

HISTORY
OF
BROOME COUNTY

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF
SOME OF ITS PROMINENT MEN AND PIONEERS*

EDITED BY
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eighteen days. The families, therefore, dug up the potatoes which had been planted, and subsisted on them and a little meal until the men returned. We were often without salt, and would 'jerk' our venison and eat it fresh. My father took General Patterson's white horse and went to Salina (now Syracuse) and got two and a half bushels of salt, and brought it home in bags on the horse's back, he walking. Reaching the other side of the State bridge (Cortland county), and it becoming dark, he was unable to find his way by the 'blazed' trees. The wolves surrounded him and he was forced to climb a tree, where he remained until the brutes went away. He then came down and made a pillow of the salt bags on which he passed the remainder of the night as best he could."

The first preacher remembered by Mr. Olmstead was Rev. Seth Williston, who preached in a log house at Asa Whitney's, about a mile up the creek from Triangle village. Land then sold at ten shillings an acre. Ashbel Olmstead died October 6th, 1847, aged eighty-four years.

The scarcity of salt in this vicinity in early times, and the difficulty of getting it, was a cause of great inconvenience to the settlers, and led to efforts for the discovery of the salt springs or wells where, it was well known, the Indians obtained quantities of the valuable article. The Indians had told Mr. Barker (the first settler in the town of that name) that they would go to "Salt Point" for their salt; but they were sure to go at night and return the next day with their camp kettle full (some eight or ten quarts), and it was said to be warm on some occasions upon their return. But the whites never learned where the Indians obtained their salt, although extraordinary efforts were made to do so, further details of which will be found in the history of the town of Barker.

A settlement was made very early about two miles east of the present village of Triangle, by Nathaniel Hays, grandfather of the present Nathaniel Hays, and the locality was known for many years as "Hays's Settlement." Four of his sons also came and a few other families at about the same time. They built a school-house, and the children from where the village of Triangle is now situated and the surrounding vicinity attended school there. Meetings were held there by a Deacon Spencer and the Rev. Henry Ford came there to preach occasionally. A Methodist class was also formed at an early day. Benjamin Jackson was one of the settlers there and his house was used as a place for religious meetings for many years. By a subsequent change of the town line, this locality was thrown into Chenango county. In course of time the business center became fixed at the site of Triangle village. Benjamin Gibbs was probably the first settler here; he was a blacksmith and had a shop where that of Charles Love now stands. Gibbs remained but a few years. Andrew Woodruff, father of the late Rev. Jeremiah Woodruff, came here early and settled about half a mile south of the village. David Gibbs, a brother of Benjamin, and a carpenter, located at an early day a little east of the center of the village; he subsequently went to Genesee county, where he died. Timothy Clark came in and lived on what was long known as the Guy E. Baker estate; he became quite prominent and was a justice of the peace. His brother, David Clark, commonly known as Colonel Clark, came about the same time and built where the widow of R. E. Hall lived until recently. He started the tannery lately owned by Nathaniel Hays, and also built the first tavern in the place; it stood a little west of the site of the present hotel, and has been changed into a private dwelling, occupied by G. G. Saxton. Colonel Clark

sold out and went to Greene, where he died. These two brothers originally owned all of the land on which the village now stands and considerable surrounding—some 700 or 800 acres. The place was first called "Clark's Settlement;" afterward "Clark's Corners."

Levi Woodruff, a brother of Andrew Woodruff, already mentioned, settled early nearly opposite of where the Congregational Church now stands. He sold to William Simmons, who came from Dutchess county, went to Michigan and there died.

Dr. Edwards lived for a number of years near the Jackson cemetery, and was the first physician in the place. He subsequently went to live with his son about a mile north of the village, where he died.

George Beckwith was an early settler and was land agent for Peter Smith, father of the late Gerrit Smith. He built the house with a brick basement on the corner, in which he kept a small store, which was at that time a great convenience to the inhabitants. He was a prominent and respected citizen and died here.

The house now occupied by H. B. Simmons was built by Ira Slater for a tavern and kept as such by him for a number of years. He died with delirium tremens. He was followed on the premises by Robert Cook, who also kept a tavern a short time, and then sold to William Simmons, and he to the present owner.

