1940

Fourth Publication

of the

Oswego Historical Society

1940

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Printers

PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE SOCIETY

William Pierson Judson 1896-1901

Theodore Irwin, Sr. 1902

William Pierson Judson 1903-1910

Dr. Carrington Macfarlane 1911-1912

John D. Higgins 1913-1923

Dr. James G. Riggs 1924-1935

*Frederick W. Barnes 1936

Edwin M. Waterbury 1937-1940

*Vice-President acting as President

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1940

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Vice-Presidents	Ralph M. Faust
	Frederick W. Barnes
	Grove A. Gilbert
	Miss Elizabeth Simpson
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	Mrs. Frederick Leighton
	Harold A. Hubbard
	Mrs. Frank Elliott
	Daniel A. Williams

[All of the elective officers are *ex-officio* members of the Board of Managers which functions as the Executive Committee of the Society.]

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1940

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OSWEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

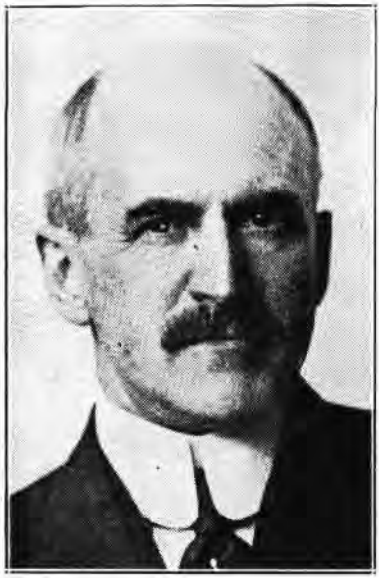
MEMBER	ADMITTED	NO
*William Pierson Judson	July 10, 1896	1
*Theodore Irwin	July 10, 1896	2
*John Charles Churchill	July 10, 1896	3
*George Cumming McWhorter	July 10, 1896	4
*Frederick Oberlin Clark	July 10, 1896	5
*George Tisdale Clark	July 10, 1896	6
John Dauby Higgins	July 10, 1896	7
*Francis Emerson Hamilton	July 10, 1896	8
*George Beale Sloan	July 10, 1896	9
*Frederick Bemester Shepherd	July 10, 1896	10
*Philip Nelson Meade	July 10, 1896	11
Frederick Augustus Emerick	July 10, 1896	12
*Swits Conde	July 10, 1896	13
*Elisha Barclay Powell	July 10, 1896	14
*Thomas Pettibone Kingsford	July 10, 1896	15
*John Thomas Mott	July 10, 1896	16
Elliott Bostick Mott	July 10, 1896	17
*Leonard Ames, Jr.	July 10, 1896	18
*Robert Sage Sloan	July 10, 1896	19
*Arthur Birney Cogswell	July 10, 1896	20

* Deceased

"Lest We Forget"

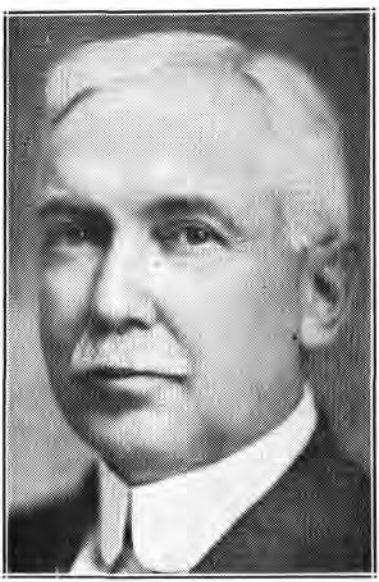
ELLIOTT BOSTICK MOTT

A Charter Member of the Oswego Historical Society and Its First Treasurer, Elliott B. Mott has since continued Ever Active in its interest. He has served continuously for Forty Five Years as an officer of the Society and has been its Curator for the past Twenty Eight Years. In Appreciation of Mr. Mott's long continued Support for, and his Active Work in, the Oswego Historical Society; this volume is Affectionately Dedicated to Him.



JOHN DAUBY HIGGINS

Third President of the Society who was serving at the time the Society was host to the 15th Annual Meeting of the N. Y. State Historical Association in 1913. A former mayor and prominent citizen of Oswego, he is now residing at New Canaan, Conn., where he is engaged in the active practice of his profession as a Member of the Bar.



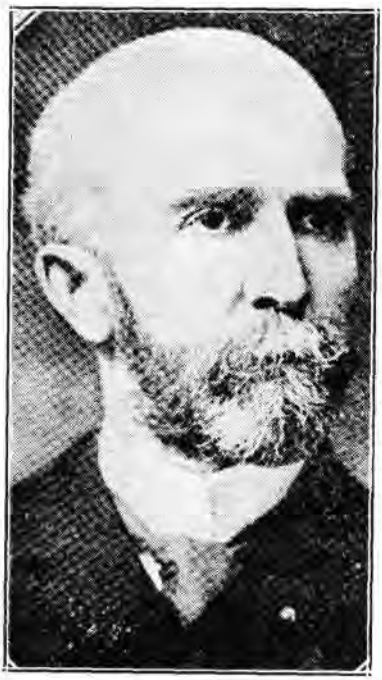
ELLIOTT BOSTICK MOTT

First Treasurer of Society, has served continuously as its Curator for past twenty-eight years. He has served his community in many positions of honor and trust. For many years his has been the hand which has safeguarded the destinies of the Oswego Orphan Asylum. He is a member of the Board of Visitors of the Oswego State Normal School. He is yet active in business as President of the Oswego City Savings Bank.

FREDERICK A. EMERICK

Until his retirement after many years spent as a Manufacturer and Banker in the Oswego River Valley, Mr. Emerick long served as a member of the Board of Managers and as a Vice-President of the Society. He it was who acquired Battle Island field, scene of the attack by the French and Indians upon Bradstreet in 1756, developed it as an Historic Memorial and presented it to the State of New York as a Public Park. He makes his home in Oswego.

BUILDERS OF THE OSWEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



WILLIAM PIERSON JUDSON
Founder of the Society in 1896 and its First President.

THEODORE IRWIN
Second President and donor of Louis XV Medal struck off in 1758.

DR. JAMES G. RIGGS

Fifth President who conceived and carried through the notable Pageant in 1925 Commemorating the 200th Aniversary of Settlement of Oswego County.

BUILDERS OF THE OSWEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DR. CARRINGTON MACFARLANE

Third President, author of a notable diary of Civil War in which he served as an Army Surgeon. He returned to the practice of his profession in his home city after the war.

FREDERICK W. BARNES

For thirty years a contributor of exceptional papers to the Society's programs, Mr. Barnes has also served it as Acting President Vice-president and Board Member.

RALPH M. FAUST

Vice-president, author of "The Story of Oswego" and Chairman of Society's Program Committee. Mr. Faust is Vice-president of the Central N. Y. Association of Local Historians.

BUILDERS OF THE OSWEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COL. JOHN T. MOTT
Served as Vice-President for nearly a decade.

MRS. FREDERICK LEIGHTON
For 16 years Member of Board of Managers of Society.

GROVE A. GILBERT
Vice-President and Chairman of Extension Committee.

WINTER PROGRAM

1940

January 14—"Three Generations of Coopers in Oswego", Dr. Lida S. Penfield.

February 18—"Oswego Valley Preludes of the British and French to Montcalm's Victory of 1756", Robert C. Macdonald

March 25—"Rise of 'the Fourth Estate' in Oswego County", Edwin M. Waterbury

April 15—"Construction and Launching of 'the Vandalia' at Oswego in 1841", Herbert R. Lyons

May 13—"Chapter II of Old Homes of Oswego", Miss Anna Post and Mrs. Karl Kellogg in Collaboration

Activities of the Underground Railroad In Oswego County

(Paper Presented Before The Oswego Historical Society January 9, 1940
By Miss Frieda Schuelke Of The History Department
Of The Oswego High School)

A Syracusan, Rev. Samuel Joseph May, related this story in 1869. A fine-looking, well-dressed young man whose hands were soft and fine came to Rev. May. The fugitive had served as a driver for the carriage of his master's daughters. One of them came to him with the message, "Harry, father is going to sell you." She put five dollars in his hand and turned away weeping. From Kentucky he started at night and reached the Ohio River before morning. He crossed to Cincinnati and hurried on board a steamer, the steward of which was a black man of his acquaintance. On board he was concealed until the boat had returned to Pittsburgh where he was introduced to a gentleman known to be friendly to colored folks. That gentleman sent him to a friend in Meadville and he directed Harry to go to Rev. May. With a letter of introduction to a gentleman in Kingston, Harry was sent to Oswego and a few days afterwards Rev. May received news of his safe arrival in Canada.

Let me use Rev. May's phraseology. "Everybody has heard of 'the Underground Railroad.' Many have read of its operations who have been puzzled to know where it was laid, who were the conductors of it, who kept the 'stations', and how large were the profits. As the company is dissolved, the rails taken up, the business at an end, I propose now to tell my readers about it." With these words he revealed his cooperation with the system devised by friends of the fugitive slaves to aid them in their escape to Canada and freedom. "So long ago as 1834, when I was living in the eastern part of Connecticut," the narrative continues, "I had fugitives addressed to my care. . . . Even after I came to reside in Syracuse, I had much to do as a station-keeper or conductor on the Underground Railroad, until slavery was abolished by the Proclamation of President Lincoln, and subsequently by the according Acts of Congress. Fugitives came to me from Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Louisiana. They came, too, at all hours of day and night, sometimes comfortably—yes, and even handsomely clad, but generally in clothes very unfit to be worn, and in some instances too unclean and loathsome to be admitted into my house." In the latter cases, Rev. May furnished the unkempt 'passengers' with hot water, towels, soap, and a complete suit of clean clothes from a deposit which his kind parishioners kept pretty well supplied. After tarrying a few days, the 'passenger' went on his way to Canada, exulting in his escape from tyranny.

Workers' Identities Concealed

Utica, Oneida, and Syracuse were important 'receiving stations' on the U. G. R. R. in this state. Many escaped slaves were transported through Onondaga county and from thence to Northern New York. Those who guided the fugitives and sometimes transported them were known as 'conductors.' Those who received them into their homes were called 'station-masters', while those who took no

active part in the work but aided by giving money were called 'share-holders'. The work of the organization was so secret that often one worker did not know who the other workers were in his immediate vicinity.

The managers availed themselves of all manner of facilities for traveling; railroads and steamboats, canal boats and ferry boats, stage coaches, gentlemen's carriages and lumber wagons were pressed into active service when needed. The large rivers were the chief obstacles in their way when they were not bridged with ice. In 1858 it was asserted that slaveholders had employed Douglass to advocate in Congress a bill to abolish the North Star and make it a penal offence for the Ohio river to freeze over.

The history of the U. G. R. R. in Oswego County is as inseparable from the great net-work of 'tracks', 'stations', and 'conductors' developed by sympathizers with the poor wretches who were subject to the slave market as the abolitionists themselves are inseparable from the institution of the U. G. R. R. Oswego's location on Lake Ontario gave it the added significance of being one of the last links separating the fugitive from the freedom which would be his if he reached Canadian soil. Before revealing the activities of agents engaged in underground work in Oswego, it is necessary to view the larger questions of the spread of slavery and the growing opposition to its extension.

So long as slavery was general throughout the colonies, every slaveholder in every colony was a member of a voluntary association for catching and returning fugitives, since fugitive slaves made slavery inconvenient and expensive. After the adoption of the Constitution, State after State provided for its abolition until it was limited to the states south of the Mason and Dixon's line and the Ohio river. In 1799, New York provided by statute for gradual abolition. On the 4th of July, 1827, all slaves in New York State were set at liberty by an Act passed in 1817. The invention of the cotton gin and the profitableness of cotton culture and cane sugar enhanced the value of slave labor. Since Congress had forbidden the importation of slaves from foreign soil after 1808, the demand for slaves was met by raising slaves for the Southern market in the Northern Slave States. In the eye of the law slaves were as much property as horses and cattle, and should be returned if they strayed from their master.

Anti-Slavery Protests in Oswego

In the meantime the moral sense of many of the people of the North was aroused to the enormity of the crime of slavery. The Quakers protested against holding human beings in bondage and petitioned the Constitutional Convention for its abolition. Anti-slavery societies were formed in several states with New York joining the list in 1835. A comment relative to the proposed abolitionist meeting which was called to meet in Oswego county appeared in the Oswego Palladium of September 30, 1835. It was filled with regret that "the few abolitionists among us have resolved upon calling a meeting in this county—not that their meeting will tend to promote their principles or add converts to their cause, but that it is calculated to stir up a spirit in this community which will not be quieted until much ill feeling is engendered among our citizens" . . . "Verily these men are assuming a dreadful responsibility; and we hope every citizen who has one spark of humanity or who would save this Union from dissolution, will pause and reflect before he gives his aid in the work of destruction . . . we hope it (the meeting) will be avoided by every citizen who wishes the peace of the community." In the same paper, in a parallel column, ap-

peared a report of strong resolutions adopted at an anti-abolitionist meeting in the town of Richland, Oswego county, in the village of Pulaski on the 11th of September with Hon. Hiram Hubbell in the chair.

On October 7, 1835, the Oswego Palladium reported that a State Convention of Abolitionists "has been called at Utica on the 21st of this month . . . for the purpose of forming a state anti-slavery society." Of 362 persons who signed the notice, 58 were clergymen. The editor's comments closed with regret that the Abolitionists have taken this course since "the great body of our citizens are hostile to the abolitionists." On October 28, 1835, the paper carried a report of the breakup of the Convention in Utica by the committee from the Court Room. Dr. Samuel Joseph May described the event in these words: "So soon as it became public that a Convention for the formation of the state anti-slavery society was to be held in Utica, certain very prominent and respectable gentlemen set about to avert the calamity and disgrace. Six or eight hundred delegates arrived at the court-house to find assembled a crowd of their vociferous opponents. They quietly repaired to the Second Presbyterian meeting-house, where they adopted a Constitution unanimously but were prevented by rioters from doing other business. Mr. Gerrit Smith, a leading abolitionist, was so disgusted, shocked, alarmed, at the proceedings of the gentlemen of property and standing in Utica that he invited all of the members of the Convention to repair to Peterboro." Thus, was launched New York's Anti-Slavery Society with the full support of a man upon whose generosity and fervent effort the abolitionists in our State depended.

In aiding the fugitive slaves, the abolitionist was making the most effective protest against the continuance of slavery. For some forty years the fugitives, guided by the North Star to the land of freedom, made their way through the Northern States and across the border. Scattered through the country were people who believed in the "higher law" and who protected the fleeing fugitive, secreted him from his pursuers, and conducted him from station to station till he was landed in Canada. The U. G. R. R. was simply a form of combined defiance to national laws on the ground that these laws were unjust and oppressive. It had the excitement of piracy, the secrecy of burglary, the daring of insurrection.

Contemporary Records Scanty

The task of the historian of the U. G. R. R. in gathering material is difficult since actual contemporary records are scanty. Reminiscences furnish an insufficient basis for historical generalization. Very few of the persons that harbored runaways were so indiscreet as to keep a register of their fugitive visitors. The liability of U. G. R. R. operators to serve penalties for harboring fugtives explains the dearth of evidence in the form of letters, diaries, and scrapbooks; such evidence would have been incriminating. Only vague and rare references to the U. G. R. R. and its workings appeared in newspapers of the pre-war days, and these are of little value. Garrison's "Liberator" was fierce in its opposition to the Fugitive Slave Laws but the editor observed a discreet silence concerning the secret efforts of his co-laborers.

The enactment of personal liberty laws by the various Northern States, with the purpose of impairing the efficiency of the Fugitive Slave Laws is characteristic of the period during which the underground system had its most rapid expansion; namely, the two decades from 1840 to 1860. These laws may be fairly considered as a guarded expression of opposition to a federal policy which had

granted increasing concessions to the powerful minority of the slave-holding aristocracy of the nation.

Among these concessions to slavery in the federal Constitution, we find that "No person held to service or labor in one state under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on the claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due." (Art. IX, Sec. 2.) The South was pleased over the supposed security gained for its slave property.

Heavy Penalty For Harboring Runaways

Early in 1793, Congress passed the first Fugitive Slave Act which provided for the reclamation of fugitives from justice and labor. Under this concession, the owner, his agent or attorney were empowered to seize the fugitive and take him before a United States Circuit or District judge within the state where the arrest was made, or before any local magistrate within the county in which the seizure occurred. The oral testimony of the claimant, or an affidavit from a magistrate in the state from which he came, must certify that the fugitive owed service as claimed. Upon such showing the claimant secured his warrant for removing the runaway to the state or territory from which he had fled. Five hundred dollars fine constituted the penalty for hindering the arrest, or for rescuing or harboring the fugitive after notice that he or she was a fugitive from labor.

In spite of the severity of its penalties, secret or "underground" methods of rescue were already well understood in and around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, by 1804. The first well established line of the U. G. R. R. had its Southern terminus in Washington, D. C., and extended in a pretty direct route to Albany, New York, thence radiating in all directions to all the New England States, and to many parts of this State. Comparatively few crossed over to Canada until the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, at which time the aforesaid route had been in successful operation about eleven years.

Under the law of 1850 the refusal of a United States marshall or his deputies to execute a commissioner's certificate involved a fine of $1,000. The failure to prevent the escape of the negro after arrest, made the marshall liable, on his official bond, for the value of the slave. The testimony of the alleged fugitive could not be received in evidence. A fine not exceeding $1,000, and imprisonment not exceeding six months was the penalty for any act meant to obstruct the claimant in his effort to bring about the arrest of a fugitive or any attempt to rescue, harbor, or conceal the fugitive, laid the person liable to the same penalty. In all cases where proceedings took place before a commissioner he was "entitled to a fee of $10 in full for his services," provided that a warrant for the fugitive's arrest was issued; if, however, the fugitive was discharged, the commissioner was entitled to $5 only. This law increased the number of recruits in underground work and created a widespread reaction against slavery.

Two Terminals in Oswego County

The severe penalties inflicted by this law for feeding, or aiding in the escape, or harboring "fugitives from labor", made it necessary to extend the lines of the U. G. R. R. directly through to Canada. It had four main lines across the State of New York, and scores of laterals. Three of them in the Central and Eastern part of the State connected with Philadelphia and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. One passed through New Jersey to New York City, up the Hudson and Mohawk rivers to Utica, Syra-

cuse, and Oswego or turned eastward at Albany into the New England States. Another led from Philadelphia through Wilkesbarre, Waverly, and Montrose in Pennsylvania to Plymouth, Lebanon, Peterboro, Mexico, and Port Ontario. The third connected Gettysburgh, Pennsylvania, with Elmira, the Finger Lakes section, Morganville, and Lockport. The fourth passed from Summit, Pa. to Buffalo and Niagara Falls by way of Fredonia and Collins, New York.

It seems probable that another branch of the secret thoroughfare followed the valley of the Hudson from Troy to the farm of John Brown, near North Elba among the Adirondacks. Mr. Richard H. Dana visited this frontier home of John Brown one summer, and was informed by his guide that the country about there belonged to Gerrit Smith, who was a friend and counsellor of Brown; that it was settled for the most part by families of fugitive slaves, who were engaged in farming; and that Brown held the position of a sort of ruler among them. The view was therefore credited that this neighborhood was one of the termini of the U. G. R. R. From Smith's house at Peterboro runaway slaves were sent in Mr. Smith's wagon to Oswego. A little to the East and North of this place of deportation there were what may perhaps be called "emergency stations" at or near Mexico, New Haven, Port Ontario, and Cape Vincent. From the place last named fugitives took boat for Kingston, Ontario.

Used Gerrit Smith's Coach For Escape

Let me quote from a letter addressed to me by Mrs. Elmer S. Wood, who is now a resident of "Woodholm," Oswego, R. D. 2: ". . . I will tell you the story as told to me by Gerrit Smith's grandson — Gerrit Smith Miller. At one time a slave woman was driven away from Peterboro in the family coach, by the usual coachman, who usually drove for Mrs. Gerrit Smith when she took her daily ride. The negress was dressed in Mrs. Smith's clothes, cloak, bonnet, veil, etc., and accordingly gave the impression to onlookers of Mrs. Smith out for her daily airing. The negress was conveyed safely to her next destination via 'underground'. My interest in all this is because these Gerrit Smiths and myself branch from the same family tree, of which I am but a very small twig."

Mr. George C. Bragdon, Rochester, New York, on August 11, 1896, wrote concerning the runaways harbored by his father near Port Ontario: "I believe they usually went to Cape Vincent, near the mouth of the St. Lawrence and were taken over to Canada from there. . . I believe some of the slaves received by him were sent on from Peterboro by Gerrit Smith to Asa S. Wing or James C. Jackson (Mexico), and came from there to our house. They steered clear of the villages as a rule. Our farm was favorably situated for concealing them and helping them on".

From Siebert's "The Underground Railroad", I learned that he had gathered the names of about 3,200 persons known to have been engaged in underground work. Among them appear Hon. Gerrit Smith of Peterboro in Madison County, Reverend Samuel J. May of Syracuse, and eight operators in Oswego; namely, George L. Bragdon, Edward Fox, Mr. French, James C. Jackson, George Salmon, William Lyman Salmon, Ard. H. Stevens, and Asa S. Wing.

Gerrit Smith's Oswego Interest

Although Gerrit Smith's residence was located at Peterboro, a little village in Madison county on the road between Morrisville and Canastota, which links the Cherry Valley with the Mohawk Valley highways, Oswego looks

upon him as one of her prominent sons. Her claims rest upon a number of circumstances which link his career with Oswego. The legislation providing for sale at auction of the remaining State lands in Oswego was enacted in 1827. This Act permitted the commissioners of the Land Office to hold the sale in Oswego. Gerrit Smith, Abram Varick and Samuel Stocking were the principal buyers.

The next year Smith built the Fitzhugh House, known at first as the Oswego Hotel. Later it became known as the Munger House. E. A. Huntley operated it for Smith. In 1835, Moses P. Hatch purchased the hotel for $25,000, built verandas and added a cupola, with other improvements. The next year he sold it to a Mr. Baldwin for about $120,000 but the sale was not perfected, and the property again passed to Gerrit Smith. About 1855, he sold it to O. G. Munger, an experienced landlord. On August 22, 1887, it was demolished to make room for the new block of the Second National Bank. In 1828 a large share of the Hydraulic Canal Company's stock was purchased by Gerrit Smith. His investment was about $14,000.

On March 31, 1830, the east side cove property was acquired by the village and was leased to Gerrit Smith the same year for 999 years at $300 a year. Later he purchased it outright and received a State patent. In 1895 the property was still held by Smith's heirs. In 1852 the city authorities made a permanent lease to private parties of the land under water which was sheltered by the east pier, and which was known as Grampus Bay, being so named after the barque "Grampus" wrecked there in 1847. The city had obtained this land by grant from the State in 1851. The lease was transferred to Gerrit Smith, and under its conditions the partly wrecked east pier was rebuilt by him and was extended upstream along the east side of the channel for 900 feet, forming the east channel pier. Six barge wharves with an aggregate length of 2,100 feet and average width of 100 feet were built, from the rentals of which the owner received large sums—$60,000 per year at one time.

On July 17, 1853 Gerrit Smith, known as a noted public benefactor and a large property owner in Oswego, addressed a letter to a number of leading business men of the city and offered the sum of $25,000 for the purpose of founding a public library. His sole stipulation was that it should be situated on the east side of the river, where his property interests were mainly located and had been devastated by a sweeping fire. The privileges and benefits of the library should be conferred on all persons without regard to race, color, or condition. He declined to have the institution called by his name. The trust was accepted and on April 15, 1854, the library was incorporated. The trustees purchased a lot on the corner of East Second and Oneida streets and erected the present building. During the Civil War, Smith made an additional gift of $1,000 to the Public Library in Oswego. In 1868 he gave $4,000 more. The next year he gave twenty-five hundred dollars to an orphan asylum here.

Smith's Abolitionist Record

The most complete account of Gerrit Smith's abolitionist activities has been recorded by Dr. Ralph V. Harlow in a recent biography of the great reformer. According to this record, Gerrit Smith was one of the prime movers in the organization of the Liberty party at Arcade, New York, in 1840, and was its candidate for the presidency in 1848 and 1852. He was elected to Congress in 1853 for one term. It is said that during the decade from 1850 to 1860 he aided habit-

ually in the escape of fugitives and paid the legal expenses of persons accused of infractions of the Fugitive Slave Law.

The father of Gerrit Smith, like most other gentlemen of his day in New York, was a slaveholder until many years after the Revolution. Gerrit rejoiced when the law of the State in 1827 prohibited utterly the continuance of slaveholding. He early joined the Colonization Society and retained his confidence in it until near the close of the year 1835. He had contributed at least $10,000 to the society. He not only joined both the American and New York State Anti-slavery Societies and gave in all not less than $50,000,—but, he set about endeavoring to get as many free colored men as possible settled upon lands and in homes of their own. Before the middle of 1847 he had given an average of forty acres apiece to three thousand colored men, in all 120,000 acres.

