

ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EVENTS IN FRANKLINVILLE AROUND 1812



GEN. JOSEPH MCCLUER

In 1812, Franklinville was known as McCluer's Settlement. Joseph McCluer, founder of this area, and Solomon Curtis, Moses Warner and Frank Clark enlisted in the War. McCluer was a Captain in Dobbin's 18th New York Regiment. There were other men from Ischua Valley listed as veterans of this War, but they may have settled in the area after their service or were not listed on the 1810 Census.

Very few records exist for this period of time. Six years previously, in 1806, nine families arrived in the area and purchased property. At first they lived in log cabins, built from the trees they had felled in order to begin growing crops. Hiram Warner McCluer was the first settler child born in the new settlement on April 30th, 1806. In 1807, Henry Conrad opened the first mill in the area of Cadiz and the area was called Conrad's Mills. The first town meeting ever held in the county we know today as Cattaraugus was at McCluer's cabin on March 11, 1808.

In the 1810 Census, the area was recorded as being in Niagara County. A road was opened between Buffalo and Olean, but it was impassible a good deal of the time. It was in 1811 that the first marriage was recorded between John Warner and Naomi Hollister. It was also during that year that John McCluer, the first doctor and teacher in the town, also became the first recorded death. Burials were in a cemetery on South Main Street. The remains of the early settlers were later moved to Mount Prospect Cemetery.

There were no churches, so families would probably have relied on their own private services and reading the Bible or meeting in different neighbors' cabins. The first minister would not arrive until 1813.

We do not have the exact date that the names Franklinville and Cadiz were chosen or even why. Several letters indicate that the name Franklinville was in use by 1822.

Life was difficult for the new settlement. Neighbors relied on each other for help in building cabins and barns. Regular mail delivery would not begin until 1816. The area did not have a tannery, or store until about 1820.

Although life in the wilderness was demanding, a surprising number volunteered to leave and fight in the War of 1812. The population of the area numbered 261 people in 1814. Many of these hardy pioneers survived and remained in the area. A timeline from 1806 to 1830, a span of 24 years, indicates that an area of wilderness quickly formed the basis of the Town and Village of Franklinville as we know it today.