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Putting Sodus Shaker Village On The Map¹

By Walter A. Brumm

Introduction

The interplay of historical evidence with the researcher's skill at historical reconstruction is what is at stake in this study of the formation of the Shaker settlement on the southern shore of the Great Sodus Bay. Although the Shaker settlement there lasted for a decade, from 1826 until 1837, attention here is on the years 1825-1827, which were the formative years of the community. Through the use of maps, and with the corroboration of Shaker journals and other writings, I will demonstrate that the Sodus Shakers did not purchase virgin land but rather a deserted, previously-settled town. This is the "what" of the article. In this case, however, the "how" — i.e., the process of discovery, the role of chance and serendipity, the need to address my own "hidden" assumptions, the mysteries created by incongruent facts and the detective work required to solve them — is perhaps of equal interest, and shapes how I will present my findings.

Any historical inquiry is dependent upon artifacts from the past, which for the most part are written documents. All too often maps are not extensively used. For this study, however, I found them invaluable. When used in comparative research, maps raise some unique issues, and these will be highlighted as they apply to specific maps under discussion. Additionally, like all artifacts of human creation, maps may be flawed. Detecting errors and erroneous conclusions drawn from them is as necessary as it is a challenge. Attention, therefore, will be paid to the quality of the data gathered, and, as in all empirical research, while singular findings are important, it is when they are substantiated by other sources, i.e., independently verified, that they achieve their greatest significance.

Shakerism Begins in Wayne County

Shakerism is an American sect which competed for the hearts and minds of people with religious interests. In Wayne County, New York, Methodism and Presbyterianism were its most significant competitors. Both were well established when the Shakers arrived. This leads to the question—What was the appeal of Shakerism, and how did it come to establish itself in Wayne County?²

The answer is found in the story of two brothers, Joseph (b. 1792) and Richard (b. 1797) Pelham, who grew up in Wayne County under the care of their aunt and uncle, Betsey and Elisha Pelham, devout Methodists. Joseph remained in the area where he grew up; he farmed, got married, and became class leader for a Methodist Society. His brother Richard, by contrast, left home shortly before he turned twenty because farming “entirely failed to satisfy or still the aching void.”³ Visiting relatives at Mill Grove, Ohio, he discovered that his cousin Joseph Lockwood⁴ and his wife Phebe had become Shakers at Union Village, Ohio. Proximity, family ties and curiosity led Richard there. Not only was the visit quite pleasant, but Shakerism proved so compelling to Richard that on June 5, 1817 he became a Shaker. All of this transpired within months of his leaving home. After seven years at Union Village, he was called upon to help organize a new Shaker community near Warrensville, Ohio, subsequently known as North Union. Not long after his arrival there, he had an opportunity to visit his brother, arriving in Wayne County in November 1824 and remaining until spring of the next year. During this visit Richard shared the Shaker message with Joseph and others in the area; this in turn led several new converts, including Joseph, to journey to Ohio when Richard returned to North Union. As in the case of Richard, it took but a short time for Joseph to convert to Shakerism. When Joseph departed Ohio for home, Shaker elder Eli Houston told him that if he found a small group sincerely interested in his new testimony, he should contact Peter Pease at New Lebanon, New York, for missionary assistance, because that Shaker village was closer than Union Village to Wayne County. Joseph believed that there was an interest; he therefore contacted Peter Pease, and was visited by a missionary team from New Lebanon.

That missionary effort supported Joseph’s claim that there was interest, and the missionaries made a positive report to the Shakers at New Lebanon, whereupon two more missionary efforts from New Lebanon were launched. Calvin Green, writing in his journal, summed up his team’s effort: “We believed there would be a considerable gathering in those parts if a suitable place could be provided for them to gather to, and form in associated Order, but they could not long be protected in their scattered state.”⁵ While it was customary for each new community to provide itself with property on which to settle, the Wayne County Shakers had no member with a farm large enough, a fact noted by Green: “They had comfortable livings, but none of them a large property.”⁶ Furthermore, the collective

assets available to the converts were inadequate to purchase such a farm; therefore, the Shaker Ministry, at the request of the missionary leaders, authorized an expenditure of between six and seven thousand dollars toward securing a suitable place.

The Search for a Place of Their Own

The historical record on the settlement of the Genesee Region puts the Shakers' search for property into its historical and social context. The vision and activities of Charles Williamson for opening and developing the lands north of Lyons, New York—including the Great Sodus Bay—are our best touchstone for understanding what the Shakers experienced as they went about their search and settlement. Williamson was the first agent of the Pulteney Estate, the owner of those lands. In the late eighteenth century, Williamson shifted his attention from the area between Pennsylvania and Geneva, New York, to the lands from Geneva northwards to Lake Ontario.

Sodus was the next site chosen for the foundation of a settlement—in fact, for the founding of a commercial village—not to say city.... Looking to Lake Ontario, the Oswego river, Oneida Lake, Wood Creek, the Mohawk and the Hudson river, and the St. Lawrence, as avenues to the New York and Montreal markets, for the northern district of the [Genesee] purchase, he selected Sodus Bay as the commercial depot.⁷

‘As the harbor of Great Sodus is acknowledged to be the finest on Lake Ontario, this town, in the convenience of the mills and extensive fisheries, will command advantages unknown to the country, independent of the navigation of the Great Lake, and the St. Lawrence.’⁸

Early in the winter of 1793, he determined upon improvements there, and in the spring of '94, he had roads cut out from Palmyra and Phelpsstown, to get access to the spot from those points. It was his first appearance in the Lake Ontario region, and his presence there, with his surveyors, road makers, builders, and all the retinue necessary to carry out his plans, created a new era.⁹

O. Turner, in his *History of the Pioneer Settlement of Phelps &*

Gorham's Purchase, states that Williamson made plans for a town, which was to be situated between the falls on Salmon Creek and Great Sodus Bay.¹⁰ This proposed town would lie on the western shore of the bay. Turner describes the subsequent events.¹¹

After the advent of Mr. Williamson in that region, the erection of his mills, large tavern house, wharf and store house—all the improvements under his auspices—there followed long years of decline; but an occasional hardy adventurer dropping into the wilderness, along on the Lyons and Palmyra roads, encountering disease and privation—some of them wrestling with them until discouraged, leaving their log cabins untenanted—a forbidding indication to new adventurers. All that Mr. Williamson had done was premature. A fine public house, good mills, a pleasure boat upon the beautiful Bay, would have been well conceived enterprises in a settled country, but sadly out of place in a wilderness.¹²

In 1801, Ami Elsworth came ... and settled on the road leading from the Ridge to the village Mr. Williamson had founded upon the Lake and Bay.... At the Point, (village) Moses Sill was in the tavern house; and there were two or three families beside, most of whom lived by fishing and hunting. On the Lake shore, seven miles above the Point, was a solitary settler by the name of Amos Richards. Elijah Brown was ... four miles above the Point.¹³

Of particular interest is that Charles Williamson opened the area north of Lyons by building a road to Sodus Point in 1794.¹⁴ Until that time the area north of Lyons was essentially a wilderness with few settlers. Nevertheless, even with a road and increased settlement, the area remained economically and socially stagnant. The War of 1812 was a setback for the region, as the British burned warehouses and other buildings along Lake Ontario, and controlled boat traffic on the lake. As Turner commented, "Population had decreased, and rural labor, where not suspended, had added little to permanent improvement."¹⁵ His assessment of the area around Sodus Bay is confirmed by what Shaker elder Calvin Green wrote in 1825: "The settlements around Sodus bay were much run down, in consequence of the stagnation in business that succeeded the war of 1812."¹⁶ Such were conditions in the area when Shaker converts began looking for a place to settle.

The search for land began in earnest in the fall and winter of 1825. As a leader among the new converts, Green formulated a list of requirements to guide the search for property. His four criteria can be stated as questions: Did the site provide a mill seat? Was the land level and of good quality? Did it have buildings? Was it affordable? Note the last line of Calvin Green's early assessment of the Nicholas property.

It comprised an excellent mill seat, a number tolerable good houses, and 1300 acres of land, part of it very good and well wooded. There was a large warehouse upon it, well calculated for a meeting house that would accommodate 3 or 400 people. It had good soft water, which is very rare in Wayne Co. Also the advantage of fishing was great The only drawback, was a fear that the place was unhealthy, as it was liable to the lake fever.¹⁷

Green's concern about health also was a sentiment expressed by another New Lebanon Shaker, Proctor Sampson, in a letter to the Ministry.

