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Early History of
Rich Valley & Snyder Hill

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RICH VALLEY & SNYDER HILL

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Snyder Hill in Cattaraugus County, New York, is a large rolling hill about 5 miles long by 3 miles wide, which was settled by the grandfathers' grandfathers of today's generation. Much of its early history is typical of other places where the pioneers who carved homes into the wilderness some 140 years ago were quite willing to strike out alone, people who worked hard but got a lot of fun out of life. In some ways it is unique since those who came to this area formed a surprisingly close-knit community. The story we are about to tell is an introduction to who they were, where they came from, and how they happened to come to this particular place.

Snyder Hill extends across the town line from the northwest quarter of New Albion into the southwest corner of Persia, and rises about 600 feet above the surrounding creeks and hollows. The easiest way to define it is to look at a map which shows the heights of hills and valleys. On the northeast side it slopes up from the road between Cattaraugus and Wesley, which is now State Highway Route 353. This was originally called Rich Valley and it is where the settlement of Snyder Hill began. On the south west, the hill drops off sharply into New Albion and Mosher Hollow, and on the west and east not quite so sharply into Cattaraugus and over the town line into East Leon.

The people who settled here loved the hilltops. They kept their highways up out of the valleys, following the section lines. One of their first roads cut straight across the forest, thru pine trees four feet in diameter,

to a sawmill several miles away in Skinner Hollow. These hilltop families inter-married among themselves, formed their own school district and their own church community, and they had surprisingly little social contact with families in the nearby valleys to the east, south and west. Any study of Snyder Hill comes again and again to the same family names, but almost none of these appear in the village of New Albion just over the edge of the hill. The old cemeteries at New Albion and on Snyder Hill are only 3 miles apart, but the names are completely different.

The pioneer period we shall consider covers about 25 years, starting with the first settlement in 1825. This was the year of the completion of the Erie Canal, an event which undoubtedly had much to do with the settlement. Our period ends with the coming of the Erie Railroad in 1851, and the founding of the village of Cattaraugus at that time in what had been open farming country. When the railroad came through, many people who had been leaders in the hill community came down and helped form the nucleus of the new village. Thus, in a real way, the history of Cattaraugus goes back to the history of Snyder Hill.

During this pioneer period there were some two dozen families which came to Rich Valley and Snyder Hill and remained as permanent residents. In developing their story we shall refer to two charts: a map with lot numbers which shows where each family settled, and an intermarriage chart which shows how they were related. It will be interesting to notice how remarkably similar these two charts are to each other. We shall see how often the families which came together were related before they came, and how often it was the children of

neighbors who married in the next generation, rather than families farther apart. We find their records in the minutes of the Snyder Hill School District, the early class membership rolls of the Cattaraugus Methodist Church, on their gravestones standing in the Snyder Hill Cemetery, and in a host of documents and family traditions which help enliven the tale.

Before starting with 1825, let us review briefly what had happened in this area before then, in the very earliest days. Many of those who started the move west across New York State after the Revolutionary War had been soldiers and officers, sons of old New England families who had seen some of the beautiful country beyond Ticonderoga which was still virgin forest. The first settlements in what had been Indian territory west of the Hudson were military lands, in Washington and Saratoga County. A number of men who had fought in the Revolution came that far between about 1790 and 1800. The present story has grown out of the effort to track back to their origins the movements of the Rich and Hall families who came to this Adirondack area at that time, and who later showed up together again on Snyder Hill.

As further Indian treaties were made, some of these same pioneers or their older sons began to move further west, along the Mohawk Valley. Each generation moved further into the wilderness. Finally, the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 made it much easier to move supplies across the state. At the same time this brought too much civilization to these people who had moved into the wilderness, and many of them decided to move on again, looking for a better place to live.

countryside was so impassible. Never traffic remained active for a long period of time, and as more people came in they gradually started to come up the side streams into the wilderness. The first settlers arrived at Little Valley in 1807 and built a saw mill but with the beginning of the War of 1812 they feared that no more settlers would come, so they closed down the mill and moved away. The first permanent settlement came with the end of the war, in 1815.

About this same time people began to come down Cattaraugus Creek from the north. The Allen family arrived at Gowanda in 1813, and on to the present site of Dayton Village in 1815. The earlier settlers in the northwest corner of Dayton had arrived from Chautauqua County in 1810. New Albion saw its first settlers in 1818, in the southwest corner nearest Little Valley. All this time people were beginning to move up the creeks and valleys in this direction, but in this whole big hill there was no settlement at all.

The history of Rich Valley and Snyder Hill, reconstructed from a host of old documents, maps & census records, indicates that between 1825 and 1830 a dozen families came to this general area. In another ten years there were another dozen or so. In the period from 1825 to 1840, the real heart of the community was completed. Interestingly enough, while there were some few more families that came in, for the next 40 years - until about 1875 or 1880 - the leaders of the community, the church, the schools, some back largely to the same group of pioneer families who settled here in the first 10 or 15 years. The community was thus settled quickly until the land was all taken, and after that it grew and developed on the basis of the families that were here. Many

of the same families, of course, are still here, in the fourth and fifth generations.

Why did these people come together, and why did so few other families come in later to join them? One thing we find is that at least two thirds of them, and probably more, had lived together at one place or another before they arrived. The largest group came from Albion in Orleans County to New Albion, and gave the township its name. Incidentally, when members of some of these same families moved on west, they took the name with them again, and founded the town of Albion in Michigan.

The Jacob Rich and Snyder families, which were first to arrive were older than most of the other settlers, and they came from a little farther east, at Onondaga Co. near Syracuse. Another group came from still further east in Saratoga Co., and some of these had stopped in Orleans Co. on the way. Still farther back, we will find that many of these same people had lived together in Halifax (Windham Co.), Vermont. Another group were immigrants from England, all about the same age. When some of them had met, we are not quite sure. By and large, though, they came together because they had been together.

The fascinatingly complex story of the intermarriages between these pioneer families has been summarized in the attached chart, which requires a few words of explanation. Each marriage tie is shown by an arrow pointing to the husband, with heavy lines for marriages before coming to Snyder Hill, dotted lines for marriages of sisters (or cousins?) elsewhere in the pioneer generation, and lighter lines for marriages after arriving or in the next generation. The families are numbered on this chart in the approximate order of their

arrival. These same numbers appear as keys to further details for each family, in the numbered paragraphs below.

