

wealths. In order to take action in the matter, a convention of delegates of the state of New York assembled at Poughkeepsie on June 17, 1788, and continued in session there until July 26, when it adjourned. The county of Dutchess was represented by Jonathan Atkins, John DeWitt, Gilbert Livingston, Zephaniah Platt, Melancthon Smith, Jacobus Swartwout, and Ezra Thompson.

“In no state of the confederacy,” it is said, “was hostility to this instrument more extensive or more violent than in this. Except in the city and one or two of the adjacent counties, public opinion was generally opposed to it. The papers since collected in the volumes called the Federalist, written by Messrs. Madison, Hamilton, and Jay, together with a pamphlet prepared by the last, contributed, in some measure, to diminish and remove the prevailing prejudice. Yet, in the state convention, assembled at Poughkeepsie, on the seventeenth of June, 1788, of which Governor Clinton was president, of fifty-seven delegates, no less than forty-six, embracing the governor and some of the most distinguished citizens of the state, were anti-federalist. In support of the constitution, however, Messrs. Jay, Livingston, Hamilton, and others were strenuous and successful advocates, and aided by the accession of New Hampshire and Virginia, to the states which had previously adopted the constitution, they procured the vote of the New York convention by a majority of three, on the final question of ratification on the twenty-sixth of July, 1788.”¹ Jacobus Swartwout was among the twenty-seven delegates who voted against the ratification of the instrument.

At the age of seventeen years, John, son of Captain Abraham and Maria North Swartwout quitted the parental home at Poughkeepsie to take the position of a salesman in a store in the city of New York. His cordiality and manliness soon won for him the acquaintanceship of a number of highly reputable young men and the esteem of certain prominent and influential citizens. His mercantile experience of three years permitted him, in 1790, to open a paint and glass store, at No. 25 Little Dock Street. From the directory of the city of New York of 1792, the information is derived that “Snowdon and Swartwout, merchants,” were engaged in business at the “corner of Front Street and Burling Slip,” and that John Swartwout was an ensign in the Fourth Regiment of Militia commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel James Alner. On September 7, 1793, he was united in the holy bonds of matrimony to Mary, daughter of Samuel Smith and niece of Melancthon Smith, she being two years his junior. In 1794, he formed a partnership with Peter Dumont, jr. (who married his sister Elizabeth), and they, under the firm-name of Swartwout & Dumont, druggists, occupied the store, No. 66 Water Street, where

¹ Essay on the history of New York, in the Gazetteer of the state of New York. 1836, p. ci.