



History Reclaimed:

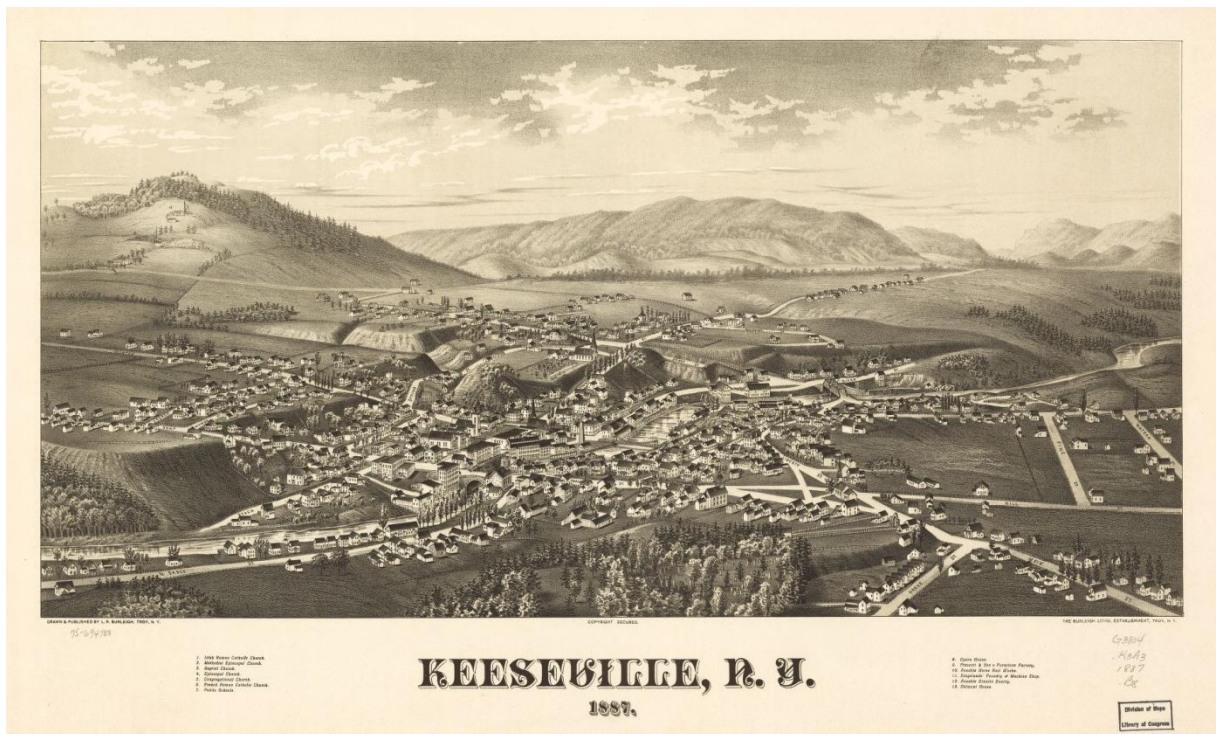
Authentic American Vintage
Lumber from the Finnegan
1867 Barn in Keeseville, NY

Keeseville, New York

The Town of Chesterfield, in which the hamlet of Keeseville resides, was formed in 1802 by partition from Willsborough. Lake Champlain forms its easternmost boundary, while the AuSable River marks the north western edge of the town. The town was well situated geographically to be a major transportation center during the country's first century as it was connected to the world via Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence River.

Algonquin Indians had an established village at Alice Falls, above the chasm on the AuSable River, and on Auger Lake. From these base camps, the Algonquins hunted throughout the Adirondacks and their presence slowed settlement to the area. It is believed that Chesterfield was named by early settlers in honor of their former New England homes, as the majority of early Essex County settlers came from New England.

The AuSable River drops precipitously through its final stretch in Chesterfield creating locations for power dams at Anderson Falls in Keeseville, just above the AuSable Chasm. Manufacturing began in 1808 with a carding and fulling plant taking advantage of the first dam on the river. By 1816, the manufacture of nails, soon to be Keeseville's principal industry, had begun. It was here that the first machine in the United States for making cut nails with heads was developed and patented. Despite setbacks of periodic floods and fires, production of secondary products of the iron ore industry grew in 1800's Keeseville. Keeseville's historic district contains many of the buildings that were built during the town's early industrial heyday.



