

The Forsyth-Warren Tavern

Knowledge Base



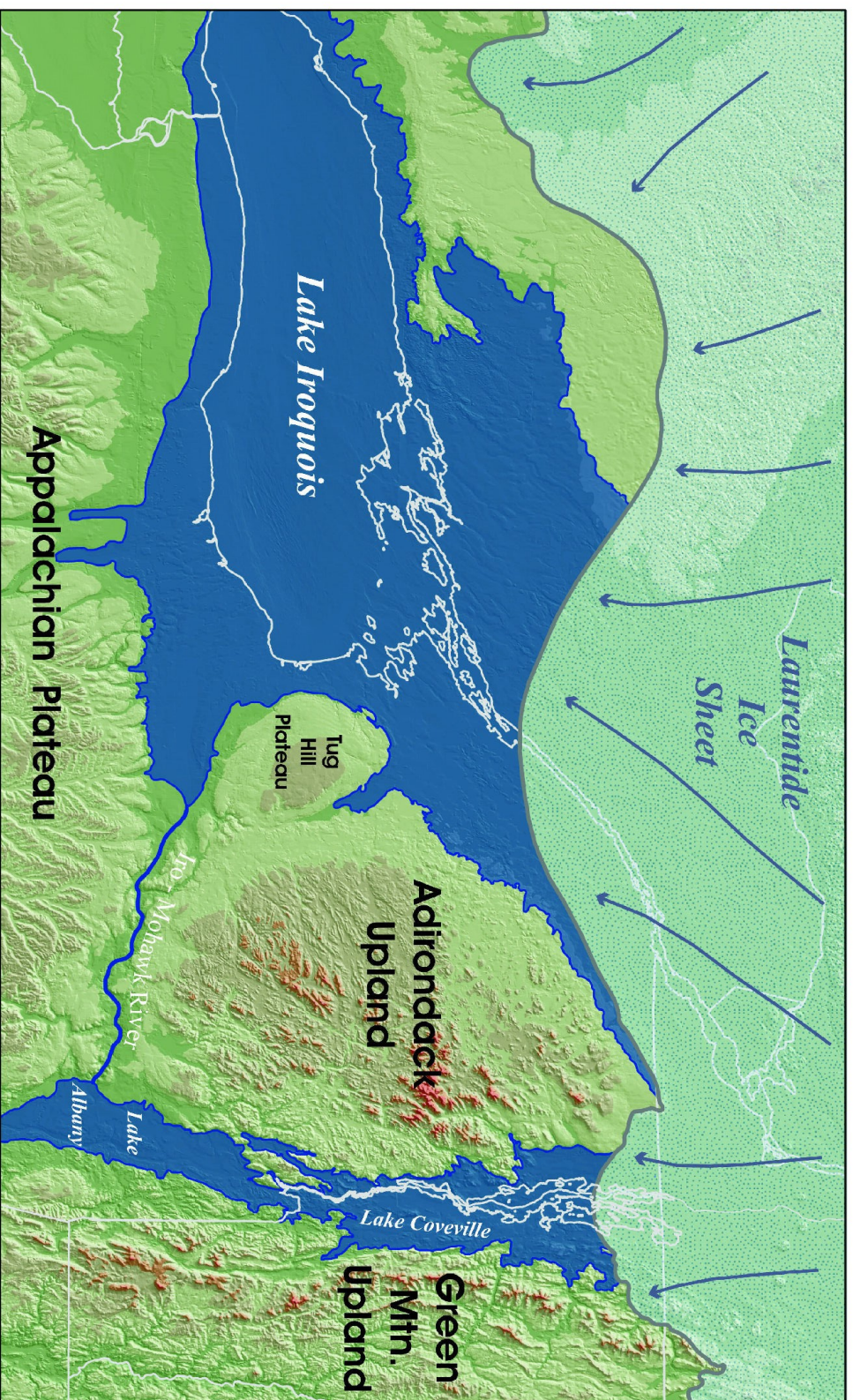
The
Forsyth – Warren Tavern
A Living History Farm & Museum

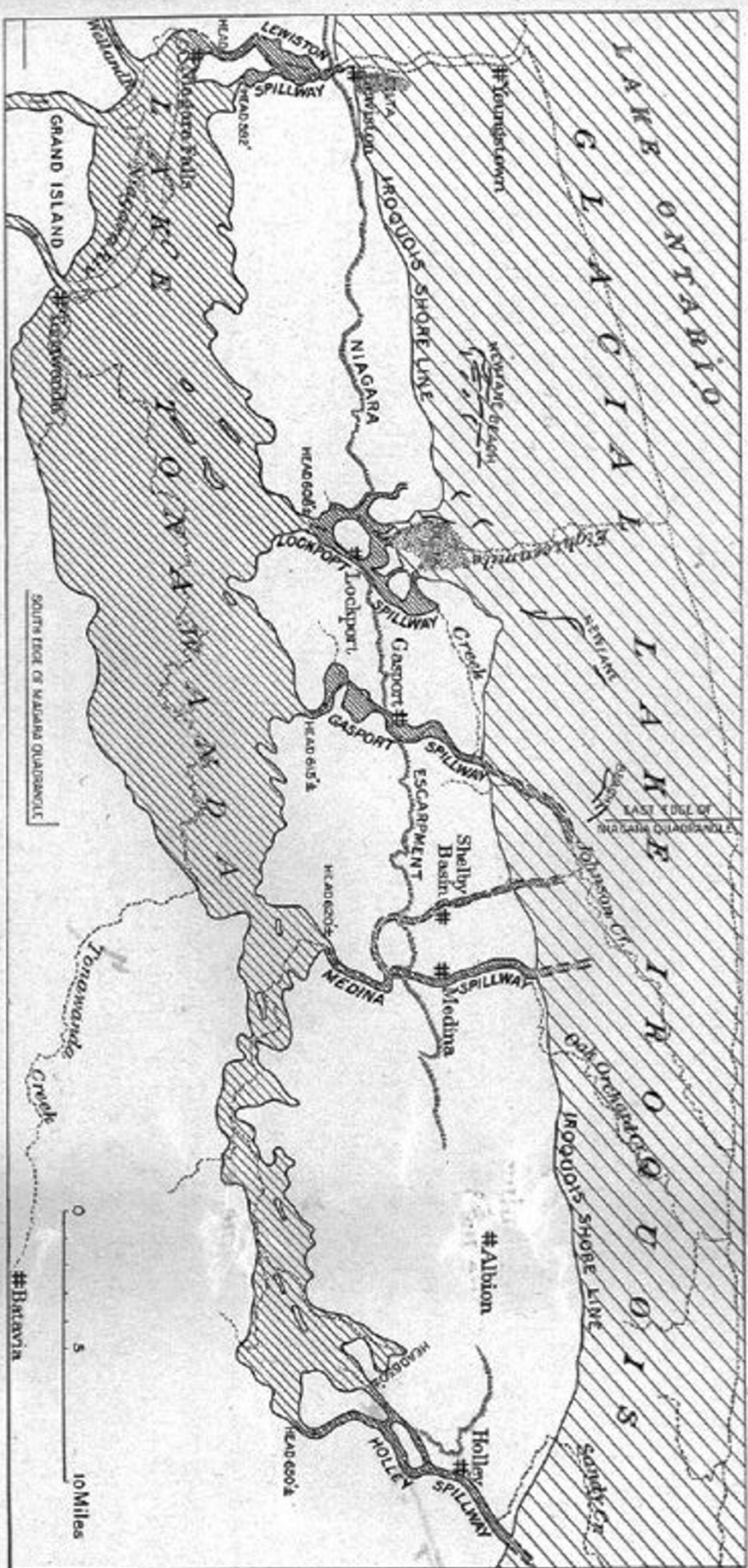
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Sketch map showing Lake Tonawanda and spillways from it to glacial Lake Iroquois.

The lower or early stage of Lake Iroquois, into which the spillways emptied, is partly indicated by the Newfane beach. The shore line of Lake Tonawanda is approximate, as it has been accurately determined in only a few places. Present elevations above sea level of heads of spillways is given.

Prehistory

A little over 400 million years ago, during the Silurian period, much of North America, including New York State, was submerged under water.

Dammed by the Adirondack Mountains and a tremendous ice sheet, glacial Lake Iroquois was three times the size of modern Lake Ontario.

Then, some 13,000 years ago, the natural ice dam collapsed.

Floodwaters rushed down the Hudson River Valley and into the North Atlantic. The water level in the Lake Iroquois dropped 400 feet, and reshaped the landscape as a torrent from the glacial lake thundered into the North Atlantic, adding a vast freshwater lid onto the ocean surface that could have rearranged ocean circulation and changed climate patterns.

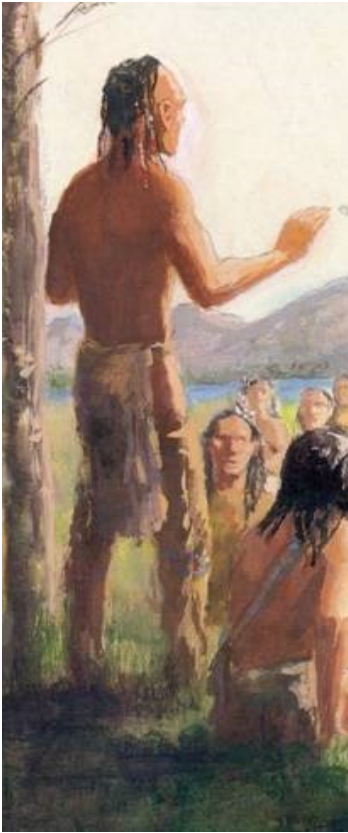
What followed is known as the Intra-Allerod Cold Period.

This proglacial lake was rediscovered by John Forsyth and first written about by DeWitt Clinton in 1807 after a brief visit with John.

What he had discovered was that the beachline of the former ancient lake was left behind after the great torrent and this thick deposit of sand created a natural roadway across Mesolithic New York that is still used today.

Indigenous people utilized this trail in their early development of the Niagara Peninsula sometime between 1300 and 1400 A.D. The people who once resided here are most often referred to as Wendat meaning "dwellers on a peninsula;" however, their true names have been lost to history.

The Wendat who resided here made a choice to not take sides in the 1649 war between the Hurons and Iroquois. For this reason, the French named them Nation du Neutre, Neuter Nation or Neutrals in their texts.



In the early 1600's, the Neutrals had a population of approximately 12,000 people in the area. They utilized the bark from trees in making homes, grew beans, corn, and pumpkins; hunted deer and beavers, use maple trees as a source of sugar and created flour from the acorn of the white oak, and they also gathered nuts, berries, and herbs.

Neutral hearth sites have been discovered on the Forsyth farm and a large burial ground was discovered atop the Ridge, to the West of Blackman Road. (more on this later)

In September 1619, during the reign of King James I, a group of Puritan Separatists that had taken refuge from England in the Netherlands obtained a land patent

from the Plymouth Company allowing them to settle Northern Virginia. They borrowed money from the Merchant Adventures and obtained passage on two ships, the Mayflower and the Speedwell. The Speedwell proved unfit for an ocean crossing and the group was forced to abandon it and all cross together on the Mayflower.

September 6, 1620 the 102 passengers and 30 crew members left Plymouth England and arrived November 9, 1620 off the coast of Cape Cod. Two days later it anchored at Provincetown Harbor.

Realizing, that they had no legal authority to settle at this location, the male passengers drafted the Mayflower Compact while still aboard the ship. This document is still considered the first document to establish self-



government in the New World. During the first winter, 45 passengers died aboard the ship and so only 7 of the planned 19 residences were constructed and those left without partners were partnered amongst the survivors.

In July 1623, two more ships arrived carrying much of the remaining Puritan Separatists. These were the Anne and the Little James. Between them, they added 96 new settlers to the already resource strained settlement.

In 1626, Etienne Brule, the first European, arrived in Niagara.

In 1630, the Winthrop Fleet, a group of 11 ships carried between 700 and 1,000 Puritans along with livestock and provisions from England to New England, beginning what would be called the Great Migration.



In 1640, a state of war broke out among the Seneca and Huron Peoples.

The Seneca started this conflict as a means to dominate the European trade markets of which the Huron people had become the favorite trading partners of the French. It began with small attacks that weakened the Huron's food supplies. Once weakened, a rapid scorched earth attack commenced. Armed by their Dutch and English trading partners, the Seneca other members of the Iroquois Nation destroyed several large tribal confederacies including the Mahicans (Mohicans), Huron (Wyandot), Neutral, Erie, Susquehannock (Conestoga) and northern Algonquins.

Father Paul Ragueneau, a French missionary in Canada wrote about the Seneca invasion. He said:

“Great was the carnage, especially among the old people and the children, who would not have been able to follow the Iroquois to their country, The number of captives was exceedingly



large, - especially of young women, whom they reserve in order to keep up the population of their own villages. This loss was very great, and entailed the complete ruin and desolation of the Neutral nation; the inhabitants of their other villages, which were more distant from the enemy, took fright, abandoned their houses, their property and their country; and condemned themselves to voluntary exile~ Famine pursued these poor fugitives everywhere, and compels them to scatter through the woods and over the more remote lakes and rivers, to find some relief from the misery that keeps pace with them.”

