

I ♥ NY



County of
OSWEGO
New York

Historical Guide



Fort Ontario State Historic Site



Fort Brewerton - Oliver Stevens
Blockhouse Museum



H Lee White Marine Museum



Intro

Oswego County boasts a rich history. With its strategic location along Lake Ontario and access to key waterways like the Oswego and Salmon rivers and Oneida Lake, the area has played a vital role not just in the history of New York State, but in that of the entire nation. The importance of this role is evident in the plethora of historic sites dating back more than 350 years. These historic sites, museums, libraries and historical societies offer deep insight into Oswego County's unique heritage and tell many fascinating stories of its hallowed ancestors.



Dr. Mary Edwards Walker was born in the Town of Oswego in 1832. A surgeon who cared for wounded soldiers during the Civil War, she was an outspoken abolitionist, feminist, and prisoner of war, and is the only woman to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Lake Ontario



Salmon River International Sportfishing Museum
Altmar

Pulaski



Salmon River

Altmar



Fort Ontario State Historic Site
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Mexico

Maple View



Pulaski Historical Society Museum
Pulaski



Safe Haven Museum
Oswego



Starr Clark Tin Shop
Mexico

Parish



Palermo



Fort Brewerton - Oliver Stevens Blockhouse Museum
Brewerton



Central Square



Culton



Pennellville



Brewerton



Oneida Lake



Casatego River



1 Bridge House Museum

Henley Park (Located just south of bridge in Phoenix)
 55 State St.
 Phoenix, NY 13135
 315-695-1308

The Bridge House Museum contains a collection of artifacts depicting the history of the village of Phoenix and the New York State Barge Canal. The historic building is located along the canal at the corner of State and Lock Streets in Phoenix.

2 Casey's Cottage

Mexico Point Park
 Mexico, NY 13114
 315-963-7657
<http://howardsplace.net/manorhouse.html>



Casey's Cottage was originally a carriage house for the Mexico Point Club which was destroyed by fire in the early 1950s. While the stone ruins still stand, the carriage house was turned into an 11th century manor house with unique features like life-size carvings in the wood walls and built-in beds that look like ships' berths.

3 Central Square Railroad Museum

132 Railroad Ave.
 Central Square, NY 13036
 315-668-6727

The Central Square Museum was once jointly operated as a depot for the NY, Ontario & Western and NY Central railroads. There are both indoor and outdoor exhibits.

4 Cleveland Historical Society

123 NYS Rte. 49
 Cleveland, NY 13042
 315-675-8688

The Cleveland Historical Society is located in the former St. James Episcopal Church. Visitors will find an extensive collection of local maps, artifacts and articles about the history of the area and the Cleveland glassmaking industry.

5 Fort Brewerton and Oliver Stevens Blockhouse Museum**

9 US Rte. 11
Brewerton, NY 13036
315-668-8801
www.fortbrewerton.org



Fort Brewerton was built in 1759. Its location was chosen by General Abercrombie, the British Commander, as a point of defense along the essential water route. The Oliver Stevens Blockhouse is a replica of the first settlement in Brewerton. Oliver Stevens and his family, who came over on the Mayflower 2, were the first settlers of the area.

6 Fort Ontario State Historic Site**

1 East 4th St.
Oswego, NY 13126
315-343-4711
www.fortontario.com



Known as the “Guardian of the Northern Frontier,” Fort Ontario has been rebuilt and changed hands several times since the first fortress was built on this site in 1755. The present star-shaped fort dates back to the early 1840s and offers an insider’s look at life on a military post in 1868. Located on a picturesque bluff overlooking Lake Ontario, the fort displays the enlisted men’s barracks, officers’ quarters, the powder magazine and more.

7 H. Lee White Marine Museum

1 W. 1st St. Pier
Oswego, NY 13126
315-342-0480
www.hleewhitemarinemuseum.com



Located on the West Side Pier overlooking Oswego Harbor, the H. Lee White Marine Museum features collections depicting 400 years of Oswego County’s maritime heritage including a variety of artifacts, paintings, models and stories of a major Great Lakes port during the 19th century. The museum includes a 1925 New York State Canal Boat and the National Historic Landmark WWII Tug “LT-5,” the last remaining large tug used in the Normandy landing on D-Day.

8 Half-Shire Historical Society

1100 Co. Rte. 48
Richland, NY 13142
315-298-3620 or
315-298-2986
<http://halfshire.com/>



Housed in the former Richland Elementary School building, the Half-Shire Historical Society contains special exhibits on rural farm life from 1800-1950, genealogical research materials and an extensive local history collection reflecting northern Oswego County’s heritage.

