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**The Cayuga Indian Reservation
and Colonel John Harris**

By JOHN VAN SICKLE

1965

DeWitt Historical Society
of Tompkins County, Inc
Ithaca, New York

One who has had the inestimable advantage of growing up under the quiet and benign influence of Cayuga village and of returning to it in times of stress, does not regret that its early dreams of greatness were never realized.

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About the Author

At the time this paper was prepared for delivery before the Cayuga County Historical Society, sometime in the early 1920's, Mr. Van Sickle had been practising law in Auburn for many years. A native of the village of Cayuga who never forgot the pleasures of living in a small, unspoiled community, he had been educated in its public school, later commuting to Auburn by train for high school education. A graduate of the Class of 1885 at Cornell, he read law in the firm of Sereno E. Payne, then and for many subsequent years Congressman from the 36th District. Upon passing the Bar examinations, young Van Sickle was taken into partnership with Mr. Payne, and later the name of William K. Payne, son of the congressman, was added to the letterhead. In conjunction with Arthur E. Blauvelt of Port Byron, Mr. Van Sickle maintained offices on Genesee Street for many years, where the residents of Cayuga village received the benefit of his legal services, both as individuals and in corporate matters dealing with the New York Central Railroad.

Long a member of the Holland Society of New York, and its one-time vice president, Mr. Van Sickle's interest in genealogy was quickened at the time of his marriage in 1892 to Hannah Katherine McIntosh, also a native of Cayuga, whose ancestry is traced back to the original John Harris, founder of Harrisburg, whose grandson is the John Harris of this title.

In writing this essay Mr. Van Sickle has combined his love for his native village, his interest in its founders, and his wide knowledge of the Cayuga Indians who made this territory their home for countless years. It has been written of the author, "His fund of learning was nothing less than profound with regard to subjects in which he interested himself."

As a senior at Cornell, John Van Sickle was editor of the Cornell Era, Major in the Student Militia, first baseman on the varsity team, and a member of the Psi Upsilon fraternity.

This paper was presented to the DeWitt Historical Society for publication by Miss Katrina Van Sickle of New York City and Auburn.

Ithaca, N. Y., December 15, 1964.

WILLIAM HEIDT, JR.

The Cayuga Indian Reservation and Colonel John Harris

*No soil upon earth is as dear to our eyes
As the soil we first mixed in terrestrial pies.*

O. W. HOLMES

The land where the Village of Cayuga now stands was part of the lands which until 1795 belonged to the Cayuga Indians.

Somewhere I have read and copied, but cannot now tell where:*

“The Cayugas, according to their own tradition, were led in their excursions into the wilderness by Ta-oun-ya-wat-ha, by some known as Hi-a-wat-ha, being partly human and partly divine. They reached the lake which now bears their name through the Seneca River. The native narrative of this voyage abounds with the most marvelous adventures, which not only exhibit the difficulties thrown in the path of the fathers of the Cayuga Nation, but illustrate their energy and prowess.

“One of these adventures was met at the marshes at the foot of Cayuga Lake. Then, as now, that spot was the haunt of wild fowl; and countless numbers of geese, duck, plover and other aquatic birds swarmed over the marshes. They were not, however, allowed to pass beyond its limits. Two monstrous eagles of horrid appearance and awful power repelled every effort of the birds to escape, and feasted upon them at will. The monsters also barred the progress of the little band of Cayugas. They were accordingly attacked with great valor,

*Henry Hall's History of Auburn.

and after a terrific combat were slain, and the way cleared. The honor acquired by this success was considerably increased by the benefit which it conferred upon all red mankind. It appears that the birds in the swamp, released from durance by the death of the eagles, rose into the air with a great clamor, and, spreading themselves abroad, ever thereafter roved at pleasure upon all the lakes and rivers of the country, and afforded sustenance to the inhabitants.

