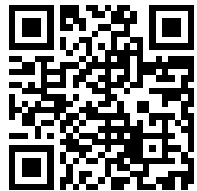

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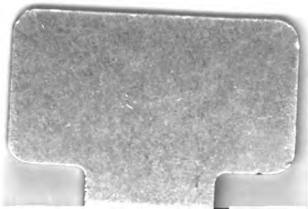
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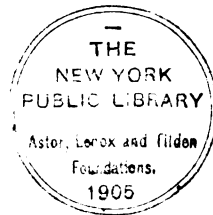
OSWEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Oswego, N.Y.



1899

H.S.

R. J. OLIPHANT, PRINTER,
OSWEGO, N. Y.



18130

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LIST OF OFFICERS.

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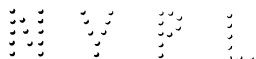
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HISTORICAL.

The Oswego Historical Society, of Oswego, New York, has been recently organized under the laws of the State authorizing the establishment of corporations for historical purposes. Its chief purpose will be to perform the proper office of such a society for the locality in which it has been established. At the same time it will attempt, whenever opportunity offers, to render whatever service it may in the wider field of State and National history. It asks and it offers co-operation with men and women everywhere who believe in the utility and benefit of preserving and publishing the notable facts of human experience. It seems proper that the field in local and National annals which lies more particularly within the province of the Oswego Historical Society should be briefly indicated.

The territory of Oswego County was originally, without doubt, a possession of that celebrated confederacy of the natives of this continent, the Iroquois or Six Nations. Morgan in his "League of the Iroquois" asserts that three of the nations laid claim to parts of the territory now constituting Oswego County—the Cayugas on the west, the Oneidas on the east, and the Onondagas between. It appears that no tribe held its seat or even any considerable village in Oswego County. It seems to have been a happy hunting ground, and the frontier protection between hostile races of Indians occupying



Canada on one side and the present territory of New York on the other. From the Iroquois the locality derives its name, Osh-wah-kee, Os-wa-go, thence Oswego, meaning "the flowing out of the waters"—the waters of the Oswego. This river pours into Lake Ontario, where now is the site of the City of Oswego, the waters of the lakes of Western and Central New York—Canandaigua, Seneca, Cayuga, Skaneateles, Owasco, Onondaga, and Oneida, lying in the heart of the land of the Iroquois.

As early as 1615, five years before the landing of the Pilgrims of the "Mayflower," Samuel de Champlain, the great discoverer and soldier, passed across the territory of Oswego County on an expedition against this powerful band of aborigines. Here also came the French Jesuit fathers from Montreal and Quebec, Poncet, Le Moyne, Chaumont, Dablon, and others, proselyting among the heathen of this wilderness. In 1664 the English succeeded to the Dutch proprietorship of New York, and the long contest between the French and English for the supremacy and for the fealty of the Indians began. In 1684 M. Le Febre de la Barre, the French Governor-General of Canada, led a band of white men onto Oswego territory. Their mission was to induce the Indians to reject the English and form an alliance with the French. Louis de Bonade, the famous Count de Frontenac, making this locality his base of operations, sent forth armies to compel their submission. Neither policy succeeded, and the Six Nations made alliance with the ancient foes of the French.

The existence of the Oswego River in this locality and the water communication obtained in every direction—with the far west by Lake Ontario, with the Valley of the St. Lawrence River and the French pos-



sessions on the north and east, with the heart of the Iroquois country, and with Albany, the Hudson and New York, where were the most apparent glimmerings of civilization—rendered Oswego County, and the locality of Oswego City in particular, uncommonly important at that time. Trade in furs and skins was the chief interest of the English, and about Oswego naturally grew a large business. This was a constant irritation to the French, and in 1756 Montcalm conquered the locality for his king, Louis XV., by his overthrow of the English forts at the mouth of the Oswego. But French occupation was temporary, and until the close of the Revolution the territory of Oswego County was part of England's colony of New York.

Tryon County, afterward, in 1784, Montgomery County, taken originally from Albany County in the colony of New York, embraced the present territory of Oswego County, as well as almost all of Central and Western New York. From Montgomery County in 1791 was erected Herkimer County, including the present Onondaga, Oneida, Herkimer, Oswego, and part of Otsego counties. Onondaga was carved out of Herkimer in 1794. Out of Herkimer also came Oneida County, and on the 1st of March, 1816, the Legislature of New York passed an act creating Oswego County, part from Onondaga County and part from Oneida County. Oswego County partakes of the rolling and broken topography of Central New York. It is unusually diversified in picturesqueness and interest by Lake Ontario, which bounds it on the north, and by the Oswego River, which traverses its territory. The considerable interior lake, known as Oneida, bounds it on the south for many miles.

The purchase by Alexander Macomb of four million acres from the State in 1791 included part of Oswego County on the north and east of the river. William Constable afterward purchased of Macomb and sold to Samuel Ward, and he in turn conveyed to Thomas Boylston, of Boston, this Oswego County tract.