9 Hannibal Historical Society

Oswego St.
Hannibal, NY 13074
315-564-5650



The Hannibal Historical Society maintains a permanent museum collection in the Hannibal Free Library.

10 John D. Murray Fire Museum

Oswego Eastside Fire Station
35 East Cayuga St.
Oswego, NY 13216
315-343-0999
www.oswegonyfiremuseum.com/index.html

Vintage fire engines, equipment and memorabilia depicting the history of firefighting in the City of Oswego.

11 “La Guerre d’Independence”

Mexico High School
3338 Main St.
Mexico, NY 13114
315-963-8400

Made in France, “La Guerre d’Independence” is a historic woodblock mural depicting scenes of the Revolutionary War. There are only two in existence; the other is on display in the White House in Washington, DC.

12 Mexico Historical Society Museum

65 South Jefferson St.
Mexico, NY 13114
315-963-8542

The Mexico Historical Society Museum features changing exhibits, local artists' work, albums, maps, and materials detailing Mexico's past. The museum, which was originally a mid-19th century law office, includes artifacts of the Underground Railroad.

13 Oswego County Records Center and Historian's Office

384 East River Rd.
Oswego, NY 13126
315-349-8460

The Oswego County Records Center and Historian's Office contains Oswego County census and cemetery records, maps, local histories, naturalization records and historical and genealogical documents.

14 Oswego Railroad Museum

56 West 1st St.
Oswego, NY 13126
315-343-2347
www.oswegormuseum.org

The museum is dedicated to preserving the area's railroad history and features an H.O. layout, displays, and several seasonal exhibits.



15 Oswego Town Historical Society

2320 Co. Rte. 7
Oswego, NY 13126
315-343-2586

Located in Oswego Town Hall, the Oswego Town Historical Society displays information on one-room schoolhouses, town history and Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, a Civil War doctor born in Oswego who is the only woman to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor.



16 John Wells Pratt House Museum**

177 South 1st St.
Fulton, NY 13069
315-598-4616

The John Wells Pratt House Museum is a historic home and museum located in Fulton. Built in 1861, it is a large two-story residence that highlights the significant history of Fulton, a former mill town and prominent industrial center.



17 Pulaski Historical Society Museum

3428 Maple Ave.
Pulaski, NY 13142
315-298-4650

The Pulaski Historical Society Museum portrays the industrial and agricultural heritage resulting from the village of Pulaski's settlement on the Salmon River. The museum contains a collection of tools, equipment, manufactured products and other artifacts, as well as thousands of documents and archives including personal diaries, news clippings, and letters.



18 Richardson-Bates House Museum**

135 East 3rd St.
Oswego, NY 13126
315-343-1342
www.rbhousemuseum.org

The Richardson-Bates House Museum is home to the Oswego County Historical Society's collection of nearly 25,000 artifacts, documents and photographs commemorating the significant history of the area. Built between 1867 and 1880, the home's upstairs is dedicated to the preservation of local history, while the downstairs is preserved with the original furnishings of the period.



19 Safe Haven Museum & Education Center

2 East 7th St.
Oswego, NY 13126
315-342-3003
www.oswegohaven.org

The Safe Haven Museum and Education Center commemorates America's only shelter for Nazi Holocaust survivors. It's dedicated to preserving the stories of 982 World War II refugees from 18 war-torn countries who were allowed into the United States as guests of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. These Holocaust survivors were housed at Fort Ontario in Oswego from August 1944 until February 1946.



20 Salmon River Visitor Center & International Sportfishing Museum

3044 NYS Rte. 13
Altmar, NY 13142
315-298-2213

www.salmonriverfishingmuseum.com



The Salmon River International Sportfishing Museum is home to a collection of over 250,000 historic items originally on display at the Gladding Corporation's museum, which was believed to be the nation's first sportfishing museum. The collection includes homemade antique fishing rods, rare lures, reels and tackle, books, original watercolors and historic prints.

21 Schroepel Historical Society Museum**

486 Main St.
Phoenix, NY 13135
315-695-6880

Located in the former Episcopal Church, the museum depicts the history of the Oswego River Canal and the village of Phoenix.

