

# A Story of Upstate New York Told in 100 Buildings

HOW THE  
EMPIRE STATE  
HAPPENED



CRUDEN BAY BOOKS

# INTRODUCTION

If those walls could talk...this is what they would say. A story about Upstate New York.

Cobblestone construction... octagon houses... strategic forts... iron horses... Chautauquas... kazoos... trout propagation... Dutch architecture... the CCC... steamboats... apples... kit houses...the golden age of motoring... transportation canals... early aviation... salt... cure cottages... carousels... castles... courthouses... Frank Lloyd Wright... Adirondack camps... trolley parks... the Borscht Belt... Carengie libraries... round barns... Shakers... dairy cows... This book will have you telling stories like a native in no time.

The photos and stories collected here are a fast and fun way to learn the explanations behind the quirks, the traditions and the secrets that make Upstate New York uniquely Upstate. Where was the birthplace of American viticulture? Solved. Where was the electric chair first deployed? A mystery no more. What New York airfield did flying legend Glenn Curtiss found? Identified. The ballfield where Babe Ruth walloped a home run before Yankee Stadium was ever built? Revealed.

Imagine a group of settlers arriving in an undeveloped location. First come shelters in which to live and then structures in which to work and shop. There are buildings for worship and education. As the community grows government buildings are required. With prosperity comes places in which to spend leisure time. And each step along the way builds a story only Upstate New York can call its own. A story told in 100 buildings. Almost all of the selections within are open to the public, or at least visible from public spaces. So, if you haven't seen these landmarks in person, fire up your GPS and get out and see the story of the Empire State standing in plain sight on Upstate New York streets!

**A STORY OF UPSTATE NEW YORK TOLD IN 100 BUILDINGS  
...HOW THE EMPIRE STATE HAPPENED**

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# Bronck House

Coxsackie

1663



Henry Hudson, an adventurer on the payroll of English merchants, twice poked around the outskirts of North America searching for a Northeast Passage to the valuable storehouses of Asia. Each journey was a failure on that account. The British business community was not prepared to bankroll a third

venture so the Dutch East India Company ponied up funds for an attempt through Norway waters. This quickly proved a fool's errand and Hudson reversed course, disobeying orders, and set out for North America again. This time he sailed up the great river that bears his name before being stalled by shallow waters and the obvious conclusion that China was not at the other end. Hudson would never return to Europe to collect his final paycheck; mutineers sent him to his demise on a small lifeboat in the Canadian Arctic in 1611. Still, Hudson's efforts were enough for the Dutch to claim its only colony on the North American mainland - one that included parts of modern day Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Connecticut and New York. Settlers to New Netherlands did not arrive on Governors Island until 1624 and they never did arrive in large numbers; the population reached 9,000 people at best while other European nations nibbled around the territory. In 1664 the vastly outnumbered Dutch gave up New Netherlands without a fight. The Dutch, however, remained the majority culture in the stronghold of New York City into the 1700s and the Dutch language was commonly heard in the state until the time of the American Revolution. The house built by Pieter Bronck dates to the final throes of the colony and is considered the oldest extant building in Upstate New York. The house has been added onto but the southernmost part still exemplifies the steep gables and thick stone walls that typify early Dutch architecture.

# Boughton Hill

Victor

1670/1998



French explorers saddled the people they found living in central New York with the name Iroquois, which has no discernible meaning. If the newcomers had bothered to ask they might have learned that there were five distinct nations - Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca - who collectively referred to themselves as the Haudenosaunee, "People Who Like to Build Houses." The Iroquoian-speaking people banded into a confederacy that proved to be one of the most powerful and independent collectives the Europeans would encounter in the New World. A sixth group, the Tuscarora, would come on board in 1722. While always preferring to remain neutral in the squabbles of the Europeans the Iroquois developed a nasty habit of falling in with the wrong side. In the Beaver Wars of the 1600s they cast their lot with the Dutch against the French and their Huron allies. That led to French permission to actively pursue Catholic converts. They were the losers against the British in the French and Indian War. And, most disastrously, there was the alliance with the British in the American Revolution. American independence meant the end of Iroquois independence. The Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1784 condemned the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy to give away rights to most of their land. The Senecas were the largest nation and Gannagaro located here was their primary village where fields of corn, beans, and squash were nurtured. Some 150 communal elm bark longhouses once stood here until the granary was destroyed by the French in 1687. This re-creation from the 1990s used the same building techniques: bitternut hickory trees lashed together for the house frame, white birch bark inside to reflect light and brighten the living space, and shagbark hickory boiled and softened into cord to tie everything together.

# Senate House

Kingston

1676



Wessel Ten Broeck constructed this one-room stone house that was indistinguishable from many others in Kingston in the 1670s. The Ten Broeck family prospered enough to not only build an addition but to lay the brick in Flemish bond, the highest quality of masonry construction in the New World. With the coming of the American Revolution New York City became - and remained for the duration - a Loyalist stronghold. So it was in Kingston on April 20, 1777 that the New York Constitution was ratified and on July 30 George Clinton was sworn in as the first governor. Space was needed for the legislators who would be gathering in the first state capital and on September 9 the 17-man Senate began meeting in this house, then owned by merchant Abraham Van Gaasbeek. Van Gaasbeek could not get inventory from New York City so he made a little cash by renting to the new legislature. Job one for the senators was raising money and keeping the militia supplied. Business was rudely interrupted on October 16 when the British sacked the town and burned the house behind a fleeing Senate. The interior woodwork was rebuilt and the Van Gaasbeek family returned to live here into the 1820s. In 1887 the stone house became one of the first buildings purchased by the State of New York as an historic property.

# Fort Niagara

Youngstown

1726



The French fortified Lake Ontario near the mouth of the Niagara River as early as 1726 and it remained in operation, under a host of different flags, until after World War II. During British control after the French and Indian War the defenses were improved with redoubt walls built five feet thick. During the American War of Independence, as the British called the nasty business, Loyalists used Niagara as a base for bloody raids into the Mohawk Valley. On one such excursion in July 1778 53-year old Tory leader John Butler marched 400 regular troops and 500 Seneca and Cayuga warriors more than 200 miles to strike at Patriot forces in the Wyoming Valley. Those indefatigable Brits did not abandon Fort Niagara until 1796, thirteen years after the Treaty of Paris officially crowbarred New York from the crown. The Americans turned the fort's guns against the British in the War of 1812, claiming its greatest prize when the merchant schooner *Seneca* was crippled on November 21, 1812. Seacoast defense was the first order of business for the United States Congress from the earliest days of independence and the ambitious Third System review in 1816 marked the beginning of the end for hulking masonry installations like Fort Niagara. The site has been restored to its origins as the only fortified "French Castle" in the United States.

