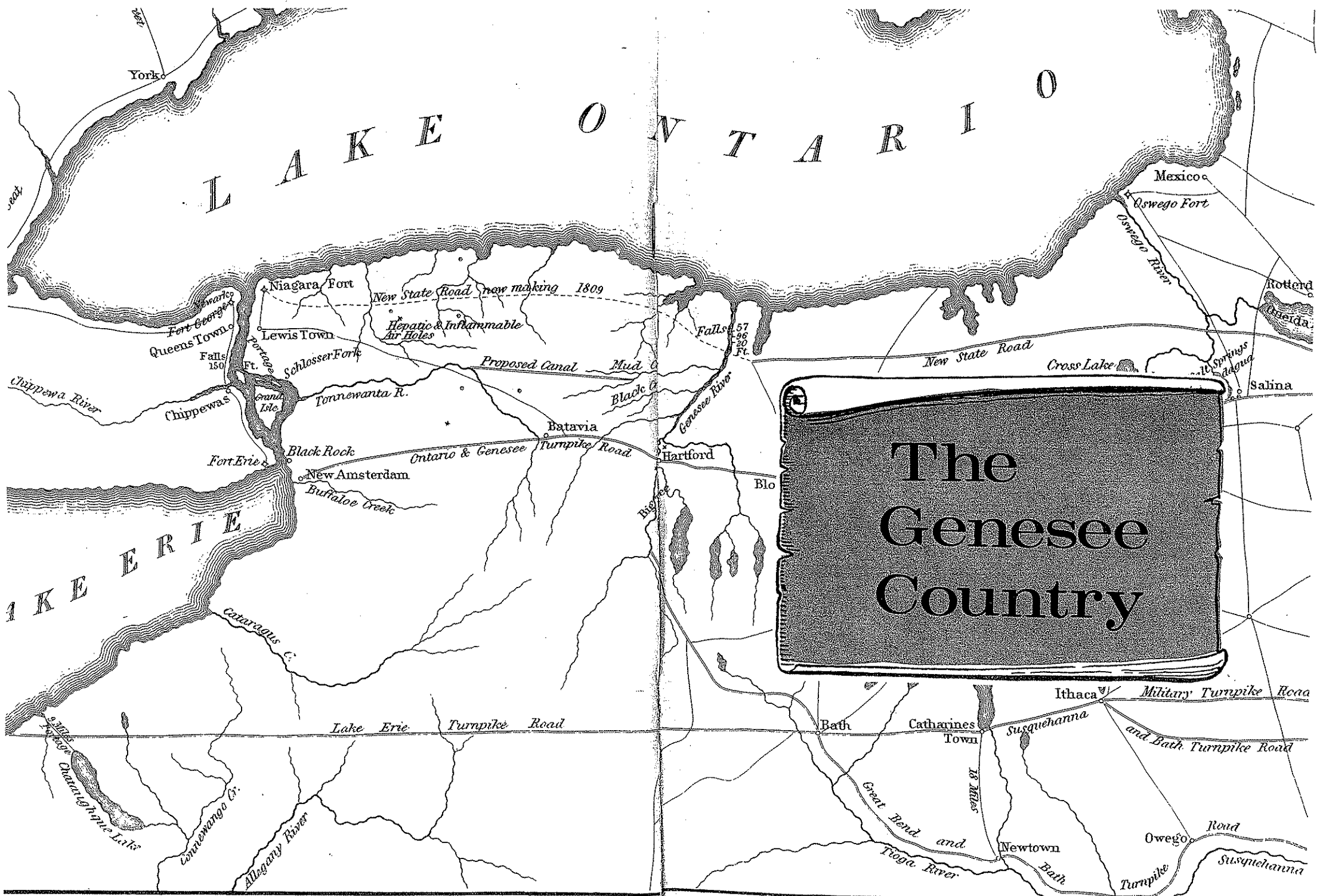
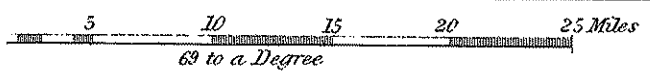


L A K E O N T A R I O



# The Genesee Country



WESTERN NEW YORK IN 1809.

Salt Springs .....  
Sulphur Springs .....

R.H. Pease Sc. & Print.

The Genesee Country  
and especially  
the story of Castile

An Affectionate Essay  
by Katherine Barnes

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## Dedication

To my children  
Dana, Margaret, Marian, and Nancy  
who have been an inspiration and comfort  
to me for more than half a century.