John and Nicholas Roosevelt, of New York, purchased of the State the portion of Oswego County lying between Macomb's purchase and the Oswego River and Oneida Lake and river. In 1792 the Roosevelts sold to George Frederick William Augustus Scriba, a Hollander, and then a merchant of New York, a striking figure in Oswego County history, whose name appears constantly in its records. He established himself at Constantia, on the banks of Oneida Lake, and sank a fortune, enormous for those days, in an endeavor to establish a colony in this wilderness.

The close of the Revolution and the independence of the colonies transferred the territory of Oswego County in name only from the sovereignty of Great Britain to the new nation. Fort Ontario, the military post at Oswego, which dominated the surrounding territory, together with similar posts of our northern frontier, remained in the actual occupation of the British until 1796.

Thereafter the history of Oswego County of general interest has been largely that of the State. In the War of 1812, however, Oswego was again the theatre of events of national importance. The record of Oswego County in the War of the Rebellion, no less proud than that of any sister county, must be read elsewhere.

So generally important and so distinct is the history of the locality in Oswego County now the site of the City of Oswego, that it seems to demand distinct con-

sideration. Space allows only a brief rehearsal of its career.

As early as 1722, William Burnet, Provincial Governor of New York, hardly less distinguished as the son of the celebrated prelate, author of "Burnet's History of His Own Times," built a trading-house at Oswego. The following year fifty-seven canoes went from Oswego to Albany with seven hundred and thirty-eight packs of beaver and deer skins. The French post at Niagara and the later one at Toronto in vain essayed to intercept this trade. The Abbé Piquet, a Jesuit priest and chronicler, writes in his diary: "Oswego not only spoils our trade, but puts the English into communication with a vast number of our Indians, far and near. It is true that they like our brandy better than English rum; but they prefer English goods to ours, and can buy for two beaver skins at Oswego a better silver bracelet than we sell at Niagara for ten."

In the spring of 1727, Governor Burnet erected on the west side of the river, toward its mouth, on what is now the intersection of Van Buren and First streets, a masonry redoubt, loopholed for musketry, to protect his trading-post. It was sixty feet by thirty, and forty feet high. This was Fort Oswego, or "Oswego Old Fort," as it was afterwards described. The French called it Fort Chouaguen, and later Fort Pepperrell. A copy of a picture of the fort made at that time now forms the seal of this society.

The Marquis de Beauharnois, Governor-General of Canada, immediately demanded its evacuation, declaring it to be a manifest breach of the treaty of Utrecht. The diplomatic Burnet got the question referred to London and Versailles, and nothing came of it.

Hitherto the conflicts between the French and English in America were faint echoes of their continental strife. But in the final struggle now impending the rival colonies were chief figures.

Says a modern writer: "It is customary in the United States to regard Wolfe's victory at Quebec as the solstice in the ecliptic of modern history, since it secured America for English institutions, and American civilization is to dominate the world." Says Parkman: "It supplied to the United States the indispensable condition of their greatness, if not of their national existence."

This view of the French and Indian war discloses Oswego upon a height of historical prominence not generally appreciated. Its figure in this great struggle towered among the highest.

In a letter to the Provincial Assembly in 1740, Governor Clark, of New York, writes: "The peace and happiness of the plantations and the trade of England, if not the very being of His Majesty's dominion on this continent, depend on the holding of Oswego." Governor Clinton wrote to his Assembly in 1744 that it was "the key for the commerce between the colonies and the inland nations of Indians." Says Parkman: "No English establishment on the continent was of such ill omen to the French."

Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts, first commander-in-chief of the British forces in America, regarded Oswego as more important than any post, and to it he first gave his attention. By his orders Colonel Mercer constructed, in October, 1755, Fort Ontario, very nearly, if not precisely, on the site of the fort of that name now existing. It was a substantial fortification, one hundred

and eighty feet on each side, built of pickets eighteen inches in diameter, rising nine feet from the ground, and surrounded by a ditch eighteen feet wide by eight feet deep. A third and inferior fortification, known as "Oswego New Fort," or "Fort George," he also erected on the high ground of the west bank, on what is now the southwest corner of Van Buren and Montcalm streets, and where is now the residence of Hon. Edwin Allen. It was one hundred and seventy feet on each side, with ramparts of earth and stone twenty feet thick and twelve feet high, encompassed with a ditch fourteen feet broad and ten feet deep.

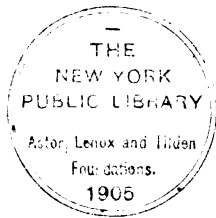
The French and Indian war was formally declared in May, 1756. On July 3d of that year the command of Colonel Bradstreet, returning to Albany from Oswego, where he had been with stores and reinforcements for the garrison, was waylaid near Minetto, about four miles up the river, by French and Indians under De Villiers. Bradstreet withdrew his men, about two hundred and fifty in number, to Battle Island, repulsed the enemy after a sanguinary fight, and, crossing to the mainland, finally put them to flight.

In August of the same year, the Marquis de Montcalm, commander of the French troops in America, and hero of many continental engagements, was before Oswego with a force variously stated at from three thousand to five thousand men.