(1.2) During the spring of the year 1825 Joseph Rich and his wife Phebe Snyder settled on Lot 58 in Persia, southeast of Wesley. Their homestead was at the lower end of what later became the Rich Valley road through Snyder's Corners and on to Cattaraugus. These two were the oldest son and oldest daughter of Jacob Rich, deceased, and of George Snyder who came with them.

The large Rich and Snyder families all came from Onondago County, where they had known each other well. In 1825 Joseph Rich had just turned 30, and his wife Phebe was 29. His younger sister, Sally Rich, had married her brother, Harry Snyder, and a few years later another sister, Ann Rich, married another brother, August Snyder. This whole tribe moved to Rich Valley and Snyder Hill together and purchased land from the Holland Land Company at about the same time.

George Snyder and his wife, Tasey Kelley, had been blessed with five stalwart sons. More sons meant more acres cleared, so Horace, Harry, Augustus, Barney B. and George Jr. were a tremendous asset in carving a new home in the wilderness. The Snyders had purchased land on the hilltop in what was then Little Valley, but settled first on Lot 57 in Rich Valley next to their daughter and son-in-law. It is interesting to note from early census records that both the Rich and Snyder families came at first without their younger children.

Two years later Horace Snyder, then 24 and the oldest son, brought his new bride, Olive Kellogg, and set up the first log cabin in the forests on the hill-

top, on what is now the flat meadows of Snyder Hill lot 59. This name was often spelled 'Snider' in the early days, but we will stay with the present spelling to avoid confusion.

Horace was joined for a while by his second brother, Augustus, who married Ann Rich in 1828 and moved to what is now Snyder's Corners at lot 50 in Rich Valley. A third brother, Barney B. Snyder, married Olive Kelley's younger sister Salome in 1832 and moved across the section line road from Horace to lot 47, where they lie buried on their own property in what is now the Snyder Hill Cemetery.

(3) By 1827 all the section lines were underbrushed, giving ready access to the whole area. Lot 49 in Persia, next to George Snyder, was taken up that year by William B. Easterly, whose son James M. later married Amanda Rich, second daughter of Joseph Rich. They were the third family to arrive, and their lot was next up the road from the Rich and Snyder homesteads. The record of other marriages in this family is not available.

(4.5) Meanwhile, Calvin Hartwell and his wife, Minerva Higbee, had article lot 46 in 1826, just beyond the Snyder's hill property to the south. In 1828 he brought his wife and two children on from Orleans Co., together with her father, William and brothers Noah and Sanford Higbee. These two brothers also married sisters, Harriet and Polly Luce. In the next generation Calvin Hartwell's son and daughter, Russell and Almeda, married a sister and brother, Rachel and Richard Ingersoll, who had come to the next town of Leon in 1825. Their sister Sophronia Hartwell married Charles Luce, Laura Hartwell married Merrill Rich, son of Joseph, and Alvira married Homer Snyder, son of Augustus. Each of these marriages

is shown by a separate arrow in the family chart.

As we will see, this pattern of intermarriages between the pioneer families continued strong-ly for several generations, and helped set the tone for the whole community. Most of these were young couples, in their early twenties when they arrived, and they had a good time together in spite of their hard, simple life. From the hamlet which began to form at what is now Wesley, the nearest cross-roads, became known as locally. This was the nearest post-office for a period of twenty years, from 1833 to 1853.

At the center of this lively group there were eight married children of Jacob Rich, and their widowed mother Jemima (Lyons) Rich. Having a grandmother nearby to mind the children was just as handy in frontier days as it is today. Jemima Rich was set up by the family in charge of her own household, which included 3 unmarried daughters and 3 young grandsons.

When Jacob Rich died in 1822 in Syracuse, four of his twelve children were married and Joseph already had 5 children, including two sets of twins. This made the assistance of a grandmother all the more welcome. Actually the families of father and son almost overlapped, since Joseph's oldest daughter, Susan, and youngest sister, Delana, were exactly the same age.

The Jacob Rich family is a different branch from Calvin and Arad, and Philip B. Rich who came after 1850 is still a third line. All of them, it seems, had the same great-grandparents, Joshua Rich, the father of Calvin and Arad, was a first cousin of Josiah Rich, the father of Philip B. Jacob Rich was apparently another first cousin. Joshua was the only one of these

three who came to Rich Valley and Snyder Hill.

The family's interest in Cattaraugus county may have come partly through Jacob's second daughter, Phebe, who had married Brown Cole about 1815 but did not come to Snyder Hill. One of the founders of Dayton in 1815 was Colonel Ralph Johnson, whose wife was Maria Cole. This tie in the first generation to nearby families which did not come to Snyder Hill is shown by parentheses on the family chart. Further ties occurred in the same families when James M. Rich, the youngest brother of Joseph, married Col. Ralph's oldest daughter, Matilda Johnson. About the same time, Calvin Rich's oldest daughter, Milly, married Gile Johnson, brother of Ralph, and their oldest son, Giles N., later married Ellen Cole.

(6) The rigors of frontier life at this time were by no means limited to the homes in the wilderness. Travel was every bit as dangerous, whether by forest trail or on the Erie Canal. A typical story is that of a young immigrant from England who married into the Rich family, Thomas Pepperdine. After arriving in this country in 1827 with his first wife and young son, William, they came up the canal to Rochester. At this point the whole family were taken ill with a bad fever, and his wife and two younger sons died. While the family was so sick, his fellow passengers robbed them of a quantity of valuable merchandise, consisting of silks and linen. On his recovery he started back east, but stopped for a year in Syracuse. There he married Mary Rich, a fourth daughter of Jacob Snyder Hill and took the next property up the road above the Easterly's, at the north corner of lot 56.

(7) Calvin and Arad Rich, sons of Joshua, had married sisters, Hannah and Nancy Olmstead, at Northampton west of Saratoga. They moved from there in 1815-18 to help start the community of Rich's Corners in Orleans Co., and same on to Snyder Hill with grown sons and large families in the winter of 1828. These two were among the leaders in all community affairs, and forbears of most of the present Rich-Hall tribe. The marriage chart shows ties from them to almost half of those listed, more than any other family on the hill.