“Another pestiferous and terrible creature that resided at or near the Cayuga Marshes was the huge mosquito. He was repeatedly attacked by the most valiant warriors of the country, but overcame all who came against him with his enormous sting, until it became necessary to appeal to the Holder of the Heavens for assistance. In response to this appeal, Ha-Wen-ne-yu one day met the horrid insect and undertook to slay him. The mosquito fled and was chased by the divinity all around the Great Lakes and surrounding country until in the neighborhood of the Seneca River he was overtaken and put to death.

“The blood flowing from his lifeless body gave birth to innumerable swarms of small mosquitoes which still linger about the place of his death.”

Be that as it may; we know in confirmation of the legend that when the first white men came the Cayugas were in possession of all the land about the foot of Cayuga Lake; that the marshes at the foot of the lake swarmed with all kinds of wild fowl, “great numbers of ducks, geese, plover and other aquatic birds,” but they were not confined there; that no such large mosquito as described in this legend has even been seen by the whites, and therefore if it ever existed may be presumed to have perished as stated in the legend, and finally in confirmation of the legend, that the swarms of small mosquitoes which sprang from his body still linger about the marshes, although in diminishing numbers, because the Barge Canal of the white man has lowered the water and drained the marshes, and is making their position untenable.

The Cayuga Nation was one of the nations of the "Iroquois Confederacy," a name given to the confederacy of the Six Nations by Cartier, a French explorer, in 1534. They called themselves the "people of the long house," the imaginary long house in which they lived extending from the Hudson River on the east to the Niagara on the west. The Iroquois have been called the "Romans of the New World."

Although the Cayuga Nation was small when compared with other nations of the Confederacy, it was famous for its eminent chiefs and orators.

Jesuit Mission at Cayuga

The Mission of St. Joseph at Cayuga was established by Father Carheil in November, 1668.

Four years later Father Peter Raffeix writes:

"Cayuga is the most beautiful country I have seen in America. It lies between two lakes and is no more than four leagues wide, with almost continuous plains bordered by fine forests.

"Mohawk is a valley very contrasted; for the most part stony and always covered with fogs; the hills that enclosed it appear to be very bad land. Oneida and Onondaga appear a country too rough and little adapted to the chase.

"More than a thousand deer are killed every year in the neighborhood of Cayuga. Fishing for both the salmon and the eel and for other sorts of fish is as abundant as at Onondaga. Four leagues distant from here on the brink of the river, I have seen within a small space eight or ten fine salt fountains. It is there that numbers of nets are spread for pigeons, and from seven to eight hundred are often caught at a single stroke of the net.

"Lake Tiohero adjacent to the village is fourteen leagues long by one or two wide; it abounds with swan and geese through the winter, and in the spring nothing is seen but continual clouds of all sorts of game."

The writer adds, "I find the people more tractable and less fierce than the Onondagas or the Oneidas."

One would think that the people would be tractable with such ideal surroundings for easy and comfortable living.

Iroquois Character

Something has been revealed to us of the Iroquois character by Morgan; by our own Dr. Hawley, the learned founder and first president of this society; and by others.

Morgan says, "No test of friendship was too severe; no sacrifice to repay a favor too great; no fidelity to an engagement too inflexible for the red man. With an innate knowledge of the freedom and dignity of man he has exhibited the noblest virtues of the heart, and the kindest deeds of humanity in those sylvan retreats we are wont to look back upon as vacant and frightful solitudes."*

The Iroquois in the War of the Revolution

In the Revolutionary War the Six Nations of the Iroquois, excepting the Oneidas, had been loyal to Great Britain, and against the Colonists on account of a covenant they had made with the British Crown, witnessed by the "Covenant Chain."

The Iroquois Confederacy as such did not enter the war against the Colonists, as they were not unanimous, but the different nations, including the Cayugas, did. One may admire the loyalty of these nations to a covenant with Great Britain, but looking back on the event it seems clear that it presaged the downfall of the Iroquois Confederacy, and hastened greatly the inevitable loss of their lands in New York State; and in saying this one does not lose sight of the fact that the Oneidas, who sided with the Colonists, suffered with the rest.