But few details of the conquest of Oswego by the French can be given here. The English force of about eighteen hundred men was divided between Fort Ontario, in command of Colonel Littlehales; Fort Oswego, in command of Colonel Mercer, and Fort George, in command of Colonel Schuyler. The French approached

from their landing-place, about three miles east, and invested Fort Ontario. After delivering a somewhat brisk fire from the fort, the English withdrew across the river to Fort Oswego. The French, occupying Fort Ontario, turned their batteries upon Fort Oswego and Fort George upon the hill. Twenty-five hundred Canadians and Indians crossed the river and attacked from the land side. On August 14, 1756, the remaining fortifications capitulated, after Colonel Mercer had been killed. Fifteen hundred men were captured, Shirley's and Pepperrell's regiments, veterans of Fotenoy, and, in addition, seven vessels of war, one hundred and thirty-nine guns, and large stores of ammunition and provisions. Among the English captives was Francis Lewis, afterwards a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The forts were demolished. The zealous Abbé Piquet erected over the ruins of this fort a cross, on which appeared the words "*In hoc signo vincunt.*" Near by he raised a staff bearing the arms of France, and wrote beneath the words "*Manibus date lilia plenis.*" The captured flags were carried in triumph through the streets of Montreal and Quebec, and hung like votive offerings in their cathedrals.

The loss of Oswego was regarded in England as a national misfortune. Pitt, the Great Commoner, taunted the ministry with it from the opposition benches. The fall of Henry Fox and the accession of Pitt to power were doubtless partially precipitated by it. Horace Walpole, the most famous letter-writer in English literature, writes to Horace Mann from Arlington street, under date of November 4, 1756, as follows: "Minorca is gone; Oswego is gone; the nation is in a ferment. Oswego, of ten times more importance than Minorca, is





SILVER MEDAL STRUCK IN 1758 BY LOUIS XV.,

COMMEMORATING THE CAPTURE OF OSWEGO IN 1756.

(From original in the collection of Mr. THEODORE IRWIN, Vice-President of the
Oswego Historical Society.)

From "Landmarks of Oswego County."

annihilated." Let it be recalled that Minorca was the strongest place in Europe after Gibraltar.

In 1758, Louis XV. struck a medal to commemorate the victories of France. On the obverse appears his bust, with the inscription, "*Ludovicus XV., Orbis Imperator, 1758,*"—"Louis XV., Ruler of the World." On the reverse appear the following names: "*Wesel, Oswego, Port Mahon,*" surrounding a representation of four citadels, and the Latin inscription, "*Expugata St. Davidis arce et solo æquata,*"—"The citadel of St. David destroyed and leveled to the ground." St. David, the strongest fort in India, was taken by Count Lally in 1757; Port Mahon, on Minorca, was the most important fortress in the Mediterranean, captured by the French in 1756; Wesel was the fortified town of the French on the lower Rhine, successfully held against siege, and Oswego, the most valued position in North America, captured by Montcalm in 1756. These were the tokens of the title of the world-conquering Louis. One of these medals is the property of Mr. Theodore Irwin, of Oswego.

With Pitt as Prime Minister, English affairs in North America took a turn.

The forts being demolished, Oswego was suffered by the French to slip back to the English. In August, 1758, General Bradstreet, with Major-General Schuyler and three thousand men, crossed from Oswego in bateaux, whaleboats and a small schooner, and took Fort Frontenac, now Kingston, from the French—a disheartening loss. July 1, 1759, General Prideaux, with two thousand regulars, and Sir William Johnson, with one thousand Indians from his seat on the Mohawk, proceeding from Oswego, captured Fort Niagara after a long

siege. While they were gone the Chevalier de la Corne attempted in vain to retake Oswego, then guarded by six hundred provincials under General Haldimand.

September 18, 1759, Quebec fell, and Wolfe and Montcalm gained immortality. In that year Fort Ontario was rebuilt, and became the base of operations against Montreal, the seat of the French Empire in Canada. August 10, 1760, Lord Amherst, with ten thousand men and thirteen hundred Indians, embarked from Oswego against Montreal. The spectacle of this great army of red-coats and Indians, at that time probably the largest ever assembled on the continent, can better be imagined than described.

After the peace the post of Oswego was garrisoned by the Fifty-fifth Infantry, a Scotch regiment from Sterling, under command of Major Alexander Duncan. The daughter of one of his captains was Annie McVicar, who became Mrs. Grant, the authoress of the "Memoirs of an American Lady," published in London in 1808, justly celebrated sketches of manners and scenery in America as they existed prior to the Revolution. She tells us that in 1760 in the hollow south of Fort Ontario there was a fine garden, which "throve beyond belief or example," and also a bowling green and fish pond.

This, also, was about the time and this the place in which Cooper laid the scene of his renowned romance of Mabel, Jasper, and the Pathfinder.

In the summer of 1766, Pontiac, the great Ottawa chieftain, who had captured all but three of the western posts, and for years defied his enemies, at length submitting, journeyed to a great council fire at Oswego from his seat in the West, to meet the English and the Iroquois, with Sir William Johnson at their head. The

pipe of peace passed around, and Pontiac and his dusky followers voyaged homeward on the lake, each with a medal bearing this inscription: "A pledge of peace and friendship with Great Britain, confirmed in 1766."

