

**TOMBSTONE INSCRIPTIONS  
FROM THE CHURCHYARD OF THE  
FIRST REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH  
OF FISHKILL VILLAGE, DUTCHESS  
CO., N.Y.**

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Tombstone inscriptions from the churchyard of the First Reformed Dutch Church of Fishkill Village, Dutchess Co., N.Y. by E. W. Van Voorhis

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**E. W. VAN VOORHIS**

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THE FIRST REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH.—FISHKILL VILLAGE.

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# Tombstone Inscriptions

FROM

THE CHURCHYARD OF THE

## First Reformed Dutch Church

OF

FISHKILL VILLAGE, DUTCHESS CO., N. Y.

COMPILED BY

✓  
E. W. VAN VOORHIS  
OF NEW YORK CITY

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## INTRODUCTION.

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The earliest historical reference to the First Reformed Dutch Church of Fishkill Village, is found in the third volume of the Documentary History of New York, page 589, where the following paper is recorded :

“ Petition for aid to erect a church at Fish creek, Dutchess Co.

To His Excellency John Montgomerie Esqr. Capt. Generall and Governor in Chief in and over his Majesties' Provinces of New York and New Jersey and the Territories depending thereon in America, and Vice Admirall of the same &c

The humble Petition of Peter Du Bois and Abraham Musy, Elders, and Abraham Blinkerhof and Hendrick Phillips, Deacons, of the Dutch Reformed Protestant Church of the fish Creek in Dutchess County in the Province of New York in behalf of themselves and the Rest of the members of the said Church



## Humbly Sheweth

That the members of the said Congregacon, being in daily expectation of a minister from holland to preach the Gospel amongst them according to the Cannons, Rules and Discipline of the Reformed Protestant Churches of the united Netherlands, and therefore have agreed amongst themselves to erect and build a Convenient Church for the Publick worship of God, nigh the said fish creek in the County aforesaid, but finding that the said building will be very Chargeable, and therefore as in the like cases has been Practised and is usuall in this Province they would desire the aid and help and assistance of all Charitable and well disposed Christians within this Province for the Compleating of the said Building

They therefore most humbly Pray for your Excellency's Lycence to be granted to the said Elders and Deacons of the said Protestant Congregacon to collect gather and Receive the benevolence and free gifts of all such Inhabitants of this Province as shall be willing to contribute somewhat toward the erecting and building such Church as aforesaid for the Publick service of almighty God, and that only for such time as

your Excellency will be pleased to grant the said Lycence,

in behalf of the Elders and Deacons and other the members of said Congregacon

28th June 1731.

PITER DU BOIS."

T. Van Wyck Brinckerhoff, Esq., in his historical sketch of Fishkill states "that although the building of the church is not positively stated in the above petition, yet in a certain bond bearing date the same year it is clearly stated that they 'had agreed and built a church,' and that there was a Glebe attached to the Church, which Glebe land was purchased in two different lots—one containing seven and almost one-half acres was purchased from Madame Brett—the other portion 'containing three quarters of an acre and fifteen rods with the appurtenances whereon to erect a church or house for the service or worship of them, in manner and form as aforesaid, for the inhabitants of the Fishkill or South Ward and their heirs and assigns forever' was purchased from Johannis Terboss—and this was the first church built in Rombout Precinct"

Probably the fullest description extant of the appearance of both the present church and the

one which preceded it is given by Henry Du Bois Bailey, Esq., in his historical sketch of Fish-kill Village. Mr. Bailey says : " The old church was built of stone in the year 1731. In shape it was quadrangular and the roof came up from all sides to the centre. From the apex of the roof ascended the cupola, in that the bell was suspended, and surmounting the cupola was the bird which veered with the wind and told from what quarter of the compass it came. In front of the church was large oak tree whose limbs extended across the street. The church was used as a prison during the Revolution and the celebrated spy Enoch Crosby who figured in Cooper's writings as Harvey Birch was confined there, and tradition says that he made his escape on one dark stormy night by leaping from an upper window to a limb of this tree. The tree was taken down when the present edifice was erected, but the exact year of rebuilding is not definitely known, the records of that portion of the church's history being lost, but it must have been only a few years after the Revolution. When the present edifice was built the church was enlarged and extended further west on Main Street, covering Madame Brett's family burying plot, and she and some of her children