



# HISTORY OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NEW YORK

VOLUME 1

FREDERIC SHONNARD  
W. W. SPOONER

# History of Westchester County, New York

From Its Earliest Settlement to the  
Year 1900

*Volume 1*

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE preparatory work for this History was begun by the editor several years ago along the Hues of research and of the collection and systematizing of materials. The identification of Mr. Spooner with the enterprise dates from a later period, but in its relative importance is not to be estimated by its duration. To him the credit of the authorship of the History is undividedly due. The editor's personal share in the joint undertaking — apart from the selection of the plan of the work and the procurement and arrangement of materials — has been mostly that of supervision; or, more properly expressed, of such co-operation with Mr. Spooner as personal knowledge of the subject and zealous interest in the project have enabled him to render in the particulars specially of recommendation, contribution, and criticism. This History is therefore not a work of collaboration, except in the sense here precisely indicated. As a literary work it is the exclusive production of Mr. Spooner; and whatever satisfaction the editor may reasonably — without an excess of complacency — take to himself in view of his own association in the enterprise, rests in a peculiar manner upon his appreciation of the conscientious devotion and accomplished ability with which Mr. Spooner has brought it to its practical issue.

Although the previous histories of Westchester County, Bolton's and Scharf's, are works of great volume and information, they are works of reference strictly, and as such belong rather to the department of historical miscellany than to that of books adapted for popular reading. Bolton's History is a collection of local chronicles

entirely; Scharf's is on the same plan, with a number of general articles added. Both represent historical labors of great formality and seriousness, which are entitled to respect and whose aggregate results possess enduring value for inquiring persons. But mere collections of historical facts — even if comprehending all the elemental facts of a given subject — do not afford a satisfying view of history itself. That can be done only by the adequate treatment of facts — by the orderly, discreet, and able conjoining of them in a comprehensive narration. The twenty-five town histories of Westchester County, however exhaustively and excellently written, do not constitute a history of the county; and for a consecutive understanding of the general county history the reader of Bolton or Scharf must rely upon his own constructive ingenuity — must indeed be his own historian.

Long before the work now given to the public was conceived as a practical project, the present editor realized the force of these considerations and cherished not only a hope that a genuine narrative history of the county might someday be produced, but an ambition to become personally instrumental in achieving so important a result. His attention was especially directed to the matter by his observations during his connection with the schools, from which he became convinced of the extremely elementary character of the general knowledge of this county's history, even in relation to the Revolution, whereof, indeed, anything like a well-coordinated understanding is most exceptional among the people, and quite incapable of being taught to the young because of the unsuitability for that purpose of all books heretofore published that bear on the subject.

In formulating the plan for the present work the editor had fundamentally in view a lucid continuous narrative, thorough in its treatment of the outlines of the subject and reasonably attentive to local details without extending to

minuteness. These lines have been followed throughout. All existing materials, so far as accessible, have been utilized, proper credit being given to the sources from which borrowings have been made. The work comprehends a variety of new materials, which have been interwoven in the text. Portions of the manuscript have been revised or criticized by persons particularly well informed on certain phases of the subject; and to all of these critics the editor extends his thankful acknowledgments.

Special credit is due to Mr. James L. Wells for his editorial supervision of the entire work so far as concerns the sections of the original county now constituting the Borough of the Bronx, New York City; and thanks must also be expressed to Mr. Wells for the crest of Jonas Bronck (the first settler of Westchester County), introduced by his kind permission in the title-page. It is probably not generally known that from the Bronck crest have been derived some of the essential features of the arms of the State of New York.

"Shonnard Homestead,"  
August, 1900.



## **CHAPTER I. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTY**

THE County of Westchester, as a definitely bounded and organized political unit, was created on the 1st of November, 1683, by the provisions of an act of the first Provincial Assembly of New York, held under the administration of the Royal Governor Dongan, which formally marked off the province into the twelve original counties. By the terms of this act, Westchester County was to comprise " East and Westchester, Bronxland, Fordham, and all as far eastward as the province extends," and to run northward along the Hudson River to the Highlands, its southern limits being, of course, Long Island Sound and the waters between the mainland and Manhattan Island or New York County. Of the boundaries thus described, only the western and northern have continued unchanged to the present time. The precise location of the eastern line, constituting the boundary between New York and Connecticut, was a matter of serious contention throughout the early history of the county, and, indeed, was not established to the final satisfaction of both parties to the dispute until 1880. This long-standing and curious controversy as to the eastern boundary involved, however, nothing more than rival claims of colonial jurisdiction, arising from mathematical inaccuracies in original calculations of distance, and from peculiar conditions of early settlement along the Sound, which presented a mere problem of territorial rectification upon the basis of reciprocal concessions by the two provinces and