During the war the hostile nations of the Iroquois waged terrible and relentless warfare on the border settlements, and in the words of Dewitt Clinton, "The Indians hung like the scythe of death upon the rear of our settlements."

In 1779 the Senecas and Cayugas were severely punished by Sullivan's expedition, which was organized and sent forth with

*Morgan—League of the Iroquois, edition 1922, p. 320.

instructions from General Washington "to cut off their settlements, destroy their crops, and inflict on them every other injury which time and circumstances would permit."

Sullivan's expedition was organized in Pennsylvania and with superior numbers marched up the Wyoming Valley and thru Elmira to the head of Seneca Lake, thence by an Indian trail on the east bank of the lake they marched to Seneca Castle, near the present Geneva, and thence by way of Canandaigua to the Genesee River. The Indians scattered before their superior numbers and General Sullivan carried out Washington's instructions to the letter, destroying villages, fruit trees and crops. He destroyed one village near Geneseo containing one hundred twenty-eight houses, described in a report as "mostly large and elegant." General Sullivan says in his report that they found in Seneca country every kind of vegetable that could be conceived of. Returning to a point near Geneva the expedition was there divided, and a detachment of six hundred men, under Lieutenant Colonel William Butler, started out September 20th, to punish the Cayugas.

Camping the first night at Waterloo, they crossed next day the outlet at the foot of Cayuga Lake, two miles below the present Cayuga village at a place now called Mudlock, where they crossed by wading in water up to their breasts. There on the east side of the outlet they destroyed an Indian village, called by the Indians "Tiohero," and the Jesuits "St. Stephen," and that afternoon reached Union Springs, called by the Indians "Ge-waw-ga."

The next day they destroyed a village called Cayuga Castle, about two miles from Union Springs, where they found about fifteen "very large square houses;" and the Journal of Thomas Grant adds, "I think the houses superior to any we have yet seen." Each of the "very large square houses" was in compartments and sheltered many families. They destroyed crops as well, including vegetables, and fruit trees were not spared. They destroyed two other towns near the big gully called Upper Cayuga and East Cayuga.

Next day they destroyed a village at Aurora, called Peachtown, and about fifteen hundred peach trees growing there. From there they marched south by way of the head of Cayuga Lake, rejoining the main army at Elmira.

This expedition and its work perhaps accounts for the Iroquois name of Washington, Ha-no-da-ga-ne-are, which signifies "Town Destroyer," although after the war the Iroquois came to regard Washington almost as a god.

The End of the Revolutionary War

At the end of the Revolutionary War the treaty of peace did not provide for the Iroquois, and the Iroquois scattered. The Mohawks as a nation moved permanently to Canada; the Cayugas, Onondagas, Senecas and parts of the Oneidas and Tuscaroras were settled around Fort Niagara, which continued to be held by the British garrison, and which remained the center of hostility to the state government and a fomenter of active hostilities along the western frontier.

Governor Clinton undertook to pacify these disturbing factors. In 1784 he attended a council of the Five Nations at Fort Schuyler, which was attended by representatives of each nation, and there proclaimed a restoration of the lands formerly held by them and a general amnesty to all. Thereupon part of the Cayugas availed themselves of the amnesty and returned to their old hunting ground, but a large body of them, with a majority of the sachems and chiefs, remained at Niagara.

There was disagreement between those members of the Cayuga tribe who returned to their lands and those who remained at Niagara. The constitution of the State forbade the purchase of lands in fee simple from the Indians by individuals, reserving to the state alone the right to make such purchases; but attempts were made to avoid this constitutional provision. In 1787-88 an association of prominent and influential men was formed for the purpose of acquiring lands from the Indians in avoidance of the constitution. It was called the Lessee Company and its object was, as its names implies, to avoid the con-

stitution by leasing the Indian lands for long terms instead of acquiring absolute title.

This association at a meeting on Canandaigua Lake made an agreement with the chiefs and headmen of the Six Nations whereby the Indians leased to them, "All the lands commonly known as the lands of the Six Nations of the State of New York, and at the time in the actual possession of said chiefs and sachems," for the term of nine hundred and ninety-nine years. Excepted from the lease were some insignificant reservations and some hunting and fishing privileges.