# Washington's Headquarters

## Newburgh

### 1750



George Washington used the house of the Widow Hasbrouck as his headquarters longer - almost 17 months - than any other building during the American Revolution. Jonathan Hasbrouck, a prosperous merchant and colonel in the local militia, had finished the family home, with a commanding view of the Hudson River, in 1770. Hasbrouck died in 1780 and Washington arrived in April 1782, creating a significant amount of American history here before leaving in August the next year. He flatly refused the suggestion that he ascend to the head of an American monarchy in the coming new nation; he stemmed a budding mutiny at the American camp at New Windsor; he celebrated the formal treaty ending the war on April 19, 1783; and he created the first American military award, the Order of the Purple Heart. Only three were known to be given out before the long-ignored order was revived in 1932. The Hasbrouck House became the first historic property ever purchased by a state when New York acquired the building in 1850. Constructed of fieldstone, it has been restored and furnished as a military headquarters.

# Fort Ticonderoga

## Ticonderoga

### 1755



Indians called it the place "between the waters." And indeed this was the position to control the two-mile portage from Lake Champlain to Lake George and thus command the entire route between Canada and New York. It would poetically be called "the Key

to a Continent" or "America's Gibraltar." French control beginning in 1758 from a fort they called Carillon because water fell like a "chime of bells" from Lake George. Just as the fort was being completed the British unleashed a 15,000-man force - the largest yet fielded in North America - against the position. The Marquis de Montcalm ordered wooden fortifications built in the woods west of the fort and beat back the invaders despite being outnumbered four-to-one. The next summer did not go so well and the doomed French retreated, destroying part of the fort as they fled. The British called their prize Ticonderoga but with the French gone the post held no military importance. It stood like a monument in the wilderness, manned by a few men, and falling into disrepair. Revolutionaries Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold led an expedition of 83 Green Mountain Boys from Vermont who surprised and overwhelmed the garrison on May 10, 1775. The position was not as critical as the cannon and ammunition stored at Fort Ticonderoga. Colonel Henry Knox arrived on December 5 to lead a train of 42 heavy sledges pulled by 80 yoke of oxen to Boston, 300 miles away. Knox was able to deliver 43 cannon and 16 mortars to General Washington to free the city. The British then returned from Canada and chased the Americans from the fort. After the Revolution Ticonderoga was never garrisoned again. Its greatest value turned out to be as a quarry for locals who plundered its stone walls for building material.

# Fort of Crown Point

Crown Point

1759



Save for a short portage here and there it is almost possible to travel from Montreal to New York entirely by canoe, thanks in large part to the more than one hundred miles of water passage through Lake Champlain. Roughly half way between Montreal and Albany the lake narrows to a quarter-

mile at Crown Point. Clearly whoever commanded Crown Point would rule the entire watery superhighway. The French staked the first claim, in 1731, and at the waterside sprouted an irregular-shaped limestone bastion, Fort St. Frederic. For the next quarter-century the French ruled the Champlain Valley and a not insignificant community grew up on the peninsula. This combined military and civilian presence thwarted British plans in the region until finally in 1759, after three failed military campaigns, a combined force of over 12,000 subdued Fort St. Frederic. Construction began immediately on "His Majesty's Fort of Crown Point," 200 yards west of the French post. Three redoubts and a series of blockhouses were interconnected by a network of roads. The earthen walls were twenty-five feet thick, fronted by a trench 30 feet wide and 14 feet deep. The fortification complex covered over three miles, making it one of the most ambitious military engineering projects undertaken in colonial North America. A fire in April 1773 caused a powder magazine to explode and the outpost burned nearly to the ground. After expending so much blood and treasure a small garrison was left on the site as most of its firepower was transferred to Fort Ticonderoga, twelve miles south. At the outbreak of the American Revolution a skeleton force of nine British defenders surrendered the fort to Colonel Seth Warner. During the remainder of hostilities Fort Crown Point changed hands several times, never in serious fighting.

# Herkimer Home

Little Falls

1764



Nicholas Herkimer built the most successful empire in the Mohawk Valley during the middle part of the 18th century. He aligned himself with the rebel cause while his powerful Loyalist neighbors, the Johnsons and Butlers, took refuge in Canada. Herkimer assembled a force

of 800 men and boys - all the males in the valley between 16 and 60 - in an attempt to break the British stranglehold at Fort Stanwix. They never made it, marching into an ambush by 400 Mohawk Indians at Oriskany, six miles below the fort, on August 6, 1777. More than a dozen officers, including Herkimer, fell in the initial volley. Demanding to be propped against a tree, blood gushing from a gaping thigh wound, Herkimer directed his band of farmers to form a circle against the snipers. Unfortunately his rear guard of 200 had fled down the road. A heavy rainstorm rendered weapons unusable for about an hour and Herkimer took good advantage of this blessed respite. He ordered his men to fight in pairs, allowing one to load his musket free of Indian tomahawk charges. The American militia were able to march out of their deadly trap. Fort Stanwix was never breached but the Battle of Oriskany weakened British alliance with the Mohawks. The exact number of casualties has never been determined with certainty but is often called "the bloodiest battle of the Revolution." General Herkimer was carried home where he died eleven days later, just short of his fiftieth birthday, after a botched amputation. The distinguished Georgian brick Herkimer home bounced among half-a dozen owners before being acquired by the State of New York in 1913. The Erie Canal was dug through the backyard and it was even a tavern for one period. Nicholas Herkimer is buried in the family cemetery adjoining the house; his grave is marked by a tall stone monument erected in 1896.

# Schuyler Mansion

Albany

1765



When born in 1733, three generations of Schuylers had already settled in Upstate New York before John Philip. After serving as a captain in the French and Indian War Philip Schuyler returned to Albany, heir to thousands of Mohawk and Hudson Valley acres. He oversaw their development personally and began construction of this Georgian rose-red brick mansion in 1761. He called his imposing home "The Pastures." An outspoken patriot, Schuyler was put in charge of the Northern Department during the American Revolution as a Major General. While laying the groundwork for what would become the ultimate defeat of Lt. General John Burgoyne's invaders at Saratoga in 1777, Schuyler split his force to relieve American troops at Fort Stanwix. His detractors in Congress rallied to remove him from command for the action so, even though he earned accolades from those on the field, Horatio Gates reaped the glory for the critical victory. Schuyler did not allow petty slights to turn him from the Revolutionary cause and he directed the delivery of supplies to the field from The Pastures during the battle. He would be cleared of all charges and after the war Schuyler became an early cheerleader for the development of canals to link the new country's interior. The Pastures remained Schuyler's primary home among several. Every major luminary of the Revolution was entertained here, including "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne who was a prisoner-guest. In 1780 Schuyler's daughter Betsy married Alexander Hamilton in the parlor. When Philip Schuyler died in 1804 he was eulogized by Daniel Webster as "second only to Washington in the services he performed for the country."