22 Selkirk Lighthouse**

6 Lake Extension Rd.
Pulaski, NY 13142
315-298-6688

The Selkirk Lighthouse, located at the mouth of the Salmon River, was completed and activated in 1838. Today, the light serves as a Class III navigation aid.



23 Spy Island

Mexico Point Park
Mexico, NY 13114
315-963-7657

Spy Island is the site where American spy and Revolutionary War hero Silas Town overheard British General St. Leger making battle plans. His warning of these plans led to the British loss at the Battle of Saratoga, the turning point of the Revolutionary War.



24 Starr Clark Tin Shop

3250 Main St.
Mexico, NY 13114

The building which housed the Starr Clark tin shop was a central gathering place for residents and a known center of abolitionist activity in the village of Mexico. The building has been restored and contains an interpretive display about the Underground Railroad in Oswego County.



25 West Monroe Historical Society

2355 NYS Rte. 49
West Monroe, NY 13167
315-676-7414
<http://westmonroehistory.org/>

Housed in the former West Monroe Grange Hall, the West Monroe Historical Society contains a collection of locally produced stoneware, a complete 1940s kitchen and a wide variety of items and photographs centered around West Monroe and communities on the north shore of Oneida Lake. There are also extensive genealogy records including newspapers, census records and cemetery listings.



26 West Pierhead Lighthouse in Oswego

Oswego Harbor
Lake St.
Oswego, NY 13126
315-342-7245 or
315-342-0480

The West Pierhead Lighthouse was built in 1934 and automated in 1967. One of Oswego's most recognizable landmarks, it remains an active navigational aid at the entrance to Oswego Harbor.



** The National Register of Historic Places is the United States government's official list of cultural resources and historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect our historic and archeological resources. For the full listing of places in Oswego County, please visit www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/ny/oswego/state.html



War of 1812

Oswego County had a significant part in helping shape the course of the War of 1812. While many crusades were won and lost during the war, in Oswego County, hundreds fought in British attacks on Oswego. Tales of these battles and more are shared through re-enactments, exhibits and sites like Fort Ontario State Historic Site and the War of 1812 Bicentennial Peace Garden Trail.



War of 1812 Bicentennial Peace Garden Trail

The War of 1812 Bicentennial Peace Garden Trail commemorates two hundred years of peace and friendship between the United States and Canada, two countries who share the longest undefended border in the world. The trail covers more than 600 miles and includes the War of 1812 Peace Garden on East First Street in Oswego. Located in the Leotta-Seaway Trail Park, the garden features orange and yellow blooms that symbolize peace and freedom, and the colors of the U.S. 3rd Artillery Regiment that defended Fort Ontario in May 1814. A weeping cherry tree stands alongside, symbolizing the sorrow of war.

Follow the garden trail here:

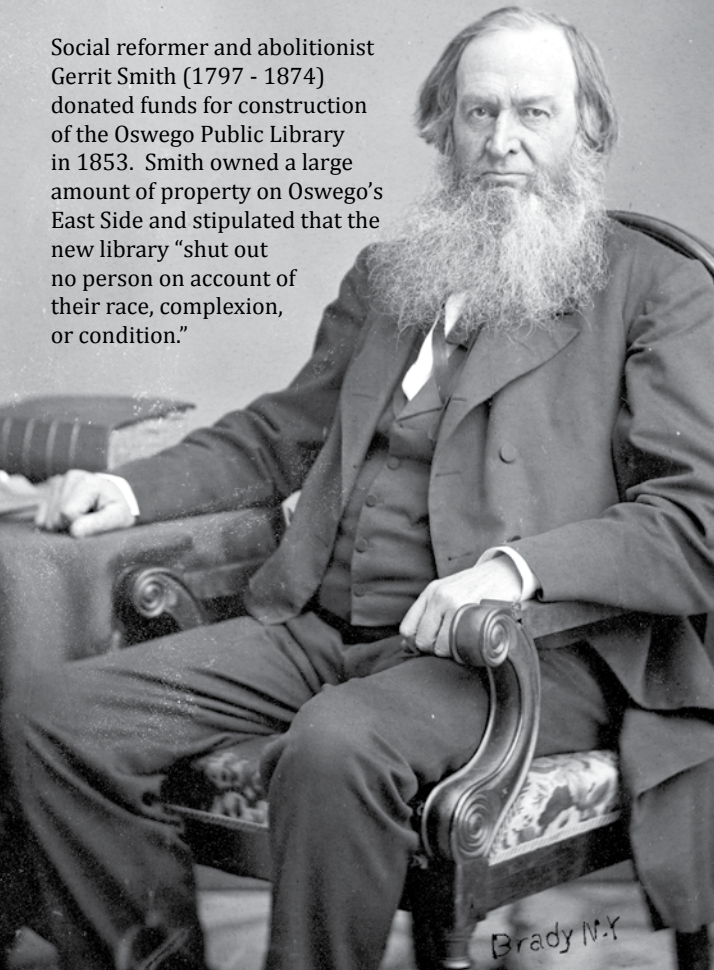
<http://www.ipgf.org/gardens/?type=1812>

