the seventh Patroon (1742 to 1769). He built the manor house in 1765, “the handsomest in the colonies” (Cuyler Reynolds). Stephen Van Rensselaer [III] was born in 1764 and died in 1839. He married Margaret Schuyler. She was third daughter of General Philip Schuyler and Catherine Van Rensselaer. (Her brother-in-law was Alexander Hamilton.) This Stephen was the great civic leader and philanthropist, “the good patroon.” Thomas Hun was certainly his agent, but may have served the father as well.

As agent for the patroon, Thomas Hun prospered and built a large home on Market Street, between the church and Maiden Lane. Abraham, his son, later occupied the home. Abraham (1768-1812) attended Columbia University and formed a law partnership in Albany with the half brother of the Patroon. (When SVR II died before his thirtieth year, Catharina remarried.) Abraham also acted as the agent for SVR III. In 1796, Abraham married Maria Gansevoort, daughter of Judge Leonard and Maria (Van Rensselaer) Gansevoort.



a color positive glass slide of watercolor by or after James Eights
looking at the east side of Market street; Dutch church between right edge and tree
view is from north to south

Abraham Hun and Maria Gansevoort Hun had five children. The last born child and only son was Thomas Hun (1808 to 1896), “the founder,” in Dr. Beebe’s words, “of a dynasty of three generations of prominent Albany doctors.” I had the privilege of knowing the last of these, Dr. Henry H. Hun, whose office on Washington Avenue was next door to that of my father, John C. McClintock, M.D.

Thomas entered Albany Academy in 1817 and graduated in 1824. 1817 was the first year of the opening of the new Hooker building in Academy Park. There were eighty new students in

all grade levels that year. Among the surnames are: Bleecker, Bogart, Burr, Center, Elmendorf, James, Knowler, Lansing, Merchant, Sedgewick, Southwick, Ten Broeck, Townsend, Van Rensselaer, Winne, and Yates.

Thomas excelled at the Academy. He won premiums in algebra, chemistry (1821, 1822, and 1823), geography, and history. He entered Union College as a junior at the age of sixteen. He graduated there Phi Beta Kappa in 1826. In 1825, Hun and classmate Orlando Meads and Professor Isaac Jackson founded a literary and debate fraternity, Kappa Alpha Society. [Dr. Beebe also credits Amos Dean.]

From Union, Hun entered the office of Dr. Platt Williams and a year later went to the oldest of American medical schools, the Medical Department of University of Pennsylvania, from which he received his medical degree in 1830. In 1832, back in Albany, he was one of the doctors assigned to the temporary hospital for the duration of the cholera epidemic. From 1833 to 1839, Hun studied science and the practice of medicine and the administration of hospitals in Europe, especially Paris, where he studied diseases of the nervous system. He returned to Albany just after the founding of Albany Medical College, and became its first professor of the institutes of medicine, i.e. the foundations and basic principles of medicine (1839-1858). According to Cuyler Reynolds,

His inaugural address excited considerable interest and admiration from its large grasp of principles as well as by reason of its lucid style and forcible illustrations. The students came to regard his lectures as the most interesting and instructive, which ability on his part greatly increased the reputation of the young college. (See Appendix C for the complete text.)

Dr. Hun was Dean of Albany Medical College from 1876 to 1896. He was president of Albany County Medical Society in 1844 and of the New York State Medical Society in 1862. At the opening of Albany Hospital in 1851, Dr. Hun was one of the four attending physicians, with Drs. Joel Wing, Mason Cogswell, and Howard Townsend. The attending surgeons were Drs. James McNaughton, Alden March, James Armsby, and John Swinburne. Cuyler Reynolds observed,

He was especially noted as a practitioner for his sagacity and accuracy in the diagnosis of disease, and also for his calm, far-sighted comprehension of the constitutional tendencies affecting the case called to his attention. He was always studiously inclined, contemplative and given to thought along philosophical and metaphysical lines, for ethical investigation was a delight for him. No physician in Albany ever stood higher in the confidence of both the profession and the public.

(Hudson-Mohawk Genealogical)



(Peltz, Top Flight, p. 74)

For The Albany Academy, Dr. Thomas Hun was a trustee from 1852 to 1896, his term of forty-four years matched by Thomas W. Olcott and exceeded only by trustees Peter Gansevoort and John F. Rathbone. As president of the board, Thomas was fourth in longevity, matched by Gideon Hawley, both behind Gansevoort, Thomas's son Henry Hun, and Frederick Townsend. Thomas was treasurer of the board from 1870 to 1877, those wonderful first years of Principal Merrill Edwards Gates. Dr. Hun presided over the first years of Principal Henry P. Warren, the longest serving, and with Beck, the greatest of Academy principals.

