An annotated bibliography of

Local History Books about Chili, New York

November 2016 update

Preface:

Many books have been written with references to Chili, New York -- many books which have been catalogued, processed, and shelved in the local history section of the Chili Public Library. This preservation of books is, however, only the starting point for research about the local area. Local history books are generally the work of fledgling authors, and their books tend to be without indexes. They are also often without helpful/descriptive chapter headings. These limitations can, of course, make research difficult.

This annotated bibliography will hopefully be a starting point for those people interested in Chili history. This bibliography is not comprehensive, as it is, even more than most books in the library's local history collection, the work of fledgling local historians.

You should find the index in the back of this booklet helpful as the topics reflect the major reference queries we receive about the area: "Cemetery records", "Cobblestone buildings", "Name of town/origins of the town's name", "Roberts College", and "Names of early settlers".

Recent additions to our book collection follow the index.

-- Staff of the Chili Public Library

1.

069.0974 BOL
Stuart Bolger
Genesee Country Museum: Scenes of Town & Country in the Nineteenth Century
1985

This book includes an account (titled “A Rural Roman Catholic Church”) of early Catholics in Chili and the founding of St. Feehan’s Church. A photograph of St. Feehan’s accompanies the text.

2.

282.7478
Gert Amesbury
A Work In Progress: St. Pius Tenth Parish: The First 150 Years
2004

An authoritative history of the church.

3.

285.1 STO
The First Presbyterian Church of Chili
2007

An authoritative history of the church.

4.

378.747 PFO
Pfouts, Neil
History of Roberts Wesleyan College
2000

An authoritative history.

5.

711
Chili Conservation Commission
Open Space Index August 1973
1973

An index of undeveloped lands in Chili circa 1973. Recommended for use as “a reference source and building block in developing and implementing a program for preservation of large natural areas within the town”.

6.

711 MON
Monroe County Division of Regional Planning
An Inventory For Planning for the Town of Chili
1938

Part I of this 1938 town inventory includes a survey of local industry, cemeteries, churches, as well as population statistics, a compact town history, more.

Part II includes a survey of school districts, geology, watersheds, as well as a map of residential density, more.

7.

720 SCH
Carl Schmidt
Cobblestone Masonry
1966

A section of the book devoted to cobblestone architecture in Monroe County has a heading for the “Town of Chili” which includes entries for these houses: Franklin-Krenzer House, Pope-Fisher House, Sheffer-Bean House, Sibley-Stuart House, Sickles-Minx house, and the Smith-Krenzer House.

8.

720 SHE
Olaf Shelgren
Cobblestone Landmarks of New York State
1978

Shelgren includes an entry for, and photograph of, the Sheffer House.

9.

720.9747 GEN
Genesee Valley Council on the Arts
The Early Architecture of the Genesee Valley
1975

This book, liberally illustrated with architects' drawings as well as photographs, includes an entry for, and photograph of, the Fellows-Alexander House on Union Street.

10.

725.372 BAR
Chili Historic Preservation Board
Our Treasured Past: The Barns of Chili
2013

This book, liberally illustrated with photographs, profiles many of Chili's barns.

11.

726.5097 K62g
Phyllis Pittman Kitt
God's Country: Historic Churches and Chapels of the Genesee Valley
2009

Kitt includes a page-length essay for the First Presbyterian Church of Chili, with accompanying photograph.

12.

728 FRE
Rich and Sue Freeman
Cobblestone Quest
2005

The Freemans chronicle the rise and fall of cobblestone architecture. They include a recommended tour of cobblestone buildings throughout Chili and Henrietta. They direct people to, and offer some facts about, the Sibley House (the residence of the first supervisor of Chili), the Sheffer House, and the Chili District #4 Schoolhouse.

13.

920.0747 GIL
Wanda Giles Weisenreder
The Giles Story
(1995)

Giles family information, one of the town's original families.

14.

920.0747 WID
Jay Widener
The Sons of Catherine Weidner
1989

Weidner family information, one of the town's original families.

15.

920.0747 WID
Howard Widener
Wideners in America
1904

Weidner family information, one of the town's original families.

16.

929.2 BEA
Emily Beaman Wooden
Beaman and Clark Genealogy
1909

Beaman family information, one of the town's original families.

17.

929.3
American Wars
(2010)

Information about various Chili residents who served in the Armed Forces. Arranged chronologically by war.

18.

940.467
City of Rochester
World War Service Record
1924

Volume 1 contains an entry for Chili resident Everett Case, in whose memory the book was given to the library.

Volume 3 contains a page-length report on Chili's war activities.

19.

