

**From  
The History of Chenango County  
by... James H. Smith (1880)**

History of Columbus

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Columbus was formed from Brookfield, Madison county, Feb. 11, 1805.

The first settlement is said to have been made in 1781, on lot 44, by Col. CONVERSE, who also kept the first inn, which he opened in 1793.

Henry, Daniel, James and Benjamin WILLIAMS came from Point Julia, R.I., in 1792. They came in the early spring with an ox team and one horse, and brought their feather beds with them. Henry and James were married, and the former, who married Patty CRANDALL, had two children, named Polly and James. They left their families at the CARR place in Edmeston while they rolled up a log house, which occupied only two days. All occupied one log house until others were erected. Henry was a soldier of the Revolution. He purchased the farm lying in the south-east corner of the town and built his log house on the west bank of "Aunt Pat" brook. Henry sold the piece of land on which he first settled to Josiah BAKER and moved to the east part of the same lot, he located on the river road, and there during the rest of his days kept what in olden times was known far and near as the "Aunt Pat Tavern." He built a frame house in 1808. His sons John and Oliver also kept tavern in that building. He had fourteen children, only three of whom are living, John and Martha, widow of Elijah ATHERTON, in New Berlin, and Betsey, settled on a farm adjoining Henry's on the north, but removed at an early day to Virgil, in Cortland county. Benjamin settled on a farm adjoining Henry's on the south, where for a few years he carried on his trade of tanner and currier. He removed with his family to Washington county. The site of the tannery is now occupied by the residence of "Dr." PORTER. Daniel settled three miles north of South New Berlin, a half mile west of Davis' crossing, where Israel ANGELL now lives. In 1794 he married Phila PARKER, and their marriage was the first contracted in the town of New Berlin. He afterwards removed with his family to the mouth of Whitewater River, in Arkansas.

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Farther up the stream from the BAKER place, Moses HOWARD, son of Thomas Howard, from Rhode Island, rebuilt his log house and cleared up his farm, which was reputed to be one of the best in the town. He left his farm to his son Moses, who still occupies it. James BAIRD, who settled on the lot next above him, was his rival in the farming business.

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The next farm of 57 acres, on lot 44, was settled by Nicholas RICHER, who came from Berlin, Rensselaer county in 1800, and occupied it till his death, Nov. 1, 1829, aged 58. The farm is now occupied by Charles E. HAYWOOD. His wife, Anna WILCOX, to whom he was married in New Berlin, also

died there, Oct. 14, 1842, aged 62. He had four children, Nicholas, John, Randall and Anson, the first two of whom were born before he came here, and the latter two, in Columbus.

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The lots on the creek next north of the RICHER farm were settled by Peter GERMAN and Jonathan BROWNELL, who came from Nine Partners, Dutchess county. Mr. GERMAN was a brother of Hon. Obadiah GERMAN, of North Norwich, and is supposed to have built the first frame dwelling house in the town. It was a small building and stood near the small brook at the foot of the hill, where now stands the dwelling house on the farm. He is believed to have been the first justice in the town. A daughter of his became the wife of Hon. Joshua LAMB.

Jonathan BROWNELL built a log house on the creek, near where yet stands his old barn, and there he kept tavern for many years. There also the public business, town meetings, elections, and company trainings were held in the early settlements of the town.

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Thomas HOWARD, Sr., was a native of Rhode Island and emigrated from Charlton, Mass., to Columbus, in 1794. But eight persons had preceded him in the settlement of the town. He moved his family and household goods with an ox team, crossing the Hudson at Albany and wending his way westward via Cherry Valley, Cooperstown, over the old State road winding among the Burlington hills to Wharton Creek, and down that stream to the Unadilla, near where he located, on the lot next north of the Henry WILLIAMS farm. The farm on which he settled and died is now owned by Bennett LOTTRIDGE. His sons were Isaac, Moses, Joseph, Abram, Jacob, Thomas, Jr., and Hopkins. The Howard family held a prominent place in the settlement of Columbus. The elder Howard served several years in the Provincial army during the French and Indian war, and again in the struggle of the colonies for independence. He died in Columbus Jan. 24, 1837, in the 95th year of his age.