subsequently the two commonwealths concerned; and accordingly, while leaving a portion of the eastern border line of Westchester County somewhat indeterminable for two centuries, the issues at stake never affected the integrity of its aggregate area as allotted at the beginning. On the other hand, the southern boundary of the old county has undergone extremely radical modifications,' which are still in progress. Since 1873, by various legislative acts, large sections of it have been cut away and transferred to the City of New York, comprising what until recent years were known as the "annexed districts" of the metropolis, now officially styled the "Borough of the Bronx" of the Greater City. Although the county still retains its two most populous municipalities, Yonkers and Mount Vernon, the New York City line has been pushed right up to their borders, and there is no reasonable doubt that within a few more years they, too, will be absorbed. Already forty-one and one half square miles, or 26,500 acres, have been annexed to the city.

In these pages the story of old Westchester County is to be told; and whenever the county as a whole is mentioned without specific indication of the present limits, the reader will understand that the original county, including those portions which have actually passed under a new political jurisdiction, is meant.

Westchester County, thus considered in its primal extent, is something more than five hundred square miles in area, and lies centrally distant some one hundred miles from Albany. From its northwestern point, Anthony's Nose, at the entrance to the Highlands of the Hudson, to its southeastern extremity, Byram Point, on the Sound, it is entirely surrounded by the waters of the Hudson River, Spuyten Duyvil Creek, the Harlem River, and Long Island Sound, forming a shore line more than one hundred miles in length -- — considerably more, indeed, if scrupulous

allowance is made for the windings of the coast along the Sound.

The Hudson River, completing its narrow and tortuous course through the Highlands at the northern boundary of Westchester County, runs thence to the sea in an almost due south direction. For a short distance below Anthony's Nose, however, it continues decidedly narrow, until, at the very termination of this portion of its course, a place called Verplanck's Point, its banks approach quite close together, being only one mile apart. Here was located the famous King's Ferry of the Revolution, an extremely important line of intercommunication between the patriot forces of the East and the West; and on the opposite bank stood the fortress of Stony Point, the scene of Wayne's midnight exploit. Just below Verplanck's the river suddenly widens, forming the magnificent Haverstraw Bay. This, in its greatest expansion, attains a breadth of over four miles. Farther down the prominent peninsula, of Croton Point juts out from the Westchester shore a distance of a mile and a half. Next the river spreads out into another noble bay, called the Tappan Sea, which extends to near Dobbs Ferry, with an average breadth of three miles. From there it flows majestically on to the ocean with no marked variations of width, the banks having a mean distance apart of a little more than a mile.

From Anthony's Nose, the northernmost point of Westchester County on the Hudson, to the Spuyten Duyvil Creek, the southernmost, is a distance, as the crow flies, of thirty-four miles. The breadth of the county varies from twenty-five to eight and one-half miles. Throughout its entire extent along the Hudson the Westchester shore rises abruptly from the river edge to elevations seldom less than one hundred feet. Nowhere, however, does the Westchester bank ascend precipitously in the manner, or even at all resembling the manner, of the Palisade formation on the western shore. The acclivity is often quite sharp, but

everywhere admits of gradual approach, for both pedestrians and carriages, to the high ridges. Thus the whole western border of the county both affords a splendid view of the entrancing panorama of the Hudson, and is perfectly accessible from the railroad, which runs along the bank of the river. Moreover, beyond the ridges in the interior the land has a uniform and gentle descent into lovely valleys, which permit convenient and rapid travel from all directions. These physical conditions render the western section of the county one of the most inviting and favored localities in the world for costly residences and grand estates; and from the earliest period of European settlement of this portion of America, the Hudson shore of Westchester County has been a chosen abode for families of wealth and distinction. But every other part of the county — at least every part conveniently reached from the railroads — is also highly esteemed for select residence purposes; and, indeed, Westchester County throughout its extent is peculiarly a residential county.

