

# Holland Land Office Museum Quick Facts

## The Holland Purchase

In 1788, Massachusetts sold 6 million acres of its land in New York State to Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham for 1 million dollars. The rights of the Indians and the trouble arising from two other land companies negotiating with them for leases had to be settled at a council in early July 1788 at Buffalo Creek. A tract of 2.6 million acres was sold for 5,000 in cash and 500 dollars in annual payments.

A year later Phelps and Gorham discovered that they would not be able to pay the price, and Massachusetts re sold the leased land to Samuel Odgen, the agent for Philadelphia financier, Robert Morris. Most of the land became the nucleus for the later Holland Land Purchase.

It was a rainy day. West Main St. was a sea of mud as the gritty array of marchers slogged along, their uniforms splattered.

But even if the sun was hiding, October 13, 1894 was a day for celebration, and Batavia was in a festive mood. There were notables to add to the occasion.

For Batavia's white columned , headquarters Holland Land Office, headquarters for the sale of 3.5 million acres of wilderness to settlers was being dedicated as a museum in the memory of Robert Morris, influential "financier of the American Revolution"

Morris, 103 years earlier had paid Massachusetts, \$3,333.33 for four million Western New York Acres. And it was from his vast farm, as he called it, that Dutch development interests known as the Holland Land Company had carved

out the Holland Purchase.

Sometimes called the forgotten Patriot, Morris died a pauper in 1806. A \$1,500 annuity from the Genesee region is said to have put the last roof over the head of the broken hearted old patriot when he emerged from the confinement nearly four years in debtors prison.

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