

HISTORY  
OF  
SULLIVAN COUNTY:

EMBRACING

AN ACCOUNT OF ITS GEOLOGY, CLIMATE, ABORIGINES, EARLY  
SETTLEMENT, ORGANIZATION; THE FORMATION OF  
ITS TOWNS, WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES  
OF PROMINENT RESIDENTS, ETC., ETC.

BY  
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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE TOWN OF BETHEL.

The town of Bethel was erected from the territory of Lumberland by an act of the Legislature, passed March 27, 1809. By law the new town was bounded as follows: North by the south line of Liberty; east by the west line of Thompson; south by a line commencing at a place on the Mongaup creek where the west line of Thompson is intersected by the south line of the Hardenbergh patent; thence north eighty-one degrees west to the south-west corner of lot number eighteen, in the subdivision of said patent; thence north, nine degrees east, to the north line of lot number seventy-one, in the subdivision of said lot number eighteen; thence westwardly along the north line of said lot number seventy-one to the westwardly bounds of this State, at the Delaware river; thence northwardly by the westwardly bounds of this State to the said town of Liberty.

Within these bounds were the present towns of Bethel, Cochection and Delaware. The first town-meeting was held at the house of William Brown, in March, 1810, when the following officers were elected: John Conklin, Supervisor; William Brown, Town Clerk; Charles Irvine, John Lindsley and William Brown, Assessors; Joseph Mitchell, Russell Hurd and Zalmon Hawley, Commissioners of Highways; Oliver Calkins and John Lindsley, Overseers of the Poor; Norman Judson, Constable; Moses Calkin, Constable and Collector.

This town is on the water-shed between the Mongaup and the Delaware. While the Mongaup and one of its branches wash its eastern boundary, no large stream runs through its territory, although there are several creeks which afford sufficient water-power for manufacturing purposes. Of these we may note White Lake brook, the west-branch of the Mongaup,\* and Black Lake brook.

The lakes of Bethel are remarkable for beauty and an abundance of fish.

For many years White Lake has been a fashionable summer resort. Its name was bestowed in consequence of its white,

\* Jonas Gregory assured us that one of the aboriginal names of this stream was Min-gas-pock-a, and that on an old map in his possession it was so designated.

sandy shores and bottom, and the brilliancy of its waters. *Kau-ne-ong-ga*, its supposed Indian appellation, occurs first in the writings of Alfred B. Street, and is said to be descriptive of the shape of the lake, which somewhat resembles the outstretched wings of a bird.

Black Lake is about two miles south of White Lake. As its name indicates, its water is of a dark hue. Its outlet is of considerable magnitude, and unites with the Mongaup. No other sheet of water in Sullivan has been more famous for pike than this. Anglers have been known to take from it half a barrel of these fish in a single day.

Lake Superior and Chestnut Ridge pond, like those already noticed, are centrally located. The name of the first originated in local pride, and the appellation of the other explains its origin. Wells' pond is so called from an early settler, and Indian Field, because the aborigines had cultivated land in its vicinity. Both are in the south part of the town. Mallory, in the west, also commemorates a pioneer; while the names of Pleasant pond, Horseshoe pond, and Birch Ridge pond, three small lakes in the northern section, explain their own origin.

The surface of this town is rolling and uneven; but there is no elevation in it which may be termed a mountain. Although lumbering and tanning have been important industries, it is emphatically an agricultural town, as will be more and more clearly manifest as its forests are destroyed.

POPULATION—VALUATION—TAXATION.

Year.	Popu- lation.	Assessed Value.	Town Charges.	Co. and State.
1810 .....	737	\$210,911	\$130.15	\$288.99
1820 .....	1,096	237,183	458.38	476.53
1830 .....	1,192	128,347	797.15	816.00
1840 .....	1,483	145,849	544.41	510.65
1850 .....	2,087	193,369	546.51	1,203.14
1860 .....	2,854	393,255	501.88	3,147.44
1870 .....	2,736	230,295	627.99	7,382.31

Undoubtedly the first white men who visited Bethel were hunters and trappers. Its numerous lakes and small streams made it a favorite resort of the beaver, the most valuable of fur-bearing animals, and its forests even in recent days have been noted for noble game.

Several causes led to the settlement of Bethel. 1. John K. Beekman owned Great Lot 16 of the Hardenbergh patent, and knew that his lands would continue to be nearly worthless unless

they were improved. 2. The Sackett road was made across the territory. 3. The Newburgh and Cohecton turnpike was chartered in 1801, and effectually opened the region through which it passed. 4. The land was of excellent quality.

The first who came for the purpose of locating here were Adam Pintler and his brother, from Sussex county, New Jersey. Their route was by the way of the Shinglekill to the Mongaup on the old Minisink and Cushetunk road. After crossing Wood's bridge, they traveled on the west side of the stream until they reached Black Lake brook; thence along the latter to the lake; and from there to the farm now occupied by the Pintlers. They probably did not remain any longer than was necessary to build a cabin to shelter their families, who remained in New Jersey. This was about the year 1798.

When they moved to their new home, they traveled by the way of Mamakating Hollow, and then passed over the Sackett road as far as Nathan Kinne's, in the West Settlement of Thompson. Beyond this there was no road over which a loaded vehicle could be drawn, although the Sackett road was soon after (1800) cut through to Cohecton; consequently they were under the necessity of carrying their household goods and provisions on their backs from Kinne's to their residence west of White Lake. Back and forth, piece by piece, looking well to the line of marked trees—the job was tedious and hard to accomplish; but it was performed at last, and it does not require a vivid imagination to appreciate the Pintlers' satisfaction when the final back-load was deposited on the puncheons of their bark-covered cabin. Here they were in the pathless woods, some half a dozen miles from a neighbor, twenty-five miles from a grist-mill or a doctor, and a still greater distance from a store of any kind. Until a grist-mill was built at White Lake, the Pintlers were obliged to carry the flour consumed by them from Mamakating Hollow on their shoulders. Sweet must have been the bread made from that flour! And when they were able to feed a cow on the grass of their newly cleared fields, and had milk and butter with their bread, how luxurious must have seemed their food! Especially was it relished (the sweet, brown rye-loaf) when it was accompanied with venison and maple-sugar or honey.

Previous to settling in Bethel, Adam Pintler had married a young lady whose courage and fortitude rendered her a wife every way suitable to an existence in the woods. And it is our duty to record the fact that Eve, the wife of the first white man of the town, did not lead *her* Adam into trouble, and that, if he found Bethel a paradise, her folly never caused his expulsion from it.

The Pintlers occupied their farm until 1804 without knowing

who possessed the fee simple. They then ascertained that it was owned by John K. Beekman, from whom they purchased it. George and Peter Pintler, descendants of the original settlers, still occupy the place.\*

After the Sackett road was opened from Mamakating Hollow to the Delaware, and the Newburgh and Cochection Turnpike Company was organized, several families moved into the town. They were principally from Orange county, the States of New Jersey and Connecticut, and from the north of Ireland. They were generally of small pecuniary means; but intelligent, hardy and industrious. In addition to this, many of them had had the advantage of correct moral example and training in the older communities from which they had emigrated. In 1807, there were between thirty and forty families located within the present limits of the town. The following memoranda in regard to them, made by the late Jonas Gregory, show where they settled. They were furnished us in 1870, when Mr. Gregory's mind was still vigorous; nevertheless it is possible that he has omitted the names of a few early settlers:

"I came to Bethel from Blooming Grove, Orange county, New York, June 7, 1807. There were then at White Lake, William Peck and family, a grist-mill and saw-mill; Edward Austin, who had a tan-yard and shoe-shop; Obadiah Tibbetts, Michael Dekay and sons, and Jesse Crocker, all of whom were from Orange county; two families of Pintlers from New Jersey; one named Potter from the same State; and one named Thurston, from Salisbury, Connecticut.

"At Mongaup Valley were Aaron Heuras, J. Heuras, E. Blanchard, Adam Barmore, and the noted Colonel Michael Mudge.

"In Hurd Settlement were two families named Hurd, viz: Graham and Chauncey Hurd; also David Jackson, Jehiel and Joseph Smith, Gilbert and Abijah Mitchell, and Thody Abbott.

"In the woods between Hurds' and White Lake were the families of Abner Hollister, Nathan Heacock, ——— Carey and Alexander Brown.

"The Hurds, Jacksons, Hollister, Heacock and Carey were from Connecticut.

"West of White Lake were John Cross, Alexander Rutledge and William Brown from Ireland.