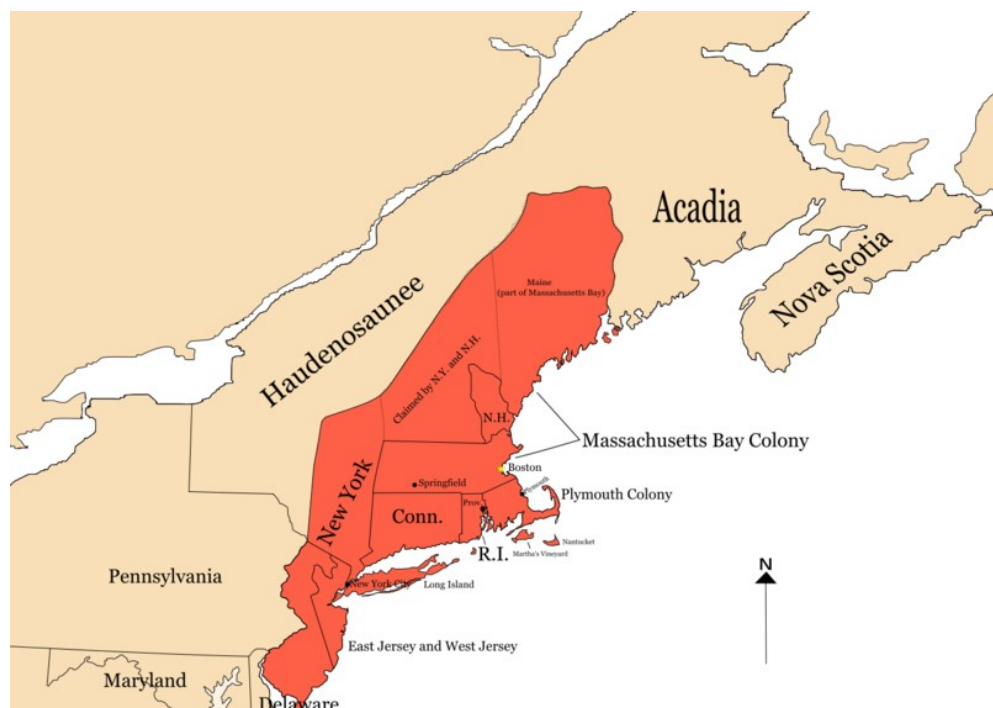
In 1675, rising tensions resulting from English migration into Native American territory resulted in King Philip's War. This conflict lasted until 1678 resulting in over 1,000 colonists dead and more than 3,000 Native Americans dead with more subjected to slavery and deportation. Many small Native American cultures in New England were entirely erased as a result.

In 1686, the entire region was reorganized under a single government known as the Dominion of New England; including the colonies of Plymouth, Rhode Island, Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. New York, West Jersey and East Jersey were added in 1688. This ended on May 14, 1692 when a new charter was brought by the royal governor Sir William Phips; known as the Province of Massachusetts Bay.

The 1760s through the 1770s were marked by a rising tide of colonial frustration with the monarch; worsened by the Townshend Acts (Intolerable Acts) in 1767.

On May 1,
1776, The
Government and
People of the
Massachusetts
Bay in New
England declared
independence.

October 1780
saw John
Hancock elected
as the first
Governor of the
Commonwealth
of Massachusetts.



Holland Land Company

In 1788, an organization formed by Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham bought preemptive rights to six million acres of land in what is now western New York State from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the pre-emptive right to the title on the land from the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. Phelps and Gorham exhausted themselves trying to clear the title to the land and it defaulted back to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Robert Morris purchased 1.5 million acres from Massachusetts for 1.5 shillings per acre. Morris succeeded in extinguishing Native American title by means of the Treaty of Big Tree and subsequently sold 3.3 million acres west of the Genesee River in 1792-1793 to the Holland Land Company, a group of wealthy businessmen in Amsterdam.

From the company's headquarters in Philadelphia, they hired Joseph Ellicott and sent him and 130 men to begin surveying the land. Surveying was done by the transit method, which required line-of-sight measurements and used 150 men to clear and gage the vast frontier lands, between March 1798 and October of 1800. They divided the tract into 6-mile square townships, those divided into 320 acre lots and the lots into 120-acre tracts measured in metes and bounds that were marked by inscribed stones or natural features of the landscape.

In 1801 Joseph Ellicott platted Batavia to be the headquarters of his land office. This new settlement was to be located just ten miles from the Ganson Settlement, which was then the farthest settlement west of the Genesee River.

Joseph Ellicott and his team developed a plan to divided the lands into 6-mile square townships which would each be developed from a single initial developer.

The first parcels were offered up for sale at the same time. The survey teams had cut some paths through forests and established camps along the way; however, most of the roads then were Indian trails and where no Indian trails were found, pioneers had to make their own paths. In 1801 land was selling for \$2.75 an acre and purchasers were required to place at least 10 percent down to their local land office. Often incentives were given to those first purchasers. These varied from being allowed to put less down to perhaps working off their debt by building a road, opening a sawmill, or any other action that would be necessary to further develop this western territory.

Ganson Family

Plans began in 1606 for the first permanent British settlements on the east coast of North America. On April 10, 1606, King James I of England granted a charter forming two joint-stock companies. Neither of these corporations was given a name by this charter, but the territories were named as the "first Colony" and "second Colony", over which they were respectively authorized to settle and to govern. Under this charter, the "first Colony" and the "second Colony" were to be ruled by a Council composed of 13 individuals in each colony. The charter provided for an additional council of 13 persons named "Council of Virginia" which had overarching responsibility for the combined enterprise.

A flotilla of ships sailed from England beginning in April 1630, sometimes known as the Winthrop Fleet. They began arriving at Salem in June and carried more than 700 colonists, Governor John Winthrop, and the colonial charter.

The ships in the fleet were:

Talbot (carried 19 cannon) Capt. Benjamin Ganson, family had long history with the Royal Navy., Sir Admiral Richard Hawkins and Sir Francis Drake.
Long line of descendants.

George Bonaventure (carried 20 cannon)

Lyon's Whelp (carried 40 planters + crew + 8 cannon)

Four Sisters (carried 14 cannon)

Mayflower (carried 14 guns and was a different ship than the Pilgrim's Mayflower.

Pilgrim (small ship with 4 guns that carried supplies only)

Captain John Ganson, born c. 1745, was the grandson of Captain Benjamin Ganson. He married Molly Holton of Danvers Massachusetts and they resided in New Salem. He was a private in Captain Ebenizer Goodall's Company of Minute Men, Colonel Woodbridge Regiment which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775. He was later wounded at the battle of Bunker Hill and lost his gun and finger June 17, 1775. He served several enlistments under Captains Richardson, Ballard, Partricks, Alden and Coburn. He was

promoted 2nd Lieutenant in Captain Seth Pierce's Co. Col. Seth Murray's regt. And 1st Lieutenant in Oliver Coney's Co. Col. Sears regt. 1781.

He was at Cherry Valley in 1778 which was the massacre of unarmed civilians that led Washington to order the equally brutal Sullivan Expedition. Seeing his forces continuously being devastated by the mighty armies of the Iroquois Confederacy of Native Americans, General Washington came up with a brutal solution:

“taking the war home to the enemy to break their morale.”



Under Major General John Sullivan, Mary's father marched from Easton Pennsylvania to Western New York, carrying out a brutal scorched earth campaign that devastated the Iroquois people. Sullivan's reached a point just north of Elmira, New York where Sullivan slaughtered his exhausted horses. This place became known as Horseheads, New York. Sullivan and his men then marched home, defeated and questioning his allegiance to General Washington and the new, young America. After turning down an offer to change sides by the famed turncoat, Benedict Arnold, Sullivan quietly retired to his New Hampshire farm.



Captain John Ganson, captivated by the beauty and fertility of the country, did not return to the comfort of home back in the colonies. Instead, he returned home for his two sons, James and John, and quickly made his way back to the remaining Iroquois village south of Rochester and on the east side of the Genesee River, he and his sons purchased land from the Seneca and made a new home for themselves.

He returned soon after for his wife and daughter but was horrified to find his wife prostrated by a serious illness which, after lingering several months, proved fatal come spring. Upon their return west, John could hardly recognize Mary's brothers among the children of the Seneca.



“Such was the outlook of the face of the country when Capt. John passed over it, and on his arrival at the Genesee river there was scarce a white settler to greet him. As he stood before the door of the Indian's wigwam, in whose charge he had left the boys, what was his surprise to witness their perfect transformation. In everything but color they were veritable Indians. In manners, dress, unkept locks, their pale face origin was barely discernable. But their greeting with their returned parent, whom they had supposed lost, from his absence, was not the less cordial.” (Gazetteer and Biographical Record of Genesee Co.)

Sometime in 1798, he constructed the first grist mill upon the river. It was made of logs, the stones of native rocks, and was mainly used in grinding corn.

In 1793 a man by the name of Charles Wilbur constructed a small log tavern west of the Genesee. The Captain sold his land to William Markham from Connecticut (that place now known as Rush) and purchased Wilbur's small tavern. It was the beginning of what would afterwards be called Ganson's Settlement which today is known as LeRoy.

“Soon after my father had come on west of the river, and opened a public house, other settlers began to come in. There was nothing on the road to Batavia, until Mr. Ellicott's surveyors made their headquarters at Safford. The Indians were frequent visitors at my fathers. I used to see them often, the chiefs, Hot Bread, Jack Berry, Red Jacket, and Little Beard. Sometimes the Indians were turbulent; they would become a terror to the new settlers. My father was a stout athletic man; had great influence over them; would quell them in their worst drunkenest frolics.” (Mary)

The Holland Land Company chose to make its headquarters just west of the furthest western settlement at that time which was Ganson's Settlement and the area quickly became alive with immigrants.

Ganson Tavern had to be enlarged and so the log tavern was razed to the ground, and a frame building was erected in its place.



Continued--

John had three sons, James and John IV, Benjamin, and one daughter, Mary.

James Ganson was a member of the New York Assembly in 1812-13-15-16 and 1823. He owned and managed the Eagle House on Main St. in LeRoy. He also owned the famous Ganson Tavern in Stafford, six miles east of Batavia, where during the Anti-Masonic Excitement in 1826, meetings were held alleged to be relative to the abduction of Morgan who subsequently disappeared near Niagara.

Although indicted in this matter, James was acquitted. He went to Jackson Michigan where he died in 1858.

John IV continued to operate his father's tavern. He and wife, Lucy, had children Holden (M.D. of Batavia), James (cashier of Marine Bank of Buffalo and twin of), John (graduate

of Harvard, lawyer, Representative in New York Legislature 1862, Representative in 38th Congresses serving committee of Elections, Delegate to Chicago Convention 1864).

Captain John Ganson died in 1813. His tombstone was brought from Albany by ox team and reads,

“In travelers claims he bent his weary way,
where perils prowled and wild beasts lurked for prey;
by perseverance and industrious toil
laid low the forests and made the desert smile,
till low in death he laid his weary head
beloved while living, and revered now dead.”

John IV's Stone is also intriguing. It reads as follows:

“Here lies the mortal part of John Ganson Jr,
who departed this life, November 30, 1819, in the
45th my year of his age.
read what this silent stone doth say,
and mind that you must pass away,
and have no time of trial more,
in time thereof, prepare to die,
that you may rest with Christ on high.”

From The Fleet in the Forest by Carl Lane (about the war of 1812) :

“Mr. Ganson buried his rum casks in manure and locked his tavern, then sledded along the great Bend Road all the way to Newton on the Tioga. He went not only east but south as well.

Fifteen hundred frozen soldiers and a dozen barn carpenters, buildin' a damn navy between me and the British! East ain't enough, I snum, he said at New Hartford and drove on.”

They got into the sleds again, drawn up in a line before Mr. Ganson's deserted tavern. Nez had led the breakin and found the rum under the manure easily. He considered Mr. Ganson's loss only just; when a man hung out a tavern sign it was his bounding duty to be around and make good on it.”

Forsyth Family

The Forsyth family descends from the Clan Forsyth of Scotland which dates back to before the 12th century. The Clan history claims that a son of Odin, Balder “The Beautiful and Good” and wife Frigge had a son, Forsite, “The Just” who became a king of Friesland.

Their motto is *Instaurator ruinae* (A repairer of ruin).



Their first known ancestor in America was Gilbert Forsyth; arriving near Boston before 1670. In 1675 Gilbert took part in the war of King Philip and afterwards received land in Connecticut c. 1682. He signed the oath of allegiance on April 21, 1679 and moved to Hartford in 1682.

In 1683, Gilbert Forsyth was installed on the Connecticut River in the city of Hartford. It was stated that he still lived there in July 1731.

The son of Gilbert was James Senior, a shoemaker. He married Hannah Lester, descendant of William and Mary Brewster of the Mayflower. James also fought in the French and Indian War.

One of their sons, James Forsyth II, (1711-1760) married Mary Mason in 1732.

James Forsyth III, was born September 2nd, 1738 in Middletown, Connecticut. It is believed that he was a member of Butler's Rangers.

He married Eunice Avery and they had four sons, Caleb, Daniel, William, John and one daughter, Sarah Buchner.