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Samuel CAMPBELL was a native of Mansfield, Connecticut, and emigrated to Columbus at an early day. He became the owner of a large farm on the west bank of the Unadilla, a little north of the turnpike running through the town. He held the offices of supervisor and justice, the latter over twenty-five years, was a Member of Assembly from this county in 1808-'9, 1812 and 1820, and represented the 15th district in Congress in 1821-'3.

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Joshua LAMB and his brother Alvin came from Oxford, Mass., in July, 1804, and settled on the west side of the Unadilla, on the southeast corner of a lot, where the turnpike crosses the river road. They were carpenters and built a large two-story dwelling, where Joshua kept a tavern during nearly all the remainder of his life. Alvin died young; but Joshua lived to be an old inhabitant of the town and left several sons to inherit the large property he accumulated by economy and industry.

George CLARK settled on the opposite side of the turnpike from Judge LAMB, and also kept tavern. The place is now owned by Truxton Lamb, a son of Judge Lamb, and the old-fashioned tavern has been turned into a good modern farm house.

Elisha MORGAN, who was a merchant in the early days of the settlement, owned the south-west and north-east corner lots where the river road crossed the turnpike, and built a large two-story dwelling-house on one corner and a store on the other. He traded there several years, and sold out and removed to the western part of the State.

Charles H. TOLL, also a merchant, came from Schenectady and occupied a room in Judge Lamb's dwelling-house, and sold goods there for some time. He then built a store at Columbus Center, and after trading there a short time sold to Benjamin STORRS and went to Camillus, Onondaga county.

Dr. Tracy ROBINSON settled on a small building lot on the west side of the river road, next south of Elisha MORGAN's. He was the first regular physician who settled in Columbus.

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Nathaniel CALKIN settled on the river road, on the farm next below Dr. Tracy ROBINSON. His log house stood on the hill on the west side of the road, and some distance north of the old state road, which crossed the Unadilla at the foot of the hill, on "Akin's bridge," and passed up the hill gorge, west over the hill to the Peter GERMAN farm and Jonathan BROWNELL's log tavern, thence up the creek and its west branch into Sherburne, and on west to Cayuga Lake. A brick kiln was erected on Mr. Calkin's farm, from which the early settlers obtained the means to build brick out-door ovens. Chimneys were then unknown in log houses. Mr. Calkin left his property to his children.

One of his sons built a large two-story house, near the foot of the hill on the east side of the river road, which was burned and another built in its place by a grandson.

Jonathan HUBBY settled and cleared up a wilderness lot adjoining the CALKIN farm on the south.

Isaac GREEN located on the lot of Jonathan HUBBY and the HOWARD farm on the river road. He was an enterprising, industrious man, and in addition to farming was engaged in the milling business. He owned the grist-mill on "Aunt Pat" brook above the Henry WILLIAMS farm, and built the two-story house yet standing on the premises. The old mill and dam have long since passed away. This was the first grist-mill in the town and was built in 1795 by Job VAIL, probably for Mr. Green. Vail also built the first saw-mill the previous year.

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Gates POPE settled north of the PERKINS farm, on a river farm through which runs Pope brook. He was a thriving and industrious farmer, and supplied the neighborhood with brick from a kiln on his farm.

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Ezra BEEBE settled early on the west side of Shawley brook, about where the old State road crossed it. He was a frugal, industrious farmer, managed his affairs prudently, and at his death, August 27, 1866, at the age of 86, left his well-improved farm to his children, one of whom still lives on it.

Capt. Joseph PAGE located on the east side of the creek about opposite the BEEBE farm. Capt. Page left his farm to his son Joseph, who occupied it during his lifetime.

John H. REYNOLDS settled on a farm next adjoining the PAGE farm on the south. He was an active, enterprising man and an influential citizen; was a militia colonel and a good officer.

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Isaac SHAWLEY settled on the brook which bears his name, where the old turnpike crosses it; and his father-in-law, Mr. KENNY, made a settlement before the road was built.