The center of the storm known as the French and Indian War passed over this locality; the center of the greater conflict of the Revolution lay to the south and east. The British made haste to range the savages of the land on their side. The baronial family of the Johnsons on the Mohawk, sons of the famous Sir William, were the chief emissaries for this purpose. Twice did they, with Joseph Brant and the execrated Butler, organize grand councils of the red men at Oswego to win them over.

On July 27, 1777, Colonel Barry St. Leger, with Canadians and Indians, whose purpose was to co-operate with the army of Burgoyne from the north for an invasion of the Valley of the Mohawk, set forth from Oswego. Up the river moved this army of two thousand white men and Indians. They besieged Fort Schuyler, on the Great Carry, between Wood's Creek and the Mohawk, where the waters flow one way to the lakes and the other to the sea, and on August 6th fought with the provincials one of the bloodiest battles of the war—Oriskany. There the valiant Herkimer, wounded and dying, withstood the foe. At length the relief of Arnold, raising the siege of the fort, turned the overwhelming tide and rescued Central New York. The defeated English hastened to Oswego, and there scattered, some to Montreal, some to Niagara. Fort Ontario was left unoccupied. In July, 1778, Americans under Lieutenant McClelland destroyed it to prevent, as far as possible, its reoccupation. In the eyes of the Indian allies of the English, the vision of Oswego, the

time-honored Chouaguen, laid low, was ominous. They besought the English to restore it, but in vain, and, as report goes, it was not until some time between 1780 and 1782 that Fort Ontario was partly raised from its ruins and supplied with a garrison of British soldiers.

The last military movement of the Revolution was directed against Oswego. Conscious of its importance to the British in their relations with the Indians, Washington, at Newburgh, directed Colonel Marinus Willett, at Fort Herkimer, in the Mohawk Valley, with a small force to surprise and capture Fort Ontario. The news of the signing of the treaty not yet being received, the expedition set out on the 8th day of February, 1783. Willett reached the vicinity of the fort, but his expedition was unsuccessful because his Indian guides lost their way in the night, owing to the severity of the cold and the snow, and he therefore failed to surprise the garrison.*

Thus it has been attempted to outline the important part played by Oswego in the great drama of the continent. It fell to her because of her location; by reason of that it was as inevitable as are any human events. Thereafter, until the War of 1812, she was a passive quantity in the controversies and parleys that arose over the terms of peace of 1783, to finally subside in the evacuation by the British in 1796.

Oswego was not evacuated by the English until July 14th of that year. Together with the frontier posts of Point au Fer, Dutchman's Point, Ogdensburg, Ni-

*The original minutely detailed instructions to Colonel Willett, in Washington's own handwriting throughout, and consisting of four letters, two of which are of several pages each, are now in the collection of the Vice-President of this Society, Mr. Theodore Irwin.

agara, Erie, Sandusky, Mackinac and Detroit, the post of Oswego was retained by the British for twenty years after the colonies had declared their independence, and for thirteen years after articles of peace were signed. The occasion of this interesting anomaly, which has been the subject of no little historical research and controversy, is probably as follows: The treaty of 1783 provided that private debts on each side should be paid, and that Congress should recommend the State Legislatures to restore estates confiscated from British citizens and their American sympathizers. The debts referred to were for the most part obligations incurred to English merchants by American merchants for goods sold prior to the commencement of the war.

The seventh article of the treaty was as follows: "His Britannic Majesty shall with all convenient speed, and without causing any destruction and without carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants, withdraw all his armies, garrisons and fleets from the said United States, and from any port, harbor or place within the same." The requirements of this article were not fulfilled. British troops sailed from New York taking negroes with them, and when Baron Steuben, on behalf of the Americans, proceeded to assert formal possession of the military posts on the northern frontier, it was denied him. No orders had been received, said General Haldimand, to evacuate, but only to cease hostilities. British officers levied duties on American boats passing Oswego. Traders and boatmen were in a ferment. They vented their wrath by seizing batteaux of goods in charge of the Johnsons, the ancient allies of the British, at Three Rivers, on the Oswego.

England's retention of the northern posts cost American fur-traders dear. A list of furs advertised at London for the spring sales of 1787, as stated in the American Museum, contained over three hundred and sixty thousand skins, which were valued at two hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds. These figures convey some notion of the trade largely diverted from American traders at Oswego, Albany and New York.

In November, 1792, Jefferson, then Secretary of State, formally opened the subject of the violation of the seventh article of the treaty by the retention of the posts, with Hammond, the English envoy to this country. The explanation came quickly that the King, his master, had suspended that article because of the failure of Congress to prevent the hindrance of British creditors in collecting their debts, and because estates confiscated from the Tories had not been restored. The charge was true. Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and South Carolina had every one enacted statutes blocking the machinery of the law against English creditors.

