

Town of Lansing



North

1:65000

2000 0 2000 4000 Feet
500 0 500 1000 Meters

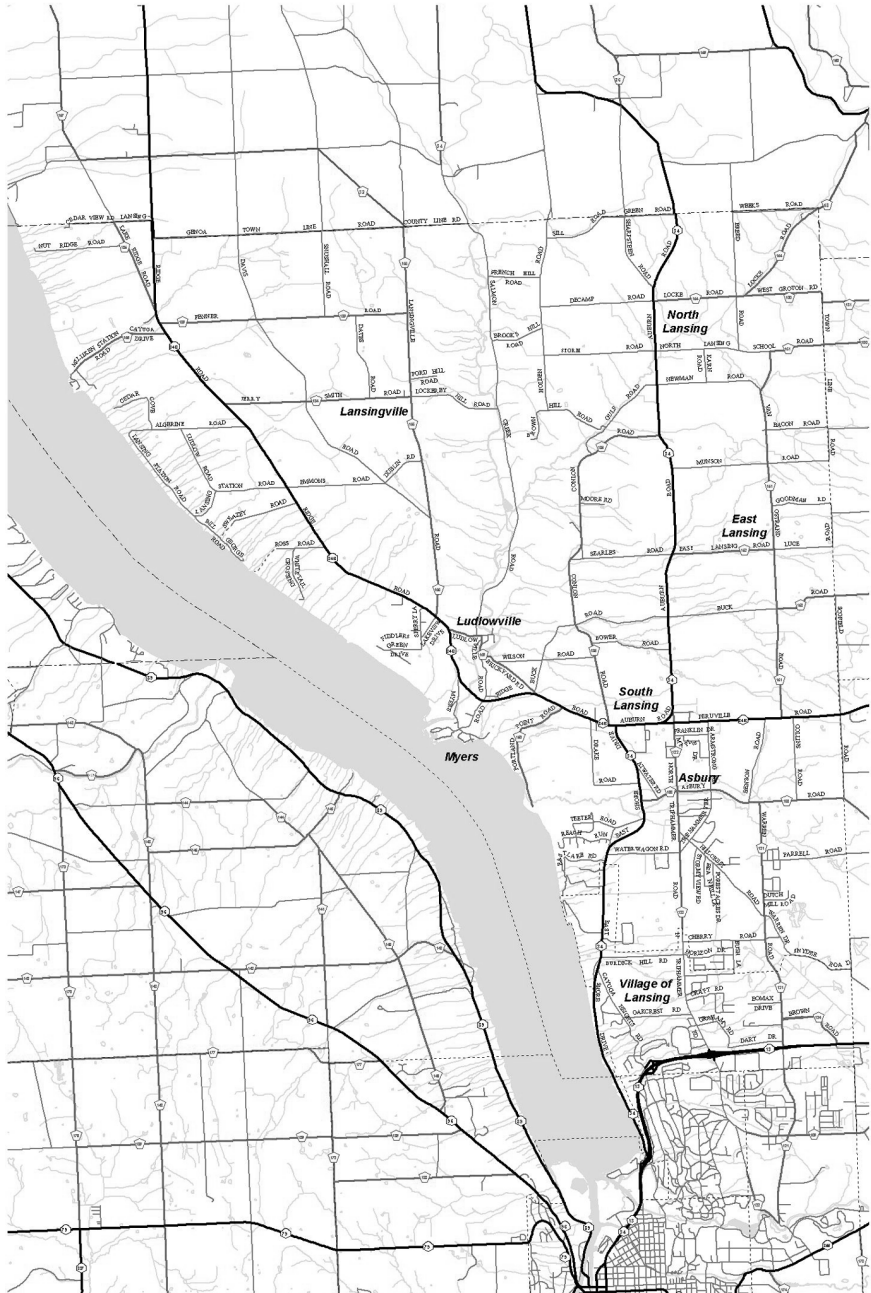


Tompkins County
Information Technology Service
GIS Division

New York State Plane Central
1983 North American Datum

One Inch represents 5417 Feet

02/13/2009



Town of Lansing

Louise Bement

Town of Lansing Historian

Lansing began as the Military Tract Town of Milton created by the survey made by Simeon DeWitt and others, and named in 1789 by the Land Commissioners in Albany. The land was distributed by lottery in 1790 after which the first legal settlers began to arrive.