Spuyten Duyvil Creek and the Harlem River, which separate Manhattan Island from the mainland and form a portion of the southern boundary of the old County of Westchester, are in reality only an arm of the sea: and though to the superficial observer they may appear to constitute one of the mouths of the Hudson, they have no such function, and, indeed, receive none of its flow. The two are strictly to be considered not as a river, but as a strait, connecting the tide waters of the East River and Sound with those of the North River. Their length is about eight miles. The Harlem River at its eastern extremity is divided by Randall's Island into two channels — the southern and principal one communicating with Hellgate, and the northern one (un navigable), called the Bronx Kills, passing between the island and the Westchester shore into Long Island Sound. The Harlem and Spuyten Duyvil waterway presents the remarkable phenomenon of double tides,

which vary decidedly in height, time of occurrence, duration of rise and fall, and swiftness of flow. "The tides in the Harlem River," says General John Newton, in a report to the War Department, "are chiefly due to the propagated Hellgate wave, while the latter is the result of the contact of the Sound and Sandy Hook tides. The tides in the Hudson River and Spuyten Duyvil are produced by the propagation of the sea. tide through the Upper and Lower bays." The mean rise of the tide in the Harlem is from Ave and one-half to six feet; in the Spuyten Duyvil Creek it is three and eight-tenths feet. The mean high water level in the Hudson River at Spuyten Duyvil Creek is nearly a foot lower and an hour and forty minutes earlier than in the Harlem, and the mean duration of the rise of tide in the former is thirty-six minutes shorter than in the latter. The westerly current, from Hellgate, is swifter than the easterly, from the Hudson. The place of "divide" between the Harlem River and the Spuyten Duyvil Creek is usually located at Kingsbridge. In early times the Harlem was navigable for most of its length, but owing to artificial obstructions (notably that of Macomb's Dam), which were begun in the first part of the present century, the channel above the present Central Bridge became both shallow and contracted. The mean natural depth of Spuyten Duyvil Creek has always been comparatively slight. Owing to the importance of this waterway as a means of short transit for craft plying between the Hudson River and ports on the Sound and in New England, the United States Government has in our own time dredged a channel, which, from the Hudson to Hellgate, has a depth of from twelve to fifteen feet. This improvement, known as the Harlem Ship Canal, was opened to commerce on the 17th of June, 1805. The Harlem River and Spuyten Duyvil Creek are crossed at present by thirteen bridges.

Along the Spuyten Duyvil and Harlem River portion of its water line, as along the Sound, the (old) County of

Westchester loses the comparatively lofty feature which characterizes its Hudson shore, and the land is generally low, sinking into marshy tracts in some localities near the Sound. The Westchester coast on the Sound, stretching from the mouth of the Harlem River to the mouth of the Byram River (where the Connecticut State line begins), is broken by numerous necks and points, with corresponding inlets and coves. Among the more important of the projecting points of land are Stony Point ( Tort Morris), Oak Point, Barreto Point. Hunt's Point, Cornell's Neck (Clason's Point), Throgg's Neck (with Fort Schuyler at its extremity), Rodman's (Pelham) Neck, Davenport's Neck, De Lancey Point, and Rye Neck. Some of these localities are famous in the history of the county, the province, and the State. The coast indentations include the outlets of the Bronx River, Westchester Creek, and the Hutchinson River; Eastchester Bay, Pelham Bay. De Lancey Cove and Larchmont Harbor, Mamaroneck Harbor, and Byram Harbor. Much of The contraband trade of colonial times was supposed to have found cover in the unobserved retreats which the deep inlets of this coast afforded; and of some of the earlier settlements along the Sound it is supposed that they were undertaken quite as much to provide secure places of rendezvous for commerce more or less outside the pale of the law as to promote the development of the country. In close proximity to the shore are many islands, of which the more notable are those between Pelham Bay and New Rochelle, including City, Hart's, Hunter's, David's, and Glen Islands.

The New York City limits on the Hudson now reach to the northern bounds of the hamlet of Mount Saint Vincent, and on the Sound to a point about opposite, taking in also Hunter's, Hart, and City Islands. Of the more than one hundred miles of coast line originally and until 1873 possessed by Westchester County, about thirty have passed to the city — three miles on the Hudson, eight on Spuyten

Duyvil Creek and the Harlem River, and the remainder on the Sound.

The eastern boundary of the county is an entirely arbitrary one, in no respect following natural lines of division, of which, indeed, there are none of a continuous character at this portion of the eastern confines of New York State. To the reader unfamiliar with the history of the New York and Connecticut boundary dispute, this zigzag line will appear to have been traced quite without reference to any symmetrical division of territory, but for the accommodation of special objects in territorial adjustment. This is largely true, although the line, as finally drawn, was reduced as nearly to a simple construction as could be done consistently with the very difficult circumstances of the boundary dispute.

On the north the limit fixed for the county at the time of its erection was the point where the Highlands of the Hudson begin. Pursuant to this provision the line between Westchester and Putnam Counties starts on the Hudson at Anthony's Nose and follows an easterly course to the Connecticut boundary.