We shall examine closely the story of these two couples, since enough is known of their parents and grandparents to use their history to illustrate how and why the pioneers leap-frogged so often past earlier settlements, to reach this particular spot. Actually, Calvin and Arad seem to have had as many connections here through the Olmstead family as through their remote cousins in the family of Jacob Rich.

The Olmstead family consisted of seven sisters and two brothers, and no-one of the family name came to Snyder Hill until several years after Hannah and Nancy. Their father, Justus Olmstead, was one of the Revolutionary soldier who had moved into Saratoga Co. just after the war. With two brothers and a married sister he was a first settler in the Northampton area on the west branch of the Hudson River. Northampton lies next to the town of Benedict, which was the family name of his wife Prudence. Jonathan Benedict was another Revolutionary soldier there whose daughters, Huldah and Sally Ann, married Luther and Asahel Allen, two of the founders of Dayton Village in 1815.

When Hannah and Nancy Rich moved west along the Mohawk

Trail with their families in 1818, they took several married sisters along and left other members of the Olmstead family behind at the homestead properties in Northampton. Nathan Olmstead, the brother next to Hannah, had married Huldah Lyons about 1815, at the same time that Jemima Lyons' son, Joseph Rich, married Phebe Snyder. Other members of the Lyons family came to Caltaraugus county and settled at Napoli, in 1824.

Nathan Olmstead and his family remained at Northampton for years, and finally left to come to Snyder Hill only after his uncle, Joseph Olmstead, died in 1853 at the age of 96. His next sister, Phebe, married William Wright, and came as far as Rich's Corners. A few years later Nancy's younger sister, Millercent Olmstead, married Peter Kellogg, and moved to Dayton. Slomon Hartwell (brother of Calvin?) married Laura Olmstead about 1829, but her father, Ebenezer (youngest brother of Justus) died in 1830, and they decided to stay in Albion to help her mother Ruth (Terry) provide a home for seven younger children.

Joshua Rich and his wife, Anna Livermore, were about 10 years older than Jacob. Their parents, Jonathan Rich and Captain Joseph Livermore, were both very active in the Revolutionary War. Jonathan was in several expeditions, including one to Saratoga in 1775, and Joshua as his oldest son was involved in at least one expedition at the age of sixteen, probably to Rhode Island. At the end of the War Jonathan Rich and his family moved from Spencer, Massachusetts, to Halifax, Vermont. This is just over the state border, in what was then the eastern part of New York. Calvin was the sixth of 14 children, at least half of whom were born in Halifax

About the time Calvin Rich was born in 1790, his grandfather would the property in Halifax. At that they considered moving farther north in Vermont, probably because there were already too many neighbors where they were. Apparently the family stayed in Halifax, however. In 1801, Jonathan, Sr. bought property at Lake Pleasant in Hamilton Co., N. Y., and moved his family there about 1803 or 1804.

Lake Pleasant is 30 miles upstream from Northampton in the Adirondacks, one of the headwaters of the Hudson. This was beautiful country in the spring and summer, but after a few years, the extreme cold and deep snows of winter were just too much. In 1814, Joshua Rich's oldest son, Jonathan, Jr., resold his property at Lake Pleasant to Joshua (a younger brother?) and started west again to the frontier along the Mohawk Trail. In 1815 he article land near Albion and Barre in Orleans Co., along the route of the Erie Canal. Jonathan was joined there in 1818 or before by his four younger brothers, Joseph, Calvin, Arad and Joshua, all with their families.

Jonathan Rich, Sr. died in Orleans Co. in 1825, at the age of 85. Joshua Rich and Anna stayed on for a while in Lake Pleasant with four younger daughters to raise, then sold out in 1834 and joined his five sons at their new community of Rich's Corners. This was also the center from which the earlier families of Hartwell and Higbee and the later families of Payne, Phillips, Luce and Sherman all left. The main office of the Holland Land Company was only 15 miles from Albion, at Batavia, on the direct route south and west to Caltaraugus.

Winters at Rich's Corners were mild compared to Lake Pleasant,

but the low-lying country seemed infested by summer ailments. The families who moved on west again were looking for a place where they could "get away from the fevers and the agues". Calvin and Arad Rich picked adjoining hilltop meadows on lots 48 and 56, next to Horace and Barney Snyder. The clean hilltop air and relatively moderate climate were what they were looking for, and this time the family stayed where they were. They and their former neighbors from Albion called their new home New Albion, and this became the official name when the township was set off from Little Valley in 1830. Joshua and Anna Rich came on with their two sons and lived peaceably on Snyder Hill till they died at the ages of 86 and 84 within 5 days of each other.

The pioneer spirit was by no means limited to the younger generation. When Joshua and Anna Rich came with Calvin and Arad in 1823, their ages were already 66 and 64. In 1832 Joshua's brother-in-law, Joseph Davis, who was also a Revolutionary soldier and 71 years old, sold out at Rich's Corners and settled with his family below New Albion, on the road towards Little Valley. Grandma Jemima Rich was well past 65 when she set up her own household, with the help of her numerous married children, to provide for the rest of her own children and grandchildren. Stephen Nichols, whose mother was probably the oldest sister of Joshua Rich, also lived somewhere near Horace Snyder in 1830 and 1835. The Nichols family then moved away from Snyder Hill, to return again in the present generation.

(8) The next family to arrive in 1829 was Josiah Pierce, who had married Hannah Rich, oldest daughter of Jacob. They took up a portion of lot 47 next

to Calvin Rich, and their oldest daughter married his oldest son, Heman, the year after they arrived.

(9) Later in 1829 Jacob Smith came from Madison Co. to lot 54, just beyond Horace Snyder. A year later he married Delana Rich, youngest daughter of Jacob. The origins of the Smith family are not available, but a number of probably connections are suggested by similarities in family names. The record says that he spent the census year 1830 living with a nearby family, which may have been either Calvin or Alvah Smith on the Leon Road. A few years later, Phebe Smith married Jeremiah Buffington, the son of William, an 1825 settler on the next large hill to the east, and she was apparently a younger sister of Jacob.

Judson Smith and Matilda, Jacob's youngest son and daughter, married Martha and Orson Rich, the two oldest children of Danford, son of Arad.

(10) Harrison Payne, who also arrived in 1829, had married Abigail Luse, the older sister of Polly and Harriet Higbee. Harrison and his brother, Dorus Payne took up lot 45, beyond the Higbees, on the top of the hill just above New Albion. Dorus soon married Catherine Smith, who was probably a sister of Jacob, and moved to lot 42 on the other side of Rich Valley, just above Snyder's Corners.