# Neilson House

Stillwater

1776



In his book *The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World* Edward Shepherd Creasy writes this of the victory of the Americans over the British at Saratoga: "The ancient Roman boasted, with reason, of the growth of Rome from humble beginnings to the greatest magnitude which the world had then ever witnessed. But the citizen of the United States is still more justly entitled to claim this praise." John Neilson came to the Hudson River Valley as a 19-year old in 1772 with nothing but spit and vinegar. He toiled as a farmhand until earning enough money to lease some land and build a typical early New York frontier house. On February 28, 1777 Lt. General John Burgoyne submitted a plan to the British ministry called "Thoughts for Conducting the War from the Side of Canada." The ultimate goal was to sever the states along the Hudson River by moving on Albany. When Burgoyne marched 10,000 men out of St. Jean, Canada in June Neilson and his wife abandoned his house to stay at his in-laws and he joined the militia. On September 19 Burgoyne threw three columns at the American defenses at Saratoga. He won the day but only at a terrible price. Rather than resuming the offensive the British busied themselves building field fortifications while the ranks were being depleted by desertion and disease. On October 7 Burgoyne attempted one more desperate charge to break the American line. Albany would never be reached. Benedict Arnold, who had bivouacked in the Neilson House, led a charge at the British middle against orders. Burgoyne fell back with a spent army as surrender negotiations began. The American victory at Saratoga came at a time when Washington's army was being pushed around New York and greatly improved American morale. Politically, it convinced the King of France to ally himself with the rebels. Strategically, the states were not divided for their continuing war effort. And the Neilson House is the only remaining witness to the most important battle of the American Revolution.

# Clermont Manor

Tivoli  
1782



The first Robert Livingston to emigrate to America arrived in 1673 and within a dozen years had acquired by grant and purchase 160,000 acres on the east side of the Hudson River. His third son, Robert II, built Clermont around 1740. Seven generations of Livingstons would follow into the mansion. The

British burned the building in 1777 necessitating a new Clermont. In 1804, Robert Livingston IV moved in to begin a very active retirement; he had been a delegate to the Second Continental Congress and was a member of the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence. In 1803, as Minister to France, he negotiated the Louisiana Purchase. While in Paris Livingston met a kindred spirit, an expat named Robert Fulton who had been living in Europe for twenty years tinkering with steam engines and supporting himself as a portrait painter. The two tried unsuccessfully to run a steamboat on the Seine but back in the United States in 1807 they built the first commercially viable steamboat, the *North River Steamboat* that came to be known as *Clermont*. On its maiden voyage from New York City the 142-foot craft - still sporting sails just in case - made the trip to Albany in 52 hours, a journey that would require a week under sail. And that included a 20-hour stopover in Livingston's estate. Just five years later Livingston and Fulton launched the *New Orleans* from Pittsburgh and it was stout enough to run all the way to the Gulf of Mexico through the uncharted river currents of the Ohio and Mississippi. The age of steamboat travel in America had officially arrived.

# Tuthilltown Grist Mill

Gardiner  
1788



Upstate New York boasts some 70,000 miles of rivers and streams and it can seem as if every one powered a grindstone in a grist mill at one time or another. Empire State farms produced wheat, corn, barley, buckwheat and more in abundance and the crops were never more than a short wagon ride from a water-powered grist mill. For farmers in Ulster County that was the Tuthilltown Mill beginning in 1788, considered the oldest operating grist mill in New

York. Selah Tuthill was still in his teens when he bought 60 acres on the north bank of the Shawangunk Kill and built the three-story wooden mill. His undershot waterwheel was the first of a trio that the Shawangunk Kill powered. As he prospered Tuthill eventually replaced the waterwheels with an automated system dreamed up by Delaware inventor extraordinaire Oliver Evans. With the use of ancient Egyptian Archimedes' screws Evans received the third U.S. Patent in 1791 for a multi-story mill that worked "without the aid of manual labor, excepting to set the different machines in motion." Two centuries and several owners later the Tuthilltown Mill became known for the quality of its kosher flour used for unleavened matzo in New York City's Jewish community.



# Shaker Meeting House

Watervliet

1791/1848



The Shakers, so named for their frenzied religious dancing, trace their beginnings to Manchester, England, in 1747. In 1758, 22-year old mill-worker Ann Lee joined the sect, which came to envelop her life. She reported visions that resulted in religious dogma and she was eventually jailed for two weeks for her beliefs. Free again, another vision told her to continue Christ's work in America. She convinced her husband, brother and six Shaker converts to follow her to New York City in 1774. After five years they leased land in the woods outside Albany to preach a life of simplicity and pacifism. The Shaker village sustained itself with farming and light manufacturing and began to attract recruits. Mother Ann's followers considered her the embodiment of the Lord in female form and she made several successful preaching trips to New England. She also met angry crowds that inflicted injuries that helped contribute to her death in 1784. The Shakers survived the passing of their leader and organized the Millennial Church. An expansive Meeting House was raised in the original Watervliet village for worship and community events; after it burned in 1848 it was replaced when the Shaker population was near its peak in the United States with an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 members in 18 villages in eight states. The Shakers faded away but the first village remained active until 1925 when the last sect member sold the remaining land to Albany County.

# Lindenwald

Kinderhook

1797



The Empire State has produced five United States presidents; only Ohio and Virginia can claim more. Martin Van Buren, #8, was the first and he was also the first president who had never been a British subject. Van Buren hailed from Kinderhook, which was about as far north as Henry Hudson ever reached on the *Half Moon*. The village was still so heavily Dutch when Maarten was born to an innkeeper and a widow that he became the only president to have English as a second language. Van Buren studied for the bar and became involved in New York politics before the age of 20. He was elected to the New York Senate in 1813 and began checking off the boxes on the national political ladder after going to Washington as a United States Senator in 1821. Van Buren won the governorship of New York in 1829 but resigned after 43 days to become Secretary of State in Andrew Jackson's cabinet. After becoming a trusted advisor in Jackson's first term he was elevated to the ticket in 1832 and segued from the Vice-Presidency to the Executive Office four years later. The financial Panic of 1837 helped doom "Old Kinderhook" to a single term and he took up the life of a gentleman farmer at Lindenwald, a 42-year old farmhouse he had purchased in 1839. Much of the surrounding farm had gone to seed and Van Buren spruced up the grounds, added land, planted orchards and constructed numerous outbuildings. Van Buren, who was a Democratic Party elder by this time, took one more stab at the presidency in 1844 but his party's nomination was not forthcoming. Kinderhook's native son returned home for the remainder of his days.

# Springwood

Hyde Park  
1800



New York developed differently from the other colonies of the British crown, partly because it was won from the Dutch and its representative assembly did not begin until 1691 and partly because the intimidating presence of the Iroquois and French gave potential settlers double exposure to attack. One result was that New York royal governors tended to issue extravagant land patents at small rents. Empire State history is littered with the granting of great tracts of unexplored upstate lands. One was the Great Nine Partners Patent in 1697 that covered four miles of Hudson River frontage all the way to the Connecticut border, a total of 220 square miles. Each of nine New York City businessmen received an equal slice. On William Creed's grant a rambling Federal style farmhouse was raised around 1800. By the time James Roosevelt bought the deed in the 1860s the estate was down to one square mile. Roosevelt's son Franklin and his new wife Eleanor joined mother Sara in the house in 1905 and Springwood would remain his home until his death 40 years later. In 1915 the mansion was given a dignified Colonial Revival facelift worthy of an ambitious young politician. During his four-term presidency Franklin Roosevelt visited almost 200 times, hosting political luminaries from across the globe. Before he died Roosevelt donated the estate to the American people and it has been open to the public since 1946.