John DOWNING settled on the brook, north of the SHAWLEY farm. Archibald and Daniel PERKINS, brothers, located in the neighborhood of the DOWNING farm on the creek north of the old turnpike road.

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Esek OLNEY came from Rhode Island about the beginning of the present century and settled on the north side of the old turnpike, a little east of Shawley brook. He was a respectable farmer and brought his farm into a good state of cultivation.

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Eliab UNDERWOOD settled on the old turnpike, east of the OLNEY farm, in the latter part of the last century.

Captain Elijah PALMER settled north of the SPARR and HOWARD settlement and was active in conjunction with his neighbors, among who was Gilbert STRONG, who settled near him, in promoting the settlements in the north part of the town.

Silas AMES was another early settler in this locality, near the GREENLEAF farm.

Samuel WHITMORE first settled on the west side of the Unadilla, near where the turnpike crossed from Edmeston into Columbus, about the time the road was made; and when the gate was changed from the east to the west bank he became its tender and continued such till his death, which occurred Dec. 9, 1855, at the age of 86. Anna, his wife, died at the same age Oct. 20, 1854.

John LOTTRIDGE came from Albany in December, 1799, and settled a half mile west of the village, on a small stream, where it crossed the State road. There he started a tannery, which he removed a year later a mile south of the village, to the farm now owned by Nicholas RICHER. He had twelve children, eight of whom are living, -Bennett, Polly, John and Julana are the only ones living in Columbus.

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William BUTTON purchased a building lot on the PERKINS place, a little north of the LOTTRIDGE tannery, and built a house. He was a carpenter by trade, and possessing a good English education he was employed to teach school during the winter months. But he soon wearied of a backwoods life, sold his house to Kimball WEBBER and took his final leave of Columbus wilds. Webber moved the house to the north side of the turnpike, near where the State road comes out to the turnpike.

Captain BERRY built a house on the south side of the turnpike from the WEBBER house and kept tavern for some time. He sold to a Mr. JOHNSON, who kept the tavern and also carried the mail for some years from Cooperstown to Oxford, by way of Sherburne. He then sold the premises and left the town.

Joseph TUBBS, who was a blacksmith, erected a shop on the south side of the turnpike, a little west of the JOHNSON tavern, where he carried on the blacksmith business during the remainder of his working days.

Garrett REED, who was also a blacksmith, settled in the same neighborhood.

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On the turnpike, east of Columbus Center, and next east of the Stephen HOWARD farm, Solomon RATHBUN first squatted and built a small tenement. He was an odd kind of a man, somewhat capable of cutting and making men's and boys' wearing apparel. His shanty passed into the possession of a Mr. CHAPMAN, who erected a shop for the manufacture of household furniture, to supply the needs of the first settlers. Dr. Isaac FINCH was the next owner of the lot and built a dwelling house thereon. Levi HAYWARD, a brother-in-law of Dr. Finch, settled on the river road a little south of the turnpike. He was a skillful and prudent physician and practiced in company with Dr. Finch. Dr. Hayward moved to New Berlin village and continued his practice.

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Elias UNDERWOOD settled somewhat more than a mile up the creek from Jonathan BROWNELL's farm. He sold his farm to Abel HYDE and went west.

Abel HYDE came in from Connecticut in 1802. He was a careful, prudent and industrious farmer and at his death August 14, 1839, at the age of 82 years, left his farm to his children.

Edward WILLIAMS settled on the south part of the same lot about the same time that UNDERWOOD settled on the north part. He was from Massachusetts, and was a strong, robust farmer. He died May 23, 1825, aged 54, and was succeeded on the farm by his children.

John MUNAL settled on a lot adjoining the WILLIAMS lot on the south. He built a saw-mill on the creek, which supplied the neighborhood with materials for erecting more commodious dwellings. Thomas LOW came from Albany and settled on the lot next west of Elias UNDERWOOD. He was of Dutch descent, an enterprising farmer and brought his farm into a good state of cultivation. His son-in-law, Frank EAGLES, settled on the south-west fifty acres of the LOW lot and remained thereon till his death.