Smith Worked For Greater Oswego

His Congressional district, the twenty-second, included Oswego as well as Madison County, and Oswego was deeply interested in a proposed reciprocity treaty with Canada. In 1850 the business men of Oswego were talking of sending a lobby to Washington to promote this project, and John B. Edwards, Smith's agent, considered reciprocity as the primary issue in the local campaign. Gerrit Smith seemed best qualified to push the cause of reciprocity. In the election Smith's Whig opponent received 5,620 votes; the Democratic candidate, 6,206; Smith as the representative of the independent party received 8,049 votes.

Knowing that the abolitionists were decidedly not favored in Washington, he disarmed his foes and treated his associates with utmost courtesy. His first official act in Congress, December 12, 1853, was the presentation of a petition of the New York City Temperance Alliance, asking for the suppression of liquor traffic in Washington, D. C. Although the Judiciary Committee returned it with an adverse vote, he continued in his efforts to promote temperance whenever an occasion presented itself in Congress. With less consistency he urged the building by the government of the new customs houses for both Buffalo and Oswego, because rented buildings then in use were too small and badly arranged for their purposes.

Early in April, 1854 Gerrit Smith made a long speech against the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. One of its most serious faults was the recognition of slavery in the territories. He admitted that the hope of abolishing slavery was small so long as the slaveholders dominated the federal government and the American churches. His opinion of both institutions was expressed by him in these words: "A bastard democracy, accommodated to the demands of slavery, and tolerating the traffic in human flesh, is our national democracy: and a bastard Christianity, which endorses this bastard democracy, is the current Christianity of our nation. . . . American religion is a huge hypocrisy." He admitted that the North had shared in the profits of slavery, but he was ready to authorize a federal appropriation of $400,000,000 to set the slaves free.

Smith loved applause, but in Congress he found himself continually subjected to the charge of being out of order. Perhaps he recognized the futility of his work in Congress. On August 7, 1854, he submitted his resignation to E. W. Leavenworth, Secretary of State. The abolitionists believed he had made a mistake in leaving Congress but as events moved, he accomplished more and acquired greater fame after he had left Congress than before.

Smith's Relations With John Brown

On June 22, 1857, John Brown, of Harper's Ferry fame, had a conference with Smith at Chicago. From Brown's diary and letters it appears that Gerrit Smith figured prominently in the "Railroad" business of a somewhat extended scale . . . "I now have a measure on foot that I feel sure would awaken in you something more than a common interest," wrote Brown. On February 18, 1858, Brown arrived at Smith's home; four days later Sanborn joined him there. On the evening of February 22, Smith, Brown, Morton, and Sanborn talked over the proposed plan for his commonwealth. As a result of this conference Brown wrote to his wife: "Mr. Smith and family go all lengths with me." According to a statement under oath made by John Brown, Jr., in 1867 in describing his father's plans and Smith's connections with them, he admitted that Brown intended to use guerilla bands in making forays upon individual slaveholders, seizing the slaveholders as hostages, and thus rendering slaveholding insecure and unprofitable, and that Gerrit Smith "did assent and cooperate. He aided by advice and money, and by counsel."

On April 11, 1859, John Brown was back at Peterboro for a four day visit with Gerrit Smith. On May 16, Brown recorded in his diary that he wrote 'urgently' to Smith and Smith's reply, expressing full sympathy with Brown's purpose, was found with Brown's effects after the affray at Harper's Ferry. Brown's attack of October 16, 1859, was followed by his capture on the 18th, his trial at Charlestown on the 25th, and his sentence on November 2nd. One month later he was hanged.

On October 21, the New York Herald editorially accused Gerrit Smith and Frederick Douglass of being "accessories before the fact", after having commented on some letters found in Brown's effects. After these disclosures in the daily press Gerrit Smith became suddenly repentant and he destroyed all the evidence in his possession bearing upon Brown's plans and directed others to do likewise.

During the latter part of October. Smith consulted a physician, Dr. John McCall of Utica. Five days after John Brown was sentenced to death, Gerrit Smith was taken to the New York State Asylum for the Insane at Utica. Various statements suggest that Smith was suffering from an extreme case of guilty conscience and from a terrific nervous strain resulting therefrom. This illness saved Smith from further embarrassment on account of his complicity in Brown's work. Later he publicly denied the facts of his association with Brown.

Rescue of Jerry McHenry

Another leading abolitionist whose associations brought less grief to Gerrit Smith was Samuel Joseph May. As 'conductor' in Syracuse, he, together with Dr. Hiram Hoyt and Gerrit Smith, planned the "rescue" of Jerry McHenry, a mulatto, who had been residing in Syracuse for a number of years. He had been claimed as a slave, arrested by the police, and was taken to the office of the Commissioner. There was a one-sided trial in which the agent of the claimant was heard in proof, that the prisoner was an escaped slave belonging to a Mr. Reynolds, of Missouri. The doomed man was not allowed to state his case. Jerry had made an unsuccessful bolt for freedom, when Rev. May was summoned to quiet him at the police station.

Jerry listened to the plans being made for his escape. Let me repeat them as they are recorded in Rev. May's "Recollections": "It was agreed that a skilful and bold driver in a strong buggy, with the fleetest horse to be got

in the city, should be stationed not far off to receive Jerry, when he should be brought out. Then to drive hither and thither about the city until he saw no one pursuing him; not to attempt to get out of town because it was reported that every exit was well guarded, but to return to a certain point near the centre of the city, where he would find two men waiting to receive his charge. At a given signal the doors and windows of the police office were to be demolished at once, and the rescuers to rush in and fill the room, press around the officers, overwhelming them by their numbers, not by blows, . . . several men were to take up Jerry and bear him to the buggy.

"About eight o'clock in the evening of October 1, 1851, the plan was executed. The driver of the buggy managed adroitly, escaped all pursuers and about nine o'clock delivered Jerry into the hands of Mr. Jason S. Hoyt and Mr. James Davis. Jerry was housed with Caleb Davis at the corner of Genesee and Orange Streets for five days. The next Sunday evening, just after dark, a covered wagon with a span of very fleet horses was seen standing at the door. Mr. Hoyt and Mr. Davis were seen to help a somewhat infirm man into the vehicle, jump in themselves, and start off at a rapid rate." Suspicion was awakened and a chase of eight or ten miles ended when Jerry's deliverers outdistanced the pursuers.

"They took him that night about twenty miles to the house of a Mr. Ames, a Quaker, in the town of Mexico. There he was kept concealed several days, and then conveyed to the house of a Mr. Clarke, on the confines of the city of Oswego. This gentleman searched diligently nearly a week for a vessel that would take Jerry across to the dominions of the British Queen. . . . At length the captain of a small craft agreed to set sail after dark and when well off on the lake to hoist a light to the top of his mast . . Mr. Clarke took Jerry to a less frequented part of the shore, embarked with him in a small boat, and rowed to the little schooner of the friendly captain. By him he was taken to Kingston, where he soon was established again in the business of a cooper."

Episode At New Haven

Next, let us examine another problem of 'conductors' of the U. G. R. R. Mr. Eber M. Pettit, who for many years was a 'conductor' at Fredonia, New York, related a curious experience of Mr. French. This story is quoted from Pettit's "Sketches in the History of the Underground Railroad." "One of our most active agents lived in the town of New Haven, Oswego County, within sight of Lake Ontario. He was a farmer by the name of French." One evening as French was returning his cows to pasture, he saw a man in the woods trying to hide. The negro attempted to flee but was so weak from the lack of food that he fell to the ground. When Mr. French told him that he was an abolitionist and not to be frightened, the negro, Moses, replied: "Yes, massa, but de ye see I'se so pore, only bones and skin; I'se eat nuffin amost dese six weeks—do massa, let me lib!" "Come with me," said French, "and I will feed you and take care of you". It required a long continued and patient effort to induce the negro to tell the cause of his fear.

In Georgia, where Moses lived. the slaves were taught by their mothers to find the North Star and by their masters to prefer death by the dogs which hunted fugitives than to fall into the hands of abolitionists, a kind of people living in the North, who, when they could catch a negro, would fatten him, if he would eat, and then kill and eat him. Moses had therefore avoided the abolitionists and wandered to the shores of Lake Ontario, where he was found and disillusioned by

the kind ministrations of Mr. French.

Among the early active abolitionists in Oswego county we must include the name of Dr. James C. Jackson of Mexico. In a letter dated April 3, 1838, and addressed to Edwin W. Clarke, Esq., of Oswego he begged to be excused from non-attendance at the Court House on the following evening, because of illness of his little son. If his physician would grant him permission to leave his home, he would not fail of addressing the people of Oswego. In a post-script he added: "It would not hurt the cause of freedom if the abolitionists of Oswego should spend an evening in discussing the question among themselves."

(Dr. Jackson, a cousin of Mr. Clarke, was the man who afterwards established at Dansville, N. Y., the sanatarium which long bore his name; it was one of the first sanatariums opened in the United States. Editor's Note)

The first house over the city line on the East Oneida Street State highway between Oswego and New Haven is a reputed 'underground station'. The property seventy years ago belonged to a Mr. Robinson, a colored man, who sold it to Mr. George Dick. A resident who has lived in the vicinity of this house for the past sixty-eight years of her life has some recollections of tales related to her by her mother which pertain to the use of the house as a shelter for escaping slaves during the Civil War.

Activities At Hannibal "Way Station"

In the western section of Oswego county abolitionists seemed equally determined to evade the Fugitive Slave Law. According to an account of the Underground Railroad prepared by Miss Grace Hawkins for her commencement address in June, 1912, and published in the Hannibal News of June 27, 1912, 'underground activities' were encouraged by Messrs. Brewster, Barstow, Bunnel, Worster, Phelps, Farnham, Fitch, Reed, and Kent. These people kept the fugitives secreted by day and at night took them on to Oswego, Fair Haven, or some other place bordering the lake so that they could cross by boat to Canada. "One day Dr. Dillon F. Acker (then a small boy) was playing 'I —spy' with several of his companions in the old Brewster barn. He knew of a hole in the corner of a haymow and went there to hide. As he removed some of the hay, much to his surprise, he uncovered a negro who was hiding there until Mr. Brewster could help him on to the next station."

In the town of Ira, about 1845, one evening sometime after dark, a rap was heard on the door of Mr. Hirma Bradt. When he went to answer the call he saw a negro, who asked to stay all night. This permission was granted but Mr. Bradt said to his wife. "Now, Mary," we must not let cousin Ben know of this because he would report us to the government." Hiram Bradt was a neighbor of Stephen Roy Lockwood of North Hannibal retired principal of of Hannibal High School in the latter's boyhood days. The latter furnished the information that the D. W. Braga home on the Oswego road one mile north of the village of Hannibal has a secret closet that was used to conceal contraband negroes. Another 'station' is to be found at Sterling Center in the house next to the school house and occupied at present by Mrs. Bell Kirk McRae.

With so many 'stations' around Oswego City, it is only reasonable to conclude that there were a number of active "station-masters" within the city. Recent research has tended to lend credence to this belief.

From a paper prepared by Mrs. John Post Miller for the D. A. R. in 1907, I learned that Mrs. Miller's grandfather, Mr. Samuel

Stillman Whitman, was a prominent member of the abolitionist society in Little Falls and a 'station-master' there. Because of her interest in the U. G. R. R., she acquired information about 'stations' in Oswego when she moved here. From interviews with older residents of the city, she discovered that one-of the most active in 'underground work' was Hamilton Littlefield, a wealthy lumber merchant and farmer, who was particularly useful because his vessels, which carried lumber between Osewgo and Canada, were manned by Canadian sailors. His vessels furnished an easy and safe means of smuggling slaves directly across the lake. Mr. Littlefield lived at the corner of East Oneida and Fourth Streets in the house later occupied by Mr. Frost. He had fitted up a room in the cellar of his house as a place for concealing fugitives. His house was considered the most important station in Oswego.

Hamilton Littlefield's Ships Aided

On one occasion Mr. Littlefield told of a party of fifteen or sixteen runaways who arrived at one time. One of their number was sent to him to say that the party were hidden in some woods at the edge of the city. Guided by the messenger, Mr. Littlefield with some of his co-workers took lanterns and found the whole bunch armed with clubs broken from branches, their eyes gleaming with fear and desperation, huddled in the hollow made by a tree that had been uprooted by the wind. They were divided into separate parties and smuggled into Mr. Littlefield's cellar with the greatest caution, for that night Mr. Littlefield had as his guest the manager of one of his farms who had been in his employ but a short time and it was not known where his sympathies lay. After several days Mr. Littlefield sent one of his vessels down the lake to a point where the slaves could be loaded during the night and carried to Canada. Mr. Littlefield told Mr. S. A. Coon that he and his co-workers had helped enough slaves out of Oswego to make a good sized town and that there was a town then named in his honor by fugitives.

Others prominent in the work were Mr. Edwin W. Clarke, the father of Frederick O. Clarke, and John B. Edwards, who occupied the house now (1907) owned by Mr. L. C. Rowe on Syracuse Avenue, just where the street cars turn; his home served as an underground station.

Mr. John Jackson Clarke retired superintendent of Mexican railways, now a resident of Mexico City, Mexico, who visited Oswego last summer, the nephew of the famous Edwin W. Clarke, prepared a paper on the "Memories of the Anti-Slavery Movement and the 'Underground Railway, ' in December, 1931, which is now on file at the Oswego Historical Society's headquarters. In it he related the operations of his father and uncle who were 'counductors" of the U. G. R. R. Fugitives were more often sent to Oswego from a "station" in Phoenix, although a few were relayed from Fulton, all having found previous refuge in Syracuse. Others came up via Elmira and Auburn and were sheltered at Sterling before reaching Oswego.

His uncle, who lived in a brick house at the corner of East Seventh and Mohawk Streets, hurried the slaves out to the farm owned by Sidney and Olive Jackson Clarke, the parents of John Jackson Clarke. It was located two miles east of the Oswego river on the North side of the Oneida Street road about 100 yards immediately west of the present Scriba boundary line, where in 1807 Dr. Deodatus Clarke, established his home as the first practicing physician of Oswego. (The foundation wall of Dr. Clarke's home still stands and he is buried in the small walled-in

enclosure on the farm.) Sailing vessels were used to convey the slaves to Canada and Sidney Clarke found that ship captains gladly cooperated in the transfer of the refugees at the rate of one dollar for one or two persons.

Clarke Family Gave Help

On one occasion John J. Clarke's father conferred with the captain of a vessel that lay at the dock near the foot of East First Street. The captain was anxious to sail before dark and, in order to get the human cargo on board without detection, the fugitives were placed on their backs in the box of a farm wagon and covered with a light sprinkling of hay, taken to the dock, and transferred to the vessel unobserved.

Sidney Clarke kept no record of the number of his 'passengers' but said that he had shipped over eighty to Canada. His wife was equally positive that the number entertained at the farm was over 125.

There is mention of but two occasions in which the Clarke family was in danger of detection. Once, when they were entertaining a fugitive, his wife, and three children, a messenger came to warn Mr. Clarke's father that he was under suspicion. Shortly after the fugitives had been transferred to the woods some 200 yards to the north, a buggy drove up with a Southern emissary and a constable. After a fruitless but very persistent search they left the farm.

Among the "Clarke papers" there is a circular letter dated May 6, 1843, and addressed to Edwin Clarke by James C. Jackson of Utica, New York, (the same man mentioned earlier as a resident of Mexico) in which the "Tract scheme" was advocated for the purpose of keeping the slavery question before the public since hard times prevented many villages from employing lecturers. Each abolitionist, male and female, should agree to pay at least six-pence a month, to create a fund for the purchase of tracts on various topics, which were to be distributed in the villages. The letter and 1000 tracts were brought to Oswego by Mr. Littlefield and left with Asa Wing, who was the agent in Oswego County.

John B. Edwards' Role

In 1831, four years after acquiring property in Oswego, Gerrit Smith secured the services of John B. Edwards, who worked for him steadily during the next forty-three years. Judging from the carefully kept records of deeds, taxes, and rentals and from the voluminous correspondence that passed between the two men, I believe that Edwards was thoroughly honest, loyal, and indispensible in managing Smith's business and land deals. After a diligent search I discovered a few letters which furnish proof that he also aided in the underground work of his employer. On May 4. 1850, he wrote to Smith as follows: "Mr. Clarke & Littlefield & myself will attend to selecting six colored men to receive the six remaining deeds you have to give." In the same year, on June 1, he sent the list of names which included: "Irael Lewis, William A. Cole, Stephen Dickers, Nathan Green, Neury Gray, Charles Smith"; and on June 13th, he acknowledged receipt of the deeds for the colored men.

On August 29, 1850, he wrote: "I am very glad to see that the Proceedings of Cazenovia Fugitive Slave Convention is shaking the Nation." On October 10th, he exulted: "since the great anti-slavery meeting held in this place last Monday evening Fugitive slaves have become almost contented to remain in this place & Nockley will probably remain. The meeting was verry large & took high ground. . . Such meetings gives some reason to hope that this wicked nation may posi bly yet reform instead of going to destruction." On October 12th,

he added: "Anti-slavery is working gloriously in this place now. I hope it will continue to work. We had a sound & wholehearted political antislavery sermon preached in our Methodist Church last Sabbath by our Local Preacher Mr. Colburn. Mr. Judson preached ably last Sabbath evening on the moral character of the Fugitive Law. He took position that the Law is founded on a lie."

The next year on March 18, he wrote: "I see by the papers that Samuel J. May is to be at this place this evening to lecture on the Fugitive Slave Law. I will give him $168 that you directed me to do." Considerable correspondence passed upon the subject of the "Jerry Rescue" trials. The gem of proof appeared in a letter dated April 29, 1852, in which Edwards wrote to Smith a line, which, if exposed at the time, would have incriminated both men. It reads as follows: "The Fugitive Slave Dorsey came to me today with your letter. I have put him aboard of a vessel bound for Canada & gave him $1. he appears more inteligent than a slaveholding family by the name of Dorsey with whom I was acquainted in Lyons when I was a boy."

Edwards Worried After Brown's Capture

On July 20, 1852, Edwards seemed worried as he wrote to Smith: "I was not before aware that you was expecting 40 or 50 colored people from New Orleans. It will be doubtful about them all finding employment here but when they arrive I will do the best I can to get them employment." His correspondence shows his deep interest in Smith's election to Congress, his painstaking care to relieve him from business worries, and his deep concern and fear for the safety of his employer when John Brown was captured after the Harper's Ferry episode. (At this point I wish to acknowledge the kindness extended to me by Dr. W. Freeman Galpin of Syracuse University who made the Edwards-Smith correspondence available for my use.)

From Mr. Coon, Mrs. Miller learned that "Mr. Edwards was a large and powerful man of few words but great force of character. One of two slaves which were concealed by Mr. Edwards was traced to his home by the master who came to Oswego to recapture him. He called upon the U. S. marshal, a Mr. Tucker, to help him, which by law he must do. But whether from fear of Mr. Edwards' influence or sympathy for the slaves, the marshal first went to Mr. Edwards to warn him that the slave's master was in Oswego and advised Mr. Edwards to give the slave up peacefully. Mr. Edwards turned upon the marshal and reminded him that he was trespassing on his property and that he would be put out by force unless he left immediately. Mr. Tucker left precipitately and did not return with the slave's master."

In a house now owned by Henry F. Koberg at 531 West Fifth and Clark Streets was a "station" revealed to me for the first time by Mr. F. W. Barnes, whose father came to Oswego in 1839 at the age of sixteen and became an employee of Mr. Buckhout. Between 1850-1857 the elder Barnes entered into a partnership with Mr. Buckhout and they located their shop at the corner where the Rudolph jewlry store is now situated. Mr. Buckhout lived in a red brick house (now the Koberg property) to which was attached a barn so that the buildings appear as one structure. Slaves were secreted in the barn by Mr. Buckhout with Mr. Barnes' assistance. The latter was an ardent abolitionist but was very careful not to disclose the fact as it might react on his business and family. Some of the slaves were moved directly from the

docks in Oswego; others from the shore East and West of the city to avoid detection. As one drives along the West Fifth Street road and notes the ideal location of this structure, one can readily understand its value in "underground" work.

Secret Closet in Brown House

The Church of the Evangelist is located on East Oneida Street between Second and Third Streets. Beside it is a red brick house built by an Englishman, Mr. James Brown. He was an ardent abolitionist, also. He arranged to have a secret closet built in the side wall of his house and thereby hangs a tale. When federal officers came to search for a fugitive who was concealed there, Mrs. Brown was frightened beyond description. After their search failed to expose the location of the secret chamber, she breathed more freely. The house later came into the possession of Judge Harmon, whose granddaughter, Miss Anna Post, passed on the tale to me.

Another "station" may be found on the Hall road. The large brick house which is now in the possession of Paul Schneible, the dairyman, is known as the "Bennett house" and was used by the former owner, Jesse Bennett, to aid fugitive slaves. The cupola formed an excellent look-out, from which this station-master could watch for federal agents. Mr. Peter Hilbert gave the data about this station to Miss Gertrude Shepherd, who has passed it on to me.

Marker Placed By State Society

Of all the "stations" revealed to me, only one bears the distinction of official recognition by the New York State Historical Society. In a letter dated November 9, 1939, Mr. Irving S. Alder of the State Society admitted that a search through historic records and markers supplied to Jefferson, Cortland, Lewis, Monroe, Oneida, Oswego, and Wayne counties listed only four markers for "underground stations" in all of these counties. The one which should be of greatest interest for Oswego is located at Fruit Valley, Oswego County. It reads:

Site Of
Underground Station
Edwards Residence 1760-65
Slaves Transferred From
Here To "Old Homestead"

Upon investigation, I found that the house was built in 1826 by Daniel Pease, who died in 1847. He was the grandfather of Asa Pease, whose father was brought to the new home when he was but a year old. Mr. Pease told me that there was a long wood-shed in the back of the house which was used to conceal slaves until they could be brought to Oswego for transportation by water to Canada.

It is more than likely that this report does not include all of the activities of "underground agents" in Oswego county. If it has created an interest in further research or fuller recognition of the Underground Stations here, your time and mine will have been well spent.

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Pioneer Oswego County Preachers and Their Churches

(Paper Presented Before Oswego Historical Society February 13, 1940
By Leon N. Brown)

The first permanent settlers came into Oswego County following the Revolutionary War, the year 1791 marking this point in the County history. During the next few years homes were built and settlements grew up at Redfield, Constantia, Vera Cruz, (Texas), Mexico, Pulaski, Sandy Creek, Oswego and along the Oswego River Valley. These early settlers came mostly from Connecticut, Vermont, the Mohawk Valley and other earlier settled sections of New York State. Many of the first settlers were Revolutionary War soldiers, a few were ordained ministers, a good share of them poor and in large part Protestant, or at least Protestant by inclination. The country was a wilderness of forest; there were no roads, other than Indian trails, no means of communication, and all of the hardships of the pioneer were suffered. Churchill writes: "It is a somewhat remarkable circumstance, in view of the history of Oswego village itself, and the fact that settlement began at several other points in the County prior to 1800, that a church society was organized in the town of Redfield as early as 1802, that there was not a church edifice in the county until 1823, when a small one was erected at Colosse—this may seem to indicate a backward condition of religious sentiment in the county, but the fact is, religious services were held throughout the county as early as other sections of the State, when compared with dates of settlement and the religious sentiment and subservience to the teachings of religion were as prevalent here as elsewhere."

Itinerant Preachers Followed Settlers

Following the first settlements came itinerant and circuit riding preachers on horseback and on foot, sent out as missionaries to the new country. These fearless men who came were largely Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists. The Congregationalists were educated men, graduates of New England colleges. They held services in homes, school houses and mills, sleeping and eating wherever they were welcome. The gray clad Methodists and the itinerant Baptists were of equal zeal, stern, severe and uncomprising, but often without the educational qualifications of the Congregationalists. These early preachers never shirked a necessary hardship nor avoided a duty. Peter Cartwright described the early frontier preacher vividly: "A Methodist preacher in those days when he felt that God had called him to preach, instead of hunting up a college or a Bibical institute hunted up a hardy pony or a horse and some travelling apparatus, and with his library always at hand, namely the Bible, Hymn Book, and Discipline, he started, and with a text that never wore out or grew stale, he cried, 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!' In this way he went through storms of wind, hail, snow and rain; climbed hills and mountains, traversed valleys, plunged through swamps, swam swollen streams, lay out at night, wet, weary and hungry, held his horse by the bridle all night, or tied him to a limb, slept with saddle

blanket for a bed, his saddle or saddle bags for his pillow, and his old big coat or blanket, if he had any, for covering."