When we had gone over the place [Nicholas' Sodus farm] I was confident that the property was cheap considering its value, its situation and its advantages—but there was a pull-back in my mind. Whether the place was as healthy as some other place believers could get was uncertain: and had I not, by information we afterwards got that we thot might be depended on had my doubts remained as to the healthiness of the place, I should have been unwilling for believers to purchase it for settlement, however great the other advantages might be; for I consider health to be the greatest of temporal blessings—and no advantages whatever, can compensate for lack of the healthiness of any place.¹⁸

From the outset, the Nicholas property (see figure 3) dominated the conversation among believers, despite the fact that they looked at a number of different farms and they were being counseled by their Shaker mentors to keep faith rather than temporal issues foremost in their minds. All who viewed the Nicholas farm found nothing comparable. In the end, the senior Shaker leadership not only felt pressed to purchase it, but came to see in its availability the workings of divine providence. With providence now supporting it, could the Ministry do anything other than approve its purchase, despite its large size and high cost? Even so, there was a shortfall between the funds available—from the converts themselves,

from individual friends such as William Read and Proctor Sampson, and from the Ministry's pledge—and the asking price. Using an innovative and collaborative approach, Proctor Sampson got other Shaker communities to invest in Shaker expansion while insuring that the new believers would not be in debt to non-believers.¹⁹

The Sodus Shaker journal (1826-1838) records the purchase:

In the year of our Lord 1826—on the 23rd.—day of February three Brethren namely—Proctor Sampson of New Lebanon—Samuel Southwick of the town of Rose and Joseph Pelham of the town of Galen—by and with the united counsel and consent of Jeremiah Tallcott of New Lebanon went and purchased a tract of land of Robert C. Nicholas (of the County of Ontario) supposed to contain 1,296 $\frac{3}{4}$ Acres—partly in the town of Portbay & partly in the town of Sodus, for the sole purpose of locating and establishing a Society of Believers (commonly called Shakers) took a Deed and gave a Mortgage in security.

March 1 [1826] According to appointment, Samuel S. [Southwick] and Joseph P. [Pelham] met Robert C. Nicholas at Sodus and took formal possession of the aforesaid purchased property.²⁰

Before the property was purchased, Green observed the site, and in words reminiscent of Charles Williamson's (see footnote 11), they were unabashedly upbeat.

The bay itself was beautiful, and the land upon its southern shore was Good, deep soiled, level and rolling. I read a description of this bay and the adjacent scenery, about a quarter of a century before I saw it, which much attracted my feelings. Little did I think then, that these land [*sic*] would ever be possessed and inhabited by Shakers; but so it strangely took place. The land had been cut over, but not much tilled, and I never saw great sweet blackberries so plenty, any where else in my life.²¹

Both Shaker and non-Shaker archival records become essential at this point for fleshing out the facts as well as for interpreting them, and maps from both of these record sets play an important role. For our purposes, the process begins with the facts related to the purchase of the Nicholas property.

John Nicholas²² was one of the southern gentlemen that Charles Williamson recruited to invest in developing new land for agriculture. He emigrated from Virginia in 1804 along with his brother-in-law, Robert S. Rose. A farm in the town of Seneca was the base from which he carried out his speculation on, and development of, regional lands until his death in 1820.²³ When the Shakers began to consider buying property, Frederick Augustus DeZeng, who was acquainted with both the Nicholas family and the Shakers from earlier times, was the first to inform the Shakers about the Sodus-Port Bay property, and he actively encouraged them to buy it. This was in 1825. The Shakers did not purchase the property until 1826, by which time they had looked at and compared the benefits and disadvantages of a number of places, as well as resolving the issue of payment. The problem with the Nicholas property had nothing to do with the property but everything to do with its size—some 1300 acres—and thereby its cost. Any suggestions made to the heirs about buying only a portion of the estate were firmly rebuffed, as the heirs wanted to sell it as a single piece. On the other hand, they were offering the whole property at a greatly reduced cost per acre. Calvin Green's journal mentions some of the reasons why the heirs were anxious to sell, and sell at such a good price.

Had it not been for difficulties in the Nicholas family, it would have cost a much larger price.²⁴

The property formerly belonging to old Judge Nicholas, who had deceased, and the heirs being in greater business, the place was running down, and was to be had cheap for its value.²⁵

These comments suggest that none of the heirs had the time or interest to pursue John Nicholas' vision of a commercial enterprise on Sodus Bay. This disinterest seems realistic given the historical context,²⁶ that is, the depressed economic conditions of the region in the aftermath of the War of 1812. Nevertheless, they do not seem to have totally abandoned their holdings between the time of Nicholas' death in 1820 and the Shaker purchase in early 1826. Evidence for this is found in Shaker statements about what they gained through the purchase, namely "a good yoke of oxen, and 2 good cows" as well as "12 acres [sic] of promising wheat on the ground, and a field of rye."²⁷ These additional assets suggest the family's minimal maintenance of the lands until they could be sold. Although the land continued to be used, the buildings apparently stood

vacant and unattended and were not given needed repairs.

This is the background information available. However, when I looked at the maps that I had collected, particularly one identified as a map of Williamson's Patent (see figure 6), I discovered that a village existed at Nicholas Point prior to both Shaker ownership and, I suspect, the arrival of John Nicholas. While some other early maps noted a village at the same place, it was unclear whether it was an Indian village or a pioneer settlement. On Williamson's map, the village bore the name of Portland (see figures 6 and 8). At the time Williamson opened and described the area in 1794, neither he nor any other writer mentioned any development around the bay. Williamson's attempts to develop the Sodus Point area bore no fruit; from every perspective these efforts failed. Since there are no references to any east-west roads near the bay, and, since the general area attracted few people until easier access was available, Portland probably did not exist before 1810.

Among the extant non-Shaker documents are several news accounts of the burning of Sodus Point by the British in 1813. In fact, the newspaper *The Columbian* ran an article titled "Burning of Sodus." Within the description of events, which occurred on June 19, is an item of special interest.

On Saturday the British sailors landed, looted the warehouse and then destroyed 'the principle part of the village. The cowardly foe, finding that the greater part of the provisions were removed ... SET FIRE TO ALL THE VALUABLE BUILDINGS IN THE PLACE.... After burning the principle part of the village, and Mr. Nicholas' warehouse on the opposite side of the bay [see figure 8], they sent a flag demanding the flour and pork which lay in their sight.'²⁸

From this we can conclude that by 1813 John Nicholas owned the land across from Sodus Point and had a warehouse there. Surely there would be no point in a warehouse near the water's edge if John Nicholas were not in the business of trading or of conducting commerce by water. The fact that the Shakers bought a warehouse on that site is evidence that Nicholas rebuilt the one that burned, not out of nostalgia, but because he continued trading in commodities. To what extent that business prospered is unknown; however, it was probably depressed because of British control of Lake Ontario. British control thwarted trade along the lake

and had a secondary impact of depressing other trade-related businesses. This situation endured for some years after the war and helped generate support for the Erie Canal, an internal waterway and trade route under the sole control of the State of New York. A warehouse would require roads leading to and from it as well as a nearby source of commodities for trade; some land development, therefore, must have allowed the farming of grain in such quantities that a surplus could be sold.

At this point the Shaker record of the purchase comes into play. Among the buildings was “one Grist Mill much out of repair.”²⁹ The grist mill was about two miles west of the point, and west of the store (see figures 1, 2, and 4). The warehouse and wharf were north of the store, nearer the shore. Nonetheless, from the Shakers’ descriptions of the buildings they purchased, one cannot determine what Nicholas bought and what he built. The question remains: Did he buy virgin territory and make the improvements himself, including grist mill, wharf and warehouse, or did he take possession of structures that were already there?

Various maps indicate that at the time of Nicholas’ death the village at Nicholas Point was called Lawson (see figure 5),³⁰ not Portland. What is the likelihood that Nicholas built a village, named it Portland, and then renamed it Lawson? It seems reasonable to conclude that there was a village named Portland prior to Nicholas’ ownership.

Based on the data gleaned from the maps surveyed, it seems likely that the Shakers bought a deserted town. My hypothesis gained credibility as information from the maps was compared with what the Shakers themselves wrote. According to Shaker journals and letters, it appears that there was no construction of housing for the seventy-two people living on the property at the close of the year 1826.³¹

Seventy-two is a significant number for a piece of property having only two “tolerable good” dwelling houses, and no housing construction. The Shakers must have had enough other buildings that could be converted into residences, such as the aforementioned store. The size of the property and its access to a water route for transporting its produce made sense, and so did the mill in that context. These were appurtenances a farm of significance could have, especially in an area with little in the way of roads. One might ask, however, why a farm would have a store, not just a farm stand.³³ Furthermore, it seems, from what the Shakers removed from it when turning that building into a residence, that it was a one-room general store. Even if it were a general store, that is more than the most

prosperous farm would have had. Given the time period, and what is known of the area, there is no basis for concluding it was a corporate farm which supplied the needs of its workers.

The next surprise comes from a journal entry for December 13, 1826: "A family is established on the Point in the old Tavern for the children. Sister Tina Seaton takes the charge of them, with Mosey Spoor to assist in the charge of the boys."³² Not only was the store adapted for Shaker housing but so too was the tavern. The tavern? This is the one building that simply makes no sense in light of my initial assumption that the Shakers bought a large farm-estate. It was the reference to a tavern that prompted a change in my thinking. A tavern in that day was a place where travelers, including those doing business at the mill or involved in trading, could eat and drink and find lodging. The presence of a tavern suggests a road through the Nicholas Tract, which in fact extant maps show. However, while the individual references cited above support my hypothesis, they still required independent verification if my conclusions were to be more than speculative.