## Preface

When Katherine Barnes writes about the Genesee Country, and especially about Castile, you may well expect it to be a matter of love. Here is an individual who has followed a dream and by sheer focus brought to life a beautiful old house where are collected treasures of history which can be the envy of a far more presumptuous museum.

To the hasty traveler passing through the rural villages of the Genesee Country, Castile may seem like a "here-it-comes, there-it-goes" village, but to our author, to whom the folklore of the settlement has become as familiar as a next-door neighbor, it is a microcosm of the United States.

In one of the stories in the text, the author tells us that in 1905 she was twenty years old. So out of the pages of the book come tumbling first-hand stories of how it was then, what she saw and experienced as a young girl.

Katherine Barnes' view of history is the long view, catching the full sweep of the twentieth century. Her thinking is as modern as the new voter, and her ideas as seasoned as a tried recipe. She is an avid reader, who can tell you what is in most of the books in her precious museum library and whose memory seizes upon and retains the details of anecdote after anecdote.

In her dream, the village needed a historical society to collect and treasure the artifacts of the past. The Castile Historical Society is such a success that the membership grows and interest increases with each passing year.

The Society envisioned a home for its collections. A donor appeared to give a beautiful old house of true historic value with a great number of rooms and an ample barn behind.

The museum needed a curator, and who better than the former teacher of history, that she might continue to point out to the members of the next generation and the next that history is not dry and dusty, but a living, exciting thing where we learn from the past how to meet today and tomorrow.

When one has something old, perhaps of value, take it to Katherine Barnes. She will make a home for it.

When one needs information about the area, go to the Historical House and sit in the sunny living room among these treasures and search through stacks of research material which the curator produces from her files. As a bonus, listen to her tell stories about the early inhabitants of this region.

But, as we said at the start, this is an affectionate essay (a kind of love story if you wish) about how Castile came to be and where it (and all the rest of the Genesee Country) can progress to, if only we do not lose our sense of direction. — D.M.

## Table of Contents

1	Chapter I	After the Revolution— A Haven
8	Chapter II	Castile, 1800-1825 Where the early settlers came from and the priorities they established
26	Chapter III	Castile 1826-1850 Castile stabilizes and grows
29	Chapter IV	Castile, 1851-1890 Castile survives the Civil War and enters an era of social growth.
40	Chapter V	The Gay Nineties The gay and not so gay
44	Chapter VI	The Turn of the Century As seen through the eyes of a young girl
47		"Is There a Genesee Country"?
48		Map Sequence

# The Genesee Country

## Chapter I

### After the Revolution

In which we examine a map of the Genesee Country which was printed fifty years ago. On the back of this map is (1) the history of the Genesee Country when there were fifteen counties within its borders, and (2) the history of the Genesee Country Federation of Historical Societies from the time when it was organized in 1917 until May 26, 1926. We have reproduced these two pages and placed them at the end of this chapter.

#### TERRA INCOGNITA

The Genesee Country has been called many names. This one, "The Unknown Country" was given to it by the Dutch. Our nation is about to celebrate a birthday. In 1983, it will be two-hundred years old. There is a man living today who was born in Castile and lived here until he was nearly eighty. On May 30, 1972, Germain Smith was 104 years old. He now lives in Walkill, New York. He is more than half as old as our nation. When his grandfather was born in 1796, settlement of the Genesee Country was just beginning. The eastern part of New York State was settled almost two hundred years before the western part. And thereby hangs an exciting tale.

#### WHY EUROPEANS CAME TO NEW YORK STATE

Land meant riches, power and glory. So each European nation tried to get all the land they could. For hundreds of years, France and England fought over land. In 1066 a Frenchman named William of Normandy conquered England and became her king. You may think that the Battle of Hastings had nothing to do with the history of the Genesee Country. You are wrong! It did. William's standard bearer was an ancestor of Castile's first settler, Robert Whaley.