Underground Railroad

Oswego County citizens played important roles in the anti-slavery abolitionist movement in the north during the mid-1800s. Many of the area's residents became involved in the struggle to end slavery in the years before the Civil War. Some provided assistance to slaves fleeing the south by hiding them in their homes or helping them escape to the north. While many slaves continued north to Canada, some established new lives for themselves in northern communities, such as those in Oswego County. Eleven of the county's Underground Railroad sites have been honored with placement on the National Register of Historic Places.



Social reformer and abolitionist Gerrit Smith (1797 - 1874) donated funds for construction of the Oswego Public Library in 1853. Smith owned a large amount of property on Oswego's East Side and stipulated that the new library "shut out no person on account of their race, complexion, or condition."



Underground Railroad Historic Sites:

City of Oswego

- 1 Site of Tudor E. and Marie Grant House**
134 West Bridge St.
Oswego, NY 13126

Tudor E. Grant bought this lot in 1854 where he and his wife Marie ran a boarding house. A former slave in Maryland, Grant escaped to Oswego in 1832 and became an abolitionist, barber and an outspoken leader in the African American community.

- 2 Nathan and Clarissa Green House****
98 West 8th St.
Oswego, NY 13126

The Nathan and Clarissa Green House was built by Nathan Green, a fugitive slave, and purchased by Gerrit Smith, a leading abolitionist. Nathan and Clarissa were one of about 15 African American families in Oswego during the 1850s.



- 3 John and Harriet McKenzie House****
96 West 8th St.
Oswego, NY 13126

The John and Harriet McKenzie House was built in 1847 by John McKenzie, a former fugitive slave from South Carolina who was heavily involved in Underground Railroad work. Two years later Nathan and Clarissa Green built their house next door.



4 Buckhout-Jones Building**

13 West Bridge St.
Oswego, NY 13126

The Buckhout-Jones Building is a historic commercial building owned by white abolitionist Abram Buckhout. The building was constructed in the 1850s and rebuilt in 1876 after a fire. Two fugitive slaves, Tudor E. Grant and Charles Smith, operated barbershops in the basement of the building from the 1850s to the 1880s.



5 Market House

159 Water St.
Oswego, NY 13126

The Market House, also known as the Market Hall and the D.L. & W. Hall, is a historic market building built in 1835. The anti-slavery National Liberty Party met at the Market House in October of 1850 to nominate a white abolitionist, Gerrit Smith, of Peterboro in Madison County, for President of the United States.

6 Edwin W. and Charlotte Clarke House**

80 East Mohawk St.
Oswego, NY 13126

Built in 1857, the Edwin W. and Charlotte Clarke House was a way station on the Underground Railroad. The Clarkes were prominent abolitionists and Edwin was president of the Oswego County Anti-Slavery Society in 1842. He spearheaded the campaign to free James Watkins Seward, a free African American from Oswego County who had been captured and enslaved in Louisiana.



7 Oswego River Canal

Oswego, NY 13126

Opened in 1828, the Oswego River Canal is 23.7 miles long and connects the Erie Canal at Three Rivers (Oneida, Seneca and Oswego) to Lake Ontario at Oswego. In 1841, Edwin W. Clarke unsuccessfully tried to rescue a young enslaved woman along the banks of the canal, testing a new law prohibiting slave owners from bringing enslaved people into New York State.

8 John B. and Lydia Edwards House**

144 East 3rd St.
Oswego, NY 13126

The John B. and Lydia Edwards House is a historic home built between 1834 and 1835. John B. Edwards was abolitionist Gerrit Smith's agent in Oswego. The house is well documented as a way station on the Underground Railroad.



9 Hamilton and Rhoda Littlefield House**

44 East Oneida St.
Oswego, NY 13126

The Hamilton and Rhoda Littlefield House is a historic home built in 1834 and remodeled in the 1920s. In 1853, Hamilton Littlefield sheltered a fugitive slave sent to him by Gerrit Smith's agent John B. Edwards, and later sheltered 15 of them at the same time. The house was clearly a way station on the Underground Railroad.