The Cayugas were represented by the Niagara faction, and not by those who had returned to their homes, and the only reservation they made was the insignificant one of a mile square near the outlet of Cayuga Lake, and Cayuga Salt Springs (these were at the present Montezuma) with one hundred acres of land to accommodate the same with wood.

These leases were signed by twenty-three Cayugas.

Of course such a lease as this was for all practical purposes equivalent to a sale in fee simple, and was therefore contrary to the spirit of the state constitution, and the state took prompt and effective measure to annul it.

The Cayuga Reservation

In February 1789 Governor Clinton made a treaty with the friendly Cayugas at Albany, by which their title to their lands was extinguished. By this treaty there was reserved for the use and occupation of the Cayugas a reservation comprising of one hundred square miles of land, located on both sides of Cayuga Lake and extending on the east side from the present Montezuma to Aurora, and on the west side about an equal distance, which was called the Cayuga Reservation. (See appendix for description.)

It seems easy to understand why the Cayugas selected this reservation as it included the foot of Cayuga Lake with the marshes, and was no doubt one of the best fishing, hunting and trapping areas of its size in the whole state. There was also salt at Montezuma.

The above mentioned treaty was bitterly opposed by all the hostile Cayuga Indians at Niagara and was declared by them to have been made illegally and without the authority of the nation. The hostile faction claimed that the treaty was made by a "parcel of boys and old women."

It is not strange then that the state encountered opposition when it started to take possession of these Indian lands.

After the conclusion of the treaty and in the summer of 1789 the surveyor general of the State sent Abraham Hardenburgh, a surveyor residing in Dutchess County, with a corps of assistants to survey the Military tract into lots and to lay out the Cayuga Reservation. He was the brother of John Hardenburgh, who in 1793 made the first settlement on the site of Auburn.

The work of Hardenburgh was to commence at the "Cayuga Ferry," the ferry then known as the Cayuga Ferry, being at the outlet of Cayuga Lake, now called Mudlock, about two miles north of Cayuga. Arriving at the "ferry," Hardenburgh was informed that agents from Niagara were at Geneva to oppose him. He met the agents and was requested to desist, but after some strong words on both sides, he proceeded with his work, and laid out the Cayuga Reservation.

The treaty of 1789 was subsequently confirmed at Fort Stanwix June 22, 1790, by all the Cayuga Nation, and the People of the State of New York came into undisputed ownership of all the lands of the Cayuga Nation, excepting the reservation above described.

Cayuga Reservation and John Harris

Into this Cayuga Reservation in 1788 had come John Harris from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, at the age of twenty-eight years, to live among the Indians, and to become the first white settler within the bounds of the original township of Aurelius, which included the present city of Auburn, preceding by about five years John Hardenburgh, who became the first settler in the present Auburn. With John Harris came James Bennett,

but he went across the lake and lived in the present Seneca County.

John Harris

John Harris was the son of Samuel Harris, and the grandson of the original John Harris, who was the first settler at the site of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and for whose family the capital city of Pennsylvania was named.

The original John Harris was born in the County of Yorkshire, England, about 1673. In or prior to the year 1698, shortly before Penn's second visit to his province, he came to Philadelphia with letters of introduction to Edward Shippen, the first mayor of Philadelphia, who became and remained his steadfast friend.

As early as 1705 Harris had become an Indian trader and it was during one of his expeditions among the Indians of Pennsylvania that he discovered the beauty and natural advantages of Paxtang, later to become Harrisburg in his honor and to become the capital city of a great state. "It was the best fording place on the Susquehanna and then as now at the crossing of the two great highways between the North and South, and the East and West. Annually the chiefs of the five nations (the Iroquois) went to the Carolinas where were located their vast hunting grounds, and returning with peltries, found there a trading post."

Here on the banks of the river Harris erected a storehouse surrounded by a stockade. His Indian neighbors were very friendly and protected him from other Indians. Harris' trade with the Indians steadily increased, and Harris' Ferry established by him became known far and wide.