The surface of the county consists of several ranges of hills, with valleys stretching between, in which are numerous streams and an abundance of lakes. None of the physical features of Westchester County (if we except its lovely prospect of the Hudson) are in any wise remarkable from the viewpoint of the tourist in quest of natural wonders. On the other hand, its entire surface presents scenery of diversified beauty and interest, not the less gratifying to the contemplative eye because unchangeably modest in its pretensions.

The principal chain of hills is the one closely bordering the Hudson, already noticed. This is the southern prolongation of the Highlands. Its elevations display a constant diminishing tendency southward.

Another range, likewise extending north and south, is found near the Connecticut border. The Matteawan Mountains enter the northwestern corner of the county, and thence cross the Hudson. A high ridge, called the Stone Hill (the watershed of the county), passes from the town of Mount Pleasant on the Hudson eastward through the towns of New Castle, Bedford, Poundridge, and Salem into Connecticut, in spite of this exception, however, the general trend of the hills is north and south, a fact illustrated by the almost uniformly southerly course of the more considerable streams, and by the usually level character of the roads running north and south, as contrasted with the conspicuous unevenness of those which extend east and west. Famous in our county's history are the North Castle or Chappaqua Hills, above White Plains, into which Washington retired with the Continental army after the engagement near the latter place (October 28, 1776), and, on account of the strength of the new position thus gained, compelled General Howe, with his greatly superior force, to return to New York. The highest point in Westchester County ( according to the figures of the United States Coast Survey) is Anthony's Nose, 900 feet above half tide level.

Of the streams of Westchester County the names of two, the Croton and the Bronx, have become widely familiar. The former river is the chief source of the water supply of New York City; the latter — which, by the way, also furnishes water to New York — has many historic and romantic associations, dear to New Yorkers as well as Westchester people, and its name has been adopted for one of the beautiful new parks of the city, and also for one of the five grand divisions which constitute the Greater New York.

Some half dozen streams of noticeable size find their outlets in the Hudson. Peekskill Creek gathers its waters from the hills of the northwestern corner of the county, and flows into the Hudson just above the village of Peekskill.



Furnace Brook is a small rivulet which empties into the river several miles farther south. Then comes the Croton, having its outlet in Croton Bay, as the northeastern portion of the Tappan Sea is called.

The Croton has its sources in Dutchess County — these sources comprising three " branches " ( the East, Middle, and West), which unite in the southern part of Putnam County. In its course through Westchester County to its mouth, the Croton receives as tributaries the Muscoot, Titicus, Cross, and Kisco Rivers. The Muscoot is the outlet of the celebrated Lake Mahopac in Putnam County, and the Cross (also called the Peppenegheck ) of Lake Waccabuc, one of the largest of the Westchester lakes. The Croton watershed lies almost wholly in the State of New York, although draining a small area in Connecticut. It extends about thirty-three miles north and south and eleven miles east and west, and has an area of 339 square miles above the present Croton Dam, to which about twenty square miles will be added when the great new dam, now in process of construction, is completed. This watershed embraces thirty-one lakes and ponds in Westchester and Putnam Counties, many of which have been utilized as natural storage basins in connection with the New York City water supply by cutting down their outlets and building dams across. Besides Croton Lake, there are two very large reservoirs in our county incidental to the Croton system — the Titicus Reservoir near Purdy's and the Amawalk Reservoir. The Croton Lake is by far the most extensive sheet of water in the county. It is formed by a dam about five miles east of the mouth of the Croton, and has an ordinary length of some three and one-half miles. When the new dam is finished the length of the lake will be in excess of eleven miles. From the lake two aqueducts, the "Old " and the "New," lead to the city. The former is thirty-eight and the latter thirty-three miles long, the distance in each case being measured to the receiving reservoir. It is

the old aqueduct which crosses the Harlem River over High Bridge; the new is carried underneath the stream.

South of the Croton River the next Hudson tributary of interest is the Sing Sing Kill, which finds its mouth through a romantic ravine crossed by the notable Aqueduct Bridge. Next comes the Pocantico River, entering the Hudson at Tarrytown. The last feeder of the Hudson from Westchester County, and the last received by it before discharging its waters into the sea, is the Sawmill (or Nepperhan ) River, at Yonkers. To this stream is due the credit for the creation of a very considerable portion of the manufacturing industries of the county, and consequently, also, to a great extent, that for the building up of the City of Yonkers.

Into the Spuyten Duyvil Creek empties Tibbet's Brook, a small runlet which rises in the Town of Yonkers and flows south, passing through Van Cortlandt Lake ( artificial ).

