



The Standards of the Manhattoes, Pavonia, and Hell-Gate

David B. Martucci

Abstract

The American writer Washington Irving is well-known for his *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, published in 1809. His claim was that this material was derived from ancient Dutch manuscripts dealing with the history of the colony of New Netherlands, 1623–1664, and its capital, New Amsterdam, now New York City. Scholars have debated this claim ever since and none of the manuscripts he cites as sources have ever been discovered to exist.

In this work, Irving describes the standards of three of the old Dutch militia companies mustered in 1655 for action on the Delaware River against New Sweden. Through this material the symbols of New Netherlands and New Amsterdam, proposed and adopted, will be explored.



Typical Dutch Militiaman, c. 1600



Figure 1. Washington Irving.

WASHINGTON IRVING

Washington Irving was perhaps the most famous early American writer producing essays, commentaries, fiction, history, and biographies in the early 19th century. He wrote under a series of pseudonyms—more for comic effect than security, I suspect—using names such as Geoffrey Crayon, Diedrich Knickerbocker, Jonathan Oldstyle, Launcelot Langstaff, Will Wizard, and Fray Antonio Agapida.¹

Born 3 April 1783 in Manhattan, he published his first material in a series of letters to New York's "Morning Chronicle" in 1802, under the name of Jonathan Oldstyle, which commented on modern styles of the day.²

¹ See the list of works and the pen names associated with them at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Irving, accessed 26 June 2011.

² Burstein, Andrew. *The Original Knickerbocker: The Life of Washington Irving*. (Basic Books, 2007). ISBN 978-0-465-00853-7, p. 19.

He was originally a lawyer by profession, having, as he stated, “barely passed the bar” in 1806.³

Irving had little success as a lawyer so he went into the publishing business, creating the literary magazine *Salmagundi* in January 1807 (in which he bestowed the name “Gotham” on New York City⁴) and becoming editor of *Analectic* magazine in 1810.⁵

Irving is best known for his short stories “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” and “Rip Van Winkle” both of which appeared in his book *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* in 1819 which made him internationally famous.

In addition to editing, commentary, and humor, Irving published several biographies under his own name, including such figures as his namesake George Washington⁶, Oliver Hazard Perry, and the Prophet Muhammad. He also published histories of 15th-century Spain dealing with subjects such as Christopher Columbus, the Moors, and the Alhambra.

Having participated in the War of 1812 in New York’s military, Irving failed financially in the recession following that war. He was forced to declare bankruptcy and in 1815 went to Europe where he remained until 1832 pursuing his writing and beginning a diplomatic career.

Irving served as secretary to the American legation in London from 1829 to 1831, then briefly as the legation’s *chargé d’affaires* until the arrival of Martin Van Buren, President Andrew Jackson’s nominee for British Minister. In 1842, after an endorsement from Secretary of State Daniel Webster, President John Tyler appointed Irving as minister to Spain, a post he held until 1846.

Irving purchased his home in Tarrytown, New York, which he named “Sunnyside”, in 1835. Tarrytown is the center of the territory of the Hudson River Valley, the backdrop for many of his stories. According to Wikipedia, “As America’s first genuine internationally best-selling author, Irving advocated for writing as a legitimate profession, and argued for stronger laws to protect American writers from copyright infringement.”⁷

He died at his home in Tarrytown at age 76 on 28 November 1859.

³ Washington Irving to Mrs. Amelia Foster, [April–May 1823], *The Complete Works of Washington Irving*. (Rust, et al., editors). 30 vols. (University of Wisconsin/Twayne, 1969–1986), v. 23, p. 740–41.

⁴ Burrows, Edwin G. and Mike Wallace. *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*. (Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 417.

⁵ Jones, Brian Jay. *Washington Irving: An American Original* (Arcade, 2008). ISBN 978-1-55970-836-4, pp. 121–122. Most of the other biographical data presented here is from this work.

⁶ Irving, at age 6, actually met George Washington at his inaugural in New York City in 1789 and was blessed by the First President. See Irving, Pierre M. *Life and Letters of Washington Irving*. 4 vols. (G. P. Putnam, 1862), v. 1, p. 27.

⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Irving accessed 26 June 2011.