To the other charge of failure to restore the confiscated Tory estates, Jefferson replied that the only engagement had been to recommend a restoration of the estates, not to restore them. The claim was made at the time that English handlers of the profitable fur trade influenced the British ministry to delay a settlement whilst they were enjoying what was naturally the business of Americans. It was also charged that the well known feebleness of the infant nation to enforce reprisals contented England with the situation in which things were. Still another cause assigned was the purpose of the British to compel the alliance of the Indians

through the threat implied in the possession of the frontier posts.

These and other poignant hostilities established a high tension between the countries. On April 21, 1794, the Republicans in Congress moved to suspend all commercial intercourse with Great Britain until the frontier posts were given up. The people, loaded with debt, and otherwise never so poorly prepared for war, still clamored for its declaration. But now he who so often before had stilled the tempest, disclosed his calm and majestic personality for the salvation of his country. Oblivious of the storm of popular disapproval, Washington wrote to the Senate: "But as peace ought to be preserved with unremitted zeal before the last recourse, which has so often been the scourge of nations, and cannot fail to check the advancing prosperity of the United States, is contemplated, I have thought proper to nominate and I do hereby nominate John Jay as envoy extraordinary of the United States to His Britannic Majesty."

The faithful servant who a decade before had obtained peace with so much honor for his country, was again enlisted to preserve it. Well did he know the unpopularity of his mission. He writes: "If Washington sees fit to call me to his service I will go and perform it, foreseeing as I do the consequence to my personal popularity. The good of my country I believe demands the sacrifice, and I am ready to make it."

He sailed on the 12th of May, 1794. While he was upon the sea, affairs at home were rapidly approaching war. Three companies of a British regiment invaded what is now Northern Ohio to establish Fort Miami there, and in a message to Congress Washington sug-

gests the propriety of preparing for the dread event. But the celebrated treaty known by the name of its negotiator, signed in London on the 19th of November, 1794, averted a catastrophe. By its terms the United States undertook to compensate British creditors. British troops were to withdraw from all territories of the United States on June 1, 1796. On June 24, 1795, the treaty was ratified, and on August 15th Washington signed it. The occasion for the delay of the surrender of Oswego and the other frontier posts after June 1, 1796, the date stipulated for their delivery, arose from the failure of Congress to pass the appropriation necessary to carry their transfer into effect.

Thus at last, in July, 1796, Oswego and its cherished fortification of Fort Ontario passed from the possession of Great Britain and entered into the birthright of her own people.

There is slight record of the circumstances of the transfer. Like many significant events in history, it transpired in quietness and simplicity. One eye witness of the event says that the British garrison marched out and gave possession to the American troops, who marched in with their field pieces, planted the standard of the United States on the ramparts of the fort, and fired a salute of fifteen cannon. He further declares that the British officers behaved with great politeness.

Another witness, Mr. F. Elmer, an American officer, writing to Mr. George Scriba, says that the American flag under a federal salute was for the first time displayed from the citadel of the fort at the hour of ten in the morning. Captain Clark and Colonel Fothergill were His Majesty's officers left with a detachment of thirty men for the protection of the works. "From

these gentlemen," he says, "the greatest politeness and civility was displayed to us in adjusting the transfer, the buildings and gardens being left in the neatest order."

In July, 1896, the City of Oswego celebrated with imposing ceremonies—a civic and military display, an oration by General Horace Porter of New York, president of the Sons of the American Revolution, and an historical address, in the presence of delegations from the principal historic societies and a vast concourse of people—the surrender of Fort Ontario and the military posts of the northern frontier by the British. Thus, too, was commemorated the centennial of the close of England's rule over territory of the United States.

In the War of 1812 Oswego played a striking part in the country's history. During that war, on May 5, 1814, a British fleet of eight vessels from Kingston, carrying two hundred and twenty guns and three thousand men, under Sir James Yeo, appeared before Oswego and bombarded it. It was defended by Colonel Mitchell, who had been dispatched from Sackets Harbor with three hundred men. Under protection of the ships' guns, the British troops were landed, and on May 6, after a vigorous resistance, the command in Fort Ontario surrendered. The British threw down the fortifications and abandoned the place. Thus it lay until in 1839 Congress voted a sum for its restoration. The timber work and the houses now standing are of that date. Since then it has been continuously garrisoned until two years ago, when the authorities at Washington saw fit to abandon this historic and strategic fort.*

Thus briefly indicated is the history of Oswego. It

* Fort Ontario was regarrisoned December 20, 1898.

partakes of the history of two continents; it recounts the strange intermingling of savage and civilized men in the wilderness of the new world.

Says Mr. John Fiske, the eminent historian, "There is more romance in New York, I believe, than in almost any other State in the Union, and a good deal of it is on the shores of Ontario."

G. T. C.

OSWEGO, N. Y., 1897.

TABLET MARKING THE SITE OF OLD FORT OSWEGO.