# Holland Land Office

Batavia  
1815



After the American Revolution the new United States suddenly had millions of acres of land available. Much of these western lands were disposed of as a reward to war veterans and plenty more attracted the attention of speculators. European investors, having the capital lacked by many Americans, gobbled up vast swathes of new America. The Holland Land Co. was one of the largest of these players, formed in 1796 to purchase and resell millions of acres west of the Genesee River. In 1815 Joseph Ellicott, surveyor and local agent for the company, built at Batavia the third and last land office of the company. He chose a spot in a bend of the Tonawanda Creek and used cut gray limestone 20 inches thick for the small Federal-style building. Vaults secured by half-inch thick, nine-foot tall metal doors secured the valuable papers of the company's holdings that included about 3.3 million acres. The large land sales declined in the coming decades and the company liquidated in the 1840s. The old land office found no new uses and fell into ruins but in 1894 it was rescued by the Holland Purchase Historical Society and became an early example of historical preservation.

# Seward House

Auburn

1817



1821 was a big year, his 20th, for William Seward. He was admitted to the New York State Bar that year and met his future wife, Frances Adeline Miller, who was a classmate of his sister at Troy Seminary College. Seward moved here to his wife's hometown and entered into a law partnership with his father-in-law, Judge Elijah Miller, who built this house. Seward entered politics and won his first election, a state senate seat in 1830. He would later win terms as governor and United States senator and challenge for the presidency. He served as Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of State and was included in the plot to assassinate the president; he was attacked in his home that day by a man named Payne who wounded him and his son. Seward survived and continued as Secretary of State under Andrew Johnson during which time he negotiated the treaty to purchase of nearly 600,000 square miles from Russia for \$7 million. William Seward went to his grave in 1872, still hearing the critics of the acquisition of what became the great state of Alaska crowing about "Seward's Folly."

# Auburn State Prison

Auburn

1817



New York opened Newgate, its first prison, in New York City in 1797. Conditions were soon overcrowded and a new prison in the state's interior was funded. William Brittin, a master carpenter, was hired to oversee construction and the first 53 convicts arrived in Auburn, then the largest village in central New York, in 1817. Brittin was appointed the first warden, probably as a way to avoid paying two salaries as the finishing touches were added to the facility. Although originally designed for communal habitation Brittin constructed solitary cells with the inmates providing the labor. Prisoners were required to move in lockstep and remain silent at all times; the black-and-white striped uniforms that became a Hollywood staple were first introduced in Auburn. The "Auburn System" came to be a model for incarceration across the country. In 1889 William Kemmler, a Buffalo vegetable peddler, was convicted of murdering his common-law wife with a hatchet. The following year at Auburn he became the first person executed in an electric chair. Prior to that most state executions were handled by the hangman. Fifty-five prisoners would be executed in Auburn. There has not been a state execution in New York since 1963 but the Auburn State Prison carries on as the second oldest operating penitentiary in the country.

# West Point Foundry

## Cold Spring

### 1818



For the first 25 years of its existence the great American Experiment of a “government of the people, by the people, for the people” came into existence without much thought to a military. The War of 1812 changed that in a hurry. After the country escaped that conflict with a tie and the democracy intact steps were taken to insure that the United States would not be so unprepared in the future. West Point Foundry was one of the munitions factories to come on line in the wake of the war. With abundant iron ore at the doorstep, timber for fuel and the Hudson River for shipping, the operation in Cold Spring was one of America’s first vertically integrated businesses. There were civilian contracts filled at the foundry as well. Pipes for the New York City water system were fashioned here and so were the world’s first commercial steam-powered locomotives. The first, the *Best Friend of Charleston* built for the South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company in 1830, was also the first to be destroyed by a boiler explosion the next year. The foundry’s *DeWitt Clinton* became the first working locomotive in New York State when put in service on the Mohawk and Hudson Railroad. Production at West Point peaked during the Civil War when more than 1,000 workers produced 2,000 Parrott rifled cannons invented by inspector of ordnance at the foundry, Robert Parker Parrott. The foundry declined rapidly after the war in the face of modern steel production. Today the National Historic Landmark is preserved by Scenic Hudson as an outdoor museum. Trails lead through the brick ruins of the foundry and to the Italianate-styled main office that remains intact.

# Quarters 100

## West Point

### 1820



The Hudson River doubles back on itself as it flows under the promontory of West Point, forcing ships to slow down to drifting speeds to negotiate the turn. This ideal defensive position was fortified by Polish engineer Thaddeus Kosciuszko during the American Revolution with a modern defensive zone that included five forts, seven redoubts and a giant iron chain stretched across the river. Preferring not to run that gauntlet British commander Sir Henry Clinton opted instead to buy West Point from Benedict Arnold in 1780 until the traitorous scheme was foiled. No buildings remain at West Point, the nation’s oldest continuously occupied army post, from Revolutionary days. George Washington initiated the establishment of a national military academy at West Point but nothing happened until 1802 when President Thomas Jefferson, who had opposed the venture while Secretary of State, signed into law the creation of a “Corps of Engineers” in 1802. Major Sylvanus Thayer earned the sobriquet “Father of the Military Academy” when he was appointed Superintendent in 1817 by establishing standards for discipline and conduct in officer training. Quarters 100, the superintendent’s residence first occupied by Thayer, is the second oldest building at the United States Military Academy. The quarters of the Commandant of Cadets precedes it by two years.