(11,12) Two other families which arrived some time before the census of 1830 were Silas Kellogg, the father-in-law of Horace Snyder, and Russell Lawrence, who married Lucinda Snyder about 1827. These two took up property near each other on lot 63, west of Horace Snyder, on what is now called the Lawrence Hollow road. This was about two miles from Peter Kellogg and

Millie Olmstead on lot 2 in Dayton, at the lower end of Rich Valley. When Stephen Lawrence came from England about 1809 to the same lot 63, Russell moved to Persia just north of Snyder's Corners.

The 12 families considered above, half of those we are concerned with as founders and leaders of the Snyder Hill community, all arrived in the first five years. It is interesting to see how the story of their arrival shows an orderly pattern of lots articulated or occupied, starting at the lower end of the present Rich Valley road, up to and across the Snyder Hill road, and then branching out from this on the main side roads.

(13) The same trend continues when William W. Brooks arrived during 1830 and took property on lot 41 further up Rich Valley, beyond Snyder's Corners. In 1834 his oldest daughter Lydia Brooks married Ezekiel Kellogg, the oldest son of Silas.

(14) Hiram Sherman, who arrived with his family in 1833, was a contemporary of Thomas Pepperdine, who also came from England. He had married Frances Lawrence and settled first in lot 46, on the side road between the Pepperdines and Russell Lawrence. Apparently he had come first to inspect this property about 1828, at the same time as the Pepperdines, but returned to Orleans Co. for his wife and 7 children.

The fact that Hiram Sherman's first 5 children were girls is undoubtedly one reason why it took more than the usual two years for him to get their new home ready to occupy. His two oldest daughters, Betsy and Malinda, later married Leonard and Danford Rich, the two oldest sons of their next door neighbor, Arad Rich. The younger sister, Malinda, married Calvin Rich,

and Moses Sherman married Mary Jane Davis from New Albany, whose mother was an aunt of Calvin and Arad. Ira Sherman the youngest, married Rosaville Brooks, daughter of William. Her name is given in another place as Rosaville Kellogg, which probably means that she was a young widow when they were married.

(15) Henry Phillips who came in 1833 had married Susannah Smith, who was apparently a sister of Jacob Smith and Phebe Buffington. The Phillips moved next to the Smiths, on lot 46. In the next generation, Smith Phillips married Betsey, the daughter of Harrison Payne across the road, and her brother, George, married Catherine Smith, the oldest daughter of Jacob.

(16,17,18) The next three families which arrived as a group in 1834-35 were Benjamin Olmstead and his wife, Lucy Gibbs; Justus Hall and his wife, Rachel Gibbs; and their younger brother, William R. Gibbs, with his wife, Sally Mix (or Meeks). The Olmsteads and Halls settled farthest up Rich Valley on lot 41, near William Brooks. Justus Hall built his home on a knoll at the highest spot along the Rich Valley road, just north of the Persia town line, looking down towards Snyder's Corners. William Gibbs moved the farthest along the valley and settled on lot 40, near where the road drops off rapidly into Cattaraugus Village. A few years later his oldest son, Isaac, married Fannie Sherman, whose family had moved to the southern part of lot 40 down the road.

These three families had all lived together at Edinburg, Cattaraugus Co., near Northampton. Benjamin Olmstead was a twin of Ebenezer, who died in Albion in 1830, and they were much younger brothers of Justus, the father of Hannah and Nancy

(Olmstead) Rich. Alfred B. Olmstead, son of Benjamin, came with him (or possibly two years before) and married Jane Rich, daughter of Jacob. Justus Olmstead and his wife, Betsy Wood, also came to Snyder Hill about the same time as Benjamin, where they appear as part of the family of Arad Rich in the census records of 1835. Their oldest son, Lewis Olmstead, died at Northampton in 1813. His will, witnessed by his parents and by Calvin Rich, refers to his wife Sarah who may have been an older sister of Justus Hall.

Isaac Gibbs, the father of Lucy, Rachel and William, was a Revolutionary soldier from Connecticut. He had moved to eastern New York state after the war, and died there at Granville in 1797. His oldest son became the first physician in Rochester, the second son became a physician and stayed in Washington County, and there have been from two to six physicians in this family in every generation since. Their widowed mother remarried and moved on up the Hudson to Northampton and Edinburg, where her older daughter, Lucy, married Benjamin Olmstead, & her younger daughter, Rachel, married Justus Hall. Justus and his family left Edinburg in 1820, along with Rachel's brother, William. They stopped for a few years on the way at Syracuse, at Orleans Co., and at Wyoming Co. At least two of these times, the loss of a new child was one of their reasons for moving on.

Shortly after their arrival at Snyder Hill, William Gibbs Hall, the oldest son of Justus, married Almada Rich, the oldest daughter of Arad. These were the grandparents of Fenton Parke, the patriarch of the Rich-Hall clan, whose continued interest over the years has helped keep the family reunion thriving.

A few years later, Phebe Hall, the oldest daughter of Justus, married Hiram Sherman, whose first wife had died, and Emily Hall, the youngest daughter, married Joshua Rich, the third son of Arad. More recent generations in this family, as in all the others, have brought many intermarriages with the other families listed which are beyond the limits of the present story. A complete chart of the descendants of Justus Hall and Rachel Gibbs, which brings this part of the record down to date, shows nearly a thousand names.

The Hall and Rich families had been together before in Halifax, Vermont, where Jonathan Rich, Sr. bought his property in 1786 from Lev. Hall. This Levi Hall was the son of John, and a nephew of Enoch Hall, a frontiersman and Indian scout of the early 1700's. Enoch Hall had a son, Timothy, who was presumably the grandfather of Justus Hall, but his family was so constantly on the move that it has not been possible so far to confirm this fully. The effort to reconstruct the many known relationships of this family with others, and find out where they came from and when, is indirectly responsible for most of the research which has gone into this study of the Rich family and Snyder Hill.