At this point, I focused on the two village names of Portland and Lawson. Besides discovering their connection to the Shaker settlement, I learned something about the use of maps in historical research. Just because something appears on a map does not mean that it is true or valid. That was borne out as I compared maps to discover as much as I could about the three settlements at Nicholas Point, including the Shaker one.

My search for area maps which portrayed early nineteenth-century roads and landmarks in upstate New York was greatly enhanced by another accidental or serendipitous discovery. I found that the County Clerk's office in Steuben County had acquired a large number of manuscript maps once in the possession of Robert Troup, an agent for the Pulteney Estate. These included surveyor maps and log books, maps showing the location of old roads and proposed canals, and maps giving town lots with the names of the purchasers, as well as landmarks used for reference. I also found copies of maps in the Clerk's offices in Wayne and Seneca Counties and at the Maps Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Only three maps supported my hypothesis about a deserted village; nevertheless, the three gave me the independent verification I needed. Those three maps identified the presence of a village on Nicholas Point, a place called Portland. Another, larger group of maps confirmed that Portland later became Lawson. On a number of these, the Lawson name was printed

along with the landmark designation, Nicholas Point. Based on these maps as well as two Shaker-generated maps, it appears that Nicholas Point had at least three periods of habitation and development—as Portland, as Lawson, and as the Shaker village. Could I find additional verification of this conclusion in another type of document?

To the best of my knowledge, no non-Shaker visitor accounts to the Sodus-Port Bay Shakers have yet surfaced,³⁴ although I remain hopeful that some will. However, as I dealt with several legal instruments regarding the purchase of the property, I came across one in which a small segment of the site was referred to as being in the town of Lawson. That document was titled “Deed of Nichols’ [*sic*] Farm, Port-Bay, from Proctor Sampson & others.” Therein is found this sentence:

Also all those certain pieces or parcels of land, situate, lying & being in the town of Port-Bay County of Wayne aforesaid; being known as Village lot in the Village of Lawson [see figure 5], and were conveyed to William Reed aforesaid by Augustus Kellogg, by a Deed bearing date the Thirtieth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six.³⁵

No other deed, legal instrument, gazetteer comment, visitor account, or list of New York town names refers to either Lawson or Portland at Nicholas Point. While the name Portland appears on no printed map, the name Lawson does. Apparently it was so well recognized that it endured for years following Shaker ownership and occupancy of the property. Lawson appeared on Findley’s New York State Map in 1825 and 1826. This is no surprise because the official date of purchase by the Shakers was 1826. In 1828, Lawson remains the village name at Nicholas Point on the William Williams Tourist Map of New York. Lawson also appears on maps of “New York with Part of Upper Canada” in 1831, and on a New York State map composed “from the most recent surveys” in 1833. The New York State map in the *Universal Atlas* of 1840 refers to Lawson. S. Augustus Mitchell’s map of New York “compiled from the latest authorities” still refers to Lawson in 1847 and 1850. Charles Magnus’ New York map, probably printed in 1854, also refers to Lawson, twenty-seven years after the Shakers purchased the property and seventeen years after they had relinquished all title to it.

Incidentally, even the maps that appropriately recorded the Shaker settlement at Nicholas Point did so three and seven years after the Shakers

had abandoned the Sodus site. No map surveyed ever had the Shakers at the site during the decade when they were actually there.

Maps and the information gleaned from them can reveal what texts may fail to indicate. On the other hand, especially for maps prior to the age of satellites and technologies permitting the instant imaging of the earth's surface, researchers must not take map data at face value.

What Maps Reveal about the Shakers at the Bay

Returning to the narrative of the Sodus Shakers—revealed primarily in the interplay of Shaker letters, journals, financial and legal documents—two manuscript maps of the site are revealing. The more detailed one illustrates how the Shaker settlement appeared in 1834 (see figure 1)³⁶; the other,³⁷ undated, is quite crude (see figure 2), causing the historian and Shaker scholar Herbert Wisbey, when he used it in his booklet on the Sodus Shakers, to caption the map with these words, “This was probably made before the purchase.”³⁸ An implication of this statement is that the map was quickly drawn by a Shaker who visited the site, and thought that a sketch with comments might prove useful in subsequent deliberations regarding the final property selection. Whether it was a planning map or a later graphic portrayal of the site, it does include some textual notations which both confirm and supplement other Shaker records. A comparison of the two Shaker maps is also useful to show Shaker development of the site.

Before describing the changes which the Shakers made to their environment, it is worth mentioning how they referred to places on their property. Significant portions of the property were in two towns—Port Bay³⁹ comprising the eastern section, and Sodus, the western section (see figure 3). At the bottom of the map, note the two town names, recognizing that at the time the map was created, the town of Port Bay had been renamed Huron. Note, too, how the town line divided the Shaker property. Equally important for our historical reconstruction is the fact that these town names reflect distinctions in Shaker social organization within the settlement. Like other Shaker societies, the one in Sodus-Port Bay contained two orders or groups of people—the First (also called Senior or Church) Order and the Second (also called Junior or Novitiate) Order, the latter being made up of individuals who were exploring Shaker faith and practice.⁴⁰ Depending on the number of believers in any order, they were divided up into families. The number in any family could vary from

just a few individuals to over one hundred. At Sodus-Port Bay, there were two families. The East Family in Port Bay at Nicholas Point (see figure 1), which was the Church Order, was initially made up of the Shakers from the New Lebanon and Watervliet Societies, who were full members and had given all their property to the Church and committed themselves to celibacy and pacifism. The West Family in Sodus (see figure 1) near Thornton or Old Point was the Novitiate Order, which was for general inquirers and for new converts—those who, even after confessing their sins and embarking on the Shaker way of life, were still learning how to fully live it. As noted above, when those from New Lebanon and Watervliet arrived, they settled in the house at Nicholas Point, on the east side of the property. That same day, they went to the West Family for dinner with the new community of Believers. Each family was more than a residential unit; it was also an economic unit. Each family had to earn its way, be productive, and pay its bills. While the different families cooperated with one another and formed one community, they also functioned as separate and distinct entities. Finally, it should be noted that a family could include more than one household or residential unit. This was true of the West Family at Sodus, for it included among others the group in the former tavern and the one in the mill house.

When the Shakers took possession of the land, they recorded that it included two hundred acres that were under poor cultivation, and that there was one grist mill, two “dwelling houses, quite good, several other small and poor framed buildings, two common barns and two small stables.”⁴¹ The immediate issue facing the Shakers was how they would support themselves; therefore, the first task they undertook was the repair of the grist mill (see figure 4)⁴², which took less than a month. James Valentine, a millwright from Clyde, was employed to do the repairs on March 28, 1826. On April 15, the work was complete, and they began to grind, freeing up Valentine to construct a saw mill, which he commenced on September 20. When it was finished on December 16, 1826, the Shakers put it to use immediately.

Focusing on repairs to the grist mill offers the opportunity to compare how various journals, autobiographies, and letters reported the same event. A minor comment in Proctor Sampson’s letter written to the Ministry while at New Lebanon is a good place to begin. “The gristmill can be set going with 60 or 80 dollars expence [*sic*], & Timber and Irons for a sawmill 60 all on the ground.”⁴³ Eunice Bennett, meanwhile, had this to say on

March 28: “Commence repairing the Grist mill, imploy James Valentine a Millwright from Clyde.”⁴⁴ An entry from a different Sodus journal on the same date reads as follows: “Hired a millwright James Valentine by name and commenced repairing the Grist Mill.”⁴⁵

Polly Lawrence, in a letter to New Lebanon, described the progress of repair, and related something of the milling conditions at Sodus. She wrote on May 23, 1826:

There is but one room of stone repaired in the mill, which has a plenty to grind all the time when there’s water—the stream is rather low on account of the dry time. There has not been any rain since we came here, except for a little shower for a few minutes.⁴⁶

Finally, there is a personal reflection by a man whose life was impacted by the renovation of the mill. Joseph Pelham, who was a small farmer when he moved to Sodus, was called upon to help the hired millwright, and was thereby inducted into milling as a new profession. His recollections date from long after the actual events.

The brethren, Jeremiah [Talcott or Tallcott] and Proctor [Sampson] thought the next best thing we could do [after concluding the contract for the property], was to repair and put into operation the Grist-mill. We accordingly agreed with a Millwright to come on the 15th day of March, to commence the work.⁴⁷

The millwright came on promptly at the time appointed, and some of the work being too heavy for one; I [Joseph Pelham] assisted in repairing the Mill, dressing the stone &c. so that by the time we got it in running order, I had gained quite an understanding of a Mill.⁴⁸

The Millwright being an excellent miller, he was anxious to have me learn to tend the Mill, while he was making other repairs: And so I soon got to be quite a miller; and we soon had a good run of custom[ers].⁴⁹

After the elders from New Lebanon arrived and took charge of the new community, they decided that Joseph Pelham should continue his work in the mill, which he did for two more years. Not only was he now

experienced at running the mill, he also was the member most acquainted with the local people who used the mill.⁵⁰ Decisions like this one reflect an awareness of the technical and social skills of individual members.