HOME OF THE FORSYTH FAMILY, SALEM, NEW LONDON COUNTY, CONN.
(Front view.)

John's parents moved to the Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania, in 1769. On July 3, 1778 1,000 loyalists and Iroquois led by Colonel John Butler set upon the Wyoming Valley. Women and Children gathered at Forty Fort while about 300 men and boys left to meet the attackers. In the massacre that followed, 360 men, women and children died, and many others who escaped to the forests died of starvation or exposure.

The family turned up in New Jersey by the time that their youngest son, John, was born (January 31st, 1781). They moved in with family members but unfortunately for them, these family members were revolutionaries.

John's parents were loyalist, also known as Tories, Royalists or King's Men, in the American Revolutionary War. New Jersey was known as the crossroads of this war and it saw the bulk and highest brutality of the fighting between the Revolutionaries and the British.

When the war ended in 1783, the British government offered free land in the Canadian territory to loyalists who continued to face persecution on the fledgling United States of America.

John and his family (James (age 44), Eunice (age 38), Daniel (age 11), William (age 9), Sarah (age 5) and baby John (age 2)) attempted to flee to Canada across New York but they were captured by an indigenous tribe in the present Genesee county.

They were released during a night raid and shortly after continued on to the New York, Canada border.

In 1785, they became one of the first families to settle on land acquired from the Mississauga Indians when John's father was given a Crown Land Grant of 388 acres along the crest of the Horseshoe Fall and Table Rock. He then purchased another 400-500 acres, amassing a massive estate in present day Niagara Falls.

The family constructed a tavern along the Portage Road near what is called Lundy's Lane.



Prospect House, Jack Ward, Proprietor 1951 Main Street, Niagara Falls, Ont. The Old Barracks of 1837

Records in the Canadian Archives reveal that John and his brother William were involved in smuggling and found trouble with the law of Canada between 1797 and 1799.

James Thomson of Stamford, in the County of Lincoln having this day declared before me an oath that he suspects and varily declares that JOHN FORSYTH of said Township was aiding and assisting his brother, WILLIAM FORSYTH in shooting at and wounding the horses, the property of himself and of Thomas Silverthorn. This therefore is to command you that you take the body of the said JOHN FORSYTH if to be found in your Bailwick and bring him before me or some other of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace to answer for the said offence herein at your peril fail you not.
Given under my hand and Seal at Queenston this twentieth day of July in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety eight.

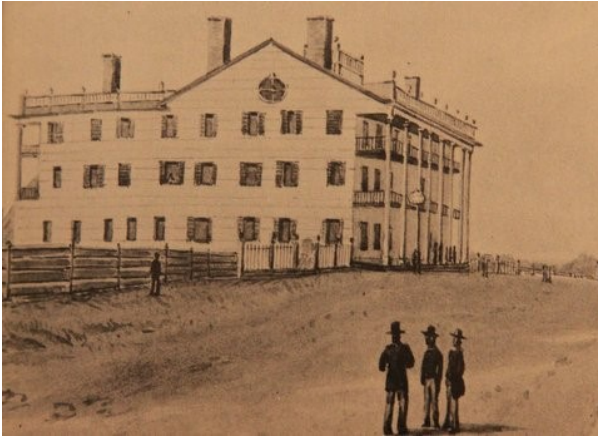
R. HAMILTON J.P.

Selemen Hyate
or any other Constable
for the home district
of Upper Canada.

(MR. HAMILTON'S WARRENT FOR THE APPREHENSION OF JOHN FORSYTH, JULY 20th, 1798. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RECORDS AND ARCHIVES, 14 QUEEN'S PARK CRESCENT WEST, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA).

In 1797, John was arrested for smuggling a person in his wagon. 1798, John was arrested for aiding his brother in firing upon the person and horses of James Thomson and Thomas

Silverthorn. Later that same year, John was arrested again for setting fire to the hay of Robert Hamilton. John and William boarded a ferry to the village at Black Rock around 1800.



William would return to Canada to open a stage coach line from Black Rock to Niagara on the Lake and then to construct the famed Pavilion Hotel atop the falls while John sojourned first to the area near Rochester that his family briefly called home once before and then to Ganson's Settlement at present day LeRoy.

William Forsyth's Pavilion was a white wooden three-story structure that was the largest hotel in Canada or America. By all standards it was luxurious and became quite famous by the many citizens and travelers that stayed there. The Pavilion Hotel's many balconies provided an unparalleled view of the Falls. William later staged the first publicity stunt at the Falls by sending the lake schooner "Michigan" with a cargo of live animals over the Falls. Soon after this, William was involved in a land dispute with the Canadian government which forced him to sell his hotel and move on to build the house that would be known as Bertie Hall nearer on the Niagara River to the Village of Buffalo.

The remainder of the Forsyth Family continued to reside on their father's original land grant; their father having died in 1812.

Their homes became a battleground in one of the bloodiest battles of the war of 1812: Lundy's Lane. The British, victorious in stopping the American invasion of Canada, utilized the family tavern and surrounding homes as barracks throughout the war.

John's father died at the Battle of Chippewa and after his death it was used as headquarters of the Army there. Sir Allan McNab, Lord Durham and James Buchanan each occupied the Tavern before it was burned by American troops.



John and Mary

John traveled from Buffalo to Gaines before he received word of a distant aunt who had married into the prominent Ganson family of Ganson Settlement. He found himself in the home and tavern of Captain John Ganson and there he met Miss Mary Rose Ganson who went by Polly. They were married sometime in 1800 or 1801.

In 1801 they had their first child, a boy named Ira (May 3, 1801 – August 7, 1802).

From Mrs. Anna Foster, wife of Eden Foster:

“In the year 1805 we settled upon a farm near Batavia. There were then inhabitants enough to make an agreeable neighborhood. We used to have ox-sleds: occasionally it would be out to Gideon Dunham’s, where we used to avail ourselves of the services of the left-handed fiddler, Russell Noble.

Some of our earliest parties were got up by first designating the log house of some settler, and each one contributing to the entertainment; one would carry some flour, another some sugar, another eggs, another butter, and so on; the aggregate making up a rustic feast. These parties would alternate from house to house. Frolics in the evenings; would uniformly attend husking bees, raisings, quiltings, and pumpkin pearings. All were social, friendly, obliging; there was little aristocracy in those primitive days. John Forsyth settled near Dunham’s grove in 1802, remaining there until 1807. Joseph Hawks came to Batavia in 1802, and moved to Erie County in 1805. It took him three days with a yoke of oxen and a wagon to go about 18 miles.”

John Forsyth signed an article of agreement with Joseph Ellicott on February 28, 1801 to purchase a lot along the speculative Queenstown Road whenever said road should be laid out. Early settlers were attracted to the well-drained fertile soils of the glacial beach line which this road occupies. Initially the speculative Queenstown Road was an Indian trail that crossed through land that once was home to the Neutral Nation, an Iroquoian-speaking indigenous people who lived in the region in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but had largely been replaced by the Iroquoian Confederacy by the mid-1600s.

It became one of the earliest roads in western New York and remains a principal east-west thoroughfare in central Niagara County. It is identified as a “wagon road” on one of the

first maps of the region prepared by Joseph Ellicott in 1804. The road would ultimately not be named Queenstown Road but Ridge Road instead.

It remains unclear whether or not John and Mary Forsyth were approached by Joseph Ellicott to construct a tavern in the new territory or if they chose to do so of their own design. In the early nineteenth century, the Holland Land Company was struggling to sell its lands in western New York and was looking for new ways to encourage the settlement of the region. One of the ways of accomplishing that was by establishing a series of inns and taverns on major roads that served as way-stations for arriving settlers. Given that John was the son of a pioneer Scottish family which operated a tavern at Niagara Falls, Canada, sometime prior to 1783, and that Mary's father operated a tavern in his settlement after the Revolution, it seems plausible that they would have been approached by Joseph Ellicott as potential tavern operators. Shortly after John made an agreement with Joseph Ellicott, the first purchase of land in the new territory was made by David Klink, who was also contracted to open a tavern under the direct guidance of Joseph Ellicott, suggesting that this may have also been the situation with the Forsyths. Klink's tavern fit into the plan of providing accommodations for other prospective land buyers visiting the area.

In June 1804 John sat on the first traverse jury organized in the new court of record. In that trial Joseph Rhineberger was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to 10 years hard labor in State Prison.

On November 28, 1804, John Forsyth signed indenture papers to take ownership of a tract of land along the Ridge Road at a principal intersection between the proposed villages of Batavia and New Amsterdam (Buffalo) and the proposed village of Lewiston and Fort Niagara and just 5 miles east of the log tavern established by David Klink. Forsyth purchased 190 acres as part of lots 23 and 24 in township 14, range 7, distinguished as

"The East Parts of Lots Numbers twenty-three and twenty-four... exclusive of one acre and six tenths of one acre reserved for a road."

The pioneers of the area had a dense forest to confront them as they located along the glacial lake line. Many years earlier, beavers had constructed dams that obstructed the flow of water in its natural course, so that three swamps were within, or contiguous to its borders. The one in the north part, called big bear swamp, encompassed hundreds of acres; the one south of Ridge Road flooded a large tract of land for most of the year, and the one on the east, located principally on the Forsyth farm, though not as large, retained water like the previous ones until the hot days of summer, when it generated malaria that caused fevers and ague (a form of malaria) that enfeebled many members of the community.

Mary was pregnant with their son Luther, born February 8, 1806, when she and John left for their new land.

With them was their son Edmund Jonas, born July 15, 1803. In an 1849 interview with Mary Forsyth, she described her and John's move and establishment of a tavern. She drove a covered wagon pulled by oxen. Tied to one side was a plow and on the other a coop with six chickens. The family cow was tied to the back of the cart. Following them was John on horseback leading three or four sheep and the same number of hogs. The trip took them five or six days. She indicated that early settlers had a difficult time co-existing with the indigenous wildlife and that livestock such as hogs had to be protected from bears and wolves. On their arrival a temporary abode was constructed. In the fall a more commodious log house was erected near the site of the current homestead. At that date their nearest neighbor east was Samuel B. Moorehouse, who kept a tavern at the place now called Hartland Corners. The intermediate space was known for many years as the unbroken woods to Forsyth's. Five miles west on the South Ridge, Joseph Hewett had located. The first summer of John Forsyth's residence, having occasion to cut swail grass in the marshes south of the ridge, he was obligated to go to Mr. Hewett's to borrow a pair of boots to protect himself from the bite of the rattlesnakes that infested the marshy places in the warm days of July and August.

Mary's Own Words (from Pioneer History of the Holland Purchase of New York)

"When we came, there were but three or four settlers between Dunham's grove and Lockport. East, there was no settler till we passed the Eleven Mile Woods. Our nearest neighbor west, was Joseph Hewett, at Howell's creek.

From James Barton's recounting of his journey from Avon to Lewiston in 1807 as told by Clarence Lewis:

Near the U.S. Arsenal (now the Batavia Fairgrounds), the road from Canandaigua branched. One road led to Buffalo where the other continued in a northwesterly direction and was called by Mr. Barton the Queenstown or Batavia Road. It was with a few deviations our present Lewiston Road.

After traveling this road for five miles he came to Dunham's farm. From there to Forsyth's he found only four log cabins. The first, after passing the Tonawanda Indian Reservation, was near the northwest corner of the present Genesee County, just short distance from the Town of Royalton's east line today.

It was a tavern kept by a man named Walworth and, like many of the early taverns, was sponsored by Joseph Ellicott of the Holland Land Company for the convenience of the new settlers coming to buy farms. In later years it came to be called Reynolds "Half-Way House" because of its being approximately halfway between Batavia and Lockport. Stage coaches stopped there for many years.

From this place the road in 1807 passed through six miles of forest. Mr. Barton then came to a partially completed log cabin occupied by a very poor family named Waldo. They appeared to be in want of many necessities.

From there to Charles Wilber's Tavern at Cold Springs was about five miles. At Cold Springs the road turned abruptly north and passed through the "unbroken woods to Forsyth's" Here was the "Forsyth Tavern" referred to by many travelers of that day as being one of the best in Western New York. Eastward from Forsyth's, the Ridge Road had not yet been opened and except in dry weather the trail there was impassable.

"In 1808, the Ridge road was laid out by General Rhea, Elias Ransom, and Charles Hartford. I remember well the arrival of the surveyors; their delight at finding a bed to sleep in, and something to eat that was cooked by a female. Previous to this there had been nothing by Indian path through the low grounds, west of Wright's Corners.

We brought in a few sheep with us, I think they were the only ones in the neighborhood; they became the especial object of the wolves. Coming out of the Wilson swamp nights, their howling would be terrific. Two years after we came in, I was alone with my then small children one day, when I heard the sheep bleating and running, and went out to see what the matter was. A large wolf had badly wounded a sheep. As I approached him, he left the sheep and walked off snarling at me as if reluctant to quit his prey. I went for my nearest neighbor, Mr. Stoughton to get him to come and dress the sheep. It was three fourths of a mile through the woods. On my way a large grey fox crossed the road ahead of me. Returning with my neighbor, a large bear slowly crossed the road in sight of us. I could tell many stories of wild beasts in this region; but I think I never saw as much of them in any one day, before or since. We had no way to keep fowls, but to secure them well in their roosting places. The first settlers found it very difficult to keep hogs; the bears would even come out of the woods and take them by daylight."

