

PHILIP SCHUYLER STATUE AT ALBANY'S CITY HALL

A STATUE OF MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER LOOKING OVER THE CITY OF ALBANY

BY REBECCA KURTZ

A statue of Revolutionary War Major General Philip Schuyler that stands in front of Albany's City Hall

In front of Albany's City Hall on Eagle Street at Maiden Lane stands a large portrait statue of Major General Philip Schuyler, representing Albany's Dutch beginnings, English influence, and ties to the American Revolution. The statue was constructed in 1923 by John Massey Rhind, and was dedicated on June 14, 1925. Schuyler stands at nine feet six inches atop an eighty-seven inch marble base, which was a gift given by George C. Hawley in memory of his wife, Theodora M. Hawley.

The bronze likeness of Philip Schuyler wears Revolutionary War period clothing, which includes a tri-corner hat and a cloak. Notice the statue's stance; Schuyler stands with his left foot in front of his right, his arms crossed with his right hand covering the left side of his chest, as if over his heart, and he is looking down. Some believe that, though the statue stands proud and tall, the fact that Philip Schuyler appears to be looking down is representative of his loss at the Battle of Fort Ticonderoga during the Revolutionary War, which led to him being replaced by Horatio Gates as Major General of the Northern Department of the Continental Army. Alternatively, Philip Schuyler could be looking down to mourn the loss of his home and lands in Saratoga, which were burned by British General John Burgoyne and his troops during the Battle of Saratoga in October of 1777. Though, as mentioned at Schuyler Mansion, Burgoyne stayed with Schuyler as 'prisoner guest' after the Battle of Saratoga, despite having destroyed his other home.

Philip Schuyler could be considered the perfect figure to stand in front of Albany's City Hall, as he represents multiple facets of the city's history. Schuyler was the product of two prominent Dutch families; the Schuylers, who first came to the Albany area from the Netherlands in 1650, and the Van Cortlands, who were well-established in New York City. Schuyler then married into the locally distinguished Dutch Van Rensselaer family. Around the time that English influence began to creep

into the Albany area, Philip Schuyler constructed his family's home in the English Georgian style. He decorated and furnished that home with English carpeting, wallpaper, and furniture, and carried himself as an English gentleman. Philip Schuyler also represents the significant role that Albany played in the American Revolution, as he not only served the Continental Army, but also hosted many founding fathers, as well as serving on the Second Continental Congress.

You will, of course, have noticed that this statue of Schuyler stands in a circle of grass surrounded by traffic. For nearly ninety years after the statue was erected, Schuyler was surrounded by flowers and shrubbery. However, exhaust from idling cars, as well as salt-laced snow caused those plants to deteriorate, and their grim appearance detracted from the statue's grandeur. Thus, in 2012, the plants were removed so that Philip Schuyler now stands on a pleasant patch of green as he overlooks Downtown Albany.

IMAGES



STREET ADDRESS: 24 Eagle Street,
Albany, NY, 12207 [[map](#)]

CITE THIS PAGE: Rebecca Kurtz, "Philip Schuyler Statue at Albany's City Hall," Albany Walks for Health, accessed August 20, 2017, <http://www.albanywalksforhealth.com/items/show/8>.

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