Sometime prior to 1719 an incident occurred there which is famous in local history and tradition, and which long afterward became the subject of a painting hung in the old capitol at Harrisburg, and was destroyed with that building when it was burned, but of which copies remain.

It seems from the legend that on one occasion a predatory band of Indians, returning from the Carolinas to their north-

ern homes, naturally halted at John Harris'. The Indians becoming drunk and riotous demanded more rum from Harris, which he refused. Becoming enraged they seized him and tied him to a mulberry tree near the river. After helping themselves to his stores they danced around the captive threatening his life, and began piling wood around him. Harris' negro man, Hercules by name, slipped away to a friendly Indian tribe across the river with news of his plight, and they arrived in time to rout the drunken Indians and rescue their friend.

Tradition further says that as a reward for his service Hercules was freed. (Biographical Encyclopedia of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, p. 10).

John Harris survived the event and in 1720 on one of his trips to Philadelphia met and married at the home of his friend Shippen a Miss Esther Say, like himself a native of Yorkshire, England.

Colonel John Harris at Cayuga

With the above facts in mind it does not seem at all strange that young John Harris, son of Samuel and grandson of the original John Harris, came into the Cayuga Reservation in 1788 and settled among the Indians. In fact he seems to have been following a family tradition as he did precisely what his grandfather had done at Harris' Ferry, afterwards Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It may be presumed that he became acquainted with Cayuga Indians who frequently traveled via Harrisburg going to the Carolinas.

He settled down on the east shore of Cayuga Lake where the famous Iroquois Trail across New York State reached the east shore of the lake (Morgan, p. 29), at the crossing of another trail leading south to Pennsylvania, and at the obvious future location of a ferry.

Harris did not long remain alone among the Indians, for in 1789 he married Mary Richardson, daughter of William Richardson, a prominent man who had moved from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, bringing with him a large family and

settling near Levanna. She was also a sister of John Richardson, who with John Harris was to play an important and honorable part in the development of the new country. The late Hon. Theodore Pomeroy said of them, "With the exception of Abram Hardenburgh, these two young men (John Harris and John Richardson) exercised more influence in warding off hostilities along the border line of the Cayuga Reservation, between the State Authority in the east and the Lessee Company and their Indian and Tory allies in the west, than any other men in Central New York, and possibly more than the battalion commanded by Hardenburgh through the critical period extending from 1789 (when the questioned treaty with the Cayugas was made) till the conclusion of the final treaty of ratification with them in 1790."

James Bennett, who came originally with Harris, married another daughter of Richardson, and the three brothers-in-law were interested in the ferry which was generally referred to as Harris' Ferry, and was located about one mile above the present village of Cayuga on the north side of Davis' Point, on the land now owned by Miss Helen Cowing. I am informed by one who has seen it that the old anchor stone, with ring attached, is still in the lake opposite the cottage known as Red Jacket Cottage, owned by Miss Cowing. Perhaps some future member of this society will find this anchor stone and raise it, attach a tablet, and make it an attraction in a fire-proof historical museum in a Historical Society building erected by this society.

A description of the ferryboat as it was in 1795, at the time the final treaty was made with the Cayugas at Harris' Ferry, was written by Hon. Elijah Miller, who saw it at that time. He says, "In 1795, the year I came in, a treaty was made with the Cayuga and Seneca Indians, and I think the Onondagas. It was held at Harris' Ferry on the shore of Cayuga Lake one mile above Cayuga Village. The ferry was a rough boat propelled sometimes by sail and sometimes by oars, and was the only crossing place at that time. The lake here is considerably more than a mile wide."

Treaties were made by the Cayuga Indians, and the Onondaga Indians, with the State of New York at that time and place, but not with the Senecas.

In 1790 John Harris opened the first tavern at the Cayuga Ferry. It was erected on land owned by the Indians, for it was unlawful to purchase land from the Indians, and it was held on sufferance. The John Harris Tavern was a place of general rendezvous, and it is stated that on the old maps of the Cayuga Reservation all trails from every point of the compass centered at that point.