Many of these families show known or probable ties back into the early 1700's. The Rich, Davis and Nichols families helped start the communities of Charlton & Spencer, Mass., two generations before they and the Wrights helped start Barre and Richs Corners in Orleans Co. In Halifax the Rich family was tied to Kibbe and Kibbe to Hall. Other families which came from Halifax to various places in New Albion were Lamb, Plumb, and Silas Kellogg. The records at Charlton also show ties with

Smith, Phillips, Gibbs, Adams, Lamb, Peck, and Allen, and many of these same names appear in Halifax.

Early neighbors in Enfield, Mass. (or Conn.) included the families of Hall, Kibbe, Terry, Olmstead and Kellogg, all of whom fought together in early Indian battles and intermarried there as well as later elsewhere. Enoch Hall fought in Captain Joseph Kellogg's company in the early days of Northfield, Mass. where he married Martha Wright. Later as a frontier scout he helped start a series of Connecticut river valley towns at Winchester, N. H. (or Mass.), Haverhill, N. H., and Guildhall, Vt. Some of his children were born at Arlington, whose records were destroyed in an Indian attack. Part of the family then moved to Rhode Island. Justus Hall's father, Timothy, came from Rhode Island, and there were ties of the Hall family to Knowlies there and in Halifax.

Enoch Hall's brother, John, had six sons who ran a famous iron forge at Enfield, and later started the town of Halifax. An older brother married into the Gibbs family, and a younger brother married Kibbe. Two generations later it was four Kibbe sisters from this same Enfield family who married forbes of the Smith, Parke, Knapp and Knowles families, and helped establish the hamlet of Soctahy in Dayton township.

(19) Martha Wright of Northfield was a granddaughter of Captain Benjamin Wright, a leader of the defense against the Indians in the French and Indian War. He also had a son and several grandsons named William. The William Wright who married Phebe Olmstead at Albion was an uncle of William H. Wright who married Louisa Rich a younger sister of Calvin and

Arad William S. Wright and his family lived on Snyder Hill between 1835 and 1840, but left shortly after their son William died in 1841. His cousin Solomon G. Wright ran an early saw mill south of New Albion, and built a fine home called "Solomon's Temple". The name of the valley family, however, does not appear on the hill.

(20) By 1835 the influx of new people to Snyder Hill was slowing down. The census that year lists Abraham Waite next to the Gibbes and Smiths, on lot 54. His nephew William Waite occupied the same lot in 1838 after being married in 1836 to Sophia Higbee, sister of Noah and Sanford. In the next generation two daughters of Sanford Higbee, Mary and Theodosia, married James and Peleg Waite, Jr. Isaac Waite, the oldest brother of William, had settled in 1830 on lot 2 in Dayton at the lower end of Rich Valley, at what is now Budd Corners. His father, Stephen, had come to Napoli in 1824 from Washington County. Both Stephen and Isaac Waite raised large families, but the only sons of this numerous tribe who show up on Snyder Hill were the three who married Higbee girls.

(21) About 1836, Joseph Luce left Orleans County with his wife and two young sons and came to New Albion to join his married daughters. He moved to the corner of lot 53 midway between the three of them, across from Harrison Payne and next to Sanford and Noah Higbee. His sons Lucas and Lucius Luce married Harriet Waite and Mary Elizabeth Benson (from Persia), and in the next generation Charles Luce married Sophronia Hartwell, oldest daughter of Calvin.

(22) Henry Adams, who came in 1837, had helped to dig the Erie Canal as it passed near his

home in Hanover. He brought his wife and three children to lot 45, across the road from the Luce's. His oldest daughter Martha married Job Benson and her sister Marcena married Hiram H. Luce, who died at Fortress Monroe during the Civil War. In this family again the oldest and youngest sons moved on west to Michigan, and the second son, Marquis De la Adams remained on the home-
stead.

(23) Migration into the area almost stopped with the financial crisis of the late 30's. Hard money disappeared from circulation, and the cash value of the "lack salts" leached from the ashes of acres of hard wood dropped rapidly towards nothing. Things finally began to improve about 1839, and 5 of Calvin Rich's 9 children married within the year. The only newcomer involved was Ephraim Ford, Jr. from Onondaga Co., the son of Ephraim Ford and Jane Lyons. He married Lurinda Rich, and they settled near Lawrence Hollow.

(24) John Pickup who arrived about 1839 came from England, and his wife, Ann, came from Germany. The Pickups had no known family relationship which brought them to Snyder Hill. It is probably no coincidence, however, that the four families of Pepperdine, Sherman, Lawrence and Pickup who arrived from England in 1828, 1832 and 1839 all settled on lot 56 or on the next lot 63. Thomas Pepperdine apparently left there for a new location on lot 31, about the time the Pickups arrived.

In the next generation, Chauncey Pickup married Catherine Rich, daughter of Phillip B. Rich, who purchased property on lot 55 next to Horace Snyder shortly after 1850. Philip Rich was the son of Josiah Rich, the third se-

parate branch of the family. When his oldest daughter, Mary, married Hiram B. Rich, grandson of Arad, their first common ancestor was five generations back.

These 24 families, plus one or two others whose records are incomplete, were the pioneers of the first 15 years who formed the core of the Snyder Hill community. By 1840 the pioneer period was over. The better properties had all been articulated at least once. Newcomers after this time had something to start from, and their records no longer make a point of the exact year of their arrival. The previous "improvements" might be only a windowless cabin in a clearing, but this was enough for a young couple to move in without spending a hard two years first to carve a homestead in the wilderness.

In most of the pioneer families there were some members who came, stayed for a few years, and then moved on. George Snyder's second son, Harry, and nephew, Ralph, were near him in 1830 & 1835, but left shortly afterwards for Michigan. His youngest son, George Jr., ended up in Missouri. In the families of Jacob Rich, Calvin Hartwell, William Higbee, Thomas Pepperdine, and almost every other for which our record is complete, there was a younger son who moved away.

The question of who came and who stayed can be best illustrated by the Riches and Halls, for whom our records are most complete. It was not just a matter of family relationships that brought people to this spot and kept them together. Calvin and Arad Rich were the only two of 14 children who left Richs Corraugus. Most of the others remained in Orleans Co.

Calvin Rich brought 4 sons aged 10 to 18 with him when he

came, and the log cabin which they helped to build was the largest on the hill. As such, it was used for many years for meetings of the Methodist classes which had started a few years before in the home of Horace Snyder next door. All of his 9 children married, five of them to stay on Snyder Hill. The second son, Justus, became a Methodist clergyman, and went west. Lurinda and Ephraim Ford moved briefly to Iowa in 1847, but returned to the site of Cattaraugus Village by 1850 while the railroad was under construction. Zalmon moved to Dayton, as did Millie with her husband, Gile Johnson.