"At Black Lake, Walter Knapp and family, from Cornwall, Orange county. Knapp had a saw-mill, or there was one there.

"There were also in the town John Sherwood and Matthias Fuller, from Connecticut.

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\* Statement of Jonas Gregory.

† William Peck was Beekman's miller, and acted as his agent.

"There were also some single men and others who did not become residents, and two or three families in Fulton Settlement.

"John K. Beekman was the owner of Great Lot No. 16, in the Southern Range of the Great Patent, and it was through his efforts that many of the settlers came. He built a grist-mill and saw-mill on the outlet of White Lake—the first in the town—for the accommodation of the people; and at one time attempted to establish a linen thread manufactory in connection with his mills. To do so he purchased very valuable machinery in Europe, which was captured by the British during the war of 1812, while on its way to New York. It has been said that he intended to send flax from the sea-board to White Lake; cause it to be made into thread there; and then cart the thread back to tide-water. This may be so; but a more reasonable hypothesis is, that he intended to encourage the growing of the raw article in Bethel, where it was then raised as cheaply as in any other town of the United States.

"A town-meeting at which a vote was taken on the question of separation from Lumberland, was held in March, 1808, at the house of David Canfield, at Rocky pond, about two miles from the mouth of Ten Mile river. The polls were open three days. Not a stone was left unturned. Every one voted who had a legal right to do so, and some who had no right. One man was taken by Peck's team, who had not been from Ireland more than seven or eight months, and his vote counted as much as any other man's.

"The first Justice's court ever held in the town was at Jesse Crocker's, before Ichabod Carmichael, Esq., of Lumberland. The parties were Adam Barmore and Thomas Smith. The suit was concerning a dog that was shot while in chase of a deer. Barmore and Smith were their own pettifoggers.

"When the Hurds\* commenced logging, they put stones between the logs to keep them asunder, supposing that they would burn better in that way.

"Mudge got his title of Colonel in the following manner: A worthless fellow, whose name was McKelpan, got in jail at Kingston for debt. Mudge had business at Kingston, and while there went to see McKelpan, who was an old acquaintance. As Mudge looked into the prison, 'Hello!' says the other, 'how do you do, Colonel? I am so glad to see you, Colonel! How's all the folks?' Mudge had a secret love of titles, and to be thus dubbed a Colonel in the presence of strangers pleased him, and put him in the best of humors. This the cunning fellow knew, and took advantage of, by imploring the *Colonel* to be his surety.

\* Graham Hurd at first lived in a cave, which is still known as the Rock Cabin. Richard D. Childs, of Neversink, informs us that, when he was a lad, he visited Hurd Settlement, and "put up" at this cave.

Mudge could not say, no! to one who thus tickled his vanity. He gave his bond for \$100—the fellow was permitted to enjoy the liberty of the jail, commonly known as 'the limits,' the bounds of which did not hold him long; for he ran away, and the Colonel had to pay the amount of the bond, which his friends persisted in terming his commission. Although he has been dead many years, he is yet remembered as Colonel Mudge.

"The first settlers came to the village of Bethel about the year 1802. They came on the Sackett road, which had been cut through but a short time.

"One of the Pintlers carried flour on his back over this road, from Gumaer's grist-mill in Mamakating."

In January, 1870, there were, including Jonas Gregory, but six men in the town who were there in 1807. Most of the original families have disappeared—not even their names are now borne by residents of Bethel.

Jonas Gregory (1870) has a copy of Webb's map of 1762, which shows that Tingley & Cox, Catharine Livingston, Philip Livingston, Cornelius Tiebout, John Aspinwall, William Alexander, Robert Livingston and Christian Hartell were among the principal owners of lands in Great Lots 1 and 18. From this it seems that John Wenham sold these lots soon after the partition of 1749, by which he became their owner.

John Lindsley came to Bethel in 1805, and was the first practicing physician of Bethel. He was a gentleman of irreproachable character—was elected Member of Assembly in 1823 and 1829, and was the standing Supervisor of his town until he declined the office because he could no longer conscientiously act as a member of the Town Board of Excise. He removed to Indiana about the year 1835. While he was a resident of Bethel, he lived at the A. Hollister place. Doctor A. A. Gillespie, one of his pupils, succeeded him, and is still practicing his profession. The professional life of the two, in Bethel, extends through a period of more than sixty-five years.

A man named Dewitt was one of the early preachers of the town. His meetings were held at the house of John Cross. Messrs. Greer, Fisk, McCauley, Hopkins, and others, also preached here in the primitive days of the settlement.

John Cross kept the first store, which was where (1870) George O. Frazer resides.

In 1807 and 1808 there was a school in Hurd Settlement kept by Joseph Smith, and another in the rear of P. J. Pintler's present residence, of which Thaddeus Judson was the teacher. Doctor Copeland, it is said, kept the first school at Bethel, and G. P. Price at Mongaup Valley.

Abraham Pintler was the first white person who died in the town, Nat. Peck the second, and James Potter's wife the third.

The first tavern was kept by Jesse Crocker. He was much liked, as his conduct was shaped in accordance with the "square" rules of honesty and fair dealing. Mr. Crocker was the first Justice of the town.

The pioneers of Bethel were of a more thriving class of people than first comers generally are. As an evidence of this, we mention the fact that in half a dozen years after White Lake was settled, there were five frame-houses in the town. These were occupied by Messrs. Peck, Austin, Crocker, Judson and Cross.

The north-east section was settled from 1805 to 1808, by the Fultons, Zalmon Hawley, James Luckey, Joseph Finckney, William Fraser, Stephen Northrup, and others. In 1808, there were nine families in that section.

According to the loose statements which usually characterize gazetteers, Catharine Fulton was the first white child born in the town. When she first saw the light, there were not less than twenty families in the present limits of Bethel, some of whom had been there from six to nine years. The priority of her birth is true as to Fulton Settlement only.\*

This section was from the first very attractive. Those who occupied it were generally men of worth, who were contented with the good things within their reach, and with striving for those things which concern the highest interests of the human family. They avoided broiling and contention, and were industrious and frugal.

Stephen Northrup was born in Salisbury, Connecticut, in 1780, and died in Fulton Settlement in 1872. At the time of his decease, he was the last of the pioneers of his locality. He came to Bethel in May, 1807, and after viewing the country, concluded to go back to his birthplace. When he reached the Neversink, he met Zalmon Hawley, one of his old neighbors, who was moving to Bethel with his family. Hawley was very glad to meet him; but sorry to learn that he was returning. After a conversation concerning their affairs, Northrup was led to alter his purpose once more, and again return to Fulton Settlement.

This meeting took place on the east side of the Neversink. The river was very much swollen by the spring rains. There was no bridge, and the ford was impassable: at least Hawley did not dare to put his oxen, cart, wife and children in peril by attempting to cross in the usual manner. So he took the yoke from the necks of his cattle, and compelled them to swim over a short distance from the ford, where the water was smooth and deep. Then he unloaded his cart, took off its wheels and box, and conveyed or towed every thing to the opposite shore in or

\* Adam, a son of John Pintler, was born May 2, 1805, and Eve Pintler was born October 7, 1803. Both of these births preceded that of Catharine Fulton.



behind a log canoe! The task was difficult and dangerous: but was safely performed, and the adventurers proceeded on their way.

They spent two days in traveling from the Neversink to the west-branch of the Mongaup. When they passed the latter, a heavy rain set in. Night was approaching, and they were in an almost trackless forest, far from human habitation. The discomforts of the day were bad enough; but they were far exceeded by the prospective miseries of the night. The first care of the men was for the young mother and her two little children. With an axe they made the frame of a diminutive tent, which they covered with blankets. In this, Mrs. Hawley and the little ones passed the dismal night, while the men fared as well as they could under the dripping trees.

On the third day they reached a clearing made by one of the Fultons, where they found a deserted cabin. Into this Hawley moved. Having thus piloted his friends to their new home, Northrup returned to Connecticut, and three weeks later came back with his family. After occupying a temporary shelter for a few months, he moved to the place where he spent the remainder of his days. During the last fifty-six years of his life, his daily walk and conversation were in accord with the strict rules of the Presbyterian faith. He never sought to occupy a conspicuous position in this life; but was content with what was far better: the discharge, honestly and earnestly, of those duties which give life and beauty to Christian society.

Joseph K. Northrup, a son of Stephen, was the first male child born in Fulton Settlement.

