

***The
Town of Amherst
Erie County
New York***

Edited by

SUE MILLER YOUNG

Historian of

**Town of Amherst and
Village of Williamsville**

Published by the

TOWN BOARD OF AMHERST



September, 1955

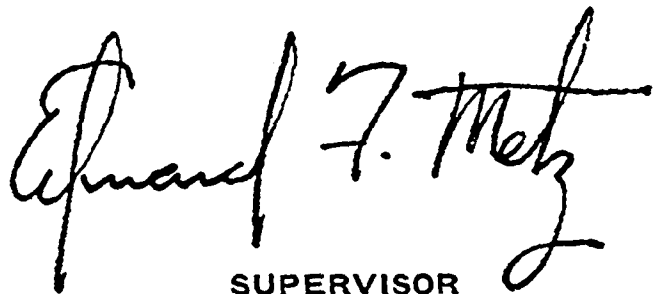
Foreword

Each community has its traditions, its lore and its history. The Town of Amherst is rich in all of these and residents may be justly proud of the heritage which is ours.

In the pages of this booklet our Town Historian, Sue Miller Young, has very ably set forth many of the important events in the history of our Town.

It is for us, the citizens of today, to follow in the footsteps of our forefathers by constantly striving to keep Amherst in the forefront as one of the outstanding communities in the nation.

The Town Board of the Town of Amherst takes great pride in publishing this booklet and does so in the hope that it will bring pleasure and be of value to its readers.


SUPERVISOR

This booklet is dedicated to the present, past and future citizens of the Town of Amherst with its rich heritage and its enviable reputation.

Acknowledgements are made to Supervisor Eduard F. Metz and to the Town and Village officials, to District Superintendent of Schools A. W. Harkness, to Mr. George J. Measer for use of The Amherst Bee files, and to local historians for the loan of documents and other papers without which the completion of this work would have been impossible.

Space and time do not permit detailed accounts, errors may have been made, but that this first attempt may be of use, is the hope of your Town Historian.

SUE MILLER YOUNG

September, 1955



Officers of the Town of Amherst

Supervisor.....	Eduard F. Metz, 36 Maynard Dr., Eggertsville 21, N. Y.
Councilman.....	Edgar J. Barth, 3905 Bailey Ave., Eggertsville 21, N. Y.
Councilman.....	D. Russell Conway, 148 Park Dr., Williamsville 21, N. Y.
Councilman.....	Edward E. Cook, 49 Campbell Blvd., Getzville, N. Y.
Councilman.....	Harry H. Schall, 8 Harwood Dr., Snyder 21, N. Y.
Town Clerk.....	Harry R. Jones, 310 Springville Ave., Eggertsville 21, N. Y.
Chairman of Board of Assessors ..	Fred W. Stuewe, Dodge Rd., Getzville, N. Y.
Receiver of Taxes..	Nelson H. Blocher, 107 Garrison Rd., Williamsville 21, N. Y.
Town Engineer.....	Clesson H. Field, 272 Washington Hwy., Snyder 21, N. Y.
Building Commissioner.....	Elmer C. Love, 1101 N. Forest Rd., Williamsville 21, N. Y.
Chief of Police.....	Edwin H. Evans, 5752 Main St., Williamsville 21, N. Y.
Justice.....	Theodore E. Smith, 86 Cayuga Rd., Williamsville 21, N. Y.
Justice.....	Edward L. Robinson, 29 Rankin Rd., Snyder 21, N. Y.
Town Attorney	Leland G. Davis, 150 Brantwood Rd., Snyder 21, N. Y.
Water Superintendent.....	William Kratzman, 116 Catherine St., Williamsville 21, N. Y.
School Attendant Supervisor.....	Bertha Drews, 139 Burbank Dr. Snyder 21, N. Y.