974.7 MER
Arch Merrill
Stagecoach Towns
1947

The prolific Merrill imagines a drive on a stage coach in the 18th century from Rochester to Buffalo. In a chapter titled "Down the Buffalo Road", his coach enters North Chili:

“With a strident blast of coach horn, we pull up before a two-story brick tavern where Union Street joins Buffalo Road at North Chili. That tavern is a favorite stop for the drovers on their way to the Rochester market, only eight miles away. There they feed and water their cattle, swine and sheep. They find their own refreshment in the tap room.

“North Chili in those days was a self-sufficient community with stores and mills. Its farmers bred fine road horses and cattle. That was before the first railroad train crawled through Chili town in 1837 on its way from Rochester to Batavia while fences all along the line were packed with spectators.”

Merrill also includes a lengthy passage about Roberts College’s origin.

He concludes the section about Chili with an explanation of the Town’s name:

“Chili, settled in 1792 and carved from Riga into a township in 1822, was part of the ‘Mill Seat Tract’, successively owned by the Seneca Indians, Phelps and Gorham, Robert Morris and the British Pulteney interests. Its name probably is a corruption of that of the South American republic, Chile. The pioneers were wont to fasten foreign names on their settlements, then sometimes misspell them and often mispronounce them.”

As Merrill’s coach continues westward on its way to Buffalo, his next stop after North Chili is Churchville.

20.

978.78 DOT
Lockwood Doty
The Genesee Country
1925

Volume 1 discusses the founding of Chili on page 627, and lists some of the original settlers of the town.

21.

974.78 PEC
William Peck
Landmarks of Monroe County New York
1895

This 1895 book has an index that directs to these headings related specifically to Chili: churches, first settlers, population, schools, seminary, town officers.

22.

974.788 CHI
Carl Moore
Chili Public Officials 1809 – 1970
1972

23.

974.788 CHI
Directory / Town of Chili/ Monroe County/ New York
1953

A 1953 directory “of the names, addresses, voting districts and school districts of the town.”

24.

974.788 CHI
St. Feehan’s Church Centennial 1854 – 1954

Self-described “historical notes” about the church.

25.

363.3709 CHI 1931 – 1981
Chili Fire Department, Inc.: Fifty Years of Service to the Community, 1931 – 1981

A decade by decade history of the department.

26.

363.3709 CHI 1931 – 2010
Chili Fire Department, Inc.: Dedicated Service to the Community, 1931 – 2010

An authoritative history of the department.

27.

974.788 CHI
Yesterday: At St. Pius Tenth Church

Donald Murphy's personal take on the history of the parish. Murphy was pastor 1954 to 1977.

28.

974.788 CHI
Forest land to First Class Town – Chili 150 Years Great 1822 – 1972
1972

From the cover: "Photos of the events of Chili's sesquicentennial celebration plus selected reprints from the Gates-Chili News series of articles of Chili."

29.

974.788 CHI
History of Chili #11 School

30.

974.788 CHI
Chili Art Group
Rural Roots and Fond Memories
2000

The history behind the paintings on the millennium quilt.

31.

974.788 CHI
First Methodist Church North Chili
1953

100th anniversary program including self-described "historical notes".

32.

974.788 CHI
"And Without Him Was Not Anything Made That Was Made"
1982

A look at the First Presbyterian Church of Chili on their 150th anniversary.

33.

974.788 CHI
Chili Historic Preservation Board
Our Treasured Past: The Chili Cobblestone Legacy
2008

A detailed look at a number of Chili's cobblestone houses.

34.

974.788
compiled by Ruth Lenhardt
Index for "Chili Chapters" and "Hidden Strands"
1985

See entries #45 and #53.

35.

974.788 CHI
Bertha Henderson
History of the First Baptist Church of Chili
(1959)

36.

974.788 CHI
C. Alan Ingalsbe
History of the First Baptist Church in Chili, 1834 – 1984
1984

37.

974.788 CHI
Ruth McFee
Chili: A visit to points of interest in the town of Chili dating from the time of early settlement
(1954)

Some of the locations covered are cobblestone houses.

38.

974.788 CHI 1954
Ruth McFee
Monroe County History Tour: a visit to points of interest in the town of Chili dating from the time of early settlement to recent years
1954

Similar but not identical to the entry above.

39.

974.788 CHI
Bernice Wilcox
Town of Chili: Mini History of Chili
(1972)

40.

974.788 CHI
John F. Kennedy Club
Reminiscences
(1972)

From the preface: “Here is our attempt to record the oral history of the town as remembered by some of its citizens.”

41.

974.788 CHI
Priscilla Fortiner
Hometown Study: Chili
1980

Review of Chili's early history.

42.

363.3709 CHI
Chili Fire Department Inc. Rescue Squad, 1949-1999
1999

History of the Chili Fire Department Rescue Squad.

43.

974.788 CHI
Polk's Chili, N.Y. Directory 1962 – 1971

Various Polk directories from years 1962 to 1971: "directory of households, occupants of office buildings and other business places, including a complete street and avenue guide."