Elisba Boyington came here probably as early as 1811; he was a native of Connecticut and came first to Otsego county, whence he went into St. Lawrence county, and then settled about a mile northwest from Triangle village, on West brook. He brought four children with him, the family coming on an ox sled. They had eight children after coming here, lived to an old age and died much respected; he in 1851 and she in 1866.

Asa Whitney was one of the first settlers and located on the lands which have gone to form the farms of A. and A. Whitney, his grandsons, O. Eggleston and L. Page.

Asa Taft, sen., came here from Schoharie county in 1807, having removed to that county from Massachusetts in 1804. He took up a farm of two hundred acres, where he lived until his death, which occurred in 1839, at the age of sixty-five years. His son, John W., followed him on the homestead. It passed from his possession to that of Graves Collins, then to a Mr. Carpenter and then to W. Jackson; it is now owned by the heirs of the latter.

John Parker, who was a soldier of the Revolutionary War for seven years, came from Litchfield, Conn., in 1806 or 1807, bringing with him ten children, equally divided between the sexes. Thomas, the youngest son, occupies the homestead. Mr. Parker died October 24th, 1831, at the age of sixty-nine years, and his wife June 28th, 1836, aged seventy years; both were buried at "Hazard's Corners."

Hazard's Corners took its name from Edmund Hazard, who settled early where his son John now lives. He became a prominent man; was supervisor of the town and a leading citizen.

Other comparatively early settlers in this vicinity, as chronicled by Mr. Taylor, may be grouped as follows: The farm formerly owned by Hamilton Boyington is now occupied by Dewitt Brown. John Brewer and Dewitt Brewer occupied it for a time. A Mr. Black formerly occupied the farm where Mrs. Aikins now lives; he was followed on the place by Major Enos Warner, and he by a Mr. Meeker. Jared Taft was an early owner of the farm now in possession of A. B. McGee. He was followed by Samuel Terry, who built a small grist-mill there. Samuel Ticknor first settled where his sons George and Samuel now live.

Reuben Hall came in early and settled where O. D. Gray afterward lived for many years. What was for many years known as the Slater farm was formerly occupied by Mr. Slater and then by his son Milo. The present owner, L. Conro, bought of him. The former Lunan Olmsted farm is the one now owned by J. Eggleston. E. Hall lives on a part of the farm formerly owned by his father, Reuben Hall, already mentioned. Francis Clough was among the early settlers and owned the farm afterward occupied by his son, F. Clough. D. S. Whitney lives on what was for many years a part of the Beckwith estate. It was originally settled by a man named Harrison. H. M. Edwards owns the farm which was originally a portion of lands owned by Timothy Clark, before alluded to. A. Sweetland lives where Reuben Chase formerly did. S. Sanford, a son of an early settler, lives on the homestead, a portion of which is occupied by G. W. Sanford. Joseph Covey was among the early settlers. Hope Covey formerly lived where Gilbert Brown now resides, and John Covey lived where C. Taft now does. Erasmus Ballard came here quite early and died here, being succeeded by his sons Dwight and Harlow. Daniel Covey, a son of Hope, lived where J. P. Beckwith now does; he went to Iowa. A union meeting-house stands in this vicinity. Some of the other pioneers in this region will be mentioned in the history of Triangle village.

If we now turn from the river road at the Dorchester burying ground and pass up what is known as the Page Brook road, we come to the farm of John Green. His father was Elon Green, who came from near Rhinebeck to Binghamton in 1792 and settled on this farm in 1804. He died in 1851 at the age of seventy-seven years.

Anson Dickinson settled at an early day where Bennett Beardslee now lives. He

died there and was succeeded by Reuben Hatch, who sold to Mr. Beardslee.

George Ashby located quite early where A. B. Dodge now lives. He afterward went west.

Orrin Dickinson formerly lived where the residence of R. B. Arnold now stands. Alec. Runney once lived where A. Hodges now resides. He was followed by Hadsell Johnson, who sold to Benjamin Hodges, father of the present owner. Jacent Hall lived at an early day where R. D. Page now lives. He came from Connecticut and was an early school-teacher. Solomon Page bought the farm and he went to Greene village; the property has belonged to its present owner many years. Stephen Bronson came from Connecticut among the first settlers in this locality and located where Reuben Hall lived, and died a few years ago. Timothy Bidwell bought from Bronson and sold to Mr. Hall. A part of the tract of land was formerly owned by Titus Page, who was also an early settler.