Officers of the Village of Williamsville

Mayor	Howard F. Tatu
Trustee Theodore A. Huck	Village Clerk Gilbert B. Dodge
Trustee Curtis H. Deming	Treasurer William C. Bingham
Trustee Earl E. Brock	Attorney Charles O. Burney
Trustee Stanley P. Jones	Engineer Harold J. Senior
Superintendent of Public Works	Arthur A. Wolf



Calendar of Town

- Annual School Meeting**—First Tuesday in May in each school district.
- Town Board Meeting**—Every Monday night except when it falls on a legal holiday, then on the following night.
- Primary Election**—Known as the fall primary, shall be held annually on the seventh Tuesday before the general election.
- Registration Days**—The board of inspectors for each election district other than an election district in a city or village having five thousand inhabitants or more shall hold before every general election two meetings for the registration of the voters thereof, at the place designated for registration. Such meetings shall be held on the fifth and fourth Saturdays before such election. The first meeting shall begin at seven o'clock in the forenoon and the second at one o'clock in the afternoon, and each meeting shall continue until ten o'clock in the evening.
- General Election**—Annually on the Tuesday next succeeding the first Monday in November.
- Budget Hearing**—Immediately after the preliminary budget has been prepared and approved the town board shall file the original thereof in the office of the town clerk where it shall be available for inspection by an interested person at all reasonable hours, and the town board shall adopt a resolution specifying time when and place where a public hearing will be held upon such preliminary budget and require the town clerk to give notice of such hearing. Such hearing shall be held on or before the Thursday immediately following the general election.
- Fire District Election**—Shall be held in each fire district on the first Tuesday in December.



Public Buildings

Supervisor's Office and Receiver of Taxes — 5577 Main St. Williamsville
Village and Town Hall — 5583 Main St. Williamsville
Highway Department — 1042 North Forest Road.

Town of Amherst Chronology

1772 — The lands which constitute the Town of Amherst were part of Albany County.

1772-1789—Part of Tryon County which was changed to Montgomery County in 1784.

1789-1802—Part of Ontario County.

1802-1804—Part of the Town of Batavia, Genesee County.

1804-1809—Part of Town of Erie, Genesee County.

1808— Niagara County created.

1808-1810—Town of Clarence.

1810-1818—Town of Buffalo.

1818—April 10, Town of Amherst created.



Early History of the Town of Amherst

Amherst was named in honor of Sir Jeffrey Amherst, commander of the English forces in America (1759-1760) when Canada was conquered from France. It comprises Township 12, Range 7 and parts of Township 11 and 13, about 53 square miles or 33,600 acres. It is bounded on the east by Transit Road, on the south by a line about 150 feet south of Wehrle Drive on the west by Niagara Falls Blvd. and on the north by Tonawanda Creek.

Williamsville is the only incorporated village in the Town of Amherst having definite boundaries. Snyder, Eggertsville, Getzville, North Amherst and the part of East Amherst, Swormville and Millersport located west of Transit Road are unincorporated hamlets having no definite boundaries.

Williamsville derived its name from one of the first settlers, Jonas Williams, who came in 1805 and who owned two mills on opposite banks of Ellicott Creek, the settlement being called Williams Mills until after the War of 1812. One of those mills is still standing on Spring Street, still operated by water power. It is The Williamsville Water Mills and is the only one of the seven original water mills still in operation in the town.

Snyder was named Snyderville as Michael Snyder was the first postmaster and operated a store at the corner of Harlem Road and Main Street. Eggertsville was named for Christian Eggert, who was the first postmaster in that settlement. Getzville, located in the northern part of the town, received its name from Joseph Getz, owner of the cooper shop in the vicinity. Swormville commemorates the name of Adam Schworm. East Amherst was originally Transit Station and Millersport was Mill Port.

Ellicott Creek which crosses Main Street in Williamsville was called Eleven Mile Creek and Tonawanda Creek was Tonewanta, deriving its name

from the Indian Reservation nearby. Ransom Creek drains the northeastern part of the township.

Main Street called the Great Road, and later the Buffalo-Batavia Road, followed the old Iroquois Trail until March 1801, when Joseph Ellicott hired White Chief also known as White Seneca, to blaze a straighter trail on higher ground and paid him \$10.00. Here the first wagon road in Erie County was opened in the spring of 1798. In 1799 the Holland Land Company offered several lots, about ten miles apart on the road from East Transit to Buffalo, to any proper men who would build and keep open taverns upon them. The lots were not donated but were sold at the company's lowest price, on long term and without interest. This was the first type of legal title to land according to the white man's idea.