Hun's impact on the Academy was the same as on all the institutions he so ably served. Men who associated with him in his endeavors rejoiced in his scholarly intellect, complete dedication, deep professional knowledge, great teaching and leadership, and "the solid strength of his exalted character."

Amasa J. Parker

At nine years of age, Amasa moved with his parents from the Litchfield area of Connecticut to Hudson, New York. He and Harriet Langdon Roberts married in 1834. Harriet was “one of the brightest, loveliest, and most intellectual women of her time... prominent in all social and benevolent affairs” (Hills). The Parker’s Albany mansion on Washington street, with its large and beautiful gardens, was the scene of many parties, “their guests including all who were distinguished in the world of letters, education, politics, society, and philanthropy.” The Parkers and the Olcotts were friends and today Amasa and Harriet’s handsome portraits hang in the second floor hall of the Ten Broeck Mansion.

Their son, Amasa, Jr. (cy 1860), entered Albany Academy in 1851, leaving early in his last year to attend Union. He was one of the organizers of the Union College Zouaves and served as a New York National Guard officer just after the Civil War, rising to the rank of brigadier general. He joined his father in his Albany law practice, and was the editor of the massive Landmarks of Albany County. As a state legislator, he was primarily responsible for the building of the State Armory on Washington avenue, the Hawk street viaduct, and other improvements to the city.

Of their daughters, Anna graduated Albany Female Academy in 1857 and wed John V. L. Pruyn. Mary graduated Albany Female Academy in 1862 and became the bride of Erastus Corning. An advocate and promoter of the accomplishments of women, Mary became the President of the Women’s Board of Managers for New York State at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892. Katharine graduated Albany Female Academy in 1864 and married General Selden E. Marvin.

Amasa J. Parker was taught by his father, Rev. Daniel Parker, and by other tutors at Greenville Academy in Connecticut and at Hudson Academy in New York. He acquired a formidable knowledge and appreciation of literature, classical languages, and history. In 1823, at the tender age of sixteen, but in appearance older, he took on the principalship of Hudson Academy. A rival institution made public issue of the young principal’s lack of formal qualification. So, in the summer of 1825, Parker arranged to take examinations in the entire course of study at Union college. He passed and was presented a bachelor’s degree as a member of the class of 1825. Without missing a beat, Parker brought his academy up to a high level of prominence. In 1827, he resigned in order to devote himself to the study of law.

He joined his uncle Amasa to form the well-known Delhi law firm A & A. J. Parker. “Before a jury, adroit; quick to meet every emergency; readily seeking and taking best advantage of every weakness in his adversary’s case; seizing hold of and making the most of every circumstance that could advance his client’s interest. In argument on appeal, presenting strongly the strong points of his case, and letting the minor parts go. He seldom over-ried the case.” (Hills)

Parker had seats in the New York Assembly (1833-1834) and United States Congress (1837-1839). While chairman of an Assembly committee, Parker urged the establishment of a state hospital for the insane. Some years later, when this was accomplished by the opening of

Hudson River State Hospital for the Insane at Poughkeepsie, he was appointed to its board of managers.

As to his experiences in Washington, a curator of his correspondence in the Library of Congress wrote:

Amasa Junius Parker (1807-1890), a Democratic representative from Delhi, a town in New York's Catskills, wrote more than sixty letters to his wife Harriet during the course of his single term in Congress (1837-39). She was Harriet Langdon Roberts (1814-1899), born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the daughter of Edmund Roberts (1784-1836), a diplomatic emissary to Siam and Muscat under President Andrew Jackson (1767-1845). Parker's letters to her provide fascinating insights into both his character and the nation's capital during the early presidency of Martin Van Buren In this letter of 31 December 1837, Parker drew the plan of the first floor of Mrs. Pittman's boardinghouse and sketched the table and seating arrangement of his messmates. Two future presidents, Millard Fillmore (1800-1874) of New York and James Buchanan (1791-1868) of Pennsylvania, shared the table with Parker.