#### EUROPEANS WANTED TRADE AS WELL AS LAND

Trade meant riches, too. India and China were a long way from Europe. But Europe wanted to trade with them, for they had heard that these countries were very rich. But it was hard to get there. They tried going overland with camels. But there were no roads over the deserts, plains, and mountains. They tried to go by sea. In small frail sailing vessels, they went clear around the great continent of Africa. That took two years. Many men lost their lives that way. Some one discovered the earth was round. So they tried going east by sailing west. That is how America was discovered. They thought there must be a north-west passage that would be shorter. That is what Henry Hudson was looking for when he sailed up the Hudson River in 1609. At that time, over in Europe, the long arm of Spain was still reaching out to control the Dutch. The Dutch stayed

in New York because they wanted to trade. They found they could get valuable furs from the Indians for colored beads, trinkets, and a few yards of cloth. The French, the Germans, and the English also came to New York.

#### THEN CAME THE REVOLUTION

It began in Massachusetts, but soon came to New York. And when it was over, New York State lay prostrate, like a person who had been cruelly attacked and beaten. It was New York's darkest hour!

The trouble was supposedly between the colonists and England, the Mother Country. One-third of the colonists were fiercely loyal. They called themselves Loyalists or Tories. One-third, for various reasons of their own, did not want to fight or help either side. The other third were the patriots who fought the war. This last group not only had to fight and conquer the English, they had to fight the Tories. It split the families down through the middle. Fathers fought against sons, brothers fought against brothers. Fortunately for the patriots, some English men were sympathetic and fought on the side of the colonists. Even the English government and the English Army had men who were in sympathy with the colonists. Two things won the war—the money that Robert Morris, an Englishman, supplied and the help the French gave us.

#### BUT NEW YORK STATE WAS THE HOME OF SIX TRIBES OF INDIANS

And the Iroquois Indians were the most powerful group in America. In 1660 they were at the peak of their power. They had a confederacy that European nations studied with interest and amazement. So well and carefully organized was it, that the six nations acted as a unit. Each group was represented both in a military and civilian way. But no decisions were made until an agreement had been reached by all. The Iroquois considered the French their enemies because of an early and unfortunate entanglement with Champlain. They tolerated the others but resented the encroachment on their territory.

#### THE INDIANS AND THE REVOLUTION

The American colonists tried to keep the Indians neutral. They started out that way. Then pressure was placed on them by the English. Indians do not change their loyalties easily. They had considered the English King their great white father. Why were his naughty children, the colonists, not obeying him. They received gifts and bribes from the English. Soon the Senecas and the Mohawks, in particular, were on the war path. No home and no family was safe. Settlers were murdered, their homes burned. Finally in 1779, the Colonists decided drastic steps must be taken. The Indians must be completely destroyed. The Clinton and Sullivan campaign was sent to do the job. Some forty Indian towns, including Little Beard's Town, their largest, were burned and destroyed along with stores and crops in the fields. In all, one hundred sixty thousand bushels of corn alone were destroyed, along with countless orchards of plums, apples, and peaches. Mary Jemison, known as the White Woman of the Genesee, was living in Little Beard's Town. That is why she escaped and came to Castile, where she spent the rest of her life.

#### AFTER THE STORM WAS OVER

The Indians were without food and shelter. Where were the English whom they had helped? The huddled together on the reservations they had been given, and now it was the Colonists who were helping them. They were told the French were their friends, because they had helped to win the war. That confused them still more. Who were friends? Who enemies? And if the English had lost the war, why hadn't they left the forts on Lake Erie and Niagara? Why, indeed? Many of the Tories had gone to Canada. The colonists had tried to give the soldiers land which was called "The Military Tract" in the lakes region. But the soldiers didn't like it there, and many sold their portion or left and came to Western New York. There was still so much bitterness. A soldier who had lost an arm or leg wasn't happy living beside someone who had never fought at all or who had been a Tory.

#### THE GENESSEE COUNTRY COMES INTO ITS OWN

Now the Genesee Country began to seem like a haven. What if there were no roads into it? What if its swamps had not been drained? What if none of the great trees in its virgin forests had been cut? It was still safer than any other part of the state. At least they would have the country to themselves. And the profound silence of its great forests was strangely comforting. Wild beasts were no more to be feared than wild men, or as much.

So, by 1790, just six years before the grandfather of Germain Smith from Walkill was born, they began to settle the Genesee Country.

