Marker #6

Literary acclaim came to Guilderland's own Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in his later years, after he became an explorer, a scientist, and an ethnologist. He wrote of covered wagons loaded with western products travelling on the Great Western Turnpike that would stop for the night in one of Guilderland's taverns or inns.

In the streets, Schoolcraft wrote, might be heard all the dialects of the Germans, the Low Dutch, the Erse and Gaelic of the Irish and Scotch as well as the genuine Yankee.

Henry Rowe Schoolcraft was one of the earliest important writers on the American Indian. He married a Chippewa Indian woman. His most important discovery was Lake Itasca, the source of the Mississippi River. Among the books he wrote was The Myth of Hiawatha, which Henry Wadsworth Longfellow used for his *Song of Hiawatha.* Schoolcraft's published poems, *Heldebergia,* are inspiring with his childhood remembrances of Guilderland.

The Schoolcraft family name in Guilderland is legend. School children learn of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft. They learn of his father, Lawrence Schoolcraft, who was superintendent of the Hamilton Glass Works and a local militia man in Albany's 3rd Regiment of the Continental Army. They learn of John Schoolcraft, Henry Rowe's uncle, one of the first justices of the peace in Guilderland, and they read about John L. Schoolcraft, who built the historic "gingerbread" Schoolcraft mansion on the corner of Schoolcraft Street and the Western Turnpike.

A blue and gold historic marker sits in front of an unassuming frame house on Willow Street in Guilderland to remind us of this valuable town legend.

"Hills, groves and streams, that bound my native land,
Ye court the pleasing homage of my hand
And, like a dream of paradise and light,
Fill my soul with rapture as I write.
Heights far more lofty, streams immensely long,
Deep in the west, invite a nobler song;
But ah to me, more sweet the scenes expand
Where Norma's cliffs, and Helder's ramparts stand."
— *Iosco, or the Vale of Norma,* by H. R. Schoolcraft.