Parker's frequent appearances as a lawyer before the courts of the state, and his reputation for integrity and correct and punctual procedure, led to his appointment in 1844 as a judge on the New York Circuit Court. Parker then moved his family to Albany where his children attended the Academies. In 1847, Parker was elected a justice of the New York Supreme Court (-1855). He unsuccessfully ran for governor of New York in 1856 and 1858.



Hon. AMASA J. PARKER.

Picture from Howell and Tenney, p. 157

The anti-rent wars originated in Albany County, but spread to others in the Hudson valley. In August, 1845, Governor Wright declared Delaware County in a state of insurrection because of mob violence in its anti-rent conflicts and, in particular, the murder of Sheriff Steele--who was leading a posse engaged in the collection of rents--by some two hundred men disguised as Indians. Over a hundred were indicted, jailed, and subsequently appeared before Judge Parker in September, 1845. In three weeks, the cases were disposed of, including two sentences of death, four sentences of life in prison, and thirteen other convictions for time in the state penitentiary. Many more were fined for misdemeanors, others suspended. In recognition of his expedient, sensitive, and just rulings, Geneva College awarded Parker a Doctor of Laws degree. When the County had returned to peaceful law and order, Governor Wright commuted the death sentences, and his successor pardoned those sentenced to terms in state prison. At the conclusion of his term on the bench, Parker returned to his Albany law practice.

As the tensions that led to the War Between the States rose, Parker did his utmost to urge negotiation and compromise. After the firing on Fort Sumter, however, he supported the actions of the President and Congress, with one significant exception. Among the laws passed to control anti-war behavior, Congress passed one limiting anti-war speech. Parker strenuously opposed this and personally argued the appeal of a person so convicted. His efforts finally led to the law being declared unconstitutional.

In 1835, the Legislature elected Parker to a ten year term on the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Judge Parker was, with Amos Dean and Ira Harris, one of the founders of Albany Law School in 1851 and lectured there for about twenty years. Like T. Romeyn Beck, Judge Parker kept alive his interests in classical literature and the practice of education. He was not only in demand for, but he was inclined to serve, the boards of local institutions. Thus he was President of the Trustees of Albany Female Academy (1855-1879), Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Albany Medical College (1876-1888), a trustee of Cornell University and of Union College. Judge Parker was also a benefactor of the Young Men's Association of Albany, the oldest society in America for the promotion of the moral and intellectual development of young men. (It had a library and reading room and sponsored lectures and debates.) Judge Parker was never idle. Judge Peckham wrote: "If I were asked to what special trait Judge Parker owed his success in life, after taking into consideration the strength of his intellectual endowment, I should say, without hesitation, it was his industry." (Hills)

The first ten years of Judge Parker's presidency of Albany Female academy were the decade of the principalship of Eben S. Stearns, A.M., D.D., who came from the State Normal School of Massachusetts where he had been principal (president). He exercised gentle but constructive leadership in an institution that had become for women from eighteen states a place of higher education. The era of women's colleges had hardly begun. At the Academy, graduate associations and learned societies extended the scope of female learning to levels not contemplated in decades past. In 1864, this great institution marked its fiftieth anniversary.

The president of the board, Hon. Amasa J. Parker, made opening remarks and Principal Stearns and former principal Crittenden led “devotional exercises.” In the afternoon, a public exercise was held in Tweddle Hall. Rev. William Augustus Stearns, brother to the principal and president of Amherst College, gave a long oration. Principal Stearns wrote in the Semi-Centennial of the Academy he and Parker led:

The number of its pupils has been great, and has represented not only this city, but the country at large extensively. Many of them have been distinguished for their literary attainments, and are not unknown to fame. Some have been instructors of others, and some have gone to the ends of the earth, bearing with them “those leaves which are for the healing of nations,” while hundreds have blessed, in their day, or now are blessing the homes of our citizens.

....