Five of the 9 sets of grandchildren were raised with either a stepmother or a stepfather, so remarriages in this family were more the rule than the exception. After Bela Rich died in the Civil War, however, his widow, Almira Snyder, continued to run the farm in her own name, with the help of her son-in-law, Abner Babcock, and three younger sons in succession. Charles J. stayed on at the homestead, and Calvin Jr. at the corner of "42nd St. & Broadway" nearby. The sister, Harriet Pepperdine lived at her husband's homestead, near the oldest brother Herman, on the Rich Valley road. Charles J. Rich is one exception to the observation that the youngest son usually left home.

Arad Rich, 7 years younger than Calvin, likewise brought four sons with him, but their ages were 3 to 12. Some seven years later, his wife's parents, Justus and Betty Wood Olmstead came from Saratoga Co. to live with them, at the ages of 81 and 76. As we have seen above, Justus Olmstead probably made this trip with his younger brother Benjamin, then 58, and picked up Benjamin's two brothers-in-law, William R. Gibbs and Justus Hall in Wyoming Co. on the way.

As Arad Rich's family grew, all five of those who married stayed on Snyder Hill and Rich Valley: Leonard and Danford with Betsey and Mary Sherman, Phebe Ann as William Pepperdine's second wife. Arad's youngest son, Lewis, went to work on the railroad, but was killed in an accident at the age of 23.

Justus Hall brought with him to Rich Valley a family of six daughters and three sons. The two who married into the Rich family were farmers who stayed on Snyder Hill at first, and later moved to Wesley and East Randolph nearby. His second daughter, Lucy, had married Henry Austin, who was a carpenter, not a farmer, and they stayed in Saratoga Co. until after 1840. They then moved to Persia, and later to Cattaraugus Village. Lucy and William G. were the only two who married during the first 10 years after 1835, while the oldest daughter, Phoebe, apparently stayed home to help raise the family.

The care of 5 growing daughters and 2 young sons in a frontier community was a very different proposition from a family of boys. As soon as they started to marry, they very nearly all went at once. In 1845 the next daughter, Rebecca, married Redmond Maguire from Perrysburg, and her sister, Betsey, married Perry Knowles, who had moved to the nearby Rich Valley farm where George Snyder, Sr. died in 1844. In 1846, Phebe married Hiram Sherman, at about the same time as his daughter Malinda married Calvin Rich, Jr.

In the fall of 1848, three more of the Hall children married within a month. Emily and Joshua Rich stayed on at her home. Leonard married Charlotte Wade from near Howard's Corners, and became a physician in Northeast, Pa. The remaining daughter, Rachel, married Ed-

gar Sprague, who had moved from Persia to Warren Co., Pa., and from there they went on to Michigan and Missouri. That fall the younger son, John Wesley, went off to college at Meadville, where he married Amanda Taylor, whose father had been the first physician at Barre and Richs Corners. He also became a physician later, and went to Indiana.

The westward movement continued. In 1852, Henry Austin had to go to Illinois to rescue a daughter whose husband had failed to provide for his family. On returning, he moved to Cattaraugus Village. About this same time the last of the Hall children Justus M., left home, and with the family gone, Justus Sr. and his wife went to live with his son, William, on Snyder Hill. The Maguires and Knowles both moved to Rich Valley farms near Joshua and Emily Rich at the old homestead. The Knowles later followed the Austins as far as Michigan. This left four married children near home, and the other five in as many different states from Pennsylvania to Missouri.

The hazards of western travel in the 1850's are supposedly well known, but the "TV Westerns" are much too romantic about it. The harsh fact is that on the trail west far more people died from tuberculosis than from Indian attacks & gunfire. No matter how sick you got there was no place to keep warm and dry; and one reason so few young wives appear in these stories is that it was often quite impossible to provide adequate care for childbirth. When troubles came, it was up to the folks "back home" to provide rescue if they could, even though this often meant a major sacrifice.

After Henry Austin brought his daughter home, her runaway husband came east to fetch her

and their son back again. This time her parents and sister decided to come along. A year later Henry himself died in Illinois and since he lived by his carpentry this left Lucy Austin and her family without support. The neighbors there gave the family a cow, but the wayward son-in-law, instead of helping, sold the cow, pocketed the money, and skipped out. Shortly after this the new baby died. By this time, Lucy and one of her girls were desperately ill with consumption, and she wrote Hiram Sherman back in Cattaraugus an urgent letter for help. He hitched up a team and wagon, and set out on the six weeks' round trip to bring them home.

The trip was made, but in vain. Lucy Austin got back to New Albion one night and died the next morning. One daughter was so sick they left her with an uncle in Michigan, for fear she would die on the way, and she died there. The married daughter stayed with the Shermans a while, earned money to rejoin her husband after hearing from him again, and finally died a year later in Iowa as a result of improper care in childbirth.

Sad as these troubles seem, the hazard of illness was by no means absent from the folks at home. In these days of baby formulas and inoculations, it is easy to forget the agony and frustration which is shown for family after family by a series of small gravestones of children. In some families, there was a succession of young children who died between the ages of a few weeks and a few months, from the mother's inability to feed them herself.

Even worse than this was the tragedy of typhoid or black diphtheria, which could wipe out whole families at once. In 3 short

weeks of September, 1862, we find stones at Snyder Hill for 3 children of Philip B. Rich, one of Barney Snyder, and one of George Payne. It was diphtheria too in 1861, when 3 children of William V. Payne died in the last half of May and two children of Dorus Payne in June. For some young couples, as we have seen, the death of an only child was enough for the parents to move away and start again in a new home.

These illustrations show how some of the forces worked which accompanied the change from pioneer days. They could easily be extended to cover the beginnings of the village of Cattaraugus, but the coming of the railroad shifted the whole emphasis of the community. The post office at Society closed the year after the one at Cattaraugus opened, and our story stops where this begins. The Snyder Hill community spread over the corner of four townships, and never was a separate political body.