Circuit Riders Found Few Roads

Rev. Nathan Dutton, who came to Champion soon after 1800 relates in his diary of riding from Adams, Jefferson County to Ellisburg and then to Redfield in 1806 over an intolerable road, where he arrived, much fatigued and, on his knees, thanked God his life had been spared during the long ride through the forests. Today, when Oswego county may be traversed from north to south in an hour and east to west in less than two hours by automobile, the obstacles confronting the traveler a hundred and forty years ago are not easily visualized. Scriba's roads from Rotterdam to Vera Cruz and Camden to Rotterdam were built early in the century. Previous to 1808 there were no roads passable with a wagon in the towns of Mexico or Parish, nor any other town north or east except Williamstown and Redfield. A post route was established in 1806 from Onondaga Hollow to the village of Hannibal and in 1804 a road was cut through the woods from Oswego to Cato; but it was not until 1811 that the legislature authorized a public road to be laid out from the court house in Onondaga to Oswego village. Other roads developed as the county grew in population, but easy travel was retarded for a number of years.

Rev. John Taylor, a Presbyterian missionary, visited Mexico in 1802, describing conditions as follows: "Preached to about 40 people September 2nd. The most I can say is that they behaved with tolerable decency. Three or four left the house sermon time. Gave one Bible and half a dozen catechisms to such persons as I thought would receive them. The people are in general nothing—arians or fatalists, or Methodists and Baptists, who are worst of all."

Early Services at Mexico

In 1808 Jonothan Huestis, a young Methodist preacher, came riding into Mexico with Bible and Hymn books in his saddle bags and preached the first Methodist sermon in the town of Mexico. The preaching occurred at the home of Mrs. Leonard Ames, whose husband, Leonard Ames, was one of the first settlers in the town. Rev. Ira Fairbanks, in 1811 was appointed to the Mexico circuit by the New York Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church and Rueben Farley was his colleague. This circuit then embraced a large territory—a part of Sandy Creek, Redfield, Camden, Williamstown, Salmon River, Richland and Mexico and as far west as Oswego Falls, "having to pass through a twelve mile dense wilderness twice every time around the circuit." In a written report to the Conference Fairbanks states: "I received $25.00 quarterly that year, and at the end of the year I owed nothing. We lived with the people. When they had venison, we had it. When they had salmon we shared with them. We received about 100 on probation."

At the request of one man who came ten miles to hear preaching, Fairbanks traveled ten miles through the woods on Salmon River and found a people without religion and abounding in quarrels. A Methodist Class was started and evidence of his good work is found in several churches which were later established in that locality. He is recorded as having preached in the settlement of Pekin in the town of Orwell in 1811. Bishop Francis Asbury, "Methodist Prophet of the Long Road," is reputed to have traveled from Kingston, Canada to Sacket's Harbor on July 15th, 1811, then following the old military road through Redfield, and thence along down the Salmon River to Pekin, Williamstown, Camden and Rome.

The Bishop's published journal records that he crossed from Kingston to Sacket's harbor, rode 38 miles to Porter's Tavern and on July 18th, "got safe to Paris," where he was to conduct a Conference. His journal give no further details. Rev. Henry Boehm, who accompanied Asbury, records the trip from Canada to Sacket's Harbor and to a Central New York destination, but he does not mention the route.

Early Oswego Preachers

Reverends Case and Gillet preached at Fort Ontario in 1815 and Rev. Chandley Lambert preached in Oswego prior to the War of 1812. Other itinerant Methodist preachers recorded as having preached in the village of Oswego were, Rev. Elias Bowen 1815, Rev. George Gray and Luther Bishop 1816. In September 1817 Mrs. Catherine Hawley, "mother of Methodism in Oswego," heard that a two days meeting was to be conducted five miles southeast of the village. With Mary Cooley she walked the distance to find Revs. James Hazen, Amos Perry and Enoch Barnes conducting the meeting. She begged that they come and preach "in benighted Oswego, where there was neither church nor minister." She was apparently wrong here, because the Presbyterians had already held intermittent services and organized a church. However, as a result of her invitation Rev. Enoch Barnes came to the settlement, a class was formed and the First Methodist Church of Oswego came into being.

George Gary and Chandley Lambert are listed as pioneer North Country preachers. George Gary was later a District Superintendent, or Presiding Elder and he left this vicinity to become a pioneer missionary to the Oregon Territory. Known among his followers as Father Lambert, Chandley Lambert is said to have preached with equal zeal against the devil, the Congregationalists, the Baptists and especially the Universalists. Before coming into Oswego County he had been assigned to Northern New York. The following is taken from his journal: "I came from the New York Conference in 1807 to the Black River Country. Received my appointment from Bishop Asbury to the St. Lawrence circuit." Rev. T. T. Rowe, historian of the First Methodist Church, Oswego, wrote this concerning Lambert, "He was an inflexible man, a good disiplinarian, and powerful preacher—a fine example of the pioneer preacher."

First Services in Fulton

Another appointment to the Mexico Circuit was Rev. Tuller, who came from Cortland, preaching in Fulton as early as 1809, marking the beginning of Methodist work there. From Fulton he traveled around the circuit, preaching in Oswego, Mexico, Sandy Creek and Sacket's Harbor. Among other pioneer preachers who visited Fulton were Enoch Barnes, James Hazen and Nathan Reeder. Rev. George White was another of the Methodist circuit preachers, later living in the village of Orwell.

In 1823 the "disiplinary allowance" or salary was $100 for a young man and $200 for a married man, serving Methodist congregations in Oswego County.

There were funeral sermons preached in the town of Sandy Creek in 1806 for the wife of a Mr. Knickerbocker, who settled about three miles northeast of Lacona; in 1807 over the remains of Mrs. Elias Howe and in 1808 at the burial of a Mr. Brown; but there are no records of who conducted the services. Soon after this, Elder Bishop, a Methodist and Elder Osgood, Baptist, both intinerant preachers, visited settlements in Sandy Creek and preached at various times. Baptism of children meant much to the early citizens and the story is told that an intinerant preacher

coming to Oswego on an unexpected mission was urged to stay and perform the rite by a settler. He told the preacher that besides his children he could find several others thus giving him the opportunity "of doing a dammed good job." Two intinerant preachers found their way to the settlement at Union Villiage (now Fruit Valley) and sermons were preached there between 1811 and 1813. One of these visiting preachers was Rev. Roswell Beckwith, a Baptist, the other a Methodist named Gillett.

First County Church at Redfield

While the early preachers were mostly traveling evangelists or circuit riders, some came into the county as permanent settlers. Col. Amos Johnson and his brother, Rev. Joshua, settled at Redfield Square either in 1800 or 1801. The Colonel opened the second tavern in the town, while his ministerial brother, of the Congregational faith, organized the first church in Oswego County in 1802 with fourteen members. This was five years before the Colosse church was established and fourteen years before the formation of a church in the village of Oswego.

Rev. Johnson also taught the first school in Redfield, of which we have any record. He served the Redfield church twelve to fifteen years, preaching in the school house or home; for it was not until 1829 that a small church was built at the Square when the Rev. William Stone was the minister.

Second Church Formed in 1807

In 1803 Elder Gamaliel Barnes built the first log house, the first barn and later the first frame house in the town of Parish. Barnes was 46 years old at the time, a Baptist preacher, and had served in the Revolutionary war. With his son-in-law, Stephen D. Morse, he came into Oswego County from Otsego, by way of Camden and Amboy. Sunday June 15th, 1806 he preached at the home of Amos Williams, after which a meeting was held resulting in the formation of the Baptist church of Mexico, the first church in the town of Mexico, the first Baptist church in the county and the second of any denomination, the date of the final church authorization being October 15th, 1807. Some twenty-five years later the name was changed to Colosse Baptist Church.

Elder Asaph Graves, a Vermonter by birth and an ordained preacher of the Baptist Church came into Palermo in 1813, settling about a mile east of Palermo Center. He was one of the first eight members of the First Baptist Church of Palermo, organized in 1817.

Christopher Martin settled in what is now the village of Cleveland in February 1821. He was a Vermonter and had lived in Williamstown, Mass., where he united with the Methodist Episcopal church. Soon after his arrival in Cleveland he started a Methodist class, the first regular service being held in the summer of 1822 at his house with Rev. Keys, a Methodist preacher, officiating. In 1833 Mr. Martin was "licensed to exhort," and in 1839 to preach. He also taught the first school in the eastern end of the county in an old log dwelling on the Vanderkamp farm.

Pulaski Church Organized in 1811

Rev. Oliver Leavitt, the first pastor of the Congregational Church of Pulaski, accompanied a colony which came from Pawlett, Vt. The church was organized January 22nd, 1811 at the home of Erastus Kellog, but the society was started in a preliminary association of nine persons in Pawlett, who met for that purpose before their departure for Oswego County. Rev. Leavitt was installed as pastor December 24th, 1811 remaining until August 27th, 1818. We find that he was zealous in his travels, for he

preached at various times at New Haven, Fulton, Mexico, Central Square and Sandy Creek. In 1819 he became pastor of the Congregational church at Volney, remaining their until 1827. While he was pastor there, a branch of the Volney church was instituted at Jenning's Corners (Palermo Center) and here also Oliver Leavitt ministered.

A Church Founding Pair

Rev. John Dunlap and Rev. David R. Dixon, Congregationalists, were the first preachers at Volney. The church there, which was the fifth church organized in the county, was organized in June 1812. Dunlap and Dixon were present and instrumental in the formation of the Congregational Church at New Haven, June 30th, 1817.

Rev. Dixon, whose name is mentioned in connection with the Congregational church at Mexico, visited Hannibal on December 4th, 1816 for the purpose of forming a Presbyterian Church there. With him was the Rev. Henry Smith, sent out by the Oneida Female Missionary Society, who preached from the text, Matthew, Chapter 25, 1 to 12th verses. John Dunlap also conducted the meeting held June 13th, 1818 at the home of the widow Perry, Fulton, at which time the First Presbyterian Church was formed. Within a month of this time twelve children were baptized. He also, with Oliver Leavitt, preached at Sandy Creek on different occasions from 1817 to 1822

Oswego's "Old First" Church

Rev. David R. Dixon, who has been mentioned in connection with both Congregational and Presbyterian churches, assisted Rev. John Davenport, of Onondaga, in the organization of the First Presbyterian Church in Oswego, November 21st, 1816. This was the first church to be formed in the village of Oswego, the meeting being held in the first school house, which stood at the northeast corner of West Seneca and Third Streets. There the congregation worshipped until 1825, when a church building was erected near the center of Franklin Square, (West Park) being a wooden structure 54 x 80 feet and costing $6,000.

In 1808 Rev. Simeon Waterman and Rev. Cleveland were sent into Oswego County by the Connecticut Missionary Society. As a result the First Presbyterian Church of Mexico was instituted in the barn of Shubel Alfred August 20th, 1810, the membership being composed entirely of women. In May 1811, the First Congregational Society of Mexico was organized, but in 1818 the name Congregational was replaced by Presbyterian. The present Presbyterian church of Mexico, an offshoot of the first church, was organized May 5th, 1829, instituted February 24th, 1830, when Rev. Oliver Leavitt, with Revs. Oliver Ayer and Ralph Robinson, was present and officiated. Rev. Oliver Ayer in 1829 was elected president of the Oswego county auxiliary of the American Bible Society, which was a successor to the Oswego County Bible Society, organized in Pulaski in 1826. In 1823 Fellowship Masonic Lodge No. 288, of Pulaski, voted to invite him to address the Lodge on St. John's Day, June 24th.

Churchill states that Rev. William Stone, later pastor at Redfield, organized a Congregational Church in Williamstown in 1805, which later took the Presbyterian form. He later writes that the Presbyterian church was organized, probably in 1817. The earlier date of 1805, which he uses, may be a mistake, as this would make the Williamstown church the second one organized in the county, preceding the Colosse date by a year, unless the Congregational organization had such a short life that it was not taken into account.

Founded Three County Churches

Rev. S. W. Leonard, born in 1800, native of Shrewsbury, Vt. and graduate of Williams College labored along the north shore of Oneida Lake. The Presbyterian Church at Constantia was organized in 1851 under his leadership, although a Congregational church existed there before 1835. A church at Cleveland was also started as a result of his efforts, but later ceased to exist. In 1849 a Presbyterian church at Whig Hall (Town of West Monroe) was started by Rev. Leonard. The building has been gone many years, but some of the timbers are still to be seen on a road from the north leading into the village of West Monroe. A woman living in the village recently told me that she had heard some mighty powerful preaching in the Whig Hill Church when she was a girl. At the time of his death in 1886, Rev. Leonard was the oldest Mason in Oswego County.

In Hastings a Presbyterian Church was started prior to 1835, but twenty-one years later because of decrease in membership closed its doors, yet in 1888 the Presbyterians again formed a church there.

Grace Presbyterian Church in Oswego was organized in 1872 with Rev. Henry H. Stebbins as pastor. The union of this church in 1936 with the First Presbyterian Church is but a recent development in local church history.

Although a number of rural Presbyterian churches were formed throughout the county, for various reasons, many of them had a short life and soon passed out of the picture.

The work of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches in the early days was closely related. In fact, the two churches had been drawn together because of conditions in England from 1662 on, the history of the Congregational church being bound up with the development of the Protestant Reformation in England. The period from 1800 to 1850 was marked by close union in missionary expansion with the Presbyterians. In doctrine the two bodies were in practical agreement and this is shown by the adoption of "a Plan of Union" in 1801 to govern the missionary work of the two churches. When the westward emigration from New England demanded some organized agency to follow the settlers, the New England Congregationalists felt that the more closely organized Presbyterian system fitted the needs of isolated settlements best. Apparently they were not guided by any strong feeling of denominationalism, because in the end the results accrued far more to the Presbyterians than to their own church.

Denominational Co-operation

In Oswego County both Congregational and Presbyterian churches were organized by Congregational ministers. Also there are a number of instances of church organizations changing from one form to the other. An example is the church at Hannibal. Organized as Presbyterian, the church voted in January 1817, "that this church make application to unite with the Presbytery of Onondaga", but on May 10th,, 1820, the church voted, "to apply to Presbytery to have leave to adopt the Congretional mode of church government" and again in January 1822, "voted that Cephas S. Kent attend the next session of Presbytery and apply for leave to govern the church in the Congregational form". Evidently permission was grated for the history of the church states: "February 20th, 1822, voted that having obtained leave of Presbytery to administer discipline according to the form of Congregational churches—Job C. Conger be deacon". In spite of this action the church still remained in connection with Presbytery, sent delegates to its meetings, and submitted minutes for its approval, ap-

parently in accordance with the Plan of Union referred to previously.

The First Congregational Society of Phoenix was incorporated in April 1837 and constituted by Rev. John Eastman with twenty members, but in 1842 a connection was effected with the Presbytery of Oswego under the "plan of union", the church, however, retaining the Congregational form of government. They continued to operate under this plan until January 3rd, 1863, when connection with the Presbytery was dissolved and in September of the same year united with the Oswego Congregational Association.

To a certain extent the Congregational Church of Oswego might be used as another example of the change in form from one to the other as between the Congregational and the Presbyterian form. Under the guidance of Rev. Luther Myrick the First Congregational Church of Oswego came into being April 1, 1833, following a meeting held in the old court house. The financial panic of 1836-37 crippled its finances, and in 1838 it was dissolved. But in January of the year previous, the Second Presbyterian Church of Oswego had been formed and in 1842 a church building was dedicated. Yet in 1856 this society disbanded, and the present Congregational Church of Oswego, meeting in the Second Presbyterian building on February 20, 1857, organized.

Today with our churches working harmoniously together and uniting in many projects, it is perhaps hard for us to realize the differences, friction and controversy that existed in the early days between the Methodists and Calvinistic churches. Catherine Hawley, in her history, written in 1852, states that Rev. Mr. Davenport, Presbyterian missionary to the village of Oswego, coming into her home saw a copy of the Methodist Discipline on the table. Laying his hands on the book, he opened it and cried, "That book rips up the foundation of Christianity. Do you believe that book?" "I verily believe its every doctrine," she replied. The argument that followed grew so warm that he left never to be her guest again.

Men and women took their religion seriously and many bitter arguments over Calvinism resulted, sometimes disrupting the peace of an entire village. An example, Rev. Sheldon, father of Dr. Edward S. Sheldon founder of the Oswego Normal School, told his son, "I do not expect to see the Wesleys in heaven."

Methodists Found Fifty Churches

No other church has been so active in forming new churches in Oswego County as the Methodist Episcopal. Following the visit of the first circuit rider to the County nearly fifty churches of the denomination have been established, several of which have already been mentioned. Methodist work started in Pulaski in 1811. James Trumbull states that when he came into Pulaski in 1811 the Methodists held services in the house of John Ingersoll and in Pliny Jones' Bar Room, which was located a mile south of the village.

The church at Amboy Center was started prior to 1834, the building being erected in that year. Methodist services were held at Mallory in 1833, Central Square 1830, Parish 1815, Gilbert's Mills 1826. At Denton Corners (Palermo) the Methodist church was organized as the Anti-Slavery Methodist Episcopal Church. The church at Minetto dates back to November 15th, 1848.

Trinity Church, Oswego, was formed in 1848 by a group who left Oswego First Church. A second church in Fulton was formed in 1852, when a small group left the First Church there but in 1857 the two reunited. State Street Church is a later development. Methodist work at North Volney and Hubbard's Corners

began in 1820, or shortly before, when meetings were held in the house of "Father Arnolds", also at Redfield in the same year.

Class Meeting System

The "Class meeting" system was a strong factor in pioneer Methodist work. Many classes were formed in various sections of the county as a result of the visit of a preacher. The class meeting was the only religious service for weeks at a time, as the circuit rider visited outlying settlements only occasionally. As the population grew "the class" developed into a church, so that many actual Methodist dates, preceded the date of the formation of a church by several years.

The last session of the Oneida Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church was held in Oswego in 1835. The next year the Black River Conference, predecessor of the present Northern New York Conference, was organized in Watertown August 1st to 8th. In 1838, the first session of the new Conference was held at First Church, Fulton, with Bishop Morris presiding .

In a paper of this kind, necessarily limited, it is not possible to go into detail concerning the history of any individual church, nor to record when every church started in the county. The Baptists were very active in every section of the county, forming churches in Sandy Creek in 1820, Fulton 1817, South Richland 1817, Palermo 1817, Hannibal 1817, Hastings 1826, Mexico 1832, New Haven 1820, and Port Ontario 1850. Rev. Nathaniel Gitteau, "a very acceptable preacher," formed the Baptists of Pulaski into a class in 1828 and presided as a temporary minister for a few years. Prior to the formation of this church, Rev. Gitteau was responsible for calling together in 1828 probably the first conference of Oswego County churches, when a Baptist Conference was held in Pulaski, attended by delegates from Baptist Churches or groups at Richland, New Haven, Sandy Creek and Ellisburgh.

Oswego Baptist Churches

The First Baptist Church of Oswego was organized with 11 members March 13, 1828, meetings being held for a time in a school house. In 1831 a church was built in the East Park. In the old City Hall on Water Street on May 3, 1852 the West Baptist church of Oswego was formed by members of First Church who resided on the West side of the river. The Baptist Church at Southwest Oswego has served the community slightly over one hundred years; for it was in 1839 that the church was organized with Rev. Edward Lawton as the first pastor.

Questions of church policy, particularly Communion, led to the establishment of the Free Will or Free Baptist Church in New Hampshire in 1779-1780, based on a belief in open communion. A "Free" church was organized at North Scriba January 7, 1828 as "Free Communion", dissolved December 13, 1831 and later organized as the Free Baptist Church. Other Free-Will Baptists churches were organized at Amboy in 1824, under the efforts of Rev. Truman Gillett, Carley's Mills 1832, Parish 1858 and Phoenix 1846. According to Dr. E. D. Kohlstedt, the Free Baptist Church united with the Northern Baptist Church in 1911.

Christ Church, Oswego, Founded In 1822

The first Episcopal work in the county was begun by Rev. Amos Pardee, a missionary, in 1822, when Christ Church was organized in Oswego February 26. Rev. Pardee left about a year later and services were held by lay readers until 1827 when Rev. John McCarty was appointed missionary for this county and part of Onondaga. The corner stone of a church building was laid by Rev. McCarty May 9th 1828 at the southeast corner of what is now Frank-

lin Square. The building was consecrated January 25th, 1829 by Bishop Hobart, Rev. Mr. McCarty remaining as rector for nineteen years.

It may seem strange, in view of Scriba's pioneering in many lines at Constantia before 1800 and his hopes of developing a large and prosperous community, that he did not foster a church there sooner. However, it was not until the late 1820's that Frederick W. Scriba became instrumental in the formation of Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church at Constantia. In 1831 a church building was erected on a site comprising twenty-four acres of land donated by Mr. Scriba, together with the building. The building was consecrated September 4, 1833 by Bishop Onderonk. Mr. Scriba and Nicholas I. Roosevelt were the first wardens, while George Scriba and George Scriba, Jr., were two of the vestrymen. This is one of the few churches in Oswego county having a cemetery in connection therewith, another one being the French Catholic Church at Colosse.

June 22, 1835, the Rev. John McCarty, of Oswego, organized the Zion Protestant Episcopal Church at Fulton. The first religious organization in the town of Granby was St. Luke's Episcopal mission formed as early as 1838 under the direction of Rev. G. B. Engle. Sometime later this mission was united with Zion Church in Fulton, and in 1861 the building, erected in 1842, was sold to the Methodists.

Pulaski and Mexico Episcopal Churches

At the Court House in Pulaski St. James Protestant Episcopal Church was organized August 10, 1846. Rt. Rev. William Heathcote DeLancey, Bishop of Western New York, consecrated the church edifice February 27, 1850. The framed Declaration of Consecration, signed by Bishop DeLancey, yet hangs in the church. Two years later Grace Episcopal Church of Mexico was formed in the town hall, December 4, 1848, but the corner stone of the church building was not laid until June 22, 1871 by Bishop Hutington.

Episcopal members of Christ Church, Oswego, living on the east side of the river, desirous of having their own place of worship, organized the Church of the Evangelists July 28, 1850. The corner stone of the present church at East Second and Oneida streets was laid July 1, 1851, although the consecration service was not held until July 17, 1865, when the service was conducted by Bishop A. Cleveland Coxe.

Other Episcopal work in the county included the establishment of Emanuel Church at Phoenix, April 11th, 1871, with Rev. Almon Gregory as first rector. This church had a short existence. Rev. James Stoddard was the first rector of St. James Protestant Episcopal Church of Cleveland, organized July 22, 1867. Through the very persistent efforts of Mary E. Henderson, Immanuel Mission at Sand Bank, now Altmar, was instituted in 1876.

St. Paul's County's First Catholic Church

About 1830 there were only seventeen Roman Catholics in the village of Oswego, but this small group of loyal Catholics, desirous of having Roman Catholic services communicated with Rev. O'Donoahoe, who at that time had charge of Catholic work in Central New York. At their request he began visiting Oswego every three months to hold divine services. This missionary work of Father O'Donoahoe resulted in the formation of St. Paul's Church in Oswego, which was the first Roman Catholic Church in the county. The first services were held in a private house on the west side of the river. Shortly after this a small frame building, twenty by twenty-four feet, one story high, was erected on a lot at East Fifth and Mohawk streets,

purchased from Gerrit Smith. The congregation soon outgrew this small building and a stone building fifty-five by one hundred feet was completed in 1844. In 1871 the old church was demolished and the present St. Paul's church erected in its place, under the direction of the Very Rev. Dean Barry, who came to St. Paul's in 1869.

From this small start the Roman Catholic Church in Oswego county has steadily grown in membership and influence. About 1840, in the vicinity of Colosse, quite a French settlement sprang up. Most of the settlers were from the eastern part of France and a few were natives of Alsace-Lorraine. They arrived in poor circumstances, but by thrift and perserverance, became prosperous. One of their first efforts was the formation of a Roman Catholic Church, the building still standing on French Street, about two miles southwest of Colosse and surrounded by an interesting old cemetery. Although the church in Mexico now meets the needs of the Roman Catholics in the vicinity, services are still held in the old Colosse church during the summer and fall months.

About this same time many French-Canadians had settled in Oswego and about 1848, Rev. F. F. Foltier, a Frenchman by birth, was sent to the village to minister to their religious needs. The present Oswego parish of St. Mary's is the result of Father Foltier's efforts. The first church building was consecrated by Cardinal McCloskey in 1850.

Walked From Fulton For Confirmation

In the biographical sketch of the life of the late Cornelius S. Murphy, it is recorded that he was born in Oswego, but later moved to Fulton. At that time there was no Catholic Church in Fulton, but occasional services were held in private homes. When Bishop McCloskey of Albany came to Oswego to hold confirmation services, Murphy with forty-two other Fulton Catholics walked the entire distance to Oswego to be confirmed in St. Paul's Church.

Fulton Catholics Organized In 1850

In 1850, Father Michael Kelly, pastor of St. Paul's, Oswego, began regular services in Fulton and the Church of the Immaculate Conception was instituted, but it was not until 1858 that a house of worship was consecrated by Bishop McCloskey, later to become a Cardinal. Rev. James Smith was the first regularly appointed priest.