Figure 2. Diedrich Knickerbocker, from *A History of New-York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty*, by Diedrich Knickerbocker.

DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER

In 1809 a series of missing person advertisements were placed in New York newspapers seeking information on Diedrich Knickerbocker, a “crusty Dutch historian” who had allegedly gone missing from his hotel in New York City. The notices were supposedly from the hotel’s proprietor, informing readers that if Mr. Knickerbocker failed to return to the hotel to pay his bill, he would publish a manuscript that was left behind in order to recoup his supposed losses.⁸ This tactic, characterized by Wikipedia as “a hoax akin to today’s viral marketing campaigns”,⁹ created a wave of public interest and unsuspecting readers followed the story in depth. Some city officials were concerned enough about the missing historian that they even considered giving a reward for Mr. Knickerbocker’s safe return.¹⁰

On 6 December 1809 *A History of New-York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty*, by Diedrich Knickerbocker was published to immediate critical and popular success. “It took with the public, and gave me celebrity,” said Irving, “as an original work was something remarkable and uncommon in America.”¹¹ Today, the surname of Knickerbocker has become a nickname for Manhattan residents in general.

⁸ Jones, *op cit*, pp. 118–127.

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Irving accessed 26 June 2011.

¹⁰ Burstein, *op cit*, p. 72.

¹¹ Washington Irving to Mrs. Amelia Foster, [April–May, 1823], *Complete Works, op cit*, vol. 23, p. 741.

Knickerbocker's History (as it is commonly referred to today) contains material that the fictional Knickerbocker supposedly retrieved from old Dutch records of the colony, with different parts of the tale taken from different, probably fictional, sources.

This is Irving's genius: he presents a fictional tale told by a fictional author that blends total fantasy with snippets of local legends and stories set in the local area, thereby creating an entire mythology for the Hudson River Valley region.



Figure 3 Map of Nieuw Nederlandt, 1656, reprint 1685.

NIUW-NEDERLANT COLONY OR NOVI BELGII

The Nieuw-Nederlant Colony (or Novi Belgii as it was sometimes called in Latin) was the product of the Dutch West India Company. This entity was formed in 1621 and settled Nieuw Amsterdam in 1624, the same year the Province of Nieuw-Nederlant was proclaimed.¹²

¹² There are many good histories of this colony. For example, see Jacobs, Jaap. *The Colony of New Netherland: A Dutch Settlement in Seventeenth-Century America* (2nd ed. Cornell University Press; 2009).

Its borders were approximately from the Delmarva Peninsula to Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island. In reality the only settled territory was on the western end of Long Island, along the Hudson River Valley, the Western Connecticut coast, the Northern New Jersey shore areas, with small outposts in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island.¹³

CITY OF NIEUW AMSTERDAM

The business of the colony was primarily the fur trade and its capital was the settlement on the southernmost tip of Manhattan Island, Nieuw Amsterdam. Despite a slow start and troubles with the native inhabitants, the colony did flourish and was quite a bit larger in terms of people and business by 1655, when the then-director general Pieter Stuyvesant led forces to successfully capture the settlements of New Sweden along the Delaware River.

The British seized the area in 1664 but lost it again to the Dutch in 1673. By treaty concluded in 1674, the area was ceded permanently to the British, who held it until American Independence in 1776.



Figure 4. Close-up of the Manhattans, c. 1630.

MANHATTANS, HELLEGAT, & OESTERS EYLANDT OR PAVONIA

The Dutch founded many small settlements along the waterways of what is today New Jersey, New York, and southwestern Connecticut. Our story will mention a number of them, but especially will focus on three: The Manhattans (or Manhattoes), an area comprising present day Manhattan, and parts of Brooklyn, Westchester County and the Bronx; Hellegat, a settlement on Long Island Sound where the currents and the channel are treacherous; and Oesters Eylandt, an early place to harvest oysters, also known as Pavonia, today a part of Jersey City, New Jersey.

¹³ The accompanying map: Visscher, Nicolaes, *Novi Belgii Novæque Angliæ: nec non partis Virginie tabula multis in locis emendata / per Nicolaum Visscher nunc apud Petr. Schenk Iun* (1685). The original map was made by Nicolaes Visscher II in 1656; this is a reprint from 1685. It is not entirely correct.