All of Amherst was purchased for \$2.00 per acre in 1799 by Benjamin Ellicott and John Thompson.

Mr. Thompson built the first house in Amherst and perhaps in Erie County although he did not occupy it immediately. Here occurred the first marriage, that of Timothy S. Hopkins and Nancy Ann Kerr, April 28, 1804. This house was originally located at Main and Oakgrove Drive in Williamsville, the present site of Read Motor Co. It was moved to 29 Oakgrove Drive where it deteriorated to the point that it became unusable and was demolished July 20 and 21, 1955. The Williamsville Historical Society has preserved several of the hand hewn logs.

The first lots sold in the northern part of the town were bought by Adam Vollmar in 1810. Peter Hershey bought lot No. 6 in 1805, this being the eighth lot sold and is the property on which St. Mary of the Angels is located. This lot on Mill Street extends to Reist Street.

During the War of 1812 troops were stationed in Williamsville on the bank of Ellicott Creek near Lehn Springs Drive, where a row of log houses served as barracks and as a hospital, the casualties being buried in the cemetery on Aero Drive near Garrison Road. It is interesting to note, that of the 205 soldiers buried there, only 12 were from New York State. Other barracks were located on Glen Avenue behind the Catholic Church and extended to Mill Street.

After the war Williamsville had a grist mill, a saw mill, a store and a tavern. When Buffalo was burned December 31, 1813, the people fled through Williamsville toward Batavia.

Isaac F. Bowman was appointed Postmaster February 4, 1813, and owned the first store. Samuel McConnell kept the first tavern as early as 1807. Dr. David S. Conkey was the first physician.

To add to the difficulties of the settlers after the War of 1812 when money was scarce, came the cold summer of 1816. There were frosts each month, snow fell late in May and there was freezing weather in June.

The Town of Amherst was created April 10, 1818, and the first Town meeting was held April 6, 1819, at Frederick Miller's Inn located at Main and Cayuga Road on the site of the Beach-Tuyn Funeral Home. Timothy S. Hopkins was elected the first Supervisor and John Grove the first Town Clerk. In those days one of the laws pertained to the building of fences four and one half feet high to keep animals out. Another stated that Path masters are fence drivers and pound keepers. By 1821 the Town of Amherst was in

Erie County. By 1830 each owner of flocks and herds was ordered to register his marks with the Town Clerk and any animal found trespassing could be redeemed by the payment of a fine. In 1842 a bounty of \$10.00 was offered for a full grown wolf. In 1837 a macadam road was built from Buffalo to Williamsville.

After the Erie Canal was built in 1825 the northern part of the town began to be settled. One of the settlements was along both sides of Ellicott Creek following the Indian trails. These people came from Alsace-Lorraine. About the same time the Germans came to the northern and southern parts. The earliest settlers came from Maryland and the New England states, the next ones from Pennsylvania and were called the Pennsylvania Dutch. Many of these people were of the Mennonite faith. As late as 1878 auction bills were printed in both English and German.

Williamsville was incorporated in 1850, Benjamin Miller being the first president and Dr. William Van Pelt the first clerk. It was re-incorporated in 1918.



Early Business

Amherst started as an industrial community, since Ellicott Creek furnished fine water power and Tonawanda Creek good transportation. By 1850 on Ellicott Creek there were seven grist mills and several saw mills, a tannery, carding works, bedstead factory and two forges. Besides these there were blacksmith and harness shops, cooperages and a stave factory in Getzville, lime kilns, a tailor shop with thirteen employees, a broom factory, paper mill, wagon shops—one at Snyder, malsters and brewers, cabinet makers, a planing mill, logging carried on in the northern part of the town, a vinegar factory, two potteries in Eggertsville and one in Snyder, slaughter houses, taverns and plenty of saloons.



Other Facts

Juba Stores and Co. had one of the very early stores where the Marine Bank in Williamsville is located.

The Beach-Tuyn Funeral Home was started in 1861 by D. Wehrle and Chalmers Gelatine Factory in 1873. These are the two oldest business places still operated by the families which founded them.

Williamsville had 250 buildings in 1854 compared with 1800 now.