Jared COOK purchased the LOW farm and settled on it about 1804 or '05. His son's widow now lives on it.

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Major Walter CLARK, a native of Connecticut, came here about 1803 from Hartwick, N.Y., where he had lived a year or two. He settled on the lot next north of the LOW lot, adjoining the SIMMONS lot on the west, about two miles north-west of the village. The farm is now owned by Alanson CAMPBELL. He had five children who grew to maturity, two of whom, Rensselaer W., and Silas were born in Connecticut, and two of whom, Silas and Nathan, are living, both in Columbus. Silas is engaged in mercantile business in the village. Nathan is a farmer and owns the Stephen HOWARD farm a little east of the village. Rensselaer W. Clark died May 31, 1855, aged 53. He was Member of Assembly from this county in 1844.

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Judatus WILLIAMS, who, like all who settled in that neighborhood, was a Connecticut man, settled on the lot adjoining the Ambrose HYDE farm on the north. He died June 24, 1852, aged 77, and Abigail, his wife, Oct . 10, 1842, aged 69.

A Mr. NICHOLS and two sisters first settled on a lot adjoining the Judatus WILLIAMS lot on the north, the last part of 1798, and cleared a patch large enough to build a sort of shanty to live in.

On the opposite side of the road running north and south through the neighborhood, Ezra LOOMIS settled and cleared up a farm. He was a son of Thomas LOOMIS of the Revolutionary army, the latter of which died Sept. 5, 1842, aged 86. Isaiah LOOMIS settled on the lot next north of the Ezra Loomis lot; Solomon ALDRICH, a native of Rhode Island on a wild lot a little north of the WILLIAMS and LOOMIS neighborhood; and Stephen SEARS near the latter. Mr. SEARS was a deacon of the Congregational Church, a quiet, peaceable neighbor and cleared up his farm by industry and hard labor. He died March 14, 1847, aged 84, and "Sary," his wife, May 7, 1838, aged 72. A Mr. CROSBY settled near Mr. SEARS and married one of his daughters. This wedding was one of the first in the town. The first marriage is said to have been contracted by Joseph MEDBERRY and Hannah BROWN in 1794.

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John TRACY came from Norwich, Conn., in 1806, and located about a mile west of the center, where he was engaged in farming till his death, Jan. 14, 1820. His children were Rachel, born Aug. 22, 1781; John, born Oct. 26, 1783, married Susan, daughter of Joseph HYDE, of Norwich, Aug. 30, 1813, at Franklin, Conn., and was an early and prominent lawyer in Oxford [see page 289 of this work]; Zebadiah L., born Oct. 8, 1786; Ulysses, Bela, born April 19, 1794; Esther, Emily, Ulysses and Harriet.

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A Mr. SALISBURY settled on a lot next east of the Elias UNDERWOOD lot. He sold to Elijah FULLER and went west. Mr. FULLER and his young wife settled on this lot about 1805. He was industrious,

economical and prudent, and left his property to his children. He died April 30, 1864, aged 87, and Ruth, his wife, Feb. 12, 1849, aged 68. Price FRENCH taught the school on the old turnpike in the Gilbert BARNS neighborhood one or two winters. The school-house stood on the GAGE lot, on the north side of the road, west of Mr. BARNS' residence. It was the first school taught in that neighborhood. The first school in the town is said to have been kept by Nicholas PAGE.

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William GRIFFIN was one of the early settlers in Columbus. He came from one of the New England states, and became a well-known business man among the first settlers. He purchased the tavern stand on the turnpike at Columbus Center, owned by Jonathan BROWNELL, and kept the tavern several years. He died Oct. 5, 1838, aged 56, and Dolly, his wife, April 5, 1837, aged 67

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Sampson SPAULDING, from Massachusetts, was one of the first settlers in the town. He purchased and settled on a wild lot near the head waters of Shawley brook in the neighborhood of Captain David SMITH and Silas AMES.