Going directly north and passing the school-house, the first farm is that originally owned by the first settler, John Page, who came from Litchfield, Conn., with his father when very young.

Turning west from the school-house of Page Brook, one passes first the house of Frank Hall, who owns one-half of the farm bought by his father. Nearly opposite lived the late J. G. Spencer, and a little farther on is the dairy farm of Miner Howland. Turning east from the school-house Cyrus Page lives on the right. His father was Solomon Page, who bought land of different persons, and his son purchased from him. Next is the farm first settled by B. Alton, which passed through numerous hands to its present owner, C. S. Tillson. On the next farm Joshua Baker settled in 1804; the farm is now occupied by Andrew Baker, his son. Another son, Cyrus

enty years ago. Mr. Fuller's land was bounded on the west by the Thomas Whitney estate; the Jerry Rogers farm was also a part of the original Thomas Whitney lands."

Passing on east, one comes to the Rogers estate, which was first settled in 1808 by Captain Nathaniel Rogers, who came then from Delaware county. He built a log house directly south of the house where Deacon Shuart lived, on the bank of a small creek. The old road ran for a number of years along the bank of that little stream. After the Catskill and Ithaca turnpike was opened on the present line, he built another log house directly south across the road from where his grandson, Earlman Rogers's house now stands. Nathaniel Rogers brought his family with him; he had twelve children, but six died in youth. When the War of 1812 began he went into the service of his country and was honored with a captain's commission. He died in 1857, at the age of eighty-six years. Earlman Rogers took a part of the original homestead and built the house afterward occupied by A. C. Robinson, in 1828. He had six children, some of whom still live in the town.

Captain Amos Johnson, a native of Westfield, Conn., came when young to Charles river, where he afterward engaged in business, and married Martha Carley; this event occurred in February, 1802. About the year 1807 he came to this town with his wife and three children. He brought his goods on an ox sled. He first built a log house where the dwelling recently occupied by his son Charles stands; later he built a frame house about twelve rods north on the opposite side of the road, where he lived for more than thirty years, when the present house was built. The deed by which Mr. Johnson obtained this land from John Hornby, of England, is still in possession of his descendants, and is a quaint document. It

was signed and sealed in presence of Robert Morelli, by Hornby's attorney, John Greig, and is dated October 7th, 1812. Hornby's patent embraced 90,000 acres, and extended as far east as the Chenango river. Mr. Johnson paid \$3 an acre for his land. He was not only one of the first settlers on the hill, but a man of great industry, and worked a large contract on the old turnpike. This latter fact is proof of the error in *French's Gazetteer of the State* that the turnpike was finished in 1796. Luman Olmstead, who was born in 1792, worked for Captain Johnson on the turnpike, which must have been at a date considerably later than 1796. It is possible that a portion of the turnpike was finished toward the eastern end and opened as early as the date given in the *Gazetteer*, but the entire line was probably not traveled before 1810 or 1812. Captain Johnson lost all of his means in his turnpike contract and was compelled to begin life again in poverty. He had eleven children, some of whom now live in the town. Captain Johnson died September 24th, 1849; his wife January 28th, 1862.

Marcus Hart was one of the first, perhaps the very first settler on the hill, and lived in a log house which stood on the south side of the road near the corners. He set out the orchard now owned by Charles Johnson. As his death approached he made a special request to be buried between two of the apple trees, which was fulfilled. Deacon William G. Shuart came to this locality in 1835 and bought forty-eight acres of Samuel Clark and Samuel, jr., and forty acres from Marcus Hart, just alluded to. It is believed that Hezekiah Austin first owned the Clark property. The two Clarks mentioned went to Michigan and died there. The old house standing back of Deacon Shuart's present dwelling was built by Marcus Hart; the present house was built in

1860. The old barn back of the old house has stood for many years, and was once used by the early stage drivers for an exchange stable. For many years a four-horse daily stage passed here each way.

Captain Daniel Saxton was a native of Smithtown, L. I., and came here in 1823. He settled on the turnpike where his son Henry H. lived. A man named Swift formerly owned the property at an early day, and afterward John Johnson owned it. Mr. Saxton bought of him. He brought with him a family of ten children, and twin boys were born to them after their arrival; Henry H. was one of them.

