



**A History of New York: From the Beginning of the
World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty,
Containing, Among Many Surprising and Curious
Matters, the ... of William, the Testy, and the
Chivalr**

Diedrich Knickerbocker

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Excerpt from A History of New York: From the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty, Containing, Among Many Surprising and Curious Matters, the Unutterable Ponderings of Walter the Doubter, the Disastrous Projects of William, the Testy, and the Chivalric Achievements of Pete

It was some time, if I recollect right, in the early part of the autumn of 1808, that a stranger applied for lodgings at the Independent Columbian Hotel in Mulberry-street, of which I am landlord. He was a small, brisk-looking old gentleman, dressed in a rusty black coat, a pair of olive velvet breeches, and a small cocked hat. He had a few gray hairs plaited and clubbed behind, and his beard seemed to be of some eight-and forty hours' growth. The only piece of finery which he bore about him, was a bright pair of square silver shoe-buckles, and all his baggage was contained in a pair of saddle-bags, which he carried under his arm. His whole appearance was something out of the common run; and my wife, who is a very shrewd body, at once set him down for some eminent country schoolmaster.

As the Independent Columbian Hotel is a very small house, I was a little puzzled at first where to put him; but my wife, who seemed taken with his looks, would needs put him in her best chamber, which is genteelly set off with the profiles of the whole family, done in black, by those two great painters, Jarvis and Wood; and commands a very pleasant view of the new grounds on the Collect, together with the rear of the Poor-House and Bridewell, and a full front of the Hospital; so that it is the cheerfullest room in the whole house.

During the whole time that he stayed with us, we found him a very worthy, good sort of an old gentleman, though a little queer in his ways. He would keep in his room for days together, and if any of the children cried, or made a noise about his door, he would bounce out in a great passion, with his hands full of papers, and say something about "deranging his ideas;" which made my wife believe sometimes that he was not altogether compos.

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