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Merchants:- Elisha MORGAN was engaged in mercantile business as early as 1810, at Columbus Corners, which was then more considerable of a settlement than the Center. He continued in trade till 1831.

Deacon Benjamin STORRS, from Connecticut, was engaged in mercantile business at the Center, in company with his brother Lathrop, from 1815 to 1821, and subsequently alone till about 1831, when he was succeeded by his son Experience, who continued the business till his death, October 26, 1833. On the death of his son Experience, Benjamin resumed the business, which after a few years, he sold to his son Hiram, who built the store now occupied by Larchar & Bryant, and traded there till 1856, when he failed.

John BEACH was trading in 1819, in the building now occupied as a dwelling by Elliot SHERMAN, but remained only a few years, when he went west.

Abner BURLINGAME, cousin to Anson Burlingame, commenced business at the Center in 1837 and continued till 1848.

In 1847, before MYERS commenced trading, Harvey HOWARD and E. Darwin HAYWARD were associated with Hiram E. STORRS about four months under the name of Storrs, Howard & Co., Storrs continuing till his failure in 1856. In 1856, Monroe GATES commenced trading in the Clark store and continued till about 1858, when he returned to Plainfield, Otsego county, whence he came. Wesley H. LOTTRIDGE, a native of Columbus, bought Gates' stock in the fall of 1858 and traded till 1863, when he sold to Silas CLARK, who still continues the business.

The only other merchants engaged in business here are Larchar & Bryant, (O. D. LARCHAR and George M. BRYANT.) The business was established in 1871, by Jerome NORTON.

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Physicians:- The earliest physicians in Columbus were Drs. Noah B. FOOT and Tracy ROBINSON, though which was first is not certain. Dr. FOOT located a half mile west of the village, but remained only a few months. Dr. ROBINSON located two and a half miles east of the village at what is known as Columbus Corners, where, at an early day, there was a post-office, which was removed across the river to South Edmeston some forty years ago. Dr. Robinson removed previous to 1817 to Binghamton, where he became prominent and died.

Isaac FINCH came from Saratoga county about 1807-10 and located a half mile east of the village, where he practiced till the spring of 1839, when he removed to Columbus Corners and practiced there so long as he was able.

Caleb G. HALL practiced here from about 1815 to 1835, when he went to New Berlin, where he continued till about 1840. He then returned to Columbus, practiced one year, and removed to Cooperstown, where he died.

Levi HAYWARD came from Saratoga county in 1812 and practiced with his brother-in-law, Dr. Isaac FINCH, till 1814, when he removed to Solon. He returned to Columbus in 1817 and practiced here till 1821, when he removed to Edmeston. After practicing there three years he again returned to Columbus, locating at the Corners, where he remained till February, 1826, when he went to New Berlin, and died there March 25, 1827.

A. BUCKINGHAM came from Otsego county in 1826 and located at Columbus Corners, where he practiced about a year and removed to the Center, where he remained till 1830, when he removed to Sherburne. After a year or two he removed to Columbus, and two or three years later again removed to Sherburne and established himself in the drug business, mostly giving up the medical practice.

Elias B. HARRIS came from Otsego, his native county, in the spring of 1847, and after two years' practice removed to Waterville, N.Y. Aristus BROWN came from Edmeston, Otsego county, in 1858, and practiced one year, when he returned to South Edmeston.

The present physicians are E. Darwin HAYWARD and Benjamin Alvin CHURCH.

E. Darwin HAYWARD was born in Solon, N.Y., June 10, 1814, and removed with his parents to Columbus in 1817.

Benjamin Alvin CHURCH was born in Coventry, in this county, Sept. 11, 1855.

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Lawyers: - Although Columbus has been remarkably devoid of those elements which contribute to the support of the legal fraternity she has furnished a goodly number who have embarked in the legal

profession. The following are the names of lawyers whose parents were early settlers in this town: John TRACY, John HYDE, John MORGAN, Edwin D. LAMB, Ira BARNES, Silas WARREN, Charles FULLER and Lewis CAMPBELL.