

Four townships marked county's beginning

Back in March of 1875, when Antrim County gave up some of its territory for the formation of a new county known as Otsego, there were only four townships in Otsego County: Otsego Lake, Charlton, Livingston and Elmira.

The first meeting of the board of supervisors for these four townships came May 1, 1875. Charles Davis, representing Elmira, Reuben Murray, supervisor of Otsego Lake, George H. Smith, Livingston's supervisor,

and Thomas Woodin, representing Charlton, gathered that day in Charles Brink's boarding house at Otsego Lake Village.

A special act of the legislature in 1877 began to increase the number of townships in Otsego County by organizing Hayes and Corwith Townships. Hayes chose Judson Hooker to be its supervisor, and Corwith gave the nod to O.F. French.

By 1879, the number of townships had increased to seven with the addition of

Dover. The residents of the township elected William Barnes to the supervisor's post.

On its second try, Bagley Township joined the county in 1882. Six years earlier a petition had requested the formation of a new township to be known as "Bagley," but that petition had been denied. All of the

early records of Bagley township were lost in a fire.

The last township was created in 1888 when Chester was carved out of a portion of Charlton township. The new township held its first annual township meeting at the Stevens Lumber Company Store in April, 1889.

All during this time there

were unsuccessful attempts to create other townships. An effort to create the township of Elmwood by splitting off a part of Livingston Township failed in 1876.

The township of Garfield was another which never quite made it. Garfield was to have been carved out of Hayes Township.

One township existed for a period of only 11 years and then died quietly. Sawyer Township, originally part of Dover, was named after the area's first settler, Samuel Sawyer. The new township held its first official meeting March 10, 1923, but by mid-1934 it had dissolved.



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