

To THE CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

It has been suggested that members of your Society would appreciate a short recount of the Historical Happenings in North East your neighbor across the line.

The close of The War of The Revolution found the western parts of our States in about the same condition they had been for many years, Indians a few Traders and endless forests.

The French Traders had a Trading Post at the foot of what is now Parade Street in Erie and a Portage Road from there to LeBoeuf. There was something similar at Barselonia with a Portage to Chautauqua Lake.

There was also a few Schacks at the mouth of Buffalo Creek and a large Seneca Indian Villiage three miles up the creek from Lake Erie. There was however no Town called Buffato until 1809

In 1795 there were four houses in the little settlement at the mouth of Buffalo Creek and in 1797 a girl baby named Duncan was born there. She at birth was the thirteenth white person in that community.

Her family was on its way to North East Township ~~to the farm~~ ^{and} where their descendents have resided ~~during~~ ^{FOR} the past one hundred and forty-five years.

In 1801 this little settlement at the mouth of the creek was laid out as a ~~little~~ ^{Buffalo} town by the Hollanders and given the name of "New Amsterdam".

In 1808 New Amsterdam was made the County Seat and its name changed to Buffalo

New Amsterdam's streets were given Holland names from members of The H Holland Land Co. The present Main Street was called Willinks Avenue. Niaga Niagara Street was Schimmelpennicks Avenue. Genesee Street was Busti Avenue. Erie Street was Vollenhovens Avenue. Church Street was Stadnitzka Avenue.

in 1826 the Trustees of the Villiage of Buffalo changed the names of these streets to their present ones.

So much for the first settlements on the shore of Lake Erie in Erie County New York. ~~The first settlement along the shore of Lake Erie~~ in what is now Erie Co. Pennsylvania was if anything a little in advance of that of Erie Co New York.

As far as North East is concerned its history is under a cloud its origin having no truthful published history.

Several histories of Erie County have been published and all of them that I have ever seen make mention of North East about as follows "The land now occupied by North East was sold by the State to a man named Brown, to a man named Gibson, who gave the Park" who sold it

The facts ^{in this case} are that no such transaction, or anything like it ever occurred. The State of Pennsylvania never sold the Site of North East to any person.

It is very probable however that James Gibson, one of the three Resident Directors of the Pennsylvania Population Co. did donate the Park to the little Town of Gibsonville (Now North East)

It appears that the State of Pennsylvania did advertise for Settlers in the Triangle about the time peace was concluded with the Indians

A dozen or so years after the War ended The State of Pennsylvania purchased the Triangle from the U.S. Government and advertised cheap lands for settlers.

Quite a few settlers came soon after 1790 when a peace agreement had been reached with the Indians. This agreement was made possible almost entirely by the efforts of the celebrated Indian Chief "Corn-Planter". Corn-Planter fought on the British side in the Revolution and later became one of our best friends.

A year or so after the first settlers came to the Pennsylvania "Triangle" the State of Pennsylvania without warning sold the Triangle land almost entirely to "The Pennsylvania Population Co." a Philadelphia Corporation of which Aaron Burr was President.

And the first Settlers? Well they paid for their land over again or moved out.

The early settlement of Western N.Y was a little different. During the War of The Revolution The U.S. Government borrowed considerable sums of money from a group of wealthy Hollanders to finance the War.

When the war was over our Country was very short on money but owned a lot of land, so, to balance accounts with the Hollanders it gave a Corporation known as The Holland Land Co. the most of the land in seven of its western New York Counties, some of Pennsylvania and possibly other considerations.

The western end of Pennsylvania
was Allegheny County at that time

In or about 1795 a man named Judah Colt of Genesee N.Y. learning that new lands for settlement were being offered by the Pennsylvania Population Co. along Lake Erie in Allegheny Co. Pennsylvania came on horse-back in company with a man named Porter to the P.P.Co's Office at what is now Erie Pa.

Each of these men bargained for 400 acres of the new lands at one dollar per acre. The following fall or winter Judah Colt visited the P.P.Co. Headquarters at Philadelphia.

There Colt offered Aaron Burr \$30,000.00 for 30,000.00 acres of the Triangle Land.

Burr refused to sell that quantity of land but did engage Colt to return as Manager at a salary of \$2,500.00 a year to the Company property on the shore of Lake Erie. Colt accepted, made his home in Erie where he died in 1832

This was before the days of Steam-Boats or Railroads and if one wished to visit any inland point he could walk, go horse-back or paddle a canoe.

Quite a number of years previous to this date and before any lands were offered to settlers, The Old French Traders in their deals with The Indians had constructed a sort of Portage Road or Trail from what is about the foot of Parade Street in Erie to LeBoeuf where connection could be made with a branch of French Creek could be made, and water transportation to Pittsburg reached.

Colt found this Portage Road rather unsatisfactory, It was upwards of 20 miles long and rather low and swampy in spots. However in his scouting about in the Virgin Forest of the Company he soon found a better location for a Portage Road and one of about half the length on dry upland, from the mouth of the Sixteen Mile Creek to what is now Greenfield.

Being a man of action he immediately made a survey and started

Construction of the Road. This was the second road built in Erie County the Old French Road, before referred to being the first.

In 1798 Colt completed this road and also established a large Country store for the Company near a branch of French Creek at the southern end of this Portage Road.

He named this point Colt's Station. Not a vantage of the buildings remain, but the road today is still known as "The Station Road"

In his survey of location for this new Portage Road Colt crossed an ancient "Indian Trail" in a large level spot of the Primeval Forest.

No one has any idea of the age of this "trail" but the location must have struck Colt as being a good "Town Site". at least (being a surveyor) he immediately laid out a Town, giving it the name of Gibsonville ~~after~~ in honor of the James Gibson before referred to.

The site of this new town took in the entire area of the north ends of Tracts No's 155 and 156 southerly to about the present location of Clay Street.

Today North East's North and South Lake Street is a section of Colts old Portage Road (the second road built in Erie County) which during the days of Gibsonville was known as Portage Street.

Today also a section of the "Old Indian Trail" (no man knows how old) is North East's East and West Main Street.

Gibson Park is at the North-West Junction of the Indian Trail and Portage Road.

The Town Of Gibsonville was laid with twelve lots south of the "Trail" and thirteen lots and Gibson Park north of the "trail".

Portage Road was laid 50 feet wide and the Trail 66 feet wide.

The lots of Gibsonville were numbered and Colts records show To whom each lot was sold-- Its acreage -- and the price received.

GIBSONVILLE

IN ^{was renamed} North East Township 1799-~~1800~~ and North East Borough Feb. 1834 ~~and~~ so named in honor their location. The North East Corner of the celebrated "Pennsylvania Triangle"

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