The bare facts in one account were substantiated by others, but clarification and amplification came by way of Joseph Pelham's "Autobiography." One journal entry had made it seem like they hired the millwright and began work immediately. Joseph clarifies this by stating that on March 15 the Shakers contracted with the millwright to start work on March 28. Without Pelham's comment, the reader might conclude that the repair work on the grist mill began the same day that the millwright was hired.

It is only through Proctor Sampson's letter, however, that we learn that the Shakers were considering building a saw mill, and had reached the point where its approximate cost was being considered. No comment was made, however, about the water supply for either mill. The location of the mills and the mill pond and dam were not discussed. Let it not be forgotten that Calvin Green had made it one of the guiding principles in selecting a property that it have a mill seat — a site that would allow construction of a mill. Polly Lawrence's comments about the water supply take into account that even a good site is not without its limitations — mill streams depend in part on rain. All other information we have comes from maps. A topographic map, although not included here, would show the fall of the water, a factor determining the force driving the mill wheel. The maps included here (figures 1, 3, 4 and 7) are useful for understanding how the Shakers used the available resources of stream and road, and for showing the relation of mill pond and mills relative to each other and to the Shakers' own 1834 map (figure 1), although it is peculiar that the artist did not identify them. There they are seen on the left side of the drawing.

Regarding the school, the interplay between map and text assists in the reconstruction of yet another aspect of the Sodus Shaker story. On the first day of June 1826, the Shakers moved an old building from Port Bay to Sodus for a school house.⁵¹ The maps (figures 1 and 2) confirm the location of the school, but they give no hint that the building was moved. That information comes from a journal note. The placement of the school at the eastern base of Thornton or Old Point puts the building near the children's house, which was the converted tavern. It is not clear at this time just where the tavern was located, although one can assume that it was close to the public road seen on figure 1. The 1834 map, titled "Slight

View of Sodus,” shows no children’s house. Does “slight” mean that only some of the existing buildings were depicted? Why else was the old tavern not shown?

The story of site development at Sodus-Port Bay continues with the move of James Valentine and his family from Clyde. They took up residence at the mill house on December 7, 1826.⁵² No map, however, shows the mill house. Figure 1 shows a cluster of buildings below the mill pond. Of these, the central and largest building is shown in extant photos of the site to be the mill. The building to the right was probably the blacksmith’s shop, as photographs taken years later show a small service building there. Unfortunately the building on the far left on the map is no longer in existence, nor are there any extant pictures of it. My best guess is that this building was the mill house.

In addition to this site information, there is a note about the Valentine family’s move to Sodus: James, who united with the Shakers, arrived with his “unbelieving woman and three children.”⁵³ The Valentines’ move was followed by the notice that on December 13, 1826, the Leonard family moved to the West House⁵⁴ (see figure 2). In turn this is followed by a journal entry stating that “a family is established on the Point in the old Tavern for the children.”⁵⁵ This is the first mention of the tavern. Oddly, it does not appear in any account of the buildings purchased, nor is it portrayed on any map, as previously noted. The only house on the 1834 map located on the road just south of Thornton Point (see figure 1) is labeled as “2nd house,” and this the journals record as being built and occupied in 1830.

The interplay of maps and texts continues when we examine the eastern portion of the village. The house taken over by the eastern Shaker leaders (see figure 1) on Nicholas Point was vacant, except for squirrels and mice. Four dwelling rooms had been cleaned prior to the Shakers’ arrival, and they found it more convenient than expected. In a letter written by Polly Lawrence to friends in New Lebanon in May, 1826, we learn more about the house:

The house we live in is 36 x 24 feet—4 dwelling rooms 2 on each story. 10 feet wide and 15 feet long with fire places in each; lathed and plastered and 2 windows in each room as large as the windows in the North house at N Lebanon.⁵⁶

The front room 24 x 21 feet—was a store we have tore down

the Shelves and [c]ounter and cleaned out bushels and bushels of dirt out of it and got ready for a meeting room the next Saturday night after we got here.... The chamber over the meeting room is not done off[f]—the ware house a joining the house is nothing but a frame 1 ½ story poorly covrd and not done off at all—The Cellar and kitchen looked more like the habitation of draggions and the cage of every unclean and foul spirit than any thing else. The floors rotten—the scills rotten and covered with mud and water. 30 panes of glass broken out in the house. We are situated on the rising eminence about 40 roads [*sic*, rods] from the bay in the nearest place—about 400 feet higher than the water.”⁵⁷

Lawrence’s comments show the community’s division of labor as well as the cooperation between orders. The cooperation began with the West Family sisters who cleared the house before the eastern Shakers arrived, as well as the assistance given by a young West Family convert to the New Lebanon Shakers as they remodeled, repaired and further cleaned their new home. However, once they had moved in, the New Lebanon contingent took over the work. Nothing else is said about the East House for a year and a half, when on September 17, 1827, Bennett’s journal reads, “Begin to repair the East House.”⁵⁸

Construction reports from 1827 contain an interesting comment about Shaker laborers. A journal entry for October 23 records that Henry Roberts and his son were employed to do masonry work.⁵⁹ It is likely that there were no skilled tradesmen among the new converts, because masons and millwrights were hired from outside the society (although James Valentine did become a Shaker for a time). What we might gather from Green’s comments (see above) about the necessity of looking beyond the converts’ properties for a suitable place for a colony, is that most of them were small farmers.

There is no record of any housing construction at Sodus-Port Bay during the years 1826-1827. According to the community journal, it was a special day when the first house built by the Shakers themselves was finished and occupied. The date, almost four years after they arrived at the site, was January 12, 1830. According to the West Family journal, “It was called the second house.”⁶⁰ Like the West Family journal, the other extant family journal, from the East Family, under the heading of “Sodus,” tells us nothing about the significance of the house, not even that it is designated the second house. It simply states, “Move into the New House today.”⁶¹

Conclusion

In the research underlying this article, the careful observation of maps along with a comparative and careful reading of texts led to the hypothesis that the Shakers bought not virgin land or a farm estate but a deserted village as the site of their new settlement. The catalyst for this study was an overlooked place reference, a village called Portland. Further analysis of the evidence found in both maps and textual documents served to verify this hypothesis.

The Shaker story at Sodus, as told here, reflects the dialogue of this researcher with the data available. New data and fresh insights required the rethinking of earlier assumptions, which in turn led to viewing the Shaker community at Sodus from a much broader perspective. The “antiphonal” approach taken in this article is intended to give the reader a behind-the-scenes glimpse into how conclusions were reached and where further inquiry is still needed. Definitive summary statements tend to kill inquiry, whereas questions keep history alive. It is hoped, therefore, that Shaker history at Sodus and elsewhere will be seen as a dynamic, emerging story which will inspire further research.

For the Sodus Shakers, several topics for future inquiry come immediately to mind. With regard to development, and especially economic development: Why was it that the Shakers appear to have made no efforts to take economic advantage of Sodus Bay and Lake Ontario? Under the heading of social relationships: What impact did the Shakers have on the development of their immediate environs? More specifically, what was the economic relationship between the Shakers and the larger society? And, what was the non-Shaker response to the Shaker’s presence in general? With the exception of a few minor clashes, there seems to have been no great public opposition to the Shakers. Was this lack of overt opposition due to there being only a few converts from within any given town or established social network? How might biological family ties within the community have helped maintain community solidarity and social stability? The possibilities for inquiry are virtually endless.

Although somewhat tangential to Shaker research, the dearth of information about the origin and demise of Portland is vexing, as is the absence, up to this point, of traveler accounts to the Shaker society at Sodus-Port Bay. New discoveries in these areas would greatly expand our understanding of the history of this interesting Shaker community.