In 1795 the council fire for a treaty with the Onondaga and the Cayuga Indians was lighted in front of the "John Harris Tavern at Cayuga Ferry." (Seneca Falls Historical Society 2nd Annual, 1904. p. 63).

In 1794 Onondaga County was erected and included approximately the lands which make up the present counties of Seneca, Wayne, Cayuga and Onondaga and parts of other counties. John Harris was appointed first sheriff of Onondaga and he served for two terms when Aurora was the county seat.

In 1795 Samuel Harris, with his wife and members of his family, joined his son, John, on the Cayuga Reservation. When the reservation was surveyed into lots John occupied lot 56 and Samuel lot 57.

Things moved rapidly in the vicinity of Cayuga from 1795 to 1801. It is difficult for us who have always lived in a settled country and have never witnessed the opening of an Indian Reservation to realize it. It is enough to say that when in 1795, or a little later, a map was made (Survey of Cayuga Reservation), not a white person, not even a squatter, lived where the village of Cayuga now is. By 1801 all the land had been bought up by the Cayuga Land Company (about 6,000 acres at both ends of the bridge), and surveys made and a village laid out with lots and streets, parks and public squares, covering territory large enough for a large city, planned to be the county seat (which it was for a time), and settlers were flocking in.

(Joseph Annin Map recorded in Cayuga County Clerk's Office, Nov. 9, 1801, Book 1, p. 28).

What had caused this great change?

When in 1789 and 1790 the Cayuga Reservation was provided for the Cayuga Indians, the State had solemnly guaranteed that the reservation should be kept inviolate for the sole use of the Indians. But the State had promised more than it could perform. The reservation was well chosen for the Indian purposes; it included the north end of Cayuga Lake and the Seneca River as far as the present Montezuma, and as stated above, probably there was not an equal area in the state that would afford as good shooting, trapping and fishing. But in another respect it was too well located for purposes of the Indian Reservation, and was soon to become untenable. It lay squarely athwart the ancient and well-worn Indian trail across the state from east to west, and as this trail was not located by chance, it was the natural and best line of travel across the rapidly developing state. The lands too were fertile.

The State had already entered upon the construction of a road, called the Genesee Road, leading east and west to and across Harris' Ferry. This practically cut the reservation in two. This was, of course, for the time the main thoroughfare across the state. Mr. Pomeroy said, in 1896, "Apparently no earthly power can keep the average frontiersman off from the Indian lands. The armies of the United States have tried it for a hundred years with unvarying failure." (Address delivered at Cayuga, 1896).

The flood of immigration following the line of the State thoroughfare certainly disturbed the quiet of the reservation and made constant intrusions and trespasses inevitable. In 1790 the State undertook to remove all trespassers from the reservation. The result was only temporary.

The result was that in the summer of 1795 the Cayuga and Onondaga Indians met representatives of the State at Harris' Ferry to negotiate another treaty. The Indians camped on the west side of the lake and the commissioners remained at John

Harris' on the east side. General Schuyler was the head of the commissioners, and Fish Carrier, the Cayuga Chief, was the representative of the Indians. Red Jacket, the Chief, then a young man, was there, but had less influence than Fish Carrier as the Indians had less faith in his judgment. In an unpublished manuscript in my possession, written by an eyewitness, Red Jacket is described as appearing to be very proud and rather gaudily dressed; indeed more dressed than any Indian there. He made a speech, charging the white people with taking away the Indians' land without compensation, and was at times very abusive and sarcastic. He was an energetic and fluent speaker. He spoke with a great deal of action and was a graceful and fine looking Indian.

The Indians were carried back and forth on the ferry with their women and children; as they were fed by the State and were having a good time, they sometimes refused to come over at all for several days, and the parley continued for a long time. The inevitable result was that a treaty was made, dated July 28, 1795, selling the reservation with small exceptions, expressed to be for the purpose of rendering said reservation more productive of annual income to the Cayuga Nation. It provided for the payment of \$1,800 cash and the further sum of \$1,800 to be paid annually forever thereafter on the first day of June at Canandaigua, in the County of Ontario. The State's copy of the treaty is recorded in the office of the Secretary of State, and I am informed the original treaty kept by the State was lost in the fire which swept part of the State Capitol a few years ago [1911].

