

HISTORIC RED HOOK

Col. Frederic de Peyster, Jr.

December 13, 1842-October 30, 1874

St. Paul's and Trinity Parish Cemetery, Tivoli

The large, stone de Peyster vault just behind the church.

Civil War Veteran

We read about the sacrifices made by our military and rightly laud our veterans. The de Peyster family intimately knew about the paradox of service—the glory and subsequent loss. Three de Peyster brothers, all in their teens when they volunteered for the Union cause, returned to their lives in New York State. Two of the three —eldest brother Col. John Watts de Peyster, Jr., and his younger brother Col. Frederic de Peyster, referred to as Fred and named for his grandfather Frederic—died about a decade after their service due to the physical suffering related to their experiences at war.

Col. Frederic de Peyster, Jr., the son of Gen. John Watts de Peyster and Estelle Livingston de Peyster, died at Rose Hill in Tivoli and is interred in the de Peyster vault at St. Paul's Episcopal Church Cemetery on Woods Road. A decade before his death, on September 7, 1864, Frederic married Mary Livingston, a great granddaughter of Chancellor Robert Livingston and the only daughter of Clermont Livingston, according to Frank Allaben's *John Watts de Peyster, Volume 1* published in 1908. Allaben continued of Frederic, "He had issue: (1) Mary, who was born 22 December, 1865, and died 9 September, 1874; (2) Clermont Livingston, born 12 June, 1867, who studied at Harvard and at Oxford, and who died, unmarried, 2 December, 1889." Soon after his daughter's death, Frederic predeceased his wife and son.

"The deceased gentleman, though a young man, had gained honors both on the field of battle and in the pleasanter meads of literature," states his obituary. "At the beginning of the late war Colonel De Peyster, then a mere boy, entered the volunteer service, in which, from time to time, he earned promotion until, when the conflict ended, he bore the brevet rank of colonel. When he returned to peaceful pursuits he applied his pen to the illustration of military subjects. His contributions to the literature of the war were marked by careful thought, a wide study of military history and an excellent literary style. He wrote for the

HISTORIC RED HOOK

magazines, and his articles in one of them, on the battle of Chancellorsville, were very skillful portrayals of the section of that great contest. Colonel De Peyster was a member of the old family of that name, resident of this city [of New York]. He was born in 1843, and was somewhat more than thirty-one years old at his death.”

Frederic’s father Gen. John Watts de Peyster commemorated his son’s death. He described the memorial in a book he authored on local memorials in 1881 as follows: “Westward of this is large and extremely tasty marble memorial of a young and handsome Union officer, who died of the ultimate results of expores and diseases contracted during the Peninsular Campaign of 1862. On the obverse are a few lines, setting forth his name, rank, &c., as follows:

FREDERIC de PEYSTER, Jr.
Brevet Colonel, N.Y.V.,
Brevet Major, U.S.V.
Born in New York City, 13th December, 1842,
Died at Rose Hill,
in the Township of
Red Hook, Duches Co.,
30th October, 1874.
of diseases contracted in the field, with the
Army of North-
Eastern Virginia in 1861,
and with the Army of the
Potomac in 1862.

The monument indicates de Peyster achieved “Fourth Corps Badge, Second Division—A. of the P. and that his remains are in his father John’s vault west of the church. Of his son, de Peyster adds, “As he discharged both line and staff, or medical, duty in one of the New York regiments which was considered as belonging to the artillery, a ten-pounder Parrot gun which had performed service in putting down the ‘Slave-holders’ Rebellion,’ is planted at the corner of this monumental plot, which is guarded from intrusion by an apparently simple but costly fence of strong wrought iron standards set in blocks of stone connected by heavy rods of the same metal.”

HISTORIC RED HOOK

Frederic predeceased his wife Mary (Livingston) de Peyster by two years. She passed away in July 1876.