Appendix

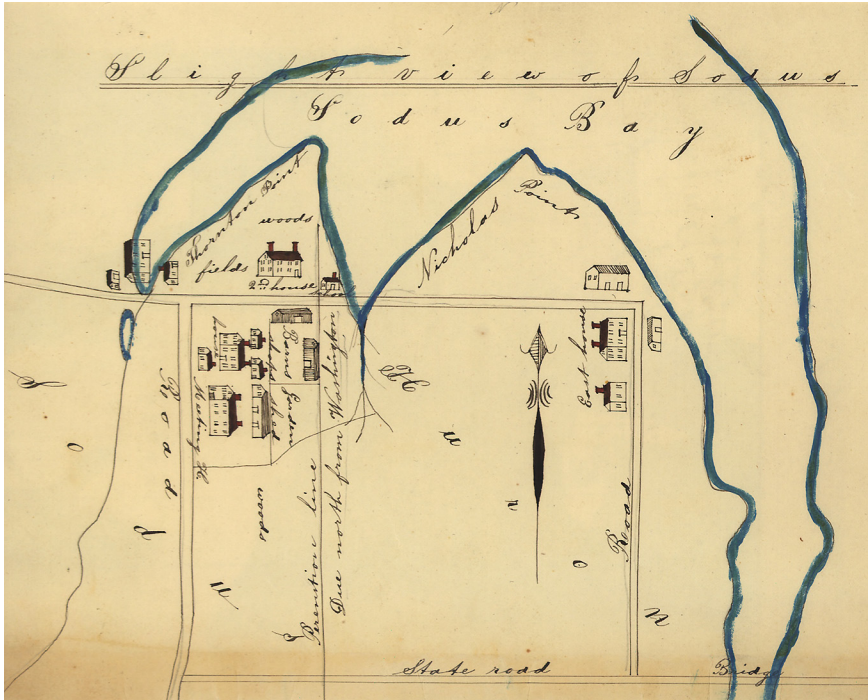


Figure 1. Slight View of Sodus

George Kendall's pen and ink drawing is based on a map drawn by Isaac N. Youngs, who visited Sodus in 1834, after it was well established. The map's title, "Slight View of Sodus," is a strange title for a map until one realizes that not all buildings on the Sodus property are shown, including the children's house (the converted tavern). Note too the town names: Sodus is inscribed on the western half while Huron is inscribed on the eastern. The map also clearly shows Thornton and Nicholas Points. The latter was the site of the wharf, and the warehouse which was burned in the War of 1812. To the left of Thornton Point near the road are the mill, mill house, and blacksmith's building. The mill here is more to the north, as it should be, than it appears in figure 2. The house at the eastern bend in the road is where the store was located, and where the New Lebanon Shakers lived. In the lower right corner, somewhat obscured by the lines marking the bay, the word "Bridge" appears. This is the Gillett Bridge, which was part of the state road going into Port Glasgow (now Resort).

Source: Sketch Book by George Kendall (July 1835) based on Isaac Newton Youngs (June 1834), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

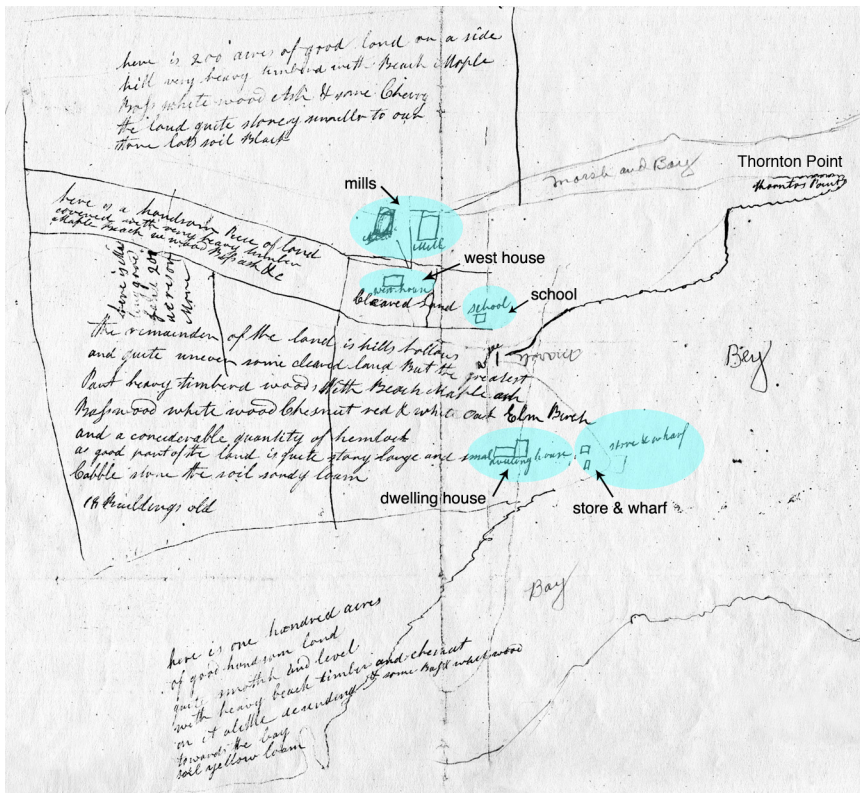


Figure 2. Shaker Sketch Map of Nicholas and Thornton Points with Land Characteristics and Some Buildings Noted

Although crudely drawn, this map shows the location of the store and wharf on Nicholas Point. To the south are large and small dwelling houses—actually a warehouse and a dwelling house. What the Shakers described as a store was actually a room on the first floor of the dwelling house. Between Nicholas Point and Thornton Point are several buildings, including the West House and the school. On the more accurately drawn map (figure 1) the mill and school are each just north of the road, not in the skewed relationship shown here. The two mills—saw (left/south) and grist (right/north)—are shown. Inclusion of the saw mill, like the school, indicates that the map could not have been drawn before September 1826 or December 1826, the former being the date when the saw mill was begun, the latter when sawing began. [Highlighting and identification added]

Source: Shaker Collection, Location: I. A. 5. Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

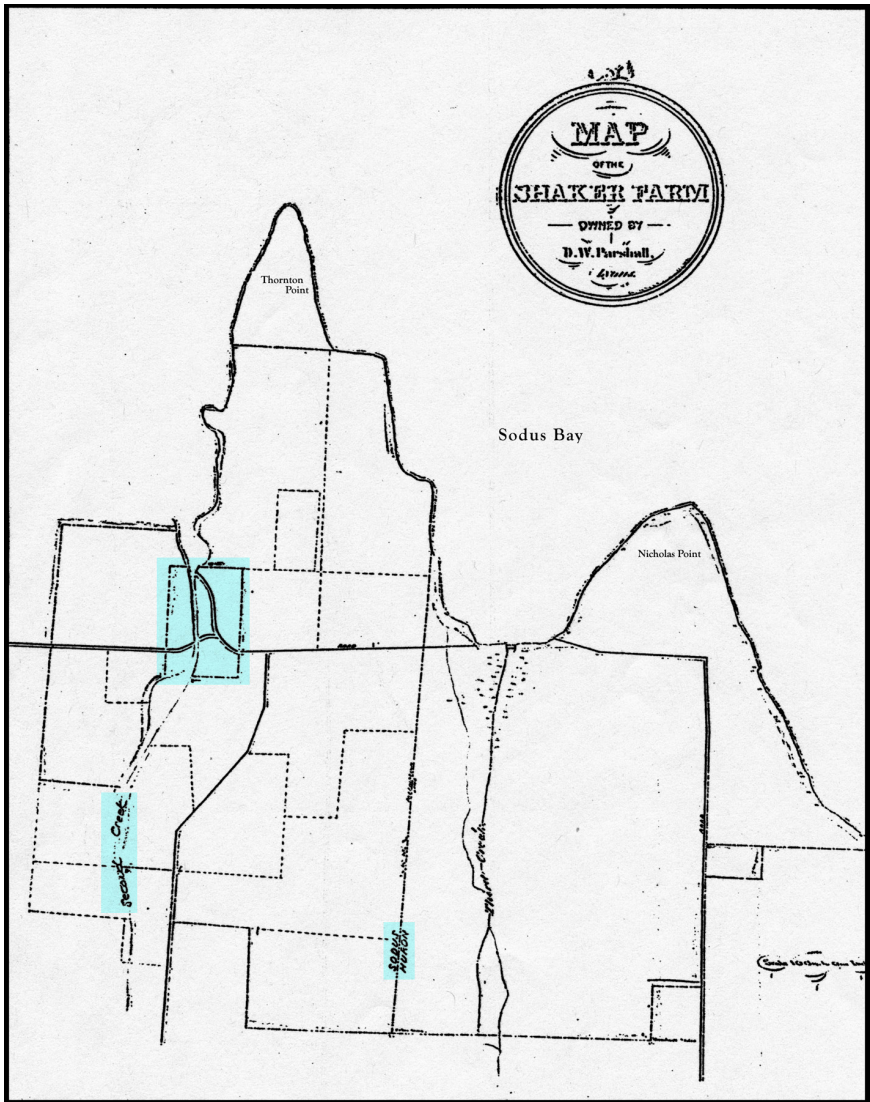


Figure 3. Map of the Shaker Farm Owned by D. W. Parshall

This outline map shows the area included in the Shaker farm. Note the town line between Sodus and Huron (formerly Port Bay) dividing the property almost in half. The large rectangular block on the left side is the west part of the farm. This and the smaller rectangular area to its right, through which Second Creek flows, is the area of the mill pond dam, saw mill and grist mill (see figures 4 and 7). Consider this area relative to the south shore of the Great Sodus Bay as shown on figure 5. [Highlighting added]