Figure 5. Plan of Nieuw Amsterdam, c. 1660, based on the Castello Plan.

NIEUW AMSTERDAM

The City of Nieuw Amsterdam was built around a fort at the southern tip of Manhattan Island. It was named the capital of the colony by the third governor, Peter Minuet, in 1626, although settlement had begun in 1624. It was eventually walled in on the north side and the main gate was situated at a point on the main “road” which was known as de Heere Straet (now known as Broadway). This way ran from the wall to the fort, ending under the ramparts of that structure at the grassy area used for militia drills and lawn bowling.¹⁴

This area is still known as the Bowling Green and one can still play lawn bowling there today. The island of Manhattan was somewhat different then, before the shores were extensively expanded by landfill.

Modern New York still has some of the other Dutch landmarks as well, primarily Wall Street, the site of the settlement’s protective barrier.

¹⁴ The illustrated plan is based on the 1660 *Castello Plan* of New Amsterdam.



Figure 6. Pieter Stuyvesant.

PIETER STUYVESANT

Pieter Stuyvesant, seventh director and the one and only director-general of New Netherland, is credited with assuring the success of both the colony and its capital city.¹⁵

The records of Stuyvesant's birth are murky, with biographies giving the year 1592 or 1610 or 1612 as that of his birth, growing up in Friesland in the Netherlands. He died in the renamed City of New York in August of 1672 and was buried in his family chapel there.

Stuyvesant joined the West India Company in the mid-1630s, and was director of the Dutch West India Company's colony of Curaçao from 1642 to 1644.

In early 1644 he attacked the Spanish-held island of Saint Martin where a cannon ball took the lower part of his right leg. He returned to the Netherlands, where the leg was amputated and replaced with a wooden peg. Irving claimed Stuyvesant was given the nickname "Old Silver Leg" because he used a stick of wood driven full of silver bands as a prosthetic limb.

He was selected by the Dutch West India Company to replace Willem Kieft with the new title of director-general of the New Netherland colony in May of 1645. He arrived in the Manhattoes (as the settlement was then more commonly known) on 11 May 1647. A short time later he named leading nine citizens as the City's Governing Council.

¹⁵ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Stuyvesant for the whole story. Accessed 27 June 2011.

Although the West India Company had granted separate privileges to others along the Hudson River, principally the Patroons of Rensselaerswyck (located at the head of navigation of the “North River” as it was then known, the area around Albany on the Hudson River today), Stuyvesant claimed overlordship due to his title and proceeded to attack Rensselaerswyck in 1649 when it would not submit to his will.

In 1650 he agreed to an adjustment of the boundary with the English colony of Connecticut, which was criticized at the time by the nine council members as “the governor had ceded away enough territory to found fifty colonies each fifty miles square.” Stuyvesant threatened to dissolve the city council. A new plan of City Government was implemented in 1653.

It was the director-general who ordered the Wall to be erected in 1652, to protect against attack. In 1653, a convention of two deputies from each village in the colony was called demanding reforms. Stuyvesant ordered that assembly to disperse, saying: “We derive our authority from God and the West India Company, not from the pleasure of a few ignorant subjects.”¹⁶

In 1655, Stuyvesant marshaled the militia forces of the colony and sailed against the “upstart” colony of New Sweden, centered along the Delaware River, within the borders of the New Netherland colony. This entity was founded in 1638 along what was then known as the “South River” by none other than Peter Minuet, a former Director of New Netherland, with a settlement named Fort Christina and a charter from the Queen of Sweden. Stuyvesant reduced the settlement and then built a new settlement, renaming it New Amstel.

Stuyvesant directed the colony of New Netherland until it was ceded provisionally to the English in 1664.



Figure 7. Fort Nieuw Amsterdam, 1625.

¹⁶ Abbott, John S. C. *Peter Stuyvesant, the Last Dutch Governor of New Amsterdam* (1898; republished as eBook, 2004; see <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/13811>)

FORT NIEUW AMSTERDAM

The fort erected by the West India Company in 1625 at the southern-most tip of Manhattan Island was named “Fort Nieuw Amsterdam”. Although for many years the area was known as the Manhattoes, it later took on the name New Amsterdam, under which it was incorporated as a city in 1653.