In 1794 Onondaga County was set aside from Montgomery County and in 1799 Cayuga County was separated from Onondaga. Within Cayuga County were Sempronius, Cato, Brutus, Aurelius, Milton, and Locke. In 1802 Locke was removed. In 1808, the name Milton was exchanged for Genoa. Then, in 1817, when the state created Tompkins County, Genoa was divided in half, the northern part remaining Genoa, the southern lots, numbers 41 through 100, becoming Lansing.

The town was named for John Lansing, a member of a prominent New York state family, a jurist and Supreme Court Judge, and State Chancellor in 1817. The name Lansing was taken west by New York residents who migrated to Michigan.

Most roads in Lansing had no name until 1937. Until then, they were referred to by the people who lived along them or by a prominent physical feature. A great number of those names remain on the maps today: Armstrong, Atwater, Benson, Bill George, Bower, Breed, Brown, Buck, Burdick Hill, etc., all originated as family names.

Lansingville West Road, became Jerry Smith Road, named in honor of Smith, who was a prominent justice of the peace and town board

member, although he never lived on the road. It was Robert Bowers, then on the Lansing Town Board, who wanted the name changed, and so it was.

Davis Road began as Nedrow; Ludlow road was once Algerine; Lansingville Road was originally Emmons Road, sometimes spelled Emmens. Storm Road began as Carson, Newman was Tarbell, and Gulf Road was Sam Lane Road. At one time, Bush Road was Moore Road in the southern part of the town; today Moore Road is in the northern part of Lansing. In Lansing there is also Brickyard Road, which began as Miscoll, and Drake Road that was once called Baseball Road. There is still Dug Road in Ludlowville. Pinch Gut Creek was the early name for Gulf Creek, the deep gorge in North Lansing. There was a mill there called Pinch Gut Mill named because the space for the road along the gorge was so narrow.

Roads in the newer developments in Lansing are named by the developers. George Totman, Lansing Town Zoning Officer in the later twentieth century, explained that roads could be named anything the developer wished as long as they were not vulgar or were used as a name in any other place in Tompkins County. Several of the more unusual names are Captain's Walk, Leif's Way, Smugglers Path, and Spy Glass Ridge although there is no record of smugglers in the Town of Lansing.

The streets in the Horizons Development were named after the developer's father, Alessandro Cima, and his mother, Rosina Cima. Nearby, Janivar Lane is named for Janet and Ivar Johnson, the developers of the area.

Algerine Road was probably named for an Algerine, or one who acted "like an Algerine pirate," referring to the Barbary pirates from Africa's North Coast. The term was widely used in Rhode Island politics during the 1840s, and from Texas the phrase "those American Algerines" meant politicians who acted like pirates. There was a comment in the 1844 *Congressional Globe* about "ruffianism" and of "Algerines." For people who acted beyond the legal limits in town meetings there was

passed an 1844 Algerine Act “making it a high offense, punishable by fine and imprisonment, for any persons to act as officers of illegal town meetings.” The use of this term in Lansing surely implied that the people living on Algerine Road were thought to act illegally. There is also mention in Carl Carmer’s book on the Susquehanna River of “algerines” being thieves who cut off the identifying marks on logs being sent to market in order to make an illegal profit. Before the road took on the name Algerine, it was known as Cooney. (These examples are cited in Mathews’s *Dictionary of Americanisms*, p. 17. The Barbary pirates were generally considered to be from Algiers, Tripoli, Tunis, and Morocco. They preyed upon ship traffic despite entreaties by the United States, which actually engaged in a Tripolitan War from 1801 to 1805 conducted off the North African coast. As late as 1816, they were still causing difficulties along the sea lanes.)

Asbury honors Francis Asbury (1745–1816), the first American Methodist bishop, who in 1811 lectured in the just-completed brick Methodist Church. In honor of his visit, the church and the area became known as Asbury. The New York and Oswego Midland Railroad went through in 1880 and the railroad station was called Asbury. The railroad went out of business in 1889; the post office was discontinued in 1902.

Bean Hill became Hillcrest in 1954 when land developers wanted something that sounded more sophisticated. But Bean Hill had been so named because nothing but beans would grow on the loose glacial till that covered the area. When the rock from the field was carried away to use as sub-basing for road construction, the area became bedrock and then suitable for houses. The name has not been lost, though: off of Hillcrest Road is Bean Hill Lane.

Bill George Road was named for William F. George who was born in 1861 in Philadelphia, but who moved to Lansing Station Road in 1922. He owned a 50-acre fruit farm and for many years he was Supervisor

of the Town of Lansing, serving also as a Democratic Commissioner of Elections.