The Piguet family settled in the town of Hastings in 1828, coming directly from France. Other settlers were French Canadians and that locality came to be known as "Little France." At the request of these early pious settlers, Father Yates came from Syracuse and held the first mass in Piguet's barn. Services were held from that time on intermittently and later a church was built.

The Catholics of Cleveland were served as an out-mission from Rome for several years, but in October 1875 Bishop McNierney confirmed 170 persons and consecrated the cemetery. The first church was built under the pastorate of Rev. Patrick J. Birmingham.

Three Other Oswego Parishes

Prior to 1855 many German Roman Catholics had come into Oswego. A mission for these people was held at St. Mary's in 1856, conducted by the Redemptorist Father, Joseph Wissel. Franciscan Fathers from Syracuse held services for the German Catholics at St. Mary's in 1859, and September 16, 1860 the St. Boniface Society was organized for the purpose of raising funds for the erection of a church building. The perseverance, faith and sacrifice of this group of German Catholics was realized when St. Peter's church was dedicated December 6, 1863.

In 1869 Bishop Conroy sent Rev.

J. F. Lowrey to form a parish in the southwest part of Oswego to meet the needs of a rapidly growing Catholic population. The Bishop saw his expectations realized when he came to Oswego July 14, 1872 and dedicated the Church of St. John the Evangelist.

St. Louis French Catholic Church was organized as a separate parish in December 1870, under the direction of Rev. John F. X. Pelletier of Quebec. Roman Catholic missions or churches at Williamstown, Altmar, Redfield, Minetto, Pheonix, Pulaski and other parishes of Fulton and Oswego came as later developments.

Universalists At Fulton

In 1825 Rev. S. R. Smith, a Universalist minister, came from Clinton, N. Y. under the auspices of Alfred Sabin and preached in the school house in Fulton. In 1831 Rev. Matthew Bullard conducted similar services and in 1832 a church was organized. The Rev. O. Whiston was installed as the first pastor of a Universalist church in the village of Mexico at the school house April 12, 1832, the Society having twenty-four members. This origional organization became extinct in 1849, but was later revived. A Universalist Chuch existed in Oswego prior to 1857, for in that year the society purchased the building from Christ Episcopal church in Franklin Square. Later this organization ceased to exist, but a Universalist church was later organized in Oswego, known as the Church of Our Father, December 28th, 1882. This church, also passed out of existence, the building built by them now being occupied by St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church. The first Universalist Society of Schroeppel, at Pennellville, was not organized until 1870, but the only church of that denomination in Oswego still functioning is the church at Central Square.

Other Methodist Sects

Other branches of Methodism were also active in the county. The Wesleyan Methodistian offshoot from the Methodist Episcopal Church formed in Utica in 1843 on the anti-slavery and non-episcopal basis, perfected organizations in Boylston in 1845, only two years after formation of the mother church, and later in Central Square, Prattham, Texas, Fulton, Sandy Creek and Pine Meadows. However, today only the churches at Boylston, Sandy Creek ai Pine Meadows are still in existence.

A Free Methodist church was organized in Fulton in 1869, while the church in Oswego of that denomination, formed February 27, 1877, had a short life.

The Methodist Protestant church grew out of a desire on the part of many Methodist for lay representation in the governing bodies of the church. Although this principal of lay representation was first promoted in 1821, the new church did not become organized until November 2, 1830 in Baltimore. This church, now merged with two other Methodist bodies in the Methodist church, had classes or churches at Sand Bank, Dugway, North Boylston, Bardeen's Corners, North Scriba, Bundy's Crossing, Oswego Town and Fulton.

Churchill states that the Reformed Methodists instituted a class and held services at Bowen's Corners many years ago. There seems to be no record to substantiate this statement. In 1871, Rev. John Newcomb, a Methodist Protestant preacher, held services in the school house at Bowen's Corners and apparently a class had already been formed. In those days Bowen's Corners was one of seven appointments (all school houses), functioning under the name of "Hannibal circuit". The strongest point seems to have been North Hannibal. The present church at Bowen's Corners was not built until 1884.

Early Lutheran Activity

In the town of Mexico, two

miles south of Colosse, a Protestant Lutheran Church was organized in 1841 and a building dedicated in 1842 by Rev. N. Van Alstyne. There were apparently a group of Lutheran adherents in this vicinity, for supporters of the Lutheran faith united with Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists to form a Congregational Church at Parish in 1841. Rev. S. W. Champlin, Lutheran, was the first pastor and the church was dedicated by Rev. Ralph Robinson, Congregationalist, and Rev. Van Alstyne, Lutheran.

St. Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran church of Oswego had its origion in 1857, following the preaching efforts of Revs. Stahlschmidt and Fisher. First services were held in a hall over Hart's Dry Goods store, with Rev. Jacob Post, the first pastor. In 1859 a frame church building was erected at the corner of East Sixth and Lawrence Streets. Twenty-eight years after the formation of St. Paul's came the formation of St. Matthew's English Lutheran church on the West Side of Oswego.

Quakers At Bernhard's Bay

Elder John Bedell and his wife, who was also a minister, were influential in the founding of a Society of Friends at Bernhard's Bay in 1846, with twelve members. Johnson in 1877 records that the church had four members. The church ceased to exist some time later.

There have been Seventh Day Adventists in the county from time-to-time, having churches and conducting meetings at Fulton, West Monroe, Williamstown, Cleveland, Oswego, Roosevelt Corners and other communities.

In 1847 an African Methodist Episcopal Church was formed in Oswego with thiry-four members. It has long since passed and no other colored congregation has succeeded it at any point in the county.

The Church of Christ, Disciples, under the preaching of Elder John Encell was organized May 1st, 1874 in Richland. Missionary work of this organization resulted in a church at Vorea, while services are now held also at Gilbert's Mills, in a former Free Baptist church, by a preacher of the Disciples denomination.

From the time of the organization of the first church in Redfield in 1802, the county steadily grew until the population in 1840 was 43,619. With the growth of population came an increase in commerce and business, marked particularly by a general prosperity from 1830 to 1837. During these forty years the religious life of the county kept pace with the general advancement in material things, for there were about sixty churches organized during this period and many church buildings erected, while many more were built during the next forty years. Although today we may doubt the wisdom of our forefathers in organizing and building what seem to have been rival churches in small communities resulting in an overchurched condition, we must pay tribute to their faith, perseverance and sacrifice.

Early Interiors Forbidding

The early church buildings were usually rude structures, rectangular in shape, with a belfry or tower, wherever the congregation could afford it. The interiors were bare and unadorned. At first there were benches, but gradually pews were introduced. These old meeting houses were often times the center of the community life, secular as well as religious. At first there were no stoves, but set about the building were huge iron kettles. The good people of the neighborhood brought in coals from their own fire places to fill the kettles before service and thus provided some degree of warmth.

As the congregations grew in numbers and prosperity many of the original buildings were replaced with more substantial edifices,

while fire in many instances caused destruction, but the fortitude and generosity of the membership found means of building anew. Although some of the early organizations passed out of existence for various reasons and others were merged with stronger societies, most of the churches organized in the first forty years are still in existence and making their contributions to the religious life of Oswego County Communities, many of the churches having celebrated their first century anniversaries with appropriate ceremonies.

Confined mostly to the first 60 or 70 years of church development in Oswego County this paper has been limited in scope. A more complete paper would give information and detail which has necessarily not been recorded here. While many of the pioneer workers in the religious field have been mentioned, there are scores of others who contributed much to church and community who have been left out. Stirring revivals, preaching missions, evangelistic services, church conferences, camp meetings and other incidents have made history and left their marks. Perhaps some future paper should treat of further church development and deal with leaders who stand out in the religious records of the county. While this paper has dealt primarily with the church organization itself, a future paper might well deal with the church buildings, treating some of the outstanding churches, both from the historical and descriptive view points.

[References: Crisfield Johnson, "History of Oswego County, N. Y." Churchill, "Landmarks of Oswego County", Landon, "History of the North Country", Mrs. Mattie E. Baker, "History of Mexico Methodism", E. W. Rice, "The Church and Society", a history of the Presbyterian Church at Hannibal, Mrs. Nellie Crouch, "A History of the First Baptist Church of Oswego, N. Y.", Rev. T. Trelease Rowe, "Sketch of First Methodist Episcopal Church, Oswego, N. Y." and "History of Black River Conference" by George F. Shepherd.]

Old Homes of Oswego

(Paper Presented Before Oswego Historical Society March 12, 1940
By Mrs. Karl Kellogg)

Before I read this paper I wish to express my thanks to the many people who have supplied me with dates, stories and facts; also their encouragement.

To Mr. Faust for the help of his "Story of Oswego" and perhaps most of all for his confidence in my ability to interest you. This is not the erudite paper this society is in the habit of hearing, but just the "jottingdown" and remembrances of people who made the Oswego Homes.

When you recall the old lines, "How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood" and realize that so many of our old homes have been torn down—for taxes, for gas stations—or perhaps cut up into apartments—and the old families long since, gone, to live elsewhere, you may feel as I do, and want to sit down at the piano and play "Home Sweet Home".

Was it not Gest who wrote, "It takes a heap of livin' to make a home"—so my talk will be chiefly human interest stories.

As I have received conflicting dates and data of all kinds, I would appreciate very much any corrections.

James Lyon

Except for receiving "letters patent" from the Government I know very little about the actual house of my Great Grandfather James Lyon—but will quote from Mr. F. O. Clarke's address before the D. A. R. in 1908:

"Mr. James Lyon came to Oswego in 1814 then 27 years old and soon owned and operated the "carry" or portage necessary for freight at Oswego Falls, until the Oswego Canal was completed. He then came to Oswego where he lived until his death in 1861. In 1811, he married Ann Forman, daughter of Judge Joshua Forman, the most powerful of the pioneers of Onondaga County and the acknowledged founder of the City of Syracuse."

The old Lyon house was at East Second and Schuyler streets and I found the paper deeding the house to his grandson, my father, on his first birthday, August 2, 1842. My Great Grandmother Ann Forman was known as "the belle of Onondaga Valley." Judging from the facts of being the mother of eight children—apparently doing a lot of sewing—(I have two wonderful quilts she made) and an apparently busy housekeeper, I can understand the old story handed down in our family "that when things got thick", she would just go to bed, and tell her daughters to carry on."—These old pioneers of Oswego were staunch supporters of the Methodist church from 1848 and though the old home is long since gone, a street has been named for them on the East side.

Speaking of "homes", on the site of this deed, later, were built two jails—one the Oswego County Jail, a picture of which was among the Palladium-Times reproductions of Oswego's old time places. I believe this was the building where was installed the rotary cell block which proved a failure as it was harder at times to reach the prisoners than it was for them to escape. Needless to say it was abandoned. I told this story to an out-of-town person and was accused of making it up—so I said, "Just refer to the Palladium's 'Looking Backward'. If you see it in the Pall, it's so".

John E. Lyon

In the next Lyon generation, my grandfather, John E. Lyon,

bought the "old stone house" as we always called it, on the S. W. corner of West Fifth and Seneca streets. It was built by Richard De Zang in 1834—the same man who was in charge of the construction of the Varick Canal. I wish I knew more about the Fitzhughs who lived at this house before the Lyons. But there are two things I do know—a window pane is still in a dining room window on which are scratched the names of some of the Fitzhugh 'boys'. Also the literally thousands of imported English yellow primroses that are blossoming today in many Oswego gardens, were brought here in later years by the Fitzhughs from their home in Canada.

This Lyon home certainly stood for gracious hospitality. Mr. F. O. Clarke used to tell that after the Civil War was over when celebrations of fire works, parades, bands, etc., were held in the West Park, the friends attending were always invited to the Lyon's open house—bountiful repasts and wines, served in the old basement dining room. Their house guests included names which will live: Frederick Douglas, former slave, and noted Negro orator and editor; Bishops from fine old Bishop Huntington, down; George Bird Grinnel, editor of "Forest and Stream" recipient of the medal given by President Coolidge for his outstanding work for the National Parks and work among the Indians whose language he spoke. (The Blackfoot tribe, by the way, made him one of their chiefs.) Being a great friend of Theodore Roosevelt, they were co-editors of "American Big Game Hunters"; also a frequent guest was Maurice Kingsley, son of Canon Charles Kingsley of England.

I remember one night at dinner sitting next to Chester Lord, then member of the New York State Board of Regents, and in town for a Normal school meeting of some kind. A wire came for him from the committee of the New York University Club of which Mr. Lord was president, asking if, at the entertainment to be given for Mary Garden after her recent debut, should they greet her with bag pipes, as she was of Scottish descent? He turned to me and said "You shall decide". Little did Mary Garden know I was responsible for her bag pipe welcome.

Lord

I spoke of Chester Lord particularly as I had hoped to find out where he lived while in Oswego when he was a reporter on the Oswego Daily Times and later with the Oswego Palladium in his early newspaper career. Later he was editor of the "New York Sun" for many years. He, by the way Mr. Clark Morrison tells me, was no relative of John H. Lord who owned and published the Weekly Oswego Palladium until 1830. I quote from Mr. F. O. Clarke's records:

"Mr. John H. Lord married Catherine Connor, daughter of Captain Edward Connor, who accompanied Colonel Willett on his attempt to re-capture Oswego near the close of the Revolutionary War."

John H. Lord, a prominent early settler, built the house at the S. W. corner of West Fifth and Van Buren streets. This home was later lived in by the George Burts, the McMurrichs, the Quirks and the Churchills, and is now the home of Dr. L. B. Kinney of the Normal school faculty and Mrs. Kinney.

James Lyon—Kellogg

This block on West Fifth street between Van Buren and Schuyler streets, was known as "the Parsonage Block," because Father McCarty, rector of Christ church until 1845, had built his house, the Rectory, at the corner of Fifth and Schuyler streets probably in the late '30s. My father, James Lyon, bought this house from Col. Robert Chaffee Morgan and my grandchildren are the fourth generation to enjoy it. From Mr. F. O. Clarke's 1908

records, I read, that later Col. Morgan's home was on West Second street near Seneca and was at that time still standing. He had married my great aunt, Mary Lyon, and their only son was killed in the Civil War.

Our original house was just the width of the front porches on Fifth street, and later the southern wing, and again later still, the second story above it, were added. The grounds used to be enclosed by a white picket fence and a hedge of hawthorne. Many years ago when this fence was removed, the Palladium published an article about the old stones having been taken over to East Bridge street where they were used for the foundation of a house then being built. I wish I had saved that clipping as this must have been one of the last of the original old fences.

When I was a little girl, an old lady living on the opposite corner, Mrs. Whitney, used to enchant me with a story about seeing bears come out of the woods, which covered what is now, our lawn.

W. J. Pardee—Adams

There are two old Pardee homes standing and lived in today—one at West Fourth and Seneca and now owned by Mrs. Mary Deane Adams. This house was built by my grandfather, William J. Pardee, and my mother was born there in 1840. Mr. Faust refers to it as one of the underground railroad houses and they say there is still evidence of a passage in the basement. This house was bought by the Olivers in 1853. Some years ago Miss Elvina Seeley told me that when she was attending the private school held in the Wells Pitkin house at West Fifth and Seneca streets, she remembered looking down the street and behind the picket fence around this old Pardee property, she could see my mother, then a little girl, playing with a fawn as her playmate. It always made me think of Sir John Tenniel's illustration in "Alice in the Looking Glass" of Alice and the fawn in the forest.

Myron Pardee—Williams

The other Pardee house at 8 Montcalm street was built by William J. Pardee's brother, Myron Pardee, and is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Daniel A. Williams. It has passed through many hands in between—among them the Bentons, the Jerymns, the R. A. Downeys, and was always the scene of a great deal of charming entertaining.

This lovely old stone house with its well-kept grounds and noted garden, is one of the loveliest spots here and contains one of Oswego's most beautiful staircases. But playing there as a girl with the Pardee grandchildren, my memories are, that the bannisters were perfect to slide down; that there always seemed to be unlimited hot ginger bread on hand; that there was a lovely big sunny porch on the South; and on the North side of the house the garden, enclosed by a high brick wall, had fine fruit trees to climb. And best of all, the summer house, called "Sunset Rest". That name telling the story of its being popular as a place to watch the glorious sunset over the lake. It is built at the N. E. corner of the garden up high, even with the wall, so that the stairs reaching this fascinating place could be a ladder leading to a hide out; a palace stairway or anything which suited our childish imaginations—truly a delightful place to play. But through the years many of us will remember this lovely old home called "Lakeside" alive with a big family, delightful entertaining, and unforgetable good times.

L. B. Crocker—Peebles

The early history of the Crocker house at the N. W. corner of West Fifth and Seneca Streets has been traced through the early deeds, the data of which, was kindly given to me by Mrs. Peebles—this being the home since 1920, of Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Peebles.

It seems Jonathan Walton bought the original lot for $390.00 in 1815 and on this lot built a small building. This was later pulled down, and the real house was built in 1831 by H. N. Walton for my Great Uncle, Lucius B. Crocker, a prominent citizen of Oswego. The house then was deeply shaded by trees, and the yard protected by a very ornamental iron fence, and the house itself almost on a level with the sidewalk. In the photograph recently reproduced by the Palladium-Times you saw at the corner the old gas lamp post which must have stood long after this first house was changed, as I remember, as a small girl seeing the little lamplighter with his ladder, lighting that old flickering gas flame.

From all accounts this Crocker house was the center of a great deal of entertaining. Miss Casey told me, that at one of the Crocker parties, her Aunt, then a young girl, needed a great deal of urging to go, but at the ball that night met her future husband—Dr. Coe, one of the first physicians of Oswego. This house was also where my Mother and Father were married. Mrs. Crocker being Mother's Aunt. Father had just returned from the Civil War where he served as Second and First Lieutenant, and Captain, and Aide-de-camp to General Moses P. Hatch. Another reason the Crocker house is of especial interest to me, is that my Father-in-law, John G. Kellogg, bought this property and remodelled the house in the late 60s. My husband lived there as a little boy. Later Mr. Kellogg, an old '49er, took his family back to California to live and minted gold for the government. In Philadelphia and New York and many pneumismatic collections can be seen these gold coins with "Kellogg and Co." across the figure of the head, where the word Liberty is now seen. So through the years, this property has passed through many hands: J. W. Walton, J. B. Crocker, J. G. Kellogg, W. D. Allen, John Eaton—besides having been rented many times, making this fine old house quite historically interesting.

Jacob I. Fort-Casey

I am thankful I had an interesting visit with Miss Katherine Casey a few weeks ago when she told me the following story. Much of it has been published since then in her obituaries but in a few instances differs slightly from her own narrative: Her Grandfather, Jacob I. Fort, built the stone house on the S. W. corner of West Cayuga and Third Streets in 1826. She let me take this sketch of the old Fort house to show you and I hope it may eventually become the property of this Society. She said her Mother, one of five daughters, and born in Albany in 1823 came to Oswego via the canal, and they were brought up in this old home. The marriage of her Mother and Father was performed by the Rev. John S. Davenport, then rector of Christ Church. This Mr. Davenport, she told me, lived in the house next door to the Forts, facing the West Park in Cayuga Street now the Scoville Funeral Home—but long known to many as the delightfully hospitable home of Dr. and Mrs. Carrington MacFarlane. This house by the way, was built in 1827 by Thaddeus Clarke, a vessel owner who was on the "Medora" when she foundered and all were lost.

Miss Casey's father, John M. Casey, built their home next door south of the Forts' home on Third Street. This is not a double house as stated in the Palladium-Times but two separate houses built exactly on the dividing line. It seems that there was a decided difference of opinion between the two architects employed and Miss Casey was very particular in stating Mr. Lippencott built her father's house, and a Mr. Harsha, the house on the south, and as

the architects would not divulge their plans to each other, bets must have been high over the outcome! I have been told a great deal of the so-called "ginger bread decoration" was later removed from the south house which was much more ornate than Mr. Casey's. This has been the home for over forty years of Miss Florence Thompson and more recently also that of her sister, Mrs. Percy Klock. While Mr. Casey was a lawyer, an organist at Christ Church for many years and Miss Casey's sister, May, was an artist, I cannot help feeling that Miss "Kittie" Casey, as we always called her, will be longer remembered, living almost her entire 94 years in a home which contained interesting old treasures, the first sofa brought to Oswego—a stool her Mother used, but the treasure of all, was this Church woman of the highest ideals; untiring, and unselfish in her life interest, her work in Christ Church.

Burt-Turner

One of the oldest and most interesting Oswego Homes and I mean home in every sense of the word, is now where Dr. and Mrs. R. C. Turner live at 250 West First Street. This house was built in the early 1800's on one of the original five Burt farms, extending from Oswego to Minetto. In Minetto a Burt house still stands, and I understand this one of the Burt brothers, added a furniture factory to his business as farmer and a great deal of very fine old furniture, made at this farm, was sold, not so very long ago. Dr. Turner bought his home from the Bundys. Mr. Philo Bundy, I find, served in 1847 as a Trustee, when Mr. Dewitt C. Littlejohn was President of Oswego village, and had married for his first wife Margaret, daughter of George Burt, builder of this home. This home still has the same old brick oven and fire place and crane in the basement, and the hand hewn sills. The big beams under the floors, until recently were covered with the crumbling old bark, since removed and the beams white washed for preservation. The square corner uprights in the living room were never even with the walls and still stand out, left just as they were originally. The old brass front door key measured 8 or 9 inches and was unfortunately carried to California by Miss Bundy, who writes it has been lost. Dr. Turner tells of his Father and Grandfather and other ship captains, all coming to the front upper room of this house for their clearance papers. The collector's office was kept in various places before Collector Robinson moved it into the Government Building in 1858.

Irwin

Just after the Civil War times, was built the house of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Irwin on the Southwest corner of East Utica and Sixth Streets. Unfortunately this house has recently been torn down but will long be remembered for housing the magnificent art and book collection for which Mr. Irwin was so well known as having diligently collected with rare skill. Mr. J. P. Morgan bought much of it, but a large part of the books, some 6000 volumes, are now in the house of Mr. Irwin's grand-daughter, Mrs. Edward Hilliard in Louisville, Kentucky. In one of my Mother's old receipt books, I found an elaborate menu of a dinner which my Mother and Father attended at the Irwin home. There were about 12 courses with accompanying wines, which attest to the magnificent entertainments which Mr. and Mrs. Irwin enjoyed giving for their friends, and the many noted out-of-town guests.

Old Ladies Home

And while we are on the East side of Oswego, I want to speak of our Old Ladies Home of which Mrs. Theodore Irwin was the first President of the Board of Directors. This Home was first started in one of the oldest houses in

Oswego. That house, still standing at 45 West Second Street and known as the Henry Eagle House, was built in 1817 and later used to house the first Oswego Hospital. The Old Ladies Home was moved to its present building in 1872, and continues to be most outstanding in congenial and happy home life.

G. B. Sloan

After speaking of the Irwins' house, it seems fitting to tell next of the Sloan home as the Honorable George B. Sloan was a business partner of Mr. Irwin's and one of our most outstanding citizens and a New York Senator. He was born at 17 East Fifth street in a house built in 1828 by his father, James Sloan. This house is still standing though somewhat changed, I understand. Mr. George B. Sloan after living opposite Grace church, brought up his family of four children in the big stone house at West Eighth and Van Buren—built by "Long John Mott" as he was called. This house is now empty and deserted, the fountain no more showing to advantage its lovely surrounding circle of iris. The big stable is empty of the many carriages and horses. I might add incidentally it also housed a good many years, George Sloan, Jr's and my husband's, two old-fashioned, great big-wheeled bicycles. But the pity of it all is that all Mr. Sloan's direct descendants are living elsewhere, so this home has not been known as the Sloan house in recent years. I have the most delightful memories of happy fourth of July parties at this lovely house and grounds, when whole families were invited. I have no recollection what the grown-ups did, but I do remember happy times there and safe and sane fourths of July.

Hughes-Tribe

I wonder how many of us remember a white picket fence around a small white frame house built at the back of the lot on the property now owned by Mr. Thompson Kingsford at West Fourth and Oneida streets? This home was reached by a long path leading from a gate in the Oneida street side, and will live in the minds of many as the home of Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, of the United States Supreme Court, then a little boy, while his father was minister at the West Baptist church where, I understand, he has made it possible for a window to be placed as a memorial to his father. Later a family by the name of Tribe lived in this house. Mr. Tribe came from England and was associated with the Kingsfords in the starch business. Among his children a daughter Margaret, still lives in London. She was for years a London guide; but now news comes from her, telling of being deep in war work, of course. A son, Dr. Paul Tribe, has had a most colorful life in Egypt, Australia and Europe.

Beattie-Piez

During the time of the Civil War, Mr. John Beattie, father of Mr. Robert Beattie, owned a farm on the East side and brought the lumber from this farm to build a home in West Seneca street, now the home of Dr. and Mrs. R. K. Piez. It seems this lovely old pine was seasoned here for five years, and in both house and barn, there are hand hewn beams. The original old house on this lot had been moved back to make room for the new home in front, and Mr. Beattie as a little boy, remembers the thrill of sitting on the door step while the house was being moved, and was so impressed with the marvel of it all.