# Erie Canal

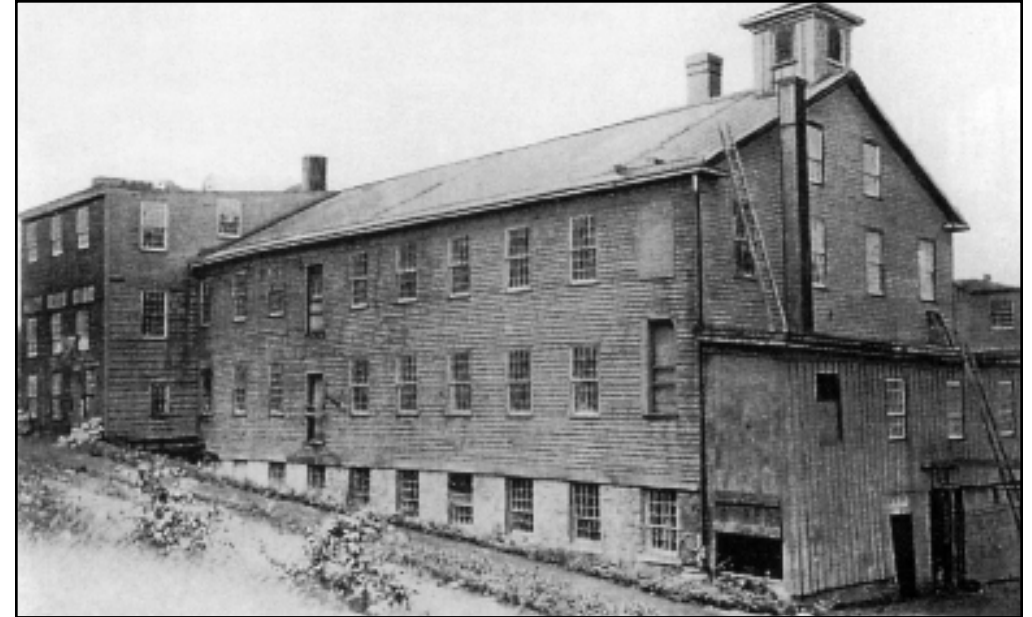
Lockport  
1825



At 363 miles the Erie Canal was the longest canal ever dug in the United States. And by far the most influential. The first dirt was shoveled in 1817 and when the canal officially opened on October 26, 1825 wilderness was transformed into villages, villages into cities, and cities into economic powerhouses. Almost overnight the balance of commercial power in the country shifted from Baltimore and Philadelphia to New York City and the Big Apple has never looked back. Albany was suddenly the 9th largest city in the country and at the other end of "the Nation's First Superhighway" Buffalo became the gateway to the American West. In the years of dreaming and planning and construction Governor DeWitt Clinton had been derided for his promotion of "Clinton's Big Ditch." Yet tolls collected in the first year covered the state's entire construction cost. The canal itself was an engineering marvel with three dozen locks required to conquer the 600 feet of elevation rise from the Hudson River to Lake Erie. The canal's success sent neighboring states into overdrive to compete, spurring a canal-building craze and the development of the railroads. Its peak years were over by the 1850s and by 1902 the iron horse had won completely and tolls were abolished. Today's traffic is almost exclusively recreational, tying into three other waterways in the New York State Canal System, including the Barge Canal that was the Erie enlarged in 1905 .

# Remington Arms

Ilion  
1828



Like most young farm boys in Upstate New York in 1816 Eliphalet Remington wanted a rifle. His father did not have enough money to buy his son such a gun but Eliphalet did not sulk. Instead he set about gathering scraps of steel from his father's forge and welded a gun barrel. He then walked 14 miles to Utica to have it rifled. He entered a shooting contest with his new flintlock and although he only took home a silver medal for his marksmanship Remington also walked away with a fistful of orders from onlookers impressed with his weapon. And so was born America's oldest gun manufacturing company. This factory was started in 1828 on the banks of the Erie Canal and E. Remington and Sons grew to become one of the world's elite arms providers along with Colt, Winchester, and Smith & Wesson. The plant in Ilion also cranked out typewriters, cash registers, bicycles, and farm equipment over the years but the signature rifle remained at the core of the Remington business. The story goes that the stress from producing so many guns in the early days of the Civil War sent Eliphalet to his grave at the age of 67 in the summer of 1861.

# Stanton House

Seneca Falls

1830



The namesake falls of the Seneca River were so powerful that by the 1830s Seneca Falls was the third largest flour milling center in the world. Yet history books written a century later in the 1930s scarcely made mention of the town's industrial heritage. Instead, an event that took place back in 1848 in a small brick chapel began to gain magnified importance in the story of women in America. Henry and Elizabeth Cady Stanton had moved to Seneca Falls in 1847 from Boston to live in this house deeded to her by her father. She became increasingly involved in the community to combat the dearth of big-city intellectual stimulation she had known in Massachusetts. She had been exposed to social reform through her cousin, abolitionist Gerrit Smith and Quaker friend Lucretia Mott. While traveling together to London for a World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840 the women talked about holding a similar gathering for women's rights. Eight years later, on July 19 and 20, 1848, Mott, Stanton, Mary Ann M'Clintock, Martha Coffin Wright, and Jane Hunt acted on this idea when they organized the First Woman's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls. Some 300 people attended and at the end of the two days, 100 people made a public commitment to work together to improve women's quality of life. The struggle continues to this day.

# Dutch Reformed Church

Newburgh

1834



Alexander Jackson Davis emerged from a childhood in Utica and Auburn to become arguably America's greatest architect of the mid-1800s. His teenage apprenticeship as a newspaper printer could not extinguish his dream of becoming an artist which he began to pursue as a 20-year old in

New York City in 1823. Davis soon found a niche as an architectural illustrator which caught the attention of Ithiel Town, a leading cheerleader for the then-trendy Greek Revival style. Working with Town, Davis gained nation recognition, including his work on the new state capitol in Indianapolis and the esteemed Customs House in New York City. A new Dutch Reformed Church congregation headed by Reverend William Cruickshank gave Davis one of the early projects of his solo career and he delivered a monumental temple situated on a bluff 250 feet above the Hudson River. Davis was never much for the nuts and bolts of structural architecture but made his mark as as designer. In 1838 he published the country's first book of hand-colored lithographs for the design of country houses. This led to a collaboration with A.J. Downing to create the widely influential *The Architecture of Country Houses* in 1850. Their pattern books spread the concept of picturesque architecture far beyond the confines of major Eastern cities. Hundreds of Davis-designed villas and cottages would come to fruition in places never visited by a professional architect. This church would serve the congregation until 1967 when it was deconsecrated. A designation as a National Historic Landmark as the only surviving Davis-designed Greek Revival church has helped the building quick-step ahead of the wrecking ball but restoration efforts remain fitful.

# Historic Track

Goshen

1838



In 1788 Messenger, a British thoroughbred stallion, arrived in the United States. This unheralded horse soon began a breeding career that launched the sport of horse racing on these shores. Messenger stood at stud in Goshen before dying in 1808 and being buried with full military honors. Trotters first raced on country roads before facilities such as Historic Track which is now the world's oldest active harness track. In 1849 a six-month old colt, a great-grandson of Messenger, made his first public appearance at the Orange County Fair on the track. Hambletonian blazed through a mile in 2:48 1/2, a fast time for even a mature horse. Hambletonian's career in the breeding shed began when he was just two years old. In the next 25 years the stallion would cover over 1,900 mares that produced 1,331 foals. Most every champion trotter of the past 150 years can trace its lineage to the great sire. In 1926 the greatest of all trotting races, the Hambletonian Stakes, would be started at the New York State Fair. After his death in 1876 the "Father of the American Trotter" was buried down the road in the village of Chester. An obelisk on Hambletonian Avenue marks the gravesite. A century later Historic Track would be the first sporting site in America to be designated a registered National Historic Landmark.

