



A History of Ontario County, New York and Its People, Vol. 1 (Classic Reprint)

Charles F. Milliken

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Excerpt from A History of Ontario County, New York and Its People, Vol. 1

Whether through some fortuitous but beneficent combination of soil and water and climate, or on account of an advantage of location, or in furtherance of a Divine plan, the people who have possessed Western New York have had a large and important influence on the country as a whole. This was true when Columbus discovered the continent, and a handful of Iroquois savages dominated the whole vast wilderness. It was true during the three centuries that followed when not even the valor of the French at the North, the enterprise of the Dutch at New York, or the chivalry of the Spaniards at the South, with sword, or cross, or coin, could make, progress toward the conquest of the coveted land. It was true when at last New England soldiery, opening the way for New England thrift and New England culture, broke the proud spirit of the Indian confederacy, and when New England from its new vantage ground in the Genesee Country diffused its tongue, its political principles, and its religious faith to the uttermost parts of the land. It is true today, even if what some of the New York papers used to call the "Canandaigua rule" in politics is broken, when a Western New York Congressman makes the tariff law for the country, when the State governs its elections and controls and taxes the liquor traffic under the laws drafted by an Ontario county legislator, when the preachers in famous pulpits, the editors of great metropolitan newspapers, and world-eminent scientists claim Western New York as their birthplace, and when its sons and grandsons, its daughters and granddaughters, it may truthfully be said, play a not insignificant part in shaping the destinies of the Great West.

The author of this History of Ontario County has made no attempt to glean the fields which have been covered by preceding writers, or to repeat in detail the story of discovery, settlement, and development.

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