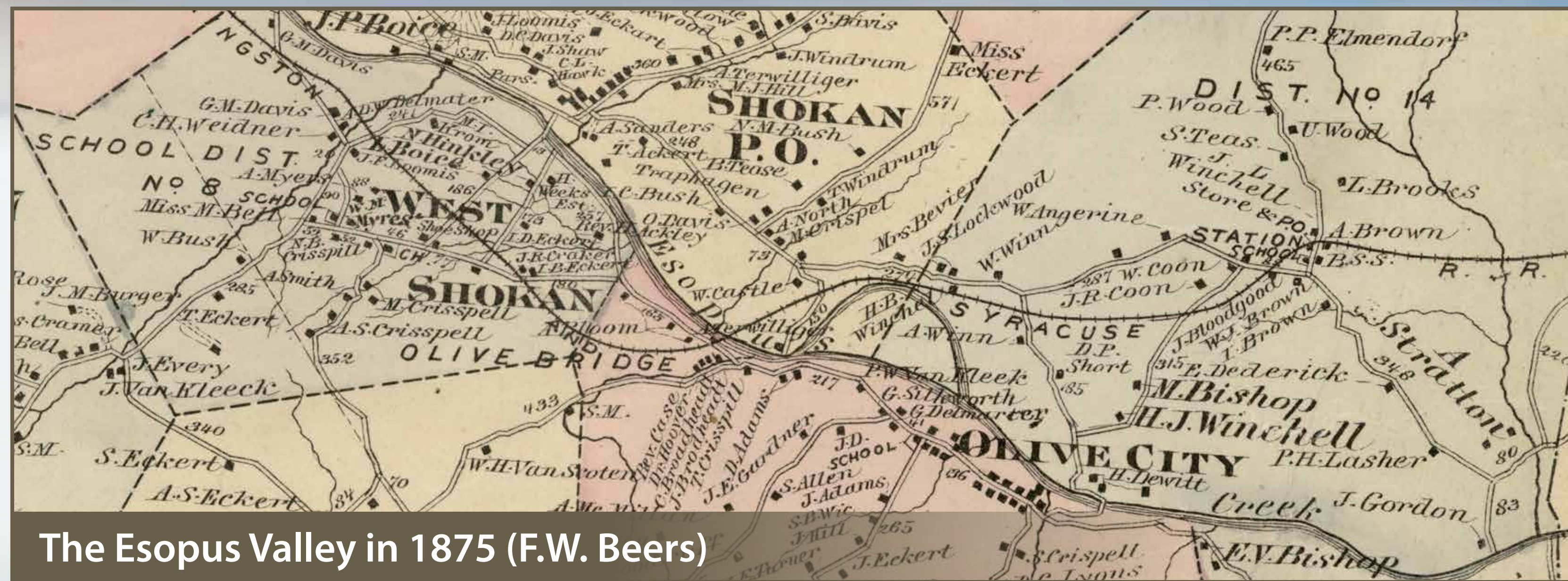


LOST COMMUNITIES



The Esopus Valley in 1875 (F.W. Beers)

BUILDING REMOVAL & CLEARING

Over 10,000 acres (approximately 15 square miles) were cleared to make way for Ashokan Reservoir to provide much-needed fresh drinking water to New York City. Entire communities were displaced and hamlets abandoned as farms, houses, businesses, and industries were taken by eminent domain. Fire was used to destroy most of

the buildings, while some were dismantled and sold for building materials; a few were moved. Over 500 dwellings, 1,500 barns and outbuildings, 10 churches, 11 schools, 40 cemeteries, and 13 miles of railroad were removed. Approximately 2,000 people were forced to move. Trees and bushes were cut, and large stumps were removed, leaving the area barren before inundation.

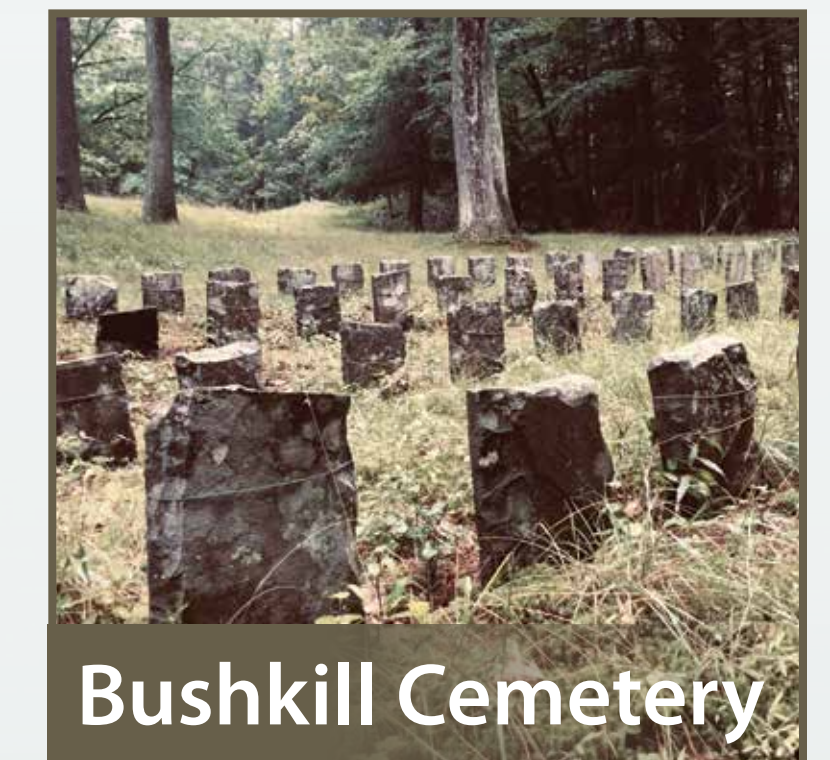
In this location, between the sites of the former hamlets of Olive and Glenford, stone walls and foundation remains are still visible along the reservoir. Historic maps show that a mill was located here.

Lost Communities

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Ashton | Olive Branch |
| Boiceville | Olive Bridge |
| Brodhead's Bridge | Olive City |
| Brown's Station | Shokan |
| Glenford | West Hurley |
| Olive | West Shokan |

BURIALS

From 1909 through 1911, graves were exhumed from the Esopus Valley in preparation for creating Ashokan Reservoir. From 1912 into 1914, the valley was cleared and grubbed. In October of 1914, the basins were allowed to fill with water. Some 2,720 bodies were exhumed from the valley from large cemeteries in Olive Bridge and Brodhead's Bridge and from many smaller family burial grounds. Most of these contained known burials, while 368 burials were unidentified or unclaimed. Unless families made other arrangements, bodies were reburied in the Bushkill Cemetery in upland West Shokan, and marked with a simple bluestone marker.



Bushkill Cemetery

View of Shokan, ca. 1906

