

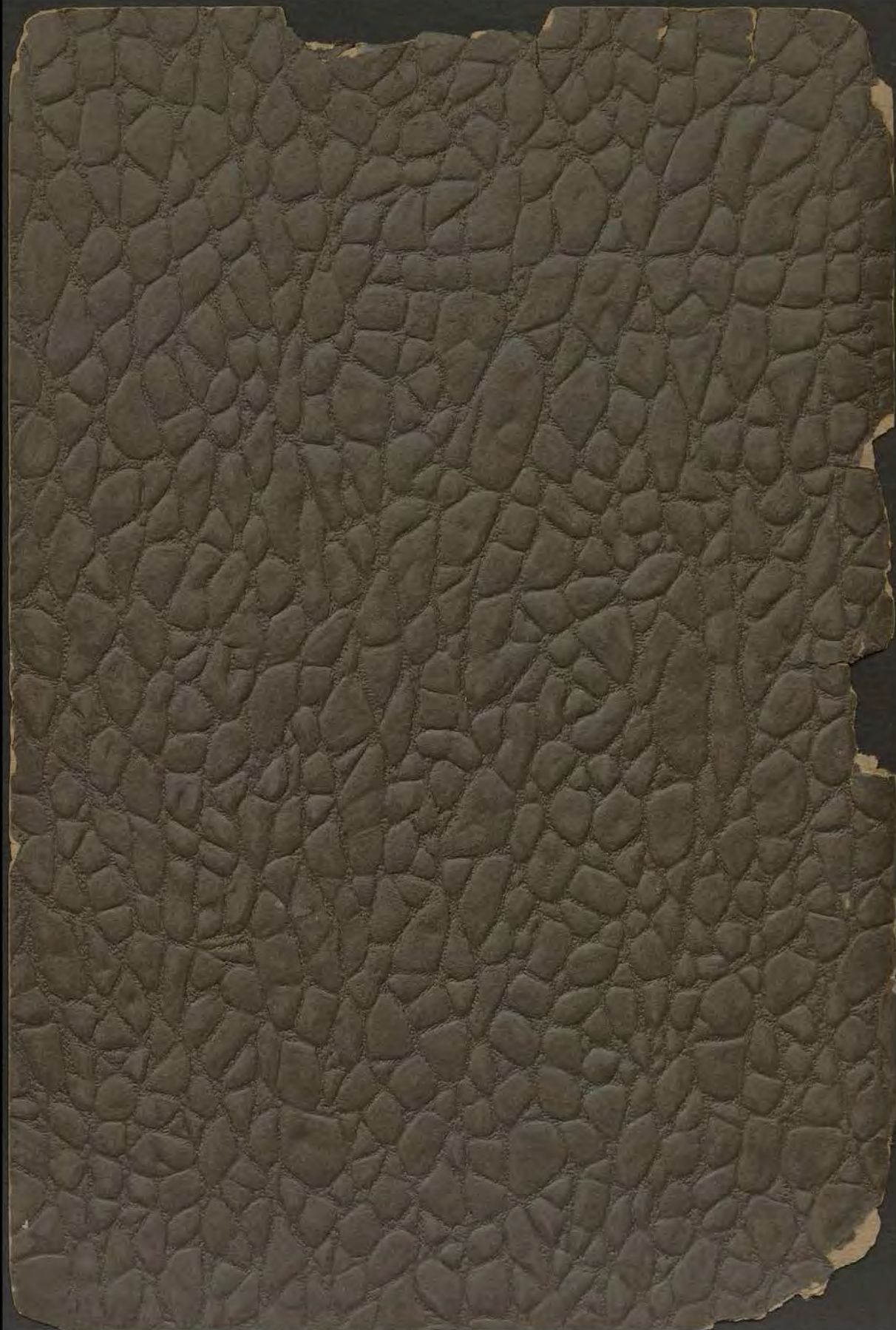
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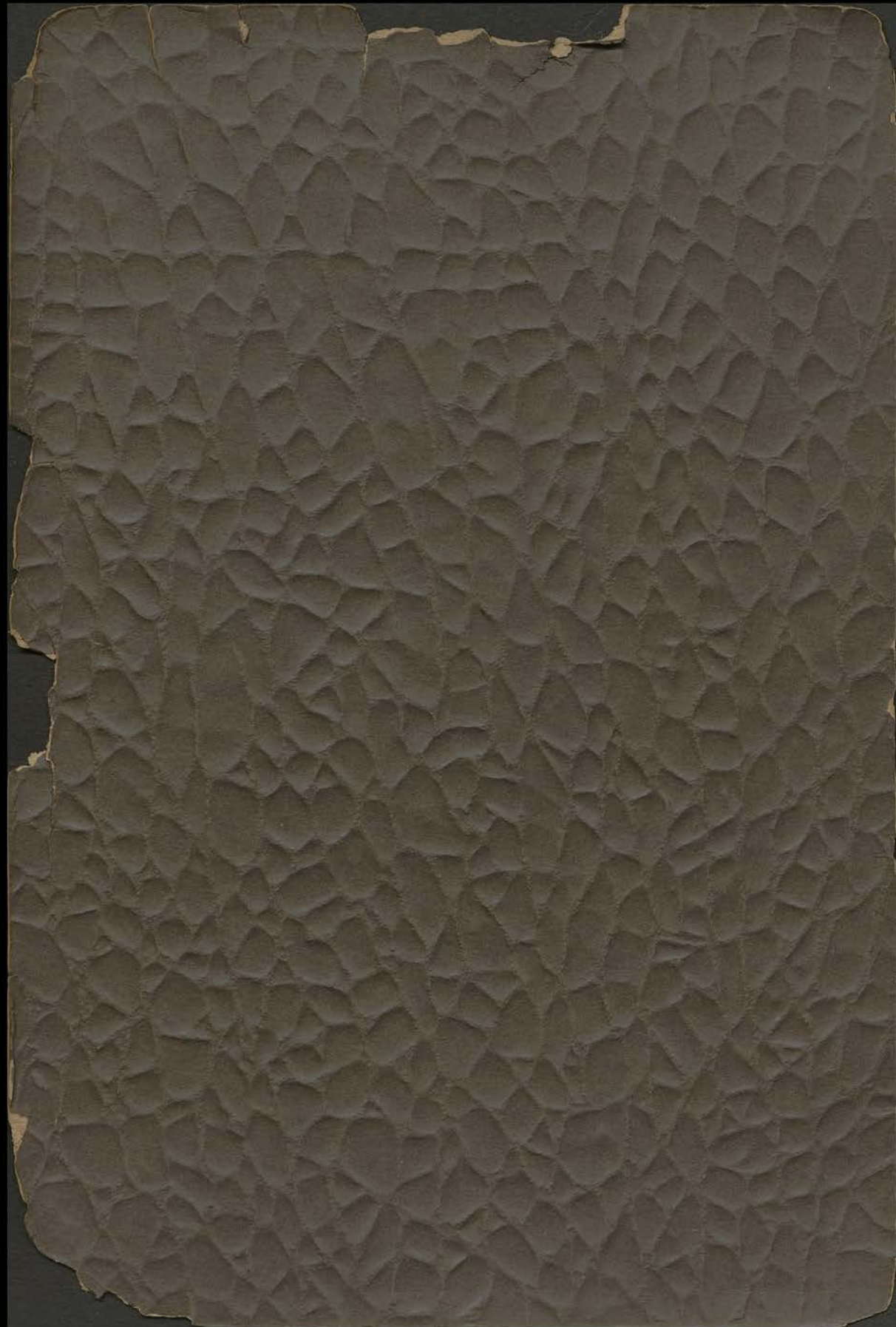
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York in a series of letters from a
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T. and J.S. Words, n.d.

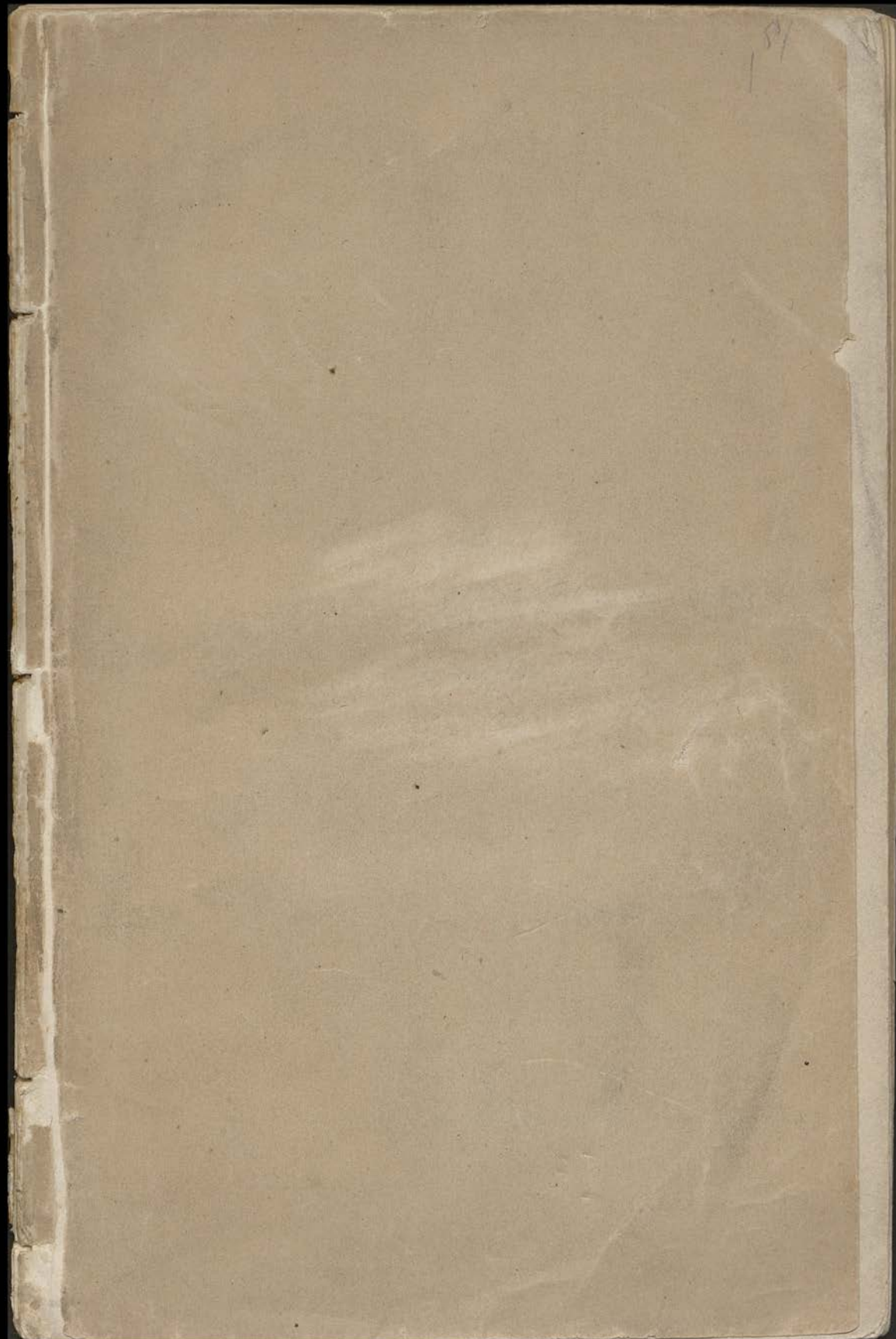
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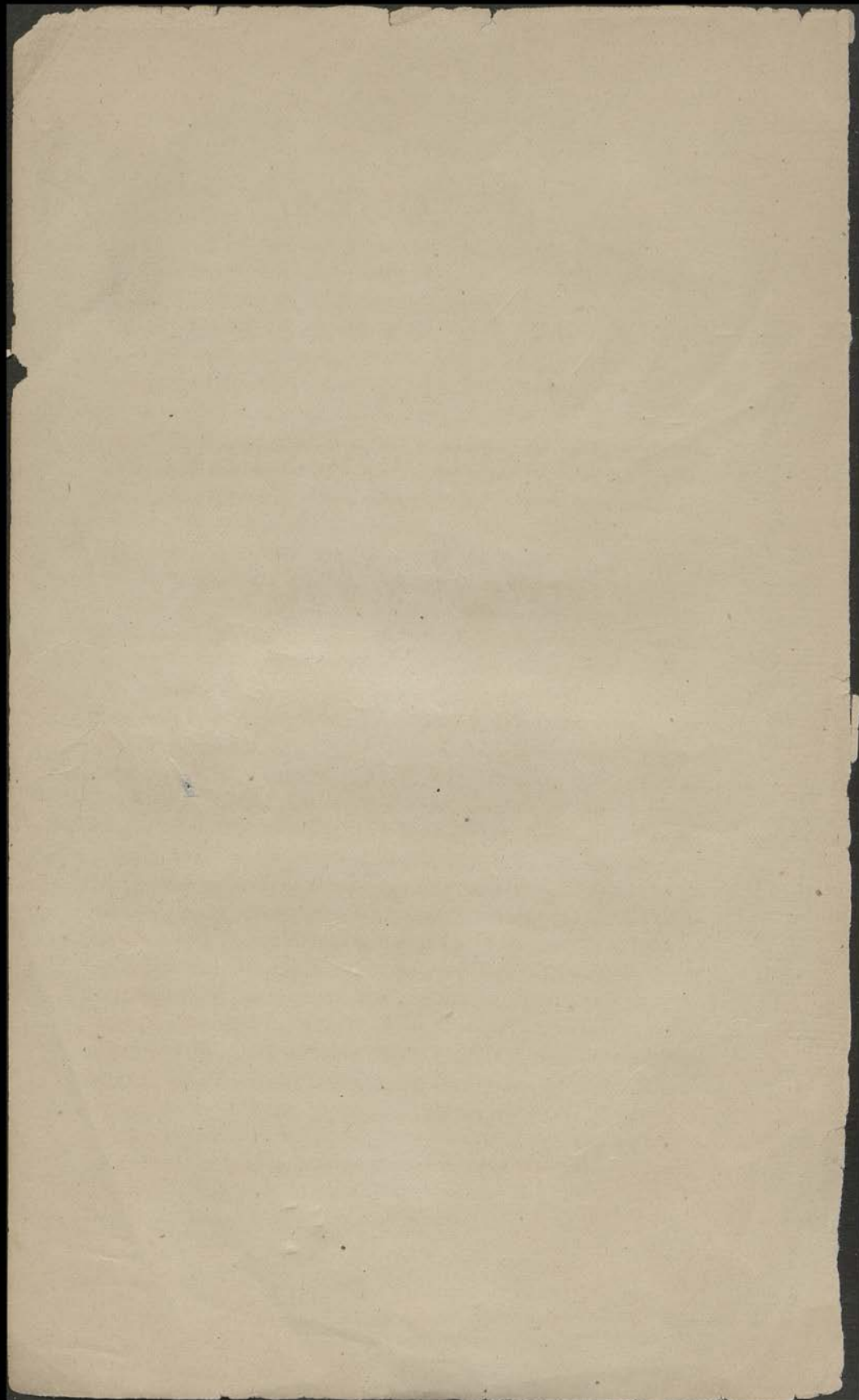
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Description of The
Settlement of The Genesee-
Country, in the State of
New York, A Series of
letters from a Gentleman
to his Friends
179999