At the time of the war against New Sweden, 1655, the fort had been fairly well completed. The governor-general had sailed up the Hudson to call out all of the militia forces and the fort was the rallying place. To quote *Knickerbocker’s History*, “While thus the enterprising Peter was coasting, with flowing sail, up the shores of the lordly Hudson, and arousing all the phlegmatic little Dutch settlements upon its borders, a great and puissant concourse of warriors was assembling at the city of New Amsterdam. And here that invaluable fragment of antiquity, the Stuyvesant manuscript, is more than commonly particular; by which means I am enabled to record the illustrious host that encamped itself in the public square in front of the fort, at present denominated by the Bowling Green.”¹⁷



Figure 8. Seal of Nieuw Amsterdam, as adopted 1630.

¹⁷ Irving, Washington. *Knickerbocker’s History of New York, Complete* (Chicago, W. B. Conkey Company; 1809), Volume II, Book VI “Containing The Second Part Of The Reign of Peter the Headstrong, and His Gallant Achievements on the Delaware”, Chapter V.

SEAL OF NIEUW AMSTERDAM ADOPTED 1630

The settlement around the fort was an important place. For one thing all of the trading along the Hudson River and Long Island brought many goods to the community for trans-shipment to Europe. Along with that, the director-general had his mansion and gardens here. Although it was not incorporated as a city until 1653, by 1630 it was important enough for the West India Company to have a seal made for New Amsterdam.

An interesting document still exists, entitled “Arms of Nieu Nederland in Amsterdam” that contains three drawings in color, a seal and arms for New Amsterdam, and a coat-of-arms for New Netherland.¹⁸

The seal for New Amsterdam, as apparently adopted 28 December 1630, shows a shield divided vertically into five areas, from left to right, red-white-black-white-red. The center black bar is wider than the others and it bears three white saltires. These arms are a variant of the arms of the City of Amsterdam, which do not have the white vertical bars. The New Amsterdam arms on this seal are supported by two lions, as are the arms of Amsterdam, and the crest is a golden beaver, unlike the arms of Amsterdam which are surmounted by a crown. Above the arms is a gold shield bearing the monogram of the West India Company, interlocking letters “GWC”, with some decorative mantling. Below is an inscription, “SIGILLUM NOVI AMSTELODAMENSIS”, meaning “The Seal of New Amsterdam”.



Figure 9. Seal of Nieuw Amsterdam, as actually used.

¹⁸ Stokes, I. N. Phelps. *The Iconography of Manhattan Island 1498–1909* (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1915–1928, 6 vols.), vol. 4, Frontispiece.

SEAL OF NIEUW AMSTERDAM AS USED

Interestingly, the seal as actually used is almost identical except that the lion supporters are gone, the beaver is shaded a darker color and faces the other way, and the inscription at the bottom has been expanded to read “Sigillum Amstellodamensis in Novo Belgio”, (“The Seal of Amsterdam in New Belgium”).