# Brotherhood Winery

Washingtonville

1838



The Hudson River Valley is the birthplace of American viticulture that now features some 10,000 American wineries in every state. The first vintages in North America appeared shortly after the Spanish and French Huguenot settlers arrived, made from native muscadine grapes. It was not easy going as the generally wet East Coast thwarted attempts to grow the classic European vines. The main use for wine in Colonial America was medicinal or as a sacrament and the drink was often laced with drugs or other foreign elements. It was a cobbler in Orange County who helped set winemaking on the course it follows today. John Jaques believed in "Pure Grape Wines" and his Blooming Grove Winery released its first commercial vintage with native *labrusca* grapes in 1839. Necessity was certainly the mother of invention since the country's hard economic times had left him with no buyers for his grapes in New York City. Jaques' wine met with instant acclaim and he set about digging underground cellars for vintages to come. The last of the Jaques sons sold the family winery in 1886, by which time their wines, sherries and ports had set the standard for subsequent New York vintners. Today Brotherhood Winery operates as "America's Oldest Winery" and those historic cellars are the longest man-made wine caves in the United States.

# Thomas Cole Studio

## Catskill

### 1839



J.M.W. Turner had his warships, Thomas Cole had the Catskill Mountain House. The English-born Cole sailed with his family to America in 1818 when he was 17 years old. He settled for work as an engraver as he taught himself to paint. In 1824 Cole was able to

sell a small collection of paintings and his new patron financed a summer sketching trip to the Catskill Mountains where the Catskill Mountain House had just been constructed on the edge of an escarpment overlooking the Hudson River Valley. Despite a five-hour stagecoach ride to reach its panoramic views the hotel would become the most celebrated resort in the nation. Cole used the hotel as a focal point for his atmospheric landscapes as Turner had done with sailing ships in his dramatic seascapes. The Catskills paintings made Cole famous and in the 1830s he returned to work, renting space on the Thomson farm called Cedar Grove. He married the landlord's niece and moved into the main house, building a studio from an old barn. Cole died of pneumonia in 1848 but by that time other artists had followed him to the mountains, including his student Frederic Edwin Church. The result was America's first artist "school," works connected not by any formal organization but by a stylistic coherence. The Hudson River School's landscapes stoked American imaginations and reached their apex with the oversized glamorizations of the West by Church and Albert Bierstadt. The Hudson River School was out of favor by 1900, and so was the Catskill Mountain House. The hotel stayed open until 1941 and was ultimately burned by the State of New York under a policy of keeping nature's woodlands unblighted by structures. The State also declined to preserve the Cole property in the 1960s. The National Park Service didn't want it either and it was left to private art enthusiasts to do restoration work. In 1999 the birthplace of the Hudson River School finally was recognized as a National Historic Site.

# Commandant's House

## Sackets Harbor

### 1840



The War of 1812 is sometimes called the "Second War of Independence" but it has more in common with the conflicts centuries down the road than with the American Revolution of a generation before. Instead of an obvious call to battle the causes of the war with England did not resonate with the average citizen. The United States stepped

onto the world stage to declare war for the first time mostly because the government felt disrespected as a country by Great Britain - the English were impressing American sailors into their navy, interrupting trade with France and fomenting Indian interference with settlers on the frontier. The nearly three years of fighting cost 15,000 American lives but mostly the war is remembered for Francis Scott Key penning "the Star Spangled Banner" and the burning of the White House. The greatest American victory, Andrew Jackson's triumph at the Battle of New Orleans, took place after the war was technically over. Most of the action was on the water. Sackets Harbor was the keystone American shipyard on Lake Ontario and the expected British assault began on May 29, 1813 against a mix of 1,500 New York militia and U.S. Army regulars. The invaders met with early success but winds on the lake prevented the British fleet from getting close enough to offer support with cannon fire. The attack was called off but not before the worried Americans had burned all the naval stores in the shipyard, which was a main objective of the raid anyway. The shipyard was converted into a U.S. Naval Station in the 1840s when tensions with Canada flared again. Construction ceased in 1874 but a token navy crew remained until the 1950s.



# Adirondack Iron and Steel Company Tahawus 1841



Early American settlement away from the Atlantic coast came in two main forms: agricultural villages to support the farmers who were clearing the land and industrial communities that grew up around a blast furnace. With limited transportation options ironworks were forced to locate near the excavation site. Since these were often isolated, such as in the High Peaks of the Adirondacks, the company needed to provide food and housing for its workers. After the Adirondack Iron and Steel Company incorporated in 1839 to smelt titaniferous iron ore deposits near the source of the Hudson River the work force grew

to require 25 houses, two farms, a church, a school, mills, a bank, and a post office. In 1854 the company invested the equivalent of \$10 million today to build a substantial hot blast furnace capable of burning the new hard anthracite coal that was being mined in the Pennsylvania mountains. The country plunged into a depression in 1857 and after only two firings the New Furnace went cold forever. The hard economic times also made it impossible to sell the property which segued into lumber production and a recreational destination for sportsmen. The remote location also made it difficult to sell the ironworks machinery for scrap. Since the New Furnace was barely used it stands as one of the best-preserved examples of a mid-19th century ironworks.

# Lutheran Church Dansville 1847

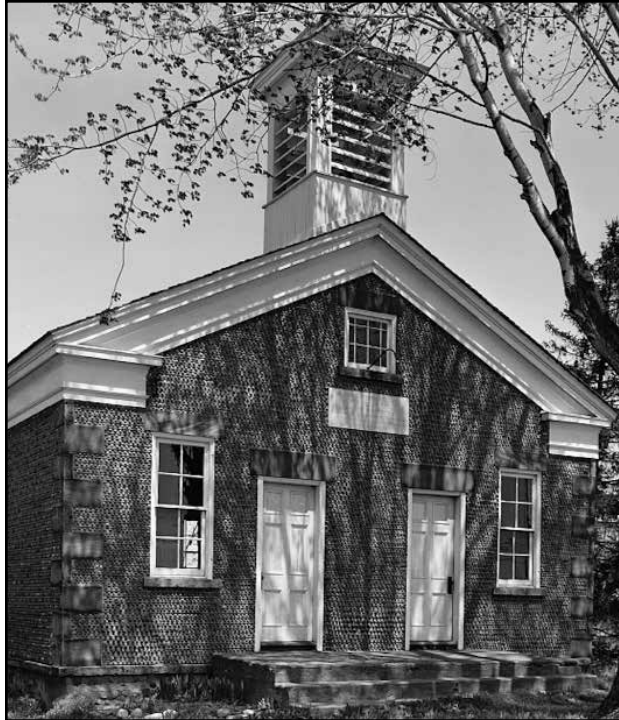


Born on Christmas day 1821 in Massachusetts, Clarissa Harlowe "Clara" Barton arrived in New Jersey in 1851 to visit friends and do a bit of teaching. She saw the lack of free public schools and won approval to start the first tax-supported school in the state in Bordentown. The school was an immediate success and attendance swelled to over 600 students by the end of the

first year. The town voted to build Barton a new brick school. When it opened in 1853, however, a male educator from outside the town was hired as principal instead of Barton and paid more than twice her salary. Discouraged, Clara Barton left teaching and moved on to Washington, D.C. and into America's history books. She served as a battlefield nurse during the Civil War and afterward went on a three-year speaking tour about her experiences. While in Europe she learned of a new humanitarian organization called the Red Cross and vowed to start a chapter in the United States. The travel, however, had left her a virtual invalid. She picked Dansville, which she had visited on her tour, to recuperate at Our Home. Barton would not be able to organize the American Association of the Red Cross until 1881 and the first local chapter was established in the Lutheran Church. The first real test for disaster relief occurred eight years later following the Johnstown Flood. At age 67, Miss Barton, accompanied by fifty doctors and nurses, worked tirelessly for the relief of over 25,000 victims. "Your pretty town has given me back my strength," she told the villagers here upon leaving for a permanent residence in Washington.