10 Site of Benjamin and Susan Hockley House

19 East 6th St.
Oswego, NY 13126

Benjamin and Susan Hockley were heavily involved with the Underground Railroad. They were buying a house on this site from abolitionist Gerrit Smith when the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was passed. When slave-catchers from Tennessee came after Hockley, he fled to Lewiston and boarded a raft in an attempt to escape to Canada.

11 Oswego City Library

120 East 2nd St.
Oswego, NY 13126

Built in 1855, the historic Oswego City Library is the oldest public library in continuous use in New York State. It was a gift from Gerrit Smith to the City of Oswego and was open to all men and women, regardless of their race.



12 Oswego Harbor Oswego, NY 13126

Oswego Harbor was the first freshwater port in the United States. Fugitive slaves used the waterway as a route north to Canada.



13 Cemetery and site of Olive and Sidney Clarke House

Lowé's parking area, north side of Route 104, west of City Line Road
Oswego, NY 13126

Between 80 and 125 freedom-seekers spent their last night in the United States at Sidney and Olive Jackson Clark's log home before heading to Canada during the 1840s and 1850s. Olive and Sidney's siblings were also active on the Freedom Trail. A stone wall and marker designate the site.

14 New Covenant Community Church

51 E. Oneida St.
Oswego, NY 13126

The Rev. Henry Ludlow, an outspoken abolitionist minister, laid the cornerstone of the Congregational Church in 1857 and was appointed the first pastor after its dedication in 1859. A graduate of Princeton, he was a pioneer leader in the fight against slavery. Rev. Ludlow is best known for his role in ministering to the African defendants in the Amistad Trial of 1840-41.

Oswego Town

15 Daniel and Miriam Pease House** 261 Cemetery Rd. Oswego, NY 13126

Daniel, Miriam and their seven children were active in Oswego County's early abolitionist movement. Their home, built between 1816 and 1826, served as a way station on the Underground Railroad..



Scriba

16 Riverside Cemetery**

County Route 57
Oswego, NY 13126 (south of Churchill Rd.)

The Riverside Cemetery is a historic, rural cemetery that was established in 1855. Many abolitionists, both black and white, were buried here.



New Haven

17 Site of David Kilburne House

Route 104 (south side, across from George-Hughes Rd.)
New Haven, NY 13121

In 1836, Kilburne confessed that he had a prejudice against African Americans until "a colored man called at my door and requested permission to tarry in my house over the Sabbath. I found my dislike was wicked prejudice."

Mexico

18 Orson Ames House**

3339 Main Street
Mexico, NY 13114

Orson Ames was a member of Mexico township's first Vigilance Committee, which was organized to help fugitives escape to Canada.

Fugitive slave Jerry McHenry was sheltered here for one night in October 1851. By rescuing Jerry in Syracuse, white and black abolitionists successfully challenged the ability of the federal government to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and helped make Central New York a refuge for freedom seekers. The home was built around 1830.



19 Starr Clark Tin Shop**

3250 Main St.
Mexico, NY 13114

Starr Clark and his family were at the center of abolitionist activity in Mexico from 1835 on. Clark was a member of Mexico's Vigilance Committee and dedicated himself to assisting fugitives. In 1837, he sheltered a fugitive named George who helped promote the abolitionist cause in Mexico.



20 Asa and Caroline Wing House**

3392 Route 69
Mexico, NY 13114

Built in the 1830s, Asa and Caroline Wing's home was used to harbor fugitive slaves. In late December of 1850, they harbored seven members of the Thompson family in their escape to Canada.



Richland/Pulaski

21 Site of George Bragdon House

7943 Route 3
Pulaski, NY 13142

George Bragdon's home was so well-known as a stop on the Freedom Trail that Wilbur Siebert in his book "The Underground Railway from Slavery to Freedom" (1898) called it simply "Bragdon's Place." The current house was built on the foundation of the original homestead.

22 Bethel Church

Lake Extension Road and Route 3
Richland, NY 13142

Built by George Bragdon as a non-denominational church between 1848 and 1849, Bethel Church was known for having several active abolitionist members. In 1861, it hosted abolitionist minister Luther Lee.

23 Ard H. Stevens-George Washington Store

31 Broad St.
Pulaski, NY 13142

Ard H. Stevens was an active abolitionist. George and Lucretia Bakeman Washington, African Americans, later owned this store.

