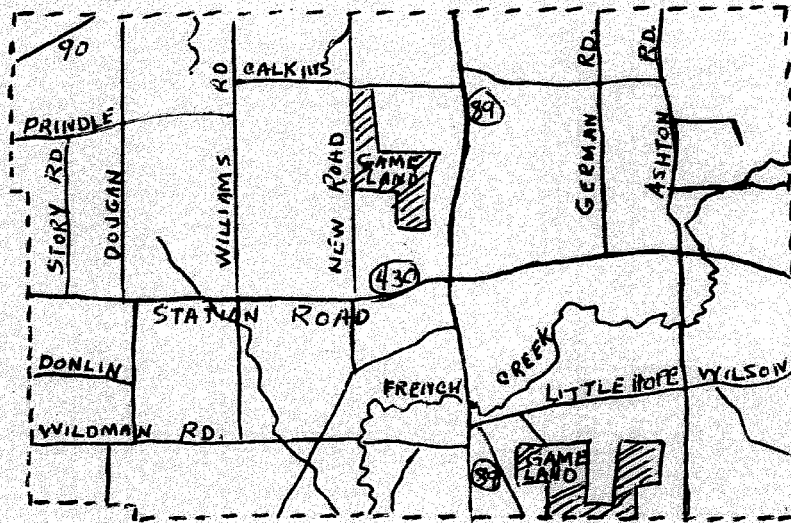


GREENFIELD

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Courtesy of Greenfield School

Hornby School

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Greenfield Township

The area we know as Greenfield Township was once part of the vast unexplored regions of the United States. The earliest known residents were Indians. History tell us that this area was once inhabited by the Eriez Indians until their defeat by the Iroquois Indians about 1650. The Iroquois Indians held this territory until the English had run off both the Indians and the French who at one time claimed the territory. The American occupation dates from 1795.

In the late 1700's the boundaries of the states of New York and Pennsylvania were set. A triangular shaped piece of land was left over and claimed by New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. At this time the authorities in Pennsylvania sent General William Irvine to explore the lands of Pennsylvania. He realized that the "triangle" should belong to Pennsylvania to give it a harbor on Lake Erie. He interested a number of intelligent and progressive citizens in purchasing the "triangle" for Pennsylvania. The 202,187 acres, including Greenfield Township, was purchased from the United States government in 1792 for the price of 75¢ an acre. The Six Nations of Indians also claimed this piece of land. It was purchased from them for \$2,000.00. The Seneca Nation also felt they should be reimbursed for this land in the amount of \$800.00.

There was much disputing of property between the Indians and the early explorers in the area.

In 1797 Judah Colt was appointed agent for the Pennsylvania Population Company. The purpose of the Pennsylvania Population Company was to survey and sell land. An earlier, 1793, plan of settlement for the area provided as follows:

1. A gift of 150 acres each to the first 20 families that shall settle on French Creek.
2. A gift of 150 acres each to the first 20 families that shall settle in the Lake Erie territory.
3. A gift of 100 acres each to the next 50 families that shall settle on French Creek.

The settlers were privileged to locate on any lands of the company they chose, and if they cleared at least 10 acres, erected a comfortable house thereon in which they resided, they were to have a deed after two years. 30,000 acres were offered for sale to actual settlers, in tracts not exceeding 300 acres at \$1.00 per acre, payable at the option of the purchaser in three years.

Many disputes arose between the early settlers and those who later purchased land from Mr. Colt. Judah Colt lived at Colt's Station for a time but moved to Erie and made his home there.

The first buildings were constructed of unhewn logs laid one upon another with the crevices filled with mud. As sawmills

increased, the log houses were replaced by frame houses made from sawn lumber, occasionally a brick or stone structure was erected.

Wild game was abundant in the dense forest that covered the land. Deer, bear, wolves, rabbits, foxes, and many others were to be had as the only fresh meat. Bears were quite numerous and did serious mischief to corn fields. Packs of wolves often surrounded the cabins at night and kept those inside awake with their howling.