The handsome old staircase railing was made from a wild cherry tree which was growing near the house. This home is beautifully situated, with fine views of the lake, and distant hills which make it most outstanding.

Mott

I feel as though I should group

what I call "Fifth Generation homes" which are today lived in by descendants of the same families, and still enjoyed and visited by the young people of the fifth generation.

At 64 West Fifth street is the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Mott which was built by Mr. Bonsteel in 1834. Squire Lewis brought it after the panic of 1837, and Mr. Thomas Mott bought it of him in 1859, and it has been lived in by the Motts ever since. Mr. Thomas Mott's interests in Oswego—first a grocery at West Seneca and First streets, and after a short time in New York, returning to help Oswego to prosperity through great shipping success, and later followed by his banking interests in 1864,made him one of our most outstanding men. As a small girl I remember seeing him play his piano-player which was such a joy to him after blindness had curtailed his activities. The garden north and west of this house used to extend to West Sixth street and on the lawn stood a charming summer house just as much fun to play in, as a place to sit and watch the fountain, which we, as neighbors, are appreciating and enjoying today as much as ever.

S. B. Johnson

The second in this group of "Fifth Generation Homes" is the S. B. Johnson home. Mr. Johnson came to Oswego in 1836 when he was first married. The family lived in the house now owned by Mrs. J. T. Dwyer at 242 West First street, next to Dr. Turner's old home. Some of the little Johnsons were born there. Later in 1848 Mr. Johnson built the big old stone home at 130 West Fifth street, N. W. corner of Bridge street, architectually very much like the Stephen H. Lathrop home, the present Amdursky home, which Mr. Johnson much admired The house is full of lovely old things, some of them bought by Mr. Johnson in his travels. Fortunately there are members of this family still living there to enjoy this home and, as I said before, there is a Fifth generation to also enjoy its charm.

Joel B. Penfield—Conway

Next door north is the home of Mrs. Daniel H. Conway, a house built by Mr. Joel B. Penfield, father of Dr. Lida S. Penfield of the State Normal faculty. This lovely old house with the big white pillars has a charming garden. You may remember the Palladium - Times photograph of this garden in which stood, among the flowers and box-bordered flower beds, the figure of a deer which now stands in front of the Elks' club, right near his old home.

Miss Millicent Penfield, also a daughter of Joel B. Penfield, tells me she spent some of her girlhood in a small white frame house which stood where Christ church chapel now stands. This house was moved to West Cayuga between Sixth and Seventh streets and was long the home of Miss Harriet Burt—but that house has since been torn down. Mrs. Conway's home has been made into apartments but the dignity and beauty of the exterior is not changed and looks just as it has for these many years.

Bennett—Bates

Another house in the "Fifth Generation" class, is one of the most delightfully hospitable homes in Oswego—that of Mrs. Norman L. Bates. The first house that stood on this site was a frame building erected by Morris Bennett (who had previously lived on a large farm just East of Oswego's present city line and now known as Paul Schneible's farm home.) This building was occupied by the members of the Richardson family while the present imposing stone mansion was being built for Jacob Richardson and his bride, Naomi Bennett. Their daughter, Harriet Richardson, married Byron H. Bates, who was the son of Simeon Bates and Polly Stone. (Simeon Bates and

his family lived in the building at 115 East Third street, now occupied by Dr. and Mrs. G. C. Elder.) The son and only child of this marriage was Norman L. Bates who married Florence Morley, who survives and occupies today the homestead where she entertains the eight grandchildren who now share in this lovely old home. The house is filled with valuable paintings and has a delightful atmosphere of a place really lived in and enjoyed.

To John M. Gill go my thanks for looking over old papers and finding both the names of Burckle and Turrill on the old deeds; and at one time "an out of town party" paid $.17 on an assessed value of $60.00. The deed for this property was in the name of Mrs. Naomi Richardson by 1860.

S. H. Lathrop-Amdursky

The Stephen H. Lathrop house of which I just spoke as largely the pattern on which Mr. S. B. Johnson built his home, is at 36 West Eighth street, and is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Amdursky. It is beautifully situated near the lake, with fine old trees making a perfect setting for it. The property originally covered the entire block, which must account for the remark that Miss Casey heard made by a Lathrop relative, a Mrs. Turrell, at the time the house was being built. "I can't understand why Stephen wants to build his home in that old swamp." So the western end of that lot must have been very low land. Until 1935 Mr. Lathrop's daughter, Miss Mary T. Lathrop, his only survivor, lived there alone, and when she went out, still trustingly hung her great big front door key behind the blind. She was organist at Christ church for many years and besides being a musician, was a fine French scholar, a great reader, and vitally interested in politics, being an exceptionally strong Republican. She was the last member of the Lathrop family to live in this beautiful old place. Two streets in Oswego are named for this family, Lathrop and Dorcas, the latter having been Mrs. Lathrop's Christian name.

O. J. Harmon

On the originally owned Gerrit Smith property, on East Oneida between Second and Third streets next to the Evangelist church, is the old Harmon home. You have already read the account of its being a station in the underground railroad, and the closet where the little darky boy was hidden is still there. The house was built in the '30's by a James Brown, who was lame, and built his entrance with only one step for his convenience. I have been told by Miss Post, that he, being a Scotchman, and his wife an Englishwoman, he planted three trees in that garden, an English larch, a Scotch pine and an Irish rowan or mountain ash. Mr. Brown sold this home in 1855 to Mr. O. J. Harmon, one of the outstanding citizens of Oswego's early days. Unfortunately the attractive white decorative railing around the roof, in later years, was removed, but one of those three trees, the mountain ash, still stood there until a short time ago when it unfortunately was cut down.

Perry-Ward

One of the most charming and beautifully situated homes was built by an old Oswego pioneer of the early 1800's, at the top of Perry Hill, and is now owned by my sister and brother-in-law, Col. and Mrs. P. R. Ward. This house was built about 1816, by Eleazor Perry, Jr. But I shall quote the account just as Mrs. R. H. Hobbie, Mrs. Perry's great granddaughter, wrote it for me:

"Eleazor Perry settled in Fruit Valley in 1805. He was the first supervisor of Oswego town. He had two sons, Montgomery and Eleazor, Jr. Eleazor, Sr. had built a home on the Rural Cemetery road opposite the little cobblestone school house. About 1813 Eleazor Jr. married Electa Rathbone and

built their home on top of the hill, probably about 1816 and named it "Rathbone House" after Electa Perry's home in Springfield, Otsego County. She was one of nine children and was very lonely in her wilderness home and the country seemed flat after the hills about Otsego Lake and it was her wish to build their home on top of this hill afterwards known as "Perry Hill." It was reached by means of a blazed trail from Oswego village. Eleazor, Jr. died in 1842 and Electa lived on in this house until her death, when a very old lady. Afterwards it was occupied by her daughter until the early 90s when it came into the possession of Daniel Perry who made many changes, among others, changing the front door from the north to the east side of the house. He named it Perry Inn and rumor has it that three Presidents have slept there. About 1865 the long wing to the west had been moved across to the west driveway and was remodeled into a house but this was eventually entirely removed."

As the house stands today, high up above the state road with the lovely garden and the fine views in all directions including a big expanse of the lake, it is certainly one of our beauty spots. One scene there two years ago I like to remember—Mrs. Ward and I were having tea on the lawn on the east side of the house and we saw a rare sight—about eight deer feeding not many yards south of the house. By the time Col. Ward was called to bring a Kodak, the little herd had gone. I will never forget those big antlers standing up high and then that sudden dash over the fence.

Hawkins—Downey

On this same blazed trail from Oswego towards the west, there is a house which dates from just after the War of 1812. Rufus Hawkins built his home on what we now call, "Fruit Valley road" and his son sold it to Mr. E. W. Mott. It is now, extensively rebuilt, the most charming home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Downey, so this home has only passed through the hands of three families—though over 125 years old. The property runs way back south over the hills and commands wonderful views in all directions.

Bunner-Emerick

Among the people we are proud to claim as Oswegonians are the Bunners. The family first lived at 26 West Cayuga street, southeast corner of West Second street—a house built by Capt. John Trowbridge in 1819 and is said to have the timbers fastened together by wooden pegs. In 1825, Rudolph Bunner who came to Oswego in 1819 and for whom by the way, Bunner street is named, has been supposed to have built the delightfully situated house at 15 Bronson street, then outside the village limits, and now the home of Mr. F. A. Emerick. Just recently a member of the Emerick family told me Miss Mary T. Lathrop always maintained that the house was built by an Englishman, who sold it to Rudolph C. Bunner. I cannot verify either statement except that the Bunners were of English ancestry. Rudolph F. Bunner, the third Rudolph in the Bunner family during its days in Oswego, in writing of the birthplace of his brother, Henry Cuyler Bunner, the editor and author, is quoted in Jensen's recent book as saying, "my grandmother's husband had built a stone mansion" which the grandmother later had to leave—because of financial reverses.

The beautifully kept grounds, view of the lake and spacious house all make it one of our show places. Mr. Henry Cuyler Bunner, son of Rudolph Bunner, and grandson of the Rudolph Bunner who established the family in Oswego in 1819, lived there. He was editor of "Puck" wrote with charm and wit—"Short Sixes"—"Love in Old Clothes," "Airs from Arcady," "The Runaway

Browns," and many other stories which will live. I understand his "Life and Letters" by Gerard E. Jensen and published by the Duke University Press, has just been acquired by the Society. His widow lives at New London, Conn. May I quote from a letter from Mrs. Roosevelt Beardslee, who has met Mrs. Bunner at Miami, Florida. The letter is dated November '38, after the hurricane and storm which struck New England that fall, in September:

"Mrs. H. C. Bunner, eighty odd, was in her summer home—a delightful, famous, old lighthouse, alone with a colored servant, and they stayed in the house until the chimney fell into it, then waded to a ridge, where her son, in a boat, rescued her. Nine refugees spent the night together in a friend's deserted house—found a little food in the ice box. Mrs. Bunner, for all her soaking and exertion and excitement seems none the worse! How's that for the good, tough, 'old time' kind!"

Herrick-Wheeler

Here is an interesting account Mrs. Homan Hallock gave me, in regard to an old landmark:

"Few Oswegonians of today would realize that the old deserted square frame house which stands high up in the South side of West Seneca street, between Sixth and Seventh, had ever been one of Oswego's beautiful homes. The house was surrounded by spacious grounds extending over the whole block, from East to West, and to St. Mary's church on the South, and surrounded by a stone wall and iron fence. The house was originally a large, square, one-story cottage, known first as "Yates Cottage," and later as "Summit Cottage.' It was occupied by Mr. Robert Gordon and his family, who removed there from New York. Mr. Gordon owned the largest dry goods store in Oswego and was the father of Mr. Donald Gordon, Misses Elizabeth and Margaret Gordon of Montcalm street. In 1856 Mr. William H. Herrick moved to Oswego from Albany and bought Summit Cottage. A second floor and attic and also several wings were added to the house, until it was large enough to accomodate the large Herrick family, of which Mrs. William D. Wheeler is the only surviving member. A few of the older residents remember the lawn parties, weddings and social gatherings in this beautiful old house. All the smaller houses standing now on that block on Seneca street and two, one each on Sixth and Seventh streets, were originally parts of the Old Herrick Home."

Straight—Mackin

Perhaps not many Oswegonians know that Willard Dickerman Straight was born in the house which is the present home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mackin, 33 West Sixth street? It is right next to our garden, so I remember Willard and my brother, Ned, toddling down our garden path together. Willard's father and mother were educators and teachers of note, in our Normal school here, and other schools. Later after Mr. Straight's death in California, Mrs. Straight took Willard and his little sister, Hazel, to Japan where Mrs. Straight taught, but failing in health she also later died in California, and the two small children came east alone, and made their home with Miss Laura Newkirk, my mother's cousin. She and Dr. Ranier, two old maids, adopted the children, and according to Herbert Croly's "Story of Willard Straight," had their hands full—not understanding Willard at all, but longing to be what he so sadly missed—his mother. Willard distinguished himself as illustrator, artist, and diplomat, as Consul General at Mukden, and lastly as a soldier and he died in France in 1918. Many know of his splendid bequest to Cornell which was so wonderfully carried out by his wife in "The Willard Straight Hall." Willard wanted the students to have a place which would give them, an atmosphere of home. But I think the finest

thing he left was his letter to his children, written in France in case he should not come back.

Bronson-Culkin

We read in Mr. F. O. Clarke's notes that in 1810 "no name was so well known between Albany and Detroit and on the upper St. Lawrence, as that of Alvin Bronson, who came here when he was 27 years old, and among other positions he held, became a leading figure in transportation." In the War of 1812 he was taken prisoner and carried off to Canada because as collector of the port he was custodian of military stores and he refused to tell where the ammunition was concealed that had been sent to Oswego. He held many positions, among them, that as the first president of the village in 1828. He was closely intimate with President Martin VanBuren who had large real estate holdings in Oswego. In that same year, 1828, in which Oswego became a village, he got the deed to a great deal of land, some of it extending to the river. On the southeast corner of West Fifth and Cayuga streets Mr. Bronson built a cottage which was later moved to West Eighth and Cayuga where it still stands. Then in the early '30s on that lot, he built his fine old stone house, the walls of which are as firm and true as ever. Mr. Bronson lived there until he died at the age of 98. Oswego's Ellen street was named for his daughter, Ellen, who married Hon. Leander Babcock. This house, has been the home of several families, Mrs. Isaacs, the Babcocks, the Pouchers, the Dudley Irwins and others, and is now the charming home of Congressman and Mrs. Francis D. Culkin.

Murray-Johnson

A curious slant in prophecy, brings to mind the fact that one of the Murrays, back in early days, sold his New York Murray Hill property thinking it would never amount to anything, and bought extensively in Oswego, where he thought there was a future. On the west river road, the lovely place now called "Brinnington," was his home and he called it "Greenvale*"

This Hamilton Murray held very important positions in Oswego and did much to promote Oswego interests.

Before this property passed to Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Johnson, it was at one time the house used as our first Country Club house, and the golf links were partly on this land. Later the Johnsons made it their summer home. Mr. Johnson was an Englishman, who came over to take an important position with the Minetto Shade Cloth Company and married Miss Helen E. Page, daughter of one of our prominent citizens, Mr. A. S. Page. It may or may not have been intentional that the garden is planned in the form of the Union Jack. A sun dial in the center, broad, grass paths, big rose arches, the continuous bloom of many flowers, and an unusually high and handsome hedge enclosing this beautiful spot, all make this garden one that is not surpassed in Northern New York.

Hugunin-Eggleston

Mr. Faust refers to a severe fire raging around a house at 33 East Fourth street when it was saved through the heroic efforts of the family who used wet blankets and rugs and brooms to beat out the hot cinders as they fell on the roof. Curiously enough, Miss Frances Eggleston told me her mother, then a little girl, was living there at that time, and had been sent to a friend's home temporarily. On her return she was quite overcome at the devastated surroundings as not one other house remained. Their house was hard to recognize in its lonliness. The house was built in 1827 by Peter D. Hugunin, head of one of the first families to settle in Oswego.

I have not been able to cover many homes. I would have liked to

have told you about the McWhorter's, the Goble's, the Luther Wright's, the Wells Pitkin's, the Wentworth's, the old Ludlow place now St. Francis Home, the Kingsford's, the Capt. Trowbridge house at W. Third and Schuyler streets; the Littlejohn's, built by Marshall Foward, a cousin of the Gordons; Dr. H. S. Albertson's home on West Fourth street built by Dr. Andrew Van Dyck, one of Oswego's earliest physicians. The Mollison home built and lived in by H. Wentworth who came to Oswego in 1806. The home of Dr. Lida S. Penfield where the Seeleys came in the early 1830s. The home now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Allison at 51 West Fifth street, built in the 50's by Captain Dobey, a grandfather of Miss Grace Allen—and where the Fred Lathrops, the Rev. H. H. Stebbins family, the English Maurice Kingsley all lived. Also a house where the City Hall now stands, was where Mrs. Perry, mother of Mrs. John Phelps, was born—part of this house was moved to West Fifth street nearly opposite Grace Church and is now the Otis home—the Ames, the Clarkes, the Allen home, known as "the Castle," and many other Oswego homes with interesting facts that I could name.

But the material on homes is so vast, it is impossible to include it in one paper—so I will call this Part I and hope some one else will "carry on" with Part II, of "the Old Homes of Oswego."

Oswego Harbor---Past and Present

(Paper Presented Before The Oswego Historical Society, April 11, 1940, by George H. Campbell, President of Oswego Harbor and Dock Commission.)

History, tradition and sentiment combine to form the background of Oswego Harbor, for, from the first time a white man visited its site, surrounded by primeval forest—its lake unnamed and unexplored—the river flowing in natural course to its mouth—it has been recognized as a strategic point for the interchange of commodities from the vast region served by the Great Lakes and the North Atlantic coast, accessible through the all-water route to the Hudson River.

Those advantages of Oswego, identical with those possessed by great ports of the world, have remained, down the years from that day when the first Indian canoe brought furs along the lakes route to be exchanged at Oswego for wares floated down the river in a trader's batteau. They exist in 1940, in just as emphatic prospect as they did more than two centuries ago, and will continue for years to come; responding to the ebb and flow of commerce; reflecting changes in the economic life of the world; meeting demands of business interchange. Those of Oswego who have gone before left a precious heritage to present generations that must be nurtured and safeguarded, aided and encouraged; so, in turn, this heritage may be preserved and in due time passed along to generations yet unborn.

From experiences of the past come lessons to guide present and future courses, and, in this connection, a review of the past of Oswego Harbor not only must ever be an incentive to renewed present-day activity in furthering the maritime interests of the port, but serve constantly to bring reminder that history often repeats itself in the ever changing cycles of commercial development.

The first business of Oswego was in a trade that was transient and of little benefit to the community, contributing nothing to it but reputation and an enhancement of its value as a trading center for furs. A French King may have had a medal struck to commemorate its capture by his armies; a British ministry may have fallen because of its loss to British control, but these were but fleeting and inconsequential, if substantial business is the consideration and topic of survey and study. It was not until 1802 that Oswego came to experience the first pulse of business, for prior to that year the shipping was entirely in control of the vessels of the Northwestern Fur Company under the British flag.

The first commerce was in salt, so precious to the pioneers, then feeling their way westward, that salt from Onondaga came down the Oswego River, was transshipped here into schooners, taken to Niagara, and over the peninsula in carts, transshipped again into schooners on Lake Erie, unloaded again in Erie, and went by cart and river to Pittsburgh to sell for $10 and $12 a barrel. The early commerce was primitive; freights were high; carriers were relatively small; but transportation by water infinitely was easier than a land movement through a forest that knew only Indian or game trails. A season's shipment of salt was from 800,000 to 100,000 lbs.; 40 or 50 tons, which serves to indicate how relatively minor was this early business.

The story of the development of the maritime business of Oswego is, after all, a story of small beginnings, but there were men of

stout courage and keen minds who pioneered this early business of Oswego in a wilderness setting.

The First Harbor

Oswego was the first harbor on the Great Lakes. Here the first English ships were built in Colonial days, and here the first U. S. man-of-war on the lakes was laid down. To Oswego came Henry Eckford, one of the most celebrated of shipwrights of the years between 1810 and 1830, whose guiding hands directed not only construction of the U. S. brig, Oneida, but the fleet at Sacket Harbor, and later the frigates on the Atlantic Ocean that defied the might of the Royal Navy in the War of 1812, and made sea-power the ambition of Americans to this day.

The Oswego Harbor of the early 1800's was a natural one, merely the mouth of the Oswego River, protected to some extent by low lake gravel bars or points formed by action of lake waves and river current. It served for a time the small ships of shallow draft that transported the commodities of that day, and there was no customhouse, no rules, only the dictates followed by necessity. Bonfires guided ships to port until 1821, when the first government work to be undertaken in Oswego took the form of a stone lighthouse, erected on the bluff of Fort Ontario, on the river-side; and north of the present post administration building, there still stands the light keeper's dwelling, changed and enlarged, and now quarters of the post sergeant-major. History, too, sometimes serves to show how small the world may be. The first lighthouse keeper in Oswego was the grandfather of Brig.-Gen. Charles D. Roberts, who within the past five or six years was at Fort Ontario commanding the 2d Infantry Brigade and daily walking soil his grandfather had trod more than a century before.

Oswego's growing commercial importance was noted by Congress in 1826, when the Rivers and Harbors bill of the year provided $200 for the first engineering survey by the government, "For a survey of Oswego Bay and Harbor for ascertaining the expediency and expense of constructing piers to improve the navigation thereof."

This year, 1940, therefore, marks the 114th year in which Oswego people have been interested in Rivers and Harbors bills, and the 114th year in which there have been continued contacts with the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army, charged with harbor improvements, and it may be stated in passing, while Oswego Harbor has not always received from the Army engineers improvements as extensive as optimism prompted, the results have been entirely just and doubtless in keeping with the merits of the claims.

The first survey recommended piers, and in 1827 construction was started, and since that year there has been government work in progress in Oswego. The first contractor was Moses Porter Hatch, whose residence for many years stood on the site of the present Hotel Pontiac, and whose garden for years was one of the show places of Oswego. His son, John Porter Hatch, Major General, U. S. A., gave to Oswego in 1848 the chair now used by the Mayor of Oswego in presiding at Common Council sessions, which article of furniture he took from the Palace in Mexico when he entered that city as an officer of the U. S. Army in the Mexican War.

Oswego Canal Opened in 1828

The first incentive of waterborne commerce and forwarding came in 1828, when the original Oswego Canal was opened, and while the locks were but 90 feet long and 15 feet wide, and the depth but four feet, this represented an improvement over the passage by the Oswego River, unimproved, and business increased from the start. Further increase came by opening of the Welland Canal in the same year, permitting passage of vessels from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie.

Oswego Harbor had known, however, the first steamboat on the Great Lakes in 1817, the Ontario, constructed at Sacket Harbor through the enterprise of Commodore Melanchton T. Woolsey, U. S. Navy, (whose mother lies now interred in Riverside Cemetery, Oswego,) and General Jacob Brown, who commanded the U. S. forces along the northern frontier in the War of 1812.

First Steamboats Appear

But the first steamboats were side-wheeled, broad of beam, and with so much machinery-space they were of little value as cargo carriers, as the Welland Canal locks were but 22 feet in width and commerce was confined almost entirely in canal passages to schooners. Then in 1841 there was constructed and launched in Oswego the first screw-propelled steamship in the western hemisphere, the Vandalia, her engine plans from the board of Captain John Ericcson, inventor of the screw-propeller. The Vandalia was the first of a line of Oswego-built propellers, and shipbuilding, for longer than 50 years to be a considerable industry in Oswego, had its real start with the first propeller, which also marked the start of the first real commerce to the upper lakes, as propellers could negotiate the narrow Welland Canal locks with a pay load, and propellers carried the freight and the settlers to the winning of the west.

Settlers passed west-bound through Oswego, by thousands, through the years, taking with them livestock, farm implements and household goods in the vessels provided with cabins—furnished for those who could afford the luxury; and without cabins, but with stoves for cooking their own meals for those who must economize. From Oswego the distance to Duluth, Minn., was 1142 miles, and to Chicago, Ill., 1049 miles, and in a steam vessel 100 ft. in length with a draft of not more than seven miles an hour, that voyage up the lakes had aspects more of hardship than pleasure.

In this period, Oswego increased in commercial importance, as in 1846 the size of the Welland Canal locks were increased to 150 feet in length, the width to 26½ feet, and the canal draft to 9 feet, although it was not until 1855 that vessels drawing more than 7½ feet of water could at all times enter Oswego Harbor, across the entrance to which there was a gravel bar, in that year removed by dredging so that the harbor depth became 10 feet.

These dimensions are cited as essential in a comprehension of the volume of traffic of old Oswego maritime business the carriers engaged and the comparison with lake and canal carriers of the present day.

Shipbuilding Takes on Importance

Shipbuilding, that it, construction of wooden schooners, canal barges and steamboats, had become of importance to Oswego in this period, and there were two factories manufacturing blocks and fittings for rigging; shipwrights and shipsmiths; two plants at least that manufactured winches and capstans and sold their output in other shipbuilding points; a dozen or more firms that specialized in ship painting; a half dozen sail lofts engaged in making sails; three or four ship chandlers; and divers other concerns all engaged in business connected with ship construction and operation. There were four shipyards, and as late as 1872 Ames Iron Works furnished boiler and engine for a propeller, one of the last of the type to be constructed in Oswego.

With more than 100 vessels owned in Oswego, and hundreds of Oswego men actively engaged in sailing as a profession, hundreds of others engaged in canal business, with hundreds of others finding employment in warehouses and along the waterfront, Oswego was truly a maritime minded and maritime engaged community.