We have already alluded to William Brown, one of the pioneers of Bethel. He was a native of Ireland, and exhibited many of the traits of the "north-country"—traits which, if modified by a certain degree of mental culture, are apt to give a man prominence and weight in some communities, but which are repulsive to many gentle and refined people, and especially so to those whose gentility borders on the effeminate. Mr. Brown was a farmer, inn-keeper, surveyor and office-holder. On the organization of the town he was elected Clerk, and when the county was erected, he was made its Treasurer. He held the latter office until 1826, and was succeeded by Jesse Towner, of Thompson.

Mr. Brown believed that the opening of a great thoroughfare from Newburgh to Cochecton would soon add much to the population and business of the country through which it passed. He came to Bethel before the road was located in that region, and bought a tract of land through which he was led to believe the turnpike would run. But he was disappointed. The line was made to run north of his purchase, and his aim in coming

to Bethel would be defeated unless he could buy another tract through which the road would be built. While making arrangements to do so, Samuel F. Jones of Monticello learned Brown's intention, and determined to buy the land himself. The owner lived in Albany, and Jones started for that city by the way of Newburgh. At the latter place he expected to take passage in a sloop to the State capital. After he left home the object of Jones' journey became public, and Brown determined promptly to reach Albany first by the overland route. He mounted his horse and proceeded to Kingston by the most direct roads. From Kingston he rode to Albany, at which place he arrived in advance of Jones. With the deed for the land in his pocket, Brown met his wily competitor in the streets of Albany and derided him in true "north-country" style.

The affair caused considerable amusement at the time, and it was reported that Brown used his surveyor's compass to enable him to travel in a straight course from Bethel to Albany. Of course, this part of the story was a *canard*, as no horse could then cross the Catskill mountains, or pass through our tangled woods.

The late Matthew Brown was a son of William, and inherited a full measure of the craft and cunning of his father.

William Brown was a slave-holder, and owned a black female chattel as late as 1823, when she became free under the laws of the State.

There is ground for belief that Rev. Thomas Greer, a Presbyterian clergyman of Minisink, Orange county, was the first minister of the gospel who visited the town of Bethel, where he preached as early as 1808, in the tavern kept by Jesse Crocker, which was nearly opposite the ground on which now stands the parsonage of the Covenanter or Reformed Presbyterian Church of White Lake.

Mr. Greer was a plain, earnest man, and did not highly value an elegant exterior, or seek respect and admiration by those polite artifices which mark the conduct of less worthy men. His deportment was quiet and unobtrusive. While pastor of the Westtown congregation, he loved to seek "jewels for his Master" in the by-ways of the wilderness country, and while thus engaged, bore the ills and discomforts of a frontier-life without complaint. Cheerfully he forded our rivers, and hopefully he threaded our forest-paths, while seeking some settlement in the wilds; for in the future he saw that the scene of his toil would be occupied by a numerous population, and that his labors would inure to their benefit, as well as promote the highest interests of those who had "wandered into a far country."

Previous to Mr. Greer's first visit to White Lake, some of the settlers had heard of him; but none of them had ever seen him.

He sent word to them that on a certain Sabbath he would "preach for them at Crocker's house," and the news was joyfully communicated from the dwellers in one log-house to those of another, until every one far and near knew that he was coming. They were to have preaching again—a privilege which they had enjoyed in the older settlements, but which they had not anticipated for many years after their removal to White Lake.

Mr. Greer reached Crocker's on Saturday; and was surprised at finding quite a number of people collected there, who were evidently laboring under excitement, a circumstance which was owing to a trial before a Justice of the Peace, the litigants being a couple of backwoodsmen who had a dispute about some trivial matter. Finding that no one recognized him, he concluded that he would not make himself known, until it was necessary to do so, and that he would quietly study the character of the people when they were unrestrained by the consciousness that the eyes of a clergyman were upon them. He soon found that the sins which predominate among men removed from the restraints of older and larger communities, prevailed among the settlers of Bethel. Too many of those present were addicted to rum-drinking, profanity and kindred vices, the trial having brought together all the tiplers and tavern-loungers of that section of country. His pious soul was shocked at seeing God's image distorted and marred by inebriation; at hearing rude jests and blasphemous revilings come from mouths which should have uttered words of purity and praise; at the violent buffetings administered by hands which should have been employed in useful industry, or used in works of mercy and love; and at other conduct which showed that this people needed admonition of "the wrath to come."

While he was gazing at the doings of the crowd, he attracted the attention of a man who was just drunk enough to discover that there was antagonism of some kind between the parson and himself. This man came up to Mr. G. and proposed to fight him; but the latter mildly declined, when the other, somewhat astonished, demanded to know whether he could fight—fighting probably being one of the accomplishments of that day. Mr. Greer replied that he did not know; that when he was young he had done something at it; but that he feared he was then out of practice. The bellicose individual then knocked off Mr. Greer's hat, in order to aggravate him; but he quietly picked it up and got away, much to the disgust of the other, who considered, as did many others, that he had done all that could be expected to arouse the wrath of the stranger.

At night the drinking and profanity continued to a late hour. Mr. Greer, fatigued with his journey, and saddened by what he had witnessed, retired early, but not to rest. His bed was di-

rectly over the bar-room, and with his whispered evening-prayer were mingled the fumes of whisky and Jamaica rum, and the uproar of the revelers. To sleep was impossible as long as the carousing was kept up; and the only recourse of the good man was to watch the stars through the roof, and to endeavor to possess his soul in patience.

About midnight, a tipsy individual came to the room where Mr. Greer was, and after undressing, reprimanded him for occupying more than half the bed. Without a murmur, he moved as far to one side as possible, when his unexpected bed-fellow laid down beside him, remarking that "it was a devil of a pretty place to put a gentleman (meaning himself) where the Lord could look right down upon him through the roof!" The "gentleman," however, did not seem to suffer much by any such intrusion upon his privacy; for he was soon fast asleep, and snoring loudly, much to the annoyance of the poor missionary.

The whole night was a very unpleasant one to Mr. Greer. He did not get asleep until near morning, and was soon after aroused by his fellow-lodger, who complained that he was dry, and invited him to go down and take a drink. Mr. Greer begged to be excused, and said he would try to sleep a little more. The "gentleman" then dressed, and went in pursuit of something to moisten his tongue and throat.

Mr. Greer slept again; but his slumber was brief. Soon after daylight, the landlady began to bustle about the house. She had breakfast to prepare, and her household goods to put in order. It was necessary that every thing should appear decent when the minister came. Finding that Mr. Greer was still in bed, and not inclined to get up, she was considerably vexed, and cried out to him, "Old man, you had better get out of that! We are going to have preaching here to-day by Mr. Greer, and must clean up the house!"

Of course, the "old man" abandoned his couch without further warning. After washing his face and hands, and combing his disordered locks in the open air, he took a short walk, and then had breakfast, when he felt much refreshed. While loitering around the premises, in reply to some inquiry, he said that, "if they were to have preaching, he would stay, especially as he did not like to travel on the Sabbath."

The necessary preparations were made for the meeting. Benches were extemporized—a table for the minister placed in the right position—the table covered with a clean linen cloth, upon which were laid a Bible and a volume of Hymns and Psalms, and the conduct of all approached nearer and nearer to what was fit and proper for the day and the occasion.

By-and-by, the people began to assemble by ones, and twos and families. All inquired if Mr. Greer had come, and were

somewhat disappointed when they learned that he had not. Many anxious glances were cast in the direction from which he was expected. The time for the opening exercises was near; some who had come for worthy purposes, looked serious and downcast, thinking, perhaps, that their time on earth was rapidly slipping away, while they remained among those who were not with God's elect, and seriously asking themselves whether God would ever move them to forsake their sins, and live according to His laws. Others, who were more volatile, amused themselves in various ways. Among other things, it was proposed that one of the company should personate Mr. Greer, and he was accordingly installed as the preacher for the day, and proceeded to read a chapter from the Bible.

The "old man," as they called Mr. Greer, during these performances, was a quiet spectator; but when the appointed time came, he arose and said, "If you have no objection, I will be Mr. Greer." As no one objected, he proceeded with the service, took a text, and preached an excellent sermon, in which he told some very pertinent truths and gave them much wholesome advice, which we may believe was suited to the capacity and habits of those who listened.

His hearers were greatly mortified at having treated "the old man" rudely, and they made many apologies, all which he accepted with his usual kindness and good nature.

The good people of Bethel never treated him with neglect afterwards; but we are sorry to say that he became unpopular at a subsequent period with the rigid professors of Presbyterianism.