The most noteworthy of the streams emptying into the Sound is the Bronx River, whose outlet is between Hunt's Point and Cornell's Neck. The Bronx lies wholly within Westchester County, having its headwaters in the hills of the towns of Mount Pleasant and New Castle. It traverses and partially drains the middle section of the county. This river, with other waters which have been artificially connected with it, affords to New York City a water supply of its own, quite independent of the Croton system—a fact, perhaps, not generally understood. It is dammed at Kensico Station, making a storage reservoir of 250 acres. A similar dam has been thrown across the Byram River, and another across the outlet of Little Bye Pond. By the damming of Little Rye Pond that body of water, with Rye Pond, has been converted into a single lake, having an area of 280 acres. The three parts of this system — the Bronx, Byram, and Rye Pond reservoirs — are, as already stated, connected artificially, and the water is delivered into a receiving reservoir at Williams's Bridge through the so-called Bronx River pipe line, a conduit of forty-eight-inch cast-iron pipe.

The portion of the Bronx watershed drained for this purpose has an area of thirteen and one-third square miles.

East of the mouth of the Bronx River on the Sound are the outlets of Westchester and Eastchester Creeks — tidal streams — emptying, respectively, into Westchester and Eastchester Bays. The Hutchinson River rises in Scarsdale and flows into Eastchester Bay. The Mamaroneck River has its source near White Plains and Harrison, finding its outlet in Mamaroneck Harbor. The Byram River, which enters the Sound above Portchester, and at its mouth separates our county from Connecticut, drains parts of North Castle and Rye. Blind Brook empties at Milton, after draining portions of Harrison and Rye. Most of the streams flowing into the Sound afford, by the reflux of the tide, an intermitting hydraulic power.

The Mianus River, rising in North Castle, and Stamford Mill River, rising in Poundridge, find their way to the Sound through Connecticut. Some minor streams in the northern section of the county flow into Putnam County.

The lakes of Westchester, like the hills and streams, boast no features of exceptional interest, but are strictly in keeping with the quiet beauty of the general landscape. The largest, as already mentioned, is Croton Lake, entirely artificial; and we have also seen that several of the natural lakes have been utilized for purposes of water supply. Lake Waccabuc, in the Town of Lewisboro, has, since 1870, been connected with the Croton system. It covers over two hundred acres, and is very deep and pure. In the Town of Poundridge several ponds have been artificially joined to one another, forming a handsome body of water, called Trinity Lake, a mile and a quarter long, which supplies the City of Stamford, Conn. A dam twenty feet high has been erected across its outlet. Other lakes of local importance and interest are Peach Lake, on the Putnam County border; Mohegan and Mohansic lakes, in Yorktown; Valhalla Lake (through which the Bronx River flows), between Mount

Pleasant and North Castle; Rye Lake, near the Connecticut line; Byram Lake, in Bedford and North Castle, the feeder of the Byram River, and Cross Pond (100 acres) in Poundridge.

The rocks of Westchester County consist mainly of gneiss and micaschist of many dissimilar varieties, and white crystalline limestone with thin interlying beds of serpentine, all of ancient origin and entirely devoid of fossils. Professor Ralph S. Tarr, of Cornell University, in a recent series of papers 1 on the geology of New York State, embodying the latest investigations and conclusions on the subject, assigns to the southern angle of the State, including Westchester County, the name of the " Gneissic Highland Province." This province, he says, is of complex structure, and one in which, in its main and most typical part, the rocks are very much folded and disturbed metamorphic strata of ancient date. " These rocks", he continues, " are really an extension of the highlands of New Jersey, which reach across the southern angle of New York, extend northeastward, and enter Connecticut. Besides these Archean gneisses there is some sandstone and a black diabase or trap, which form the Palisades, besides extensive layers of limestone, gneiss, and schist, which extend across the region occupied by the City of New York. This whole series of strata is intricately associated. Except at the very seashore line, the province is a moderate highland, with rather rough topography and with hills rising in some places to an elevation of 1,000 or 1,200 feet above the sea level. Where there is limestone or sandstone in this area, there is usually a lowland, while highlands occur where the hard gneiss comes to the surface not immediately at the seashore. This is extremely well illustrated in Rockland County, where the gneissic Ramapo Mountains are faced at their southeastern base by a lowland, a somewhat rolling plain, which, however, is

bounded on its eastern margin by another highland where the trap of the Palisades rises close by the Hudson River."