The majority of early settlers had to depend mainly on the produce of their little clearings for their food, mostly potatoes and corn. Other groceries were very expensive and very hard to get.

Judah Colt had the road we know as Route 89, from Lake Erie to Little Hope, opened in 1797 - 1798. In 1797 Colt's Station was a very important settlement in Erie County. Another north-south road, Ashton Road, then called the eastern road, went from North East to Wattsburg in 1800. Station Road from Wesleyville in Pennsylvania to Mayville in New York passed through Colt's Station in 1813. These early roads opened the township to more settlers and by 1820 the census of Greenfield Township was 281. By 1870 it had grown to 1,039 people. In 1970 it was 1,346.

French Creek was very important in the early development of the area. The length of the East Branch is about 20 miles and crosses Greenfield Township. It was navigable in the early 1800's as far north as the New York stateline.

Greenfield Township was one of the 16 original townships in Erie County, established in 1803.

Several "firsts" in Erie County occurred in Greenfield Township. Among them were:

1. The first protestant church service was held by Judah Colt at Colt's Station on July 2, 1797. Thirty people attended and Mr. Colt read a sermon as there were no protestant ministers there at the time.
2. The first burial place of which there is a record was established at Colt's Station on July 6, 1801. Fifteen people met and cleared an acre of ground for the interment of the dead.
3. The first celebration of our Nation's Independence was held near Colt's Station on July 4, 1797.
4. The first military company in Erie County was organized in Greenfield Township on 1801. It had 80 members.

The only settlement in the township which approached the dignity of a village was Greenfield. The place is better known as Little Hope. The site was taken up about 1796 by Leverett Bissell, on a soldier's right of 400 acres. He built a sawmill and a landing on French Creek, where batteaux came up loaded with supplies from the lower country. In 1880 the village consisted of - cheese factory, gristmill, sawmill, store, blacksmith shop,

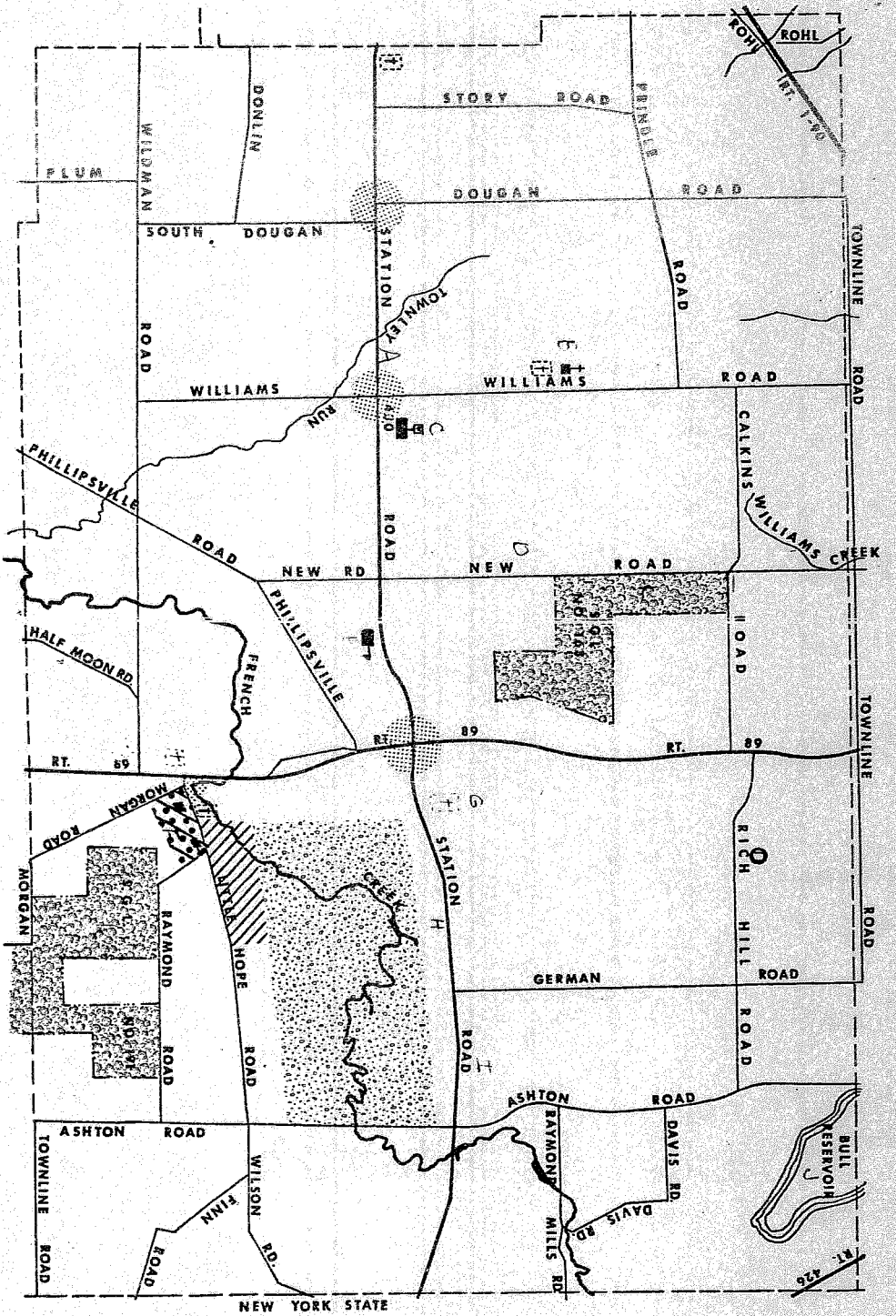
schoolhouse, approximately 25 houses. There were two cemeteries nearby and a church on the corner of Wildman and Wattsburg Roads (Route 89).

