



Marker #28

The earliest of settlers, Jurrian Severson, came north from the Catskills about 1745 to build a home in West Manor on the Rensselaerwyck estate. He was among the few early Dutch or German people to emigrate to the Helleberghs and call it home.

These first pioneers spoke their native tongue. Few could read or write and there were no schools available for their children. A lack of doctors in these outlying, sparsely inhabited regions caused the sick to be treated by homemade remedies and those who died were buried by a family member on their own property. One such ancient cemetery lies across the road from where Jurrian Severson built his house during the War of the Revolution.

Jurrian (George) Severson, eldest child of Danish-born Claas Sivers and Amatje Van Patten, was born in 1700. As a young man he married Elizabeth Groot of Schenectady, and began a long line of descendants in the Altamont area.

Young pioneers like the Seversons, whose houses were crude wooden structures and who used primitive utensils made of wood, eked out a living and paved the way for future generations to enjoy the beauty of living under the escarpment of the Hellebergh Mountains.

The aged Severson burial plot has several rows of marble headstones marking the resting places of Altamont's first permanent settlers. The blue and gold historic marker by the side of the road confirms their place in history.