In the opinion of Professor Tarr, this region, with the large Adirondack area, at the beginning of the Paleozoic were mountainous lands facing the sea, which stretched away to the westward, and beneath which all the rest of the site of New York State was submerged. The western Highland mountains extended northward into New England, and toward the east they probably reached seaward along the present const Line. This mountain range extended southwestward along the eastern part of the seacoast States, and west of it was a great sea in the present Mississippi Valley. Whether the Adirondacks and this Highland mountain range were ever connected, and what was the actual extension of the two areas, cannot be told in the present state of geological knowledge, the record of much of the early history having been hidden beneath the strata of later ages. However in very early Paleozoic times the waves of the sea beat at the western base of the southern Highlands, and these were then at Least separated from the Adirondack area, which was at that time an island in the Paleozoic sea.

Professor James D. Dana, in an inquiry concerning the relations of the limestone belts of Westchester County, arrives at the conclusion that, with those of New York Island, they are probably of Lower Silurian age, assigning also to the same age the conformably associated metamorphic rocks. He holds to the view that Westchester County belongs to the same geologic period as the Green Mountain region resembling in its order that portion of the latter which is now western Connecticut. Other geologists find reason for believing that the Westchester rocks are older than those of the Green Mountain area and belong to an even earlier age than the Lower Silurian. It is pointed out that the marbles of Vermont and the marbles of Westchester County, with their associated rocks, are

essentially different from one another, and can hardly, therefore, belong to a common formation; the Vermont marbles being found in a single belt and being almost pure carbonates of lime, and of mottled and banded appearance, fine grained, with gray siliceous limestones, quartzites, and slates identified with them; whereas the Westchester marbles constitute a series of parallel belts and are coarsely crystalline dolomites (double carbonates of lime and magnesia) , generally of uniform white or whitish color, and have no rocks associated with them that can represent the quartzites and argillites of Vermont."

Still another opinion regarding the origin of the rocks of the Westchester County regions is that of Prof. I. S. Newberry, who believes that they date from the Laurentian age.

The limestone beds are distributed through every geographical section of the county. At Sing Sing occur marble deposits— very heavy beds which have been extensively quarried. It was, in fact, largely for the purpose of employing convict labor for the quarrying of the marble that this place was chosen as the location for the New York State Penitentiary. The Sing Sing marble, however, although an admirable building stone for many purposes, is of comparatively coarse and inferior quality, becoming stained in the course of time by the action of the sea air on account of the presence of grains of iron pyrites. Marble is also quarried at Tuckahoe.

Abundant indications are afforded of extensive and radical glacial action. " Croton Point, on the Hudson, and other places in the county, show evidences of glacial moraines. Deep striae and lighter scratches still remain upon many exposed rock surfaces, and others have been smoothly polished." A prominent feature is the presence in great profusion of large granite boulders, undoubtedly transported by glaciers from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, with an intermingling of boulders of

conglomerate from the western side of the Hudson, the latter containing numerous shell fossils. The so-called "Cobbling Stone," in the Town of North Salem, is a well-known specimen of the glacial boulders of Westchester. It is a prodigious rock of red granite, said to be the solitary one of its kind in the county.

The minerals found in the county, in greater or lesser quantities, embrace magnetic iron ore, iron and copper pyrites, green malachite, sulphuret of zinc, galena and other lead ores, native silver, serpentine, garnet, beryl, apatite, tremolite, white pyroxene, chlorite, black tourmaline, Sillimanite, monazite, Brucite, epidote, and sphene. But Westchester has never been in any sense a seat of the mining industry proper, as distinguished from the quarrying. In early times a silver mine was operated at Sing Sing, very near where the prison now stands and not far from the same Locality an attempt was made some seventy years ago to mine for copper. Both of these mining ventures are of mere curious historical interest, representing no actual successful production of a definite character. In the ridges along the northern borders of the county considerable deposits of iron ore are found. It is stated by Mr. Charles E. Culver, in his History of Somers, that the iron ores of that town have, upon assay, yielded as high as 61 per cent." Peat swamps, affording a fuel of good quality, exist in several parts of the county, notably the Town of Bedford.

There are various mineral springs, as well as other springs, yielding water of singularly pure quality, The latter being utilized in some cases with commercial profit. A well-known mineral spring, for whose waters medicinal virtues are claimed, is the Chappaqua Spring, three miles east of Sing Sing.