It has rested on no splendid endowments. It has made no pathetic appeals to the sympathies of the public. It has kept on the even tenor of its way, furnishing its own pecuniary support, sometimes even paying dividends to its stockholders, and relying on its own conscious excellencies for its favor with the community

In his tribute to New York State Men, Frederick Hills quotes Judge Matthew Hale, “[For half a century, Amasa Parker] has been a resident of our city, and always interested in everything pertaining to its welfare. He has been proud of its position among the cities of the Empire State, and our citizens in return have at all times felt a profound personal respect and liking for his commanding and familiar figure.” William Crosswell Doane, Episcopal Bishop of Albany, concluded a tribute to Parker:

Chief among equal citizens, he bears
Our City’s name to honor high and fair

William Law Learned



William Law Learned
Picture from Howell and Tenney, p. 157

Of English and Welsh stock, William Law Learned was a member of a distinguished New England family. Both his maternal and paternal grandfathers were Congressmen. His father, Ebenezer, was a lawyer and banker. William prepared for Yale at Union School in New London, and graduated in the Yale class of 1841, a member of Skull and Bones, editor of the literary magazine, and salutatorian. Yale was the college of father, grandfather, grandson William Law Learned Peltz, and great-grandsons. With brothers and cousins, the Learned dynasty is perpetually linked with Yale College. In 1878, his alma mater conferred upon him the LL.D. degree. William Learned's portrait hung in the Yale College dining hall (reported in 1939 by W. L. L. Peltz).

W. L. Learned and Phoebe Rowland Marvin were wed in 1855. She was the daughter of Alexander and Mary (Pepon) Marvin. Three daughters were born of the marriage, but Phoebe died in 1864. William re-married, in 1868, Katherine S. DeWitt, daughter of Clinton DeWitt. Learned published a 500 page genealogy, The Learned Family and edited editions of

two works, Madam Knight's Journal, a diary kept in 1704 by Sarah Kemble Knight on her journey by horseback from Boston to New York and back, and Bishop Earle's Microcosmography, a reflection on seventeenth century English life and institutions.

William began the practice of law in New London, but almost immediately accepted an invitation to join the Troy, New York, firm of Gould and Olin. Gould was later mayor of Troy and a justice of the New York Supreme Court. Learned then joined an Albany law firm and moved there. In 1870, he was appointed by the governor to a vacancy on the New York Supreme Court. In that same year, he was elected to a full term of fourteen years. Thereafter, he was re-elected for a second term (in all, 1870- 1891). Governor Samuel J. Tilden appointed him Presiding Judge of the Third Department and Governor Grover Cleveland re-appointed him at the end of that term.

From 1874, Judge Learned was a professor at Albany Law School, lecturing on civil law, equity, and the trial of causes. He later headed the faculty, became a trustee, presided over the board, and, as such, was automatically a governor of Union University

Judge Learned enjoyed a reputation for erudition and wisdom on the bench, and of character and active citizenship in public life. His love of education and literary expression drew him to the boards and the presidencies of Albany Law School, Albany Female Academy, Albany Academy, and Albany Medical College, even unto his early eighties. He also served as president of the Board of Public Instruction (Albany Board of Education), an unusual bridge of interest in both public and private education, the Historical and Art Society of Albany (Albany Institute of History and Art), and Albany Cemetery Association (Albany Rural). He was the second president of the Fort Orange Club. He was also a member of the Board of Governors of Albany Hospital.

Judge Learned died in September, 1904. The Board of Trustees of Albany Female Academy met to unanimously adopt a memorial to him. It was written by Dr. Frederick C. Curtis, Academy trustee and professor at Albany Medical College:

Judge Learned has filled a place in this civic community that is almost unique. Being a man of unusual culture of mind and heart, and with attainments beyond the ordinary in many ways, he has used them, especially in the later years of large leisure since retiring from the place he so long graced on the Supreme Court Bench, in a multitude of ways for the helping and upbuilding of the beneficent enterprises of the city. For there has hardly been any good cause in Albany...to which Judge Learned has not in one way and another lent a helping hand, or been with it in some capacity efficiently connected, giving to it his wise counsel, the inspiration of his good heart, and bearing a large share in its financial needs. The business enterprises, the benevolent institutions and especially the educational concerns have found him associated with their management, and to many he has, like ours, been the head for a long period of years.

....

It is inspiring to see him in the street, to meet him in the way, and to have his presence at the meeting of the Board and the committee, to encounter his ready enthusiasm giving vitality to wise foresight.

....

The Principal of the Academy, the teachers and pupils, with all the large number who in years gone by have received their diplomas at his hands, and the entire body of the Alumnae of the academy will with us lament his departure and cherish his memory.... Judge Learned will live with us in his genial presence, his helpful spirit, his sagacious counsel, his constant inspiration to that which is best. The Academy will be more vital in all its years to come for the beneficent life which has passed into it during the years of his service and care.



Albany Academy for Girls, 155 Washington Avenue, 1892 - 1959

Bibliography

Albany Academy, Celebration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary. Albany, 1888.