Thereupon the reservation was surveyed into lots, a map was recorded and about 1797 the lots were sold by the State to settlers.

On March 7, 1797, the Cayuga Bridge Company was incorporated to build a bridge at the present Cayuga, the incorporators being John Harris, Thomas Morris, Wilhemus Mynderse (of Seneca Falls), Charles Williamson and Joseph Annin. At first they failed to interest capitalists and nothing was done,

but the charter was amended in 1799 and extended to the term of seventy-five years. The bridge was to be completed by May 1, 1801, and the company was given an exclusive franchise covering three miles on each side of the bridge. The capital was fixed at \$25,000, all subscribed by Aaron Burr and John Swartwout, both members of the assembly from New York City.

In the meantime, 1799, John Harris, in anticipation of the bridge, had moved his ferry to Cayuga to a site just south of the location of the contemplated bridge, and had become the first permanent settler of the future village. "Thereafter, until his removal in 1814 to West Cayuga, at the west end of the bridge, there was no man more prominently connected with the business interests of the thriving village." (Pomeroy).

In 1806 John Harris was elected member of Congress from the district and in the same year he was appointed Colonel of Militia. During the War of 1812 he served with his regiment on the Niagara front and took part in several engagements on Canadian soil, his command having consented to be taken into foreign territory. After the war he held several musters of militia at Bridgeport. Great importance was always attached to one of these musterday gatherings. His prominence in the militia, before and after the War of 1812, was no doubt due to the fact that he served for a time as captain in the 12th Pennsylvania Regiment in the Revolutionary War. (Seneca Falls Historical Society Report, 1904, p. 63).

It is said that he kept a public house on the site of what was later the Titus House, Cayuga, as early as 1802. Later he became a merchant in the village, but in 1814 he sold out to Eleazer Hills of Auburn, and soon after moved to West Cayuga where he died in 1824, aged sixty-four years. He was buried in the little graveyard near the west end of the bridge where an ancient stone shaft recounts his record and that of his father, Samuel Harris.

To one looking back at the list of the acts of the legislature having to do with the rapid development of the Cayuga Bridge

Company Charter, in 1799 the legislature passed an act creating the County of Cayuga, embracing the territory of the present counties of Cayuga and Seneca, and some besides. As the east and west parts of the new county were separated by Cayuga Lake and its marshy outlet, Cayuga village at the bridge, more than a mile long (1 mile 8 rods) connecting the two parts, at once became the obvious county seat. The same act which created the new county provided for the holding of the Court of Pleas and Court of Sessions at Cayuga Ferry in Cayuga Village, and then or soon after the county jail was established at Cayuga, and a map filed, establishing the jail limits.

About this time a number of people migrated from Aurora to Cayuga; among them were two lawyers, Elijah Miller and Thomas Mumford. The latter built a fine colonial house on the large lot east of the present Presbyterian Church. He practiced law there until his death in 1819. He was the first president of the National Bank of Auburn.

A county jail was built of logs at the east end of the bridge under the bank, and I remember hearing it stated by old inhabitants that the prisoners were let down into the jail through a hole in the bridge, although I admit this sounds improbable. Certainly it would not make a quiet retreat, and no Prison Reform Association would have approved it.

Cayuga Village was made the county seat in 1799 and there is a tradition referred to by Mr. Pomeroy that the erection of a courthouse was commenced near the northwest corner of State and Willard Streets, about where the house of Mrs. Kate Duncel and the house formerly owned by John M. Freese now stand, but that was destroyed by fire before completion.

The thing that marked Cayuga for greatness was the planning and construction there of the Cayuga Bridge (completed September 4, 1800), a toll bridge one mile and eight rods long, considered at the time of its construction one of the wonders of the western world.