There were other means of stimulation which were all in favor of the growing community. In 1848 the Oswego and Syracuse Railroad was opened and commenced to add to the tonnage of Oswego Harbor, and in 1854 the Reciprocity Treaty with the Dominion of Canada was negotiated and brought additional business, and this was the beginning of the period when it was a common sight to see schooners berthed in the Oswego River so closely that, as was often said, one could pass across the river on their decks and an agile man could, by swinging from bowsprit to stern downstream, pass from the lower bridge to the end of Seneca street.

Free Canal Tolls Hurt Oswego

The first State canals required payment of tolls and, as the levy of tolls was in proportion to the length of canal used, Oswego could compete with the Port of Buffalo on the Lake Erie end of the waterway for a share of the trade from and to the west. There were tolls, too, on Welland Canal traffic, and after 1882, when the State ceased to collect tolls and established free canals, tolls on the Welland Canal were continued and the decline of Oswego's upper lake business had set in.

There were other factors, however, one of them being the increasing size of upper lake steamships, which could not pass through the Welland Canal, and which established Buffalo as the foot of Upper Lakes commerce. The newspapers of this period, in Oswego, are filled with efforts made valiantly by Oswego shipping interests to bring about construction of a Niagara Ship Canal to overcome this handicap, but the efforts came to naught.

The water-borne business of Oswego always has resolved itself into two classes—commodities which were brought to the port for use in industry and those which were passing through in transit, which is the same with every point of interchange of commerce. At points of interchange, a manufacturing business usually is evolved to utilize the products available, providing there is economic access to markets available. From the start, this has been true of Oswego and, from the time that Alvin Bronson established the first milling business in Oswego in 1820, grain has been a commodity entering the port and passing through it of late years in returning volume.

Milling Takes on Importance

The Bronson mill at first used local grain, but in the 70 years of milling that was to follow, grain came from the west for the flour mills of Oswego, with Penfield, Lyon & Company starting in 1842 and continuing in business for a half century, and with other names equally known in the milling field—Henry Fitzhugh, Samuel B. Johnson, M. J. Cummings, George and Cheney Ames, Frederick T. Carrington, Mollison & Hastings, Irwin & Sloan, O. F. Gaylord and others entering the scene as the industry developed.

In 1848 the Kingsford Starch Factory was started, continuing until the turn of the last century and using 1,000,000 bu. of western corn annually and employing 700 persons. (After transfer of the Kingsford plant to other ownership, it was finally closed in 1922.)

In 1850 or about that year, malting was started in Oswego and eventually was developed into a business that made Oswego one of the principal importing points for Canadian barley and likewise provided considerable employment.

All of these enterprises required economy of water transport and also low-cost power, the latter provided by the hydraulic canals on either side of the Oswego River.

Up to 1850 the salt forwarding business was heavy, a total of 2,186,510 bushels passing through Oswego from Syracuse for the west in 1848.

Days Of Lumber Imports

There had always been a lumber and planing mill business in Oswego, for from the time the first sawmill was built by Bradner Burt in 1802, using timber cut from the surrounding forests, the power of river origin was an incentive to further development, and like the grain trade, when local lumber became scarce, imports from Canada followed to provide the raw materials, and water transportation played its part in profits possible.

In 1852 the Kingsford plant entered the field with its box shop and planing mill, requiring 5,000,000 ft. of lumber annually, and, as the lumber importation increased in the 60's and 70's, larger planing mills, cooperage plants, sash and blind factories followed, using a considerable part of the lumber entering the harbor and providing employment for hundreds of men.

When the planing mills waned, with the center of the U. S. lumber industry going to the Michigan peninsula, and with Canadian lumber requiring payment of a protective tariff, the Standard Oil Company with its plant in the west harbor was established, further to prolong the lumber import business of the harbor, and the Diamond Match Company plant, established in the early 90's, materially assisted, and low-cost lumber transport was the basic reason for establishing both plants, the Standard Oil Box Shop using as much as 125,000,000 feet in a year.

Lumber was in the class, too, of a commodity for delivery to points beyond, and this business was greater far than the trade in which lumber was locally consumed. Grampus Bay was a lumber yard, with six piers affording easy transfer facilities from schooners to canal boats or railroad cars, and each of those piers paid Gerrit Smith, owner of the property, $10,000 a year, and it was a popular belief some of those rentals contributed to the funds which Gerrit Smith (who gave Oswego its public library) raised to finance John Brown, who met his fate on the scaffold, in the cause of abolition of slavery, after the Harper's Ferry fiasco.

Simeon Bates had the first large lumber business in Oswego. There were others soon to follow —O. M. Bond, J. P. Wetmore, A. S. Jage, John K. Post, Dewitt C. Littlejohn, E. W. Rathbun & Co., Charles M. Bond and many others.

Industry From Shipping

The profits that came from shipping operations more likely than not were invested in manufacturing enterprises, and those who amassed money on shore were to be found partners in maritime development, so closely were early Oswego business enterprises dependent upon maritime activities, and the coalition was responsible for keeping Oswego enterprises owned and operated by Oswego men, which always is a potent factor in community prosperity and development.

There were several transportation companies, almost wholly owned in Oswego, one of the most widely known—the Northwestern Transportation Company, organized in 1833, attracting subscriptions of $200,000 in Oswego capital, to illustrate the interest which could be aroused in Oswego undertakings.

One of these concerns, organized principally to cater to the needs of shipbuilding, was the firm of Daniel and George Talcott, operators of the Phoenix Foundry in East Second street, which in the course of business changes became the present Ames Iron Works.

An accessory to the Starch Factory was the Kingsford Foundry & Machine Company, where fire tube boilers for marine purposes were manufactured and enjoyed a wide sale, as did Fitzgibbons boilers, to be found in many a

lake tugboat for a period of fifty years or longer.

These industries had their origin primarily in connection with the maritime business, illustrating graphically how the latter becomes a source for many other kinds and types of business in a community where freight interchange or import is a major enterprise.

The industries of Oswego, however, which came into existence in this period when the marine and canal business was prospering were dependent, too, upon accessibility of raw materials, and when these could be made available elsewhere, at lower costs, these industries were to wane and in most instances entirely to pass from the Oswego industrial scene.

It was inevitable that this was to be. The milling business of America started in Virginia, moved westward as the country was settled, following the center of grain production. Rochester had it for a time; Oswego enjoyed its benefits; Buffalo in turn felt its growth; and then the industry spread out to Kansas City, to Minneapolis and other western points. This change and the entrance of Argentina corn into Atlantic ports was to bring an end to the starch manufacture, so long a leading Oswego industry, and gradually, as the accessible lumber was cut away in Canada and rail costs had to be added to get lumber to lake ports for shipment, the transfer business in Oswego passed, and the greater ease of lumbering and shipping forest products from upper lake points operated in a combination of circumstances to bring this business to a close.

Tariffs also contributed in curtailing barley and Canadian grain imports as well as those of lumber, and there was always the fact that the Welland Canal size restriction was handicapping the passage of larger vessels from the upper lakes to Lake Ontario.

Discovery of salt springs and large deposits accessible from driven wells in Michigan brought about eventual cessation of the salt movement through Oswego and eliminated in time the Onondaga industry in its entirety.

Oswego lost, in about the same stages as it arrived, its grain business, its milling, its lumber, its salt, its package freight business. Of the latter movement there formerly had been a tremendous volume moving via the canal, to be transshipped in Oswego to schooners and steamers for delivery to upper lake ports. Advent of railroads, increased size of carriers, higher and higher costs of handling, lower freight rates, all combined to remove the package freight business from the maritime field in Oswego. There was for some years a prosperous rail and lake interchange, but the Panama Canal Act, which divorced steamship lines from railroad control, brought about eventually the end of this business.

Decline Commences

From high freight rates, with relatively low handling charges, the pendulum was swinging in a direction that worked to Oswego's disadvantage. Larger lake carriers on the upper lakes could carry freight longer distances at lower rates and make profits, where schooners and small steamships could not exist in competition. Wages increased in 'longshore operations. Recently an automatic machine manufacturing company published a most effective advertisement. It was the imprint of a man's hand, nothing more, except that the company tersely stated: "If this print is on the article or commodity you handle, you are losing money. We make a machine for every purpose to eliminate handling by hand." That, in effect, was what was happening in Oswego. Handling commodities was coming to cost more than freight rates, in reversal of the earlier trend.

But meanwhile, the day of the wooden ship was passing. In that

same year, 400-ft. steel steamships were being constructed for upper lake trade, carrying more than 5,000 tons of cargo on 18 ft. draft. Neither in its harbor nor in canals and channels giving access to it, could Oswego compete in this growing maritime business of increasing tonnages.

But, for a number of years Oswego Harbor continued to enjoy a considerable, even though declining, business. There was still coal to be exported, but the transfer business had declined almost to the vanishing point, and year by year canal business was falling off.

Death Blows Strike Milling

Tariffs imposed by the McKinley Act dealt the last blow to the Oswego grain trade and to its milling, which however had been declining for years, due to western competition, and on May 2, 1892, a fire, sweeping elevators on the east side of the Oswego River, seemed to add a final knockout to this trade. The elevators never were rebuilt.

The original Oswego locks had been increased to 110 feet in length, 18 feet wide and 7 feet in depth, which latter depth was increased to nine feet by the Act of 1896, but was never fully completed due to authorization for the Barge Canal in 1903. By the latter year, most of the old canal craft were disappearing, and none was being constructed, as the new canal was to be for 1,000 ton barges as a maximum, too large for mule-power.

The passing of the old Oswego Canal marked the passing of the individual canal boat owners. From an investment of $5,000., at the most, the canal carrier was getting into the class of big business, like transportation on the lakes under changing economic conditions.

Oswego men were alert to a necessity for changed conditions in Oswego, with the Barge Canal nearing completion in 1913, and with Canada making appropriations for the New Welland Ship Canal. A movement was started, tending toward a survey of the harbor, to undertake to have upper lake conditions met in harbor depths, more adequate breakwater protection and other modern harbor details, but the declaration of War in Europe deferred work on the Welland Canal, and while hearings were conducted in Washington on Oswego Harbor, by the Corps of Engineers, soon the United States was to enter the World Conflict, and harbor improvements gave way to national defense.

In 1919 consideration was given to harbor improvements, for there had been accelerated commerce due to war demands, and decision was made to organize a Port Authority to have public direction of any future plans for improvements.

With the Barge Canal completed and open to traffic in 1919, the year 1921 brought just 18,946 tons movement in freight through Oswego, and in 1923 the freight movement was but 15,525 tons. Motorships were being constructed, however, and tonnage was increasing, and the popularity with motorship operators of the Oswego route was commencing to divert traffic which grew year by year until 1930, when the tonnage was 251,179.

In that year the tonnage of Oswego Harbor proper was at lowest ebb, having fallen to 143,539 tons. Sailing vessels had almost entirely disappeared. There were no new carriers entering the trade. Coal shipping trestles were antiquated and docks were rotting and fallen into conditions making use for any purpose impossible.

Canal Locks Limit Ship Size

Lock dimensions and navigable depths in the State Canal System and in the Welland Canal regulated, naturally, the sizes of carriers that could use those waterways, and Oswego Harbor, located between the two canals and the St. Lawrence River canals to the east, could have only traffic in the canal-restricted shipping.

Until 1882 the usable length of Welland Canal locks was 150 feet., the width 26 1-2 feet., the depth 9 or 10 feet, and it was in the period preceding 1887 that most of the vessels engaged in Oswego Harbor trade were constructed. Most of them were schooners and in 1884, as a typical year, 329 steamers carried 48,861 tons of lake commerce into Oswego, and 1,827 sailing vessels carried 317,-543 tons, or more than six times as much freight transported by sail as by steam. Lake Ontario was truly the last stamping ground of sailing vessels in Great Lakes traffic.

To consider a typical Lake Ontario schooner of the period, which carried a master, a mate and a crew of four or five men, it may be seen that in initial cost, which ranged from $10,000 upward, the investment in such a carrier was relatively small. Such a ship carried 350 to 400 tons of coal, or 17,000 to 20,000 bushels of grain. Their low cost made ownership possible to a wide number of investors, and lake captains more often than not were part-owners of the ships they sailed. Freights usually brought a good return on the investment, and while speed was desirable, it was not a demand.

With enlargement of the Welland Canal to locks of 256 feet usable length, and after 1887 navigable depth of 14 feet, there were some larger steamships that entered the Oswego trade, and in 1894 a steamship brought a cargo of 75,000 bushels of grain from the upper lakes, and steamships of equal size took as much as 1,300 tons of coal from Oswego shipping trestles.

The Oswego and Erie Canals were becoming antiquated because speed had commenced to be a factor in transportation. Steamships sounded the death knell of sailing vessels. The State Canal System, with towed barges making less than two miles an hour on an average, with stops at sunset and fleets tied up until daylight, was failing to meet demands of the rising tempo of American business. Men were commencing to think and to operate in larger volume. Business in transportation, as in industry, was growing up. These were all to the disadvantage of Oswego, where the pioneers were paying the toll of time, retiring or dying, and with apparently no successors to carry on.

New Start Made in 1923

That was the situation that existed in 1923, when the State Legislature enacted the measure which established the Oswego Harbor and Dock Commission, and the situation was not too promising in the possibilities of restoring what had been lost to Oswego Harbor and to Oswego.

It was apparent from the start, after organization of the Commission under the presidency of the late Frederick B. Shepard, anything undertaken should be on a firm foundation of fact. From the outset it was determined the policy of the Commission always would be to keep the public informed of its activities, its aims and its objectives, when announcement did not conflict with confidences of necessity sometimes imparted by interested business. This policy has been consistently followed, even at times when the announcements were not encouraging, but they were facts, and if any measure of success has come to the work of the Commission in seventeen years, it has been because it has faced facts and dealt only with factual matters.

The Commission consulted with U. S. Army Engineers on the problem of modernizing Oswego Harbor to accommodate traffic it was believed would come when the New Welland Ship Canal was opened for business. There were doubts expressed, in Washington and elsewhere, for the Welland Canal threatened to change, in theory if not in fact, long-established trade routes and practices, and competitors of Oswego were as jealous in preserving their ad-

vantages as Oswego since has been in protecting its rights.

Seeking facts, and facts only, the Commission retained the consulting engineering firm of Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, Boston, Mass., to make a commodity survey of the Great Lakes in relation to Oswego Harbor. That work occupied the greater part of three years, involved an expenditure of more than $25,000., by the Commission, and resulted in a monumental report in two volumes, which still, after fourteen years, are the basic reference books on its subject. It may be of interest to state this report not only is in the library of every U. S. college and city, but is in most of those in Europe, and throughout every year there are still requests for copies of the report, many of these coming from European cities.

The Commission did not await the final determination of the engineers, whose instructions were to ascertain whether it was worth while to develop Oswego Harbor from an economic standpoint, and who were directed to report adversely if the facts so indicated. From time to time, the Commission received reports, some of them encouraging, others to the contrary, but the general trend indicated, while there had been many changes in the years, fundamentally the location of Oswego was its greatest commercial asset on water-borne transportation problems, and what had made the port great in the past, properly developed, again would bring similar results.

Grain Rate Readjustment Sought

The Commission undertook then to secure readjustment of the grain rate structure on rail shipments from Oswego, for, while not a bushel of grain was being moved through the port, it was the engineers' belief grain would move eventually, and a proper recognition of its proximity to tidewater, compared with other lake ports, was necessary if the volume of movement was to be predicated on rates and economies of transport.

For three years, the Commission battled the Oswego Grain Rate Case, before the Interstate Commerce Commission in Washington. Every railroad company in the North Atlantic States, except the New York, Ontario & Western, opposed Oswego, as did many cities including Buffalo, and many corporations. The report of the first examiner was a defeat for Oswego, but believing from its engineers' reports facts cannot well be controverted, the Commission appealed, and finally the victory was won, and the Oswego Grain Rate Differential of 1.5 cents per 100 lbs., under Buffalo rates, to North Atlantic ports on grain and grain-products shipped from Oswego, established. The Commission was again required to defend this rate within two years, and again in 1939, but each time was successful in maintaining the differential, which now seems to be firmly established for all time.

Meanwhile, the Commission engineers had completed their report and, after a series of hearings which brought favorable recommendations by the Army Engineers, Congress authorized the start of construction on the present breakwater system.

There was the authorization, but no funds from Congress, and the Commission, with the approval of the Common Council, borrowed on the city's credit the sum of $100,000. which was advanced to the War Department so a continuing contract could be awarded for the first breakwater under the authorization. The Commission from its budget paid the interest charges and finally, after three years, secured re-payment of the loan by the government. Incidentally, the loan was secured from F. L. Carlisle, anxious and willing then to help Oswego and not realizing perhaps there would result an ultimate benefit to one of his companies, starting to use Oswego Harbor in 1940, in connection with movement of bit-

uminous coal for the Central New York Power Corporation steam-electric station on the west harbor.

There was a multiplicity of minor matters to be adjusted in endeavoring to get Oswego Harbor in condition to meet the demands of a greater and modern commerce. The question of harbor lines came up three times in ten years. There were questions of straightening out harbor lines in Oswego River; questions of securing deep water to dock faces in the river section of the harbor; question of an economic design for new docks; and dozens of others, involving continued activity by the Commission.

Other Harbor Problems

Apart from the problems of physical development, there were always other problems, solution of which was vital to Oswego Harbor's future. One of them was proposed consolidation of railroad systems which, as presented by railroads to the Interstate Commerce Commission, placed all railroads serving Oswego under one system,—the New York Central. Oswego strenuously fought this proposal, and so successfully that plans for allocation of railroads to Lake Ontario ports were completely changed, and, while the consolidations never became effective, yet the hearings and the ultimate recommendations revealed that Oswego was a potent force in transportation affecting Lake Ontario and Central New York, and again solely because the Commission dealt only with and upon facts.

Questions of the St. Lawrence seaway development, of the imposition of tolls on the New York State Barge Canal, of improvement of that canal with federal funds without the government taking title, came up in succession, all involving considerable study and not a little effort in preparing proper presentations to authorities. Again, there were presented only facts, and the public was kept advised and informed of developments and the reasons for the policies undertaken.

One of the vexatious problems in connection with harbor improvement was removal of two islands in the Oswego River, which restricted the operating space, narrowed the east channel, made current action in spring, or flood periods detrimental to carriers, and otherwise were deterrents to operation of larger carriers in the area south of the river mouth. Another obstacle to development was the jutting end of the Ontario & Western Railway terminal, which extended more than 100 feet into the Oswego River, handicapping the berthing of large vessels and making channel obstruction, in so doing, almost certain.

The islands were condemned in U. S. Court and removed by dredging. Lawsuits followed, in which the Commission members participated as witnesses, until final settlement was reached. Had the islands remained in the river the Commission subsequently must have been unsuccessful in securing approval by Congress and the War Department for dredging to harbor lines in the Oswego River and for removal by the government of the end of the railroad terminal.

But these objectives were accomplished. Their details required years of patient work, overcoming an obstacle here, surmounting another there, but always with the satisfaction progress was being made.

The Commission, it must be understood, did not have access to large sums of money. In fact, its primary consideration was to accomplish its aim with as little cost to the city as possible, and the means in securing the Ontario & Western terminal area was an example of carrying out a considerable land transfer without public cost, except for construction.

Harbor Projects

The War Department was induced to declare the portion of Fort Ontario Reservation, lying

at the foot of the west slope of the bluff, surplus and not required for military purposes, as indeed it was not. This land was released to the State of New York, as is provided in the original deed by the State to the Government, when the Reservation ceases to be of military use. By Legislative Act the land was granted by the State to the City of Oswego. The City of Oswego deeded the land to the railway company, for the end of the terminal, which the City in turn deeded to the War Department and the Government of the United States, and the Government removed the end by dredging, thus satisfying all concerned.

Only the records of the Commission show the number of trips to Washington, Albany and New York involved in the rather complicated transfer and the negotiations, of necessity, involved. But it was worth the effort, as results indicate this year, with the Ontario & Western Railway Company to undertake a development of that property for a terminal for interchange of rail, lake and canal freight, which has in its present aspects much of promise in adding to the tonnage of Oswego Harbor and employment of Oswego people.

Plan Expanded Coast Guard Station

The Commission, looking ahead, saw the time to come when the U. S. Coast Guard station, on its site, acquired from the Grampus Bay property-owners years ago, would be an obstacle to construction of a proper railhead to serve the waterfront in that vicinity, if modern development and utilization should follow. Negotiations over two or three years with U. S. Treasury Department executives resulted in a plan which merely awaits the need to be executed, but which will result in construction of a new Coast Guard station and probably, now the Lighthouse Department has been consolidated with the Coast Guard, into a Coast Guard base that will serve the shore establishment, the Cutter on the station and the lighthouse division in one location.

In the original plans for Oswego Harbor development, the west harbor, which as previously noted was developed for protecting the lumber terminals that no longer existed in 1923 when harbor plans were first made, was to be of shallower depth than the other harbor and river basin, and was to be confined principally to shelter for oil tankers. Mooring dolphins were authorized near the shore-return-arm, and pipe lines therefrom laid to the oil tanks in Fifth Avenue.

But location of the steam generating station in the west harbor, on the site of former lumber docks and buildings once using lumber in vast quantities, changed these plans. Deep water is required for the largest size lake carriers to bring bituminous coal to the steam station, where a terminal 800 feet long is to be constructed this year, and where under plans of the power corporation there will be 360,000 tons of coal discharged annually, and perhaps other commodities interchanged in the plans of the corporation executives for utilizing the advantages presented in low-cost water transportation for its other plants.

What eventually will happen in that section of Oswego Harbor is conjectural. It is not difficult to foresee a time when the present breakwaters in front of that property will be moved outward into Lake Ontario, to provide greater space for maneuvering carriers, and further to provide shelter in greater area, for carriers laden with grain, which sooner or later will seek to go into winter quarters in Oswego Harbor. The present harbor cannot accommodate them, in number or security, to make the venture worth-while, but the Lake Carriers' Association now urges a change in the breakwater layout in Oswego to provide these facilities, and the Commission believes the future will

show a further development in that end of the harbor.

Then and Now In Tonnage

Records were not always kept in the exactness now featuring reports of government departments. It was not until 1868 that the net registered tonnage of shipping using the Oswego Harbor was compiled on a comparable basis, and that year the net registered tonnage 1,752,767, and the value of imports was given as in excess of $7,000,000, and domestic business as more than $17,000,000, in value, but there was no record of the tonnage, and in 1869 the records, while showing 1,563,881 registered tonnage, merely state that the value of the commodities handled was "very great." That does not give much opportunity for comparison, but checking through customs reports of later years and taking the year 1891 when the net registered tonnage was 1,071,504, when the grain and lumber business was prosperous, the total tonnage handled in Oswego Harbor was 1,138,144.

It is interesting from 1868 to check down the list of harbor tonnages, which tell graphically the rise and recession of lake and canal business, until in 1923 when the total harbor tonnage had fallen to 393,202 tons.

There is of course more to the story, for the figures also show that in 1868 revenues collected totaled $1,224,088.32, or more than $1.00 per ton. In 1928 the revenues had fallen to $2,195.65, showing something of what abolition of tolls meant, but more, the decline of a grain and lumber trade that paid tariff duties.

Expend $4,500,000 In 58 Years

During the 58 years from 1866 on, the United States Government collected in revenues in Oswego Harbor in excess of $21,000,000, and during that time up to the present has expended a total of $4,537,243.82, of which $1,347,148.91 has been for maintenance. Oswego Harbor does not owe the Government much, for at least five times the cost of harbor improvement have been returned in duties collected.

In 1938 there was received by lake into Oswego 1,221,622 tons, valued at $19,558,868, and by barge canal 732,727 tons valued at $16,391,457; or a total of 1,954,349 tons valued at $35,950,325. Additional transit cargoes passing through Oswego comprised 627,383 tons valued at $43,193,262.00.

Thus it may be noted that tonnage of Oswego Harbor at the present time is greater than at any time in the days of old Oswego Harbor business, and the value of the commodities handled many times greater. The difference is that profits in the ships, in the wages paid to crews, in the transactions of the commodities do not come to Oswego. The only advantages have been in the increasing employment offered. Unlikely for some years will Oswego men be actively interested in shipping or in forwarding in the large volumes of modern business. The financial requirements are too great.

There are some interesting figures available for the 1939 business of Oswego Harbor, which showed a total tonage of 1,450,995, including canal transit movement, with a total value of $16,670,346, in strictly lake movements, as the values for transit cargoes have not yet been computed.

But in 1939 there were 312 vessels in port loading or discharging, and 8,646 carloads of rail freight were loaded or discharged, and 2,480 trucks loaded grain, beet sugar or other commodities ex lake. Commodities transhipped included anthracite and bituminous coal, coke, wheat, oats, rye, barley, soy beans, copper, zinc, woodpulp, pulpwood, cement, paper-board, beet sugar, etc. Railroads shared in the business, 8,646 carloads being handled in and out, with a tonnage of 426,938 of $3,964,655 value, and freight rates collected amounting to $1,056,180.