In the early settlement of our county, the Presbyterians and Baptists struggled, each for their own communion, to obtain the vantage ground. Fierce and unyielding was the controversy concerning the lawfulness of "sprinkling." In the bar-room and in the pulpit, at the logging-frolic and at the prayer-meeting—anywhere and everywhere, when a few of the profane or the pious came together, the controversy was carried on—sometimes with good nature—sometimes angrily—always earnestly. It was not surprising, therefore, that, while some saw their way clear so far as the subject in dispute was concerned, others became confused and bewildered. Of the latter class were two Forestburgh converts. They were Presbyterians; but they would not enter the Church as members, except in the manner prescribed by the Baptists. And so Mr. Greer immersed them, like a good liberal soul, as he was. Both sprinkling and immersion were lawful in his eyes.

Many Presbyterians thought he yielded too much to the Baptists, and some imagined, probably, that he would desert

the Church of Calvin; but he remained faithful to the Presbyterians as long as he lived.\*

People who live in a new and sparsely settled region are often called upon to make considerable sacrifices in the cause of humanity and mercy, and however loose may be the ties which sometimes bind together such communities, but few persons thus situated refuse to freely give their time and means to relieve the distress of a neighbor. If his cabin takes fire from the burning woods, they turn out and build another for him; if he is from any cause unable to plant his newly cleared fields, or gather his crops, they lend him a helping hand; indeed, if any misfortune befalls an upright and hard-working pioneer who is not himself a thoroughly selfish man, other honest and laborious pioneers will freely assume each his portion of the calamity.

Perhaps nothing will so stir their sympathies as an alarm that a child is missing or lost in the woods. In 1810, nearly the entire population of Bethel consumed eight days in searching the wilderness for a little boy named John Glass, and did not cease to hunt for him until they relinquished all hope that he was living.

The parents of this lad lived near White Lake. During the summer of the year mentioned, his mother sent him about a mile into the woods to carry dinner to some men who were engaged in chopping. He reached them safely, and started for home, after which he wandered from the track which led to his father's house, and became hopelessly bewildered. He was not missed until evening, when the choppers returned home without him, and it was found that he had not reached the house previously. Every parent may imagine the scene which then ensued—the distress of the mother, and the wild energy and activity of the father. The night was spent in giving utterance to frantic misery by the one; and in a fruitless search by the other, assisted by all who had heard of the circumstance. In the morning the news was spread far and wide, and all joined in beating the swamps and thickets, and so continued to do from day to day until they lost courage and hope. No trace of the lost child was found, and every one believed that he had perished from terror, hunger and exposure, or had met with a more speedy and less fearful fate by being devoured by wild beasts, which then and there were known to be numerous and ferocious.

When young Glass left the path, he traveled almost directly from home. When night overtook him, he laid down beside a fallen tree, weary, hungry and half crazed, and slept until morning. He then started again at random to find his way out of the woods. He thus continued to wander for ten days, with

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\* Verbal statement of Simeon M. Jordan.

nothing to eat except a few wild berries, and seeing no living thing except an occasional beast or bird of the forest. One night, as he was in a fevered sleep, he was awakened by the bleating of a deer, and then heard the angry snarl and growl of a catamount, and knew that the ferocious animal was drinking the blood of his harmless victim.

On the eleventh day of his wandering, he was a pitiable object. His body was emaciated and lacerated, his feet were sore and swollen, his clothing was in tatters, and he was so worn and exhausted that he could with difficulty stand up. He would have soon laid down to die, when he heard a distant cow-bell. The sound gave him renewed life. He tottered forward in the direction from which it came, and discovered a clearing, in which were several cattle. It was near night. The animals, when they saw him, started slowly for home. With the utmost difficulty he followed them. Finally his strength so far failed that he was obliged to crawl upon his hands and knees. He continued to do so until he saw the house of a person named Lair, who lived on the Callicoon.

When Mrs. Lair went out to milk the cows, she discovered the poor lost boy upon the ground near her door, and throwing down her pail, took him in her arms, and carried him into her dwelling. Notwithstanding she lived on the outskirts of civilization, and was unlearned and almost beyond the influence of Christianity, she had a good, motherly heart and a sound head. She treated the lost boy as kindly as if he had been her own son, and with as good judgment as if she had been one of the regular faculty. She washed him, dressed his sores, and put him in a warm, soft bed, and then gave him nourishing food in small quantities. Soon he was able to tell his name and residence. News of his escape was sent to his friends, who for two days had ceased to search for him, believing that he was dead.

James Glass lived to be an old man. For many years he had a home with William Stewart. He never fully recovered from the effects of his adventures in the woods, and always needed the controlling influence of a mind more sound than his own.\*

About the year 1811, William Gillespie removed from the city of New York to Bethel. In conjunction with Josiah C. Hook, Mr. Gillespie established a store at White Lake—the second in the town. Until his death, Mr. Gillespie was a highly respectable resident of Bethel. In 1820, he was elected a Member of Assembly from Ulster and Sullivan counties, and we believe at one time was the candidate of his political party for Representative in Congress in opposition to Charles H. Ruggles; but was defeated. He was a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for

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\* Hunters of Sullivan.

nearly twenty years, and First Judge of the county from 1835 to 1844, when he became ineligible from age. He was also a Commissioner of Loans for several years, as well as a Ruling Elder of the Associate Reformed Church. He was emphatically an honest man, and exhibited every trait of a devout and sincere Christian. His death was very sudden. On Sunday, May 28, 1849, he attended church as usual; was taken ill on his return home, and died at 4 o'clock on Monday morning.

Mr. Hook, who was associated with Mr. Gillespie in business in the early days of the town, was a gentleman of the old school—of lofty and pretentious bearing—ceremonious and hospitable. He was Supervisor of Bethel for several years. His old age was marked by misfortune. His pride was chastened by poverty. On the 20th of February, 1841, Edward, a much-loved son, was lost at sea by the capsizing of the schooner *Three Friends*, while passing from St. Joseph's to Mobile, soon after which Mr. Hook removed from the town.

Jesse Crocker, the first tavern-keeper of Bethel, was a man who enjoyed the respect and esteem of the public; but he carried on a business which almost always brings sorrow and suffering to the families of those who engage in it as well as to the families of their customers. If we doubted the doctrine of compensation for sin in this life as well as in the life to come, our doubts would be removed by studying the history of men who have been aptly styled retailers of liquid damnation. If they do not themselves become the victims of their own calling, they generally live to see some one as dear as their own souls reduced by it until he sinks below the level of a beast.

Nelson Crocker, a descendant of the old tavern-keeper, was equally noted for his love of hunting, his blasted life, and his tragic death. No hunting-party was complete without him. He knew every foot of the woods, and when he accompanied an expedition after game, his companions felt sure of success. Many interesting anecdotes could be told of his adventures; but the following, which we find in the "Hunters of Sullivan," must suffice:

"Crocker often hunted north-west of Big pond, in the vicinity of 'Painter Swamp.' During the days of Joseph Peck, Paul Horton, William Brown and Jared Scott, this ground was as good for deer-hunting as any other, and where these animals were most numerous, panthers generally abounded. Nelson here found more of the last-named than he wished to see. While on the outskirts of the swamp with his dog, he struck the trail of no less than seven panthers. The panther is generally found singly, or at most in pairs. Why so many of them were here together is a matter of conjecture. It was probably the rutting season with them, and that there were six males in



pursuit of a single female. The fact that Nelson found them unusually ferocious gives color to this supposition.

"Crocker followed their tracks until he was hungry, when he sat down upon a log to eat his luncheon. This he divided into two parcels, one of which he offered to his dog; but the latter, instead sharing of his master's repast, showed his teeth and seemed to be bristling for a fight with an unseen enemy. Just as the hunter swallowed his last morsel, a large panther sprang by him like a flash, almost brushing his shoulder as it passed. Crocker caught up his old General Morgan rifle, and firing at random, saw the beast disappear unharmed. An instant afterwards his dog was fighting another feline monster at a little distance; but the terrible claws of the panther were too much for the poor cur, which gave up the battle, and ran to his master for protection, while the panther fled. As Crocker was reloading, he saw another running toward him. He yelled at it, and it ran up a tree. This one he fired at and killed. Almost as soon as he could load his rifle again, he saw another, and succeeded in sending a bullet into it. Then the fright of his dog, which seemed to feel safe nowhere except between his feet, and the screaming of the panthers in almost every direction, caused him to lose heart. He made up his mind that he had better get out of the swamp without unnecessary delay. He ran for safer ground, and while doing so, his hat was shoved from his head by the limbs of a bush. He did not stop to pick up his displaced head-gear; but continued to run until he believed he was out of danger.