Albany Academy, Trustees, Minutes (from 1813), Archives and Collections of The Albany Academies.

Albany Female Academy, Catalogues, Circulars (from 1829), Archives and Collections of The Albany Academies.

Albany Female Academy, [Semi-Centennial] Proceedings of the Albany Female Academy in Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary. Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1864.

Albany Female Academy, Trustees, Minutes (from 1821), Archives and Collections of The Albany Academies.

Albany Academy for Girls, Centennial Celebration. Albany, 1914.

Albany Female Academy, Historical Sketch. Albany, 1884 and 1894.

Albany Historic Post Card Series, No. 13, "Albany from Across the River in 1840." Archives and Collections of The Albany Academies.

American National Biography Online (www.anb.org), on-line version of the printed work published in 1999 by Oxford University Press and the American Council of Learned Societies, itself a successor to the Dictionary of American Biography, published by Charles Scribner's Sons between 1927 and 1936, with supplements up to 1985.

Archives and Collections of The Albany Academies, the source for images not otherwise cited.

Beebe, Richard T. M.D., M.Sc., Albany Medical College and Albany Hospital, A History, Schenectady: Union University, 1983.

Colvin, Andrew J., "Anti-Rentism in Albany County," in Howell and Tenney, pp. 277-285.

Coulson, Thomas, Joseph Henry, His Life and Work. Princeton, 1950.

Emerson, Catherine, Niagara County Historian, letter to John McClintock, March 25, 2011. Archives and Collections of The Albany Academies.

Harsha, David Addison, Noted Living Albanians & State Officials. Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1891.

Hills, Frederick S., ed., New York State Men: Individual Library Edition, with Biographical Studies and Character Portraits. Albany: Albany Argus Art Press, 1929.

Howell, George R. and Tenney, Jonathan, History of the County of Albany, from 1609-1886. New York: W.W. Munsell and Co., 1886.

Hun Family, Collected Articles, Archives and Collections of The Albany Academies.

Hun, Henry, M.D., A Survey of the Activity of the Albany Academy, The Ancestry and Achievements of its Students. Manuscript, n.d. 1922, 5 vols. Archives and Collections of The Albany Academies.

Hun, Henry, M.D., "A Study of a Hospital Plan," with plans by Marcus T. Reynolds, in Albany County Medical Society, Albany Medical Annals, September and November, 1897.

Hun, Thomas, M.D., "Introductory Lecture Before the Albany Medical College," Albany: H. D. Stone & Co., 1839.

McClintock, John T. II, Albany and Its Early Nineteenth Century Schools. Cambridge, 1967.

_____, "Trustee For All Seasons - Profile of Thomas Worth Olcott," expanded version of article in The Academies Magazine (Fall, 2008). Delmar, 2008.

_____, "Early Science at the Albany Academies." Expanded version of article in The Academies Magazine (Spring, 2009). Delmar, 2009.

_____, Short History of The Albany Academy. A prelude to the bicentennial history. Albany: The Albany Academies, 2010.

_____, Short History of Albany Academy for Girls. A prelude to the bicentennial history. Albany: The Albany Academies, 2010.

McEneny, John J., Albany: Capital City on the Hudson. Sun Valley, California: American Historical Press, 1998.

Meyer, Adolphe E., An Educational History of the American People. New York: McGraw Hill, 1957.

Munsell, Joel, Annals of Albany, ten volumes. Albany: J. Munsell, 1850-1859.

Munsell, Joel, Collections on the History of Albany, vol. II. Albany: J. Munsell, 1867.

Miller, George F., The Academy System in the State of New York. Albany: J. B. Lyon Company, 1922.

Parker, Amasa J., Landmarks of Albany County. Syracuse: D. Mason and Co., 1897.

Peltz, W.L.L., Top Flight at Number One La Fayette Street. Albany, 1939.

Reingold, Nathan, Editor, Papers of Joseph Henry, vol. I, "The Albany Years." Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1972.

Reynolds, Cuyler, Albany Chronicles. Albany: J. B. Lyon, 1906.

Reynolds, Cuyler, ed., Hudson-Mohawk Genealogical and Family Memoirs. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1911. On-line version:
www.schenectadyhistory.org/families/hmgfm/teneyck-1.html

Ritter, Don, Images of America, Albany. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.

Rudolph, Frederick, The American College and University. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962.

Sizer, Theodore R, ed., The Age of the Academies. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 1964.