A New Day Dawns

Drought in the far western grain states for four or five years after Oswego Harbor was improved, not only reduced grain exports to almost nothing, but brought for the first time in history imports of grain to the lakes region. Then in 1938 there came a grain surplus and a foreign demand and Oswego handled in the single State owned elevator 27,000,000,000 bushels. Last year, uncertainties in the foreign market did not permit a repetition of this volume, which may never come again in one elevator, but Oswego handled about 15,000,000 bushels which is more nearly the normal single elevator capacity.

The Commission looks to continuance of the grain business under existing conditions, given a foreign demand, for almost all of the grain handled through Oswego is for export. The 1938 movement represented 36 per cent of the harbor's total tonnage, and it was 17.2 per cent of the entire country's export grain trade, and represented payment of $1,460,000, in carrying charges, transfers, and wages.

A gradual return of the milling business is expected, but when, in view of uncertainties existing in government and other factors, make fixing a date difficult. But several large milling concerns are investigating and there is a prospect, when conditions become more settled and normal, for at least one other grain elevator.

Oswego has become, through establishment of the Huron Portland Cement Company's storage and packing plant in this port, a rate making point for cement distribution in New York State. Sooner or later, other bulk plants will follow. Warehousing cement started on a larger scale by competing companies last year.

There are prospects for a dairy feed business, to augment that in operation at present. A soy bean processing plant, recently established, is now in operation. These are adjuncts of the grain trade, a start in a small way of more expected to come on a larger scale, being but history repeating itself as it did many years ago, when from small beginnings large enterprises resulted.

Coal Traffic to Exceed Million Tons

Improved coal terminal shipping and receiving facilities, and steam plant requirements, will bring Oswego's total coal shipments, in and out, to more than 1,000,000 tons annually. This is a certainty, and requires no prophecy other than ability to add figures.

All indications point to Oswego becoming a large woodpulp distributing center, with imports from abroad, from Canada, and shipments by canal from the south, where the industry is just starting on new woodpulp developments. Shipments received in the past two years are forerunners of more to come.

The petroleum products shipments, increasing annually, shortly are due to be greatly augmented by a new movement from west to east, reversing somewhat the present trend.

Canal tonnage will continue to increase through the better facilities afforded by the Government's $27,000,000 improvement program, the last part of which is centered in and about Oswego and which was started late last fall in channel deepening, with river channel deepening, increased clearance under the lower bridge and other work to follow.

Planned development of the Ontario & Western terminal where new dock faces are to be built, with warehouse facilities, etc., added, will bring a new type of business to Oswego, in addition to lake and rail interchange of diversified cargoes. The prospects, given facilities provided, are excellent for continued devel-

opment, once this business receives a fair start.

In reviewing Oswego Harbor history, it is well to recall that the passage of 75 years was required to bring the old harbor to its peak tonnage. In less than a decade, since the opening of the New Welland Canal and improvement of Oswego Harbor, its tonnage and valuations have exceeded all old records, and Oswego Harbor now floats one-quarter of all the tonnage carried on the entire barge canal system. It will carry more.

The "good old days" may never return under the conditions prevailing now, when one grain cargo arriving in Oswego equals that carried in 30 schooners, and one modern canal carrier has capacity for 15 times that of the largest old-time canal boat. The days of a half-dozen harbor tugs racing for tows far into Lake Ontario are gone. Carriers are self-propelled. There are other changes. Something of the picturesque unquestionably has gone forever. The dangers and the hazards have been taken out of Great Lakes sailing, when it is recalled the wrecks, the losses and the tragedies of the old days.

Last year Great Lakes freighters carried 114,229,856 tons without the loss of a life or a ship, and Oswego Harbor definitely was in the scene, and will continue to be for years to come, in increasing tonnage.

It may be unwise to venture any forecasts for the future of Oswego Harbor, but it is nevertheless true that predictions or, more properly termed, estimates of Commission and U. S. Army engineers on present-day traffic, have been almost uncannily correct.

These Facts Are Significant:

Following the prediction of Oswego engineers that when adequate facilities were available, capital would seek the advantages of the Port of Oswego,—early in 1938 came the announcement that Central New York Power Corporation, subsidiary of the great Niagara Hudson Power system, after an intensive survey and study by its engineers, had selected a site on the Harbor of Oswego for the erection of one of the greatest steam electric generating plants in the world. Contracts were let early in September, 1938, for the first unit, and the following year the second unit was started, at a total investment of over $16,000,000 The first unit of 80,000 KW. will be in operation in 1940; the second unit in 1941. Provision is made in the company's plans for the eventual construction, when needed, of three aditional units.

What this tremendous asset will mean to the Port of Oswego, only time will tell. This we do know—that history is already repeating itself. As in the early days pioneers came and settled—now came and studied the engineers, men of vision, men with the courage of their convictions—builders—men who shape the destiny of the community.—Now again, unless all signs fail, will come to this community industry eager to take advantage of abundant low-cost power, linked with cheap transportation, either by rail or water.

The magic growth of the City of Buffalo was due, in major part, to the fact that until the opening of the New Welland Canal in 1930, that city was the most easterly port on the Great Lakes to which the largest lake vessels afloat could bring their cargoes. Added to this was the fact that in 1896, Buffalo, for the first time in its history, became linked with the great power development at Niagara Falls which paved the way for industry to come and prosper.

Only a short distance away was Niagara Falls, a virgin territory with only 3300 inhabitants in 1890, when for the first time in its history the great power at the Falls was harnessed and made available to those who would use it. The development of this power startled the industrial world in the late

90's, and Niagara Falls and "the Niagara Frontier" grew almost over-night. Today a world-renowned city of over 80,000 population, it boasts of some of the greatest chemical plants in the country, the location of which there was primarily due to the abundant low-cost power available there at its source and to the available opportunity in cheap transportation.

Today the picture in Oswego has changed—the day of the horse and mule on the tow-path has gone—once again Oswego challenges its nearest port rivals for the commerce of the Great Lakes.

With the completion of this great monument of power, Oswego will be enriched with the very factors that made Buffalo and Niagara Falls the great industrial cities they are today.

Here, through this harbor, where "Power, Rails and the Waters meet," will come industry, —creating new payrolls and opportunity—*the very foundation* upon which great cities are built.

History proves—beyond a shadow of doubt, "Where there is abundant low cost power (the life-blood of industry), industry inevitably follows."

Yes, the "old days" are gone—a new day dawns. From the history of the past comes inspiration for the future. Today conditions are new and entirely different, yet so full of promise as to justify all the expenditures that have been or will be made by the Federal government. They would have made glad the hearts of the pioneers of old, some of sacred memory, and to those who have lived to see this day, men who year after year have given of their time, their money and their brains,—those who have been an inspiration to all of us—to those men must come a just pride in the success of such an important undertaking—the Development of the new Harbor at Oswego,—"Nature's Gateway to the East."

Battle of Oswego in 1814

(Paper Presented Before Oswego Historical Society, May 6, 1940, on 126th Anniversary of Battle by Francis T. Riley of Oswego High School History Faculty)

One hundred and twenty-six years ago, conditions in and around Oswego were somewhat different from those of today. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon of May 6, 1814, the Battle of Oswego had terminated with a success for the British, under the command of Sir James L. Yeo. Before going into the circumstances which finally led up to the Battle of Oswego, and the capture and destruction of its fort by the English, let us consider some of the differences which existed between England and the United States which finally brought about the War of 1812, in which the attack on the fort at Oswego was only an incident.

Jefferson's second term (1805-1809) was destined to be an unhappy one for reasons beyond his control. After a short truce the Napoleonic Wars again broke out in Europe (1803) and for the next twelve years the world was in a turmoil. By 1805, Napoleon had crushed his chief adversaries, Austria and Russia, and regained mastery of the continent. Great Britain had repulsed the French fleet and was the acknowledged mistress of the seas. This war now settled down to a life and death struggle between Great Britain and Napoleon, with the far-flung British colonial empire in the balance. Jefferson, in accordance with American policy, remained neutral, but soon experienced all the unpleasantness of our previous British-French relationships and more. The British soon reasoned that if the war-mad Napoleon could not be conquered on land, perhaps he could be starved into submission by cutting off his source of supplies. Napoleon had reached the same conclusion respecting the British.

While Europe was spending its energy in war, the United States was rapidly expanding its trade. In the years from 1789 to 1807, American shipping had increased more than sixfold in tonnage. From 1792 to 1807, exports had jumped more than five-fold, and imports had increased more than eight-fold. American shipping, moreover, was carrying in 1807 more than 90 percent of these increased imports and exports, as compared with less than 25 percent in 1789. Farmers, shipbuilders, merchants and workers enjoyed a prosperity created by European war demands similar to that of the early years of the World War (1914-18). This was all halted in 1807.

Causes Which Led to War

In a series of British 'Orders in Council' (1806-07), that country blockaded the French coast from the Elbe to Brest, and finally extended the restrictions to practically the entire western European coast as well as to India. However, if neutral ships first paid a duty in British ports they might under certain conditions trade with France. Napoleon countered with a series of French Decrees (1806-07), in which he declared the British Isles blockaded, a blockade later extended to the British Colonies, and finally ordered that any neutral vessels submitting to the British orders and duties were subject to capture. While these orders, and especially the French Decrees, created 'paper blockades,' largely—that is, one which is ordered and announced, but which is not or cannot be enforced—the fact remained that if we as a neutral obeyed the British orders we were liable to capture by the French, and if we observed the French De-

crees the ever-vigilant British Navy was likely to seize our ships. This was the intolerable situation which confronted the United States during those trying years of her early history.

Jefferson, following precedent, turned to diplomacy rather than war. A treaty was finally negotiated with Britain, but it proved so unfavorable that Jefferson never sent it to the Senate. Although the European blockades resulted in the capture of about 1600 American ships and $60,000,000 worth of property, the large profits of successful blockade-running kept the American flag on the seas. The British captured twice as many vessels as the French due to their superior naval strength, and not to any friendly act toward us on the part of Napoleon. The impressment of American seamen by the belligerents was another act which made us complain loudly. The wages and conditions of labor on the American vessels were so far superior to those on the British vessels that British seamen deserted the British flag for the American vessels. In search for these deserters, British officers would frequently impress native Americans, for the British Navy was hard pressed for man power. The British deserters tried to protect themselves by taking advantage of our naturalization laws, but this proved to be no protection, as the British refused to recognize their new allegiance, declaring that 'once an Englishman, always an Englishman.' We refused to accept the right of the British to order us about on the high seas. The British cruisers continued to search for contraband, forbidden goods, and deserters, sometimes even coming well within the coastal three mile limit. Thousands of seamen were impressed and the number of ships seized increased daily.

The "Chesapeake Affair"

As evidence of this deplorable condition which existed between the two countries, "the Chesapeake affair" may be cited. The British man-of-war, Leopard overhauled the Chesapeake off the Virginia coast, and fired a broadside into the vessel, killing or wounding 21 men. The Cresapeake was totally unprepared for action, as her guns were unmounted, and after firing a single shot she was forced to strike her colors. Three of the four seamen who were seized were Americans. Public opinion demanded action as a result of this insult. Jefferson, therefore, ordered all British vessels out of American waters, demanded an apology from Great Britain, and called Congress into session.

Next Jefferson followed a policy of 'peaceful coercion.' Congress passed (1806) the Non-Importation Act which closed American ports to certain British products; the Embargo Act (1807) which prohibited American and foreign vessels engaged in foreign commerce from entering or leaving our ports. This last act was very injurious to the entire country, and in particular to the New England shipping and commercial groups. American exports and imports dropped off sharply. It is estimated that 55,000 sailors, and 100,000 merchants and laborers were without work. American shipping lost $12,500,000 and the government's revenues from customs dropped from $16,000,000 to a few thousands. Under these circumstances, the Embargo was repealed and replaced by the Non-Intercourse Act in 1809.

When Jefferson's successor, Madison, took office, Congress passed the Macon Act, without waiting for the Non-Intercourse Act to expire. Under the terms of the Macon Act, as soon as Great Britain or France withdrew its decrees against our shipping, the Non-intercourse Act would be revived against the other. Napoleon agreed to withdraw the decrees, and the United States revived the Non-Intercourse Act against the British. This placed us in a position of favoring the French. Madison's peace proposals were lead-

ing us into war. Conditions went from bad to worse in regard to our relationship with the British. There was the conflict which occurred off the Virginia coast between the American frigate, President, and the British ship, Little Belt, which revived the ill-feeling between the countries which had been stirred up by the Chesapeake-Leopard affair. This situation was aggravated by a young nationalistic group in Congress called the "War Hawks," and finally Congress declared war on Great Britain, June 18, 1812. "On to Canada" became the war cry.

In his war message to Congress, Madison summarized our grievances against Britain since 1803. They were insults to our flag on the high seas, illegal impressment of seamen, blockading of our ports, seizure of our ships, refusal to withdraw the Orders in Council, and incitement of Indian attacks against our frontier. The House of Commons finally did repeal the Orders in Council in so far as they affected the United States, but by the time the word reached the states war had already been declared. It might be interesting to note that had either the telegraph, telephone, wireless, or the radio been invented and in operation at the time, the war probably would have been avoided.

Country Unprepared For War

The country was unprepared for war. Our army of 7,000 was generaled largely by Revolutionary leaders. The war was fought mostly in the Northwest, New York, and the South. The Conquest of Canada, though frequently attempted, was not accomplished. General William Hull surrendered Detroit to the British and all land west of Lake Erie fell into the hands of the enemy without a battle. William Henry Harrison regained Detroit and the western territory, and repulsed the British in the decisive battle of the Thames north of Lake Erie. We were able to regain the Northwest, largely through the gallant action of Captain Oliver Hazard Perry, whose hastily built fleet defeated the British fleet on Lake Erie in September of 1813. Perry gave us control of Lake Erie and contributed to naval tradition by his frequently quoted dispatch concerning the victory: "We Have Met the Enemy and They Are Ours. Two Ships, Two Brigs, One Schooner and One Sloop." In our attempt to invade Canada, we did not get above Lundy's Lane. The British, on the other hand, were decisively defeated by Capt. Thomas Macdonough at the Battle of Plattsburg on Lake Champlain. Thus it may be seen that the Great Lakes played an important part in the general conflict.

One of the most important military objectives during the war was Oswego. Most of the supplies needed for the shipbuilding at Sacketts Harbor, under Commodore Chauncey, commanding the American fleet, were brought to Oswego by way of the Oswego River, from Onondaga, which later was called Syracuse. From here the supplies were transported either by lake or overland to Saketts Harbor. The British at Kingston were aware of this, and made plans to cut off this base of supplies and stores before they could reach Chauncey to assist in completing the armament of the fleet he was building. It was the hope of the British to attack the fort at Oswego as soon as possible after the ice broke up in the spring of 1814. This plan of the British to attack Oswego was known to Chauncey, and in April, 1814, a battallion of 336 regular artillerymen, armed as infantry, proceeded by road from Sacketts Harbor to Oswego to defend the Fort here and protect such supplies and property as might be gathered there.

Cooper's Description of Oswego

What was Oswego like in those days? James Fenimore Cooper, an Ensign in the United States forces

and the author of Naval History of the United States has this to say: "In 1808 Oswego was a mere hamlet of some twenty or five-and twenty houses that stood on a very irregular sort of a line, near the water, the surrounding country for 30 or 40 miles being very little more than a wilderness. On the eastern bank of the river, and opposite to the village, or on the other side of the stream on which the Oneida (a 16-gun brig) was, there was but a solitary log house, and the ruins of the last English fort.

"The arrival of a party of officers, together with a strong gang of ship-carpenters, riggers, blacksmiths, etc., produced a great commotion in that retired hamlet, though port it was, and made a sensible change in its condition. For the first time money began to be seen in the place, the circulating medium having previously been salt. The place was entirely supported by the carrying of the salt manufactured at Salina. Eight or ten schooners and sloops were employed in this business, and the inhabitants of Oswego then consisted of four or five traders who were mostly ship owners, the masters and people of the vessels, boatmen who brought the salt down the river, a few merchants and a quarter educated personage who called himself a doctor."

The women and children, and non-combatants who were living in Oswego 126 years ago were preparing to leave in anticipation of the attack by the British forces. Some went into the nearby country, and others went much farther inland, up the Oswego river to places of greater safety. The men of military years remained to defend the village and the fort. A certain Mrs. Hawley started in an open boat with her child for Little Falls, as her husband had been captured and was being held a prisoner in Canada for taking food to the United States troop in Canada.

The houses standing in Oswego in 1814 were all located on the "flats," as that part of the present First Ward which slopes toward the river was then called, as it sometimes is today. The Wentworth residence was near the Bradner Burt mill at the dam, about where the lower dam is now located. The Burt family lived farther south on the West River road, as did the Van Burens, Mooneys, Schencks, and Walradts. William Burt and Dr. Deodotus Clark lived on what is now known as "the State road," (East Oneida street). The Stones, and the Halls lived on the Hall road. Near Fruit Valley, earlier called "Unionville", was a thriving settlement of the Ries, Farnhams, Bishops, Braces, Clarks, Peases, Thompsons, Perrys, Robinsons, Fords, and Dr. Coe. The Baldwin family lived on the Lake road.

In the village of Oswego, close by the west bank of the Oswego River, lived the Hugunins, Rasmussens, Sages, Jacobs, Stevens, Hawks, Parsons, Bronsons, McNairs, Burts, Tylers, Coltons, Cooleys, and others of the early families. There was no settlement then on the East side of the river.

Oswego Prepares For Struggle

As soon as war was declared in 1812, Oswego became a very busy place. The United States Government appointed Matthew McNair commissary of subsistance, and Alvin Bronson naval and military storekeeper. Vast stores of arms and ammunition, and supplies were brought down the Oswego River, and sent by boat to Sacketts Harbor, where large shipbuilding operations were in progress. The British forces in Canada made plans to cut off this base of supplies at Oswego, and to destroy the supplies, if possible, before they could be taken to Sacketts Harbor to arm Chauncey's fleet under construction there.

Information reached Chauncey at Sacketts Harbor that the British were outfitting an expedition to attack Oswego. The quartermaster sent instruction to Alvin Bronson at Oswego, to halt any supply trains at Oswego Falls (now a part of the city of Fulton), and to send all possible stores to Sacketts Harbor and Niagara, the rest to be hidden in the woods.

General Gaines at Sacketts Harbor sent Lieut. Colonel George E. Mitchell with five companies of artillery, armed as infantry, to Fort Ontario to protect the cannon, ammunition, and stores at Oswego and at the Oswego Falls. (Some sources place the number in this command at less than 300, while others contend that it numbered over 300.) They marched overland over very crude roads and arrived at Fort Ontario on April 30, 1814, but five days before the British opened fire on the Oswego fort. They found five rusty guns, three of them without trunions, and the stockade in decay. On the old breastworks of Fort Oswego were mounted four brass cannon. Colonel Mitchell pitched tents near the ruins of Fort Oswego (on the west side of the river) to make it appear that there were troops encamped there.

Land Forces Came With Yeo

Sir James Yeo, in command of the British fleet left Kingston on May 4, 1814. The fleet consisted of the frigate Princess Charlotte, the flagship, of 1200 tons and 42 guns; the Montreal, Niagara, Charwell and Magnet, carrying 32 pounders; and the Star, a 14 gun schooner. They towed gunboats, big open barges, some of which were lugger-rigged with thwarts across so two men could pull on each of the three dozen oars, with one or two guns on platforms, stern and bow. They carried a large number of small boats for landing parties. The fleet had 222 guns, with a crew of about 1,000 sailors.

The fleet transported with it landing forces, commanded by Lieutenant General Sir George Gordon Drummond, consisting of two companies of DeWatteville's regiments of infantry under Captain De Bersey; one company of the celebrated Glengary regiment under Captain McMillan; a battalion of marines under Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm of the Royal Navy; two hundred seamen armed with pikes under Captain Mulcaster; all commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Fischer. (Editor's Note: Other regiments which served with the British at Oswego were: The Royal Marine, the Royal Newfoundland, the King's 8th and 100th Regiments.)

The British fleet was sighted off Fort Ontario early in the morning of May 5. Colonel Mitchell in command of the United States forces at once sent horsemen through the country to call out the militia. The Growler, a U. S. ship loaded with supplies, was sunk in the Harbor. Lieutenant Pearce, with part of her crew, joined Mitchell's forces. A squad under Captain Boyle and Lieutenant Legate set up a twelve-pounder just west of the fort.

The fleet came about one-fourth mile off shore, and made ready fifteen boats to be loaded with men to attempt a landing. They were preceded by gunboats to rake the woods, while the larger vessels opened fire upon the fort.

As soon as the debarking boats got within range of the fort, troops therein under Captain Boyle opened a successful fire and compelled them twice to retire. Several of the boats were perforated so that they were abandoned. One of them was sixty feet long, with three sails, and of a capacity to transport 150 men. She had received a shot through her bow and had filled with water. The boats returned to their ships without effecting a landing. The British lost several men, killed and wounded, in these boats. Then a storm came up, forcing the fleet to put out into the lake for safety.

Lieut. Blaney Killed in Repulse

Second Lieutenant Daniel Blaney, 3rd Artillery, U. S. A., a young officer of great promise, was killed while directing fire of guns which repulsed the first landing attempt. Many years later Theodore Roosevelt, then president of the United States, recognized the young lieutenant's heroism by directing that one of the defensive works protecting San Francisco Bay be named "Battery Blaney."

The British fleet spent the night in the shelter of the Big Galloo Island, half way between Oswego and Kingston. During the wild lake storm that was raging several of the gunboats were lost and their crews transferred to larger boats.

The horsemen riding throughout the countryside spreading the alarm, and the boom of the hundreds of guns of the fleet during the first day's attack, which was heard as far away as Onondaga (Syracuse) served to set in motion towards Oswego all the militia for miles around marching to the assistance of Colonel Mitchell's outclassed force. Major Jonathan Parkhurst's battalion from Oneida County, one of whose captains was Heil Stone, arrived together with many small bands of militia. Oswego citizens who served with those at the fort included Abram Hugunin, William Squires, and Peter Hugunin.

Colonel Mitchell stationed the militia in the woods to protect the hidden stores and to stop any attempt by the British, if they landed, to proceed south to Oswego Falls. They were also in a position to help defend the fort and repulse landing parties.

Eleven Ships In Yeo's Fleet

On the morning of May 6th, the British fleet appeared again and renewed the attack. The Magnet was in front of Oswego, the Star and the Charwell near the mouth of the river, and eight other ships were to the north and east. The heavy ships directly against the fort kept up an incessant cannonade from 10 a. m. to 1 p. m. while they made ready to land their main infantry force near Baldwin's Bay. Colonel Mitchell put out most of his force east of the fort to engage this advancing column, and left only a few to work the guns of the battery in the fort.

Several of the British boats were set on fire by the red hot cannon balls fired from the guns of the fort. Captain Popham of the Montreal had his right hand shot away while holding his trumpet to give an order. Sir William Howe Mulcaster landed with 200 bluejackets and stormed up the steep hill against the works of the fort. They advanced over the ramparts, led by Lieut. Laurie.

Colonel Mitchell withdrew his small force to the rear of the fort and with Captain Romeyn's and Captain Melvin's companies met the advancing British columns, while the other companies attacked the British flanks. Seeing that the fort was being taken, and that he was hopelessly outnumbered Col. Mitchell gave the order for retreat.

In the northwestern bastion of the fort stood the flag staff to which by order of Colonel Mitchell the flag of the United States had been nailed. While attempting to tear it down two British sailors were shot and Captain Mulcaster was wounded.

After the capture, the British destroyed the fort, blew up the guns, burned the barracks, captured tons of powder and shot 500 pounds of pork, 800 pounds of flour, and much bread in barrels. They found and raised the schooner Growler which the Americans had sunk in the river with her cargo of three long 32 pounders, and four long 24 pounders, intended for the Superior, then nearing completion at Sacketts Harbor. This, with a long string of batteaux, a schooner or two, sixty prisoners, and large quantities of stores and rigging for ships, they took with them back to Kingston. Among the prisoners was Alvin Bronson, naval and

military storekeeper at Oswego, (and later known as first president of village and long-lived, prominent citizen). Through his prompt action before the attack on May 5 all books and papers were secreted, and great stores hidden in the woods.

Strong measures were adopted by the British in an attempt to induce Bronson to tell where the stores which the British had failed to locate had been secreted. When he steadfastly refused to give information he was taken away as a prisoner. The chair in which he was taken over the side of the British man-of-war from the small boat in which he was taken from shore is one of the cherished possessions of the Oswego Historical Society. Several months after his capture, Bronson was released, unharmed, and returned to Oswego, bringing with him by special permission the chair in which he had been lifted over the side of the ship when he was carried away as a prisoner.

There was no general injury to private property in Oswego by the British landed forces. No attempt was made by the British to hold the fort and the fleet soon sailed away with its booty.