During 1898, this tablet was received and permanently placed by the Oswego Historical Society. The tablet was provided by the Society of Colonial Wars, at whose annual meeting in New York on December 20, 1897, a resolution was offered by Mr. William Pierson Judson and seconded by Mr. John T. Mott, appropriating funds of the society "for preparing and placing as near as possible to the site of old Fort Oswego, in the City of Oswego, New York, a suitable tablet properly inscribed, to commemorate the important military works there erected by the colonial authorities in 1727 and 1755, and destroyed by the French and Indians in 1756; said tablet to be embedded in and attached to the side of a boulder of as large size as can conveniently be placed to receive it."

This was favored by Mr. Abraham B. Valentine, Historian of the Society of Colonial Wars and corresponding member of this Society, and it was passed by unanimous vote. Mr. W. Gedney Beatty, of New York, was put on the committee and afterward designed the tablet, which was sent to Oswego with the understanding that this Society would receive and properly place it. This has been done with funds from the treasury of this Society, increased by a contribution from one of its members.

This tablet is an oval of twenty-four inches width and thirty inches length, formed of fine bronze, and bearing in raised letters the following inscription, which is surrounded by circlets of Indian arrow-heads, Tudor roses, and Colonial bullets :

THIS · TABLET
 MARKS · THE · SITE · OF · FORT
 OSWEGO · SOMETIMES · CALLED · FORT
 BURNET · CHOUAGUEN · OR · PEPPERRELL
 BUILT · IN · 1727 · BY · THE · BURNET
 STRENGTHENED · AND · ENLARGED · IN · 1755
 BY · GEN · SHIRLEY — GARRISONED · BY · 1700
 ROYAL · AND · COLONIAL · TROOPS
 CAPTURED · AND · DESTROYED · ON · AUG.
 14 · 1756 · BY · 5000 · FRENCH
 AND · INDIANS
 ERECTED · BY · THE · SOCIETY · OF
 COLONIAL · WARS · IN · THE · STATE
 OF · NEW · YORK · MDCCCXCVIII

The tablet was embedded and anchored in the side of a red granite boulder of seven tons weight, which was placed as near as possible to the center of the old fort, at a point carefully chosen to avoid obstructing the roadway, the sidewalk, or building sites.

As a protection to the tablet, and also as being in itself an object of historic interest, the committee secured a portion of a wrought-iron fence which was in front of the White House grounds in the City of Washington during Lincoln's administration, and until 1888. The fence enclosed Lafayette Park, which lies directly in front of the White House, and is sometimes called Jackson Square, after the equestrian statue which occupies it. When removed from Washington, the greater part of the original fence was sent to Sackets Harbor and there erected in 1889 around the historic cemetery at that old post, while the remainder now surrounds the boulder and the embedded tablet on the site of old Fort Oswego.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.

PREAMBLE.

The Oswego Historical Society, pursuant to its articles of incorporation, for its government hereby adopts the following Constitution and By-Laws:

ARTICLE I.—OBJECTS.

SECTION 1. The objects of this Society are to discover, to collect, and to preserve historical, commercial, and genealogical records, relics, mementoes, medals, coins, books, pictures, charts, and papers, relating to or connected with the history of the county and the city of Oswego, New York, and of the adjacent country; also, to secure the writing and publication of papers treating of these subjects, and to promote public interest in them.

ARTICLE II.—MEMBERS.

SECTION 1. The Society shall consist of active, honorary, and corresponding members, who shall be elected as hereinafter provided.

SEC. 2. Active members shall have a residence within the county of Oswego, New York.

SEC. 3. Honorary members may be either residents or non-residents of Oswego County.

SEC. 4. Corresponding members shall be non-residents of Oswego County.

ARTICLE III.—ADMISSION.

SECTION 1. Nominations for active membership shall be first considered by the Board of Managers, and those approved by the Board shall be posted for thirty days in the meeting room of the Society, after which their names may be presented at the next regular meeting of the Society, and they may then be elected, by ballot, by a majority vote of the active members present. Honorary and corresponding members may be appointed by the Board of Managers.

ARTICLE IV.—DUES.

SECTION 1. Active members shall each pay an initiation fee of two dollars (\$2.00) when elected, and an annual fee of two dollars (\$2.00), payable in advance on the day of the annual meeting; and any member failing to thus pay shall be deemed delinquent, and after six months delinquency shall be dropped from the roll, but the Board of Managers may restore the name upon payment of the dues.

SEC. 2. The payment by any active member of the sum of fifty dollars (\$50.00) at one time, and for that purpose, shall constitute that person a life member, and he shall thereafter be free from payment of annual dues.

SEC. 3. Honorary members and corresponding members shall not be liable to any initiation fee or dues, nor shall they have the right to vote or to hold office, or have share in ownership of the property of the Society.

ARTICLE V.—EXPULSION.

SECTION 1. Any member may be expelled by a two-thirds vote of all the members present at any meeting, provided that notice of the intention to move for such expulsion has been given the members at least one month previous to the meeting at which such vote is taken.

ARTICLE VI.—INSIGNIA.