Constantia

24 Peter Feeler Cemetery

Center Rd.
Constantia, NY 13044

African Americans Peter and Jane Feeler came to Constantia around 1835 from the Hudson Valley. Several African Americans are buried in this family graveyard, including at least two Civil War veterans. This site is not accessible to the public.

Hastings

25 Site of Toll Booth

Jerry McHenry's Rescue - Near 431 Route 11
Hastings, NY 13036

Hidden in a butcher's wagon, Jerry McHenry passed along this road on his way to Mexico and Oswego, and ultimately, Kingston, Ontario. Under the Fugitive Slave Law, McHenry was seized by federal authorities and later rescued by a group of abolitionists, including both black and white citizens of Syracuse, who helped him escape to Canada.



Schroepfel/Gilbert Mills

26 Hiram and Lucy Gilbert House

452 Gilbert Mills Rd.
Schroepfel, NY 13135

A Congregational deacon, miller and founder of a local academy, Hiram, and his wife Lucy housed fugitives as early as 1837, when the freedom seeker George stayed overnight with his family.

27 Amos and Hannah Mason House

Gilbert Mills Rd., across from Red School House Rd.
Phoenix, NY 13135

Amos and Hannah Mason actively supported the Underground Railroad. In December 1839, Hannah's son, James Watkins Seward, was kidnapped in New Orleans and accused of being a runaway slave. Oswego County abolitionists successfully lobbied for his release, but in July 1841, he was hanged for murder in St. Louis.

28 Stephen and Rhoda Griffith House

Gilbert Mills Rd., across from Church Rd.,
Schroepfel, NY 13135

Grove Gilbert, grandson of Hiram Gilbert, was told a story by his grandmother of two African American sisters, one sheltered in the Gilbert house and one in the Griffith house, who were happily reunited one night.

29 Gilbert Mills Cemetery

Church Rd.
Phoenix, NY 13135

Both blacks and whites were buried in the Gilbert Mills Cemetery, including Amos Mason, an African American member of the Schroepfel Town Vigilance Committee, and his twin daughters, Helen and Harriet.

Volney

30 Bristol Hill Church

North side of Route 3, east of Fulton
Fulton, NY 13069



Established in 1812, this church had both black and white members (including the Gilberts and Masons), many of whom were active in the Underground Railroad. The church building was constructed between 1832-1836 and incorporates original wainscoting, windows, and carved lintel.

31 Mount Pleasant Cemetery

County Route 45, across from the Methodist Church
Fulton, NY 13069

The Mount Pleasant Cemetery contains graves of nearly 50 African Americans, including at least one Civil War veteran, Samuel Bakeman.

32 William Baldwin House

323 Baldwin Rd.
Fulton, NY 13069

William Baldwin's granddaughter recalled stories of his participation in the Underground Railroad. The proximity of several African American families, including the Depuys, Slaters, and Lawsons, suggests the possibility of a biracial freedom trail network in this neighborhood.

33 Site of Charles and Mary Ann Case House

133 South First St.
Fulton, NY 13069

In 1854, when the Cases still lived on Second Street, nine fugitives from Maryland stayed at their home, fleeing from notorious slave dealer Hope Slatter, who intended to sell them in New Orleans. Four years later, they began building another home on this site. Frederick Douglass, noted abolitionist leader, spoke in Fulton in 1847.





Granby

34 Jacob and Juliett Bakeman House
 County Route 8 and Harris Hill Rd.
 Granby, NY 13069

In about 1800, Jacob Bakeman's father, Henry, an African American, was among the first residents to settle in what is now Fulton. Jacob owned two mills at his father's settlement of West Granby and built the north side of the present house in the early 1830s. Members of the Bakeman family continue to live in Central New York today.

Hannibal

35 Silas Brewster House
 963 Cayuga St.
 Hannibal, NY 13074

Silas Brewster was at the heart of Underground Railroad activities in Hannibal, using his barn to hide freedom seekers. Brewster's store is now Cook's Jewelers.

- = Existing structures
- = Structures no longer exist



It's great history.

visitoswegocounty.com



John Wells Pratt House



Starr Clark Tin Shop



Richardson-Bates House Museum



It's great history.

visitoswegocounty.com



Historical Attractions

From lighthouses and forts, to museums and historical societies, Oswego County is brimming with attractions preserving the area's captivating history.





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