Turning once more to the map and marriage chart, we can clearly recognize the Rich Valley families at the top, the various Rich and Snyder families at the center of the community, and a third group of families at the southern end of the Snyder Hill road. The sharp separation between these hiltop families and their neighbors a mile away in the valleys is easy to illustrate. For example, the road down into East Leon cuts a hollow about a mile back into the edge of the Hill, in lot 64. Reuben Mosher came here in 1827, and his sister married Calvin Hall (no relation to Justus) who also came in 1832. These two families intermarried with Waite, Judd, and other families from East Leon and Dayton, but not at all with our Snyder Hill group.

Similarly, Mosher Hollow was settled in 1827 by John Mosher (or Mosler), a Revolutionary soldier who was the father of Reuben and John Jr., Jonathan Jewell, Charles Sibley, Benjamin North and others came to Mosher Hollow before 1832. Fifty years or so later, a number of the Snyder Hill folks intermarried with these valley families, in the third or fourth generation, but the movement was from the hill to the valleys and not the other direction. The same thing holds true for the families of Parke, Howard, Judd, Easton and others who came to the nearby corner of Dayton around 1830 or before but only started to intermarry freely with the Snyder Hill families after about 1860.

A correlation very similar to the marriage chart appears in the class rolls of the Methodist Church, which are available for 1864 and 1866. Classes were organized by community, and the community lines run strongly to cousins. Even at this date, 90% of the Snyder Hill class have the same familiar names, but almost none of them are found at Persia (Allen's Switch). About 50% of those in Dayton and New Albion are folks who have come down by then from the hill to the village.

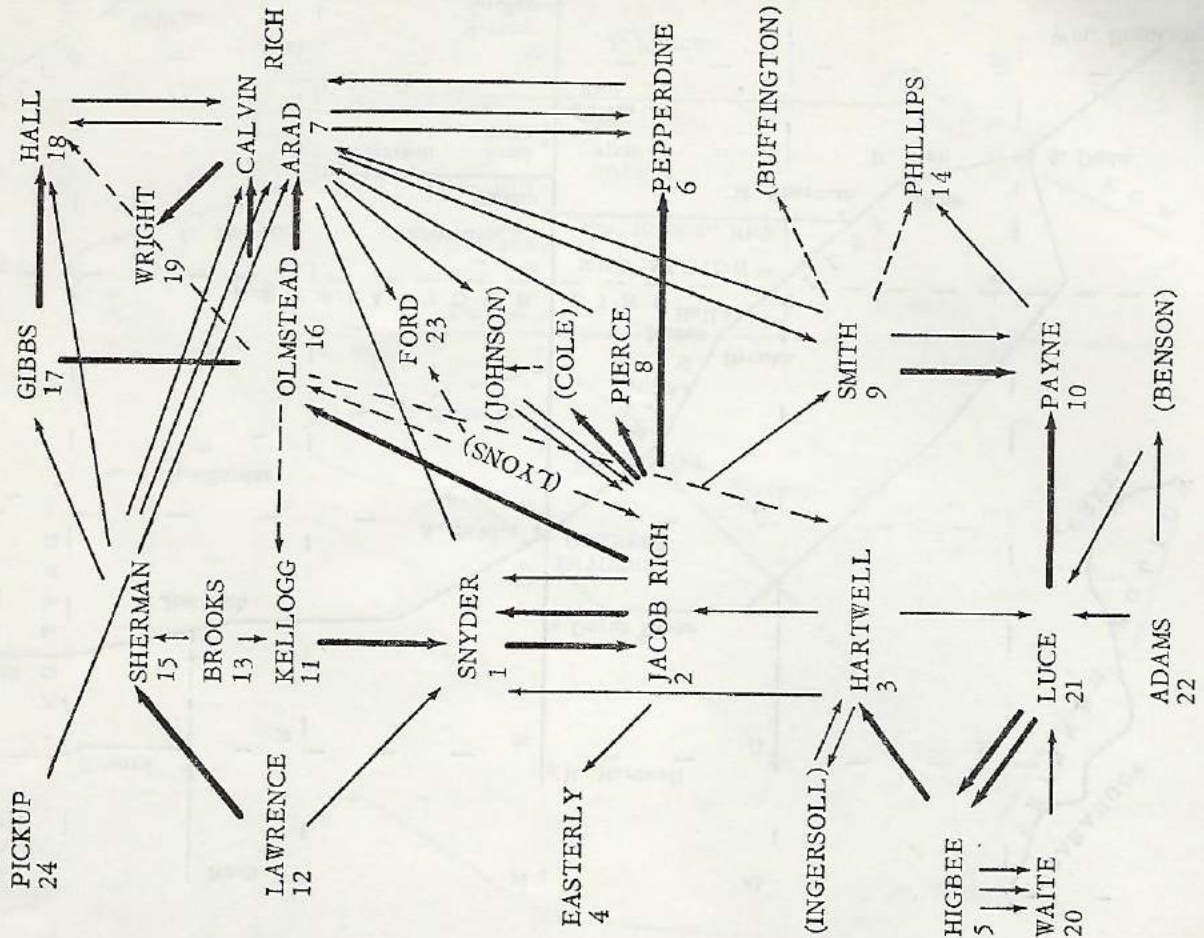
The same trends appear consistently in differences between the two class rolls, only two years apart. The few geographical exceptions all seem to have some specific reason. Warren Barnard, for example, had come in 1828 and lived at the southern end of the Snyder Hill road, next to Harrison Payne, on lot 45; but he gives his class address as New Albion, where he ran the first sawmill in Mosher Hollow. His family does not appear on our marriage chart, and he was buried not on the hill, but at the

New Albion Lower cemetery.

In the records of the Snyder Hill School District No. 3, there are 75 names listed in some official capacity between 1855 and 1905. For the 20 years up to 1875, 90% of those listed are again from the same families, with Asa Pritchard as one important new-comer who bought Barney Snyder's old homestead in 1856. Even the 30 years after 1875 show 75% of pioneer family names, for all those on the list.

This could be a never-ending story, and the records of any family involved will contain items to enrich the tale. The strong main lines we see make it easier to fit new pieces into the puzzle, and putting it all together has helped correct some of the mistakes of unrecorded tradition. No doubt that there are still some errors here. A set of the working notes for the story as told here is on file at the Cattaraugus Area Historical Society, and documentation is available for any of the statements made. The Society will be happy to accept any pertinent records or documents which add to the story or set it straight.