SECTION 1. There shall be issued to any member who shall pay the actual cost thereof, a bronze medallion insignia having on its obverse the seal of the Society, and on its reverse a certificate of membership, upon which shall be engraved the name of the member and the date of admission, the certificate being encircled by a wreath of maize, whose place of origin is said by the Hiawatha legend of the Iroquois to have been upon the shore of Onondaga Lake, a tributary of the Oswego River, and whose product was the staple food of the early settlers. When used as an insignia, the medallion shall be pendent on a ribbon of blue and buff.

SEC. 2. No issue shall be made except to members, and no duplicate shall be given unless the Board of Managers shall be satisfied by evidence that the original has been destroyed.

ARTICLE VII.—OFFICERS.

SECTION 1. The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, a Curator, and three Managers.

SEC. 2. These officers shall be elected annually, by ballot, by a majority vote of the active members present at the annual meeting to be held at the regular meeting place in the City of Oswego on the evening of the first Saturday in January, and they shall continue in office until their successors are elected. Vacancies in office may be filled by election at any regularly called meeting of the Society.

ARTICLE VIII.—BOARD OF MANAGERS.

SECTION 1. All the above-named officers shall constitute a Board of Managers, who shall conduct the business affairs of the Society. Meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the President or by the Recording Secretary, and a majority of its members shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IX.—DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

SECTION 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Society and of the Board of Managers; shall be *ex-officio* a member of all committees, and shall perform the duties usually pertaining to his office.

SEC. 2. The Vice-President shall, in case of the absence or inability of the President, perform all the duties of the President.

SEC. 3. The Corresponding Secretary shall have the custody of all letters and communications to the Society, which he shall file and preserve; and he shall read to the Society all communications received; and he shall, under direction of the Society or of the Board of Managers, prepare all communications in the name of the Society, and shall keep and file true copies of them.

SEC. 4. The Recording Secretary shall have the custody of the records and of the seal of the Society. He shall give members due notice of each of the meetings, and shall keep records of the meetings of the Society and of the Board of Managers.

SEC. 5. The Curator, under direction of the Board of Managers, shall have the custody of the library and collection, and shall keep a record of all donations or loans to the Society's collection, and shall report in writing to the Society at its annual meetings.

SEC. 6. The Treasurer shall perform all the duties usually pertaining to the office; shall collect and receipt for the admission fees and dues; shall deposit the funds of the Society in one of the banks of the city; shall pay out the funds as the auditing committee of the Board of Managers shall direct; shall keep an account and render an annual statement thereof to the Society at its annual meeting, and also whenever required by the Board of Managers.

ARTICLE X.—SEAL.



SECTION 1. The seal of the Society shall consist of a medallion, one and five-eighths inches in diameter,

bearing the name of the Society and the date of its founding around a fac-simile of the original picture showing Fort Oswego, the first houses along the river front, and the first vessel in construction. Under all, the dates 1727–1756, being those of the building of the English fort and of its destruction by the French troops.

ARTICLE XI.—MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY.

SECTION 1. The annual meeting for the election of officers shall be held in the City of Oswego on the evening of the first Saturday in January of each year, or at an adjourned meeting of which three days notice shall have been given that the election will be the order of business. Fifteen active members shall constitute a quorum.

SEC. 2. Meetings, other than the annual meetings, shall be held whenever the President shall give notice to the members three days in advance by mail, or by publication in two Oswego daily papers, stating in every case the object of the meeting, at which ten active members shall constitute a quorum. Upon written request of five active members, a meeting shall be called at any time specified.

ARTICLE XII.—SPECIAL COMMITTEES.

SECTION 1. The Board of Managers shall appoint special committees to further the interests of the Society, and to serve during the pleasure of the Board:

SEC. 2. *First.* A committee on membership, which shall invite and shall present to the Board the names of persons whom the committee may deem proper members.

SEC. 3. *Second.* A committee on donations and collections, which shall secure articles of interest for the Society's collection.

ARTICLE XIII.—AMENDMENTS.

SECTION 1. The Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of the active members present at any meeting, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been given with the call for the meeting.

ARTICLE XIV.—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

SECTION 1. The order of business at any meeting of the Society shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, and shall be as follows—subject to change by a majority vote at such meeting:

1. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.
2. Communications from the President, Board of Managers, or officers.
3. Nominations to membership.
4. Miscellaneous business.
5. Reading of papers.
6. Discussion of papers.
7. Adjournment.

LIST OF MEMBERS.

HONORARY.

	MEMBERSHIP	
	DATE.	No.
Bradley Benedict Burt*.....Oswego, N. Y.	Nov. 24, 1896	31
John Clark Cooley.....Oswego, N. Y.	Dec. 12, 1896	38
John Porter Hatch.....Brig.-Gen. U. S. Army President Aztec Club, New York.	Dec. 12, 1896	37
Horace Porter.....New York City President-General Society Sons of the American Revolution.	Dec. 12, 1896	36

CORRESPONDING.

