

WATSON TOWNSHIP

Formed from Leyden on March 30, 1821, Watson embraced all of Lewis County east of Black River. Watson was named for James T. Watson, the proprietor of a tract of 61,433 acres lying in this town and in Herkimer County.

After James T. Watson's death on January 29, 1839, his estate was divided among his first cousins. The Watson Tract formed two triangular areas, connected by a narrow strip. The first agricultural production of any magnitude was by Isaac Puffer, who in 1811 burnt over the great windfall on the plains east of the present bridge and planted corn.

In 1822, a settlement was begun in the eastern border of Watson in the community of Number Four, Brown's Tract. Orrin Fenton settled here and aided in developing the area into a summer resort. Glamour girl Brenda Frazer was known to summer at Number Four. Until 1828, the only means of crossing Black River to gain access to the town was during the summer by a ferry. A frame bridge was built by Thomas Puffer and finished on August 6, 1828 after a group of men pushed for its construction.

Dannatberg was the only village in Watson, which was formed by William H. Dannatt and Charles E. Pell, who were lumber merchants of New York City. This village was located upon Independence Creek, on the south border of the town. A sawmill was the chief economic establishment in Dannatberg.



Pine Grove Church