

# Wilhelmus Mynderse

Wilhelmus Mynderse was the earliest resident proprietor of a large portion of what is today the village of Seneca Falls. He owned a one-fifth interest in the Bayard Land Co., then the owners of the land and water power of present Seneca Falls village. He was the resident business agent of this land company for thirty years. He located in Seneca Falls permanently in 1795. No other single individual had as much to do with the beginning of the settlement of Seneca Falls, its subsequent growth to a prosperous village and the location there of early industries as did Wilhelmus Mynderse.

The year he came to Seneca Falls he erected a grist and a saw mill and a double log house, the latter being located next to where Trinity Episcopal Church now stands. He lived in one end and kept store in the other. The mill which was put in operation in 1796 stood on the present site of Chamberlain's mill. In 1807 he erected the "red mills" on the lower rapids. He also erected a fulling mill and other small industries. His various investments proved profitable and he was a man of strict business methods. His was the very first industry. The entries of his milling and merchandise business date as early as April 20, 1796. The first entry of sales from his grist mill is dated Oct. 22, 1796. In 1801 he was appointed lieutenant-colonel. In 1807 he was commissioned brigadier-general.

During his residence in Seneca Falls, Col. Mynderse lived in four towns as they were successively organized, Romulus (first in Cayuga County), Washington, Junius and Seneca Falls, and held many public offices.

He was born at Albany, July 11, 1767, and died Jan. 31, 1838, in the house he built and for years occupied.

Mr. Mynderse lived to see a flourishing village spring from a forest. He did much to encourage its growth. The village park was his gift to the village and he was a generous patron of the Academy which bore his name for many years as part of the public school system. He contributed the site and furnished the greater part of the means for building the original building.