- Polly (Mary) Forsyth



Despite these hardships, John Forsyth erected the first sign post for a tavern here in the spring of 1805 according to the writings of Mary Forsyth. The tavern and residence were built by John and Mary using materials harvested on site, including native black walnut and hemlock. It was common practice in the area for settlers to occupy a rough shelter while the trees to be used in construction of a larger dwelling were killed by digging a circle around their trunks a few feet deep. After the trees died, they would need to be chopped down and left to dry, or season, before they could be carved.

Shortly after opening their tavern, family records tell of a woman stopping at the tavern on her way to reunite with her fiancé at Fort Niagara only to fall dead inside the tavern's front door. She became the first burial on the knoll a few rods south and west of the tavern. This small plot was used as the primary cemetery for the corners until the establishment of the town cemetery system.

On March 11, 1808 the town of Cambria was formed, and the first town meeting was held on April 5, 1808. The first legislation was to establish a bounty of \$5.00 to be paid to anyone who could produce the skin and ears of a wolf. With no town hall established in those days, bounties such as this, as well as most shipments of goods and mail, would be first purchased by the local tavern keeper and then resold to the town or resident.

Sarah Forsyth was born April 9th 1808 and on August 12th 1809 John and Mary purchased lot 16, just northeast of their property.

In 1810, Governor DeWitt Clinton passed along the Ridge Road while surveying prospective routes for the Erie Canal. He described each of the taverns in which he spent the night at in his diary. In one he said that he could not sleep because of the numerous

crawling bed fellows so he slept out on the lawn. However, his description of the Forsyth's Tavern was most flattering. He remarks that "...Forsyth keeps a good house, we dined here. He lives seven miles from the Lake, fifteen from Lewiston. Forsyth gave for his land 22 shillings an acre five years ago being an intelligent man and an old settler. The road from Forsyth's is dirt and thickly settled country." In the winter months this trail east of John Forsyth's property was impassable, which led to the creation of a plank turnpike road under grant by General Dearborn beginning at the corner of John Forsyth's Tavern and connecting the Ridge Road directly to Genesee and Rochester.

Then on December 29th 1810 another girl, Eunice, was born.

Looking back to 1810 when the first census of Niagara County was taken, we learn that the population of the area between Lake Ontario and the Cattaraugus Creek was 4,562. It is interesting to note that eight of them were slaves. The Town of Cambria which then encompassed all of what currently makes up the present Niagara County, had 248 families or approximately 1,450 people.

There were only three access routes to and through the county. Access through central Niagara County was the Ridge Road formerly an Indian trail from the east to about where the Checkered Tavern Road is now located, then branching off to the southwest, joined the Niagara Trail near Cold Spring. The reason for this changing from the Ridge was because the area between what is now Warren's Corners was a great swamp and practically impassable except when frozen over.

When in the early war years General Dearborn, secretary of war, wanted to transfer cannon from the Gaines Arsenal to our frontier, he had a "log causeway" or corduroy road built through this swamp. The next spring many of the logs washed away. By 1816, however, a permanent road sufficiently passable for stage coaches was built.

On May 11, 1811, John and Mary Forsyth sold their land in Genesee Country, lot 14, section 8, township 12, to Russell Nobles for three-hundred and twenty-one dollars, indicating that the family intended to stay in the town of Cambria.

John Forsyth ③
Polly Forsyth ③

Mary Ganson-Forsyth and the War of 1812

In 1812, however, tragedy struck the pioneer family as John Forsyth died, reportedly of paralysis, at the young age of about 31. His was the second burial made on the property, on the knoll to the south of the tavern. By that time the family had grown by two more children, Sarah, born April 9, 1808, and Eunice, born December 29, 1810. After John's death, Mary continued as the proprietor of the tavern. A new deed was cast for her by the Holland Land Company on July 13, 1813, granting her ownership over all of the land that she and John had purchased along the Ridge Road. Later that same year, Mary and her young family had a front row seat to one of the nation's earliest military events, as the Niagara Frontier, and the Ridge Road, became strategically important during the War of 1812.

On October 13, 1813, American troops crossed the Niagara River from the Village of Lewiston, which was at the terminus of the road on which the tavern stood, and began what would become known as the Battle of Queenstown Heights. It was the first major battle of the War of 1812 in which American troops invaded British Canada. Due to poor training and organization, the American troops were defeated on the shores of the Niagara River. December 10, 1813, American troops under direction of General McClure invaded Canada again, captured Fort George and burned the Canadian Village of Newark. This displaced about 400 women and children into the hardships of early nineteenth century winters.

The British retaliated for the burning of Newark by invading Niagara County on December 19, 1813, beginning a campaign that decimated much of the early settlement in Western New York. Under Colonel Murray, British forces attacked Fort Niagara at the northwestern tip of Niagara County. Meanwhile some one thousand British troops and a large number of Western Native Americans under the command of General Riall joined the troops at Fort Niagara. When the fort fell that same day, the British troops marched south to Lewiston. British General Drummond reported that "the Indians under intoxication had burned the great part of the houses at and near Lewiston. I thought it advisable to direct the remainder of them to be set on fire."

Many accounts and books of the residents of Lewiston tell a gruesome tale of families being slaughtered, scalped and burned in their houses in the small Village of Lewiston. The refugees fled the village and were pursued east along the Ridge Road. With no forewarning or time to consider, many families along the road joined the retreat from the frontier towards the larger settlements near the Genesee.

The frontier fugitives had such short notice of the attack that they left most of their possessions behind. In some instances, the women tied their silver and other small treasures in bags and dropped them in a well or hid them in nearby underbrush.

Orsamus Turner wrote,

“There was little warning, the Indians preceding the English soldiers swarmed out of the woods and commenced an indiscriminate shooting down of the fleeing citizens plundering and burning their log homes. Six or seven men and boys were killed and scalped.”

On Ridge Road, Tuscarora Indians who were friendly with the area settlers witnessed the flight of pioneers and the pursuing army from their reservation high on the banks of the ridge and took a stand against the invading army. They did not have the numbers to take on the advancing army and so they gathered the whole nation, men women and children on the escarpment above the ascending road. The men had all guns, the women each with a round stick looking like a gun barrel from below and a horn for every boy and girl. It was a big bluff but it held up the invaders for some time.

The Tuscarora then again stepped into the line of fire closer to the Forsyth's Tavern even after their own village had been set to torch. Some men along with a few white settlers took a stand at a small arsenal of a dozen muskets and ammunition west of Howell's Creek where they were able to gain time for the women, children and the old folks to get a safe distance ahead.

When those fleeing the frontier arrived at the tavern of Mary Forsyth, she sent her two boys to her father and brother in Genesee County. Mary remained at the tavern, with five-year-old Sarah and nearly two-year-old Eunice.

The British continued onward only three miles east along the Ridge Road and upon finding both Howell's Tavern and William Molyneaux's Tavern empty, they proceeded no further. Mary's tavern was the next place east on the Ridge Road, being only four and one-half miles from Molyneaux Corners. The remainder of Niagara County was abandoned and many of its residents would never again return.

Many of those who fled the Lewiston area reached the Town of Gaines, roughly thirty miles west of the tavern, on the same day. Residents of the Town of Gaines recount that the villagers from Lewiston passed through their homes with warnings of an invading army killing and burning everything along the Ridge Road. The residents at Gaines decided not to flee but to muster a militia. It is said that all of the males over 18 living along the Ridge Road were gathered and under the direction of Captain McCarthy they proceeded single file west on the road by early daylight on Friday, December 20, 1813. They paused at the home and tavern of the widow Forsyth just before nightfall where the soldiers argued about whether to make camp or continue to the arms stockpile further up the Ridge Road. They came upon the tavern of William Molyneaux (originally that of David Klink) where some British soldiers and their Native allies had burned the barn and taken residence in the log tavern. In the dark, the militia stormed the tavern. Two British soldiers and one Native American were killed in the skirmish and the remainder were taken as prisoners. The militia later turned their prisoners over to the American army as it advanced from the south to scout the charred remains of the settlement at Lewiston. Twenty-one farms were destroyed on the Ridge Road between Lewiston and the Forsyth Tavern. The British continued to dispatch raids of approximately 15 men each throughout the Niagara Frontier to pillage and burn farms. Meanwhile an army of over 1,000 burned the village of Buffalo.

Every home between Lewiston and Warren's Corners on or near the Lewiston Trail (Ridge Road) was deserted and as far as Church Street they were looted and burned.

Settlers on the Lake Road and up to the east bank of the Eighteen Mile Creek to Van Horn's Mill suffered the same fate so that the west half of Niagara County was almost depopulated.

Sergeant Ezra Warren, a native of Vermont, and his company were stationed at the Forsyth tavern. The plank road was completed and utilized as the main transportation route for soldiers and supplies. Ezra and his company were tasked with managing and protecting these transports as they arrived at the edge of the warfront. The Forsyth Tavern was also used for a time to supply meals to the barracks at Hardscrapple (later known as Dickersonville, a hamlet roughly nine- and one-half miles west of Warren's Corners on Ridge Road).

The barracks are estimated between various military letters to have been large enough to house up to two thousand men, with storage and a hospital. 500 men were listed at station there before the camp was burned by the British.

In April 1814 an American soldier, a member of our Frontier forces defected to the English station at York (Toronto). He reported that the only sites on the American side of the Niagara River were as follows:

“The troops on that line totaled 7,000 men, the 25th Regiment of 500 men stationed at Hardscrabble, 100 men at Black Rock, and 6,500 men at Eleven Mile Creek (Ellicott Creek, about a mile south of Williamsville).

“On the Ridge Road at Hardscrabble there is an arsenal, a log building containing 500 stands of arms deposited by the militia who were all dismissed on the 11th of April 1814. There is also there a quantity of ammunition and four wagon loads of entrenching tools. There are no field pieces.

There is a depot of provisions on the Ridge Road at the Widow Forsyth's. It consists of beef, pork, whiskey and flour of all of which there is a large supply. There is a road leading from the mouth of 18-Mile Creek on the west side. The distance is 10 miles but the road is very bad. He thinks there is at least 2,000 barrels of provisions at this depot.”

July 1813, Ezra and Mary are believed to have been married. The War of 1812 was ended by the Treaty of Ghent, signed on Christmas Eve, 1814. The settlement stipulated that captured territory be returned to the status quo ante bellum, meaning that the British would remove themselves back across the Niagara River and settlers could return to their lands and reestablish the Niagara Frontier.

Ezra Warren

Richard Warren was one of the few passengers on the Mayflower to survive their first winter in the New World and the twelfth signer of the Mayflower Compact. His wife, Elizabeth Walker, and their 5 children, Mary, Ann, Sarah, Elizabeth and Abigail arrived 3 years later on the Anne. Warren was a financial backer for the venture. They had two boys in the New World; Nathaniel (born 1624) and Joseph (1626).

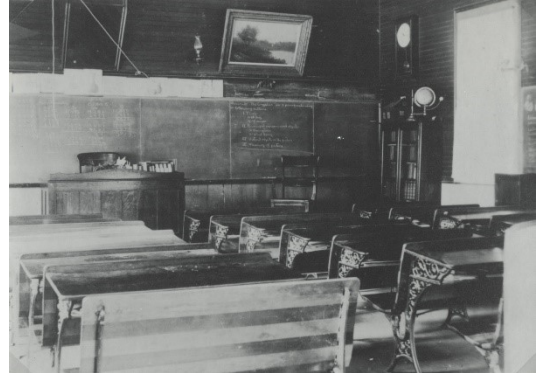
Ezra Warren descends from Nathaniel; his own father being Pvt. Josiah Warren, Jr. and his mother, Sarah Catherine Pratt.

In 1814 Ezra was deeded the entirety of Mary's estate, including the tavern, which he took over as proprietor. Ezra also constructed a grocery store across the Ridge Road in 1814, roughly two hundred feet north of the tavern (outside the nomination boundary, no longer extant). By removing the holding and sales of goods from within the tavern and into its own building, Ezra was able to vastly expand his wares. From the large collections of receipts that remain from Ezra's store we can see that he provided neighbors and travelers alike with all manner of items from butter to coffee to nails and brandy. Single receipts total over one hundred dollars and were paid off over several years.

In addition to the store, Ezra Warren was active in helping to develop the fledgling surrounding community. In 1816 a school was built a few hundred feet east of the tavern along the Ridge Road. It was built by subscription on land donated by Ezra Warren. In 1836 it was decommissioned and removed from the property to be used as a dwelling further east.



This original school also served as host for Sunday church meetings by traveling circuit preachers. After this, Forsyth's Corners began to go by a new name: Warren's Corners.



1816 was the year without a summer; commonly referred to as "Eighteen Hundred and Froze to Death." The stage coaches began stopping at the tavern that year and one day a young man alighted from the stage and told Ezra Warren that he had no more money and therefore could go no further on the stage. Mr. Warren employed him for a month and then he went on to Lewiston where he taught school, served as tax collector and by 1825 was so well known and popular that he was elected sheriff of Niagara County. His name was Eli Bruce and the story of the remaining seven years of his short life is a sad one. (More on that later)

Twelve regular stagecoach schedules were established and the post office at the Forsyth Tavern became increasingly prominent. Sarah Forsyth (daughter of Mary and John) even married a young stagecoach driver in 1827 after years of being courted by him during his brief passes through the tavern.