	MEMBERSHIP	
	DATE.	No.
William M. BeauchampBaldwinsville, N. Y. Vice-President Onondaga County Historical Society.	Dec. 5, 1896	32
Walter B. Camp.Sackets Harbor, N. Y. President Jefferson County Historical Society.	Nov. 24, 1896	26
Charles W. Darling.....Utica, N. Y. Corresponding Secretary Oneida Historical Society.	Nov. 24, 1896	27
Robert Earl.....Herkimer, N. Y. President Herkimer County Historical Society.	Nov. 24, 1896	28
George May Elwood.....Rochester, N. Y. President Rochester Historical Society.	Nov. 24, 1896	23
Hugh Hastings.....Albany, N. Y. State Historian.	Jan. 7, 1899	68
Salem Hyde.....Syracuse, N. Y. Member Onondaga County Historical Society.	Nov. 24, 1896	25
John Alsop King.....New York City President New York Historical Society.	Nov. 24, 1896	29
Andrew Langdon.....Buffalo, N. Y. President Buffalo Historical Society.	Dec. 5, 1896	35
Clarence R. Neher.....Rochester, N. Y.	Jan. 29, 1897	62
Howard S. Osgood.....Rochester, N. Y. Vice-President Rochester Historical Society.	Nov. 24, 1896	24
Peter A. Porter.....Niagara Falls, N. Y. President Niagara Frontier Historical Society.	Nov. 24, 1896	21
Cyrus Kingsbury Remington.....Buffalo, N. Y. Historian Pennsylvania Society of War of 1812.	Nov. 24, 1896	22
Frank Hayward Severance.....Buffalo, N. Y. Recording Secretary Buffalo Historical Society.	Dec. 5, 1896	34
S. W. Strowger.....Cape Vincent, N. Y. Member Jefferson County Historical Society.	Dec. 5, 1896	33
Abraham B. Valentine.....New York City Historian Society of Colonial Wars.	Nov. 24, 1896	30

* Deceased.

ACTIVE.

(The charter members are those whose numbers are from
1 to 20 inclusive.)

	DATE.	MEMBERSHIP	No.
Leonard Ames, Jr.	July 10, 1896		18
Charles Henry Bond	January 2, 1897		47
Charles Henry Butler	January 2, 1897		51
John Charles Churchill	July 10, 1896		3
Frederick Oberlin Clarke	July 10, 1896		5
George Tisdale Clark*	July 10, 1896		6
Arthur Birney Cogswell	July 10, 1896		20
Swits Condé	July 10, 1896		18
S. Mortimer Coon	January 2, 1897		41
Horace Day Diment	January 2, 1897		45
James Dowdle	January 2, 1897		61
Robert Downey*	January 2, 1897		52
Frederick Augustus Emerick	July 10, 1896		12
Alonzo Haverton Failing	January 2, 1897		49
Oren Fitzhugh Gaylord	January 2, 1897		43
Niel Gray	January 2, 1897		56
Francis Emerson Hamilton	July 10, 1896		8
James G. Halleran	January 7, 1899		63
John Dauby Higgins	July 10, 1896		7
Theodore Irwin	July 10, 1896		2
James Ford Johnson	January 7, 1899		66
William Pierson Judson	July 10, 1896		1
Thomson Kingsford	January 2, 1897		40
Thomas Pettibone Kingsford	July 10, 1896		15
Gardiner Tracy Lyon	January 7, 1899		69
Philip Nelson Meade	July 10, 1896		11
John H. McCollom	January 2, 1897		57
Carrington Macfarlane	January 7, 1899		67
George Cumming McWhorter	July 10, 1896		4
Gilbert Mollison	January 2, 1897		44
Gilbert Mollison, Jr.	January 2, 1897		58
Elliott Bostick Mott	July 10, 1896		17
John Thomas Mott	July 10, 1896		16
Luther Wright Mott	January 2, 1897		39
Richard Oliphant	January 2, 1897		46
Alonzo Sumner Page	January 2, 1897		50
John P. Phelps	January 2, 1897		55
Elisha Barclay Powell	July 10, 1896		14
Maxwell Bennett Richardson	January 2, 1897		59
Louis Cass Rowe	January 2, 1897		48

* Deceased.

	MEMBERSHIP	
	DATE.	No.
Edward Austin Sheldon*	January 2, 1897	60
Frederick Bemister Shepherd	July 10, 1896	10
George Beale Sloan	July 10, 1896	9
George Beale Sloan, Jr.	January 2, 1897	42
Robert Sage Sloan	July 10, 1896	19
William C. Todt	January 7, 1899	65
Sidney Van Auken	January 2, 1897	54
Charles Wendell	January 2, 1897	58
Maurice Lauchlin Wright	January 7, 1899	64

* Deceased.

Recrology.

Edward Austin Sheldon,

August 27, 1897.

Bradley Benedict Burt,

July 27, 1898.

George Tisdale Clark,

December 7, 1898.

Robert Downey,

January 16, 1899.

WM. PIERSON JUDSON, PRESIDENT.
JOHN THOMAS MOTT, VICE-PRESIDENT.

JOHN CHARLES CHURCH
FREDERICK OBERLIN CLA
ROBERT SAGE SLOAN,

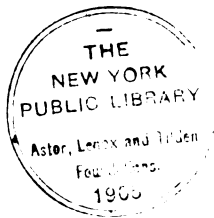
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