# District 5 School

Childs  
1849



True cobblestone buildings may be the rarest structures in the United States. A detailed inventory yields about 1,000 buildings, 90% of which can be found within 75 miles of Rochester. Cobblestone masonry flourished from 1825, when the Erie Canal opened, to about 1875 when wooden balloon framing became the preferred method of construction. Early settlers to western New York had little choice but to use cobblestones in construction

since they were everywhere - jostled and rounded by ancient glaciers. There were piles of stones after clearing land and if you needed more you could always take an ox cart to the shores of Lake Ontario and gather plenty. But building walls from round stones is no easy matter. The quality of the binding mortar was everything. It was said that crafty masons would stop their exacting work whenever anyone came near so as not to reveal their secrets in the lime. A trio of cobblestone structures - a church, a home and a school - have been herded into New York's smallest National Historic Landmark District in Childs. The school, considered one of about 50 cobblestone school buildings constructed in Upstate New York, is unusual in that the cobblestones are only a decorative veneer, not a load-bearing wall. Together the three represent the zenith of cobblestone architecture, a folk art form rendered in fist-sized pre-historic stones.

# Delaware Aqueduct

Minisink Ford  
1849



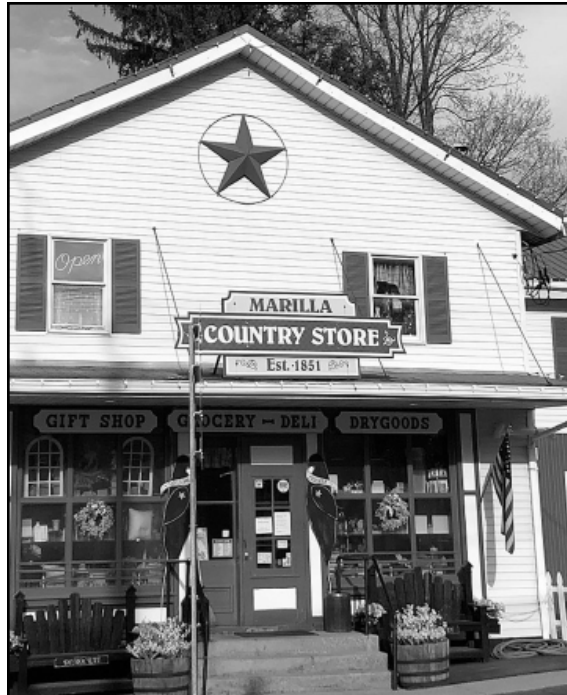
Suspension bridges are one of our oldest forms of bridgebuilding, dating back to the 1400s when Thangtong Gyalpo used iron chains to hang decks around Tibet and Bhutan. The first American iron chain bridge crossed Jacob's Creek in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania in 1801. Cables consisting

of intertwined strands of wire were used instead of chains for the first time on the Spider Bridge at the Falls of Schuylkill in Philadelphia. John Roebling, a German bridge engineer, sailed for Pennsylvania in 1831 where he hoped to establish a utopian agrarian community called Saxonburg. After five years of tilling the soil Roebling began seeking bridgebuilding work again. He completed several suspension bridges in western Pennsylvania and won the commission to construct four suspension aqueducts on the Delaware and Hudson Canal, including this one. With business booming Roebling shifted his wire-making cable operation to Trenton, New Jersey. Following his canal work Roebling went on to create major bridges across Niagara Falls (a tourist attraction until being dismantled in the 1890s), the Allegheny River and the Ohio River. John Roebling died in 1869 after an accident in the early stages of building the Brooklyn Bridge, which he designed. His son Washington, finished the country's most famous bridge 14 years later. Water was drained from the Delaware Aqueduct when the canal closed in 1898 and it operated as a toll bridge until the 1970s. Today it is the oldest existing wire suspension bridge in the United States.

# Marilla Country Store

Marilla

1851



Nothing was more central to Upstate New York life in the 19th century than the general store. The stores started in America's colonial period to serve pioneers who pushed away from the convenience of urban markets. Often they were started by itinerant peddlers who earned enough to open a shop at a dusty crossroads or in a mining camp. Inventory would come from buying trips - often to New York City - that would last weeks. Some in these rural communities would be fortunate to come in and browse for "store-bought goods"

buy everyone was a regular at the general store. The post office was usually in the back and it was the place to come for provisions, local news, a game of checkers, or just to warm up by the ubiquitous pot belly stove. The coming of Rural Free Delivery by the U.S. Postal Service in 1896 marked the beginning of the end for country stores. Not only was it not necessary to come in for the mail but catalogs from the likes of Sears & Roebuck and Burpees - the merchants called them "town killers" - began to become commonplace. The Marilla Country Store, however, has never closed since Harrison T. Foster opened the doors in 1851. The story goes that Foster had been a logger until his oxen escaped into a cornfield and ate themselves to death. Facing ruin, Foster was able to swap his land with a shopkeeper and so he went into the mercantile business. Three ownership families later shoppers can still find the provisions they need out on Two Rod Road.

# Ellwanger and Barry Office

Rochester

1853



The crabapple is the only apple native to North America. That means that each of the 24 varieties of apple commercially grown in New York - to the tune of 30 million bushels per year from 700 growers - has its own origin story. Many can trace that beginning to George Ellwanger's eight acres of land he started in 1839 and called Mount Hope Nursery. Ellwanger

had apprenticed in the nursery trade in his native Stuttgart, Germany for four years before he came to Ohio as a young man. In 1840 he hooked up with Irish immigrant Patrick Barry who had found work with the oldest and most elaborately developed nursery in America, the famous Linnean Nursery in Flushing, New York. The pair would import and propagate more new and rare species than any other horticulturalists of the time. Among the innovations were the dwarf apple and pear tree, several varieties of beech tree and the Northern Spy apple. Ellwanger was a regular on transatlantic steamers bring back cultivars from Europe. The Ellwanger and Barry Nursery grew to be the largest operation of its kind in the world and the main reason that Rochester changed from the "Flour City" to the "Flower City" when horticulture overtook milling as the city's leading industry. The Gothic Revival-styled office building was the command center for 30,000 square feet of greenhouses and a platoon of salesmen. The last new planting was in 1912, six years after Ellwanger's death and six years before the liquidation of the company. The building is used by the University of Rochester today.