Source: Wayne County Clerk's Office, Lyons, New York

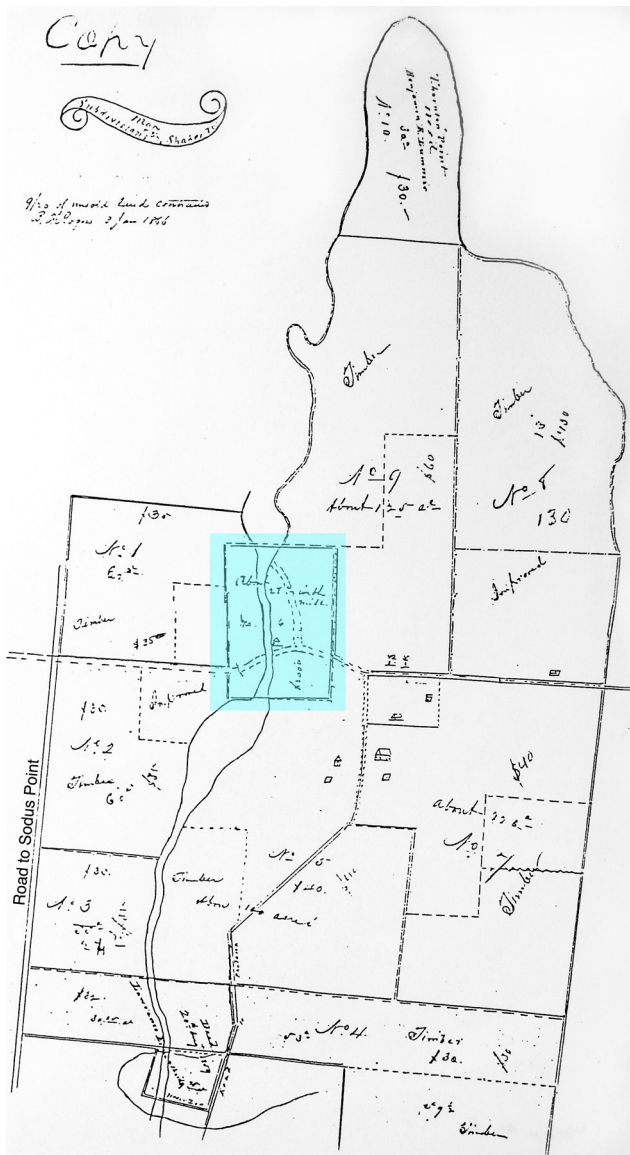


Figure 4. Map and Subdivisions of the Shaker Tract

Source: Greig Collection, Folder 2. Ontario County Historical Society, Canandaigua, New York.

Even in the second half of the nineteenth century much of the land remained unimproved, as evidenced by the extent of timbered areas. This view of the natural setting, when compared to the Shaker sketch map (figure 2), gives a good idea of how little changed between 1826 and 1866, the date on the subdivisions map. The road which parallels Second Creek leads to the intersection of the east-west road crossing the property. It is still in use. In the small rectangle at the juncture of the roads is where the Shaker Church Family dwelling house, built in 1833-1834, is located. The Shaker meeting house was a short distance to the south (see figure 1). However, the location of buildings on the map may to be more symbolic than geographically accurate. [Highlighting added]

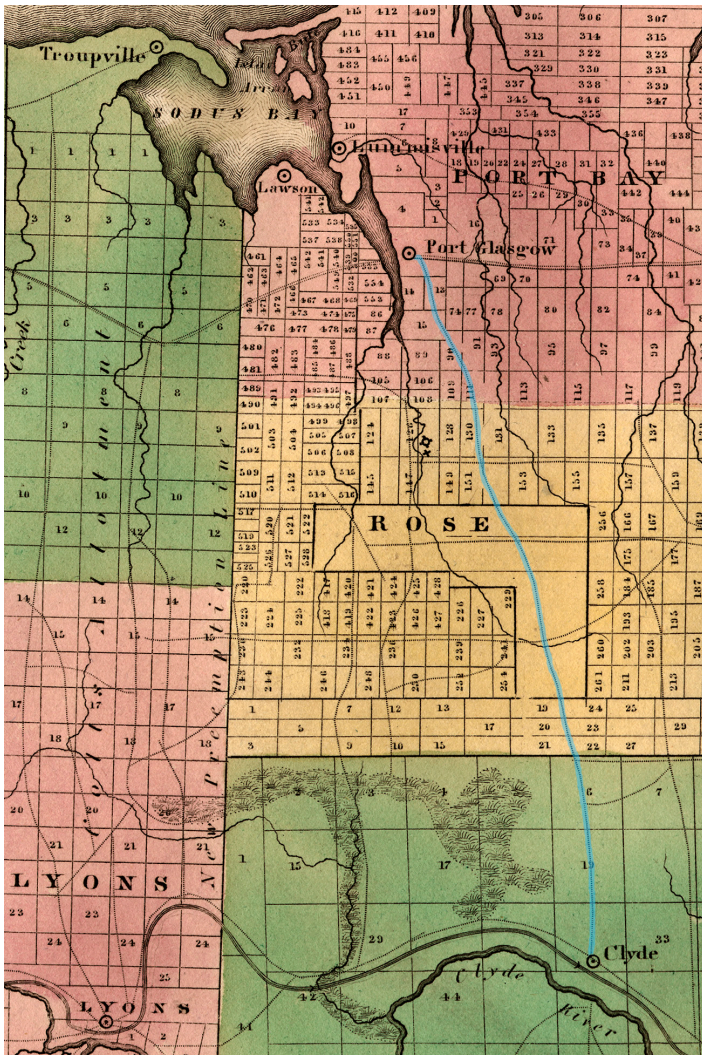


Figure 5. Map of the County of Wayne, New York, 1829 [detail]

This section focuses on the triangle formed by Lawson at the north and the cities to the south—Lyons on the west and Clyde on the east. A number of new converts came from this area. Furthermore, Clyde and Lyons were the primary sites used by the Shakers to enter and exit the Erie Canal. The road from Clyde to Port Glasgow was a principle route taken on the route to Lawson/Portland/Sodus Shaker Village. At Port Glasgow, the road west goes across the Gillett Bridge and shortly thereafter intersects with the road to Nicholas Point and the East Family of Shaker Village. [Highlighting added]

Source: David H. Burr, *Atlas of the State of New York* (New York, D. H. Burr, 1829), Map no. 43.



Figure 6. Williamson’s Patent Map [detail]

This map is one of two showing that the oldest known settlement at Nicholas Point was called Portland, in the upper top left corner of the map. The area covered by the Nicholas tract on this map is in Port Bay township, formerly called Wolcott and later Huron. [Highlighting added]

Source: Photostatic copy of a map located in the Wayne County Clerk's Office, Lyons, New York. Unfortunately, personnel in the office do not know its source, and since I originally made a copy of the photostatic copy, the copy in the County Clerk's Office has disappeared.

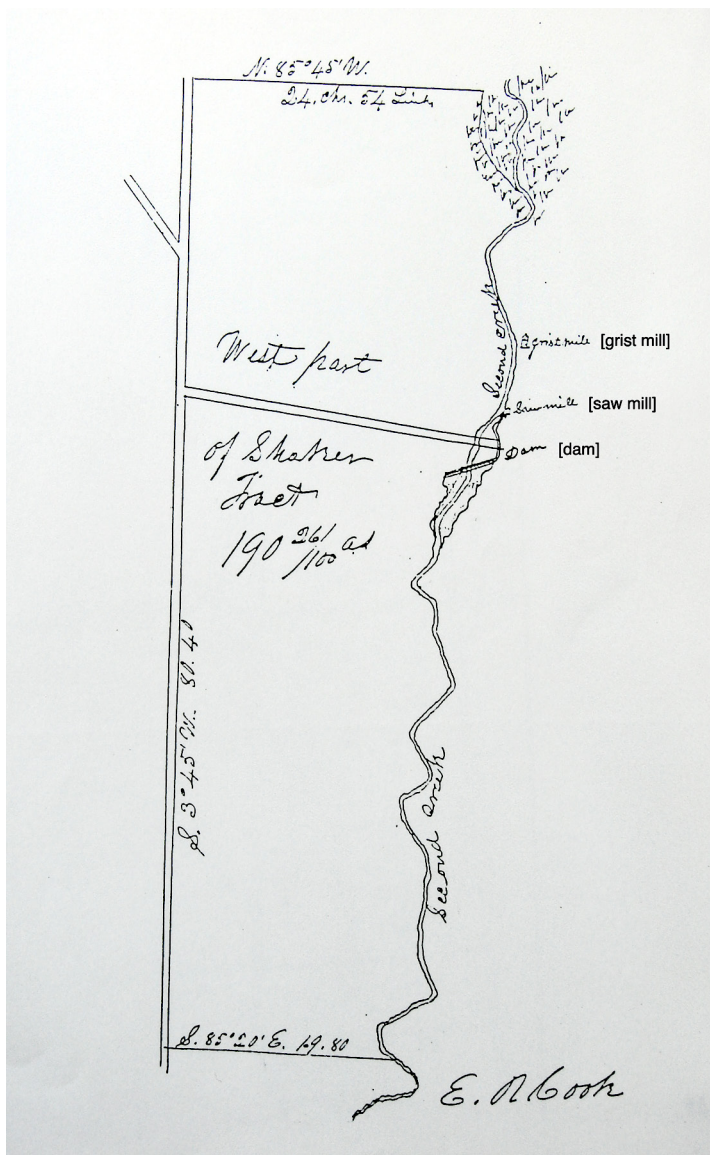


Figure 7. West Part of Shaker Tract by E. R. Cook

The significance of this map is the detail it shows about the mill pond, dam, and the two mills. For how it fits into the Shaker Farm as a whole, see figures 1 and 4. [Identification added]

Source: Greig Collection, Folder 2. Ontario County Historical Society, Canandaigua, New York.