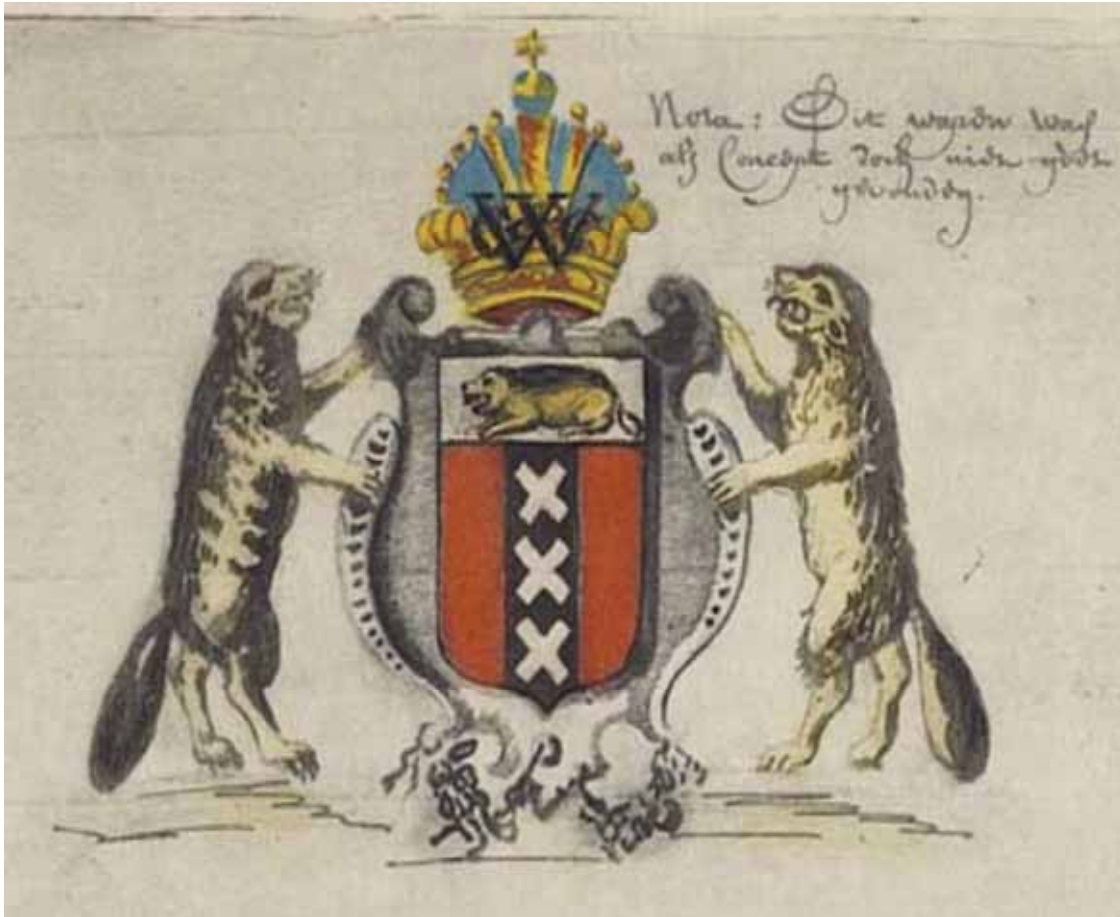


Figure 10. Arms of Nieuw Amsterdam, “not found good”.

ARMS OF NIEUW AMSTERDAM

There is also a coat-of-arms proposed for the city-to-be. It is different than the seal, showing a shield that has the actual arms of Amsterdam, differenced with a white chief bearing a golden beaver. The supporters are beavers and above the shield, for a crest, is the imperial crown defaced with the monogram of the West India Company. There is an inscription written next to the design that states, “This coat-of-arms was [submitted as] a Project, but was not found good”¹⁹ which seems to mean the design was rejected.

¹⁹ Stokes, *op cit*, vol. 4, p. 77.



Fig 11. Typical Dutch Militiaman, c. 1600.

THE COLONIAL MILITIA

As in most other colonial enterprises, all able-bodied men were expected to be a part of the local militia, subject to military discipline and liable to be called upon by the authorities to ensure order and to be available in case of military necessity for the defense of the colony. In 1655, however, these units were called upon by the director-general to invade a neighboring colony, New Sweden. The first call for troops went somewhat unheeded by the men North of New Amsterdam, so Stuyvesant himself sailed up the North River stopping at each settlement and ordering the men to arms and to transship themselves and their equipment down to New Amsterdam where the forces were being marshaled.



Figure 12. Standard of the Men of Battle of the Manhattoes (reconstructed).

STANDARD OF THE MEN OF BATTLE OF THE MANHATTOES

The troops were to encamp on the Bowling Green. While Stuyvesant was gathering the reluctant forces upriver, the local forces were gathering at the appointed place. In his unique and colorful manner, Irving describes some of these troops as having flags.

“In the center, then, was pitched the tent of the men of battle of the Manhattoes, who being the inmates of the metropolis, composed the lifeguards of the governor. These were commanded by the valiant Stoffel Brinkerhoff, who whilom had acquired such immortal fame at Oyster Bay; they displayed as a standard a beaver rampant on a field of orange, being the arms of the province, and denoting the persevering industry and the amphibious origin of the Nederlanders.”²⁰

²⁰ Irving, *op cit.*



Figure 13. Drawing of the Arms of Nieuw-Nederlant, adopted 28 December 1630.