The assessed valuation of the town is \$93,038,805.00

The population of Amherst November 15, 1847 was 3,133 and in 1953 it was 42,950.

Garrison Road received its name from the fact that a garrison of soldiers was located there during the War of 1812.

North Cayuga Street was Canal Street.

Many streets have been given names of families in the town.

The Indian name for Williamsville meant Many Falls and Ellicott Creek meant Level Heavens.

The Town Pump with iron cup and chain was on the east corner of Main and North Cayuga Streets.

Pound parties, coasting parties, dime socials and pie socials were important events.

John Hutchinson had a boot and shoe factory in connection with his tannery.

In 1880 horses were stabbed by delinquents.

When excavating for the Wehrle Building at Main and Cayuga Rd., bones were found. This had been the site of an early inn.

There was deep mud on the highways in April of 1882.

Garrison Park was Hartman's Grove, a part of the Evans farm.

Between 125 and 150 subdivisions have been developed within the town.



Libraries

Williamsville-Amherst Free Library located in the Village Hall in Williamsville has about 10,000 books and is associated with the Erie County Library. Hours are 1 to 9 P. M. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and from 10 A. M. to 6 P. M. on Saturday. Librarian, Mrs. Suzette I. Berezowska.

Eggertsville-Snyder Branch of the Buffalo and Erie County Library, 4622 Main Street, Snyder, has about 12,000 books. Hours are 1 to 9 P. M. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Thursday 1 to 5:30 P. M., Saturday 9 A. M. to 5 P. M., Librarian, Mrs. Marjorie McTaggart.

Bookmobile stops at North Amherst, Getzville and Eggertsville schools and at several other places in the town.

All schools have libraries.

Public Schools

Amherst Central Senior High School, District No. 1, was organized in 1930 as a High School District only, to provide High School facilities for residents of Common School District No. 13 and No. 18. Grades 7-12.

Location—4301 Main St., Snyder 21, N. Y.

Supervising Principal of District—Mr. Phillip Schweickhard

Principal of Senior High School—Mr. John Scheller

Number of day school faculty—52

Enrollment—866

Amherst Central Junior High School opened September 1, 1955.

Location—55 Kings Highway

Principal—Mr. Edward Mustard

Number of day school faculty—60

Enrollment—1055

Common School District No. 13, known as Eggertsville District - K - 6

Number of schools—2

1. Windermere School—291 Windermere Boulevard

Number of faculty—36

Enrollment—765

2. Eggert Road School—1360 Eggert Road

Number of faculty—31

Enrollment—659

Common School District No. 18, known as Snyder District - K - 6

- Number of schools — 2

1. Smallwood Drive School—300 Smallwood Drive

Number of faculty—40

Enrollment—884

2. Harlem Road School—4255 Harlem Road

Number of faculty—34

Enrollment—755

Central School District No. 3 (Williamsville Central District) was organized June 28, 1948, from 11 former districts K - 12.

Number of Schools—3

Supervising Principal of District—Dr. William J. Keller

Principal of Junior-Senior High School—Mr. Patrick J. Murray

Separate Schools

1. Jr.-Sr. High School—Grades 7-12

5950 Main Street, Williamsville

Total number of day school faculty—68

Total enrollment—1164

2. Academy Street School K - 6

Academy Street, Williamsville

Number of faculty—45

Enrollment—1085

3. North Elementary School K - 6

Dodge Road, East Amherst

Number of faculty—30

Enrollment—771

Central School District No. 7 (Sweet Home Central) organized June 30, 1950, from 4 former districts. K - 9

Principal of District and Junior High School—Mr. Norman C. Vergils
664 Sweet Home Road, Eggertsville.

Number of faculty—48

Enrollment—890

In addition to the public schools, Amherst has church schools, nursery schools and the Park School of Buffalo located on N. Harlem Road in Snyder.

The first school lot was donated by Jonas Williams in 1817, but its location is not known.

John Grove, first Town Clerk of Amherst, was a hatter who established his business on Grove Street in Williamsville during the War of 1812. He taught school in a little frame building located on the property now occupied by the Village Hall some time before 1840.

District No. 3 school was located at 70 Eagle Street, Williamsville, before 1844. This lot was donated by Benjamin Hershey.