44.

974.788 CHI
Historic Preservation Board
Historic Landmarks of Chili
(2000)

Discussion of various residences being considered for historic landmark status.

45.

974.788 CHI
Carl Moore
Hidden Strands from the Fabric of Early Chili
1976

See our entry #34.

From the preface: “from extensive official and semi official sources have been gleaned hidden strands of economics, sociology, religion, education and the local judiciary – most from the 1820s to the 1860s… as assorted ‘strands’ this combination of past and present is composed as a series of topics rather than a chronological narrative.”

46.

974.788 GAT
Narrative Script for Slides of Chili
1981

A script that offers background on a variety of local landmarks: schools, cobblestone buildings, notable gravesites, businesses, more.

47.

974.788 HAL
Tombstone Inscriptions from the Town of Chili, Monroe County, New York
1993

Inscriptions from various local cemeteries.

48.

974.788 HOS
Howard C. Hosmer
Monroe County (1821 – 1971)
1971

Hosmer, in an entry devoted to Chili, details the town’s early days, the names of many of the settling families, more. He also suggests why many early settlers found the Chili area attractive:

“Chili benefited because many newcomers to the region, first attracted to Rochester, were repelled by its lowlands, rattlesnakes, lack of transportation by way of river, malaria and the $4 going price per acre of land, and many of them moved to Chili.”

In a chapter titled “What’s in a Name?” the author discusses the origins of various local place names, including Chili’s.

49.

974.788 LEA
Chili Mills Conservation Area
1996

50.

974.788 L477p
Florence Lee
Pleasant Valley
1970

A history of the Genesee Valley. The book’s index directs to these subjects related to Chili: early settlers, Black Creek area, hotels and taverns, historical museum, taken from the Town of Riga, organized.

51.

974.788 MCI
W. H. McIntosh
History of Monroe County – Name Index

See our entry #52.

52.

974.788 M152h
W.H. McIntosh
History of Monroe County, New York
1877

See our entry #51.

Pages 196 to 200 offer a detailed early history of Chili, illustrated with many drawings. Information is included about Roberts Seminary, as well as various local churches. Biographical sketches are also included.

53.

974.788 MOO
Carl Moore
Chili Chapters: A Condensation of Chili's History based primarily on Town Records
1972

See our entry #34.

54.

974.788 M821cpo
Carl Moore
Town of Chili Public Officials
1970 & 2000

Part I includes public officials years 1809 to 1970.

Part II includes public officials years 1970 to 2000.

55.

974.788 WIL
Bernice Wilcox
Chili Mills National Historic Site Scrapbook
1997

From the preface: “This history of events and anecdotes was compiled to acquaint the citizens of Chili and the local community with their town.”

Volume I includes a condensed history of Chili arranged by year, information about Indian remains, origins of the town’s name, biographies, more.

56.

974.788 U58u
Union List of Cemetery Record Holdings
1982

Includes local cemetery records.

Recent additions to the book collection:

A1.

362.76 SHE
Out of the Darkness: The Story of Mary Ellen Wilson
1999

Abused girl is relocated to Chili, New York. Information about the relocation is included in the book's epilogue.

A2.

974.788 OKE
Historic Genesee Country: A Guide to its Lands & Legacies
2010

The section on "Western Monroe" includes entries for Joseph Morgan, Benjamin Titus Roberts, and "Early Stage Stop" (in North Chili).

A3.

720.973 PUE
The Octagon House Inventory
2011

Information about the octagon house located at the Genesee County Museum. The entry is listed under the heading "Mumford".

A4.

398.232
The Burning Ship and Other Legends
1994

Contains a story titled "The Farmer Who Wanted to Fly" that takes place in Chili.

A5.

364.1523 BEN
Devil at Genesee Junction
2015

A true crime book concerning the murder of two school girls in Chili in 1966.

A6.

974.788 IOA
Coldwater: An Eclectic History of the Hamlet
2016

“Today, it is just a place name – an unincorporated hamlet within the towns of Gates and Chili… but in its day, Coldwater was a business and transportation hub with an official post office address and a regular stop on the New York Central main line.”

A7.

974.788 SCH
Threads of Life II: And Then to Grow
1979

A personal remembrance of the Coldwater area including general history of the area.

Index

Cemeteries: 6, 46, 47, 56

Churches: 1, 2, 3, 6, 11, 21, 24, 27, 31, 32, 35, 36, 52

Cobblestone buildings: 7, 8, 12, 33, 37, 46

Fire Department: 25, 26, 42

Names of early settlers: 20, 21, 48, 50

Origins of the town's name: 19, 48, 55

Publications devoted to specific families: 13, 14, 15, 16

Roberts College: 4, 19, 21, 52

Servicemen: 17, 18