DESCRIPTION
OF THE
SETTLEMENT
OF THE
GENESEE COUNTRY,
IN THE
STATE OF NEW-YORK.
IN A
SERIES OF LETTERS
FROM A
GENTLEMAN TO HIS FRIEND.



NEW-YORK:

Printed by T. & J. SWORDS, No. 99 Pearl-street

1799.

DESCRIPTION

OF THE

SETTLEMENT

OF THE

GENESSEE COUNTRY,

IN THE

STATE OF NEW-YORK.

BY

SERIES OF LETTERS

TO THE

OWNERS OF THE LANDS



NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY T. & J. SWANSON, NO. 25 NASSAU-ST.

1808

DESCRIPTION, &c.

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR,

I with pleasure comply with your request; and will endeavour to furnish you with such information relative to the soil, climate, situation, and present state of the Genesee Country, as may enable you to judge of the propriety of making it the place of your future residence. From the following plain statement of facts, which have fallen within the sphere of my own observation, you may be able to form some idea of the rapid growth of this part of the United States. Any apology for the plainness of the style I consider unnecessary. It is useful information you are in quest of, and such only I shall attempt to impart.

In the year 1790, the Legislature of the State of New-York formed into a county, by the name of Ontario, all that part of the State lying west of a meridian line drawn from the eighty-second milestone on the Pennsylvania line to Lake Ontario. Within this is included the tract known by the name of the Genesee Country, bounded on the north by Lake Ontario, on the west by Niagara River and Lake Erie, on the south by Pennsylvania, and on the east by the counties of Tioga and Onondago.

The year previous to the formation of this county, Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham, Esqrs. of New England, purchased from the State, and from the Seneca Indians, their right to that part of the country which lies between the meridian line above mentioned and the Genesee River; including, on the northernmost part of the country, a tract extending twelve miles west of the river, as will appear by the plan, forming a tract of country forty-five miles from east to west, and eighty-four from North to South, and containing about two million two hundred thousand acres of land

Within these limits are contained the country now settling, which is as remarkable for its natural advantages, as for its fertile soil and moderate climate. The northern part of the county of Ontario is watered by the Genesee River, Rundigut Creek, Flint Creek, Mud Creek, Salmon Creek, and many other inferior streams, and also by a number of lakes, some of them from forty to fifty miles in length, the outlets of which afford not only a good navigation to Albany and Lake Ontario, but also valuable mill seats. The south part of the country is watered by different branches of the Susquehannah, viz. the Conhocton, Canisteo, Tuscarora, and Cawannisque; all of which unite at the Painted Post, and are navigable from the middle of March to about the first of July, and from the middle of September till late in November.

The distance from Albany, New-York, Philadelphia or Baltimore, does not exceed in a direct course, one hundred and eighty miles, and, by the roads now in use, not much above two hundred miles; and to the Federal City the distance is about two hundred and sixty five miles: and the improvement of the intermediate country will not only facilitate the travelling, but by opening new and more direct roads, will considerably lessen the distance. At present, the journey to any of these cities is generally performed in five or six days.

The settlement of this country was first attempted by Mr. Phelps, in the year 1789; but this attempt was attended with great and almost insurmountable difficulties: there was no access to the country but by Indian paths, and the nearest settlement was above one hundred miles distant: the Alleghany Mountains, then never passed, lay on the south, and Lake Ontario to the north; to the west was one boundless forest. It is not to be wondered at, that, under such circumstances, the country made little progress in population and improvement for some years. By the census taken in 1790, it appears that there were only nine hundred and sixty souls, including all travellers and surveyors, with their attendants, who happened at that time to be within the bounds of the country. That you may form some idea of the progress of improvements in this country since that period, I shall give you an account of the journey of a gentleman into the Genesee Country in February, 1792, in his own words.—

“ On the 15th February, 1792, I left Albany, on my route to
“ the Genesee River; but the country was thought so remote, and
“ so very little known, that I could not prevail on the owner of
“ the sled I had engaged to go further than Whitestown a new
“ settlement on the head of the Mohawk River, one hundred
“ miles west from Albany. The road, as far as Whitestown, had
“ been made passable for waggons; but from that to the Genesee
“ River, it was little better than an Indian path, just sufficiently
“ opened to allow a sled to pass, and the most impassible streams
“ bridged. At Whitestown I was obliged to change my sled; the
“ Albany driver would proceed no farther, he found that for the
“ next one hundred and fifty miles, we were not only obliged to
“ take provision for ourselves and our horses, but also blankets as
“ a substitute for beds. After leaving Whitestown we found only
“ a few straggling huts scattered along the path at the distance of
“ from ten to twenty miles, and they affording nothing but the
“ convenience of fire and a kind of shelter from the snow. On
“ the evening of the third day's journey from Whitestown we
“ were very agreeably surprized to find ourselves on the east side
“ of the Seneca Lake, which we found perfectly open and free
“ from ice as in the month of June: the evening was pleasant and
“ agreeable; and what added to our surprise and admiration, was
“ to see a boat and canoe plying on the lake. This, after having
“ passed from New York over three hundred and sixty miles of
“ country completely frozen, was a sight pleasing and interesting.

“ We then crossed the outlet of the lake, and arrived at the
“ settlement of Geneva, consisting of a few families, who had
“ been drawn thither from the convenience of the situation and
“ beauty of the adjoining country. The Seneca Lake, on which
“ Geneva is situated, is forty-four miles long by four to six wide;
“ and to find it navigable at this season was a sight as pleasing as
“ unexpected. It appeared that the inhabitants of this delightful
“ country would, by the slight covering of snow then on the
“ ground, have all the convenience of a northern winter, and, by
“ the waters being free from ice, the advantages of inland naviga-
“ tion; a combination of advantages perhaps not to be experienced
“ in any other country in the world. From Geneva to Canadarqua

“ the road is only the Indian path, a little improved the first five
“ miles over gentle swellings of land, interspersed with bottoms
“ seemingly very rich; the remainder of the road to Canadarqua,
“ the county town, sixteen miles, was, the greatest part of the
“ distance, through a rich heavy timbered land. On this road
“ there were only two families settled. Canadarqua, the county
“ town, consisted of only two small frame houses and a few huts,
“ surrounded with thick woods. The few inhabitants received me
“ with much hospitality. I found there abundance of excellent
“ venison. From Canadarqua to the Genesee River, twenty-six
“ miles, it is almost totally uninhabited, only four families residing
“ on the road. The country is beautifully diversified with hill and
“ dale, and, in many places, we found openings of two and three
“ hundred acres, free from all timber and even bushes, which, on
“ our examining, proved to be of a rich, deep soil. It seemed
“ that, by only inclosing with one of these openings a propor-
“ tionable quantity of timbered land, an inclosure might be made
“ similar to the parks in England

“ At the Genesee River I found a small Indian store and
“ tavern; the river was not then frozen over, but was low enough
“ to be forded. As yet there are no settlements of any conse-
“ quence in the Genesee Country. That established by a society
“ of Friends, on the west side of the Seneca Lake, is the most
“ considerable: it consists of about forty families. But the number
“ of Indians in the adjoining country, when compared with the
“ few inhabitants who ventured to winter in the country, is so
“ great, that I found them under serious apprehensions for their
“ safety. Even in this state of nature, the county of Ontario
“ shows every sign of future respectability. No man has put the
“ plough in the ground without being amply repaid: and, through
“ the mildness of the winter, the cattle brought into the country
“ the year before, are thriving well on very slender provision for
“ their subsistence. The clearing of land for spring crops is going
“ on with spirit. I also found the settlers here abundantly
“ supplied with venison.”

Such, it appears, was the situation of the county of Ontario in the year 1792. Its present appearance, contrasted with what it

was at that period. I intend for the subject of another letter from,

Dear Sir
Yours &c.