Hasting Martin lived on the turnpike directly west from Mr. Saxton's, where Stephen Webb now lives. He was killed by a log rolling over him.

Leonard Rose lived in a house which is still standing, near Mr. Martin's. The turnpike was changed at this point many years ago, to better accommodate Whitney's Point and also avoid the steep hill. Before this was done, Mr. Leonard kept a tavern. Mr. Rose was succeeded by a man named Hard, who subsequently left home and has never since been heard from.

Albert Seymour settled early where his son Fred now lives. Directly north of Mr. Seymour's lived the four families of Stephen Austin, Solomon Page, P. Bliss and S. Alexander. These were one after another bought out by Dr. H. Hemingway and the lands consolidated into one large and valuable dairy farm. Samuel Willard owned a portion of this tract at a very early day.

Robert Austin lived where the late G. W. Mitchell lived and died as early as 1823. Mr. Mitchell bought the property of Captain Hawley more than thirty years ago. It is now occupied by his son-in-law, P. O. Tower.

Samuel McKay settled probably as early as 1815 on what was long known as the Bliss

property. He came from Burlington, Conn., and sold to Eben Bliss and he to his brother Robert about 1833. Robert was succeeded by his son Frank, who died recently.

Coming back to the corners on the new turnpike we find, a few rods east, the school-house. A log school-house was built here very early, on the opposite side of the highway. Here a school was taught and meetings held. Elder Levi Holcomb, a Baptist minister, preached there occasionally and accomplished much good. Among the early school teachers was William Johnson, who is remembered as a very good and useful man. Miss Whitmarsh, who afterward married the late Earlman Rogers, also taught there.

A. C. Woodruff built the house now occupied by David Brown, in 1828. He bought of Samuel McKay and sold to Elon Scott in 1848; it passed through other hands before the present owner secured it. Just east of this place there was formerly a log house, which was built by Timothy Woodruff, who came from Burlington, Conn., and died in the house as early as 1816. He was succeeded by Wooster B. Woodruff, who sold to Phineas Ball, went to Michigan and died there. Different owners have had the property since then.

A man by the name of David Fuller first took up the land where P. McGary now lives. He is remembered as a man of exalted piety. His widow married Nathan Webb.

Samuel Brockway settled early where the late David Ticknor died; the house stood a little west from the site of the present dwelling. Mr. Ticknor died nearly twenty years ago; and his widow some years after became deranged and committed suicide by throwing herself into a well. A few months after this calamity the youngest daughter was burned so that she died, her clothing having taken fire while she was

buried in early days on the south part of the Starkey farm, on the west side of the road; but when the present cemetery was opened many of the remains were taken up and placed in the new inclosure; the others were left and the land plowed over. The first burial in the new cemetery was the wife of Samuel Terry, in 1818.

Deacon Ephraim Hodge settled on the east side of the road joining the Starkey farm; he came from Butternuts in 1807, and had been a Revolutionary soldier; he died in December, 1849.

The first bridge near Upper Lisle crossed the river at Levi Dewey's south line, where a road crossed the river. What was then called the new bridge, at the Corners, was built in 1807, and stood a little above the site of the present bridge. John Storms built it as a toll-bridge, but it was subsequently made free. Isaac Terry and Elijah Hatch operated a plow-factory for some years, long ago, at the north end of the bridge, Terry running the foundry and Hatch doing the wood work.

George P. Elliott built the first store in Upper Lisle soon after 1800; the store-room was in front and living apartments in rear. In 1812 Dr. Todd came and built a store on the southwest corner. His clerk was Thomas Gazelay. About two years afterward his wife died and he closed his store and returned to Bainbridge. After the lapse of about two years more he was again married, returned to Upper Lisle and opened his store. Herbert Coburn was his clerk at this time. Meanwhile Mr. Elliott had moved away. Harry Green kept store here at an early date. One of these stores stood about opposite the present tavern; one where the blacksmith-shop is and one opposite the tavern on the south.

Henry Van Vliet, a brother-in-law of Conrad Sharp, came here at about the same time with Mr. Sharp. He worked in the

mill for a time and later kept a tavern where the house of the late John Barghardt, sen., stands. On the site now occupied by the tavern of L. B. Elliott a Mr. Bradt kept a public house.