In 1880 the township also boasted of two additional sawmills, including a shingle, lath and heading mill, a cider, jell and vinegar factory, and two other churches, a Free Will Baptist Church and United Brethern Congregation.

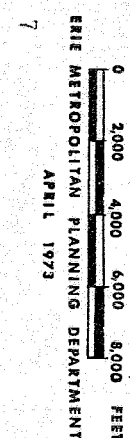
The earliest schools date to 1816 to a log schoolhouse two miles east of Route 89 on Wilson Road. Many one room schools have been used prior to consolidation in 1956. At one time Greenfield Township had their own High School. Many students attended that high school, traveling by foot and horseback to avail themselves of the opportunity to get a high school education. In 1956 another milestone in the history of education in Greenfield Township was reached with the dedication of the new Elementary School. This brought about the closing of the six remaining one room schoolhouses in the township. The student enrollment at that time, 1956, was 160 in grades 1 thru 6. During the next two decades the enrollment reached 211 and grades 5 and 6 were moved to Wattsburg Area Middle School. Kindergarten classes were begun in the 1970's. At the beginning of the 1977 - 1978 school year the enrollment was 140.













Places of Interest

- A Hornby School - being restored
- B Greenfield Baptist Church
- C Greenfield Fire Hall
- D Iroquois Archery Range
- E Greenfield Elementary School
- F Wesleyan Methodist Church
- G Old Cemetery
- H 4-H Snipe Farm
- I Fort Eriez
- J Eaton Reservoir
- K State Game Lands



GREENFIELD TOWNSHIP
ERIE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
 (FOR REFERENCE ONLY)



-  SCHOOL
-  LOCAL COMMERCIAL
-  CHURCH
-  RESIDENTIAL
-  CEMETERY
-  STATE GAME LANDS
-  MUNICIPAL BUILDING
-  LIGHT INDUSTRY
-  GRANGE HALL
-  PROPOSED WATER CONSERVATION
-  FIRE HALL
-  AGRICULTURE