Early schools were held in several buildings in the village just as school was held in the church basements and in the Village Hall in 1921 while the new Academy Street School was being built.

Snyder and Eggertsville both had small one room schools early in the history of the town. Snyder also had a singing school held in the Witmer Homestead.

Eighteen districts had been formed by 1866 and the little red school houses dotted the area to the north and east.

The stone school on Cayuga Street was built in 1840 and is the oldest school building in Amherst.

Williamsville Classical Institute was built as a private school by the Church of Christ Disciples in 1813 and used until 1868, at which time it was called the Academy. In 1874 the School Board bought the building for a grade school. Later it became a Union School and in 1893 a High School. In 1921 a new school was built and ten years later an addition. This is the Elementary Academy Street School. The Central Jr.-Sr. High School was built 1948-1950.

Amherst Central High School was built 1930-1931. It was the first central district in the Town of Amherst.

Churches

Calvary Episcopal—Milton and Cayuga, Williamsville

Williamsville Methodist—Main at Oakgrove, Williamsville

Christ Methodist—Saratoga and Harlem Roads, Snyder

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran—North Ellicott and Eagle Sts., Williamsville

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran—4007 Main Street, Eggertsville

Amherst Lutheran—Main and Lafayette Boulevard, Snyder

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran—6540 Main Street, Williamsville

Ascension Lutheran—20 Burroughs Drive and Main Street, Snyder

Sheridan Drive Evangelical Lutheran—Sheridan Drive and Larch Road,
Eggertsville

Disciples of Christ—5658 Main Street, Williamsville

Randall Memorial Baptist—Main and Spring Streets, Williamsville

St. Peter and Paul's R. C.—Main and Grove, Williamsville

St. Leo's R. C.—Sweet Home Road and Emerson Drive, Amherst

St. Benedict's R. C.—Main at Eggert Road, Eggertsville

Christ the King R. C.—Main at Lamarck Drive, Snyder

Amherst Community—77 Washington Highway, Snyder

Community Church of Eggertsville—Sheridan Drive and Sweet Home Road,
Eggertsville

Reformed Mennonite—Main and North Forest Road, Williamsville

Harding Avenue Mennonite—Harding Avenue, Williamsville

Unitarian-Universalist—Los Robles and Milton, Williamsville

Christian Fellowship—765 Niagara Falls Boulevard, Amherst

North Presbyterian—Forest at Union, Williamsville

First Church of Christ Scientist—5571 Main Street, Williamsville

The Reformed Mennonite Church is the oldest church building in Amherst, having been built in 1834. It has been in use continuously.



Fire Departments

Hutchinson Hose Company

Eggertsville Hose Company

Snyder Fire Department

Getzville Fire Company

North Amherst Fire Company

Main-Transit Community Volunteer
Fire Company

Transit Fire Company

Swormville Fire Company

Ellicott Creek Volunteer Fire Co.

North Bailey Fire Company

Post Offices

Williamsville

East Amherst

Getzville

Swormville

Eggertsville-Snyder will be established soon.



Parks

Island Park—rear of Town Hall, Main Street, Williamsville

Garrison Park—Garrison Road and Park Drive, Williamsville

Ball Park—S. Long Street, Williamsville

Island of Ellicott Creek Park



Playgrounds

K-A-R-E at Kingsgate Village, Snyder

Dellwood-Ivyhurst, Eggertsville

✓ All schools have playgrounds.



Country Clubs

Westwood—772 N. Forest Road

Transit Valley—Transit Road, East Amherst

Park Country Club—Sheridan Drive

Country Club of Buffalo—Youngs Road



Institutions

Blocher Homes—Evans Street, Williamsville

St. Mary of the Angels—Mill Street and Reist Street

St. Rita's Home for Retarded Children—Millersport Highway

Cemeteries

War of 1812—Aero Drive, Williamsville

Roman Catholic—S. Cayuga Road, Williamsville

Roman Catholic—South Union Road, Williamsville

Williamsville—Main and Reist Streets.

Skiddersville—Skiddersville Road



Wars

1812—Timothy S. Hopkins served as Brigadier General under Major-General Hall, but resigned his commission when peace was declared.

