

NEW YORK

THE VALE OF TAWASENTHA
(Route 146, 3/4 miles west of
the Great Western Turnpike)

STATE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT 1932

Marker #17

Tawasentha, meaning Hill of the Dead, was the Indian name for Normanskill. The Vale of Tawasentha is the Valley of the Normanskill, the birthplace of Guilderland's famous son, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow paid tribute to Schoolcraft and his knowledge of the Redman, his life and his legends. He used Schoolcraft's voluminous writings on Indian life for his poem, Song of Hiawatha. Longfellow wrote that his own Indian stories were drawn chiefly from the "valuable writings of Mr. Schoolcraft, to whom the literary world is greatly indebted for his indefatigable zeal in rescuing from oblivion so much of the legendary lore of the Indians."

In the vale of Tawasentha
In the green and silent valley
By the pleasant water-courses
Dwelt the singer Nawadsha.
There he sang of Hiawatha
Sang the song of Hiawatha
Sang his wondrous birth and being.

— Longfellow

Those of us who live in or nearby the Vale of Tawasentha give little modern day thought to its beauty or its legendary history. The historic marker that once stood stoically in the "green and silent valley" is no more. As the Indians who walked the lush trails of Tawasentha and the wagons that burdened over the rutted pioneer road bringing new life to the valley, it is gone. But "the Vale of Tawasentha" lives forever in the written word.

"By Belgic voices christened Norman's Kill,
But called by him (the Indian) in affluence of words The Tawasentha."

— *Heldebergia*