Tantillo, L. F., "Becalmed in the Hudson Highlands, 1836." The whaleship "Huron" returns from the Pacific to her homeport of Hudson, New York.

_____, "The Return of the Experiment." Captain Stewart Dean prepares to land his sloop "Experiment" at City Hall Dock in Albany, New York, following his amazing voyage to China which began in 1785 and ended in 1787.

Tenney, Jonathan, New England in Albany, Boston: Crocker & Co., 1883.

Waite, Diana S., ed., Architects in Albany. Albany: Mt. Ida Press and Historic Albany Foundation, 2009.

Weise, Arthur J., The History of Albany. Albany: E.H. Bender, 1834.

Wise, George, Civic Astronomy, Albany's Dudley Observatory, 1852-2002. Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 2004.

Woody, Thomas, A History of Women's Education in the United States. New York: The Science Press, 1929.

Appendix A

Beck Vita

A. B., Union College	1807
M. D., College of Physicians and Surgeons, N. Y.	1811
Alms House Physician, Albany	1811
Fellow of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, N. Y.	1811
Medical Society, State of New York	1813
New York Historical Society	1813
Member of Physico-Medical Society, New York	1815
Trustee of the Albany Academy	1815
Professor of the Institutes of Medicine, Fairfield	1815
Honorary Membership of Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia	1816
Receiving Officer of Antiquarian Society, Mass.	1816
Principal, The Albany Academy	1817-1848
Honorary Membership Lyceum of Natural History, N. Y.	1817
Honorary Membership American Geological Society, New Haven	1819
Author of <u>Medical Jurisprudence</u> and other works	1823
Honorary Membership Medical Society, London	1824
Honorary Membership Medical Society, Quebec	1824
Corresponding Member Linnean Society, Paris	1826
Honorary Membership Medical Society, Connecticut	1826
Honorary Membership Natural Historical Society, Montreal	1827
Senior Honorary Membership Medical Society of Emulation of Charlestown	1827
Honorary Membership Medical Society of New Hampshire	1828
Associate of the College of Physicians, Philadelphia	1829
President Medical Society of New York	1829
Honorary Membership of the Ithaca Lyceum	1830
Honorary Membership of the West Point Lyceum	1830
Member Albany County Agricultural Society	1830
Honorary Membership Royal Medical Society, Edinburgh	1832
Philosophical Society, Rutgers College	1833
Professor Materia Medica and Medical Jurisprudence, Fairfield	1836
Honorary Membership Meteorological Society, London	1838
Honorary Membership American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia	1839
[a distinction of which he was most proud]	
Honorary Membership Medical Society, Rhode Island	1839
Professor Materia Medica, Albany Medical College	1840
Honorary Membership National Institution for Promotion of Science, Washington	1840
Honorary Membership Historical Society of Pennsylvania	1841
Secretary of the New York State Board of Regents	1841
Honorary Membership American Ethnological Society, N. Y.	1842
Honorary Membership Northern Academy of Arts and Sciences, Dartmouth	1845
Corresponding Fellow of N. Y. Academy of Medicine	1847
Degree of LL. D., Mercersburgh, Pennsylvania	1849

Degree of LL. D., Rutgers College, New Brunswick	
President of Albany Institute	
Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, Copenhagen	1843
Honorary Membership Historical Society, Vermont	1850
Editor, American Journal of Insanity	1850
Honorary Membership American Statistical Society, Boston	1851
Honorary Membership State Historical Society, Wisconsin	1854
Trustee State Lunatic Asylum (1842) and President, Board of Trustees	1854
President of the Board of Trustees Albany Academy	1848-1855
Member Executive Committee of the Normal School	
Emeritus Professor Albany Medical College	1854

Please note that the attachments may be found at
www.albanyacademyhistory.org/

Attachment 1

The Elements of Medical Jurisprudence, T. Romeyn Beck, M.D., 1823, Table of Contents, 10 pages.

Appendix B

Attachment 2

“Albany Medical College,” in Munsell, Joel, Collections on the History of Albany, Vol. II, 13 pages.

Appendix C

Thomas Hun, Henry Hun

Attachment 3

“Introductory Lecture Before the Albany Medical College,” Thomas Hun, M.D., 1839, 30 pages.

Attachment 4

“A Study of a Hospital Plan,” Henry Hun, M.D., with plans by Marcus T. Reynolds, 1897, 27 pages.