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR,

Messrs. Phelps and Gorham having sold, to Robert Morris, Esq. of Philadelphia, nearly two thirds of their Lands, Mr. Morris resold them in England; and the purchaser of Mr. Morris having arrived in America, began, early in the summer of 1792, to put in execution the plan he had formed for the improvement of the country. This gentleman having landed in Baltimore, was, at an early period, impressed with the idea that this new country, situated immediately north of the centre of Pennsylvania and Maryland, must reap great advantages from opening a communication across the Alleghany Mountains; and his first attempt at improving the Genesee Country was to examine, in person, the possibility of opening the communication. Not discouraged by the information he had received of the impracticability of the object, with four companions, on the third day of June, 1792, he left the settlement at the mouth of Lycoming Creek, on the west branch of the Susquehannah, and entered the wilderness, taking a northerly course. After ten days laborious exertion they fell on the Cawonisque Creek, and, from the course of the waters, they soon found they had entered the county of Ontario. It appeared by the map of the adjacent country that a direct road across the mountains would shorten the distance of the Genesee Country from the settlements in Pennsylvania at least one hundred miles, and the advantages attending the opening of this communication were so obvious, that, difficult as the undertaking was, he determined, without delay to try to effect it. By the month of November, of the same year, thirty miles were made sufficiently good to admit the passage of waggons; and by the following August the road was completed to Williamsburgh, a distance of one hundred and seventy miles from the mouth of Lycoming Creek, where they had entered the wilderness to explore the route.

It is only from this period, which opened to the Genesee a communication with the settlements in Pennsylvania, that we can trace the beginning of that singularly rapid progress in population and improvements, which has so eminently distinguished that country. The opening of this road from Pennsylvania over a chain of mountains before reckoned impassable, excited the curiosity of the inhabitants in the adjacent country, and many were tempted to explore the Genesee lands, that, previous to this, had scarcely ever given them a thought. The idea of the immense distance was at once destroyed. At this early period, however, it was only men of observation that were pleased. Many returned disgusted with the extreme inconvenience of travelling through a country almost destitute of inhabitants, for the distance of one hundred and seventy miles, and particularly when they found the only settlement in that part of the country depending on the Indians for subsistence.

In the spring of the year 1793, the scarcity of provisions that was felt so severely at the end of the preceding season, was considerably increased by the number of families that emigrated at this time into the county of Ontario. To keep the settlements together, an additional stock of provisions, consisting of flour and pork, was procured from Philadelphia and Northumberland, in Pennsylvania. By the assistance of this timely supply, several settlements were begun in the south part of the county, the principal of which was on the Conhocton Creek, on the road from Pennsylvania to Williamsburgh. In this place, then the centre of a wilderness of nine hundred thousand acres, the town of Bath was laid out; and before the end of the season not less than fifteen families were resident in the village. Early in the season, a saw-mill had been finished; and previous to the setting in of the winter, a grist-mill with a saw-mill nearer the town, were in great forwardness. In the year 1794, those who had moved into the country the preceding years, finding a ready money market for their produce, had made great exertions, and a considerable surplus was furnished by them to the new comers. Of the new settlements, begun this year, the principal were those of Sodus, Honeoy Lake, Braddock's Bay, Canascraga, Tuscarora, and Pleasant Valley.*

* Situated on the southern extremity of the Crooked Lake: the other settlements are designated by the original names of the parts of the country in which they were situated.

At the same time the population of the older settlements was increasing with rapidity: on the most convenient mill-seats mills were building and roads making to unite the different settlements: indeed the whole country seemed one scene of exertion.

Every situation which nature had pointed out to possess superior advantages, was the scene of action, under the direction of some enterprising characters. This year several settlements were begun on the Indian line, and one was commenced under the direction of a Mr. Bartles, from the Jerseys, on the outlet of Mud Lake, one of the branches of the Conhocton. Towards the end of summer a set of merchant mills were in considerable forwardness, and lots laid out for a village, called Frederick's Town, after the name of the founder, Frederick Bartles; before winter the saw-mill had got into complete operation,* and several excellent mechanics were settled in the town. The number of emigrants that had, by this time, moved into the new establishments in every part of the country, and the respectability of many individuals now resident, induced the Legislature of the State to agree to a division of the county of Ontario; the north part retained the name of Ontario and the part struck off was called Steuben, after the Baron of that name: the town of Bath, only two years before the centre of a wilderness, was fixed on as the seat of justice.

Roads were cut this year in many directions, to connect the different establishments, and many grist and saw-mills were building on the streams adjoining the settlements.

As early as the year 1796, the various settlements had begun to assume an appearance of respectability never before instanced in so new a country. On an enumeration being taken of the inhabitants in the town of Bath, and the district eight miles round it, by the assessors, there were found above eight hundred souls; also, within the same distance, two schools, one grist-mill, and five saw-mills. Nearly all the settlements had increased in a similar proportion; the number of emigrants each year was supposed to be not less than three thousand souls; these were either engrafted on

*It is not unworthy of notice, that in the month of May, 1798, Mr. Bartles proceeded from his mills, in the centre of Steuben county, with 100,000 feet of boards, for Baltimore, where he arrived, safe and met with so good a market, that he engaged to deliver the same quantity the next spring.

the old settlements, or, under some enterprising man, formed distinct settlements of their own.

Of those begun in 1796, there were two worthy of notice : that of the Rev. Mr. Gray in Township No. 4, seventh range, who moved from Pennsylvania with a respectable part of his former parishoners, and a Jersey settlement on the head of the Canascraga Creek ; both of these exhibit instances of industry and enterprize, rare as uncommon. The ensuing season, on the organization of the militia of the county of Steuben, this Jersey settlement turned out a company of grenadiers, all in handsome uniform, and completely equipped, composed solely of the young men belonging to it, and the same season, a troop of horse and a company of light infantry were formed at Bath, and attached to the battalion of Steuben county.

Much pains were taken to induce the different settlers to erect mills at an early period of their settlement, and every encouragement was given to put it in their power to carry them into effect ; indeed, in no new country were the settlers so well accommodated with mills. The consequence was evident, both in the appearance of their houses and farms: a greater number of framed houses and barns were to be found in these settlements than in many that were twenty years old. This had not only a good effect in beautifying and enriching the country, but by the erection of comfortable houses, much was done towards the preservation of the health of the inhabitants.

This year a printing-office was established in the town of Bath, and a newspaper printed, entitled, "The Bath Gazette." The county of Ontario having several years the start in settlement, and the advantage of many Indian clearings of great extent, had already the comfortable appearance of an old settled country: the old Indian orchards had been dressed up, and the fruit secured from depredation. Fruit was in such abundance, that one farmer, near Geneva, made, this year, one hundred barrels of cyder.

The town of Canadarqua, from consisting of a few straggling huts, as described in 1792, had now assumed the appearance of a very handsome village: a court-house and goal were already built ; and an academy founded on a subscription of thirty thousand dollars was now building. The whole adjacent country was

rapidly settling with a most respectable yeomanry, but particularly that part lying between Canadarqua and the Genesee River. This tract of country, about six miles from north to south, and twenty seven from east to west, for well cultivated farms, a thick population, and respectable inhabitants, may already vie with any part of the United States.*

In this year (1796) the town of Geneva received a great addition by the laying out a street on the summit of a rising ground, along the west bank of the lake. At the south termination of the street a handsome country house was begun, and finished the year following; and in the corner of the square, a large and convenient house, for a tavern and hotel besides, many other large and well finished houses. About this time a sloop of forty tons, burden, was put on the stocks, intended, when finished, to run as a packet between Geneva and Catherine's Town, a small village at the head of the lake, about forty-four miles distant from Geneva. Towards the close of the season almost all the new buildings were finished, and the sloop was launched. The circumstance of the sloop, however trifling in itself, was of sufficient importance to assemble several thousand people, and no circumstance having occurred to draw together the different settlements, the people composing them were not a little surprised to find themselves in a country containing so many inhabitants, and these so respectable. Natives of every state in the union, and of every nation of Europe, were to be found in the assemblage, all ambitious of the same object, the aggrandisement of the Genesee Country.

This season a printing office was established at Geneva, and a weekly gazette published, supported by eight hundred subscribers, who, before six months, increased to one thousand. Of the settlements begun this season, one was sixteen miles south from Geneva, on the outlet of the Crooked Lake, which here empties into the Seneca; a village, called Hopetown, was laid out on a rising ground adjacent to the creek, and within half a mile of the

* This tract of country has continued to increase with great rapidity; one hundred and fifty families moved into it in the space of a few weeks last winter, 1797.

lake ; at the same time a set of merchant mills were begun on the outlet, about half a mile from the village. No situation in the world can be better adapted for an establishment of this kind, having not only an excellent mill-seat on a powerful and never failing stream of water, but it is in the centre of a rich and flourishing settlement, and possesses the advantage of a good navigation from any part of the Seneca Lake to the mills, and from thence to Albany ; and also, with a trifling land carriage, to the Crooked Lake. These mills are intended as a depository for all grain taken in this part of the country, in payment for lands sold, where it can either be manufactured into flour, or distilled, as may answer best for sale to the *new-comers*, or for exports to Canada or Albany. One floor of the mills will be solely appropriated for the use of the merchants residing in the adjacent country, who may sell their merchandize for wheat delivered at the mills, and pay storage for the advantage they derive. Mills of this kind, in countries where such vast crops of grain may be raised, are highly useful to the farmer, the merchant, and the great land-holder. On the north side of Geneva, about the same distance as Hoptown, a set of mills, on a similar plan, were built this season. These last are situated on a very important navigation, the outlet of the Canadarqua Lake, near its junction with Mud Creek, both of which are very considerable streams, and run through a great extent of rich country already well settled. In the settlement of Mud Creek alone, there were for sale, last fall, not less than ten thousand bushels of wheat, of an excellent quality. From the junction of the two rivers, Mud Creek affords good navigation for boats of four or five tons at least, twenty miles ; and the navigation downwards for boats of ten tons, is good to Schenectady sixteen miles only from Albany. The settlements in this part of the country derive great advantage from the Western canals, which the State has patronized at much expense. On the bank of Mud Creek, near the junction of the two streams, is laid out the village of Lyons, so called from the similarity of its situation to the city of that name in France. The vicinity of this place to the mills and to the salt works, and the command of the navigation, both to the interior country and to Albany, contribute to make it a

place of importance : such has been the success of this settlement, that though only begun two years ago it is now almost one continued village from Geneva to Lyons, sixteen miles. From Lyons to Sodus there is a direct road, but only a few families are, as yet, settled on it. The town of Sodus is however, making considerable improvements ; a set of mills are finished, and other considerable improvements are carrying on. This place is situated on a bay of the same name, which is well known as the best harbour on the south side of Lake Ontario. Few or none, even on the sea coast, exceed it for spaciousness and beauty. The extent of the bay, from north to south, is about six or seven miles, and from east to west, from two to four miles. The grounds around the bay rise considerably high, and the entrance is not above half a mile over. So completely is it protected from the wind, that when the lake is agitated with a storm, the bay may be passed safely in a canoe. Vessels, may anchor near the town in twenty-five fathom water, on a sandy bottom, and in many places a vessel of fifty tons might lay afloat near enough the shore to land on a plank. In this bay there are several islands,* covered with timber, which with the head lands stretching into the bay afford picturesque views from the town, scarcely to be equalled. The town stands on a rising ground, on the west point of the bay, having the lake on the north, to appearance boundless as the ocean, and the bay to the east, romantically intersected with islands, and parts of the main land stretching into it. The first view of this place, after passing through a timbered country twenty-eight miles, strikes the eye of the beholder as one of the most magnificent landscapes human fancy can picture, and the beauty of the scene is not unfrequently heightened by the appearance of large vessels navigating the lake. At the sight of these immense bodies of water, the mind of a reflecting man must be struck with admiration. With only the interception of the portage of nine miles at Niagara Falls they may be navigated to the westward at least two thousand miles ; and at one place the portage between Lake Michigan and the navigable waters of the Illinois, does not exceed half a mile. I was at Sodus some time ago, when a boat, with a number of

* Some of these islands contain fifty acres, all of very fine soil : they produce vegetables in great abundance, particularly onions.

families on board, put into the bay, they appeared to be French. Being questioned as to their business, they said they were bound for the Spanish settlements on the Illinois River, some of them had been there the year before, and stated, that, excepting the Falls of Niagara, they had only a carrying-place of half a mile from Lake Michigan to a branch of the Illinois River. They said they had still one thousand five hundred miles to sail. What an extensive navigation !