ARMS OF NIEUW-NEDERLANT AS ADOPTED 1630

This emblem was in fact a prominent feature of the arms of the province of Nieuw Nederlant. The document previously cited, entitled *Arms of Nieu Nederlant in Amsterdam*, shows an armorial achievement consisting of a blue shield with a yellow band across the center bearing a black beaver. Behind the band on the blue shield is a vertical white wampum belt. The crest is a crown superimposed with the monogram of the Chartered West India Company and the supporters are two lions, one holding a bundle of arrows and one brandishing a sword. The lions stand on a blue ribbon but if it is inscribed with any motto, it is not readable.

Accompanying this drawing is written the following:

“Extract from the resolutions of a meeting of the XIX of the general Chartered West India Co., held at Middleborg in Zeeland.”

“Saturday the 28th decemb. 1630: Post Meridian.”

“Exhibited by Mr. Michael Paaw, a design of a coat-of-arms for Nieu-Nederlant, being a black beaver on a wooden field, with a border of white Zeewant [Wampum], on a blue ground, embellished with the Crown of a Count, and is also found good by the approval of the Lords High Mightinesses.”²¹

²¹ Stokes, *op cit*, vol. 4, p. 77.



Figure 14. Seal of Nieuw Nederlandt, as actually used.

SEAL OF NIEUW-NEDERLANT AS USED

The seal of the colony extant on certain documents is somewhat different than those arms. It shows a black beaver on a shield with a border bearing a single strand of wampum going all around the border. It has a crown for a crest and is encircled with the inscription “SIGILLUM NOVI BELGII” (“Seal of New Belgium”). A wreath of what is probably laurel completes the design

This seal exactly matches the written description of the arms as adopted 28 December 1630 and leaves out the extraneous symbols shown in the drawing accompanying the text but not mentioned in it.



Figure 15. Standard of the Vassals of Ancient Pavonia (reconstructed).

THE STANDARD OF THE VASSALS OF ANCIENT PAVONIA

Two other military companies from different localities are described as bearing flags. The first is described thus by Irving:

“On their right hand might be seen the vassals of that renowned Mynheer, Michael Paw, who lorded it over the fair regions of ancient Pavonia, and the lands away south, even unto the Navesink Mountains, and was, moreover, patroon of Gibbet Island. His standard was borne by his trusty squire, Cornelius Van Vorst, consisting of a huge oyster recumbent upon a sea-green field, being the armorial bearings of his favorite metropolis, Communipaw. He brought to the camp a stout force of warriors, heavily armed, being each clad in ten pair of linsey-woolsey breeches, and overshadowed by broad-brimmed beavers, with short pipes twisted in their hat-bands. These were the men who vegetated in the mud along the shores of Pavonia, being of the race of genuine copper-heads, and were fabled to have sprung from oysters.”²²

This area was the site of the first Dutch settlements on the west bank of the Hudson River, across from Manhattan. By 1617 a trading post was established at Communipaw and it was originally intended that the capital of the colony would be established here. In 1629 a patroonship was

²² Irving, *op cit.*

granted to Michael Pauw, designer of the Colony Arms, and it was called Pavonia, a Latinized form of Pauw's name (which means "peacock").²³ Part of the territory Pavonia encompassed was first known as Oyster Island, an important early food gathering site.

To be sure there are several ways you could interpret the description of this standard into a drawing. The symbol of an "oyster recumbent" could mean an Oyster Bird, but given the area's association with the mollusk by the same name, I have chosen to use that for a symbol. Also it is commonly known that oysters reside in beds, so a recumbent oyster would be a mollusk lying peacefully in his own bed, much like Irving's description of the men of Pavonia!