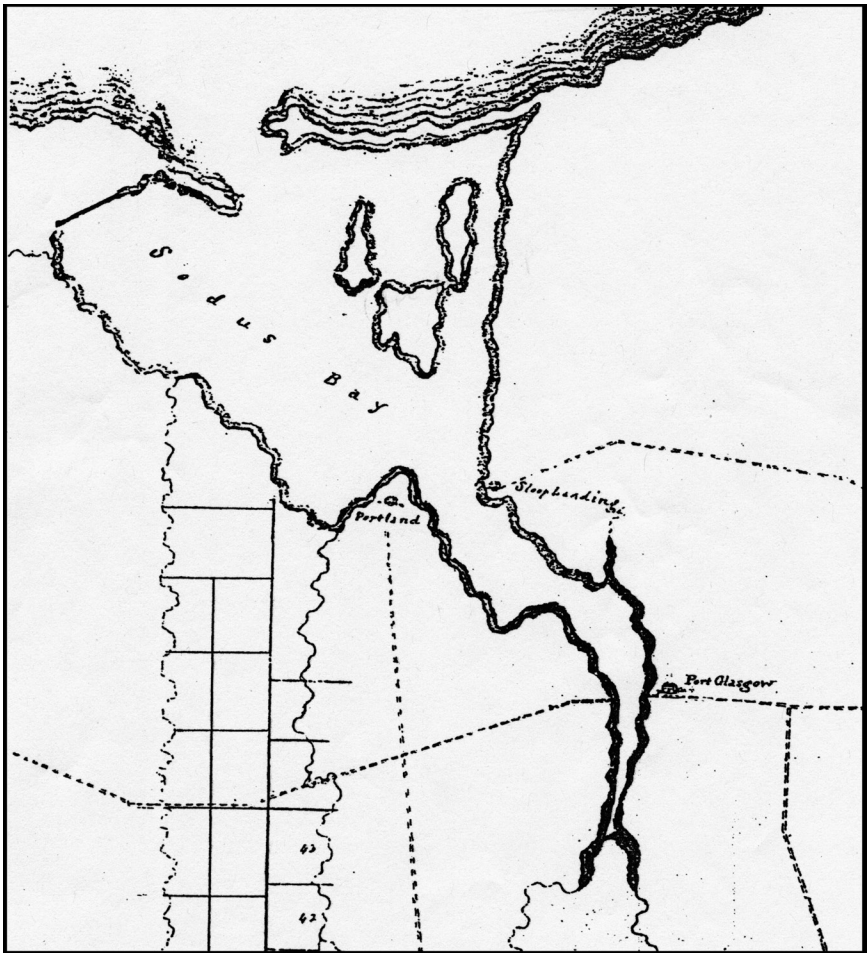


Figure 8. Nicholas Point Showing Portland

In the lower right, the road from Clyde to Port Glasgow can be seen. It intersects the state road a short distance east of Port Glasgow. Traveling west on the state road, a traveler had to cross the inlet to Great Sodus Bay. The fact that no bridge is evident, along with the town name of Portland at Nicholas Point, suggests that the map was made prior to 1813. Missing on the map is a road coming from the west to Portland; instead there is a road coming from the state road north to Portland, which is not, however, drawn accurately. Compare this map with figures 1 and 6. In the upper left corner is Sodus Point, although it is not identified on this map. However, the clear line of sight between Sodus Point and Nicholas Point suggests that the British who burned Sodus Point could see the Nicholas warehouse across the bay.

Source: Pulteney Estate Papers, Item MA 12A (3). Steuben County Clerk's Office, Bath, New York.

Notes

1. This article is part of a larger research project dealing with the Shakers at Sodus Bay.
2. In the 1820s and 1830s, the Shakers were one of a number of religious groups competing for converts in central western New York, an area now known as the “burned-over district,” a “region swept by religious enthusiasms that flared up like the periodic brush fires so familiar on the frontier.” (Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr., *The Sodus Shaker Community*, Lyons, New York: Wayne County Historical Society, 1982, 3-4.) William Warren Sweet provides a good summary of events impacting this area. (William W. Sweet, *The Story of Religions in America*, New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1930, 396-97.)
3. Richard Pelham, “Autobiography,” [1862], in Alonzo G. Hollister, “Autobiography of the Saints, or Stray Leaves from the Book of Life,” VI. B. 36, 156, Shaker Manuscript Collection, The Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio [hereafter WRHS].
4. The Lockwood connection adds dimension to the Sodus story. Joseph’s brother John Lockwood also became a Shaker and lived at New Lebanon and then at Sodus, where he played a leadership role. (Pelham, “Autobiography,” 157.)
5. Calvin Green, “Biographic Memoir of the Life and Experience of Calvin Green,” 257, VI. B. 28, Shaker Manuscript Collection, WRHS.)
6. Green, 257.
7. O. Turner, *History of the Pioneer Settlement of Phelps & Gorham’s Purchase And Morris’ Reserve. To Which Is Added, A Supplement or Continuation of the Pioneer History of Ontario, Wayne, Livingston, Yates and Allegany. Together with Sketches of The War of 1812 upon the Niagara Frontier, and Events Connected with the Completion of The Erie Canal*, Rochester, New York: William Alling, 1852, 262-63.
8. Turner, 263-64.
9. Turner, 263.
10. Turner, 263.
11. Town names can be problematic when reading early accounts. On some maps, the large block called Sodus is the name of the town, or what is more aptly designated a township. Within the township are villages and hamlets, including the village of Sodus. According to Turner, “Sodus village has grown up on the Ridge — a flourishing, brisk country village, having a pleasant rural aspect; its site, where the road from Lyons to Sodus Point crosses the Ridge. A walk, or ride, of four miles through a fine farming region, of ridges and valleys, brings you to the Point, or the old site of Mr. Williamson’s magnificently projected town.” (Turner, 400) Referring to early settlers in Sodus [township], Turner writes: “Enoch Turner was the first settler upon the site of what was called in early years, ‘Turner’s Corners’ — now Sodus village — in 1815.” (Turner, 508) Now, consider Calvin Green’s 1825 reference to what is now Sodus Point. After describing the Shaker lands on the southern shore of the Great Sodus Bay, he adds, “The town of Sodus lay opposite.” (Green, 242) This is neither a reference to the entire township nor to the village of Sodus; rather, it is a reference to Sodus Point. Compare this to a description of Sodus by Charles Williamson “The town stands on a rising ground on the west point of the Bay, having the Lake on the north... and the Bay to the east.... The first view of the place, after passing through a timbered country from Geneva, twenty-eight miles,

strikes the eye of the beholder, as one of the most magnificent landscapes human fancy can picture.” (Turner, 401) Here the reference is to an area encompassing more than Sodus Point.

12. Turner, 394. The town that Charles Williamson began on the west side of Sodus Bay and adjacent to Lake Ontario has been called Sodus, Williamson’s name for it; Troupville (see figure 5), in honor of Robert Troup, an agent for the Pulteney Estate; and Sodus Point, its current name.
13. Turner, 394.
14. The manuscript, “1792-1795 Cash Book of Charles Williamson,” notes payment for services rendered at Sodus Point. On January 20, 1795 Williamson records, “pd. Henry Lovell on Acct of cutting Sodus Road.” (Collection 222, Box 7, Folder 82, McCall Family Papers, Cornell University Archives, Ithaca, New York)
15. Turner, 579.
16. Green, 227-28.
17. Green, 241-42. Note Turner’s comments about disease in the Sodus Bay area: “In busy seasons, when health and strength were most needed, whole households and neighborhoods were stricken down with agues and fevers.” (Turner, 566) Moreover, on August 2, 1826, Eldress Polly Lawrence, one of the leaders who came from New Lebanon, died of bilious colic. She had only arrived at Sodus on May 13, 1826. (Eunice Esther Bennett, “A Record of Events at the Sodus Shaker Community, 1815-1836,” [14], MS Items 6651-52, New York State Library, Albany, New York.)
18. Proctor Sampson to Beloved Ministry [at New Lebanon], March 10, 1826, [2].
19. Details about the financing of the Nicholas property will be described and analyzed in detail in my forthcoming monograph on the Sodus Shakers. In essence, it is the story of new converts pooling what monies they had, of individual Shakers from New Lebanon with access to personal monies contributing significant sums for the purchase, and of the willingness of various eastern Shaker societies to loan the balance in response to the solicitation of several prominent Shakers.
20. “A History or Record of the most important occurrences ... at Sodus and Port Bay, 1826-1838,” [2], V. B. 22, Shaker Manuscript Collection, WRHS.
21. Green, 228.
22. John Nicholas “was a lawyer by profession, but had retired from practice. He was for several terms, a member of the State Senate, and a Judge of the courts of Ontario. He engaged extensively in agricultural pursuits. ” (Turner, 235-36).
23. Turner (p. 236) records John Nicholas’ death as being in the year 1817, whereas the *Rochester Telegraph*, January 11, 1820, [3] states that “In Seneca, Hon. John Nicholas, aged 55, late first judge of Ont. county, formerly a member of Congress from Virginia, and a senator in the Legislature of this state [died].”
24. Green, 306.
25. Green, 242.
26. Turner (p. 566-67) refers to the condition of the United States at this time as an era of depression. The War of 1812 was followed by a period in which business and trade were stagnant. To this he adds, “Those who had homes in New England, and elsewhere — and the means of comfortable subsistence — generally chose to remain where they were — leaving it mostly for those who were impelled to it by necessity to encounter the then hard task of settling and improving the wilderness. NO NEW REGION OF OUR ENTIRE COUNTRY HAS BEEN SETTLED BY A CLASS OF

EMIGRANTS, AS POOR, IN THE AGGREGATE, AS WERE THE PIONEERS OF THE GENESEE COUNTRY.” For those who had bought their farms and cleared and produced a crop, “they had no market,” and if they could get their goods to market, they sought a low price. “[A] better day dawned for a brief season, but soon came the national exigencies of embargo and non-intercourse, which bore especially hard upon all this region.”