PIONEER FAMILY INTERMARRIAGES
(In order of arrival 1825-1840)



- Acknowledgements -

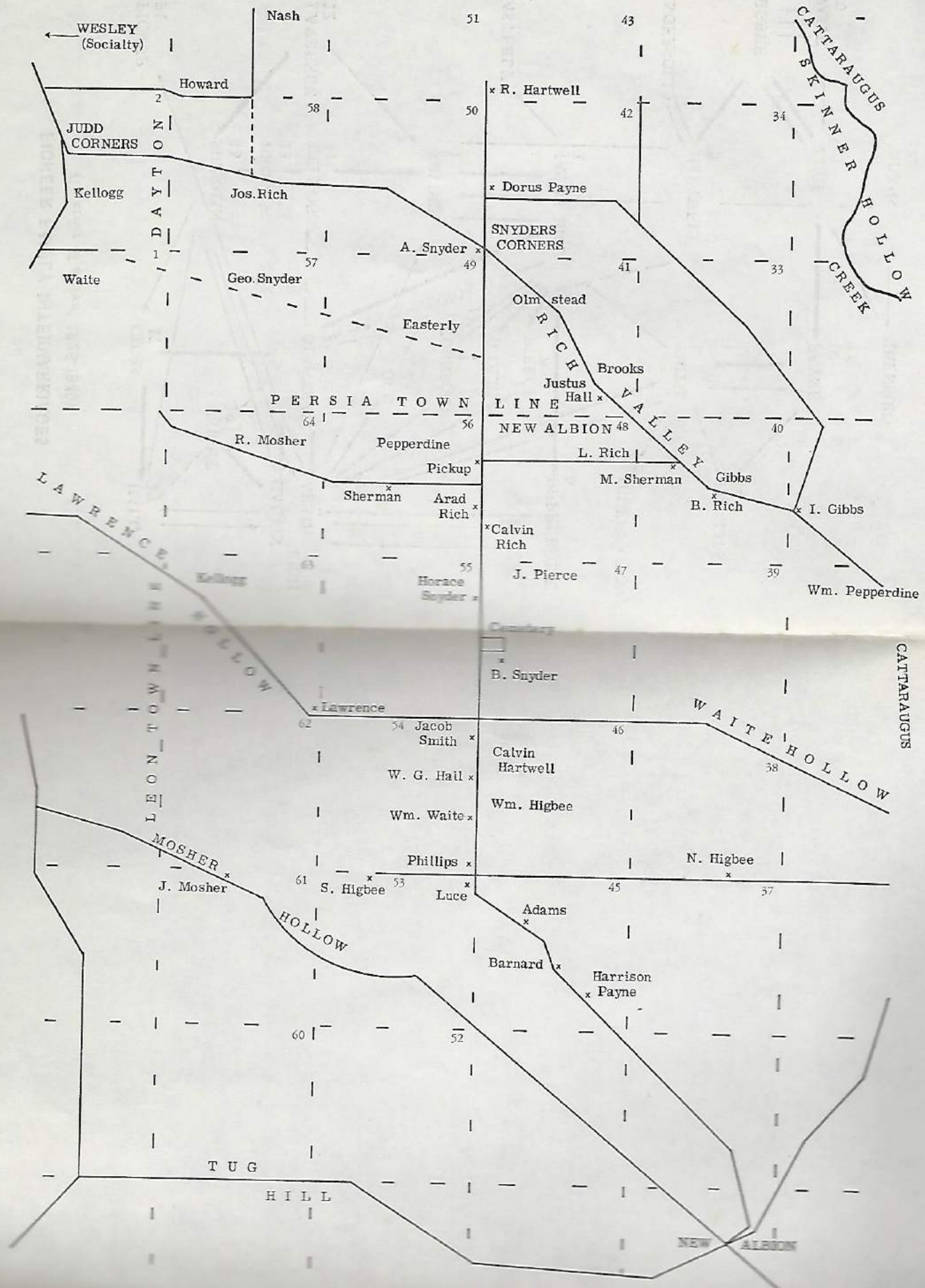
The map, chart and story outline in this booklet were first presented in a talk given before the Cattaraugus Area Historical Society in May, 1964, by Newman A. Hall. It draws upon extensive notes and family correspondence by the late Georgia Rich, Nellie Earhart, Julia Pierce and Alzina Hall Fuller, the "Hall Family Chart" published by Homer J. Hall, and research by Ida Sager into the records of the Historical Society. Its present form is based in part on a complete paging of Cattaraugus County Gazetteers and local histories of 1874, 1879, 1893 and 1901, property maps of 1869, 1921 and 1963, the New York state census records of 1835 to 1875 at Little Valley, and U.S. census records of 1800 to 1850 at Washington, D. C. Invaluable assistance has come from detailed notebooks preserving Rich family and Snyder family documents and interviews, as recorded by Henry and Ethel Rich Young.

Key to Chart

- arrow points to husband married before coming to Snyder Hill.
- - - marriage elsewhere in same families.
- - - married after coming.
- () families in nearby towns.

Key to Map

Rich Valley road is now Route 353, between Wesley and Cattaraugus.
Lot numbers as shown in Persia, Dayton, and New Albion do not duplicate across the town lines.



← WESLEY (Socialty)

Nash

51

43

Howard

58

50

x R. Hartwell

42

34

JUDD CORNERS

2

Kellogg

Jos. Rich

x Dorus Payne

SNYDERS CORNERS

A. Snyder x

49

41

33

Waite

Geo. Snyder

57

Easterly

Olmstead

Brooks

Justus Hall x

PERSIA TOWN LINE

NEW ALBION LINE

48

40

R. Moshier

Pepperdine

L. Rich

M. Sherman

Gibbs

Pickup

Sherman x

Arad Rich x

B. Rich

I. Gibbs

x Calvin Rich

J. Pierce

47

39

Wm. Pepperdine

LAWRENCE HOLLOW

Kellogg

Horace Snyder

55

Canary

B. Snyder

WAITE HOLLOW

CATTARAUGUS

x Lawrence

54 Jacob Smith x

46

38

W. G. Hall x

Calvin Hartwell

Wm. Waite x

Wm. Higbee

Phillips x

N. Higbee

MOSHER HOLLOW

J. Moshier

61 S. Higbee x

53 Luce x

45

37

Adams x

Barnard x

Harrison Payne

60

52

TUG

HILL

NEW ALBION