



# 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Fiction

Irving Washington's "Rip Van Winkle"


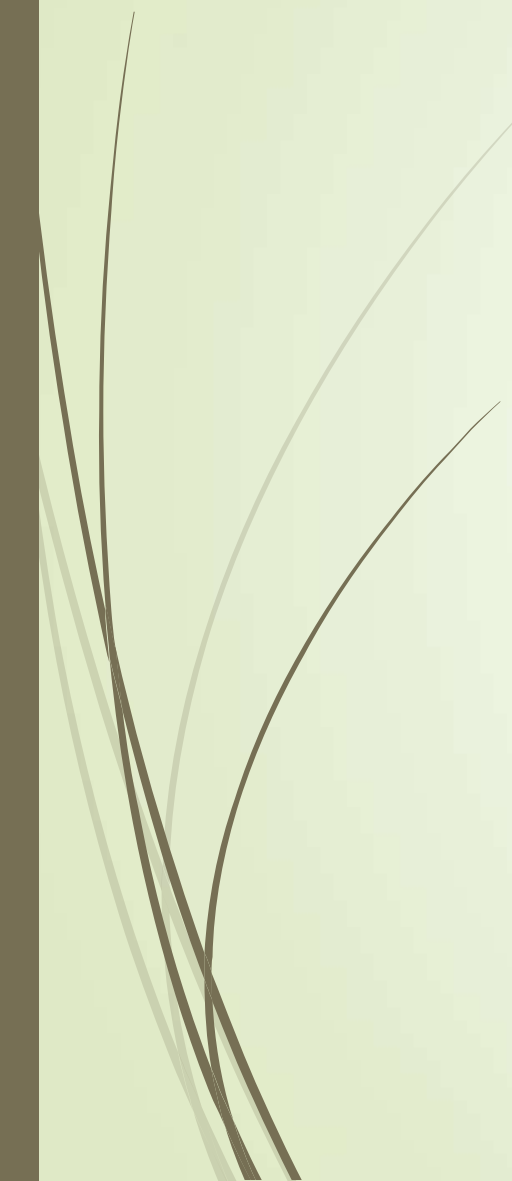
# Setting





# Rip Van Winkle

- ▶ He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient henpecked husband (716)
- ▶ a certain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. (716)
- ▶ told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. (716)
- ▶ The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor (716) [...] In a word Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own (717).

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- His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. (717)
  - Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; (717)
  - Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much henpecked as his master; (717)
  - Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. (718)



# Derrick Van Bummel

- ▶ the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary (718)



# Nicholas Vedder

- ▶ The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbors could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sundial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation. (718)



# Other Characters

- Dame Van Winkle
- Wolf
- Henry (Hendrick) Hudson





# Summary





**Narrator**



**Did Rip Van Winkle actually sleep for  
20 years?**



**Before and after**



# The flag

- ▶ Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes - all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.



**What is this time-travel thing?**



**Is Rip Van Winkle a romantic  
character?**



# **Anti-hero and the American Dream**



# Women in “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” and “Rip Van Winkle”

Katrina Van Tassle VS Dame Van Winkle





# **Romantic elements in the short story**



# **Romantic Nostalgia**



# **Fiction and Facts**