Civil War—Among the 328 enlistees in the Town of Amherst were Major William H. Randall, Captain Edgar Hinkley, Capt. Thomas Lanphear, Capt. Christopher Smith, Sgt. Tobias Witmer, Corp. Christian Witmer, who was the last survivor in Amherst and who lived to be 99 years of age.

Spanish-American and Mexican War had no casualties in Amherst.

World War I—George F. Lamm Post American Legion was formed Nov. 10, 1919, the Ladies Auxiliary being formed later. The Post monument was placed in the Williamsville Cemetery in 1947.

Amherst Township Post No. 416 was formed in 1937, the Ladies Auxiliary in 1938.

World War II—American Veterans of World War II (Am.-Vet. Post No. 49) was formed in 1946.

New York State Division of Veteran's Affairs opened its local office in the Tax Building on Main Street in Williamsville, November 1, 1945.



Dates and Happenings

1799—First house in Erie Co., built by John Thompson at Williamsville.

1804—First marriage in Erie Co., Timothy S. Hopkins and Nancy Ann Kerr.

1807—First tavern built by Samuel McConnell in Williamsville.

1811—Jonas Williams built mill in Williamsville.

1812—War. General Winfield Scott used the Thompson House as headquarters for a short time.

- 1816—Berkes Hotel built at Main and Eggert Roads.
- 1818—Town of Amherst formed.
- 1819—First Town Meeting held. Timothy S. Hopkins was the first Supervisor.
- 1820—Jonas Williams died and was buried in his own cemetery at the rear of Dr. A. Sager and Harry Green's house at 30 Cayuga Road.
- 1821—Reist Mill built and Jacob Schenck came to Snyder in a covered wagon.
- 1824—Hydraulic cement from the Williamsville quarry was furnished for the first lock of Erie Canal.
- 1825—Erie Canal opened. Postage on a letter cost 25 cents, the price of a calf skin.
- 1827—Oziel Smith purchased Jonas Williams mill.
- 1832—Eagle House built by Oziel Smith.
- 1834—Reformed Mennonite Church built at Main and N. Forest Roads.
- 1835—Mansion House built. First fire department formed and hand pumper bought.
- 1838—First Eggertsville Lutheran Church built.
- 1839—Southern part of Amherst cut off to form Cheektowaga.
- 1840—Cayuga Road stone school house built(Williamsville).
- 1843—First Baptist Church built—94 Cayuga Road, Williamsville
- 1844—Methodist Church in Williamsville built, sanctuary is original building.
- 1848—First steamboat built in Amherst for Christian Reist.
- 1850—Williamsville incorporated.
- 1854—First map of Williamsville made by Tobias Witmer.
- 1855—Eggertsville Post Office established with Christian Eggert as postmaster.
- 1856—Rough and Ready Fire Engine Co. No. 1 formed in Williamsville. Post Office established in Getzville with George H. Hoover as postmaster.
- 1857—Union Road property bought for Catholic cemetery.
- 1861—Baptist Church bell was used as fire alarm.
- 1863—St. Peter and Paul's R. C. Church built in Williamsville.
- 1868—First lawyer in town, Aaron Eggert.
- 1872—Tannery burned.
- 1874—Williamsville Classical Institute (The Academy) bought for a public school.
- 1879—First edition of Amherst Bee. First telephone.
- 1880—First canal boat built in Amherst by Jacob Hartel.
- 1882—Stone bridge in Williamsville built.
- 1883—School Exhibition held in Getzville by D. S. Krull, teacher.
- 1885—\$300.00 appropriated to repair corduroy road (Swamp Road).

1893—First trolley, which operated until 1930.

1894—Dodge Mill burned.

1895—Water system installed in Williamsville.

1896—Lehigh Valley Railroad branch built.

1901—Electric lights on Main Street.

1903—First Women's Club, Williamsville Study Club.

1904—Blocher Homes built by John Blocher at cost of \$50,000.

1905—Big fire in Snyder.

1907—Site for Village Hall and Hose House in Williamsville donated by E. H. Hutchinson.

1908—Village Hall built for \$14,000. Milton J. Hoffman, Village President.