In 1819 Isaac Warren, cousin to Ezra Warren, purchased land a mile east of Warren's Corners and opened an inn and tailor shop.

Eunice Forsyth passed away in 1820 at the age of ten.

State officials appointed a three-member commission to designate the county seat and it was reported that two of the three commissioners designated Warren's Corners. One of the three died and in 1822 an entirely new commission was appointed. By that time the Erie Canal had begun to be surveyed and the county seat was selected for a site along its route instead of at Warren's Corners.

Niagara Sentinel, Nov. 29, 1822, p. 3, col. 4

Whereas by a rep, rec, put in circulation by certn evl, disposd prens it is reprsntd tht I hv by probable caus of the deth of a crtn pren, who died latly at Mr. Buck's, tvn kepr in the town of Hartland, or tht, he died in consqne of injures recd at my house therefore tht prfct

silnc on my prt undr a sever a censur may not b construd into a tacit aknldgmnt tht thr is good ground for the report I tak ths method to mak it known to the pub tht so mch of sd rep as relates to the cause of hs deth as being attributable to me in any shape or manr is absolutely false + tht ths is a fct whoh cm b esily shown to any candid + imprejided pren who is disposd to cal + enqir + tht I hold myself redy to ansr any complant which may b prefrd angst me by frnd or foe + in the mentime I shl continu in my prst line of bus the public's humbl srvnt, Ezra Warren, Lewiston, Nov. 25, 1822

In 1823 Company "A" of the Niagara County military regiment was established with Captain Edmund Forsyth as its lead and with nearly 100 men, company drills were staged on the Warren Farm the first of every September until 1849.

A Day of Infamy

Like most taverns, Ezra kept a large stock of wine and liquors on hand. The many barrels of whiskey and brandy were stored in his basement which due to the slope of the land opened on the rear into a sort of low swale. Ezra's conscience had never bothered in the least about selling liquor. Tavern keepers were popular and greatly respected in most cases.

About the year of 1825, however, there was started more or less simultaneously all over the east a great temperance movement. In 1825 a Temperance lecturer came to Warren's Corners. Atop a large stump where the Methodist Church now stands, he dwelt on the evils resulting from the habit of drinking liquor and even went so far as to paint a verbal picture of tavern keepers sizzling in the lower regions.

All this made a deep impression on Ezra Warren. During the night he dreamed that the Lord appeared before him and commanded him to cease selling liquor and to begin preaching the gospel and the evils of intemperance. Bright and early the next morning Ezra went to the basement door and he rolled barrel after barrel of whiskey and cherry brandy out into the gully. When the very last barrel was out, he began knocking in the heads of the barrels and soon there were great pools of whiskey and cherry brandy with cherries floating in it.

Now like all taverns along the Ridge, meals were served here to the weary travelers who arrived by stagecoach, on horseback or whole families in covered wagon. The scraps of food from the table were thrown out the rear of the kitchen into the swale. The only garbage collectors in those days were hogs which by law were at that time "Free commoners" which meant they were allowed to run at large.

Naturally all hogs anywhere near Warrens Corners came to the rear of Ezra Warren's Tavern for the tidbits tossed out the windows. On this particular morning when Ezra was obeying the command of the Lord and spilling out all of his liquor the usual number of hogs were on hand. At first, they sniffed the brandy, then ate the cherries. A real treat this time they must have thought. Next, they began to drink the brandy and whiskey from the pools.

Ezra began to overhear his patrons,

"Farmer Dowdy's pig is trying to jump over the road fence!"

“Why the pigs are chewing each other’s ears and romping like kittens.”

“They’re eating the buttercups!”

“They’re chasing butterflies!”

Ezra finally went to have a look, and saw that this was all too true. Squealing and “oinking” as they never had before, the swine were rooting in the gully. Most appeared totally stricken, stretched out, their tails as straight as sting.

In those days every owner of domestic animals that were free commoners had to have one ear of each animal perforated or slit with his own “earmark.” These were of many different shapes and were registered with the Town Clerk in what was designated “The Book of Strays.”

Ezra recognized the earmarks of the drunken hogs and since they showed no signs of sobering up, Ezra then saddled up a horse or sent a messenger depending on whose recounting you read and rode to notify all of the hog owners. His shouted greeting at each whistle stop was:

“Come and get your drunken pigs!”

It meant two trips for most of the owners, because they had to return home and get teams of oxen and mud boats for by that time the pigs were out cold.

Neighborhood farmers who had prodded their swine in vain, now faced the ex-cavalryman, leaning on their pitchforks.

“Kind sirs,” the latter began, feeling their silent reproach as he climbed a stump.

“In these innocent creatures some of you may see yourselves. Believe me, they have consumed the best and last from Warren’s taproom. They don’t know any better but you as men, do. Feel only compassion for your hogs. They’re drunk.”

Ezra Warren thereafter traveled from place to place preaching the word of God and the evils of intemperance. He never became an ordained minister, because he refused to be baptized; saying that he had been “Baptized by the Holy Spirit,” but he undoubtedly had a tremendous influence in aiding the Temperance Movement. He afterwards was called “Father Warren.”

Soon after he gave up the tavern business, Ezra modified the tavern to appear more “homely.” He described it as “rounding off” the building; however, the exact nature of

these modifications remains unclear. He then moved on to become a lay minister, traveling to perform baptisms, marriages and memorial services in churches, homes and fields around the county.

Warren subsequently donated land just east of the schoolhouse and one hundred dollars to the Methodist Society, which constructed a small wooden church on the site.

An Old Veteran Fallen.

Mr. Ezra Warren, born November 1789, in Woodstock, Vt., died on the 12th of November, 1879, at the residence of his son, Henry Warren, in Cambria, Niagara county, N. Y., "an old man and full of years." He came to Cambria 67 years ago. He was converted in his 35th year, united on probation with the M. E. Church, and proved his allegiance to his new master by toiling successfully many years as an evangelist. His strength failing about three years ago, he realized a constant longing to be with Jesus, saying: "My satchel is all packed and I am ready to go." Twenty-two years ago his dear companion preceded him to the Spirit Land. His constant theme was, Jesus as he trod the lonely way. About a year ago he selected his funeral text, "I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me on that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing." II Tim., IV. 6-8. His work being done he became restless to depart.

"Let me go! Let me go
To the land of the blest!
Let me go! Let me go
Where the weary find rest.
My work is all done, Blessed Jesus, for Thee,
I'm restless my paradise mansion to see."

After nearly ninety winters he calmly leaned his head on Jesus breast and breathed his life out sweetly there. Having visited him a day or two before he gave us a patriarchial blessing, saying "May your fruit be unto holiness and the end everlasting life." We bore his mortal remains to the city of the dead till Jesus comes and bids him rise.

Rest, soldier rest; the strife is o'er,
The battle fought, the victory won.
Thine ear hath heard the grand salute;
Thine armor laid aside. Well done."

W. P.



On the last page of the first record book of the Town of Cambria 1808 to 1835 are noted these lines:

"This book has gone through the late War with England. Many are sleeping the sleep of death." R.L.H.

Eli Bruce

Calvin Baker, brother of Dr. Artemus Baker and Jonas Baker, came from their native place in Connecticut in 1816. Eli Bruce was his companion. The stage that brought them stopped at Warren's Corners. Mr. Baker was at home with his brother who resided across the road from the tavern whereas Bruce had no relatives where he could make a temporary home. He was in a strange land and among strangers and still worse was using the oft repeated parlance "strapped." He applied to Mr. Warren for work and succeeded in securing a job of cutting cord wood. Just emerged from his college studies with soft hands, not inured to hard work would look at his sore and blistered hands, then soliloquize with himself, "Now Eli, you must, you will have to" there is no other way, you have come out to western New York to make your fortune and there is no backing out until a better opportunity presents itself."

Then he turns up again in 1823, a schoolteacher and tax collector for the Village of Lewiston. He received word that Mr. Eliakam Hammond had discovered something most gruesome on his farm on upper mountain road just south of the Tavern back in Cambria. This of course was the infamous PIT.

The pit lying between upper and lower mountain roads was what was left of the 14th century native American civilization that once resided there. They were a colossal nation atop the hill, consisting of thousands of men, woman and children reduced to a pit of skeletons. It was a massacre of profound depth.

Mr. Hammond and Mr. Bruce opened the farm up as a tourist attraction for 10 cents apiece. It is said that some 150 people a day visited the site and left with a bone souvenir each. For this reason, the site has vanished; leaving only the mansion which Mr. Hammond built with his fine earnings. Today we who know of it call it the BONE HOUSE.

Eli also became quite wealthy and also quite popular. So much in fact that he was soon elected Sheriff by his townspeople.

On July 5, 1826 James Ganson, secretary of the Batavia Royal Arch Chapter gave David C. Miller the text of a petition to institute a new chapter in Batavia. William Morgan's name was left off the list of petitioners. The following day Morgan was allowed to add his

name to the petition, and then while he was on a several-day drunk, it was destroyed and another petition circulated.

This angered William Morgan and he soon announced that he was going to publish an exposé titled *Illustrations of Masonry*, revealing their secret degree work in detail.

Morgan announced that a local newspaper publisher, David Cade Miller, had given him a sizable advance for the work. Miller is said to have received the entered apprentice degree (the first degree of Freemasonry), but had been stopped from advancement by the objection of Batavia lodge members. Morgan was promised one-fourth of the profits, and the financial backers of the venture—Miller, John Davids (Morgan's landlord), and Russel Dyer—entered into a \$500,000 penal bond with Morgan to guarantee its publication.

On Sunday September 10th, Nicholas G. Chesebro, Master of a lodge in Canandaigua, and coroner for Ontario County, obtained a warrant for Morgan's arrest on a charge of stealing a shirt and cravat. Chesebro left Canandaigua with Constable Holloway Hayward, as well as Henry Howard, Harris Seymour, Moses Roberts and Joseph Scofield. At Avon they were joined by innkeeper Asa Nowlan and storekeeper John Butterfield; at Le Roy they were joined by Ella G. Smith and others. James Ganson joined the posse in Stafford. Dr. Samuel S. Butler proceeded them to Batavia to inform Nathan Follett and William Seaver, Master of Batavia Lodge No 433, of their approach. Two miles from Batavia the posse was met by Butler who conveyed Seaver's message to not come on. They returned to Ganson's Tavern to spend the night.

Morgan was formally arrested at Donald's Tavern on September 11th and the group proceeded to Le Roy. Morgan was discharged in Canandaigua and re-arrested by Chesebro on a debt of \$2 due to Aaron Ackley, a tavern keeper in Canandaigua. (\$2.69, debt and costs) Morgan spent the night in jail. According to his jailkeeper Israel Hall, Hall's wife Mary and a fellow prisoner, Daniel Tallmadge, Morgan was well provided with food and liquor through the night and following day.

Loton Lawson and two others arrived Tuesday night sometime after 6:00 pm. They left when Mrs. Hall refused to release Morgan into their custody and returned with Captain Ed Sawyer to be met with the same refusal. They left and returned with Chesebro who authorized Sawyer's payment of Morgan's debt and took custody of Morgan. They took Morgan from the jailhouse where, drunk and argumentative, Morgan changed his mind and decided he didn't want to go, screamed "Murder! Help! Murder!" John Whitney arrived at this point and Morgan calmed down, getting into the carriage driven by Hiram Hubbard, a livery stable proprietor.

There was no attempt at secrecy and many freemasons and non-masons were aware of the progress of the carriage. James Gillis, a visiting Freemason from Pennsylvania met them at Victor and agreed to ride ahead to announce Morgan's progress. Dawn found them in Hanford's Landing on the outskirts of Rochester. At the insistence of Morgan, and with no attempt at secrecy and in broad daylight, the procession of couriers, outriders, carriages and other riders stopped at almost every tavern and inn on the route.

Three miles west of Clarkson there was a change of horses and Captain Isaac Allan took over driving. The next stop, a mile beyond Gaines, Elijah Mathers took over driving. At Ridgeway Jeremiah Brown, road supervisor and later member of the Legislature, took the reins. Arriving at Wrights tavern seven miles from Lockport, at least fifty Masons met that evening to discuss the project. Eli Bruce, Sheriff of Niagara County arrived and near 10:00 pm the procession continued. Brown was replaced by Corydon Fox at 1:00 in the morning. The journey ended in Youngstown, at the residence of Colonel William King, Master of a lodge in Lewiston — a journey of more than 100 miles in thirty hours.

Fox drove King, Bruce, Morgan and a fourth man to a point near the ferry at the Niagara River. They were met by Edward Giddins, innkeeper and keeper of the Fort Niagara Magazine, who ferried the party across the river. Orsamus Turner and Captain Jared Darrow met them on the other side and told them that the Canadian Freemasons weren't ready for him. They returned to the American side where for five days Morgan was imprisoned in the Powder Magazine in the care of Giddins, who, it later developed, was a confederate of Miller. On Friday Giddens' association with Miller was uncovered; he was relieved of responsibility and replaced by Elisha Adams.