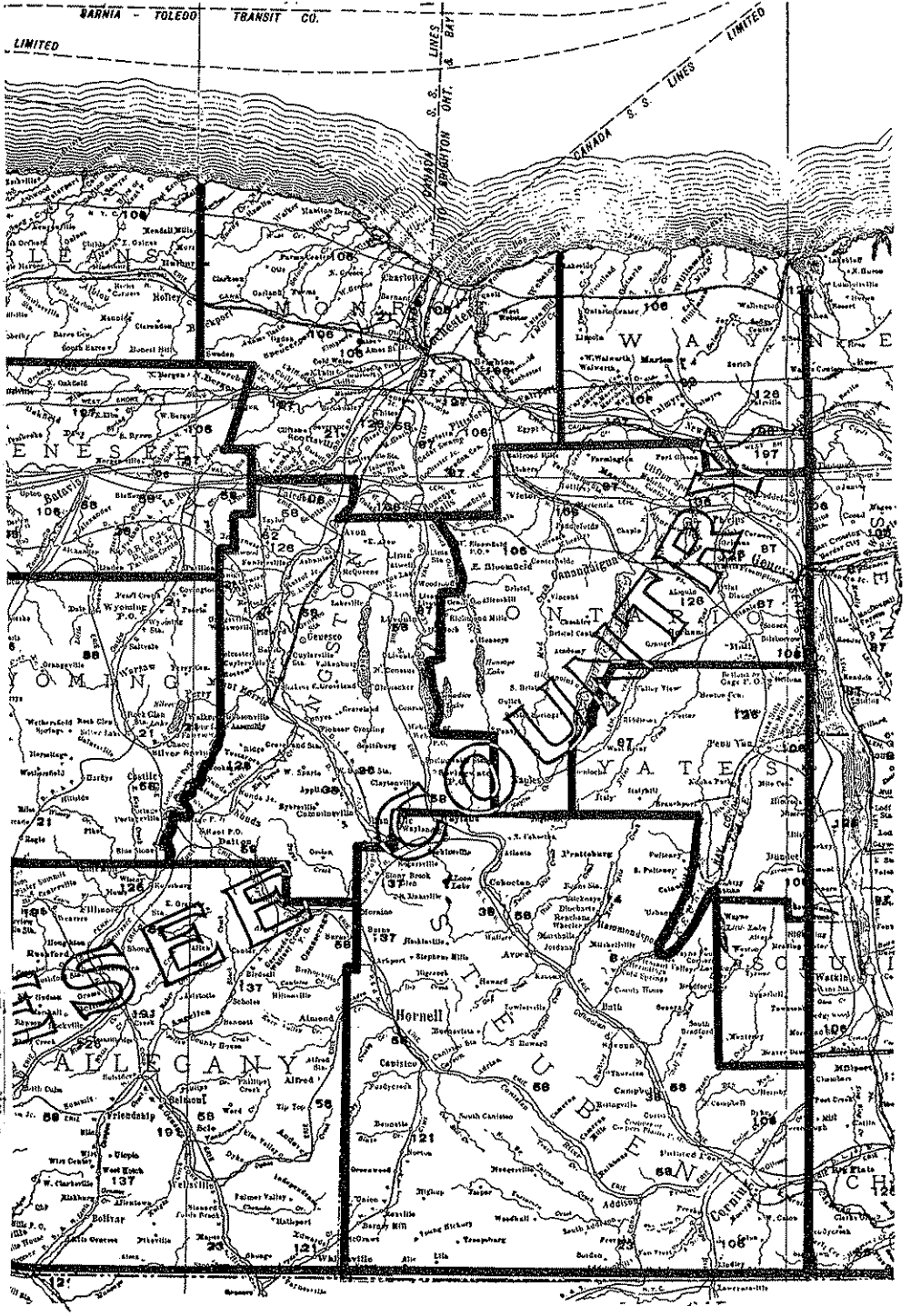
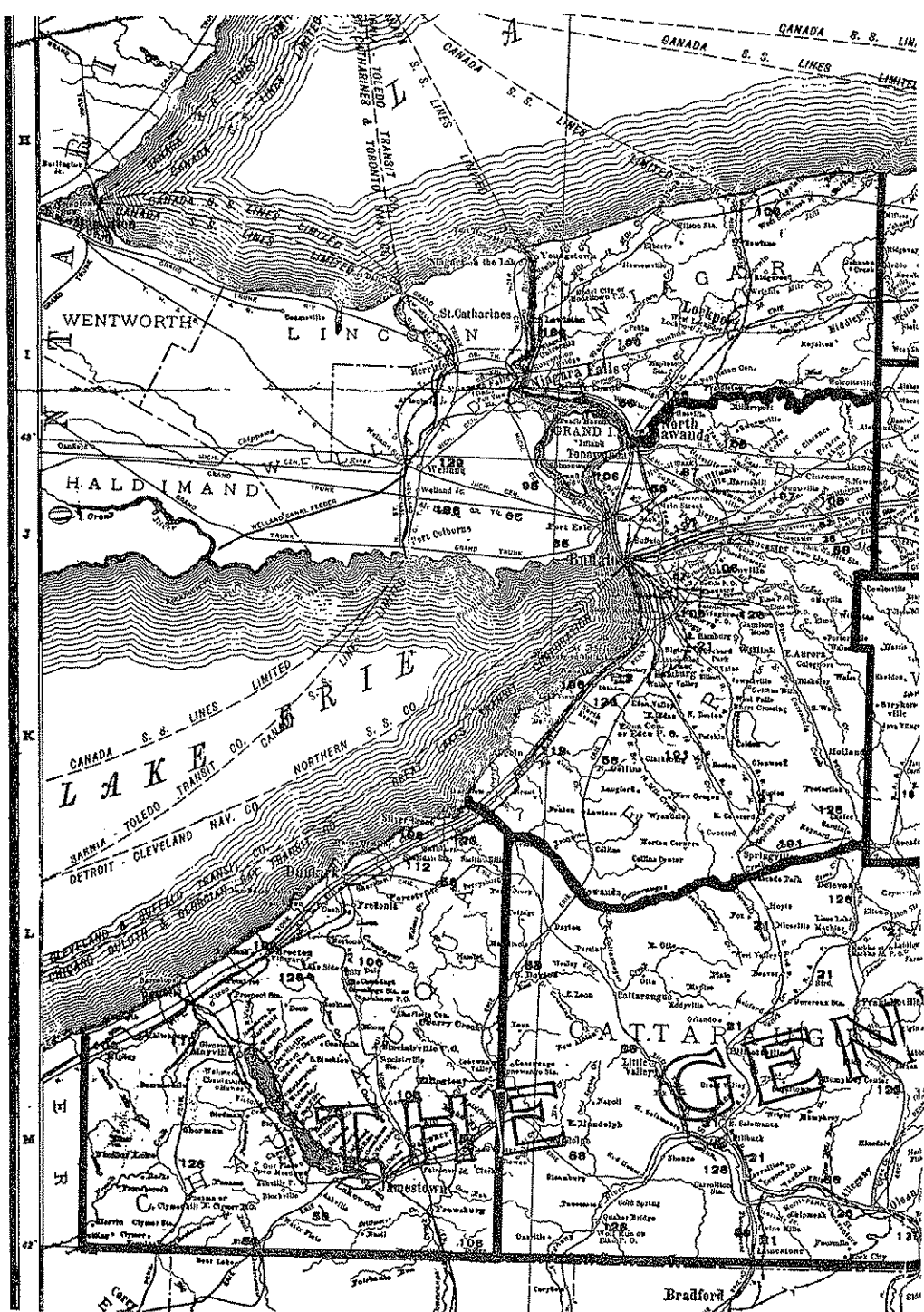
#### PROBLEMS

