

## **History of Skaneateles**

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During the Revolutionary War, the area that was to become Skaneateles was a wilderness, covered with trees and thick underbrush, and a lake populated by geese, herons, and ducks. Indian trails passed through, some leading along the west shore of the lake where the native Americans camped while they fished and hunted during the summer months.

In 1750 a small group of Moravian missionaries had come through, noting that the waters of the lake were fresh and cold and emptied into a creek with a swift current. They found dense forests made up of hemlock, ash, and white cedar.

At the end of the Revolutionary War, the government surveyed the land in central New York, dividing it into tracts of land that would be used to pay the military men for their service in the war as promised. Marcellus was one of these military tracts.

In the Village of Skaneateles, in 1796, the lake in the area where the stores are now located was a grove of trees. And in the lake tree stumps appeared above the water a considerable distance from the shore. When a dam was built across the outlet, the lake level was raised by three or four feet and the stumps disappeared under water.

In 1830, thirty-nine of the original military lots were taken from the Marcellus tract and formed into the township of Skaneateles. The old State Road ran through the business section of the town.

According to some sources the first settler was John Thompson who came here in 1793. Since he had no wife or family, some believe he didn't actually settle here until 1810 or later.

Meanwhile, after forty-three days on the road, Abraham Cuddeback arrived here in 1794 with his wife and eight children, including their stock. Because there was no trail leading to the west side of the lake, he built a raft and ferried his family and stock across the lake. Here he built a home for his family, a barn for his stock, and set about establishing his farm.

Abraham and his wife raised ten sons who, at one time, all lived at home. And each night there were ten pair of boots lined up in a row on the kitchen floor.

