



Marker #4

Before the Great Western Turnpike was a reality and just a stone's throw off the dirt road that preceded it, near the narrow Hungerkill Valley stood the Glass House. Until a few decades ago, Guilderland school children were enchanted by field trips to the area, where a plow might have unearthed discarded pieces of blue and amber glass to be retrieved as souvenirs. The original glass house was built along what is now Foundry Road in the Town of Guilderland.

Dutchman Leonard DeNeufville came from Holland and invested his future in the land that supplied huge quantities of sand, plenty of wood for his furnace, potash, and water power from the Hungerkill for his glass works eight miles west of Albany. When the city of Albany celebrated the adoption of the Federal Constitution with a parade, a float carried glass makers and the tools of their trade, such as globes and blue glass bottles from the Glass House.

In 1802, the subsequent owner of the Glass Works, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, named Lawrence Schoolcraft as his superintendent. In 1813, Hamilton (Guilderland) village contained 56 houses occupied by the laborers in the glass works employ. At the time, they were manufacturing 500,000 feet of window glass a year. Guilderland's noted hometown boy, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, lived in one of those village houses with his father, who taught him the art of glassmaking. Both father and son became nationally known for their expertise in that field. In his later literary career, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft wrote:

"Place once renowned for furnaces that threw
Their rolling volumes to the amber skies,
Where reeking glassmen their bright fabrics blew
'Neath roofs that shamed the piny hills for size"
— *Helderbergia*.

The Guilderland Town Highway Department has replaced the old blue and gold marker with a new one denoting the site of the glass works. It stands on Foundry Road south of Route 20. A lone specimen of a half-pint blue glass bottle reading "Albany Glass House" rests in the New York State Museum, a silent sentinel of the ancient factory and Guilderland history.