But it didn't yet belong to New York State. Massachusetts claimed she owned it. Finally, in 1786, it was agreed that Massachusetts should sell the land and keep the money, and after it was sold it should belong to and be governed by the State of New York. But—the Indians would have to be paid and their title extinguished before any sale was legal.

#### LAND SALES

Then followed a long series of land sales. Historical House in Castile has made a study of these, and the material is available for research work. It is too long and too complicated to print in this small book. Three men stand out among the many who engaged in the land speculation: Oliver Phelps, Nathaniel Gorham, and Robert Morris. These sales are interesting to the historian. Robert Morris was at one time a millionaire but died penniless. Not because he helped in the Revolution but because he speculated in the western lands, and before he could sell, he lost everything. That happened to many others. At first, Phelps and Gorham were going to buy the whole six million acres of Massachusetts. They couldn't, and so decided to buy two million, six-hundred-thousand acres on November 21, 1788. Then Robert Morris started buying in 1791. In 1792 and 1793 he sold to the Holland Land Company the remaining 3,600,000 acres which Phelps and Gorham had failed to buy from Massachusetts. The other 500,000 acres he sold to various land agents. This is where the Ogden Tract and the Cottringer Tract of Castile come in.

Incidentally, Cottringer is spelled Cottinger, Cotringer, and Cot-tringer, and in the very earliest deeds and maps it is spelled in all three ways.