The prevailing soil of Westchester County is the product of disintegrations of the primitive rocks, and is of a light and sandy character, for the most part not uncommonly

fertile naturally, although the methods of scientific farming, which have been pursued from very early times, have rendered it highly productive. It is not generally adapted to wheat, summer crops succeeding best. Drift deposits and alluvium occur along the Sound and in some localities elsewhere, with a consequently richer soil. Agriculture has always been the representative occupation, although during the last half century extensive manufacturing industries have been developed in several localities.



## **CHAPTER II. THE ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS**

It was not until 1609, one hundred and seventeen years after the discovery of the New World, that European enterprise, destined to lead to definite colonization and development, was directed to that portion of the North American continent where the metropolis of the Western hemisphere and the Empire State of the American Union have since been erected. The entire North American mainland, in fact, from Florida to Hudson's Bay, although explored by voyagers of different nationalities within comparatively brief periods after the advent of Columbus, had been practically neglected throughout the sixteenth century as a field for serious purposes of civilized occupation and exploitation. The early French attempts at settlement in Canada, in the first half of that century, and the colonizing expeditions sent by Sir Walter Raleigh to the shores of North Carolina, in the second half, were dismal failures, and in the circumstances could not have resulted differently. For these undertakings were largely without reference to intelligent and progressive cultivation of such resources as the country might afford, being incidental, or, at least, secondary, to the absorbing conviction of the times that the riches of India lay somewhere beyond the American coast barrier, and would still yield themselves to bold search. Naturally, few men of substantial from ax old print. character and decent antecedents could be persuaded to embark as volunteers in such doubtful enterprises. The first settlers on the Saint Lawrence were a band of robbers, swindlers, murderers, and promiscuous

ruffians, released from the prisons of France by the government as a heroic means of providing colonists for an expedition which could not be recruited from the people at large. The settlers sent by Sir Walter Raleigh under his patent from Elizabeth in 1585 for establishing colonies north of the Spanish dominions in Florida were, according to Bancroft, a body of -broken-down gentlemen and libertines, more fitted to corrupt a republic than to found one, with very few mechanics farmers, or laborers among them— mere buccaneering adventurers, who carried fire and sword into the land and had no higher object before them than to plunder and enslave the natives. It is true that very early in the sixteenth century the fishermen of Normandy and Brittany began to seek the waters of Newfoundland for the legitimate ends of their vocation, and soon built up a gainful trade, which, steadily expanding and attracting other votaries, employed in 1583 more than four hundred European fishing craft. But this business was conducted almost exclusively for the profits of the fisheries, and although the vessels devoted to it ranged all along the New England coast, there was no consecutive occupation of the country with a view to its earnest settlement until after the dawn of the seventeenth century.

Throughout the era of original American discovery and coast exploration, the returning mariners had agreed in describing the region to the north of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea as utterly lacking in indications of accumulated riches, inhabited only by savage races who possessed no gold and silver or other valuable property, enjoyed no civilization, offered no commodities to commerce except the ordinary products of the soil and the chase, and could communicate nothing definite respecting more substantial wealth farther to the west. The ancient civilizations of Mexico, Central America, and rem having been subverted by the Spanish conquistadores, and their stores of precious metals largely absorbed, it was fondly

hoped that the unpenetrated wilds of the north might contain new realms with similar abundant treasures. Narvaez, in 1528, and De Soto, in 1539, led finely appointed expeditions from the Florida coast into the interior in quest of the imagined eldorados— emprises which proved absolutely barren of encouraging results and from which only a few miserable survivors returned to tell the disillusioning tale of dreadful wilderness marches, appalling sufferings, and fruitless victories over wretched tribes owning no goods worth carrying away. The impressive record of these disastrous failures, in connection with the uniformly unflattering accounts of the lands farther north, deterred all European nations from like pompous adventurings. The poverty of the native inhabitants of North America saved them from the swift fate which overtook the rich peoples of the south, and for a century preserved them even from intrusion, except of the most fugitive kind. This fact of their complete poverty is by far the most conspicuous aspect of the original comparative condition, in both economic and social regards, of the North American Indians, as well as of the history of their gradual expulsion and extirpation. Possessing nothing but land and the simplest concomitants of primitive existence, they did not present to the European invaders an established and measurably advanced and affluent organization of society, inviting speedy and comprehensive overthrow and the immediate substitution on a general scale of the supremacy and institutions of the subjugators. Dispersed through the primeval forests in small communities, they did not confront the stranger foe with formidable masses of population requiring to be dealt with by the summary methods of formal conquest; and skilled in but few industries and arts, which they practiced not acquisitively but only to serve the most necessary ends of daily life, and maintaining themselves in a decidedly struggling and adventitious fashion by a rude agriculture