Chicahominy Road has an odd history. Today this road is Farrell but according to Brad Griffin writing in 2000, “When I was first around these parts Emmons Ogden of Dryden told me that soldiers returning home from the Civil War named it [Chickahominy Road] because it reminded them of that famous battleground. Emmons’s grandfather, who was a Union volunteer with a company from Dryden, told this to Emmons.”

Dublin was a small collection of houses on Davis Road, which angles from Lansingville Road all the way to the Genoa Town Line. Many of the people who lived along the road had come from Ireland.

East Lansing began in 1804. The Second Baptist Church of Milton was organized in what came to be known as East Lansing. Today a signpost at the intersection of Van Ostrand and East Lansing Roads reads East Lansing. There was a post office called East Lansing from 1842 until 1902.

Esty’s, a little settlement just off Route 34 on the southern spur of the Town of Lansing, was first called Forest City. There was a post office by that name operating from 1850 until 1869. The area was developed by Dr. J. F. Burdick, who ran the Water Cure and Ladies Seminary in the 1850s in the large stone house on the corner of Burdick Hill Road and Lake Shore Drive. From 1970 to 1990, that building housed The Greystone Restaurant. Today it is a private residence. The name of the area gradually changed to Esty for Edward Esty, a prominent resident and area landowner. The ravine, once called Burdick’s Ravine, is now Esty Glen.

Fiddler’s Green began in 1806 when a post office was established on the brow of the hill above what today is Route 34B. It was known orig-

inally as Genoa Post Office. In 1815 the post office moved to Ludlowville, and the hilly area rising above the lake came to be called Fiddler's Green, for reasons unknown. The first settler was Jonah Tooker, a leading citizen, but there is no record that he played the fiddle. Norris comments that Fiddler's Green is a "happy place where all good sailors go when they die and fade away." It could be that this was thought to be such a place because from Fiddler's Green there is a splendid view of the lake. With the new development of houses in the mid-1980s, the name took hold and it is probably more established now than it ever was.

Hedden's was first known as Himrod's Point after a settler who established himself there in 1792. When Aaron Hedden settled in 1802 it became known as Hedden's. A railroad station was called Hedden's and a post office by that name operated from 1888 to 1917. Frances Brown, daughter of John Brown, a former postmaster, commented in 1994: "It was Hedden's not Lake Ridge and we had a post office there until the RFD came in June 1917. It was changed from Hedden's, New York, to Lake Ridge, New York, because it was very confusing to have the station called Lake Ridge but the mail address as Hedden's." It is now called Lake Ridge Point.

Hillcrest Road. *See* Bean Hill.

Ladoga dates from 1885 when William H. Barr established a park and picnic ground on the south side of Myers Point. It is supposed to have been named after Lake Ladoga, that body of Finnish water, claimed by Russia and, around the turn of the twentieth century, absorbed by that country.

Lake Ridge settlement began in 1792. A hotel was built in 1814, but is now gone, a victim of fire. For a time this was a popular stopping place for the stagecoach. A post office served the area from 1829 until 1902.

Lansing Station began in 1829 when J. M. McLallen operated a ferry from Frog's Point on the West shore of Cayuga Lake to Lansing Station on the East. This lasted until 1845. In 1885 the ferry *Wide Awake* operated from Port Deposit (or Frog's Point) and now Camp Barton, the Boy Scout Camp. The ferry port on the east shore became known as Taughannock Landing. This was also a stop on the Cayuga Lake Railroad, or the Auburn to Ithaca branch of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. It was first called Countryman's or Woodworth's Landing. When the Lehigh Valley Railroad came through in 1873, the station also took that name. When the ferry was discontinued, the name Lansing Station was adopted. Lansing Station Road began as a collection of summer cottages and is now a community of year-round homes.

Lansingville is situated on the ridge above Salmon Creek. It was first known as Teetertown after Conrad Teeter, who ran a tavern there. When that was sold in 1828 the name was changed to Lansingville. Glenn Norris claims that the Indian name for Salmon Creek was Gientachne.

Ludlowville was named for the Ludlows—Silas, Henry, and Henry's son Thomas—who located on Salmon Creek in 1791. Four years later they established a gristmill at Ludlowville. The community that grew up around them was called Ludlowville Falls. Then it was called Ludlow's Mill, Ludlowtown, and Ludlowvillage. Finally it became Ludlowville. It reached its peak population at the turn of the twentieth century.

