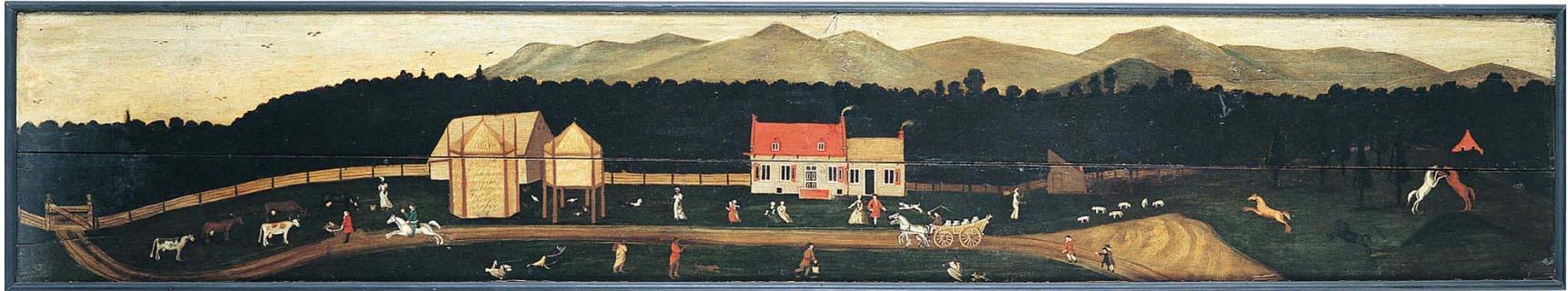
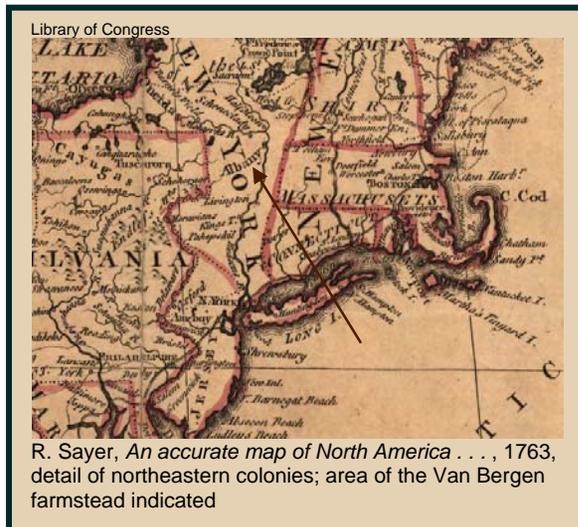




THE VAN BERGEN OVERMANTEL



attributed to John Heaten (active 1730-1750), Leeds, Greene County, New York, ca. 1728-1738
oil on cherry wood, secured with white pine battens, 7' 3½" x 15¼"
Fenimore Art Museum, New York State Historical Association



Martin Van Bergen, a New York colonist of Dutch heritage, commissioned this work by a local artist to depict his farmstead near the Catskill Mountains. Intended to be displayed over the fireplace (thus the term *overmantel*), the work is about seven feet long and one and a quarter feet high. It clearly indicates the Dutch-style architecture of the farmhouse and outbuildings.

Most notably, the overmantel displays the ethnic diversity of New York in the 1700s, a characteristic widely noted by travelers to the colony. Depicted are European American settlers (including the Van Bergen family and several indentured servants), African American slaves, and two Native Americans of the Esopus tribal group.

Enlarged sections of the overmantel are reproduced on the following pages. What does one learn from studying this work? What questions arise? How would one pursue answers to the questions?



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left third of overmantel





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middle third of overmantel





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right third of overmantel