On or about Monday night, September 18th, Colonel King, John Whitney of Rochester, Eli Bruce, Sheriff Niagara County, Orsamus Turner, editor, Captain Jared Darrow, Loton Lawson, John Sheldon, James Gillis, Timothy Shaw, Noah Beach, Samuel Chubbuck, William Miller, David Hague, Richard Howard and other unidentified Freemasons confronted Morgan in the magazine.

Morgan recounted the full confession he gave three weeks previous to Whitney: that he had never been a regular Freemason, that he had entered into a contract with Miller to write an exposition of Freemasonry, and that Miller had failed to fulfil the terms of the contract.

It was said that William Morgan was then given the option of a farm at Breede's Hill or a horse and \$500 in gold, Morgan took the gold in exchange for leaving the country forever. Colonel King, John Whitney, Richard Howard, Jared Darrow and Samuel Chubbuck accompanied Morgan across the river. Given the horse and gold, Morgan was offered an

escort which he declined. John Whitney's deposition on these events can be found in Rob Morris' William Morgan; Or Political Anti-masonry, Its Rise, Growth and Decadence.

Recognizing the damage Miller could do them, Sheriff Bruce, Whitney and King hired two trackers to find Morgan. They reported that Morgan had travelled to the settlement that would later become Hamilton, then to York where he visited Richmond Hill and finally to Point Hope where he sold his horse and embarked on a steamer bound for Boston, Massachusetts.

William Morgan was never seen again.

In October 1827, a badly decomposed body washed up on the shores of Lake Ontario. Many presumed it to be Morgan, and the body was buried as his. However, the wife of a missing Canadian named Timothy Monroe (or Munro) positively identified the clothing on the body as that which had been worn by her husband at the time he had disappeared. One group of Freemasons denied that Morgan was killed, saying they had paid him \$500 to leave the country. Morgan was reportedly seen later, including in other countries, but none of the reports were confirmed.

Sheriff Elli Bruce was removed from office by Governor Clinton on September 26, 1827 and received a 28 months sentence. An appeal failed and he was jailed from May 20, 1829 to Sept 23, 1831. Loton Lawson received two years in the County jail; Nicholas G. Chesebro, one year, Edward Sawyer, one month; and John Sheldon, three months. Colonel William King died before trial. All of them made depositions prior to trial date; confessing their guilt in holding Morgan against his will for five days but denying that he had accompanied them against his will or that they had killed him.

In April, 1827, Jesse French, James Hurlurt, Roswell Willcox, and James Ganson, were tried at Batavia, in Genesee county, for an alleged riot, assault and battery upon, and the false imprisonment of David C. Miller. They were all found guilty, except for Ganson.

Eli Bruce died shortly after that; a victim of the Cholera Epidemic in 1832.

Underground Railroad

In 1850 the Fugitive Slave Act was passed by the United States Congress. This federal law mandated the return of runaway slaves found in free states to their masters. Former slaves who had settled in the New England states as refugees began fleeing to the United States boarder with Canada. The brother of the late John Forsyth, William Forsyth, had since sold his own tavern at the Canadian Horseshoe Falls and constructed a large home along the Niagara River presently known as Bertie Hall. Many sources cite his home as a final destination on the Underground Railroad. On August 12, 1854, an article in the Anti-Slavery Bugle wrote about a man named Chares Brown who fled upon the arrival of his former owner's nephew to his home in Warren's Corners. Oral tradition holds that a secret room in the tavern was used by Brown and others to hide on their journey to the Niagara River. Such a room does exist on the second floor of the tavern and the Methodist Church is often mentioned in connection with the underground railroad and anti-slavery movements. The combination of family connections to the underground railroad in Canada, combined with Ezra Warren's position as a preacher for the Methodist Church, suggest that the family may have been involved with the underground railroad in this time.

Anti-Slavery Bugle (Salem, Ohio), August 12, 1854, 3,c4: SLAVE-HUNTERS IN THE EMPIRE STATE-- The following letters is from the Lockport (N.Y.) Journal: Warren's Corners, Niagara Co., June 20, 1854: Southern bloodhounds and slave catchers are abroad! Our remarkably quiet neighborhood has this day been thrown into great excitement from the appearance and suspicious deportment of some strangers. Charles Brown, a colored man, who has resided in our midst more than two years, and who has won the respect of all who made his acquaintance, was, at an early hour this morning, rather surprised by the appearance of his master's nephew from Kentucky. Two gentlemen had been making strange maneuvers in the neighborhood by the residence of Brown on the Lockport and Warren Plankroad, going toward Lockport. They stopped nearly in front of Mr. David Carlton's then wheeled around and drove up the lane to Brown's house. One of them went back to Mr. Carlton's and inquired for Mr. Mighells (on whose farm Brown lives): the other remained in the carriage looking directly through the door of Brown's house, watching apparently for some one. The one in quest of Mr. Mighells pretended to want to rent his farm for the ensuing year. Brown saw him, recognized him. It was the nephew of his old master! Brown fled to the woods with the avowed intention of crossing Niagara River. We have not heard from him yet to-night, but we hope that he has kept clear of the river, as all the crossings are undoubtedly watched. It probably was the plan of the hunters to start him from his place and trap him there. But we know that others are on the alert, and that the fugitive will not be captured without a struggle.

Next Generations

John and Mary Forsyth had five children:

Ira (May 3, 1801 – August 7, 1802)

Edmund Jonas (July 15, 1803 – November 16, 1877) Married Harriet Pardy in 1825

Luther (February 8, 1806 – October 31, 1872) Married Maria B. Newman in 1829

Sarah (April 9, 1808 – March 14, 1829) Married Daniel Rees

Eunice (December 29, 1810 – August 13, 1820)

Ezra and Mary Warren had eight children:

Henry Harrison (February 21, 1814 – April 12, 1890) Married Sarah Ann Gray in 1847

John Ganson (April 13, 1816 – September 13, 1894) Married Betsy Snyder

Mary Louise (May 13, 1816 – June 26, 1891) Married Harvey Stedman

Ira James (July 25, 1819 – Unknown, Tonawanda) Married to a Mary

Asa Prat (October 30, 1821 – November 9, 1903) Married to an Emily

Emily Eunice (January 12, 1824 – May 14, 1903) Married Charles McNeil

Enos E (April 22, 1826 – January 15, 1881) Married to an Esther

John died June 2, 1812

Marry died February 23, 1857

Ezra Died November 12, 1879

John Forsyth's two sons, Edmund and Luther, filed for rights to part of the land and were given large parcels to the east as well a monetary buyout of their interests in the tavern. Ezra's son Asa later became quite successful in the barrel making business and operated just west of the old Forsyth Tavern, while another son, Henry, took over operation of the farm.



Home of Edmund Forsyth



WARRENS CORNERS LOOKING EAST ON RIDGE ROAD — 1940's

Structural History

The former Forsyth-Warren Tavern is an extremely rare survival of a building from the first phase of settlement on the western New York frontier. Although it has undergone several periods of development, expansion and change throughout its two-century existence, it remains a highly significant resource that, in its physical fabric and location, chronicles the settlement of New York's western frontier. While documentary evidence detailing the expansion and alteration of the building is scant, the building's physical fabric, and in particular its timber-frame structure, offer compelling evidence of its physical evolution. Somewhat surprisingly, the core structure of the building represents New World Dutch building practices. There are a number of possibilities that account for the use of this building system in an area far removed from the Hudson River and its related tributaries, areas where that building tradition was well entrenched. The work was presumably executed by an itinerant carpenter trained in that particular framing style or otherwise by a builder contracted by Forsyth who hailed from the eastern part of the state. One possibility is that the framing was executed by an individual traveling from an earlier settled area of New York into Ontario, where New World Dutch building traditions left at least some imprint, as they did in other parts of Canada.

The Forsyth-Warren Tavern, along with a Dutch-framed house recently identified in Laceyville, Pennsylvania, chronicle the geographic reach of a distinctive building tradition that in New York is more typically associated with the New World Dutch vernacular architecture of the Hudson, Mohawk and Schoharie valleys. Recent discoveries such as this one indicate the extent to which this tradition was carried into distant geographic locations.

The core frame was built in characteristic New World Dutch fashion with a series of closely spaced H "bents" consisting of two vertical posts linked by a horizontal tie beam. Prior to the Revolution and for a time afterwards, the tie beams were planed smooth and expressed on the interior; as such they served both structural and aesthetic ends. The common rafter roof frame is also characteristic. This framing concept, which gave rise to the story-and-a-half house type, was much employed in areas of New York State settled by lowland Europeans and continued to be employed into the first decades of the nineteenth century. The term "New World Dutch" encompasses the related building traditions in New York State inclusive of its early Dutch, Palatine German and French Huguenot peoples. While subtle variations might be discerned in comparing the early vernacular architecture of

the Dutch with that of the Palatine Germans, it is generally acknowledged that these two distinctive ethnic groups conceived of and built largely in the same manner. When contrasted with contemporary framing practices employed by those of New England background, the Dutch type frame offered the advantages of simpler and less joinery; however, it did require more timber.

The earliest known photograph of the Forsyth-Warren house from the 1920s shows a building with two wings, a one-story side gable wing to the east, and a one-story wing to the rear/south. Based on the appearance of turned columns on the porch fronting the east wing, it would appear that this wing may date to the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Since it's likely that the house originally had a basement kitchen, this eastern addition was likely built as a kitchen wing, supported by the appearance of a chimney in the historic photo. The function and character of the wing at the rear is unknown, as no information about its construction or appearance exists.

Some evidence of this wing is likely present in the unusual rear porch on the south side of the building, and there are scattered remnants of what appear to be fieldstone foundation south of the house. What is known is that these wings were removed sometime before 1952, likely in the 1940s, when a photograph of the house shows the building essentially as it remains today.

Outbuildings on the property reflect both the early agricultural function of the farm, as well as the increased reliance on mechanical equipment. The property itself appears to have three broad periods of development for the outbuildings. The first wave occurred roughly contemporaneously to the tavern, with the construction of a three-bay barn ca. 1808 with a rear lean-to added. It is unknown, but likely, that there may have been additional early outbuildings on the property that have since been lost. The next major development on the farm occurred with the construction of the large gambrel barn in 1896, which would have increased the workspace as well as the small dairy operations. The early twentieth century was the third and final major development era on the farm, with the construction of a garage in 1915, a chicken coup in 1925, and a machine shed also in 1925. The garage and machine shed reflect the increasing importance of mechanized equipment on farms during the era, the storage of mechanical tractors and automobiles. The chicken coup is a crudely built structure, clearly made out of several repurposed windows, which reflects the thrift and resourcefulness typical in many farm outbuildings. Perhaps nothing speaks to the early history of the property more than the presence of the small family cemetery, set up on a slight rise at the rear of the property. Created out of need, with no neighboring church

cemeteries available, the establishment of the small cemetery reflects burial customs and traditions of the era, with simple headstones typical of the early nineteenth century. The family cemetery held the remains of members of the Forsyth and Warren families during the earliest era of development in Niagara County, while later family members were buried in more traditional mid- to late-nineteenth century off-site cemeteries. Taken as a whole, the tavern, outbuildings, and cemetery reflect the settlement, growth, and development of a family farm over the span of more than a century.

During the earliest years of settlement and occupation, the focus of agricultural activities would have been largely of a subsistence nature, with arable land given over to the cultivation of cereal grains, of which wheat would have been preeminent. Livestock would have been necessarily limited at an early date, given the ever-present threat of wolves and bears. The English barn that remains on the site would have served as the center of agricultural endeavors; there hay could be stored, grain could be stored prior to threshing on the floor of the central bay, and animals could have been safely stabled. Much of the agricultural production likely fed not only the family, but served the tavern's needs as well.

Under the Warren family, agricultural production on the property appears to have been historically modest. The agricultural census records, available for the period of 1860-1880, when the farm was under the ownership of Henry Warren, appear to reflect a largely subsistence family farm, and the family's income was likely supplemented by the profits generated by the general store. Crops and livestock produced on the farm appear to largely have sustained the family, and the operations were not large. There is some indication that the farm may have been a sheep farm in the 1860s; however, by the 1880s, this product declined. Like many farms in Niagara County, the Warren farm appears to have had a significant orchard component, particularly after the Civil War.

The 1860 agricultural census reveals that the farm consisted of 63 acres of improved land, with a cash value of \$3,150 and \$300 worth of farm equipment and machinery. The farm consisted of 2 horses, 3 milk cows, 20 sheep, and 3 swine for a livestock value of \$319. Crops produced on the farm included 150 bushels of Indian corn (generally used for cornmeal and flour), 100 bushels of oats, 136 pounds of wool, 100 bushels of potatoes, 10 bushels of buckwheat. The farm had a total orchard value of \$150, indicating the likely presence of fruit trees on the property. Products also included 400 pounds of butter and 2 tons of hay.

Little had changed for the Forsyth-Warren Farm in the 1870 agricultural census, when it consisted of 62 acres of improved land. The farm was valued at \$5,000 with \$300 in

equipment and machinery and a total value of \$1,000 for overall farm production. Interestingly, the record indicates that \$40 had been paid in wages, suggesting that the Warrens may have hired a few farm hands to assist on the farm, possibly at harvest season.