It was originally planned to connect the bridge up with the old Genesee Road, and a lottery was authorized by the legislature to pay the expense of the construction at both ends. Then followed the designation of Cayuga as the county seat; the incorporation of the Seneca Road Company to build a toll road from Utica to Canandaigua through Cayuga, the organization of the Cayuga Land Company, also known as the Cayuga Company (unincorporated), to buy up the land at both ends of the bridge (about 6,000 acres), the laying out of a large village and all the rest.

The thing that awakened Cayuga from its dream of greatness was the cutting off of Seneca County from Cayuga County in 1804, which left the village at one edge of Cayuga County instead of near the center, later making Auburn the county seat, although Cayuga continued to be a prominent village of the State as long as the Seneca Turnpike and the Cayuga Bridge were operated. But the construction of the Erie Canal, and later of the Auburn and Rochester Railroad, now the New York Central, took away the business of the Seneca Road and the Cayuga Bridge, and the bridge was abandoned in 1857; leaving Cayuga the beautiful and quiet village that it still is, undisturbed by the noises of a great city.

One who has had the inestimable advantage of growing up under its quiet and benign influence, and of returning to it in times of stress, does not regret that its early dreams of greatness were never realized.

Samuel Harris

Samuel Harris, son of the original John Harris, and father of Colonel John Harris, was born at Harris' Ferry, Pennsylvania, 1733. (I am aware that the monument over his grave gives the date of his birth at 1740, but the historian of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, gives it as above, and I believe this date is correct, as he had access to the records of Pennsylvania, and it compares with other facts there given.)

He married Elizabeth Bonner of Philadelphia in 1758.

He took an active part in the Old French War and was present at the surprise defeat of Braddock near Fort Duquesne. At the beginning of the Revolutionary War he was a resident of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, and took an active part in the affairs there, as also in the Pennamite War.

He is described as the decided friend of his country and her cause in the War of the Revolution, in which he served as a captain in the Cavalry.

In 1795 he joined his son John at Harris' Ferry, near Cayuga and settled near him. The map of the Cayuga Reservation shows John settled on lot 56 to which he acquired title, and Samuel on lot 57 to which he acquired title.

His youngest daughter Tabitha Harris married Daniel McIntosh of Cayuga, and became the forebear of the McIntosh family of Cayuga.

Samuel Harris died in 1825 and is buried in the cemetery at Bridgeport, across the lake from Cayuga as above set forth.

At least one son other than Colonel John Harris came to Cayuga. This was Daniel Harris who gained some prominence. He was a member of the Cayuga Land Company.

The first house built in Cayuga County by a settler was built at Aurora for Captain Roswell Franklin. The names of the settlers who helped erect the house are given (Cayuga County Historical Society Paper, January 14, 1879, by Dr. Charles Hawley, p. 149). John Harris was master builder and another Harris was there whose first name is not given.

Appendix

The Cayuga Reservation is described in the treaty held in the City of Albany, February 25, 1789, as follows:

“All that tract of land beginning at the Cayuga Salt Spring on the Seneca River and running thence southerly to intersect the middle of a line to be drawn from the outlet of Cayuga to the outlet of the Waskongh Lake (Owasco Lake) and from the said place of intersection southerly the general course of the eastern bank of the Cayuga Lake, thence westerly to intersect a line running on the west side of the Cayuga Lake at the mean distance of three miles from the western branch thereof; and from the said point of intersection along the said line so running on the west side of the Cayuga Lake to the Seneca River; thence down the said river to the Cayuga Lake, thence through the said lake to the outlet thereof, thence farther down the said river to the place of beginning, so as to comprehend within the limits aforesaid and exclusive of the water of Cayuga Lake the quantity one hundred square miles, also the place in the Seneca River at or near a place called Skayes, where the Cayugas have heretofore taken eel, and a competent piece of land on the southern side of the river at the said place sufficient for the said Cayugas to land and encamp on and cure their eel, excepted nevertheless out the said land or reserved one mile square at the Cayuga Ferry.”