The first church erected here was the Universalist, 1830.

The first blacksmiths in the place were Timothy Bradley and a Mr. Carew; the shop was on the west side of the river. Mr. Bradley built the first house between Noah Rogers's and the bridge. Julius Bragg bought them out and he was succeeded by Mr. Cross. Isaac Terry, above mentioned, and his brother John followed in the business. Their father lived near them.

In 1814 John Hinman built a house below Mr. Elliott's store, north of the Corners. His brother Samuel had a distillery in the field east of the house.

The first school-house was a few rods north of the bridge on the flat, on the west side of the river. Chauncey and John B. Rogers boarded one winter with their uncle, Noah Rogers, and went to school in that house; the high water took the bridge away and the school was discontinued. The next school-house was built on the northwest corner, east side of the river, where the hotel has since stood. In 1815 the district was divided, a school-house put on Noah Rogers's farm, a little east of where Abram Rogers afterward lived and died.

In 1810 James Stoddard, of Lisle, father of William and George Stoddard, taught the winter school; Henry Coburn next and Jonas Billings next (L. B. Elliott's grandfather). Miss Rachel Beckwith the summer school, six summers; she was from Clark's Settlement.

In early days the Indians came to this region every winter to hunt. They had a camping-place a little above where Hen-

The old turnpike passed here and there was formerly a toll-gate a short distance east of the site of the village. Samuel Wiswell kept this gate for many years and was blessed and cursed indiscriminately, as such functionaries are apt to be, no matter how faithful and accommodating.

Comfort Jackson was one of the early settlers at this point. He came from Connecticut and lived to be about one hundred years old. He located on what was long known as the Peter Johnson farm. His descendants still live in the vicinity.

Messrs. Almsbury and Boyd formerly owned where William L. Taber lives. This farm was in possession of members of the Hays family or their descendants for about seventy years.

Nehemiah Spencer was an early settler and lived where Benjamin Lewis does now. He is remembered as a staid and upright deacon of the Presbyterian Church and held meetings and taught school a little east of the village, before they were instituted in the village.

Jonas Standish located early where Isaac Taft lives; and Lewis Beman lived for a time on what was known as the Beman estate.

Julius Spencer was a basket maker who lived many years ago where R. Barnard recently owned.

West of the village is what was originally the Colonel Clark farm. South is the residence of O. Eggleston and that of G. Dunkil on the opposite side of the road. Adjoining is the parsonage of the Congregational Church, the land for which was presented to the society by Miss Beckwith, sister of George Beckwith. Nearly opposite is the dairy farm of S. Losee, which is a part of the A. Woodruff and T. Clark farms. Andrew Woodruff also formerly owned where G. P. Sibley lives. George Beckwith's father formerly lived where E.

Pearsall now resides. Reuben Chase, who moved into the village and died, formerly lived where A. Sweetland lives. Jonathan Sweetland was probably the first settler on the farm where William Purdy lives. Samuel Waltron also lived there a number of years and gave of his property to build the Baptist church. He removed to the West, but contracted a fever and returned East where he died. The farm where Martin Vroman lives was formerly occupied by Fred. English.

G. G. Saxton succeeded E. W. Simmons in the post-office, June 1st, 1875, and has since had the office. Mr. Saxton's father, Israel Saxton had the office two different periods, before and after the war.

The Whitney store was built by Dexter Whitney in 1851. It was sold to O. Eggleston, and M. E. Pearsall has occupied it since 1883. The other store was built by Harvey Phelps in 1865 and occupied a few years by him. He sold to Margaret Mills. It was occupied by E. W. Simmons a number of years and then passed to G. G. Saxton, who kept it until 1882. Chandler Olmstead has kept his store since 1871. It was built many years ago and has passed through numerous hands.

The hotel was built by Daniel Clark and has been kept by Egbert Pearsall since 1872.

The cheese factory was built as a stock concern in 1874. The owners are Egbert Pearsall, D. S. Whitney.

Mr. Taylor has published the following history of the churches of Triangle:—

"The Congregational Church was organized by Rev. Henry Ford, September 14th, 1819. The place was then called 'Clark's Settlement.' But there had been more or less divine services held there previous to that period. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper had generally been administered by this denomination twice a year. The