The Hamlet of Keeseville in 1887

The Finnegan

The Irish Potato Famine was a period of mass starvation, disease and emigration in Ireland between 1845 and 1852. At the beginning of the famine about two-fifths of the Ireland's population was solely reliant on this cheap crop and the potato blight resulted in approximately 1 million people dying and a million more emigrating from Ireland. Having lost nearly 25% of its inhabitants during that time, Ireland's population has never returned to its pre-famine levels.

According to the *Irish Immigrants: New York Port Arrival Records*, it is believed John and Mary Finnegan emigrated from Ireland and arrived in New York on 6 Nov 1851 on *The Enterprise* along with 226 other passengers who embarked from Liverpool, England. John and Mary then traveled 300 miles north and settled in Chesterfield, NY.

John and Mary lived in a wooden house and had their first child, James a year after arriving in 1852. He was soon followed by six siblings: John born in 1854; Ellen born in 1856; Thomas born in 1858; Daniel born in 1860; Patrick born in 1862; and finally Michael in 1864.

I. Population. CENSUS of the Inhabitants in the First Election District of the Town of Chesterfield in the County of Essex taken by me on the Eighteenth day of June, 1855.

Walter Sumner Marshal.

Dwellings and families.	Of what material built.	Value.	Families numbered in the order of their valuation.	Name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June was in this family.	Age.	Sex.	Color.	Relation to the head of the family.	In what county of this State, or in what other State or Foreign Country born.	Married.	Widowed.	Years resident in this city or town.	Profession, Trade, or Occupation.	VOTERS.				Deaf, dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.		
														Native.	Naturalized.	Alien.	Persons of color over 21 years of age cannot vote unless they are free.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
37	Wood	300.350		John Finnegan	30	M		Head	Ireland	1		7	Farmer	1						
38				Mary Finnegan	30	F		Wife	Ireland	1		7								
39				James Finnegan	4	M		Child	Essex			1								
40				John Finnegan	2	M		Child	Essex			2								
41				Ellen Finnegan	2	F		Child	Essex											

New York State Census of 1855, First Election District of Chesterfield, Finnegan Family

I. Population. CENSUS of the Inhabitants living in the First Election District of Chesterfield in the County of Essex, N. Y., on the first day of June, 1875.

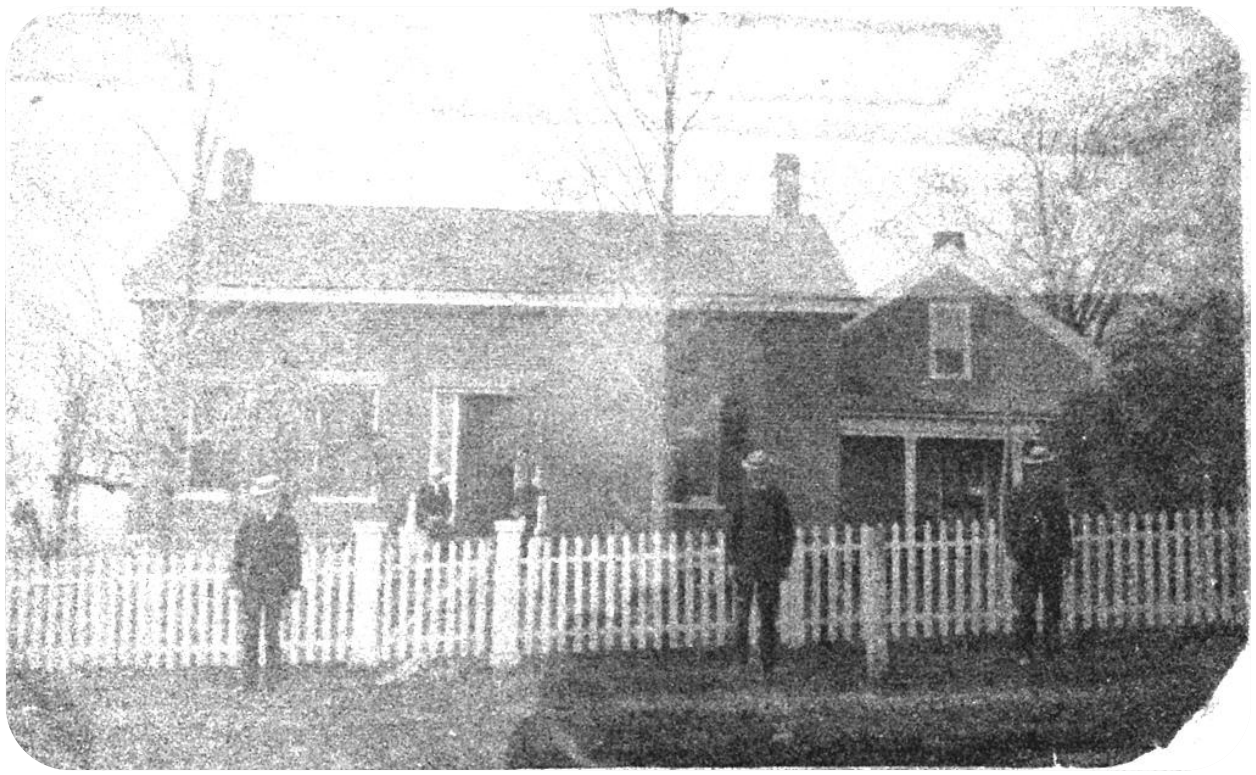
This Enumeration was made by me, on the 8th day of June, 1875.

