

## INTRODUCTION TO "OLD SETTLERS OF THE TOWN OF SALINA"

By Michael F. McGraw – July 16, 2014

The soldiers that were awarded 600 acre lots from the Military Tract, for their service during the Revolutionary War, are long forgotten. Even the names of the speculators that bought up much of the veterans' land, in hopes of making a profit, have faded into history. Their names can still be found in the Deed books in the Onondaga County Clerk's office, but many never even set foot in Onondaga County. For that reason these initial speculators can't be considered settlers.

Business men from Village of Salina, or the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward of Syracuse, as it was known after the city of Syracuse was incorporated in 1846, were the next group that took possession of the land in the northeast corner of the Town of Salina. Many of this group of individuals had come from Connecticut, Massachusetts or the eastern counties of New York State.

In some cases, such as B. A. Avery, Latham Y. Avery, Dennison Avery, Thomas Richmond they actually resided on the land that these purchased. However, the farm was not always their primary business interest. William F. Gere owned the land that later became Richfield Farms and Garden City but he had a residence in the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward. Nelson Phillips was the Constable for the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward and had much real estate activity in the Salina Village prior to his purchase of 10 acres on Lot #8 in 1859. Patrick Molloy owned the land in Lots #8 and #19 along Town Line Road. His first purchase was 100 acres in the southeast corner of Lot #8 from Latham Y. Avery in 1840 (present site of the Seward Army Reserve Center). Molloy was an early settler that had an active farm and was also active in the Salt business.

Farmers that came from the north, i.e. Clay and Cicero: Daniel Lynch (1855), Albert D. Wright (1883), Charles and George Skiff (1882), Solomon Overacre and sons Silas and Daniel (1866), John Kirsch (1900 - father Michael was on Lot #8, John just moved southwest to Lot #3) and George Thayer (1910).

Farmers that came from the south, i.e. Fabius and Pompey: Perry (1864) and Eli Hinsdell, John Dwight (1844), Charles Bailey (1864), Miles Adams (1839 - Otisco), Richard Adams (1836 - Onondaga), Leman B. Pitcher (1845 from Pompey by way of Syracuse).

The last ones to arrive were B. G. Harrington (1920), photographer turned farmer turned real estate developer (Harrington Farms), and Frank Matty (1914), pig farmer, former saloon owner, former race horse owner, retired politician and soon to be real estate developer (Mattydale Tract).

The Molloy, Kirsch and Wright families came, settled and farmed the land or ran a dairy farm and lasted for several generations. Hinsdell, Overacre and Skiff also lasted a long time. These can be considered the real early settlers of Mattydale.