"On the succeeding day, Nelson determined to revisit the scene of his adventure, and skin his game and recover his hat. While doing so he discovered a large male panther in the crotch of a tree, and fired at it. It fell; but immediately ran up a sapling until it reached the top; when the sapling bent with the weight of the beast until its limbs reached the ground. As the panther came down, the dog, forgetting the rough usage of the previous day, stood ready for another battle. A brief struggle ensued, with much snarling, yelping and flying of hair. The dog was speedily whipped, and fled toward his master, with his antagonist close to his heels. Crocker's rifle was unloaded. He had no stomach for a hand-to-claw encounter, and very sensibly concluded that he would run too. A race then ensued in which the dog was ahead, the hunter next, with the panther in the rear, driving all before it. Nelson expected every instant to feel the weight and the talons of his pursuer upon his shoulders, and consequently made excellent time. Finding his rifle an encumbrance, he threw it away. This proved his salvation; for the beast stopped a moment to smell it, and decide whether it should be torn to pieces. This enabled Nelson to get out of the

swamp before the panther could catch him, and it did not seem disposed to follow him to the upland.

"After waiting several hours, Crocker, armed with nothing but his hatchet and hunting-knife, started for his gun, and recovered it. After reloading, he endeavored to make his dog follow the panther's track; but the cur had had enough of panther-hunting, and refused to stir an inch. They then went a few yards from the swamp, when the dog commenced howling. The panther answered with a loud squall, and repeated the challenge as it approached for another fight. The dog crouched close to the hunter's feet. Nelson, who had so recently fled ingloriously, because no glory could be won with an empty rifle in a fight with a panther, now coolly awaited the approach of the ferocious monster. Soon the beast appeared. Nelson covered it with the muzzle; but reserved his fire until the animal was within one bound of him, when he sent a ball crashing into its brain.

"Without further adventure, he skinned the game he had shot during the two days, and returned home. There are men yet living who saw the pelts of the panthers he shot in 'Painter Swamp.'"

As we have already intimated, Nelson Crocker was of respectable parentage. Alcoholic liquors were the bane of his life. A depraved appetite was rapidly sinking him in the social scale to the level of the vagrant and pauper. This he knew and deplored, as does almost every other poor drunkard who is passing down the inclined plane of decency to destruction. For twenty-five years, he frequently lost all control of himself, and continued in a state of beastly intoxication for days and weeks. Then would follow a sober interval, and expressions of bitter regret for his excesses. Sometimes he declared that death was preferable to a life of drunken degradation. In the summer of 1843, when the total abstinence reform was potent, he joined the Temperance Society of Bethel, and for nearly three months successfully resisted the enemy of his life. Kind hands were extended to him—cheering smiles brightened the road to honor and usefulness. But in an evil hour, he joined Jacob Munger and others of his old associates in a hunting-expedition, who took with them a supply of rum. After searching the woods for game, the party gathered at night in a hunter's hut in the woods. Here, as was their custom, they spent the evening merrily, and drank freely, and here Crocker violated his pledge. A wild debauch of a week's duration followed. When Nelson awoke from it, it seemed to him that his last hope of a better life was lost; that death was preferable to a life of shame and self-imposed abuse-ment; and so the old hunter, by shooting himself, added the

horrible offense of self-murder to the comparative venalities of his life.

Bears still abound in Bethel, and when wounded or defending their young, are sufficiently ferocious to afford the hunter all the excitement he should desire. Under such circumstances, they do not hesitate to attack a man. Many have had battles with them; but notwithstanding the great strength and weight of bears, and their tenacity of life, no one in Sullivan has been fatally injured by them.

In November, 1865, James F. Calbreath was hunting in a laurel swamp about three miles from White Lake. He was armed with a rifle and revolver, and had with him two or three good dogs. The latter found a very large she-bear, and two well-grown cubs, and a noisy battle immediately ensued between the dam and dogs, while the young animals ran away, and were passing Mr. Calbreath, when a bullet from his rifle caused one of them to fall. He immediately reloaded, hoping to get a shot at the one with which his dogs were fighting; but much to his surprise the one he had shot got upon its feet, and ran toward him in a rage. A second ball caused it to tumble over, squalling for help. The mother, hearing the signal of distress, rushed toward the spot, and crashed through the laurels. When she came within sight, Mr. Calbreath attempted to shoot her with his revolver. It snapped. He tried again. The caps were worthless. What was to be done? An unloaded rifle, a useless revolver, encompassed on every side by tangled laurels, and an enraged bear approaching and within twenty feet of him, did not afford a flattering prospect of longevity. With a vivid prospect of being crushed, torn to pieces, and devoured, he dropped his revolver, clubbed his rifle, and stood ready to deliver at least one stunning blow upon the head of his rapidly approaching enemy, when the dogs rushed up behind, and fastened their teeth into the hams of Mrs. Bruin. The effect was magical. She turned about in a fury to avenge the insult, ran after her assailants, and failing to reach them, went away, apparently forgetting her human foe altogether. Mr. Calbreath was thus left "master of the situation," and escaped uninjured. Whether he remained in the swamp long enough to skin his game, we cannot say; but of this we are certain, the young bear was taken from the woods by some one. It was very fat and weighed one hundred pounds.\*

BUSHVILLE.—About the year 1850, Abial P. Bush, General Luther Bush, and other members of the same family, built a tannery at this place. The establishment brought disaster to them, as well as financial ruin to their successors and others.

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\* Sullivan County Republican.

In March, 1852, the Bushville post-office was established, of which Myron Grant was the first post-master.

MONGAUP VALLEY.—Until 1847, this place was known as the Mongaup Mill—a grist-mill having been built by the Livingston family at the point where the Newburgh and Cocheton turnpike crosses the Mongaup. Great Lot 15 was owned by that family, and finally passed to the children of John C. Tillotson, whose wife was a Livingston. In 1807, five families were living in the valley or its neighborhood. Forty years later, there were but four dwelling-houses in the place, and about twenty-five inhabitants.

A new era, then commenced. The magic rod of enterprise touched the valley, and it awoke from the sleep of ages. The days of passive respectability were passed, and the wise spirit of progress ruled.

The Messrs. Kiersted saw that Mongaup Valley possessed superior advantages for manufacturing leather. In 1847, they purchased a site for a tannery and village. They also bought the hemlock-bark on ten thousand acres of land in Great Lot 15, and in 1848, with John W. Swann, a practical tanner, put up extensive buildings. The erection of one of the best-ordered and best-managed tanneries in the country was soon followed by the building of dwellings and places of business, which are second to none in the town. In 1859, a census was taken, when it was found that the place contained 664 inhabitants, of whom 365 were under 20 years of age. Of the residents, 477 were born in the United States, 167 in Ireland, and 20 elsewhere. 277 were Roman Catholics.\*

The post-office at Mongaup Valley was established in 1848, when Wynkoop Kiersted was appointed post-master.

The place has had two physicians. The second, Isaac Purdy, M. D., is still in practice, and the other, James W. Wells, M. D., died in 1858.

Mongaup Valley has had but one lawyer (Robert L. Tillotson), who found so little to do that he joined the federal army during the great rebellion, and died while serving his country. Robert L. Tillotson was of a genial and pleasant humor—an aristocrat by birth—a man of the people at heart. Ever bubbling over with wit, he was yet chivalrous and punctilious. Unfortunately he was of convivial inclinations, and had not sufficient moral stamina to resist his morbid appetite—a fact which he himself deplored. He was a duellist withal. The following anecdote of him is authentic:

With a young gentleman named Anthon and other friends, Tillotson visited a fashionable restaurant in the city of New

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\* MSS. of Peter M. Lorgan.

York. While there, he believed that Anthon willfully insulted him, and promptly challenged him. Anthon chose Bowie knives as weapons, and both proceeded with their seconds to a celebrated duelling-ground in Virginia. Tillotson had been an adept in manly sports; but was then partially disabled by paralysis. He knew that his antagonist could cut him to pieces in less than ten seconds; yet he was determined to fight, and take the consequences. On the other hand, the physical disparity between the two was so great, that Anthon would have committed downright murder by carrying the affair to extremity. Therefore, when all was ready for a deadly encounter, Anthon threw away his weapon and apologized. The parties then became reconciled.

**BLACK LAKE.**—This hamlet takes its name from the lake near which it is situated. A sole-leather tannery was established here by Strong & Mitchell. It was subsequently owned by Medad T. Morss, of Woodbourne.