# THE GENESEE COUNTRY

The Genesee Country is a definite territory historically, being that part of New York State lying west of Seneca Lake. At present this comprises all or parts of the fifteen counties shown on the map herein: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Steuben, Wyoming; and in part Schuyler, Wayne, Yates. It is the original Phelps and Gorham Purchase.

Refresh your recollection with this brief summary of facts in regard to the Genesee Country: At the close of the Revolution, 1783, King George III relinquished to America all his claim to this territory; it was then a wilderness inhabited by Indians; the State of New York claimed the territory under grant of King Charles II to his brother the Duke of York, 1664; Massachusetts resisted the claim upon ground of prior title under charter of King James to Plymouth, 1620; this dispute was settled by treaty of Hartford, 1786, when Massachusetts relinquished sovereignty to New York but retained title to the land, subject to Indian rights; April, 1788, Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham bought the entire territory from Massachusetts and extinguished the Indian title in part by treaty of Buffalo; later they were released from the contract as to the lands west of the Genesee and the Mill Lot; subsequently Robert Morris bought the whole unsettled territory east and west of the Genesee, extinguished the Indian title, except as to reservations, by treaty at Big Tree, and sold the west to the Holland Land Company, and the east to the estate of Sir William Pulteney. The first land office in America was opened at Canandaigua in 1789 by Phelps & Gorham. Settlement followed east and west of the Genesee and our modern history began. Then the Genesee Country, concerning which Sullivan's soldiers had carried back such wonderful tales, became the Eden of pioneer hopes, a land of promise, filled with wonderful forests, natural meadows, mountains and valleys, of rich soil and natural water-courses. Long the paradise of the Senecas, it became at last a smiling Empire of the white man. Now the old Seneca Country holds nearly one-sixth of the population of New York State, including fourteen cities, two hundred eighty-one towns, and one hundred thirty-four incorporated villages. Rich in romance and history, this region is worthy to rouse the enthusiasm and win the intelligent study of all its inhabitants. There should be quickened interest in the dear homeland of the Genesee.

# THE GENESEE COUNTRY HISTORICAL FEDERATION

## *An Invitation*

You are invited to become a member of The Genesee Country Historical Federation.

## *The Organization*

The Federation is an organization seeking to affiliate the historical societies, and persons with pride in their local communities, throughout the fifteen counties of Western New York. It is a movement to understand and interpret our local history as an incentive for live community service. *It is co-operative goodwill with a practical program.* The Federation was organized at Canandaigua, June 29, 1917, under the gracious auspices of the Ontario County Historical Society, Mr. Charles F. Milliken, President, with the participating support of the sixteen principal historical societies included within the Genesee Country. At first the membership was corporate only, being restricted to Societies. Recently the Constitution has been amended to admit, upon invitation, individuals who would naturally be interested.

## *The Objects*

The money received from the small dues is used for postage and printing to advance *the objects of the Federation*: as a general agency throughout the district to encourage the marking of historical sites and the study of local history in the schools; to invite historical lectures, publications and the exchange of materials; to unite and stimulate local historical societies; and to *provide a central agency to promote these matters continuously.*

## *Headquarters*

Through Mr. Charles H. Wiltsie, President of the Board of Trustees of the Rochester Public Library, and President of The Rochester Historical Society, the Federation has been invited to use the Museum Building, Edgerton Park, Rochester, N. Y., as its headquarters, free of charge, and this invitation has been accepted. Here the Treasurer's office is located, and a clearing house of information for the Federation has been established.

## *Join Hands*

Indicate your acceptance by returning the enclosed slip to the Treasurer, with \$1.00, covering dues for the current year to May 26, 1926

LOCKWOOD R. DOTY, *President,*  
Genevoo, N. Y.  
CHARLES D. BEAN, *Secretary,*  
Geneva, N. Y.

## Chapter II

### Castile 1800-1825

In which we relate the story of the growth of Castile which was similar to the development of hundreds of villages in the Genesee Country.

Castile is a typical Genesee Country town. The time when it was settled; the character of its first settlers; the difficulties they encountered—all are characteristic of the early Genesee Country towns.

In 1800, what later became Castile township and Castile Village was then a virgin forest. There was an Indian trail around Silver Lake. The Allegany Road, which is now Route 39 and runs through the town and village, hadn't been started. There was only Mary Jemison's cabin down on the Genesee River and the two cabins she had built for her daughters. The ninety-eight hundred and thirty-five acres of the Indian Reservation she had been given in 1797 was in Castile the rest was on the other side of the river.