You will find the Genesee Country abounding with situations both valuable to the farmer and amusing to the gentleman and man of leisure : but amongst the variety it affords, they must all yield to Sodus ; for fishing, fowling, sailing or hunting, this latter place stands unrivalled ; and perhaps no place in America can equal it. Fish of various kinds, many of them from the ocean, can be had at pleasure ; and a species of soft-shelled green turtle* may be procured in plenty, little inferior to the green turtle brought from the West Indies. In the spring and fall, all sorts of water-fowl are innumerable in the bay. In the adjacent woods are abundance of deer ; they may be easily drove by dogs into the bay, and the chase is continued by water greatly to the amusement of those who are fond of such sports. Strangers going to Sodus, will now find good accommodation, in a house built for the purpose ; and they will find handsome sail-boats, and every apparatus necessary to accommodate the sportsman in pursuit of his amusement.

The lands about Sodus are a black sandy loam, very deep : a soil not very common in this country, but of an excellent quality for every species of cultivation : it affords the finest gardens.†

In one of the creeks running into the bay there was, some time ago, discovered a fine body of chocolate marble, which has been found to bear a good polish, and the blocks sufficiently large for any sort of building ornament. On this Creek, now called Marble Creek, there are some excellent mill-seats, accessible to boats from the lake, which, as the settlement increases, will come into use. The present mills are on a creek, west of the town, called

*This species of turtle weighs above 20 lb.

† It is very common to see onions in gardens at Sodus from fourteen to fifteen inches in circumference, and from the seed not sown above four months.

Salmon Creek, and consist of one grist-mill and two saw mills.

The only part of the Genesee country, that seemed, until now to have escaped the general improvement, was that contiguous to the Genesee River, below Hartford or Canawagas: a set of very good mills, however, had been built at the falls, and some settlers were to be found in that neighbourhood, on the fertile plains by the side of the river: but the idea of exposure to Indian depredations on a frontier is always sufficient to prevent the man of industry and property from settling. The luxuriance of the soil will not always tempt him. The moment, however, the western posts were given up to the United States, and this part of the country rendered safe, the industrious settlers turned their attention to the lands west of the river; and they now bid fair to prove one of the best settlements in the western country.

I am &c.

LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

The emigration that took place in the year 1797, into this Western Country, not only exceeded former years, as to numbers. but also as to the respectability of the emigrants; a very great proportion of the settlers were the most substantial farmers from Pennsylvania, Maryland, the Jerseys, and New England. The country had already been so far improved, that the inhabitants lived in comfort, and even luxury; regular weekly markets had been established in Geneva, Canadarqua, and Bath; and were well supplied with meat of all kinds. The flour from our mills was inferior to none on the continent, and the merchants' stores were regularly supplied. The United States had established a weekly post for the carriage of letters: in fact, we found no inconvenience but that the access to the country, for near one hundred miles on each side, was through settlements, in point of improvement, far behind those in the Genesee Country. To improve our communication with the coast seemed to be all that was necessary to render this country equal to any part of America, for comfort and convenience: in many things, particularly the climate, we had much the advantage. To remedy this inconvenience as to roads, the Legislature of the State had, by an act passed in the session

of 1797, taken the road from Fort Schuyler to Geneva under their patronage. A lottery had been granted for the opening and improving of certain great roads; among these, this road was included. The inhabitants of the country through which the road passed, made a voluntary offer of their services, to aid the State Commissioner, and subscribed four thousand days work, which they performed with fidelity and cheerfulness. By this generous and uncommon exertion, and by some other contributions, the State Commissioner was enabled to complete this road of near one hundred miles, opening it sixty-four feet wide, and paving with logs and gravel, the moist parts of the low country through which it was carried. Hence the road from Fort Schuyler, on the Mohawk River, to Genesee, from being, in the month of June, 1797, a little better than an Indian path, was so far improved, that a stage started from Fort Schuyler on the 30th of September, and arrived at the hotel in Geneva, in the afternoon of the third day, with four passengers. This line of road having been established by law, not less than fifty families settled on it in the space of four months after it was opened. It now bids fair to be, in a few years, one continued settlement from Fort Schuyler to the Genesee River. All last winter two stages, one of them a mail stage, ran from Geneva and Canadarqua to Albany weekly.

A wilderness changed, in so few years, to the comfortable residence of a numerous body of industrious people, who enjoy the comforts and conveniences of life in a degree superior to most parts of the United States, affords matter of curiosity to the intelligent traveller, and many respectable characters undertake the journey from no other motive. To them, therefore, it must be highly gratifying to find entertainment and accommodation equal to any thing of the kind in America. Very few places of the size now exceed Geneva, either as to the stile of the buildings, the beauty of the adjoining country, or valuable improvements.

The number of sail-boats have greatly increased on the lake, and the sloop finds constant employment: and, in addition to their comforts, a person from Scotland has established, at Geneva, a very respectable brewery, which promises to destroy in the neighbourhood, the baneful use of spirituous liquors. The apple and

peach orchards, left by the Indians, yield every year abundance of fruit, for the use of the inhabitants, besides making considerable cyder; so much so, that one farmer near Geneva sold cyder, this year, to the amount of one thousand two hundred dollars.

So respectable are these establishments in this western country, that any one of them would be sufficient to give a stranger a high opinion of its progressive state: but the traveller of observation cannot fail to be highly gratified to find, on passing the counties of Ontario and Steuben, at least twenty respectable and distinct settlements, each under the direction of some enterprising man, whose greatest ambition, and that of his fellow settlers, is to distinguish their settlement above the others. Water, in the town of Geneva, is brought, in pipes, from a remarkable spring, at the distance of a mile and a half, so that each house is plentifully supplied at the door; and a number of farmers in the adjoining country bring water into their farm-yards and kitchens. These conveniences show the comfort in which they live.

A new settlement was this year begun on the west side of the falls of the Genesee River, about nine miles from Lake Ontario, and at no great distance from the mills already built. Several of these settlers, being from the sea-coast of New England, particularly a Mr. Granger, turned their attention to the navigation of the lake, and its communication with the Genesee River. The navigation of the river is here intercepted by four successive magnificent falls, the highest of them ninety six feet: around these falls a carrying place was made, and the inhabitants on the Genesee River now receive their salt from the Onondaga salt works, and their stores from Albany, with a very trifling land carriage compared with what they were necessitated to undertake from Geneva. The opening of this navigation has also furnished them with a ready water communication for their surplus produce. Mr. Granger, last winter, built a schooner of forty tons, which was launched early in April: before the middle of May she made a trip to Niagara, with two hundred barrels of provisions, and there were then laying on the beach two hundred barrels more, ready to be put on board on her return. If we calculate on what has been experienced in the other settlements, the port on the Genesee River bids fair,

in a very few years, to be a place of considerable importance.

Should the inhabitants of the immense flats on the Genesee River and the adjacent country turn their attention to the cultivation of hemp, and the manufacturing of it into cordage, which may be sent, with very trifling land carriage, either to Quebec or Baltimore, both of which are advantageous markets, it is not possible to calculate what may hereafter be the value of this country.

1798. The number of families that came into this country last winter far exceeded any former year. Not less than three thousand people are supposed to have come into the counties of Ontario and Steuben in the course of six weeks last winter; and this spring families were coming in the moment the navigation was free from ice. A Mr. Thayer, with a number of families, moved into a new settlement on a tract of land south of Braddock's Bay. As a necessary measure, and to follow the footsteps of others, they are already building their mills, having brought with them all the materials.

Another settlement of Germans, from Pennsylvania, was this season begun at the south-west extremity of Steuben county, where they have a rich, unequal country, but well watered. These lands, being remote from the roads leading into the country, have heretofore been undervalued; but the opening of a communication from that quarter to Pennsylvania, which is already partly effected, will make it a commodious situation.

The rapid progress of this new country, in every comfort and convenience has not only caused the emigration of vast numbers of substantial farmers, but also of men of liberal education, who find here, a society not inferior to that in the oldest country settlements in America. The schools are far from being indifferent, and even the foundations of public libraries are already laid. The gentleman fond of a rural life, or the amusements of the field, may here gratify himself; he may find a situation for a country-seat, that will please the most romantic fancy: the excellence of the climate and soil will afford him every certainty of a great return for his trouble and expense as a farmer, and with little trouble his garden may equal any gentleman's in England.* Indeed, with

* Musk and water-melons, and all the delicate plants produced in the interior of France, come to perfection in our gardens.

the advantage of climate and soil, the great variety of situations can only be equalled in the finest parts of England.

You will find the climate of the Genesee Country not only forms a very interesting part of its advantages, but also of its natural history: those parching heats that, on the south side of the Alleghany Mountains, seem to dry up every particle of nourishment from the plants; are never known in this country: in almost every instance a hot day is succeeded by a plentiful shower, which preserves throughout the summer, a constant verdure and affords to us the finest pastures and meadows on the continent: the nights are proportionately cool, and a traveller from the sea coast is surprized to find, in the dog-days, a couple of blankets a comfortable covering. Late frosts in the spring, and early ones in the fall, are uncommon, and there is scarcely an instance of the fruit or corn suffering by them. The peach trees, the great test of a climate free from severe and late spring frosts, come to great perfection; in one orchard, at an old Indian town near Geneva, the occupier of the farm sold, last year, to a neighboring distillery, one hundred bushels of peaches.

In the winters of 1796 and 1797, two gentlemen kept regular diaries of the weather, the one at Bath in Steuben county, the other at Lancaster in Pennsylvania, the result was, that at Lancaster the cold was greater than at Bath, from 11° to 13° during the winter; but the spring commenced ten days later. If more proof was necessary to establish this important fact: viz. the moderation of the climate, it might be stated, that the settlers have, in many parts of the country, been in the custom of turning into the woods part of their cattle before winter, at a distance from their farms and they have been found, in every instance, in good order, and with less loss than might be expected from the same number of cattle if kept about the houses. The frosts have never been so severe as to stop the operation of the mills, provided very trifling precaution is used. So remarkable was this circumstance in 1797, that a number of sleds came from Pennsylvania to the Bath mills, a distance of seventy miles. Except in shallow places the lakes never freeze: and the navigation of the Seneca Lake has not been impeded since the settlement of the country. This will appear the more remarkable, when, frequently within that period

the North River has been frozen at New-York, the Delaware forty miles below Philadelphia, and the Chesapeake Bay as low as Annapolis. All this is owing to the relative situation of the Genesee Country. The country is bounded, on the north and west by great bodies of water, which do not freeze, and in this direction there is not one mountain. The northerly and westerly winds, which scourge the coast of America, by blowing over the Alleghany Mountains late in the spring and early in the fall, covered with snow are tempered by passing over these waters; and these mountains to the south of us do, at the same time prevent the destructive effects of the southerly breeze in winter, which by suddenly thawing the frozen wheat-fields, destroys thousands of bushels. While the Lakes and Alleghany Mountains are in existence, so long will the inhabitants of the Genesee Country be blessed with their present temperate climate. The town of Bath has, this season, increased considerably, and much improvement has been made on the different roads leading to it. The opening a market to Baltimore for our lumber and fat cattle, has also raised a spirit amongst the inhabitants to improve the navigation of the Conhocton. A handsome court-house, and a very secure and convenient goal, are added to the number of our buildings; and the inhabitants have recently encouraged a clergyman to settle amongst them. Thus from year to year we improve.

