

THE KETCHUMS OF KETCHUM ROAD

Today's travelers from Bushnell's Basin to Victor drive on Route 96, Pittsford-Victor Road. One hundred years ago it was known as Ketchum Road, most probably named after the Ketchum family who owned several farms in the eastern part of Bushnell's Basin.

A variety of sources, including maps and census and land records, provide some answers as to who the Ketchums were. The family was in Ipswich, Massachusetts, as early as 1635, appearing in Rensselaer, New York, about one hundred years later, and finally showing up in Perinton in the early 1800's.

Land records indicate a number of transactions involving members of the Ketchum family. In 1829, Thomas and Mary Leggett sold 332 acres of land in Lot 49 (in the Bushnell's Basin-Route 96 area) to 52-year-old Joseph Ketchum and his son Daniel. They added another 32 acres to their property in 1832. By the mid 1830's, both Seymour and John Van Ness Ketchum had purchased property in the same area. John Van Ness probably acquired land from his father Joseph.

Census records shed some light on each of the families. The 1850 census lists Joseph as living with his son Joseph and daughter-in-law Lucy. By that time Daniel had moved to Webster. The 1855 census lists another son, William, his wife Emiline, a widowed daughter Sarah and her son Melvin joining Joseph in the household. Joseph died in 1856 and yet another son Cornelius, as indicated by the 1865 census, inherited the property, living on the site with his wife Caroline and his children Elvira, Edward, and Clayton. After Cornelius' death in 1874, the 1875 census has Caroline living on the property with her daughter Elvira and her grandson Elington. She and her daughter are also listed in the 1900 census as is their son Andrew and his family, who were probably running the farm after Cornelius' death.

John Van Ness Ketchum is listed in the 1850 census with his wife Alma and his children Erasmus, Mary, and Charlotte. He also shows up in the 1855, 1865, and 1875 census records. By 1865 his household consisted of his wife, sons Darwin and Franklin, daughters Mary, Charlotte Ann, and Isabel, a niece Emma, and an adopted daughter, Mary Fehrle. John died in 1886 after which his son Franklin took over the 99 acre farm. His household included his mother Alma, his wife Minnie, and their son George. After Franklin's death in 1914, Minnie and George ran the farm for several more years.

The Seymour Ketchum 120 acre farm was located in the vicinity of today's Fisher's Road. He moved to Perinton in 1835 with his wife, Elizabeth Ann Lee, and children Cynthia, Mary, Jared, Angeline, and Edward. Their first house was a log cabin which was replaced in 1860 by a 1 ½ story frame house. The farm's primary crops were potatoes and apples, including Peach Blow potatoes and Red Spy apples. Following a common practice of the times, Seymour sold the farm to his son Edward in 1884 and moved into Victor with his daughters Mary and Angeline. After Edward's untimely death, the three moved back to the family property and continued to run the farm. Later their nephew George and his daughter Helen lived in the family homestead.

A look at the old maps helps locate the various farms. The 1852 map shows the J. (Joseph) Ketchum property and the J.V.N. Ketchum properties on the north side of Ketchum Road and the Seymour Ketchum property near today's Park Road. By 1858, the J. Ketchum property had become the C. (Cornelius) Ketchum property, as Joseph died in 1856 and Cornelius (his son) inherited the property. The J.V.N. and Seymour Ketchum properties are still shown. By 1900 the Seymour Ketchum property had become the Mary & Angeline Ketchum property, the Cornelius Ketchum property had been sold to the Matthews family, and the final piece of property is shown as the Frank J. Ketchum Valley View Farm.

Today that land along Route 96 has been developed primarily for commercial use, but the Ketchum/Matthews farmhouse at 1433 Pittsford-Victor Road still survives as a Perinton designated landmark and is home to Edward Jones Investments.

