

Staking Claims Settling a Wild Land

Grit and Determination

The earliest European American settlers needed tenacity and resolve to make their homes and livelihoods in this wild place. Jeffrey Cowper became the first white settler to put down stakes here, between 1759 and 1762. Patent holders and soldiers given land as payment for war services came to the region, often arriving in groups since there was safety in numbers. Once settled, these pioneers developed the land to meet their needs. The Hudson and Schroon rivers powered saw mills, grist mills, and more, and communities grew up around these industries.



John Jones' land grant from King George, 1774. Courtesy of the Warren County Records and Archives Center.

Land Grants and Patents

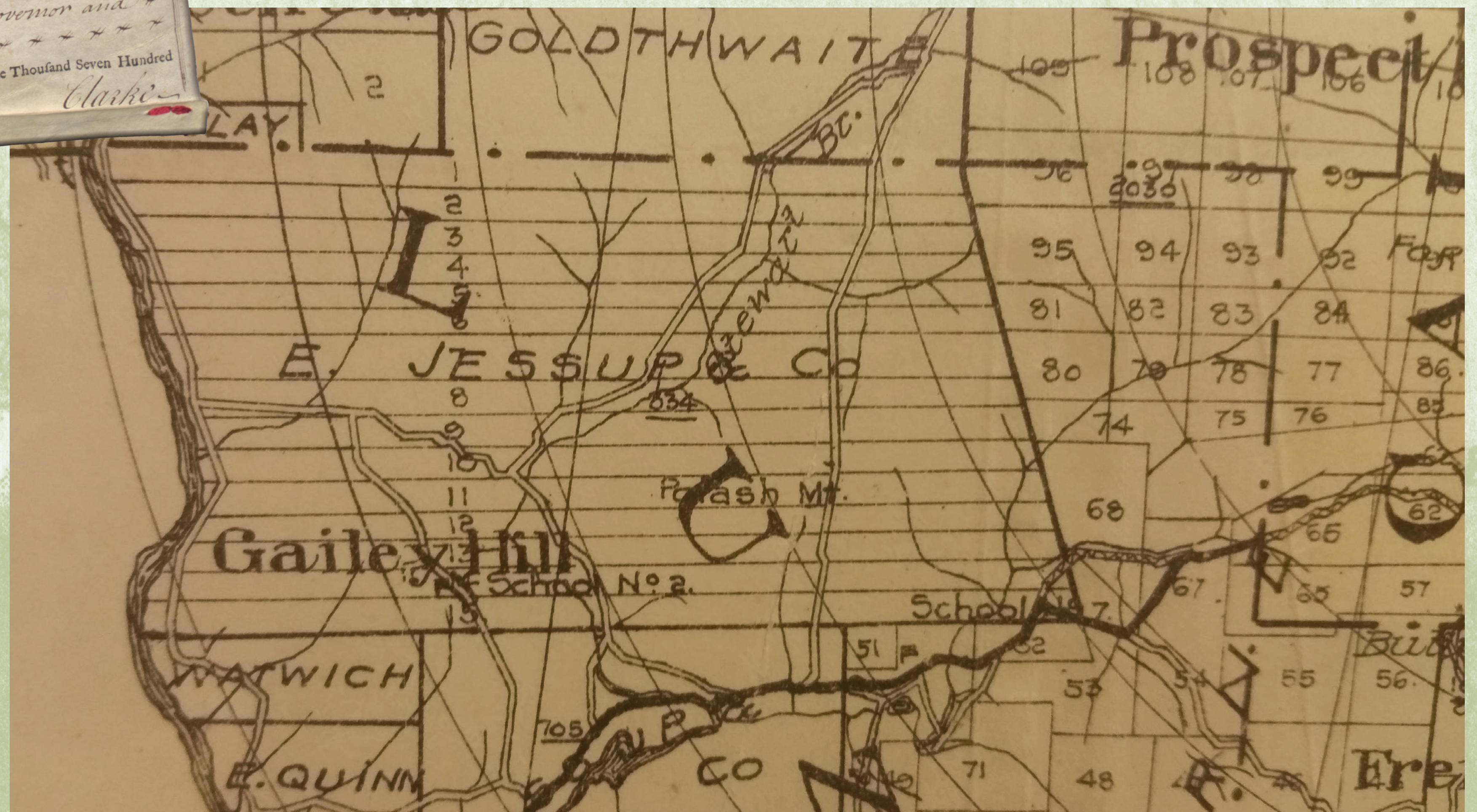
Land grants were often given to former soldiers, such as John Jones' land grant from King George, 1774 (shown). Jones' grant gifted all the land's assets except any gold and silver mines and any white pines greater than 24 inches in diameter, which were retained for use as ship masts for British ships. **Patents** were large tracts of lands purchased by men who found favor with the King.



Many early settlers built log cabins. This 1903 photo shows George Aldous' cabin off of Thirteenth Lake Road in Johnsburg. Courtesy of Joan Aldous.

The Brothers Jessup

Around 1764, Edward and Ebenezer Jessup began applying for land grants from King George and buying land patents in this region—parcels ranging from 4,100 acres ("Jessups Small," which includes parts of the towns of Lake Luzerne, Corinth, and Hadley) to the massive 800,000-acre Totten and Crossfield Patent, which included much of what is now Warren County. When the Revolutionary War broke out, the Loyalist Jessups escaped to Canada.



Map of "Jessups Big," a 7,750-acre parcel that includes central and northern sections of the present-day town of Lake Luzerne.

Stories Behind the Names



Gore Mountain

A **gore** is any unappropriated piece of land located between two previously granted parcels. Gore Mountain lies between Townships 12 and 14 of the Totten and Crossfield Patent.



Lake George Village

In 1787, James Caldwell obtained a land patent for nearly 600 acres at the south end of Lake George. He erected a gristmill and inn and rented properties within his new village, named "Caldwell." In 1962, Caldwell was renamed "Lake George."



Johnsburg and Thurman

John Thurman's land holdings covered much of present-day Warren County, so it's little wonder two towns are named for him. He built his home in Johnsburg, along with several mills, including one of America's first calico mills.