27. Proctor Sampson to Beloved Ministry [at New Lebanon], March 10, 1826, [3]. For a similar account, not including the fields of grain, see “A History or Record of the most important occurrences ... at Sodus and Port Bay, 1826-1838,” [2], entry for March 1, 1826. Compare these accounts with Bennett, [10], entry for March 1, 1826. The May 23 letter broadens the description of what was planted on the farm. From the context of the letter, it can be concluded that the crops were planted before the takeover by the Shakers. (See Polly Lawrence to Dearly Beloved Elders and Friends, May 14, 1826, [4]; and, C. [Calvin Green] P. [Proctor Sampson]; J. [Jeremiah Talcott] L. [Lucy Brown]; J. [John Lockwood] R. [Roby Bennet] to Beloved Ministry, May 23, 1826, [3].)
28. “Burning of Sodus. Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Geneva, to Its Friend in The City,” *The Columbian*, June 28, 1813, [2]. A variation of this personal observation is found in *Columbian Gazette*, “Burning of Sodus. Geneva, June 23,” June 29, 1813, [2]. While the latter adds information not in the former article, it says nothing of the burning of the Nicholas warehouse.
29. “A History or Record of the most important occurrences ... at Sodus and Port Bay, 1826-1838,” [2].
30. Where did the name Lawson originate? If the name Portland was changed to Lawson by Judge Nicholas, he might have named it for his son Lawson Nicholas. An alternative explanation might be found in another familial bond. John Nicholas and Robert S. Rose were brothers-in-law. Their wives were sisters “of the Virginia family of Lawsons.” Both sisters named a son Lawson: one was Lawson Nicholas, the other, Lawson G. Rose. (Turner, 236) However, there is yet a third possible explanation. There was another land speculator, Dr. Thomas G. Lawson, who purchased a number of lots from Charles Williamson in the area of Sodus Point. “Possessed of considerable wealth, he practiced his profession only occasionally, spending his money freely in improvements of his possessions. He returned to England, where he died in 1833.” (Turner, 399) Despite what he may have contributed to area development, I have found no direct connection between Dr. Thomas G. Lawson and the land now identified as Nicholas Point. Furthermore, no known business or friendship connection has been found linking Dr. Lawson with John Nicholas, or any other member of the Nicholas family. There is one final possibility, albeit remote. Among those who joined the new believers in 1826 at Sodus was a woman by the name of Ann Lawson, “who united Sept. 9th.” There is no other comment about her. Even in the membership notes, the only information given was her birth date, December 25, 1808. (“A History or Record of the most important occurrences ... at Sodus and Port Bay, 1826-1838,” [7, 90].
31. “A History or Record of the most important occurrences ... at Sodus and Port Bay, 1826-1838,” [7].
32. Bennett, [16].
33. The word “store” in the first quarter of the nineteenth century would have meant

something quite different than it connotes in the twenty-first century. There is no way to know what the Shakers meant by the word, except what can be surmised from the size of the space (twenty-one by twenty-four feet) and from what was removed when the Shakers remodeled it to be a meeting room.

34. At most I have found a visitor's acknowledgment of the Sodus Shaker settlement. Col. William Leete Stone in his account of a tour writes from Sodus Point: "Several elegant farms have been cleared upon its [Great Sodus Bay's] margin; and towards its eastern section, the Shakers from New Lebanon have planted a colony, which like the present establishment [Sodus Point], has already become a bee-hive of neatness, order and industry." (William Leete Stone, "From New York to Niagara: Journal of a Tour, in Part by the Erie Canal, in the Year 1829," *Buffalo Historical Society Publications* 14: 231.)
35. "Deed of Nichols' Farm, Port-Bay, from Proctor Sampson & others," 113, in North Family Book of Records, 1814-1910, New Lebanon, NYPL Shaker Manuscript Collection. As in the case of Sodus, Port Bay refers to a township, within which the village of Lawson was located
36. George Kendall, *Sketch Book (July 1835) after Isaac Newton Youngs (June 1834)*, sketch titled "Slight View of Sodus," Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
37. Untitled [Shaker sketch map of Nicholas and Thornton Points], n.d, I. A. 5, Shaker Manuscript Collection, WRHS.
38. Wisbey, 8.
39. "HURON — was formed from Wolcott, as 'Port Bay,' Feb. 25, 1826. Its name was changed [to Huron] March 17, 1834." Within the town of Port Bay, in 1826, was the hamlet of Port Glasgow, "at the head of sloop navigation on Great Sodus Bay." J. H. French, *Historical and Statistical Gazetteer of New York State*, Interlaken, New York: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1986, 691.
40. Anyone reading this article and having read Wisbey's *The Sodus Shaker Community* may notice what appears to be a contradiction. In discussing the Shaker orders, Wisbey states the following: "The earliest settlers were housed in the eastern or Port Bay section of the property in buildings that were there at the time of the purchase. This came to be known as the East Family or the Gathering Order where newcomers lived prior to signing the covenant." (Wisbey, 10) During the time period covered by this article, 1825-1827, the Gathering Order lived on the western part of the property, located in Sodus. Later, however, as the community came into its own and developed its own senior leadership, it may well have modified its organization and residential units. Wisbey's account deals with this later period in Sodus history.
41. Bennett, [10].
42. In figure 3, the blocked section at the left of the map is the same as the blocked area in figure 4. What both blocks represent is found in figure 7. The latter might be considered an inset image for figures 3 and 4. Note, too, the relationship of the road to the mill pond and mills.
43. Proctor Sampson to Beloved Ministry [at New Lebanon], March 10, 1826, [3].
44. Bennett, [11].
45. "A History or Record of the most important occurrences ... at Sodus and Port Bay, 1826-1838", [3].
46. Polly Lawrence to Beloved Ministry [at New Lebanon], May 23, 1826, [3]. The New Lebanon Shakers, including Polly Lawrence, arrived at their new assignments as

- teachers, leaders, and helpers, on May 13, 1826. (Bennett, [12])
47. Joseph Pelham, "A Brief Narative [sic] of the Religious Experience of Joseph Pelham," 1863, [82-83], VI. B. 3, Shaker Manuscript Collection. WRHS.
 48. Pelham, "A Brief Narative," [85].
 49. Pelham, "A Brief Narative," [85].
 50. Pelham, "A Brief Narative," [86].
 51. Bennett, [12].
 52. Bennett, [16].
 53. "A History or Record of the most important occurrences ...at Sodus and Port Bay, 1826-1838," [6].
 54. Figures 1 and 2 reflect a change in the West Family's dwellings. The West house seen in figure 2 does not appear in figure 1. Figure 1 shows a house south of the road, and a second house north of the road. When the reference to the West house was made in 1826, it could be identified on the map in figure 2; however, by 1834, no such building appeared (figure 1). Either it no longer existed, or it had been converted to another use, or it was not thought worthy of inclusion in the "slight view." This suggests that the crudely drawn map was made after June 1926 and before Young's visit in 1834. [Because of the quality of figure 2, it may be helpful to point out that the West house appears above the words, "Cleared Land."]
 55. Bennett, [16].
 56. The Novitiate Order at New Lebanon, New York, had its locus at the North House. Most of the missionaries had their primary residence there, although Jeremiah Talcott and John Lockwood were from the Upper Canaan Family, also part of the Novitiate Order. (John Lockwood, "A Brief account of Brother John Lockwood's Experience," (1869) in Joseph Pelham, "A Brief Narrative of the Religious Experience of Joseph Pelham," v. 4, [143-60])
 57. Polly Lawrence to Beloved Ministry [at New Lebanon], May 23, 1826, [2]. This letter reiterates what she wrote in a previous letter, on May 14, 1826, written on behalf of Proctor Sampson to Beloved Elders and Friends. In her letter on May 23, she stated that we "are tearing down the shelves in the old store room to fix it for a meeting room."
 58. Bennett, [26].
 59. Bennett, [27].
 60. "A History or Record of the most important occurrences ...at Sodus and Port Bay, 1826-1838," [32]. Was it the second house of the Novitiate Order, the one currently owned by the Mangan family of Alasa Farms?
 61. Bennett, [55].