I am &c.

LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR,

It has very erroneously been supposed, that the face of the Genesee Country was flat and level, full of swamps and stagnant waters; but, in fact, the direct contrary is the case. The face of the country from Geneva to the Genesee River appears to be a succession of gentle swellings of land, running most frequently from north to south; and the intermediate spaces afford considerable bottom or meadow land, and generally a small stream of water. This furnishes the best situations imaginable for farms, there being a due proportion of high land and meadow. The upland, as it is termed, is timbered chiefly with hickory, oak, and walnut; and the interval with elm, basswood, sugar-tree, &c. The stone found

on these ridges mostly inclines to lime-stone, which is a certain indication of the best land for every species of grain. The openings, or large tracts of land, found frequently in this country free of timber, and showing great signs of having been once in a state of cultivation, are singularly curious. This sort of land, from the ignorance of the first settlers in regard to its quality, was supposed to be barren, and was therefore little valued: necessity, however, obliged some to attempt the cultivation of it, and they were agreeably disappointed on finding they had got a good crop, and in numberless instances they have continued to reap plentiful crops every year for seven years past. This kind of land, which, six years ago would not have sold for a quarter of a dollar an acre, is now reckoned cheap at ten dollars an acre. It is difficult to account for these openings, or for the open flats on the Genesee River, where ten thousand acres may be found in one body, not even encumbered with a bush, but covered with grass of such height, that the largest bullocks, at thirty feet from the path, will be completely hid from the view. Through all this country there are not only signs of extensive cultivation having been made at some early period, but there are found the remains of old forts, where the ditches and gates are still visible. They appear to be, in general, well chosen for defence. From the circumstance of swords being found in them with French inscriptions, it is concluded they are of French origin. I do not recollect that the French had ever so great a force in this part of America, at so early a period; for these forts, from very large decayed timbers lying in them, and large timber growing over those fallen down, must be at least two hundred years old: the forts are, besides, too numerous for mere stations; and great collections of human bodies are found in them, which shows they have been occupied for many years. An accurate examination of this country, by men of observation and science, might throw light on the history of this part of America, now so little known.

The soil of the country has, in every instance, proved favourable to the raising of grain: the long and moderate summers seem particularly adapted to bring to perfection wheat, barley and oats; the two last, so inferior on the coast to the English, are here or a

quality equally as good. The crops of timothy and clover hay are superior to most in America; and have been known to produce from three to four tons per acre, of excellent well dried hay.* The price of grain and average produce per acre is nearly as follows:

Price per bushel	Dolls.	Cts.	Produce in bushels per acre.
Wheat,	1		from 25 to 30
Rye,	75		40 to 50
Oats,	50		40 to 50
Indian corn,	50		30 to 60
Barley,	70		60

Ten dollars per ton for timothy and clover hay; the product is from two to three tons per acre on an average. That you may be able to ascertain, with some accuracy, the advantage that may be reaped from an expenditure of capital in this country, in improving a farm, it is necessary to make some calculation, founded on the expence and probable return.

It has been found, by repeated experience, that when wheat is about one dollar per bushel, an acre of ground, taken from a state of nature, and well timbered, will require, with great economy, fourteen dollars per acre to put it into a crop of wheat or rye, including every expense: this I have seen ascertained with great accuracy, in a field of forty acres, near Geneva: these forty acres may be, at the least, expected to yield one thousand bushels of wheat; and after deducting two tenths or two hundred bushels, for reaping and threshing, leaves a balance of eight hundred bushels to defray the expense and as profit for the value of the land used; and the land is left in complete order for a second crop, without any more expense than the trifling one of plowing and sowing.

It is also found, that the temperate climate, and richness of the pastures, particularly adapt the Genesee Country for those branches of farming dependant on cattle. No part of America is better adapted for dairy farms; for at no time is the weather so hot but butter can be made and preserved. The quantity of cheese already made is considerable; several farmers keeping from twenty

* This season a field of twenty acres was averaged at Bath, and found to bear of good hay three tons 8 cwt. 46 lb. per acre. In many places the red clover was four feet seven inches long.

to thirty cows. The cattle brought into the country from the neighbouring States thrive well, and some bred in the country have grown to a great size.* The mildness and short duration of the winter, when compared with that of the great cattle countries in the New-England States, are much in favour of the Genesee Country. When we consider the ease with which every thing can be sent to market, the surplus grain, the product of the dairy, the salt provisions, and fat cattle, will at once appear a fund of wealth to the country.

The settlements already formed on the principal navigations, and whose inhabitants are used to business, and respectably connected, find, at an early period, the most advantageous markets for their surplus produce. To Canada, beef, salt, pork,† flour, and whisky, are already sent to a great amount.‡ To the county of Steuben, nature has pointed out a market by the Susquehannah River. Several of its branches afford good navigation to the most westerly parts of the county. They may be navigated almost to their source, for five or six months in the year, by boats carrying from five to eight tons; but when the surplus produce requires the carriage of heavy articles, to Baltimore, the natural sea port of this part of the country, for six weeks or two months in the spring, while the waters are kept high by the melting of the snow

* A four years old bullock was killed at Bath in November last that weighed 12 cwt. 28 lb. And this spring a bullock was killed at the same place that measured seventeen hands and a half high, eleven feet six inches from the root of his horns to the root of his tail, and nine feet six inches in the girth—he sold for two hundred and forty-seven dollars cash.

† The salt works at Onondago are now under the direction of the State. As the salt can be brought to the Seneca Lake or the Genesee River by water, it can be procured here at little more expense than on the sea coast, and equally as good.

‡ A great quantity of spirituous liquors is necessary for the supply of the western posts, and Indian trade in Canada. The whisky, for some years back, has been sent from Northumberland, in Pennsylvania: after a carriage of four hundred miles it is sold for one dollar and fifty cents per gallon at Niagara, and two dollars and fifty cents at Detroit. The county of Ontario, from its communication with Lake Ontario, has a very decided advantage; and the distilling of whiskey has already become an object to our farmers.

on the Alleghany Mountains, a species of boat* may be made to descend the stream that will carry from two to five hundred barrels of flour. Lumber for the Baltimore market can be sent down with ease, and at little expense, when compared with the high price of boards, &c.

The opening the navigation to Baltimore, and the ease with which bulky articles can be carried to one of the best markets in the United states, places the county of Steuben in a situation highly flattering to its future prospects. The land-holder will receive, in payment for his lands, articles fit for the Baltimore market,† and the settlers will be encouraged to make great exertions to pay from the soil, for the land they have purchased.

The success of every individual who has emigrated to the Genesee Country, has stamped a greater value on the lands than ever was known in any place so recently settled, and so distant from the old settled country ; but this has, in a great measure, been owing to the convenience and security afforded to the settlers at the earliest period of their emigration.

In several instances I have advised the following plan for the settlement of a few families of Europeans. In this I have considered their apprehensions and difficulties, when scattered in a woody country, and the advantage they may gain by being mutually able to aid and encourage each other. I proposed that the whole body should, instead of scattering in the woods, fix themselves in a village, and bestow their first labour on improving the village lots, which, to save the labour of fencing, should be worked up in a number of small portions by the settlement under one common fence, but each lot to belong to the individual proprietor. Houses could be built at a small expence on each town lot, to accommodate families. Foreigners will find much advantage from following a

* A Mr. Kryder, of Juneata River, invented these boats about six years ago; the high price of flour and lumber induced him to make the experiment, and he arrived safe at Baltimore with his load. They have been used every year since that time, and are made of plank: they are broke up after discharging their cargo, and sold for lumber, with little or no loss: they are navigated by three or five men, and will float down at the rate of eighty miles per day; they are called *Arks*.

† The proper articles for the Baltimore market are lumber, such as ship plank boards, scantling, lath and shingles—fat cattle, barrelled beef and pork, flour, barley and hemp, may also, at little expence, be transported on the rafts

plan of this kind: one third the number of cattle will be sufficient for the purposes of husbandry, and a great deal more produce will be raised in a large enclosure than in a number of small separate ones, making the same extent of land. In small fields, surrounded with woods, one half will be overshadowed, so as to bear little crops. As the settlers find it convenient, they can improve, and afterwards move to their farm lots, and lease or sell to mechanics their town lots.

One mill, one blacksmith, and one road will serve the settlement, at a time when every shilling is valuable, and every hour's labour of much consequence; and the satisfaction of a society labouring together, who are bound to each other by the strongest motives to friendship, will lighten the most arduous task.

I have no idea that you can reap any benefit from my attempting to give you information on the mode of farming in this country; that you must condescend to learn here; but it is requisite that you know the prices of the implements, necessary for a farmer.

A good log house,* with two rooms, if made by hired men, will cost

	100 Dollars
Oxen per yoke,	70
A cow,	15
Farming utensils necessary at first	20
An ox cart,	30

This is the least any family can do with, unless a number combine together. The wealthy man may add what he pleases.

If the dam is not difficult, a small grist-mill and saw-mill may be built for one thousand dollars.

I am &c.

LETTER V.

DEAR SIR,

When a census of this state was taken, in the year 1790, the number of inhabitants in the county of Ontario was estimated at nine hundred and sixty souls; but even in this small number, there were included Surveyors and their chainbearers, &c, and even those

* A small log house, twenty feet square, will cost fifty dollars; a number settling together can do with one yoke of oxen, and of course, one set of farming utensils, for every two families, the first year.

whom curiosity had drawn into the country. Every year since that period considerable additions have been made to the number of inhabitants; but for the last two years the increase has been proportionably greater than the preceding. Within the space of five weeks last winter, five hundred and seventy sleighs, with families passed through Geneva.

The great number of settlements into which the new inhabitants spread themselves, renders it impossible to ascertain the present number of souls; but considering the great difficulties we had to encounter for many years, and our distance from the old settlements, our population is astonishingly increased. It may be nearly judged of by concurrent circumstances; but, until our census is taken, it cannot be exactly ascertained.

We find, amongst the circumstances from which our population can be ascertained, that the printer of the *Ontario Gazette* disperses, weekly, not less than one thousand papers, and the printer of the *Bath Gazette*, from four to five hundred. From this some judgment may be formed, not only of the number, but of the respectability of the people settled in the country. As it is several years since the militia of the county of Ontario was organized, we cannot judge of the population by the number of regiments; they are at present formed into a brigade of three complete battalions, and a very excellent troop of horse. The militia of Steuben county consists of only one battalion of infantry to which are attached a troop of horse, a company of grenadiers and light infantry, and a company of riflemen. These companies, and a troop of horse, are in complete uniform.

A very just idea may be formed of the population and respectability of a settlement, by the number of mills. Within my knowledge there are in Ontario County nineteen grist-mills, and twenty-eight saw-mills, and some of them equal to any in America: in Steuben county there are only ten grist-mills and twenty saw-mills.

