At the time when the county began to settle, its territory was embraced in two towns of Oneida County. All south of Black River was a part of Mexico, and all north of the river belonged to Leyden. The subdivisions that had preceded these, were briefly as follows: In 1788 (March 7), Whiestown was formed as a part of Montgomery County, embracing all north, south, and west, to the bounds of the state, from which, by successive divisions, many hundred towns have since sprung. Steuben was formed April 10th, 1792, from which Leyden was erected, March 10th, 1797, embracing besides its present limits, all east and north of the river in this county and Lewis. By the same act the town of Mexico was formed, with most of Oswego, the south part of Jefferson, and west half of Lewis for its limits, and from this town, Champion, Watertown, and Lowville, were formed, March 14th, 1800, by one act; Adams, April 1st, 1802, and Ellisburgh, February 22d, 1803. Simeon De Witt in his map of the state east of the preemption line, published in 1802, adopted the following names to the towns in the county.

Penet Square, now in Clayton and Orleans, Penet.I
Great tract number four, Castorland.
Purchase of the French Company, Chassanis.

Blk R. Tract, No. 1, now Houndsfield, Hesiod.
" " 2, " Watertown, Leghorn.
" " 3, " Rutland, Milan.
" " 4, " Champion, Howard.
" " 6, " Henderson, Henderson.
" " 7, " Mams, Alepso.
" " 8, " Rodman, Orpheus.

Town of Ellisburgh, Minos.
Boylston Tract No. 1, now Lorraine, Atticus.
2, " Worth, Fenelon.

But one of these has since been preserved.

* Changed to their present names, April 6th, 1808.
† A manuscript map of 1798 gives the name of Penet's Square as Richtland.