NARRATOR'S NOTES: Lady of Letchworth

MARY JEMISON is best remembered as "White Woman of the Genesee Valley" for her years of residence in New York State. Actually she was born to Irish parents aboard a vessel bound from Europe to America.

The Jemison-family was homesteading at Marsh Creek, Pennsylvania, near Gettysburg when a raiding-party consisting of Frenchmen and Native Americans invaded their domain. With the exception of two sons who were not at home and Mary who was abducted as a hostage, all family members were slain.

Mary was taken to the site of modern-day Pittsburgh and adopted. Subsequently she became Squaw to a Delaware war-chief and bore him a child.

Soon thereafter, the French who had established Fort Duquesne to monitor activity in the Ohio River Valley abandoned the area leaving the Indians to fend for themselves in the face of British aggression. For whatever reason, Mary and her son, Tom, were conveyed northward to New York where they joined the Seneca-branch of the Iroquois Confederacy thus becoming residents of the Genesee River Valley.

In time, Mary became Squaw to a Seneca War-chief with whom she gave birth to additional children. When the area was threatened with invasion by Colonial military forces she was forced to seek

refuge with these sons and daughters on land bordering the Genesee River. Said property was eventually ceded to her by provisions of the Big Tree Treaty whereby Thomas Morris as Agent for his father, Robert, managed to extinguish Native American claims to land west of the Genesee River. This particular Reservation turned out to encompass a massive land-grant thus resulting in Mary's status as one of the largest landowners in what is now New York State.

WILLIAM PRYOR LETCHWORTH was a Businessman from Buffalo, New York, who amassed a fortune ere building a retirement home on land which once formed a portion of the so-called "Jemison-Reserve". Preserving the Legacy of MARY JEMISON then became his "Pet-Project". His Estate, Glen Iris, as well as adjoining property, ultimately became Letchworth State Park.