and the pursuits of hunting and fishing, their numbers in the aggregate, following well-known laws of population, were, indeed, comparatively few. Yet the same conditions made them the ruggedest, bravest, and most independent of races, and utterly unassimilable. Thus, as found by the Europeans, while because of their poverty provoking no programme of systematic conquest and dispossession, they were foredoomed to inevitable progressive dislodgement and ultimate extermination or segregation. The cultivated and numerous races of Mexico and Peru, on the other hand, exciting the cupidity of the Spaniards by their wealth, were reduced to subjection at a blow. Put though ruthlessly slaughtered by the most bloody and cruel conquerors known to the criminal annals of history, these more refined people of the south had reserved for them a less melancholy destiny than that of the untutored children of the wilderness. Their survivors readily gave themselves to the processes of absorption, and their descendants to-day are coheirs, in all degrees of consanguinity, with the progeny of the despoiler.

The origin of the native races of America is, in the present state of knowledge, a problem of peculiar difficulty. Nothing is contributed toward its solution by any written records now known to exist. None of the aboriginal inhabitants of either of the Americas left any written annals. The opinion is held by some scholars, who favor the theory of Asiatic origin, that when the as yet unpublished treasures of ancient Chinese literature come to be spread before the world definite light may be cast upon the subject. There is a strong probability that the civilization of the Aztecs was either of direct Mongolian derivation or partially a development from early Mongolian transplantations. This view is sustained, first, by certain superficial resemblances, and, second by various details in old Chinese manuscripts suggestive of former intercourse with the shores of Mexico and South America. The belief

that man's initial appearance on this hemisphere was as a wanderer from Asia finds plausible support in the fact of the very near approach of the American land mass to Asia at the north, the two being separated by a narrow strait, while a continuous chain of steppingstone islands reaches from coast to coast not far below. Accepting the Darwinian theory of man's evolution from the lower orders, the idea of his indigenous growth in America seems to be precluded; for no traces have been found of the existence at any time of his proximate ancestors—the higher species of apes, from which alone he could have come, having no representatives here in the remains of bygone times.

The question of man's relative antiquity on the Western hemisphere is also a matter of pure speculation. Here again the absence of all written records prevents any assured historical reckonings backward. Ancient remains, including those of the Aztecs and their associated races, the cliff-dwellers of Arizona and the mound-builders of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, are abundant and highly interesting, but their time connections are lacking. Yet while the aspects of the purely historical progress of man in the New World are most unsatisfactory, anthropological studies proper are attended by much more favorable conditions in the Americas than in Europe. In the Old World, occupied and thickly settled for many historic ages by man in the various stages of civilized development, most of the vestiges of prehistoric man have been destroyed by the people; whereas these still have widespread existence in the New.

In the immediate section of the country to which the County of Westchester belongs such traces of the ancient inhabitants as have been found are in no manner reducible to system. There are no venerable monumental ruins, nor are there any of the curious "mounds" of the west. Various sites of villages occupied by the Indians at the time of the arrival of the Europeans are known, as also of some of their

forts and burial -rounds. Great heaps of oyster and clam shells here and there on tin" coast remain as landmarks of their abiding places. Aside from such features, which belong to ordinary historical association rather than to the department of archaeological knowledge, few noteworthy "finds" have been made. Several years ago much was made in the New York City newspaper press of certain excavations by Mr. Alexander C. Chenoweth, at Inwood, on Manhattan Island, a short distance below Spuyten Duyvil. Mr. Chenoweth unearthed a variety of interesting objects, including Indian skeletons, hearthstones blackened by lire, implements, and utensils. There can be no doubt that these remains were from a period antedating the European discovery. But they possessed no importance beyond that fact. With all the other traces of the more ancient inhabitants which have been found in this general region, they show that hereabouts Indian conditions as known to history did not differ sharply, in the way either of improvement or of degeneration, from those which preceded the beginning of authentic records.

Verrazano, the French navigator, who sailed along the coast of North America in 1524, entering the harbor of New York and possibly ascending the river a short distance, speaks of the natives whom he met there as " not differing much " from those with whom he had held intercourse elsewhere, " being dressed out with the feathers of birds of various colors." " They came forward toward us," he adds, " with evident delight, raising loud shouts of admiration and showing us where we could most securely land with our boat." In similar words Henry Hudson describes the savages whom he first took on board his vessel in the lower New York Bay. They came, he says, " dressed in mantles of feathers and robes of fur, the women clothed in hemp, red copper tobacco pipes, and other things of copper did they wear about their necks." Their attitude was entirely amicable, for they brought no arms with them. On his