All the first settlers in this country were from New-England: this circumstance probably arose from access to it being from that quarter only, and the purchasers from the State being New-England people. Indeed, until after the opening of the road to Pennsylv-

nia, over the Alleghany Mountains, there was scarcely one instance to the contrary. But the opening of this communication, and the means that have been taken to make the inhabitants of the adjoining States acquainted with the country, have induced a great many to immigrate from the Jerseys, Pennsylvania and Delaware, and this season a considerable number from Maryland. The settlers from New-England, a people remarkably enterprising, long supposed that no others would venture into a country so remote from their homes; but since the improving of the waggon road to the southward, it is found to be considerably easier to remove from Philadelphia, Lancaster, Trenton and Baltimore, than from New-England. The number of emigrants from Pennsylvania, Maryland and New-Jersey, has been greatly on the increase, and custom has made the distance familiar. I have known several persons above sixty years of age, ride, with ease, in seven days from Baltimore to Bath. When they compare this with the difficulty of reaching the new settlements on the western waters, and the little value of produce there, the comparison is highly in favour of the Genesee.* Here they find the inhabitants enjoying more comforts and conveniences than is at this moment experienced in many settlements of twenty years standing. The most advantageous markets are courted, and recourse is had to them by such exertions, that men of respectability and property are drawn into the country, not only from the neighbouring States, but from Europe.

An European, who contemplates moving to America, has a vast field before him. The United States offer a variety of soil, climate and people. It is difficult to select from these, the situation most conformable to his opinions and habits. That country whose climate requires exertion and industry to procure the comforts of life, and whose geographical situation admits of its produce being easily transported to market, certainly bids fair for having an orderly and well regulated government. The certainty of reaping a moderate profit, is the only security for industry.

This is very far from being the case on the western waters.

* It is found that the price of lumber, fat cattle, butter and cheese, is at least fifty per cent higher in Baltimore than in Albany; a circumstance much in favor of Steuben county, when compared with the counties North of Albany.

Their corn, the common food of the inhabitants, is sometimes 62½ cents per bushel and sometimes 12½, and everything else in proportion*. The distance from any large city is too far to drive fat cattle, and the climate too warm for the dairy, or to allow salting or barrelling beef, could salt be procured. That country seems also to have a different interest from the Atlantic States. With the Genesee Country these objections do not hold good: droves of fat cattle can be sent at any time to Philadelphia, New-York, Albany, or Baltimore. The distance is not so great as the best grazing countries in Massachusetts, from whence they have, for many years past, drove their fat cattle to Philadelphia. From the south part of the Genesee Country, cattle, as well as every kind of produce, can, in the spring, be sent down the Susquehannah, either for the Philadelphia or Baltimore market. The Onondaga salt-works being in the immediate vicinity of the Genesee Country, afford salt at an easy rate for curing beef and pork, either for home use or for exportation; and no country is better suited for the dairy. These are advantages to a new country, which are incalculable, and afford the means of bringing thousands of acres into cultivation. For my own part, after having seen great part of the United States, and resided six years in the Genesee Country; seen it a dreary wilderness, and seeing it now possess every comfort man can desire, who divests himself of the foibles and follies of large cities, I must decidedly give this country the preference. With a moderate climate, it is in this country as Yorkshire is to England: it is near enough to the large cities to draw a revenue from their markets, but too distant to be affected by their vices and follies. A little industry will make the roads excellent, in a country where, for sixty miles in any direction, you cannot find a mountain or a swamp, or any barren land; and thick population will give conveniencies and luxuries. Our vicinity to Maryland and Pennsylvania procures us the finest horses in America; and we have had the same advantages in a breed of cattle from New-England. The lakes and rivers supply us abundantly with fish,

* Since the army left the Western Territory, all grain has fallen in price, so as not to be worth the raising, except for the consumption of the inhabitants, while all European goods and salt are very dear. It will take the produce of one acre to buy a pair of breeches.

the woods with venison,* the maple tree with sugar,† and our industry with abundance of grain.

The most convenient route for Europeans to come to the Genesee Country will be to land at New-York; they will with much ease reach Albany by water, and from thence they can either hire wagons or take navigation by the canals, or the Mohawk River, to Geneva. Unless the water be in good order, I should certainly prefer the land journey. A waggon, with two oxen and two horses will go twenty miles per day with a load of 30 cwt. The accommodation by the state road will be found very good; and should any accident happen on the road, assistance can be procured at every stage. The great secret of moving with facility is to carry nothing but bedding, clothes, and cooking materials; all the articles of household furniture can be procured in the country at less expense than would carry it from the coast.

I am, &c.

LETTER VI.

DEAR SIR,

The Genesee Country, I find has not failed to engage the attention of foreigners, and those from Great-Britain in particular. Many respectable characters from that part of the world have already come into this country, with the intention of establishing themselves in it; and what has added much to the advantage of emigrants of this description, is the law passed by the Legislature at the last session, by which foreigners, though *aliens*, are enabled to hold real property within the State of New-York. This indulgence shows the liberality of this country, and, it is presumed in the present state of Europe, is a circumstance in its favour that will not be overlooked by those who may wish to secure an asylum for themselves or their families on this side of the Atlantic. To such, this part of the United States is particularly suited. The climate and soil are by no means inferior to their own, and the laws and customs of the State of New-York bear a striking

* For three several years back five hundred deer have been killed in the neighbourhood of Bath annually.

† A settlement of fifteen families, in No. 4, seventh range, made this year two tons of sugar from the maple tree, some families made 500 lb.

resemblance to those of England. In this delightful country, societies of old countrymen have it in their power to choose fertile situations for their establishments, where they may indulge their own fancy as to the arrangement of their respective farms, and where they can enjoy without interruption, their own manners and customs. To these distinct establishments, the laws and customs of the country are highly favourable. In many instances such societies are found for half a century to have preserved their native language in great purity. Though these circumstances may appear trifling, yet they are of material consequence to the comfort of those who change their country at a period of life when both habits and manners are formed, and to those who have, by prudential motives, been induced to change their country, but who cannot, with the same facility, change their feelings as men.

On a plan similar to the one above mentioned, a Scotch settlement was projected two years ago, and a considerable number of persons of that country have already joined it. This settlement is formed on the west side of the Genesee River, about eight miles from the River, and is called Caledonia. The village is built around a remarkable spring, which issues from a limestone rock, and forms a body of water covering about two acres, from whence a stream takes its rise sufficiently powerful to work, at a short distance from the spring, a set of merchant mills. The plan for this settlement occupies about ten thousand acres, distributed in the following manner

For the ministry	100 acres
For the school, about	60
Ten gentlemen, 500 acres each	5,000
Ten farmers, 100 acres each	1,000
Forty farmers, 78 acres each	3,120
For the village, sixty lots of 12 acres each...	720
	10,000 acres.

Men of property anxious to secure to their families *estates in America*, will experience great satisfaction in joining their countrymen, perhaps their former friends and neighbours, in such a colony. They can, as opportunity offers, improve their respective purchases,

according to their fancy ; and they will not only enjoy advantages from their own industry, but finally be enriched by the industry of their neighbours. Those who have been born to labour for their livelihood, with a few years continuance of the same industry as was necessary for their existence in Europe, will find themselves rich and independant ; and at their death, instead of leaving their families, as is generally the case in Europe, the same hard and scanty means of existence, they will leave them real property, and the means, by industry, of living in ease and plenty.

At the most early period of the settlement of this country, establishments were formed at much difficulty and at great expense; and even money could not obviate the difficulties emigrants had to encounter. During the two first years my companions and myself scarcely ever slept in a bed, and could seldom command the common necessities of life. But the exploring of the navigations, removing the incidental obstructions, opening roads, and building mills, not only procured an easy supply of necessities, but, by inducing a rapid settlement, ensured the cultivation of the country. What would four years ago have been impracticable, is now easy ; and all the new settlers are supplied with every necessary at moderate price. Mechanics of every description are to be found throughout the country, and no country was ever so well supplied with mills.

It is necessary for all those who propose removing to new settlements, to make a calculation of the expence of their removal, and the quantity of provisions which will be necessary, until they can raise crops from their own labour. The great object is to reach their respective destinations as near the opening of the spring as possible, as their cattle will then in a short time be provided for without any expence, and in a very few months they can reap the fruits of their industry. The European must expect to encounter difficulties ; but the greatest of these, perhaps, will be to overcome his prejudices in favour of the customs of his own country. A little observation will, however, convince him that the most ordinary customs of the country have not been adopted without good reason, and by no means should be deviated from by new settlers.

It is a true observation that, practice and example are ever to

be more depended on than theory. I shall therefore, to be some guide in your future business, give you a short detail of the operations of a gentleman who left England only last April, and settled himself in the Genesee Country, where he is now comfortably established. M. B. left England early in April, and arrived with his family at New-York, about the middle of May: after having purchased a few necessary articles at New-York, he took a passage for himself and his family, on board an Albany sloop, and in two days he arrived in Albany; from thence he went, by land to Schenectady, a small town on the Mohawk River, sixteen miles from Albany, where he engaged a three ton boat to carry him to Geneva, at which place he arrived early in June. Mr. B. from the plan of the country, had selected a lot of six hundred and forty acres, situated on the east side of the west branch of the Crooked Lake. On viewing this spot, Mr. B. who is a man of observation, saw, notwithstanding its perfect state of nature, both its beauties and advantages: he found it extending one mile on the lake, from which the ground rose with a sufficient ascent, of a rich soil, and a fine stream of water nearly intersecting the lot. He immediately fixed on a situation for his buildings and garden, and marked reserves of handsome trees in different places so as to give it the appearance of an English country-seat. Mr. B. having fixed his family at Geneva, procured five young men to begin clearing off the timber around the place allotted for his buildings, and also to put in a field of wheat. This gentleman, although unused to business of the kind, by the end of October had put into the ground forty acres of wheat in good order; and before the first of December had his house finished for the reception of his family. The continuance of the same exertion for one season more, will place this gentleman in a situation that his family will be abundantly supplied with all the necessaries that a farm can be supposed to furnish in any country; and he will have the satisfaction to reflect, that he owes it entirely to his own exertion and industry.

I am &c.

LETTER VII.

DEAR SIR,

The different communications by water from the Genesee Country to the sea I shall endeavour to explain to you in as few words as possible. From the country known by that name there are three that are now used. 1st. To Baltimore by the Susquehannah; 2d. To Albany by the Seneca and Mohawk Rivers; 3d. To Montreal by Lake Ontario and the River St. Lawrence; and from the south-west part of the country boats may descend the Allegany River, which is a branch of the Ohio, to New Orleans.

The Susquehannah enters the Chesapeak Bay at Havre de Grace. Few rivers embrace a greater extent of country within its various branches; and none afford better navigation to so near their source. At Northumberland the west and north branches of this river meet, affording a very advantageous situation for trade. The branch which heads in the Genesee Country makes, from Northumberland, a course almost directly north, and is called the North Branch. At Tioga Point a junction is formed between the waters of the Otsego Lake, known by the name of the East Branch of the Susquehannah, and Tioga River, and form a situation very similar to that of Northumberland. At the Painted Post, a small village on the most easterly bounds of Steuben county, the different branches of the Tioga, or Chemung River, form a junction, and are all navigable for a great distance into the Genesee Country. The Conhocton River rises in the north-west part of the County of Steuben, and taking a southeasterly course, passes the town of Bath, the county town, to which place it is navigable for boats of eight tons: about five miles below Bath it is joined by Mud Creek, so called from a lake that forms its source; and even this small stream is navigable for boats, to Mr. Bartles's mills, built on the outlet of the lake, eleven miles from its mouth. Mr. Bartles, from these mills, rafted one hundred thousand feet of lumber, last spring, to Baltimore, by the Susquehannah, and found the business so advantageous, that he is now preparing a much larger quantity for the same market. As you descend the Conhocton, from the

accession of many streams, the navigation betters, until you reach the main river at the Painted Post.