During this time the farm consisted of 3 horses, 3 milk cows, 2 cattle, and 2 swine for a total value of \$661. It appears that between 1860 and 1870 sheep and wool production had been abandoned on the farm. Crops consisted of 100 bushels of winter wheat, 50 bushels of Indian corn, 60 bushels of oats, 40 bushels of buckwheat, 40 bushels of potatoes, and a value of \$360 worth of orchard products. Produced on the farm were 375 pounds of butter, 25 tons of hay, 8 pounds of beeswax, and 150 pounds of honey. The presence of beekeeping and the increase in orchard products during this time suggests that both were becoming important parts of the production on the Warren farm.

The last available agricultural census, taken in 1880, reveals some more detailed information about how the Warren-Forsyth Farm was utilized. A total of 64 acres were noted in the farm, 56 acres being improved and 8 acres of woodland. At the time, the farm had a value of \$6,500, \$400 worth of farm machinery and equipment, and \$810 worth of livestock. The figures given for the farm's livestock were comparable to the 1870 census, with the exception of 60 chickens, producing 400 eggs. Of those 56 acres in production, 5 acres were utilized for barley (producing 80 bushels), 4 acres produced Indian corn (producing 200 bushels), 3 acres were dedicated for oats (yielding 150 bushels), 9 acres were utilized for wheat (producing 165 bushels of wheat), and one-half acre was dedicated for growing potatoes (yielding 30 bushels). On 8 acres were 320 apple trees, producing 1,250 bushels of apples, and on 3 acres were 360 peach trees, yielding 50 bushels of peaches. The value of the orchard produce was set at \$875, and 800 pounds of honey were produced. Based on these figures, it appears that substantial land was devoted to the orchard and fruit growing, which is consistent with other farms in Niagara County. While there are few remains of the orchard production on the property today, likely because as the fruit trees were exhausted, they were removed and not replaced, the few scattered peach, pear and apple trees on the property, just south of the barn, reflect this important crop.

In addition to the census record, the ledgers of Henry Warren contain consistent sales primarily of barley, bees wax, wood, oats, milk, butter, peppers, squash, cucumbers as well as eggs, horse hair, lath, meat and fruits by the barrel. There are also a variety of store items intermixed in these sales ledgers, such as cigars, salt, tea, coffee, coal, borax, paint, rice, dishes, currants, cloves, yeast cakes, raisins, soap blacksmithing, furniture making,

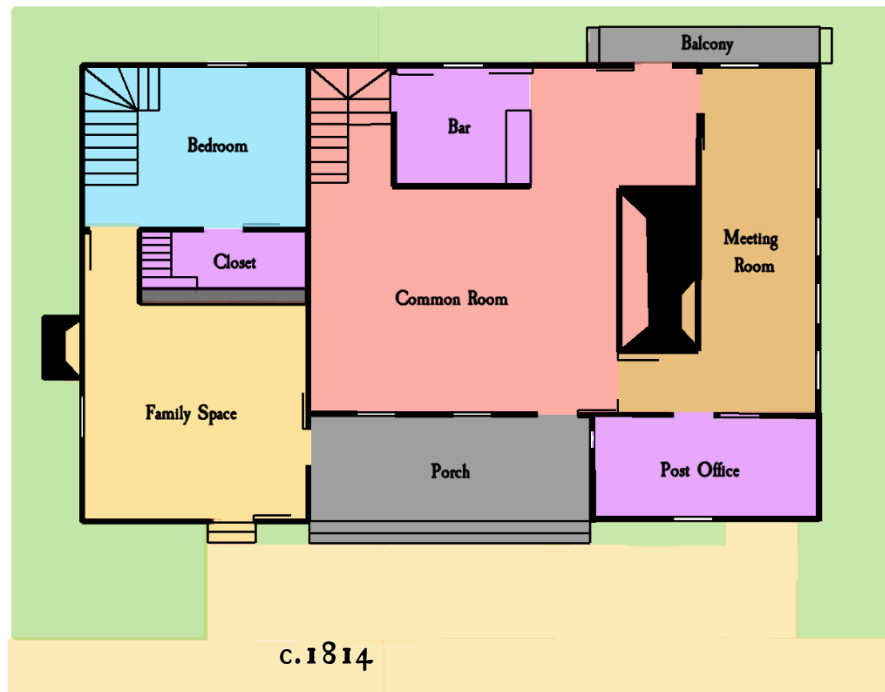
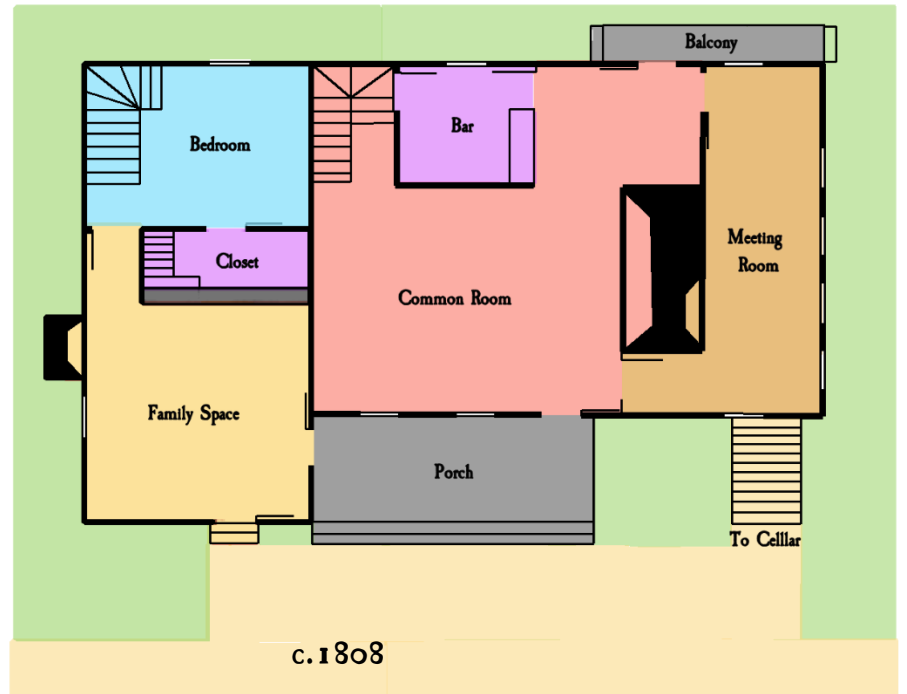
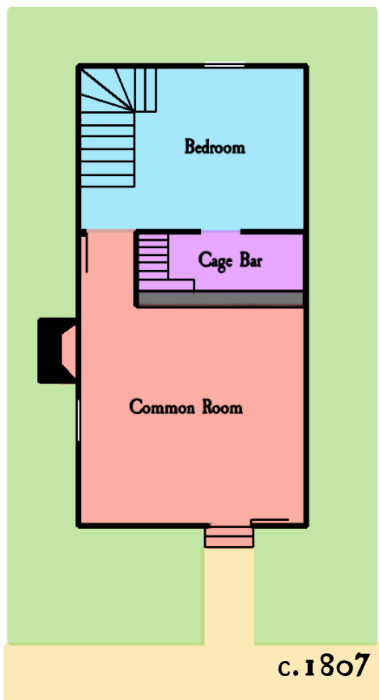
silks, stock fish, and farm equipment among many others demonstrating a very active growing and importing business.

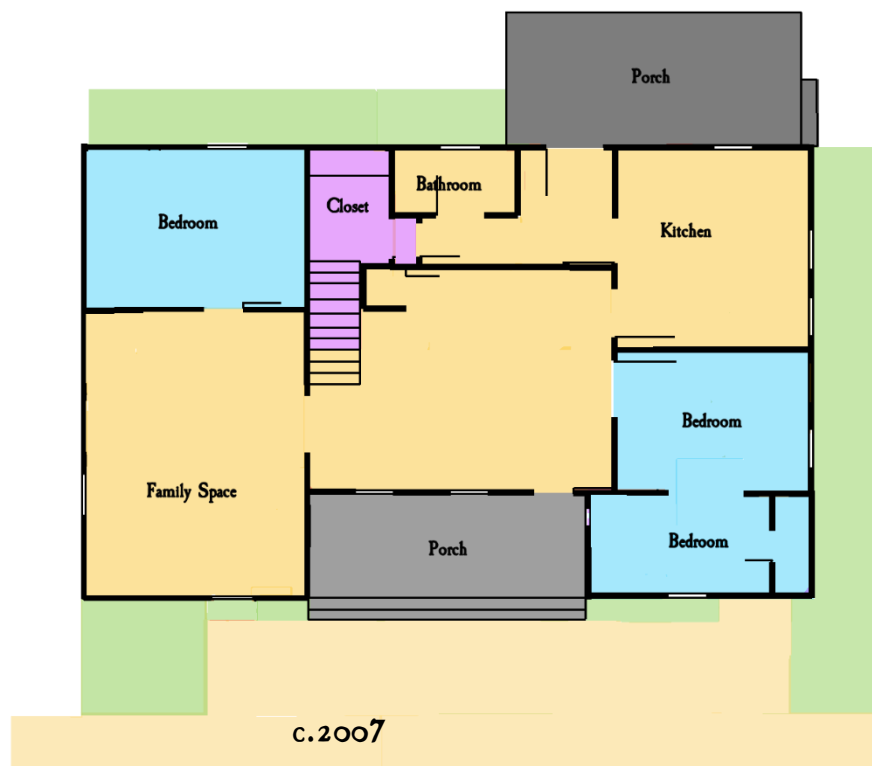
One way in which the Warren family may have also supplemented their income was through sales of parts of the property originally purchased by John Forsyth. Forsyth had originally purchased lots 23 and 24 of township 14, range 7, which were approximate 190 acres in a long north-south strip that straddled the only early route through the region. This type of long, narrow land division was a common land division by the Holland Land Company during its first wave of land sales starting in 1800 and falling out of favor by 1803.

The first known major land sale on the nominated property occurred ca. 1872, when approximately 112 acres to the south of the primary farm grouping was sold off to the Blackstone family. However, this land sale may have occurred earlier than the 1870s, as the 1860 agricultural census indicates that the farm consisted of only 63 acres of improved land. A parcel to the west of the barn was given to Enos Warren, Ezra Warren's son, sometime prior to the 1850 federal census. This property later became the home of the Parker family by 1907. A map of the town of Cambria from 1938 shows the property under the ownership of Jennie Warren, widow of Charles Warren, reflecting that roughly 57 acres, both north and south of Ridge Road, were associated with the farm.

Elmer Warren, son of Charles and Jennie Warren, was the last generation of Warrens to own the farm, and after his death around 1950, his widow, Maude, sold the property to Floyd Yousey. Yousey had been living on the property and aiding as a farmhand. After his death in 1999, the property passed to his daughters, Virginia Ferchen-Yousey and Phyllis Orchard-Yousey. They sold the property to Harry B. Morton III in 2003, and in 2007 the property was foreclosed on. Due to the foreclosure, much of the land to the south and the parcel to the north was sold off between 2007 and 2013, leading to the current parcel of approximately 5 acres. However, by this time, the land had lost much of its historic character as agricultural land. Several new houses and properties were constructed on the former Forsyth-Warren lands, and aerial images show the loss of the orchard and organized farm fields by the 1950s. The remaining lands contain all surviving built resources associated with the Forsyth-Warren property and sufficiently convey the history and character of the property as a farm dating back to the pioneer era in Western New York.

Approximations





1857 - 2017

Mary died in 1857 at seventy-five and Ezra died in 1879 at eighty-nine. After Ezra Warren's death, his son, Henry Warren, continued operating the businesses on the family homestead. Around this time, farm production in the area began to diversify from the simplicity of livestock and grains to commercial orchards and vineyards.

The first cider mill in the area was constructed one mile east of the tavern, abutting land willed to the sons of John Forsyth and Mary Ganson. It is also assumed that the farm had a rather large cherry production due in part to Ezra's sales records of cherry brandy as well as the later cherry productions by subsequent generations. In 1896, a second barn was added abutting the original. This new barn provided much more open space to accommodate more robust thrashing equipment as well as a large straw shed and hayloft. It also included a sub level with milking sanctions. It was at this time that the farm most likely began to mass produce dairy milk for sale. Asa Pratt Warren, the fourth son of Ezra and Mary, opened a cooper shop one lot to the west of the former tavern before 1850.

Their other three Warren sons and two daughters relocated to the far west territories as America expanded westward.

Following Henry Warren's death in 1890, his son, Charles, inherited the farm. He was a carpenter by trade and hired stewards to operate and maintain the family farm. An ink barrel stamp bearing his name can be found on one of the interior barn walls and is also stamped on several furniture pieces that have remained on the property.

Charles leased the former grocery store on the property to the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry to expire when or if the grange hall ceased to function. Warren's Corners Grange had upwards of three hundred members. Unfortunately, both the grange and the Warren Grocery Store were torn down in the 1950s.

The Town of Cambria received electricity in January of 1905 and the tavern was electrified shortly thereafter.