Among the former residents of Bethel about whom we intended to make inquiries, are the following: Elias Sanford, Captain Asa Robinson, Eleazer Everard, Seth Whitlock, John Ramsey, Archibald Coleman, Henry H. Crist, Robert McCrabbie, John Voorhes, Asahel Hollister, Abner Lyon, Charles Dekay, Lee Mitchell, Thomas Lyon, Captain Romar, John Coots, John Potts, Hugh Dunlap, and others. But we have already reached the limits of the space we can devote to personal sketches in this chapter.

Bethel has been generally exempt from prevailing diseases. This, however, has not prevented its people from indulging in panics on account of apprehended maladies. In July, 1832, when Asiatic cholera first visited the city of New York, they feared that it would sweep over the hills of Sullivan, and decimate Bethel. A Board of Health was organized, of which Josiah C. Hook was chairman, Nathan J. Sherwood secretary, Doctor John Lindsley health-officer, and John Maffit, Nathan J. Sherwood and John Barhyte a committee to care for the sick. Not one of this self-sacrificing committee ever saw a case of cholera.

The people who were so much terrified by cholera, were less apprehensive of the miasmatic diseases of the far West. In 1836, a few families removed from the town to the State of Indiana, and during the first year of their residence there eight individuals died. There were not as many deaths in Bethel during the same year.

Scarlet fever and diphtheria are the most fatal diseases which have visited the town. In the fall of 1861, the latter caused great mortality among children. In a single family (Philip S. Fulton's) no less than seven children died from it within a few weeks.

**WHITE LAKE.**—White Lake is a beautiful sheet of pure, clear water. It has been supposed that the Indians gave it the name of *Kau-ne-ong-ga*. That it was frequented by native tribes for the purpose of fishing is beyond doubt, as darts and other relics have been found on its shores. It is possible its waters have been stained with the blood of battle. But the trail of the red man of the forest has been lost to the memory of living men, and the natural loveliness of the place which must have attracted even the rude savage, now occupies in cultured society the pen of the poet and the pencil of the artist.

This is the deepest lake in the county. By actual measurement James E. Munger found the northern end 80 feet deep, and the Narrows 70 feet deep. Until pike were put into the lake, it contained the largest trout in the world.\* It is known that the brook-trout (*salmo fontinalis*) have carmine spots; lake-trout (*salmo conifinis*) have not. The White Lake trout had carmine spots. Charles Fenno Hoffman, an author of some celebrity, says he saw one, in the winter of 1832, taken from White Lake which weighed 6 pounds. Louis Pyatt caught one in February, 1843, which weighed 8 pounds and 14 ounces. Some weeks later, a gentleman from Newburgh caught another weighing 7 pounds and 6 ounces. In the year 1843, John B. Finlay employed an Indian to take black bass from Lake George and put them into White Lake, from which they have been distributed to other lakes.

Fed by internal springs, the lake has no inlet; but there is an outlet with water-power sufficient for two mills. In the year A. D. 1804, J. K. Beekman, residing in New York city, who owned Great Lot 16 of the Hardenbergh Patent, sent his agent, William Peck, to make improvements. Mr. Peck built a saw-mill and a grist-mill, and one or two other buildings at the outlet. The grist-mill was rebuilt in 1812, and machinery put in the basement for spinning flax. The business, which was conducted under the supervision of Alexander Starret, was closed in 1815.

In 1811, William Gillespie erected a store-house on the turn-pike, near the lake, and, as considerable travel had commenced by this time, a hotel was opened and kept by Doctor Lindsley. For many years a few summer-boarders frequented the place. In 1846, J. B. Finlay put up the first hotel for the special benefit of this class of people. It was kept by Simeon M. Jordan, George B. Wooldridge,† Stephen Sweet, and others. But the

\* Since this was written, we have been informed by Seth Green, one of the Fish Commissioners of this State, that George S. Page, of No. 10 Warren street, New York, caught a brook-trout in Maine, which weighed ten pounds.

† Mr. Wooldridge was an illiterate man, and yet a paid contributor of several New York publications. Among them was the *Leuder* and *Bonner's Ledger*. He was also a *protege* of General Sickles. While in Washington, he discovered the infidelity of Sickles' wife, and gave Sickles the information which led to the murder of her seducer.

business was not remunerative until the Mansion House was built by a club of wealthy New Yorkers, who made an arrangement with David B. Kinne by which he ultimately became the owner. In 1866, George B. Wooldridge put up the Grove Hotel. Two years later Captain Waddell constructed a boarding-house called by the romantic name "Sunny Glade." At none of these houses are sold any intoxicating drinks. Napoleon B. Wooldridge, of the Detective Police of New York, has lately finished a fine cottage residence, commanding a pleasing view of the lake. Harold Henwood, a wealthy gentleman from Jersey City, has purchased considerable land near the lake, and is improving the soil, and, it is understood, preparing to build extensively.

There are few persons in the Great Metropolis who spend their summer-months in the country, who do not know and appreciate the attractive loveliness of this place; so that it has become the resort of substantial men and their families every year. Mount Wilder rises south of the lake, and with gentle declivity recedes 800 feet from the shore, until it reaches a point more than 1,600 feet above the Hudson. From the Mansion House observatory the view is magnificent. It is still better from the other side of the eminence. Following a winding road back of the residence of Napoleon B. Wooldridge, you find a look-out to suit the purpose. Slumbering beneath lies the lake, whose waters, when fanned by the breeze, wash a shore of pebbly white sand, and the blossoms of the rhododendron which fringe the margin, in their season, make the whole winding confines look like enchantment. When the surface of the lake is dotted with boats in gay colors, there is presented in the summer-months a sight which one never tires of seeing. In the foreground, and near the shore, is Chester hill, on the top of which is a pillared temple devoted to Freedom. Cape Henwood slopes down towards the Narrows, and trees of natural growth cast a grateful shade.

Away to the north, Mount Sherwood looms up into the serene heavens, from which the outline of prospect is scarcely inferior to that which greets the eye of the delighted traveler among the Catskills. A spur of the latter makes a show back of the Shandaken hills. Then on the right "the smoky range" of the Shawangunk is lost in the glades and forests of Neversink. As the eye sweeps the distant landscape, it detects an almost unbroken chain of mountains lying round the whole Cyclopean circle. Everywhere sloping farms are framed in groves of natural beauty; but what most attracts attention is the lake itself. Here are not the bold configuration of Newburgh bay, and the richly laden vessels of commerce; but there is more of the undisturbed repose which is calculated to please those who relish retirement from the busy scenes of active life. To crown all,

here is an atmosphere as healthy as any on the globe. Physicians frequently send invalids to recover health from its life-giving qualities. Instances of recovery almost incredible might be given: so that to those who wish to combine rare scenery with healthiness of climate, a sojourn during the summer-months is desirable.\*

The following lines were written by Alfred B. Street, whose poetical afflatus was developed by the charming scenery of Sullivan:

WHITE LAKE.

Pure as their parent springs! how bright  
The silvery waters stretch away,  
Reposing in the pleasant light  
Of June's most lovely day.

Curving around the eastern side  
Rich meadows slope their banks, to meet,  
With fringe of grass and fern, the tide  
Which sparkles at their feet.

Here busy life attests that toil,  
With its quick talisman has made  
Fields green and waving, from a soil  
Of rude and savage shade,

While opposite the forest lies  
In giant shadow, black and deep,  
Filling with leaves the circling sky,  
And frowning in its sleep.

Amid this scene of light and gloom,  
Nature with art links hand in hand,  
Thick woods beside soft rural bloom  
As by a seer's command.

Here, waves the grain, here, curls the smoke;  
The orchard bends; there, wilds, as dark  
As when the hermit waters woke  
Beneath the Indian's bark.

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\* For this description of White Lake and its surroundings the author is indebted to Rev. J. B. Williams. Mr. W. is not responsible for the foot-notes.



Here, the green headlands seem to meet  
 So near, a fairy-bridge might cross;  
 There, spreads the broad and limpid sheet  
 In smooth, unruffled gloss.

Arch'd by the thicket's screening leaves,  
 A liliated harbor lurks below,  
 Where on the sand each ruffle weaves  
 Its melting wreath of snow.

Hark! like an organ's tones, the woods  
 To the light wind in murmurs wake;  
 The voice of the vast solitudes  
 Is speaking to the lake.

The fanning air-breath sweeps across  
 On its broad path of sparkles now,  
 Bends down the violet to the moss,  
 And melts upon my brow.