1911—Williamsville Free Library founded.

1914—Amherst Community Church laid cornerstone.

1917—Bank of Williamsville opened. First soldiers of World War I left. Liberty Loans 2, 3, 4, and 5.

1919—First water meters installed in Williamsville.

1922—First Chautauqua held in Williamsville.

1925—First Girl Scout Troop, Sheridan Drive built.

1926—Amherst League of Women Voters organized.

1929—Amherst Garden Club formed, first in town. Bank of Snyder opened.

1930—Amherst Central High School built.

1931—Amherst Bank in Williamsville closed.

1933—First flower show held by Amherst Garden Club.

1941—World War II.

1945—Germany and Japan surrendered.

1948—Williamsville School district centralized.

1949—Dial system telephones installed. Liberty Bank in Williamsville opened.

1950—Sesqui-centennial celebration at Williamsville.

1951—Amherst was one of the first townships to set up an overall program of Civil Defense.

1952—Windermere School dedicated. Western New York Firemen's Convention held in Williamsville. Dodge-French Roads site selected for school. Neumann High School corner stone laid. Calvary Church and St. Benedict's Church dedicated.

1953—Korean Armistice and return of veterans. Sweet Home Central School dedicated.

1954—Thruway completed and opening celebration held at Wehrle Drive intersection. North Elementary School opened.

1955—Town Planning Board Report completed. Worst drought in Town of Amherst.

Transportation

From Indian Trails to the construction of the 1954 Thruway covers a span of 150 years through the eras of mud, corduroy, plank, macadam, brick and concrete roads. Today there are in Amherst 45.9 miles of state maintained highways, 70.57 miles of County roads, 120.65 miles of Town roads and 3.5 miles of the Thruway.

Methods of transportation have changed from ox-carts to railroads, automobiles, and buses. The stage coach from Williamsville to Buffalo was the first public conveyance. This was quite an imposing vehicle in 1866 when it was operated by H. M. Brown, making one trip and return to Buffalo each day. Stories are still told about the swaying back and forth as the coach lurched in the ruts and even overturned at times. By 1890 a shabby black curtained wagon had taken its place. This was called the "Black Maria" and served until April 5, 1893, when the electric railway took its place and operated until September 1930 when the Buffalo Transit Co. began the operation of buses.

As a method of paying for road upkeep in early days a toll gate was located on Main Street near Getzville Road.

Two railroads operate in the town—the Lehigh Valley since 1896 and the New York Central, which passes through the northern part of the town. It became known as the "Peanut" when it was taken over from the Canandaigua-Niagara Falls Railroad in 1855.

Travel by automobile necessitated good roads, so Sheridan Drive was built in 1925.

Nearness to Buffalo Airport makes the people of Amherst conscious of that method of travel and there are several small airports within the town.



Statistics — Amherst

The following information is taken from the Erie County Recreation Survey published February 1955, and started in 1952.

More than one-half of the population is over 30 years of age, while less than one-third is under 18. The Town's birth rate (23.3 per 1000) is somewhat higher than the County average (22.6), while the death rate (8.0 per 1000) is lower than the County average (10.1 per 1000).

Slightly more than 15% of the population 25 years and over are college graduates. 27% more are high school graduates and 12% more have completed the eighth grade.

Of the men employed, 41% are in professional and managerial positions, 34% are foremen, craftsmen and operatives, and 17% are in clerical and sales work. Approximately one-fifth of the women (over 14 years of age) are employed outside the home. 44% of these are in clerical and sales posi-

tions, 29% in professional and managerial positions, and 11% are in service jobs.

While individual family incomes range from less than \$500 to more than \$10,000, the median family income in 1949 was \$4,787 as compared to \$3,490 for Erie County.

The number of people who seek the help of private agencies is low (ranging from 0.5 to 2.9 per 1000). The juvenile delinquency and the adult probation rates are low.

Amherst had unprecedented growth from 1950 to 1955 with an average of 1000 new dwelling units being built and occupied each year.

OMISSION

Officers of the Town of Amherst
Superintendent of Highways

F. THEODORE JENSEN
174 Audubon Dr., Snyder 21, N. Y.