#### CASTILE'S FIRST SETTLERS

Robert Whaley and Janet McKay Whaley were the first people to build a home here. Robert was twenty-seven and Janet was twenty-six. They had come from Janet's home in Caledonia by way of Leicester. It was only thirty-five miles, and the road to Leicester from Caledonia was fairly well traveled. But the road from Leicester to Olean, which went through what later became Castile, had been started only two years before. It was just wide enough for their two-wheeled ox cart and was full of mud holes and deep ruts. Spring had come late in this year of 1808. There had been heavy snow in the winter, and they would pass through no settlements after they left Leicester. But both these young people came from pioneer stock and knew very well what was before them.

Robert's ancestors were the Vikings who came from Norway to France in the 900's. They settled in Normandy, and when William of Normandy left France to conquer England, he took as his standard bearer, Wyamarus Whaley. It was the duty of the standard bearer to protect the life of his leader, even at the cost of his own. When the king was in danger, he would raise the standard high, and all of the king's men would rally around the king to protect him and help him fight. Wyamarus did so well in the Battle of Hastings in 1066 that the king awarded him the lordship of Whaley in the Wapentake of Blackburn, Lancaster County. From him, all the families of this name claim descent. The family became numerous and extended over many counties. The names of the oldest sons, their wives and children were recorded for eleven generations. Their coat of arms carried three whales.

Then in 1615 was born Edward Whaley, the regicide. By this time, some of the Whaleys had become identified with the Puritans who tried to carry out some much-needed reforms. They were the Protestors of their time. Oliver Cromwell was the greatest Puritan of them all. Oliver's grandfather, Sir Henry Cromwell, had four children. The youngest, Frances, had married Richard Whaley, father of Edward. Edward held a high place in Cromwell's army and was soon made a colonel. When all the trouble came to a head, Edward was one of the judges appointed by Parliament to constitute a court for the trial of King Charles I. He was one of the fifty-nine men who signed the death warrant. A copy of this has been kept in the Whaley family. And the Whaleys have a cherished letter from Oliver Cromwell: "For my beloved cousin, Col. Whaley, At Hampton Court, Putney, November 1647.

*My Dear Cousin Whaley:*

*There are rumors abroad of some attempt on His Majesty's person. Therefore, I pray you, have a care of your guards. If any such thing should be done, it would be accounted a most horrid act.*

*Yours, Oliver Cromwell*

Edward Whaley's regiment served at the execution of King Charles which was witnessed by thousands. The sight of their helpless king produced a violent revulsion of feeling resulting in a reaction in favor of the monarchy. Cromwell feared anarchy, but he was an able and vigorous ruler. Scotland and Ireland became quiet. Edward Whaley was given the government of five counties: Lincoln, Nottingham, Derby, Warwick, and Leicester. He was made major general in the army and appointed commissary-general of Scotland. After ten years, Cromwell died, and his son Richard, who took his place, was unequal to the task. Charles II was restored to the throne and immediately started tracking down the men who had killed his father. Edward Whaley and his son-in-law, William Goffe, who had married Edward's daughter, Frances, left England and came to America. Nine others were executed before Edward left. Edward reached Boston July 1660 and was kindly received by Governor Endicott. But warrants for the arrest of Edward and his son-in-law soon reached this country. A sum equivalent to \$500 was offered for their apprehension. This started both Indians and whites on their track. They were concealed from house to house sometimes they lived in caves or in the woods. Finally they made their way to Old Hadley, Massachusetts. Here a minister by the name of Russel secreted them in his home in underground passages which he had made for their use. Here they stayed for fifteen years. The Whaley family say that in 1680 Edward went first to Virginia and then to Maryland: that he bought 2200 acres of land under an assumed name. When William of Orange came to the throne, and it was safe to do so, he had the land registered in his own name and lived there until he was one hundred three years old. He had been blind for twenty years.

Not all of the Whaleys were Puritans. Some were Cavaliers and escaped to Scotland. From there they went into Northern Ireland and became a part of the Scotch-Irish.

The brother of Edward the Regicide came to America, too. He took the assumed name of Theophilus. His son was Samuel, then another Theophilus, who had a son Jeremiah. He was Robert's grandfather. He married Tamson Purchase. Her tombstone is at