The Canisteo, which is the next River to the North, rises from a marsh in the north-west corner of the county of Steuben, and, taking a south east course, joins the Conhocton at the Painted Post. It is somewhat singular, that this river is navigable almost to its source. From the opposite side of the marsh, the Canaseraga also has its source. This is a branch of the Genesee River, which falls into the River St. Lawrence; while the Canisteo, a branch of the Susquehannah, falls into the Chesapeake. Both are navigable for boats of ten tons to within nine miles of each other, and the portage now in use may, with very trifling labour, be reduced to five miles. The navigation of the Canisteo has been more used than any of the other branches of the Susquehannah that water the Genesee Country, and has added much to facilitate the moving of the Pennsylvania emigrants; but the recent settlement of the country has not permitted them even to clear out, much less improve the navigation in the manner it will admit of.

This country has now drawn the attention of some very respectable characters in the mercantile towns on the Susquehannah, and at Baltimore; and there is no doubt but the farmers will be induced to turn their attention to those articles which are most in demand in the markets on the coast. One of the most respectable mercantile houses in Baltimore made a purchase, last year, near Tioga Point, in order to draw to that quarter the trade of the western country: they have built a set of mills, and are establishing an extensive work for the manufacturing of ship cordage. If we consider the vast body of rich flats on the Susquehannah, where its various branches pass the Genesee Country, and the ease with which the produce of the Genesee River can be brought to the navigable part of the Canisteo, it will appear that the quantity of hemp which may be collected at Tioga Point, or the Painted Post will be incalculable. The flats on the Genesee River and Canaseraga Creek alone, cannot be estimated at less than eighty miles in length, and about two in breadth, forming a body of about eighty thousand acres: and every acre is, I suppose, eighteen feet deep of black mould. In such land the Indians raise one hundred

bushels of corn on an acre, and they never have been known to make any change of the spot. Where such land under proper management, and turned to the cultivation of hemp and flax, the returns would be immense. To forward this object, it is intended, this season, to begin an establishment at the extremity of the navigation of the Canisteo; and to induce the farmers on the Genesee River to cultivate hemp and flax, proper boats will be provided to carry those articles to market. To those who object that three hundred and fifty four miles* is too lengthy an inland navigation to carry such bulky articles to market, I reply, that the United States are at present supplied with hemp from Russia, and that it there bears an inland navigation of one thousand two hundred miles before it reaches a sea-port.

Some years ago the high price of flour and lumber at Baltimore, induced a Mr. Kryder, a farmer on the Juniata River to try an experiment in the mode of transporting flour from his mills to Baltimore: he built a sort of a boat, which he called *an Ark*; it was long and flat, and constructed of very large timber, such as he supposed would suit the purpose of builders. This vessel, or float, carried three hundred barrels of flour. This man had the courage to push through a navigation then unknown, and arrived safe at Baltimore, where he received from the merchants a premium of one dollar above the market price for every barrel. Thus encouraged—the same person has been down every year since, and has made so considerable improvement on this sort of boat, that *arks* are now used which carry five hundred barrels. From the most diligent inquiry, and from the ease with which Mr. Bartles carried down his lumber last spring, there does not exist a doubt but that the navigation of the Conhocton and Canisteo will serve for boats of this kind, carrying from three to five hundred barrels. As they are never intended to be used but for descending in high water, they are navigated with few hands, and go down with great rapidity. It is intended that two shall go from the county of Steuben this season: they will be loaded with valuable lumber, and a few fat bullocks. It is supposed they will reach the tide water,

* The distance from the head at the Canisteo to Havre de Grace.

at Havre de Grace, in five days. In a few years, flour, and every other article of produce in demand at the sea-ports, will be sent the same way. In every other back country of America, where there exists a possibility of sending the spare provisions abroad, particularly on the *Ohio*, the difficulty of procuring salt to cure the beef and pork will prevent these branches of farming from yielding any profit. The situation of the Genesee Country, and, indeed, the whole western part of the State of New-York, is, in this respect, highly advantageous. It is supplied with salt in such abundance, that the price is not higher than on the sea coast; and the intermediate country, till within one hundred miles of tide-water, is also supplied from these works.* Thousands of barrels pass every year through the Genesee Country, for the use of settlements fifty years established, and one hundred miles nearer to the sea coast. So highly are these waters impregnated with salt, that eight pounds of water, when evaporated, make one pound of pure salt; and the springs are so abundant, that it was calculated by a very ingenious and correct gentleman, that from a single spring three hundred thousand bushels might be made in one year; and at least twenty springs are now used.—But to return to the navigation.

The south branch of the Tioga has a north course from the Alleghany Mountains, and joins the Conhocton and Canisteo at the Painted Post, as also does the Tuscarora and Cowanisque. These streams, at this uniting place, form a great, and, in time of high water, a magnificent river. From this place boats of any size could be sent to Baltimore; there being to this navigation no interruptions of consequence until we get below Wright's Ferry; from which place for Havre de Grace the State of Maryland is making great exertions to render the navigation safe and beneficial to the trade of Baltimore. The method which the gentlemen employed in this business has taken will, I have no doubt, be crowned with success. The obstructions are formed by bars of

* Of so much importance did these salt-works appear to the Government that, two years ago, they took the business entirely under their own direction, and appointed a Commissioner to superintend the salt-makers, and restricted the price to sixty cents per bushel, at which they are obliged, by their contract, to supply the country.

limestone rock, running across the river, from east to west, and the whole water of the river pours over them. In the dry seasons, the drift wood which collects on these ledges, is gathered and piled on the rocks, and burnt until they become quite heated : water is then thrown on them, when they immediately split into pieces : the rocks are then broke up and thrown into the pools below. These breaches are made one hundred yards in length, so as to allow rafts of any size to pass with safety. Large subscriptions have been made to carry on these works ; and there is no doubt but a few years perseverance will complete a safe navigation from the head of the Canisteo to Baltimore.

The navigation from the county of Ontario to Schenectady, sixteen miles from Albany, has been of late years much improved, and is of great advantage to that part of the country. The outlets of Seneca Lake, Canadarqua Lake, and Mud Creek, join together, and form the Seneca River, which, through its whole extent, is a very useful navigation. At the Three River Point it is met by the outlet of the Oneida Lake, and, after passing Oneida Lake, the boats ascend Mud Creek, from which there is a canal, to unite its waters with the Mohawk River, on which two other obstructions are canalled, to make the communication good to Schenectady. These improvements are made on the scale of boats carrying ten tons being used on this navigation. Considerable quantities of flour, potash, and salt, are every year sent down by this navigation, and thus the merchants are enabled to make their remittances. So much has the navigation been used, that one hundred boats have been known to arrive at the little town of Geneva in six weeks. In the beginning of the settlement of this country, families, moving in these boats, suffered much from want of shelter in the night ; but the number of travellers has induced persons to settle and keep taverns at the most suitable places, where the accommodations are far from being bad.

The navigation from the interior county of Ontario into the lake of the same name, is by the Genesee, Rundigut, and Seneca Rivers. The Seneca River is formed by the waters of the Seneca Lake, Canadarqua Lake, Mud Creek, and the Cayuga Lake, each of which are large and deep streams, affording great convenience

to the country adjoining them : these meet the Oswego River at Three River Point, which falls into Lake Ontario at Oswego Fort. The importance of this place induced the Legislature of the State of New York to lay out a town, which already affords great convenience to persons trading to and from Canada.

The Rundigut lies about five miles east of the Genesee River, and runs into the country about six miles : at the south extremity of the bay Rundigut Creek forms a very handsome fall of about twenty feet, affording a fine situation for mills, which may be so placed that boats might be navigated from Canada to the mill, and there loaded without any trouble. A convenient store-house has already been built, and, during the two last summers, very considerable quantities of provisions and distilled liquor were sent from this place to Canada. In the neighbourhood of this place are several bodies of iron ore,* and it is presumed that works will soon be established for the making of iron.

The Genesee River is navigable for sloops of sixty tons from the lake to the falls, a distance of six miles. These falls, which are formed by a continuance of the same ridge that forms the Falls of Niagara, are a succession of four distinct falls within the space of one mile : the highest is ninety feet, but, with the rapids above, the total height is three hundred feet. These falls, for beauty, are not inferior to those of Niagara. A carrying place is made on the west side of the river, and it has already a considerable employment. Immediately above the falls the river is navigable for large boats, and continues so for twenty-five miles above Williamsburgh, where it is again interrupted. At the village of Williamsburgh the Canaseraga Creek joins the Genesee River : this creek affords good navigation for near twenty miles, to Dansville, a settlement in the north west corner of Steuben county, only nine miles from the navigable waters of the Caniskeeo River. The quantity of provisions and distilled liquor sent from the mouth of the Genesee River is very considerable. Last summer a small vessel was kept in constant employment in this business.

*Iron can be brought, by the Susquehannah, from Pennsylvania to Geneva or Bath, and afforded at nearly the same price it is sold for in New-York or Philadelphia.