WHITE LAKE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—For the origin of this Church and congregation, we refer to the records of it, as carefully kept by the officers. On christmas-day, 1805, we find it stated that "a number of the inhabitants of Lumberland, being by previous notice called together, at the house of Captain Abner Hollister, it was noted as their wish to form and to be formed into a society of worship, publicly called Presbyterian, and to be known by the name of the 'White Lake Presbyterian Society.'" The following persons were, at said time and place, chosen as officers of the society: *Commissioners*—Captain Abner Hollister, Captain Abijah Mitchell; *Trustees*—John K. Beekman, David Jackson, William Peck, William Hurd, Daniel Hunter, Captain Abner Hollister and Captain Abijah Mitchell.

Sometime during the following year, it was determined to build a "House of Worship," for we have an account of a meeting held December 25th, 1807, when it was "voted that the resolution passed in 1806, for setting the church on John K. Beekman's lot, adjoining John T. Clayton's lot, shall be *revoked*, and that the church shall be set on Mr. John Sterratt's lot, near the centre of the lot, and that William Peck, Abner Hollister, Henry H. Crist, Matthias Fuller, William Hurd, John Potts and Abijah Mitchell be a committee to stick a stake on the place, where to erect the church."

At the adjourned meeting of the congregation, held August 15th, 1808, (of which *notifications* had been put up at five different localities,) there was *another change* made, as to the *site* for the contemplated edifice, as it is recorded that a vote was taken

to build the church on Abner Hollister's lot, north of the road leading from William Peck's mill to Henry H. Crist's, and west of the road leading from the "Hurd Settlement to the turnpike, at a beech-tree marked, near the place, and that the trustees shall determine on the place, not to exceed four rods from the above marked tree."

For some cause which does not appear, there was still a *fourth* change made as to the church-site; and which was to the rising ground north of the turnpike, and half-way between Bethel village and White Lake, the location of the present edifice. This was in the spring (April 24th,) of 1809; and when the work of erection at once commenced.

The amount subscribed towards the work is set down at \$961.67, of which \$364.15 were paid in labor done, each individual being allowed six shillings a day.

The building, though commenced so early as 1809, was not completed until nineteen years after, for we find a record of a meeting of the congregation, held January 4th, 1828, at which a contract was entered into between Solomon and Thaddeus Hurd, for "finishing the meeting-house, for the sum of \$650. Two hundred dollars to be paid before the work is done, and the remainder when finished."

The house of worship, as used in its unfinished state, had at first neither pulpit, nor regular seats, nor sash in the upper windows, and as it was unplastered, and without stoves, the people were obliged during the winter season, to hold their services in the "ball-room" of a hotel near by. Some years after, however, the ladies of the congregation had spun and woven a piece of linen cloth which was sold, and the proceeds used in building a pulpit and supplying the want of sash in the upper windows of the building.

The Church was organized September 3d, 1810, by the Rev. Daniel C. Hopkins, "a Missionary of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States." Its first members were John Sherwood and wife, Esther Sherwood, William Peck and wife, Elizabeth Peck, Abner Hollister and wife, Miriam Hollister, Huldah Taylor, Margaret Tibbits, Ruth M. Mitchell, Bridget Dekay, Sarah Judson; of these, two were at the time elected Elders, namely: Messrs. John Sherwood and Abner Hollister. In December of the same year, they were duly "set apart" to their office by the Rev. Henry Ford.

For more than twenty years the congregation depended upon supplies from Presbytery. Among these we find the names of the Rev. Messrs. Methuselah Baldwin, John Johnston, Luther Halsey, Ezra Fisk, Isaac Vandoren, William McJimsey, Isaac Arbuckle, Messrs. Babbit, Adams and Timlow. The Rev. J. Boyd served the congregation for two years, and the Revs. Samuel

Pelton and Thomas Holliday, each about the same length of time.

In the year 1841, the Rev. William B. Reeves was called as the first regular pastor of the congregation, which he continued to be for six years.

During Mr. Reeves' pastorate, the present church-edifice and parsonage were built.

Rev. W. T. Blain next served the congregation for four years, and after him the Rev. Mr. Brewster, for three and one-half years.

Its more recent pastors were the Rev. Messrs. Petrie, Brown and Wells, their terms of service averaging about three years each.

Since the commencement of the present year, the congregation has been temporarily supplied by the Rev. Edwin Town, a member of the "Presbytery of Lackawanna."

The congregation at present is composed of from eighty to eighty-five families, and one hundred and twenty communicants.\*

**ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH.**—The Associate Reformed Church had no regular organization until the year 1830, although there was a missionary station at White Lake under the care and supervision of the Presbytery of New York, as early as the year 1811 or 1812. Several families from the North of Ireland, of strong Protestant proclivities, had settled in Bethel, bringing with them their religious preferences. About this period also, William Gillespie, who was a member of the Associate Reformed Church of New York, removed from the city to the town, and was chiefly instrumental in obtaining missionary aid.

Nursed by the mother Presbytery, the infant Church continued to live. It was during the winter of 1818-1819, that the Rev. William Boyse, from one of the Southern States, visited this missionary station. We have before us a copy of a letter written by him to his wife, which serves to cast a little light over this (then) dark spot. We insert the letter as a part of our History:

"WHITE LAKE, SULLIVAN Co., N. Y., }  
1st December, 1818. }

"\* \* \* This is a pretty wild part of the country. You would say it is a perfect wilderness. Yesterday I went to church. There stood a little, solitary, unfinished house, which I entered. There was no pulpit—no seats; but a very common chair, which I was to occupy, and some boards, propped up on blocks, on which the congregation sit; no fire, and the wall nothing but very thin boards. After some time, however, there was a con-

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\* Statement of Rev. Edwin Town.

gregation assembled. I got up at the end of a carpenter's bench that passed through the centre, and preached them a sermon. They sat and heard it with as much patience as if they had been in the temple of Jerusalem, I suppose; and as they are in the habit of hearing two sermons in this place, one directly after the other, cold and bleak as it was, I found they would not be satisfied unless I gave them another—and so I did. Strange as it may appear, there are some very decent people in this place, and some that live very comfortably. I expect to preach here next Sabbath.

“MONTGOMERY, December 9th, 1818.

“I returned from White Lake on last Monday. I expect to preach next Sabbath and the Sabbath after at Graham's church, and on the last Sabbath of this month at Bloomingburgh. I enjoy pretty good health. I have found some very good friends in the country. Though I cannot say that religion is in a very flourishing state in any of the congregations to which I have preached—yet many are very attentive, and receive the gospel with gladness, and show a desire to promote the glory of God, and their own eternal happiness. The vacancies belonging to the Associate Reformed Church in this Presbytery are all poor. No one of them is ready for settling a minister at present; but I have been able to get along without sinking money.”

No definite information concerning this religious pioneer is in our possession, until 1826, when he was connected with the Dutch Reformed Church, and employed as a missionary at Woodstock and Shokan, in Ulster county. In the year 1829, he became the pastor of the Woodstock Church, and occupied that position until 1837. He died in 1853.

But to return to our narrative of the White Lake Associate Reformed Church. The building alluded to in the letter of Rev. Mr. Boyse, was located on the turnpike-road, west of White Lake.

In the year 1830, the Associate Reformed people deemed it advisable, in view of their increasing number, and the necessity of supplying the spiritual wants of the community, to make a re-organization; and in January of that year a meeting was held, at which Hugh Dunlap presided. Rev. J. V. S. Lansing was present, and a resolution was adopted unanimously in favor of such re-organization, and that the Associate Reformed Presbytery of New York should be asked to take this infant Church under its care for presbyterial purposes. William Gillespie and William Frazer were elected Elders and Deacons.

On the 8th of February, 1830, after the usual religious exercises of preaching, etc., these persons were duly ordained as Ruling Elders of said congregation. The church-members at this time were William Frazer and Isabella Frazer, William Gillespie and

Mary Gillespie, Robert Frazer and Eliza Frazer, Thomas Stewart and Nancy Stewart, Hugh Dunlap, Robert McCrabbie and Agnes McCrabbie, John Coot and Mary Coot, Ann Brown, Mary Brown, Sally Brown, Ann Ramsay, Elizabeth Craig and Martha Stewart. During the same year, the following named persons united with the Church, viz: James Brown, Jane Brown, Nancy Brown, Hugh Tasey, Nancy Tasey, Samuel Brown, William A. Brown, William Cochrane, George Stuart, Jane Stuart, Eliza Cochran and Nancy Darragh. The adherents exceeded in number the church-members.