In 1926, Charles Warren, son of Henry Warren and grandson of Ezra Warren, constructed a large frame house about three-hundred feet west of the former tavern. It appears that around this same time, alterations may have been made to the interior of the former tavern building, including a new staircase with a square newel post and several arched openings between rooms. It is unknowns who, if anyone, lived in the former tavern at this time; however, it has been suggested that at least one family resided there for some time as charity from the Warren family. The son of Henry, Elmer Warren, had married Maude Capen, whose family resided in the cobblestone house located just north of the former tavern. Elmer and Maude moved into the home of Jennie Warren and Elmer's late father, Charles.

After Charles's death in 1930, his wife, Jennie, took over ownership of the farm.

In 1940, a commercial milk house was added abutting both previous barns. The milk house was built to the standards approved by New York State for the commercial bottling of dairy milk. The original plans for this standardized building remain with the property. Jennie hired a farm hand, Floyd Yousey, to help maintain the six remaining acres of cherries, peaches and apples, as well as the dairy cows and chickens. Yousey resided on the upper floor of Charles's home until the death of Jennie Warren in 1943, at which point Floyd and his family moved into the former tavern.

Early in Floyd Yousey's employment with the Warrens in the 1940s, a large addition abutting the eastern rear of the former tavern and extending to the south was removed. No evidence of its existence remains today except for a painting that has hung in the home of Charles Warren since 1924. During this era, a chimney was added in the south crawlspace of the second floor to service a cooking stove in the kitchen below. Presumably, this chimney replaced that chimney for the original basement oven, which was removed at some point. The removal of this large chimney allowed for a much larger and more open kitchen space. The walls were also covered in wallpaper around this time. Elmer inherited his father's property after the death of his mother, Jennie, but died only four years later. Maude Warren sold the property, then consisting of fifty acres of land, to their steward, Floyd Yousey, marking the end of nearly 150 years of ownership of the property by the Forsyth and Warren families.

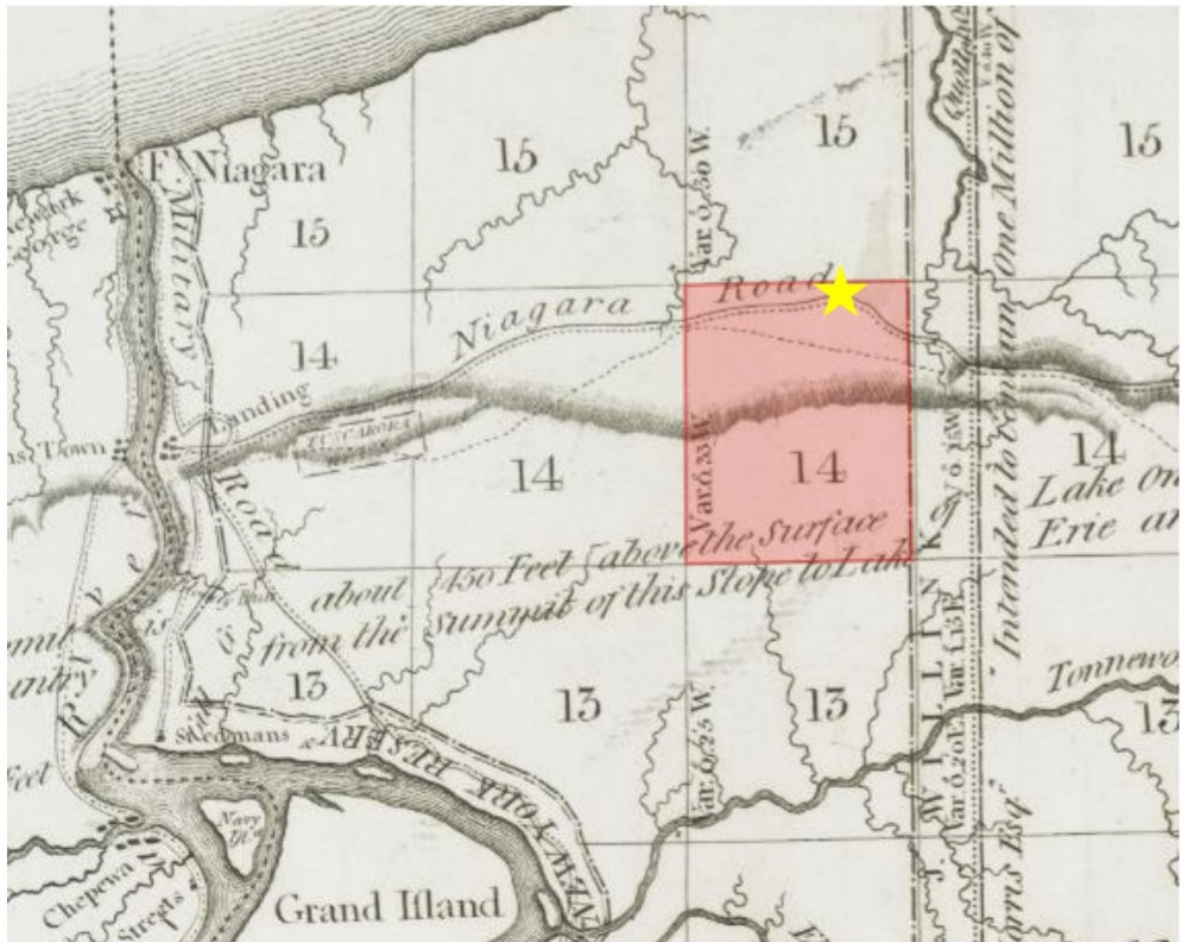
In May 1964 the Cambria Water District was established and public water lines began to be installed. For the tavern this meant that the longstanding row of hemlock trees that lined the Ridge Road in Warren's Corners was removed in front of the tavern and the Yousey family ceased using the three spring-fed wells on the property to supply water to the house; however, they continued to use the barn well to supply water to their dairy.

On January 16, 1971, a fire engulfed the 1896 addition to the barn. The news headlines listed it as a two-alarm fire that resulted in a total loss of the priceless historical landmark; however, the Youseys were able to repair the barn with a new roof and new metal siding around the 1896 addition. The interior, though blackened in the 1896 portion and along the roof of the 1808 section, remained structurally sound.

Virginia Ferchen, and her husband, Ronald, took up residency in the former tavern until the death of her father, Floyd, in 1999. At this point the property was deeded to Floyd's daughters, Virginia and Phyllis. Verda Yousey died a year later while tending to the gardens behind the former tavern.

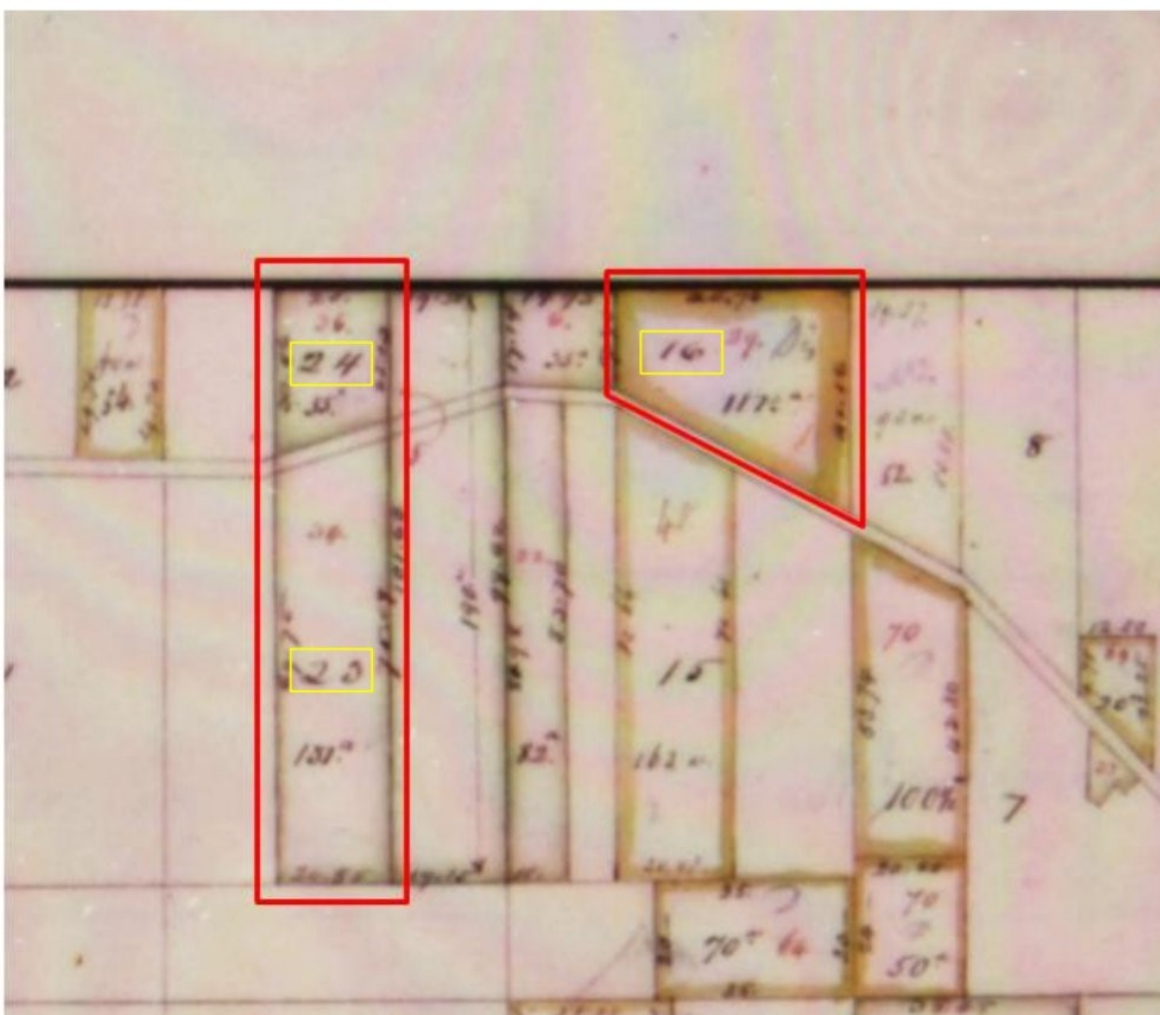
In May of 2003, the former tavern was sold along with 5 acres of land to Henry Morton. Virginia Ferchen remained in the house to the west. Parcels of 2.4 acres and 9.1 acres south of the former tavern were sold in May of 2007 to the Rickerson and Ness families. In November 2013, the 27.9-acre parcel remaining of lot 24 north of the former tavern was sold to the McCollum Farms Partnership. Then in 2007 the remaining 5 acres, including the original Forsyth tavern and barn, were foreclosed upon and abandoned. During this period, all of the buildings suffered from the effects of poor roofs and vandalism. The parcel was purchased in 2017 at auction by Tyler Booth of the Forsyth-Warren Tavern Foundation. Efforts began immediately to restore the five-acre parcel back to its original appearance and functionality. The mission of this group is to open and operate the property as a non-profit living history farm and museum utilizing the historic buildings, farm, artifacts, and recorded histories to replicate life on frontier farm in the earliest years of its existence.

Supplemental Maps



Detail of Holland Land Company Survey Map

This detail shows the early “Queenstown” or “Niagara Road” (Ridge Road) which was the earliest route through Niagara County, linking Lewiston and Batavia. Township 14, Range 7 is highlighted. The approximate location of the Forsyth-Warren Tavern is marked with a star.



Detail, Township 14, Range 7 map (undated, ca. 1805)

Lots 23 and 24, highlighted were purchased by John Forsyth. Lot 23 contains the Forsyth-Warren tavern. Lot 16 was a later purchase by John and Mary and was later given to John's sons after they came of age to inherit the lands from his will.



Detail, Map of Niagara County, New York (1852)

H. Warren is Henry Warren, corresponding to the former tavern building. E. Warren is Ezra, corresponding to Warren's Store. N. Miles corresponds to the former frame church.



Detail, Map of Niagara and Orleans Counties (1860)

Note here that the property was owned by Henry Warren. This map also shows the growth of Warren's Corners at the time, with a grocery, church, and schoolhouse nearby. Note that the sons of John Forsyth occupied lands originally part of their father's land holdings.

Cemetery at Warren's Corners

Row 1	Mary J. wife of James Warren d. Sept. 25, 1854 age 36 yr. 8 mos. 19 days
Row 2	Sarah wife of Daniel Rees
North — South	d. March 31, 1829 age 20 yr. 11 mo. and 24 days Eunice daughter of John and Polly Forsyth Died Feb. 23, 1857 age 71 yr. 5 mos. 25 da. Mary, wife of Ezra Warren Died Feb. 23, 1857 age 71 yr. 5 mos. 25 da. John Forsyth d. Jan. 2, 1812 age 31 yr. 4 mos. 2 days In memory of Ezra Warren d. Nov. 12, 1879 age 89 yrs. 11 months
Row 3	Nancy daughter of Luther and Mary Forsyth
North — South	Sept. 7, 1833 age 3 yr. 7 mos. Abigail daughter of Luther and Mary Forsyth Died Nov. 22, 1843 age 9 yr. and 6 mos. Betsey Maria wife of Luther Forsyth Died 1851 age 38 yr. 9 mos. Emily E. daughter of Harvey and Mary Steadmond Died Mar. 1846 age 3 monts and 10 days