A post office established in Ludlowville in 1806 lasted until May 1973 when the three remaining post offices in Lansing (Ludlowville, Myers, and South Lansing) were consolidated.

McKinney's dates to 1804, when Jesse McKinney purchased land along the lake shore where he operated a gristmill. Later it was built up with lake cottages and now permanent homes.

Midway. *See Sage.*

Mill Point, located on the north side of Myers at the outlet of Salmon Creek, was known as Mill Point because of the mills operating there. In 1822 Nicholas Slocum obtained a license to operate a ferry from Salmon Creek across to Willow Creek, Crowbar Point, and Goodwin's on the west shore of Cayuga Lake.

Myers was named for Andrew Myers, who with his family, settled on The Point in 1792. For a time, this was a busy harbor and shipyard, but after 1913 there was little remaining commercial traffic on the lake. When Henry H. Plough was appointed postmaster in 1880, the office was called Ploughs. It was changed to Myers in 1882 and consolidated into the Lansing post office in 1973.

North Lansing, first known as Beardsley's Corners, is located near the Cayuga County border on State Route 34. It was named for Roswell Beardsley who kept the post office. Beardsley was appointed in 1828 and continued in office for 74 consecutive years, lasting through the terms of 20 presidents and 34 postmasters-general. The post office was discontinued in 1920.

Norton's Landing can be found on the 1853 map of Lansing on the edge of Cayuga Lake, where the Cargill Salt Mine is today. It was earlier known as Kimple's Landing. When Jehiel and Jonathan Norton owned and operated a warehouse here, it took the name Norton's Landing. Ships docked here to take on goods and there was a station for the Lehigh Railroad.

Ploughs. *See Myers.*

Portland Point is located just south of Norton's Landing. Koplins Point, a ferryboat stop, is the first name associated with this spot. Then it became Shergour's, named for Joseph Shergour, who had an orchard, limekiln, and boat yard there. When Shergour's daughter Sarah married Harts Collins, it became Collins' Point. Their son Sherman

formed the Portland Cement Company in 1900 and from then on the land has been called Portland Point.

The railroad and the post office also became known as Portland Point, the post office operating until 1944, the cement plant closing in 1947. Sherman Collins laid out a worker village south of Asbury Creek and directly east of the plant where the streets were called Main and Easy. Some houses were built, but the community never materialized. Local wags thought of Portland Heights as the Crow's Nest. Today the Point is privately owned.

Rogue's Harbor, Lansing's grand hotel, was built in 1830 by Samuel Kelsey for General D. D. Minier, and was first called the Central Exchange Hotel. It was a major stagecoach stop between Ithaca and Auburn. It was later called the Elm Grove Hotel, for the elms standing in the front, but the nickname of Rogue's Harbor remained and finally became its proper name. Grace Miller White wrote a book entitled *Judy of Rogue's Harbor* (New York: H. K. Fly Company, 1918), which probably helped establish the name.

Sage was first called Jacktown after Jack Osmun, who owned a large tract of land at the southern end of State Route 34, halfway between the south and north Town of Lansing lines. The post office, established in 1873 and discontinued in 1896, was called Midway. When the post office reopened in 1897 it, and the area, were called Sage after the district school built there in the 1880s. That post office closed again in 1902. The Auburn–Ithaca Railroad had a small station there until 1924, also called Sage and sometimes Ozman's.

The area is now owned and operated by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, which purchased 600 acres in 1935. In August 1968, the South Lansing School for Girls of the New York State Department of Social Services opened on part of the Watchtower land, which the state purchased from the society. It was intended as an upstate alternative to the Hudson Training School and could house up to 60 girls. In 1974, the facility was turned over to the New York State Division for Youth

and became the only training school for girls in the state. It was re-named the Lansing Residential Center. In 1993, the Division for Youth opened a similar facility for boys, named the Lewis Gossett Jr. Center, adjacent to the girls' school. In 2001 there were 113 girls and 150 boys in these facilities.

South Lansing began as Libertyville, reflecting the patriotic spirit of the inhabitants but by 1828 the post office was known as South Lansing. The name Libertyville lingered on for a time but gradually fell out of use. South Lansing was also known as Rogue's Harbor or The Harbor, a nickname generally given to the large three-story brick hotel at the divide of State Routes 34 and 34B.

Syrian Hill is a high peak above Myers that became the home of many Syrian families who came in the 1890s to work in the production of salt. The hill on which they lived was called Syrian Hill while the opposite side was known as American Hill.