Being without a church-edifice, arrangements were made between this congregation and the Reformed Presbyterians for the occupancy of the church-edifice belonging to the latter, and it was transferred by a lease for twenty years, on condition that the lessees should finish it in a plain manner, paint it, and permit the lessors to occupy it on one Sabbath in each month, should they require it for public worship. Under this arrangement it was occupied until the new church at Mongaup Valley was erected.

In the autumn of 1830, the Rev. James George was sent as a supply to the White Lake Church, and remained there for about a year, preaching with much success. He was then sent to Philadelphia by the Presbytery, from which city he went to the Associate Reformed Church, in the northern part of this State. Soon thereafter, he removed to Canada—was chosen a Professor and Vice-President of King's College, which office he held for several years, when he resigned and became pastor of a large and flourishing congregation at Stratford, C. W. Doctor George was a man of great intellectual power, and as an orator he had few equals at the time of his death, which occurred in September, 1870.

After Rev. Mr. George left White Lake, the pulpit was occupied for six months by Rev. Henry Connelly, who became pastor of the Associate Reformed Church at Bloomingburgh thereafter. He died at Newburgh.

In June 1833, the congregation had increased, and the Church Session was enlarged by the election of Robert McCrabbie, George Brown and Archibald C. Niven. In the same year, the Rev. Jasper Middlemas, a licentiate from Scotland, was chosen pastor and duly installed. He was the first pastor of the congregation.

In May, 1835, Rev. Mr. Middlemas resigned the pastorate. Of his subsequent history little is known, except that he formed an ecclesiastical connection with the Dutch Reformed Church.

For about one year after Mr. Middlemas resigned, the pulpit was occupied at intervals by Rev. Alexander Proudfit, Rev. Clark Irvine, and Rev. T. C. McLaury.

In June, 1836, a call was presented to the Rev. T. C. McLaury, which he accepted, and was regularly installed in September of that year.

In 1842, Rev. Mr. McLaury resigned, having been formally invited to become the pastor of the Associate Reformed congregation of Cambridge, Washington Co., N. Y., where he labored until September, 1852, when he received and accepted a "call" to preach to a congregation at Lisbon, St. Lawrence county; but died during the week appointed for his installation.

After the Rev. T. C. McLaury resigned the pastorate at White Lake, the congregation had religious services by several young clergymen at different times, among whom were the Revs. Herman Douglas, S. D. Gager, Mr. Donaldson, James Campbell and P. C. Robertson. This state of things continued until 1847, when Rev. P. C. Robertson became the pastor, who continued as such until the new church was built at Mongaup Valley; soon after which period, that is to say, in 1853, Rev. G. M. McEckron was chosen pastor, and after occupying the pulpit about five years, resigned and was succeeded by the Rev. Alexander Adair. Mr. McEckron accepted a situation as pastor of a Reformed Dutch Church in Poughkeepsie. Mr. Adair remained at Mongaup Valley until the year 1868, when he removed to Oxbow, Jefferson county, where he now resides.

Rev. Mr. Rockwell, from the Reformed Dutch Church, then preached to the congregation for about a year, when Rev. William Ferrie, A. M., became pastor, and is such at the present time. The number of actual members, exclusive of ordinary hearers, is at this date (1872) about ninety.

In reference to this denomination of Christians, it is proper to say, that in regard to the *form* of Church government, it is strictly Presbyterian; in regard to *doctrine*, it differs but little, if any, with the Episcopal, Reformed Dutch, Presbyterian, Orthodox Congregationalists or Baptists; in *practice*, it is not exclusive; but admits to its communion all members in good standing of other Churches, who hold the same doctrines.\*

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WHITE LAKE.—This Church was organized in 1822, and at first consisted of ten members. For nearly thirty years the congregation was unable to maintain a regular pastor, although two years after its formation it erected a church-edifice. This building stood on the shore of the lake and was a plain unpretending affair. Homely as it was, it was not put to shame by a more ornate structure in its vicinity, and in primitive times was regarded with a certain degree of local pride. Rev. J. B. Williams, the first and pres-

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\* The author is indebted for this sketch to Hon. A. C. Niven.

ent minister of the congregation, was ordained in 1850. Under his pastorate, the membership has increased to eighty. In 1864, a new house of worship was built, at a cost of \$2,500.

The Reformed Presbyterians, who are popularly known as Covenanters, are in some respects a remarkable class of professed Christians. They adhere to the Westminster Confession. In public worship they sing nothing but David's psalms translated into English, and condemn the use of metrical hymns and psalms as impious and idolatrous. Stringed instruments, organs, and even choirs, they regard as abominations. They refuse to "incorporate, by any act, with the political body" of our country, because the organic law contains no "recognition of God as the source of all power, of Jesus Christ as the Ruler of Nations, of the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule, and of the true Christian religion." Consequently in their eyes it is sinful to vote, hold civil office, or swear to support the Federal or State Constitution; and they treat those of their membership who offend in this respect as unsound branches of the true vine, and lop them off. They are political eunuchs, and from a sense of duty forego the dearest privilege of American citizens, hoping thus to promote the glory of God, and the reign of Immanuel over the tribes, and powers, and principalities of the earth.

The memory of William Stewart, who was long a Ruling Elder of the congregation at White Lake, holds a warm corner in the hearts of the pastor and laity. He came to Bethel in 1804, when the site of Monticello was still covered by primitive forests, and the only practicable conveyance was an ox-sled, and was a resident of the town until his death, in January, 1871. He was a man of vigorous mind, and persistent, untiring aims. "It was mainly owing to his exertions that the Church organization was preserved until 1850 as a vacancy."\* He was an omnivorous reader, and from the books within his reach, acquired an extensive knowledge of history, theology and English literature. He was also a man of marked individuality of character. Many pleasant anecdotes are told of him, and among them this: When reading his Bible, he sometimes added a running commentary to each verse. While busy with the last chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, he came to the verse—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." This he rendered as follows: "I can do all things—'Paal! Paal! ye're boastin' noo'—through Christ which strengtheneth me—'P-h-i-e-w!!!—Paal, I cud do't mesel'!"

When this rigid, sincere, but genial adherent of the Covenant died, the community which had known him nearly three-score

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\* Rev. J. B. Williams.

and ten years suffered a great loss; "the poor were parted from a friend and guide; but an eminent peace-maker was taken to his reward. The record of his life teaches that charity is the greatest of earthly blessings."\*

The Methodist Episcopal church of Mongaup Valley was erected in 1850, when Rev. William Bloomer was on "the circuit." It was improved in 1869, and will seat about 400 people.

The manner in which the old school Methodist preachers labored—their brief connection with each circuit, and the imperfect records of their work which remain and are accessible, render it almost impossible to give a connected history of their operations in this county. We have applied to several intelligent members of this respectable body of Christians for information; but have failed to procure what we have faithfully endeavored to find—an account of the labors of their pioneer preachers, a description of the revivals which have swelled the number of converts, and a list of the elders and deacons who have been sent into our county to advance the standard of Methodism.

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\* Rev. J. B. Williams.

NOTE.—The Mansion House at White Lake was not built as a club-house, as stated in this chapter, although Mr. Kinne received some assistance from several persons when he made additions to it.



## SUPERVISORS OF THE TOWN OF BETHEL.

From		To
1810.....	John Conklin.....	1817
1817.....	Oliver H. Calkin.....	1818
1818.....	John Lindsley.....	1829
1829.....	Josiah C. Hook.....	1835
1835.....	Matthew Brown.....	1842
1842.....	Thomas Lyon.....	1843
1843.....	Matthew Brown.....	1846
1846.....	James H. Foster.....	1847
1847.....	William G. Potts.....	1848
1848.....	Matthew Brown.....	1849
1849.....	Wynkoop Kiersted.....	1850
1850.....	Reuben Fraser.....	1854
1854.....	Isaiah Breakey.....	1855
1855.....	William J. Hurd.....	1856
1856.....	Robert L. Tillotson.....	1857
1857.....	George A. Mitchell.....	1858
1858.....	Daniel M. Brodhead.....	1859
1859.....	J. Howard Tillotson.....	1861
1861.....	John W. Swan.....	1862
1862.....	Charles Foster.....	1863
1863.....	Thomas Williams.....	1864
1864.....	Schuyler Duryea.....	1867
1867.....	George E. Swan.....	1868
1868.....	Thomas Williams.....	1869
1869.....	Hiram Post.....	1871
1871.....	Roderick Morrison.....	1874