D.H. Sargent Enumerator.

Page 49

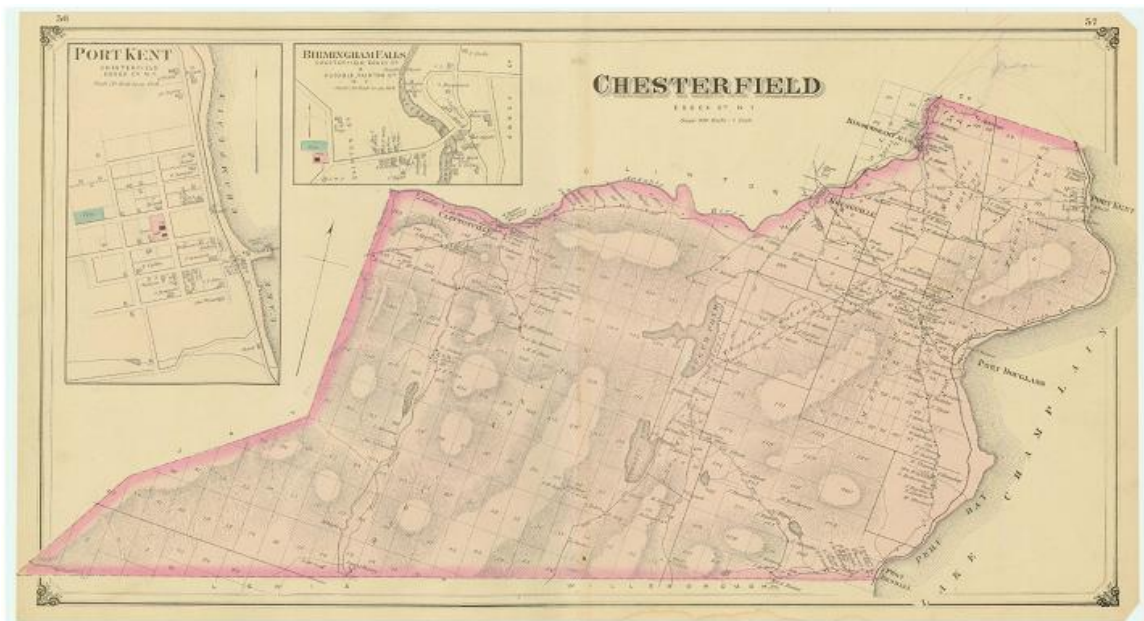
Dwellings.	Of what material built.	Value.	Families numbered in the order of their valuation.	Name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1875.	Age.	Sex.	Color.	Relation to the head of the family.	In what county of this State, or in what other State or Foreign Country born.	New married.	New widowed.	Single.	Profession, trade or occupation.	Total place of employment, if out of the city or town, where the family resides.	Voters.				Deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	
															Native.	Naturalized.	Alien.	Persons of color over 21 years of age cannot vote unless they are free.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
114	Brick	1000		John Finnegan	50	M		Head	Ireland	1			Farmer							
				Mary Finnegan	50	F		Wife	Ireland	1										
				James Finnegan	28	M		Son	Essex co				Farmer							
				John Finnegan	17	M		Son	Essex co											
				Thomas Finnegan	17	M		Son	Essex co											
				Ellen Finnegan	19	F		Daughter	Essex co											
				Samuel Finnegan	15	M		Son	Essex co											
				Patrick Finnegan	13	M		Son	Essex co											
				Michael Finnegan	11	M		Son	Essex co											

New York State Census of 1875, First Election District of Chesterfield, Finnegan Family



Finnegan 1867 Brick House Picture That Still Hangs in Home, Date & Subjects Unknown

According to the Census of the state of New York for 1855, neither John nor his wife Mary could read or write. However, by 1867 his success at farming had allowed John and his family to build a new one-story brick home, at the corner of Mace Chasm Road and Port Douglas Road.