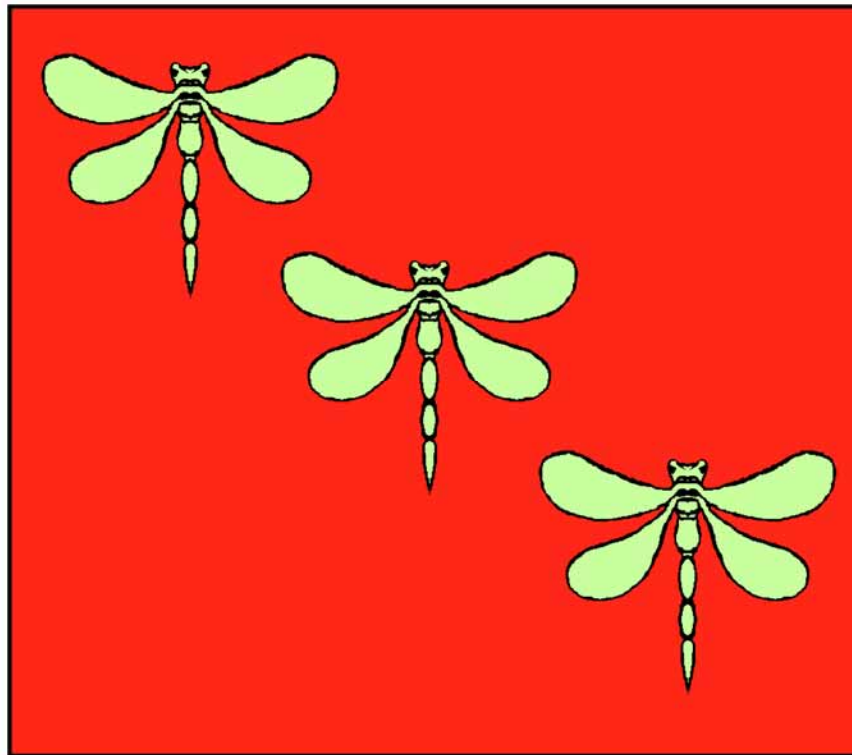


Figure 16. Standard of the Warriors of Hell-Gate (reconstructed).

THE STANDARD OF THE WARRIORS OF HELL-GATE

The other flag described belonged to the warriors of Hell-Gate. This locality lies to the east of Manhattan, at a spot where the Long Island Sound narrows considerably as it meets the river, a treacherous piece of water that has dragged down many a boat over the years.

Irving writes, "At a little distance was encamped the tribe of warriors who came from the neighborhood of Hell-gate. These were commanded by the Suy Dams and the Van Dams, incontinent hard swearers, as their names betoken; they were terrible looking fellows, clad in

²³ See Doherty, Joan F. *Hudson County: The Left Bank* (Windsor Publications, Inc., 1986), ISBN 0-89781-172-0 for a detailed history of this area.

broad-skirted gaberdines, of that curious colored cloth called thunder and lightning, and bore as a standard three devil's darning-needles, volant, in a flame-colored field."²⁴

Three Devil's Darning Needles! The dictionary defines that name as either a nickname for a dragonfly or a variety of Magnolia. Given Irving's wild and overly descriptive imagination I cannot believe he meant the latter so I have chosen three dragonflies as the symbol of Hell-Gate.

The term "volant" means to be represented as flying, or having the wings spread as in flight. It is usually applied to a bird, as "an eagle volant".



Figure 17. "The Colonial Soldiers march through the City Gate" by Edward Windsor Kemble, from *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, Vol. 2 (1893).

THROUGH THE CITY GATE

Unfortunately those are the only flags described by Irving. But I cannot end without completing his colorful description of the forces gathering for the invasion of New Sweden.

"But I refrain from pursuing this minute description, which goes on to describe the warriors of Bloemen-dael, and Weehawk, and Hoboken, and sundry other places, well known in history and song—for now do the notes of martial music alarm the people of New Amsterdam, sounding afar from beyond the walls of the city. But this alarm was in a little while relieved; for, lo! from the

²⁴ Irving, *op cit.*

midst of a vast cloud of dust, they recognized the brimstone-colored breeches and splendid silver leg of Peter Stuyvesant, glaring in the sunbeams; and beheld him approaching at the head of a formidable army, which he had mustered along the banks of the Hudson. And here the excellent but anonymous writer of the Stuyvesant manuscript breaks out into a brave and glorious description of the forces, as they defiled through the principal gate of the city, that stood by the head of Wall Street.