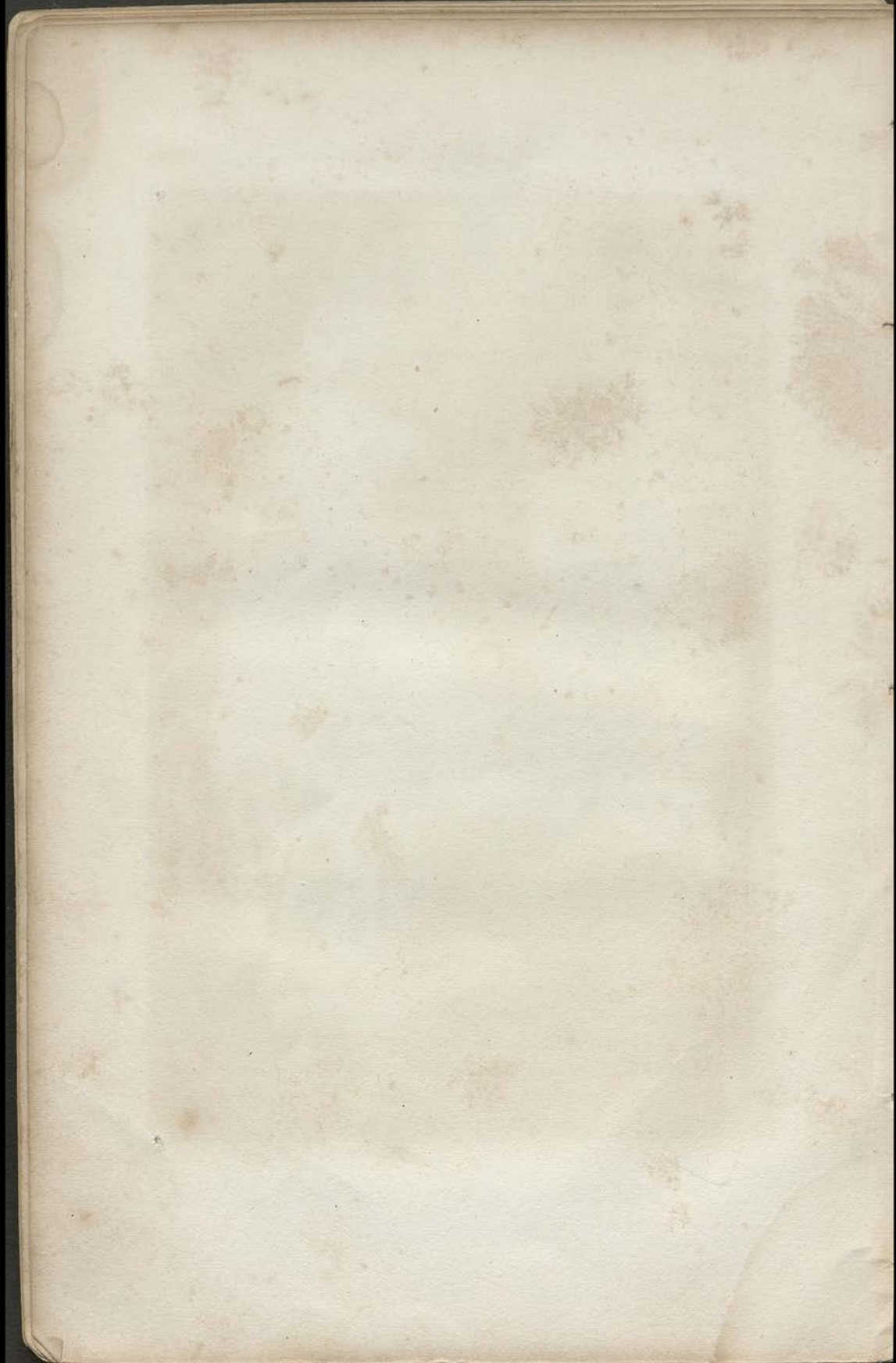
The Niagara Falls

Copied from the original Engraving by Morris 1788

The Niagara Falls

SOUTH EAST VIEW OF THE LOWER CATARACT
ON CASCONCHIA GON OR LITTLE SENECA'S RIVER LAKE ONTARIO.

1788



The counties of Ontario and Steuben have also the advantage of being, by a particular law, exempted from all taxation for sixteen years from the year 1790 ; so that, until the year 1806, they are free of all public burdens, except what may be necessary for the support of their internal regulation : and we find by a late Law for raising by a direct tax, the sum of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars, that this privilege in favour of these counties is expressly guaranteed.

LETTER VIII.

DEAR SIR,

I Shall now endeavour to give you some idea of the route and distance to the Genesee Country from the city of New-York.

There are shorter roads than by Albany, but this route being the best and most convenient, the additional travelling is fully compensated for. During the summer months sloops are constantly passing from New-York to Albany : they generally run the distance in two days ; and sometimes in one. The road from Albany to the westward goes by Schenectady and the Mohawk River ; but at Utica, ninety-six miles from Albany, it is intersected by the Great Genesee Road, at which place you are ninety-nine miles from Geneva, the whole of which distance you will find a well settled country ; but, for your guide in making comfortable stages, I have annexed a list of the best taverns on the road, with their respective distance from each oher.

Should curiosity induce you to visit the Falls of Niagara, you will proceed from Geneva, by the State Road, to the Genesee River, which you will cross at New-Hartford, west of which you will find the country settled for about twelve miles ; but after that, for sixty-five miles, to Niagara River, the country still remains a wilderness. This road was used so much last year by people on business, or by those whom curiosity had led to visit the Falls of Niagara, that a station was fixed at the Big Plains to shelter travellers. At this place there are two roads that lead to Niagara River ; the south road goes by Buffalo Creek, the other by Tanawandoe Village to Queen's Town Landing. The road by Buffalo Creek is most used both because it is better and because

it commands a view of Lake Erie ; and the road from this to the Falls is along the banks of Niagara River, a very interesting ride. The river is in no place less than a mile over and the picture is enlivened by a variety of landscapes. Niagara River is the only outlet of Lake Superior, and all those immense lakes that afford, from the falls, an uninterrupted navigation of near two thousand miles to the westward. As you approach Chippaway, a military station two miles above the falls, the rapidity of the river increases, bounding to a great height where it meets with resistance from the inequality of the surface ; and this vast body of water at last rushes over a precipice of one hundred and seventy feet. The falls can be viewed from several different places : but they are seen to most advantage below. You can with safety, approach the very edge of the fall, and may even go some distance between the sheet of falling water and the precipice ; but this experiment requires caution ; the footing is unequal and slippery ; and blasts of condensed air rush out with such violence as to deprive you, for some moments of the power of breathing. From the falls to Queens-Town, the nearest place to which shipping approach the falls, the river is confined within a chasm in the rocks, one hundred and fifty feet deep, and to all appearance cut out by the force of the water. Queens-Town is a neat village, and has all the appearance of a sea-port : it is not uncommon to see at that place several brigs of one hundred tons burthen, and many smaller vessels. The territory opposite to Queens-Town, on the east side, is a reservation belonging to the State of New-York, which the Legislature directed the Surveyor-General to lay out into small lots, for the accommodation of settlers. This place is the key to the trade of the western lakes, and numbers of teams are daily employed between it and Chippaway : the distance by the carrying place now in use, on the British side, is eleven miles : the carrying place formerly in use, on the American side, was only six miles ; but the mountain forming the falls is more abrupt.

Some persons, interested in the countries beyond the falls, had this interruption to the navigation examined by a very respectable engineer, for the purpose of discovering the practicability of making a canal to open the navigation of the western lakes. The fall

was found to be three hundred and twenty feet from Steedman's Landing, above the falls, to Queens-Town Landing below: the distance to be cut did not exceed four miles, nearly three of which is on level with the navigable part of the river above the falls.

I am, &c.

The principal Taverns on the Road from Albany to Geneva, and from thence to Niagara, with their Distances.

Albany to Schenectady,.....	16	
Schenectady to Bents,.....	14	
Bent's to ———,.....	10	
Dewight's,.....	16	
Hudson's Indian Castle,.....	14	
Aldridges, German-Flats,.....	10	
Hotel, Fort-Schuyler,.....	16	
	—	96
From Fort-Schuyler to Laird's on the } Great Genesee Road }	10	
Van Epp's, near the Oneida Reservation,.....	6	
Wemp's, in the Oneida Reservation,.....	6	
Sills's, at the Deep Spring,.....	11	
Keelers, junior,.....	12	
Tyler's, Onondago Hollow,.....	10	
Rice's, Nine mile Creek,.....	10	
Cayuga Ferry,.....	20	
Powel's Hotel, Geneva,.....	13	
	—	98
From Geneva to Canadarqua.		
Sanburn's,.....	16	
Searson's, on the State Road,.....	14	
New-Hartford,.....	11	
Peterson's, at the Big Spring,.....	6	
Ganson's,.....	6	
To the Station on the Big Plain,.....	27	
To Buffalo Creek,.....	43	
	—	123
	Miles,	317

*. * The following note from the Hon: JOHN GREIG to T. ROMEYN BECK Esq. M. D. indicating the author of the foregoing Tract, is annexed to the copy in the State Library.

"CANANDAIGUA 29, October 1846.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am favoured with your letter of the 27, instant—

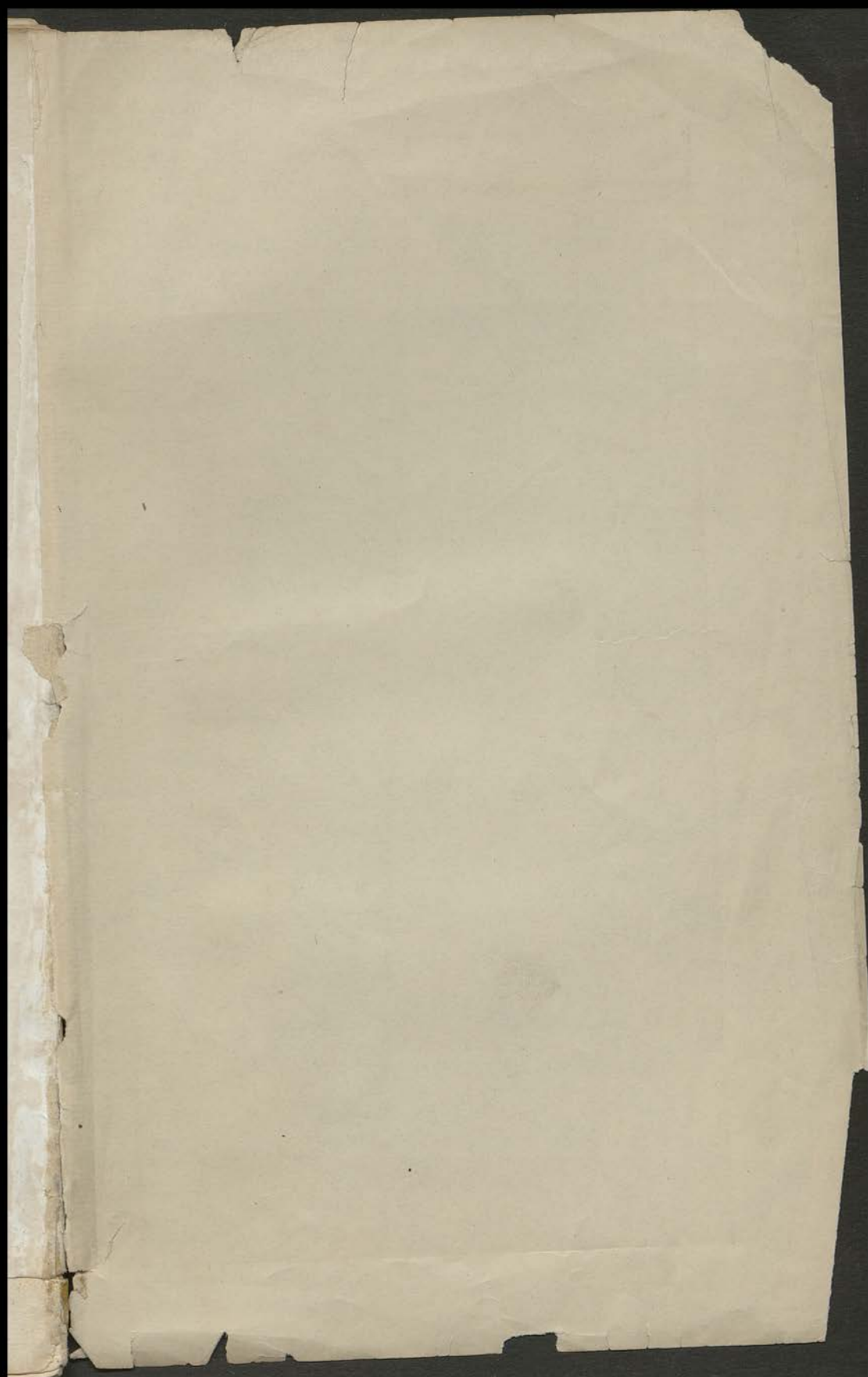
I very well remember the Pamphlet on the "Settlement of the Genesee Country" to which you refer, and my own recollection of it, and of the Author of it, is fortified by that of Judge Howell, to whom I have shewn your letter.

It was written by Capt. Charles Williamson, who came to this country as the Agent of Sir W^m Pulteney and Governor Hornby, for the settlement of their Lands in the Western part of the State of New-York, in the year 1792. He remained as their Agent until the year 1802, when he returned to Europe. He afterwards made occasional visits to this Country, until the year 1807, when he died of the yellow fever while on a mission from the British Government to the Havanna.

Believe me with much regard

Yours Sincerely.

JOHN GREIG.



1134

1143

1147