# John Brown Farm

Lake Placid

1855



For the first 50 years of his life John Brown's claim to notoriety was as a sheep and wool expert. In 1848 a disastrous investment in Springfield, Massachusetts cost him his family home and savings. From his acquaintances in the abolition movement he heard of Gerrit Smith in the Adirondacks offering free land to

Blacks. Brown showed up offering guidance in the endeavor in exchange for land he could buy for \$1 an acre. The rough terrain did not surrender easily to the till and after two years, without paying Smith, Brown departed for Ohio where his Devon cattle won blue ribbons on the county fair circuit. He returned to North Elba to build a farmhouse for an entirely different reason - to shelter his wife and younger children while he and his sons hauled a wagon loaded with weapons to Kansas Territory in 1856 to confront pro-slavery rabble-rousers. Twenty-nine men would die in "Bleeding Kansas," including Brown's son Frederick, but he emerged a national abolitionist hero for his bravery in the confrontations. Brown next set his sights on the U.S. armory in Harpers Ferry, Virginia where he planned to seize 100,000 weapons to arm a Southern slave revolt. Brown's 21-man "army of liberation" raided the arsenal on Sunday evening October 16, 1859. Thirty-six hours later most of his men, including two more sons, were killed or wounded, and U.S. Marines under Colonel Robert E. Lee had captured Brown. Brown was swiftly executed and his widow brought his body to the farm, making most of the five-day trip clandestinely with an empty hearse to defuse emotional crowds. For many years the grave was a tourist attraction; today the farm is a National Historic Landmark.

# Blenheim Bridge

North Blenheim

1855/2018

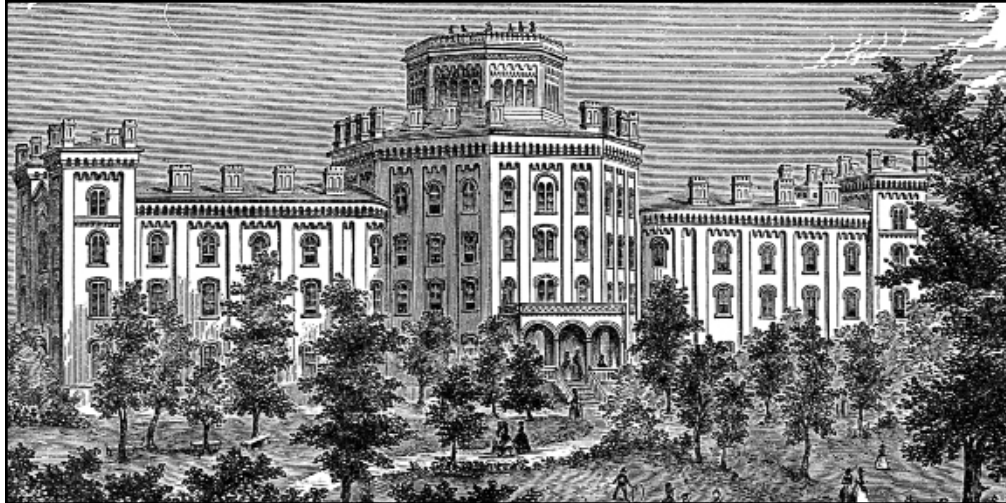


Covered bridges are the favorites of romantics everywhere. Wooden bridges were, however, the apogee of practicality - the roof protected the structural elements from the weather. It is estimated that over 14,000 covered transportation bridges have been constructed in the United States and fewer than 1,000 remain. There is no greater proof of the allure of covered bridges than the span across Schoharie Creek. Nicholas Powers was recruited from Vermont to build the Blenheim Bridge. His resume showed no formal engineering training and nothing more than a 10th grade education but using no construction equipment he fashioned what was considered to be the longest single span covered bridge in the world - 210 feet. Powers was paid \$6,000 for his handiwork when a good day's wage fetched a single dollar. The Blenheim Bridge carried vehicles until a steel truss bridge was built in 1932; afterwards it was used by pedestrian traffic. The National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark was still in fine fettle on August 28, 2011 when it was washed away by flooding from Tropical Storm Irene. The price tag to replace the bridge was \$6.8 million but the Federal Emergency Management Agency said it didn't pay to replace structures of historical value. The community refused to lose its defining icon so easily. For years officials argued that the bridge was an attraction integral to the community that brought sightseers from around the country. Finally an angle declaring the bridge a "pier" since it didn't connect to an official road and a local gathering place won the day and an exact copy was constructed 15 feet higher.

# Cowles Hall

Elmira

1855



In 1982 more women than men were awarded bachelor's degrees in America for the first time; today women graduates outnumber their male counterparts nearly 3 to 2. The first college to grant women degrees the equivalent of those bestowed on male graduates organized on Prospect Hill in the "Queen City of the Southern Tier." The idea of "a real college for women" was batted around by a group of men in Albany beginning in 1851. The institution was ticketed for Auburn but when funds failed to materialize Simeon Benjamin, a New York City dry goods king turned Elmira real estate mogul, offered \$5,000 to start the school on the banks of the Chemung River. The charter announced that "no degree of literary honor shall be conferred without the completion of a course equivalent to the full ordinary course of college study pursued in the colleges of this state." That first curriculum was based on Yale University and the first graduating class of 17 received their diplomas in 1859. The original campus building, designed in the shape of a Greek cross with an octagonal center, did duty as classroom, dormitory, and dining hall; it would later be named for first president Augustus Cowles. The brick building is renowned for its Peterson Chapel and outstanding collection of secular stained glass windows that detail the history of the college.

# Watervliet Arsenal

Watervliet

1859



Two hundred years ago the tiny village of Gibbonsville across the Hudson River from Troy was a key location in the defense of the United States. From here there was relatively quick access to three of the nation's main vulnerabilities during the War of 1812: Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario and New York harbor. To prepare for the war Congress established the United States Army Ordnance Department and gave Decius Wadsworth, a respected military organizer and engineer, the job of 1st Chief of Ordnance. He ordered ten brick buildings constructed in 1813 to manufacture small items such as pouches, powder horns and cartridge boxes. Following the war the Watervliet Arsenal morphed into the Army's most important developer of large-caliber weapons in peacetime and in war. The original buildings were gradually demolished and by the end of the 19th century had become a recreational area. Building No.38 was built in 1859 for gun-carriage manufacturing. It is a rare surviving example of pre-fabricated cast iron construction. Cast iron was enjoying a moment at the time as a building material - it was cheap, easy to assemble and could be molded into ornate styles such as this exterior with Italianate overtones. Watervliet is no longer of such strategic importance but the arsenal is the oldest continuously operated arms manufactory in the United States.