“First of all came the Van Brummels, who inhabit the pleasant borders of the Bronx: these were short fat men, wearing exceeding large trunk-breeches, and were renowned for feats of the trencher; they were the first inventors of suppawn, or mush and milk. Close in their rear marched the Van Vlotens, or Kaats-kill, horrible quavers of new cider, and arrant braggarts in their liquor. After them came the Van Pelts of Groodt Esopus, dexterous horsemen, mounted upon goodly switch-tailed steeds of the Esopus breed; these were mighty hunters of minks and musk-rats, whence came the word Peltry. Then the Van Nests of Kinderhoeck, valiant robbers of birds’ nests, as their name denotes; to these, if report may be believed, are we indebted for the invention of slap-jacks, or buckwheat cakes. Then the Van Higginbottoms, of Wapping’s Creek; these came armed with ferrules and birchen rods, being a race of schoolmasters, who first discovered the marvelous sympathy between the seat of honor and the seat of intellect. Then the Van Grolls, of Antony’s Nose, who carried their liquor in fair round little pottles, by reason they could not bouse it out of their canteens, having such rare long noses. Then the Gardeniers, of Hudson and thereabouts, distinguished by many triumphant feats: such as robbing water-melon patches, smoking rabbits out of their holes, and the like, and by being great lovers of roasted pigs’ tails; these were the ancestors of the renowned congressman of that name. Then the Van Hoesens, of Sing-Sing, great choristers and players upon the jewsharp; these marched two and two, singing the great song of St. Nicholas. Then the Couenhovens of Sleepy Hollow; these gave birth to a jolly race of publicans, who first discovered the magic artifice of conjuring a quart of wine into a pint bottle. Then the Van Kortlandts, who lived on the wild banks of the Croton, and were great killers of wild ducks, being much spoken of for their skill in shooting with the long bow. Then the Van Bunschotens, of Nyack and Kakiat, who were the first that did ever kick with the left foot; they were gallant bush-whackers and hunters of raccoons by moonlight. Then the Van Winkles, of Haerlem, potent suckers of eggs, and noted for running of horses, and running up of scores at taverns; they were the first that ever winked with both eyes at once. Lastly came the Knickerbockers, of the great town of Schaghtikoke, where the folk lay stones upon the houses in windy weather, lest they should be blown away. These derive their name, as some say, from Knicker, to shake, and Beker, a goblet, indicating thereby that they were sturdy toss-pots of yore; but, in truth, it was derived from Knicker, to nod, and Boeken, books; plainly meaning that they were great noddors or dozers over books; from them did descend the writer of this history.”²⁵

²⁵ *Ibid.*

About the Author



David B. Martucci first became interested in flags in 1966 and joined The North American Vexillological Association (NAVA) in 1967 and is the designer of the NAVA Seal, adopted in 1968. He attended his first NAVA meeting in 1967, which was held in Chillum, Maryland and his first International Congress of Vexillology (ICV) in 1969, the 3rd ICV, which was held in Boston, Massachusetts.

He served as NAVA's President 1998–2004 and edited *NAVA News* 1998–2006. He is also a founding member of the New England Vexillological Association and currently serves as Secretary/Treasurer and editor of *The New England Journal of Vexillology*. For a while he was an assistant list master for the Flags of the World email list (FOTW); he is a former editor and is still a member of the FOTW web site.

As a practicing vexillographer he has designed more than 100 flags, some of which have actually been adopted and put into regular use. Dave has presented papers at several previous NAVA meetings and ICVs, winning the Driver Award for Best Paper in Nashville, Tennessee in 2005 for “Flag and Symbol Usage in Early New England”, which was later published in *Raven* 13 in 2006. He has published many articles in the *Flag Bulletin* and *NAVA News* as well as in *Maine History*.

In 2000 he was employed by the United States Postal Service as fact checker for the historic US Flags Stamps set issued that year and his original essay, “Americans Love Their Flag”, was recorded and used in an advertising campaign by the Boeing Corporation in 2002 (which can be heard on Dave's web site at <http://www.vexman.net/>). Also in 2002, he appeared in an episode of “This Week in History” about the history of the American Flag aired on the History Channel.

Dave lives in Washington, Maine, with his wife Janet and his dog and two cats. He is a Certified Maine Assessor, works as a municipal tax assessor, and also does antique flag assessments and appraisals. Besides NAVA and NEVA, he is a member of the Maine Association of Assessing Officers (MAAO).