Chesterfield Essex Co. NY Land Ownership Map, 1876



"J. Finnegan" at Center in Detail of Chesterfield Essex Co. NY Land Ownership Map, 1876

The Barn

Shortly thereafter, in 1867 the main barn was constructed to support the families farming operations across Mace Chasm Road. Built on a fieldstone foundation and constructed from a variety of hardwood and softwood trees that were harvested from the property, the post and beams were massive in size. Many of the timbers utilized in this English-style queen-post barn, measured over 11 inches x 11 inches and some 30 feet from end to end. The 30 foot by 40 foot structure was utilized for livestock housing and winter hay storage for the Finnegan's animals.

In the years following, given the continued success of the Finnegan farming operation, an additional 30' x 40' barn was likely moved from another local farm onto the end of the existing barn; making a new total barn footprint of 30 feet by nearly 100 feet long.



Images of the Interior and Beam Detail of the Finnegan Barn, 2014

Reclamation

Throughout the coming years, additions were added such as a shed roof spanning the entire length of the barn, a silo and other functional pieces that were tailored to the farming trends of each era. The Finnegan's one story brick house was also increased in size with a second story added to house. Although no records could be found about the later years of John and Mary Finnegan, the Finnegan 1867 Barn stayed in the family through the 1970's. The land, no longer being farmed, was subdivided and sold for development and the new owners of the barn rented it to a local horse riding club who used it as a stable for horses through the late 1990's.

The Finnegan barn sat empty for two decades after the riding club left, during which time the shed roof along the back of the barn began to fail, letting rain and snow slowly deteriorate the side of the structure. On September 12, 2001, the new owner painted a flag on the end of the barn closest to the intersection of Mace Chasm and Port Douglas roads, which served as a major landmark for locals and visitors alike in the area. In 2011, fearing for the barns collapse, the owners filed for, and were granted a permit for the local fire department to burn the barn down. The night before the planned burn, the town council revoked the permit due to a neighbor's concern that the large fire would spook and injure his horses.

Over the course of two weeks in October, 2014 the StoriedBoards team reclaimed the entire barn structure; salvaging over a tractor trailer load of beams, barn board and tin roofing. The American flag from the side of the barn was saved so that it could be put back up on the corner as a reminder of the Finnegan 1867 Barn that stood on the corner for over 145 years.

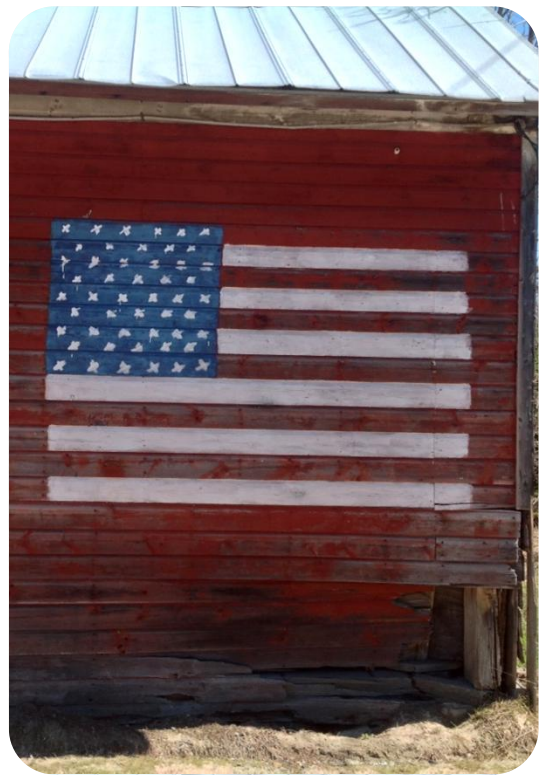
The brick house that John and Mary Finnegan built and grew their family remains in fine condition. The house has been kept within in the family lineage for six additional generations, many of which have resided within its walls.



Aerial Shot of The Finnegan 1867 Barn in Upper Right Corner with Silos. House Top Center, Circa 1950



Bob Finnegan in 1948, Barn in Background



American Flag on Barn, 2014



The Finnegan 1867 Barn Before Reclamation in 2014



Dedicated to giving our products a voice, telling
the stories of their past and allowing you to write
the next chapter of their life

www.StoriedBoards.com
(518) 227-0899