Aftermath of the Battle

James Fenimore Cooper relates in his Naval History of the United States that when the British evacuated Oswego and sailed away on the morning of May 7, the stores which the Americans had so carefully hidden were taken from their hiding place, loaded into boats, and under command of Major Appling were started for Sacketts Harbor. The boats had arrived off Sandy Creek when they found themselves covered by the British scout boats. Major Appling turned into Sandy Creek, landed, secreted the boats, and prepared an ambuscade. The British followed into the creek and were completely overpowered and surrendered. In an engagement which lasted only twenty minutes, none of the Americans was wounded. The supplies were taken to Sacketts Harbor without further incident.

After the stores had successfully reached Sacketts Harbor, Mitchell returned to command Fort Ontario, but the fort was not again attacked during the remainder of the war.

With the completion of the Surprise at Sacketts Harbor, Chauncey had supremacy on Lake Ontario and successfully blockaded Kingston and Toronto, daring Sir James Yeo to come out and fight, which, however, the latter refused to do. An order dated Jan. 11, 1815, announced the declaration of peace.

Considering the casualties in the Battle of Oswego, we find that the British lost 19 killed, 75 wounded. The bodies of the British dead, with the exception of those of the officers, were collected and burned.

The Americans lost, killed, wounded, or missing, a total of 69. Captain Hiel Stone's tavern at Fredericksburg (now Scriba Corners) was used as a hospital for the wounded.

In his official reports to the United States War Department, Colonel Mitchell praised for conspicuous bravery Lieutenant Daniel Blaney, killed in the battle; Subalterns Legate, McComb, Ansart, King, Robb, Carle, McClintock and Newkirk, and Captain Boyle.

It might be interesting to note, in connection with the heroic sacrifice made by Lieutenant Blaney in this engagement at Oswego, that for some time past there has been a movement on foot, sponsored by the officers of Fort Ontario, Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Oswego Historical Society, to take the necessary steps to have a suitable tablet inscribed and a memorial erected to his memory near the site where he fell, to refresh the minds of Oswego residents and visitors to our city as to events in the past of Oswego and their relationship to our national history.

Memorial Suggested For Lieut. Blaney

Lieutenant Daniel Blaney, U. S. Army, was killed May 5, 1814, while directing the service of a 12 pounder gun, mounted on the shore, east of Fort Ontario, the fire of which gun prevented a landing from the fleet of Admiral Sir James Lucas Yeo, R. N. on that day, when the British temporarily were repulsed.

He was born in Delaware, probably at Newcastle, and was commissioned as an ensign in the 15th infantry, July 19, 1813, and promoted to second lieutenant October 1, 1813, and assigned to the 3rd artillery. He was serving under Lieut, Col. George E. Mitchell, U. S. A., commanding the 3rd battalion of that artillery regiment which was known (and still is known) as the "Spartan Battalion." He was present at the taking of York, Ontario, with Mitchell, and came with the 3rd battalion from Sacketts Harbor to Oswego for defense of Fort Ontario.

His body was interred in Oswego, first in the Old Cemetery at the foot of West First street; next in the City Cemetery, where Kingsford Park school now stands; and finally in Riverside Cemetery, where it now rests.

One of the seacoast batteries defending San Francisco was named Blaney Battery in his honor by direction of President Theodore Roosevelt, who was a keen student of the War of 1812 and author of a history of this same war.

Most of the information about the Battle of Oswego in 1814 printed heretofore, deals with the American phase of the struggle. It might be well at this point to give some consideration to the British concept as related by the Canadians. Malachi Malone, who participated in the attack on the fort aboard the Canadian gunboat Sir Sydney Smith (later called the Magnet, which name she bore at the time of the attack) relates in an article "How We Stormed Oswego" copied by the Toronto Telegram: "We lay closest to the fort and they hailed red-hot shot at us from the ramparts. We came back with cold grape and round. They slithered our sails to ribbons and cut our rigging till it hung in tangled bunches of hemp. 'We can't get out of here, lads,' hailed Captain Popham, 'for our gear's all gone.' But a ball whizzed and his right hand holding the trumpet, dropped, mangled, but he raised the trumpet with the other and finished, 'We'll give them the worth of their money since they want us to stay so badly.'

Description Given by Canadians

"Up the steep slope of the hill to the Fort swarmed two hundred blue-jackets with their boarding pikes, Sir William Howe Mulcaster of the old Royal George at their head. Sir James Yeo, the Commodore, was ashore, too. Along the bank of the fort hill from the landing place streamed the kilted Glengaries and the DeWattevilles in red tunics and white breeches, and Royal Marines in their glazed stiff hats red coats, and blue trousers. But they could fight, those same Johnnies, and the Yanks who potted them from the shelter of the woods were now on the run for the fort.

"By this time we were on fire. The red hot shot from the furnaces in the fort made our tarred rigging sizzle and the flame licked up the masts. 'Buckets aloft', called Captain Popham, and the topmen scrambled up the flaming ratlines and laid out along the scorching yards with their buckets on long lines and soused everything. I could see through the smoke that the blue-jackets were up the bank now and Lieutenant Laurie, Sir James Yeo's secretary, was scrambling over the ramparts first of all. Then another burst o' flame along our decks made everybody's heart jump, for fire in a wooden

ship, ballasted with gunpowder, is a pretty sure passport to the big beyond.

"The Bulkworks had taken fire, but we smothered them with hand and tarpaulins when there came a yell from aloft. A brace of red hot chain had struck the foretop and swept away the maintopmast stays where it was stowed there. It floated down like a flaming parachute on to the fo'c'sle head by the powder gangway. The sailing master rushed forward with a boarding pike, caught the mass as it fell, and pitched it overboard. Then with a scream he dropped the pike and rolled down the gangway. Where his left arm had been, hung a bloody mass of seared flesh and shredded jacket sleeve. A red hot round shot had got him.

Fighting Seaman Turned Bishop

"I helped carry him to the cockpit. 'It'll have to come off at the shoulder,' I heard the surgeon say. Jimmy Richardson gritted his teeth, and then above the roar of the guns I heard rounds of cheers on cheers. I rushed on deck, sick with the smell of surgeon's shambles, and there on the hilltop, with his legs locked around the head of the fort flagpole, I could see a marine hanging. It was Lieut. Hewett. He had swarmed up, as nimble as a man-o-wars-man and had torn the big Stars and Stripes down with his hands. The colors had been nailed to the pole." James Richardson, Jr., the sailing master mentioned, a native of Kingston, Ont., later became an itinerant bishop in the Methodist Episcopal church.

Regarding Richardson, we find these remarks of General E. A. Cruickshank, speaking in Kingston on the 6th of May, 1938, on the anniversary of Yeo's success at Oswego, at a gathering commemorating the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Kingston, and reported in a Kingston newspaper: "Young Richardson, who with his comrade in arms, Lieut. Joseph Dennis, had laid aside his gold epaulets for a pilot's tarpaulin, became sailing master to the Commodore. A red hot shot took off his left arm in the battle of Oswego, one hundred and twenty-four years ago this afternoon. As soon as the stump was healed he resumed duty. He was pilot of the St. Lawrence, of 2,304 tons burthen, and 23 feet draft, and never stranded her, the greatest feat of sailing ship pilotage ever accomplished on fresh water. With peace he became a pastor and bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as he once ploughed Ontario's waves he now rode Ontario's forests on circuit, a one-armed horseman of the Lord."

In the same article the general has this to say concerning the work of the Royal Marines: "They did their work at Oswego, for it was Lieut. John Hewett of the Royal Marines who climbed the flagstaff of the fort, and captured the Stars and Stripes nailed to the masthead. He and his company had been stationed to cover the retreat should the attack fail. But he received permission to lead what was optimistically called the 'forlorn hope'. His party forced an entrance and he cut his way to the flagstaff. While climbing he was wounded by several bullets. Having gained the flag, he leaned against the foot of the mast, faint with loss of blood. A wounded defender on the ground raised his musket to fire at him again. The color-sergeant's bayonet saved the young lieutenant's life.

"When Lieut. Hewett delivered the captured colors to Sir Gordon Drummond, the general said: 'No one is so worthy of them as yourself'. Annually thereafter on the anniversary of this day, Lieut. Hewett's men used to present him with a wreath of laurel."

Yeo Attack Gained Its Purpose

Continuing in the same article, we read concerning the attack on the Oswego fort: "The object of the Battle of Oswego was to prevent the enemy from completing new ships before the St. Lawrence (the largest Canadian man-of-war on the lakes, then building) could be launched at Kingston. This object was accomplished. The British captured or carried off three thousand barrels of provisions, several miles of large rope, and seven big ship's guns. They destroyed some others, and all the barracks and public buildings. They captured three transport schooners. Not one civilian was injured, insulted, or robbed. Equipment of the contemplated American ships was delayed, and although they learned of the St. Lawrence, and began a still larger ship to meet her, the war was over before this ship was launched. She was never launched. Britain had that control of the lake which was vital.

"They knew how to make war in 1812. That is why we have had 124 years of peace and a frontier of 4,000 miles defended by fenceposts since the battle of Oswego. As I said, no war can be fought without bloodshed. But no war has left cleaner wounds or fewer scars than the war of 1812."

It is unique in the history of nations that two peoples live close together as neighbors without any fortification along so extensive a border. This is indeed a credit to the American and Canadian people. It is regretable that more nations in other parts of the world have not found it possible, or desirable, to emulate this splendid record of peaceful relationship between two great peoples.

Baldwin Discovered Approach of British

Fred P. Wright, secretary of our Historical Society, and himself a great-grandson of Major Philo Stone, who served as a captain in Major Jonathon Parkhurst's milita battalion and who was promoted to major during the war, records in his collection of 1812 war data the following statement of Albert L. Baldwin, 94 Mitchell St., Oswego, March 9, 1923: "He is a grandson of Morris Baldwin, who came here from Connecticut in the year 1811, bought land of the government where the Richardson Theatre now stands, and out East along the lake shore for three miles. His name was given to the bay east of Oswego, Baldwin's Bay, and the road through the woods out through Scriba was called "Baldwin Road." He was a man six feet, six inches tall in stocking feet, and thought nothing of walking to Mexico and return in a day. His flintlock musket is in the possession of his grandson named above.

"He lived east of the city, and the day the British came to Oswego to attack the fort he discovered them coming into the bay. He acted as a scout for the fort and mounting his white horse he set out post-haste to alarm the garrison. The British landed. There was a battery planted by them back of what is now St. Paul's Cemetery. The remains of the earthworks were discernable up to a few years ago. Many small cannon balls and Indian arrowheads are found around this locality. Mr. Baldwin relates that the militia were told to wait until the British soldiers were near enough to see the whites of their eyes, and then if they kept coming on and it appeared impossible to stop them, to 'Run like hell toward Oswego Falls' where the stores were secreted, and from which direction they expected to receive reinforcements. Some of the Men followed these instructions, and met the reinforcements. They joined them and returned to take further part in the battle.

"Some of the fallen British

soldiers were buried near Baldwin's Bay. Their burial place was known and the spot pointed out by old Mr. Baltes, a schoolboy friend of Morris Baldwin for many years."

Diary of Orrin Stone

Mrs. George M. Penney, wife of our present Surrogate, is in possession of a very interesting diary kept by Orrin Stone, her grandfather, who was an eyewitness of the battle of Oswego and took part in the engagement. Orrin Stone was the son of Major Hiel Stone and with his brothers Anson, Erastus, John, and Philo served in his father's company during the war. Let me quote some excerpts from Orrin's 1814 diary:

"Sunday, May 1: About home.

Mon, 2: A. M. hoing in wheat round store; P. M. sowed onion seeds and makeing garden.

T. 3: A. M. went to Oswego; P. M. fixed hog pasture fence and turned my hog out to grass.

W. 4: Chopping E. of the house.

Th. 5: An alarm at Oswego, turned out and went down. the British shiping lay off. Sent out their gun boats and fired upon the fort and village. Did not land this day.

F. 6: This morning the British fleet stood in and at 12 o'clock commenced a verry heavy cannonadeing upon the fort and fired upon the village, put out their boats and landed below the fort marched up and carryed the fort about three o'clock. Our troops retreated up the river.

S. 7: This morning went to Oswego and the British had burnt the barracks and plundered the place and evacuated the place.

S. 8: at home.

M. 9: Went to Oswego, dug cannon balls.

T. 10: Diging cannonball on the state lot.

W. 11: Planting beans and beet seed

Th. 12: Went to Oswego, dug cannon balls

F. 13: Went with horses and waggon, gathered cannon ball

S. 14: no entry

S. 15: Brought my cow home

M. 16: Plowing for corn on Father's farm

T. 17: Plowing, British fleet lay Oswego, sent in a flag; p. m. went to Oswego

W. 18: Plowing some in P. M.

Th. 19: Plowing for corn

F. 20: P. M. Plowing

S. 21: Chopt some shelled corn

S. 22: no entry

M. 23: Began to plant corn and hoeing in the nursery

T. 24: Planting corn and potatoes

W. 25: A. M. went down to Father's to see the troops; P. M. planting corn

Th. 26: A. M. Planting corn; P. M. went to the widow Peeler's loging bee

Pioneers' Interest Self Centered

In looking over this diary of an early Oswegonian, one cannot help but be impressed with the fact that Orrin Stone was primarily a pioneer and a builder rather than a soldier. True, he served in the militia, and was ready to lay down his life in defense of his home. It is obvious from the lines that he penned 126 years ago that his first thoughts were for his home, his family, and his land. The destructive forces of war made little appeal to this sturdy farmer, who was concerned primarily with bringing civilization to a wilderness.

No mention is made in the diary of the fact that the U. S. had planned to invade Canada, and that the English were attempting to invade the States. No recognition is given to the momentous struggle which was occurring on the continent with the Allies pressing Napoleon harder and harder, until finally in March of 1814 he was defeated at Leipsic and later exiled to Elba. Not one word is recorded of these historic landmarks at a time when the United States was actually a belligerent against one of the Allies, Great Britain. How differ-

ent it is today, with the world in a similar situation! In our daily conversations, in our newspapers, over the air, we are constantly being reminded of the latest developments in Europe, even though we are standing on the sidelines as a neutral; most of us are as well informed as though we were actually participating in the conflict.

Perhaps in Orrin Stone's diary we can see a man who looks upon the war as an aggravating influence which takes him from his work, for to lay down the plowshare and take up the musket interrupted the every-day processes which were necessary if the land was to be cleared and made productive. The attack on Oswego and the war of 1812 were incidents which had to be given some immediate attention when they came uncomfortably too close to home, but they were certainly far from the major concern of this early Oswego pioneer. He had a job to do, and he hankered to get back to it.

In preparing this paper, valuable assistance was rendered by Mr. E. M. Waterbury, Mr. Fred P. Wright, Principal Ralph M. Faust, Mrs. George M. Penney, and Joseph Louis, the youthful artist who painted a picture of the attack on the fort, and prepared the chart which was used in describing the attack and Thomas Crabtree who made the frame for the chart. To all of these people, hearty thanks are returned.

Fort Ontario Historically Distinguished Among Forts Yet Garrisoned

(Paper Prepared by Ralph M. Faust, Vice-President of Oswego Historical Society for Presentation in Connection with "Oswego Remembrance Days" July 4-7, 1940)

On the high-banked shores of sparkling Lake Ontario, at the place where the historic Oswego pours out, still stands old Fort Ontario, one of the last grim guardians of a colorful frontier of earlier days.

At a time when the blue flag of France with its gold fleur-de-lis waved over the far-flung St. Lawrence and Great Lakes region, the battlements of old Oswego took shape to challenge the dominion of the French king. The first foothold of the English on the Great Lakes, in 1727, Oswego continued for a long time to be "the hinge on which the fate of empire creaked." As Niagara was the great portal to the west and an indispensable link in the French chain of water communications which gradually encircled the English colonies, so Oswego became the gateway from the Great Lakes Frontier to the English settlements along the entire eastern seaboard. Recognized early for its strategic importance and its location for trade, Oswego be-the center of English barter with the Indians just as Niagara was the center of the French trade. From across the blue waters of Ontario, the French at Frontenac and Niagara watched it with covetous eyes.

The dream of empire—that vision which inspired the picturesque activities of the courier-de-bois, the heroic deeds of Jesuits, and the valour of French soldiery—seemed almost realized when the intense rivalry flamed into the decisive struggle known as the French and Indian War. It began in America in 1755 when General Braddock lost his claim to military fame by sheer ignorance of the ways of war on a strange continent. The place was Duquesne, and today it is a story known to every child. Then to strengthen the Ontario link of their great chain of forts, and to throw fear into the Iroquois allies of the English, the French turned to the hated Oswego.

Montcalm Accomplishes the "Impossible"

With unique skill commensurate with the great warrior that he was, the Marquis de Montcalm, supreme commander of the French armies in America, laid the plans and directed the attack upon the three fortifications at Oswego which challenged French supremacy on the inland seas. Impregnable to any fire other than heavy artillery, which, it was vouched, could never be brought before Oswego. Montcalm accomplished the impossible and in August 1756 stood before the English posts with three thousand soldiers and Indians, and his heavy artillery. Then four days of terrific bombardment, four days of stubborn resistance by the Royal American regiments holding the forts, and finally Fort Ontario, Fort George, and Fort Oswego capitulated to a superior leader and a more inspired army. With sixteen hundred prisoners, great quantities of stores, arms, and ammunition, the French left the "pouring-out-place" with its bastions leveled and the emblem of France alongside the cross of the Jesuits standing victorious over the charred ruins of what had once been the only important English frontier post west of Al-

bany. The colonies were plunged in despair, and the Iroquois allies were ready to break the covenant with their English white father which was saved only by the rare eloquence of Sir William Johnson. Louis XV eager to announce his claim to world dominion had struck off medals commemorating the event. Today the medal is the prized possession of the Oswego Historical Society.

Once again Ontario became "a French lake" as everywhere French arms continued to hold strategic points along the entire frontier. Truly the English cause seemed lost on the continent until the young William Pitt took over the reigns of King George's government. Money and men then poured into the colonial campaigns, and after three fruitless years the English star began to shine.

Death Blow To French Power

In the story of the fall of New France, Oswego played its most significant role. Out of its ashes and ruins rose anew the battlements of Fort Ontario; soldiers and carpenters arrived; whaleboats and bateaux took shape; and at various times for three years it became the great rendezvous for the regiments of the British line, for the Scotch Grenadiers, and the great Black Watch, for the colonial militia, and for the painted red allies. The summers of 1758, 1759, and 1760 saw determined expeditions —first to Frontenac (Kingston) under General Bradstreet, then to Niagara under Sir William Johnson, and finally to Montreal under General Jeffrey Amherst—sweep out from Oswego to deal death blow after death blow to French power across Lake Ontario. Montreal was the last stronghold to fall, and with it came the complete collapse of the French empire in America. By the terms of the peace treaty signed in 1763, the fleur-de-lis came down reluctantly throughout the whole of the great continent, and the cross of St. George rose aloft over the broad domain. Thus Anglo-Saxon culture became the heritage of a vast part of the New World.

Pontiac's Conspiracy

But while the sovereigns of France, England, and Spain were signing the treaty of Paris putting an end to their rivalry in two continents, countless Indians warriors were chanting the war songs and whetting their scalping knives. From the head of the Potomac to Lake Superior, and from the Alleghanies to the Mississippi, in every wigwam and hamlet of the forest a devilish scheme was being shaped. Back of the clever intrigue was Pontiac, chief of the Ottowas, despotic and ambitious warrior. Beneath an apparent friendship for the English was his secret desire to send the Indians on the warpath, to wipe out the English settlements, to embrace the French again, and thus hold the English in check along the Atlantic seaboard. Although the general plan was nipped in the bud, the red men struck swiftly at frontier posts and settlements over a wide area and spread death and destruction in their wake. Stubbornly the English held their ground until the tribes lost patience and one by one withdrew. Disappointed at the promised assistance of the French, chagrined at the dropping off of his allies, and discouraged at the long drawn out struggle which he sensed was hopeless, Pontiac agreed to accept the peace which was proffered and to patiently await his hour of vengenance.

In the spring of 1766, Pontiac came to Oswego to smoke the calumet with Sir William Johnson. In view of the ramparts of Fort Ontario, the great treaty was concluded after days of long speeches and the usual exchange of gifts. Proud in defeat, and thoroughly believing in the justice of his cause, the great Pontiac was destined never to have his hour of vengeance.

"Black Watch" Becomes The Garrison

Of all the picturesque soldiers of the British line who were sent to Fort Ontario during the trying years of the French War, none were perhaps more striking than the kilt-clad Forty-second Battalion of the Royal Highlanders, or "the Black Watch" as they were called. Raised in the highlands of Scotland about 1740, and fighting in different parts of Europe, they landed in New York in 1756, the year that Montcalm destroyed the forts at Oswego. After participating in Abercrombie's attack on Fort Ticonderoga in July of 1758, they were withdrawn to Fort Ontario where they spent the winter of 1758-1759. In the meantime a second battalion of the same regiment had been raised in the highlands and joined the Forty-second at Fort Ontario early in 1759. They formed a part of Lord Amherst's army of six thousand which successfully attacked Fort Ticonderoga, and thence marched north to take part in the capture of Montreal from the French in 1760.

During the days immediately following the French War, Fort Ontario was garrisoned by the Fifty-fifth Infantry of the wearers of the tartan under command of Major Alexander Duncan. The period, the local setting, the commander, and his activities gave James Fenimore Cooper the scene for his renowned romance of Mable, Jasper, and the Pathfinder. It was while Cooper was stationed at Oswego as a young midshipman in 1808-1809 that he acquired the background for his "Pathfinder" published a quarter-century later.

The Fort During The Revolution

In the War of the American Revolution, Fort Ontario was the place where Guy Johnson, loyalist nephew of Sir William Johnson, induced the Iroquois nations to declare for the British cause. Here were organized many of the raiding parties which went scalping and killing through the Mohawk valley, and here passed Colonel Barry St. Ledger's army from Montreal intending to meet Burgoyne at Albany, only to be set upon by Herkimer at Oriskany and forced to turn back to Oswego and thence to Canada. General George Washington directed the last but unsuccessful offensive of the Revolution against Fort Ontario carried out by Col. Marinus Willett in February 1783.

For thirteen years after the treaty of Paris in 1783, Fort Ontario continued to be held by the English. During the period it protected many families of escaping loyalists who fled to upper Canada to give the Province of Ontario the mighty impetus which marked its subsequent development. In July of 1796—just one hundred and forty-four years ago—Fort Ontario, a cherished fortification passed from a great power across the sea, the last bit of territory to be surrendered to the United States.

Ontario's Role In 1812

In the War of 1812, and in the hectic days preceding it, Oswego played still another part in the drama of the old frontier. To Fort Ontario, President Jefferson ordered a detachment of troops to intercept smuggling across the border after he had placed the embargo on all trade with its empire. During the period, Sacket's Harbor became the center of shipbuilding operations on Lake Ontario, but Oswego was the key-point for trans-shipment of equipment and supplies destined for the great ships of war there under construction. As such, great quantities of materials were often stored at Oswego awaiting shipment to Sackets. Determined to destroy the link in the American line of communication and seize the equipment said to be stored there, Sir James Yeo,

commander of the British squadrons on the Great Lakes, stood before Fort Ontario in May of 1814 with a fleet of the British line. After a teriffic bombardment the ill-prepared fort was evacuated as its garrison executed an orderly retreat to Oswego Falls (Fulton) where, it so happened, the great mass of the stores awaited shipment down the river to Oswego. Again the old fort suffered destruction at the hands of invaders. In the days of peace which followed, some of its stone work found its way into the foundations of the old homes of early Oswego.

Left to the mercy of the elements, the old ruin continued to raise its ghostly head above the blue waters of Ontario until the federal government once more ordered it rebuilt and made of it a single company post in 1841. Intervening years saw additional improvements made and various companies of infantry come and go.

Ontario Trained Units See Action in Foreign Wars

From Madison Barracks and Fort Ontario went the several companies of the Ninth Infantry to bring honor and fame to American troops in the attack on Tientsin, China, during the Boxer rebellion. Except for a battalion of Marines, the Ninth Infantry was the only American military force engaged in that battle. During the action, Colonel Emerson H. Liscum, the regimental commander, was killed. In his honor a gigantic silver punch bowl was dedicated, fashioned from a portion of melted Chinese pigot the whole of which was rescued from the ruins of a Tientsin mint by American troops during the engagement. In appreciation for their prompt action, Chinese officials presented to the regiment some of the ore from which the bowl was made. Today it is the Ninth Infantry's prized possession.

Fort Ontario was made a battalion post in 1903, and from its gates went one of the first of the American combat units to land in France during the World War—Company K of the Twenty-eighth Infantry. In 1918 it was converted temporarily into a huge hospital where many sick or wounded were brought from the battle fields of France.

(Fort Ontario was made the headquarters of the Second Brigade in 1931 and continued as such until within the present year. Still garrisoned by the headquarters company and detachments of the 28th Infantry, the future of the fort is at present undetermined as a part of the general reorganization of the United States Army now in progress but it is believed that the post will be developed as the training ground of National Guard units. For a decade or more the fort has been used during the summer months for the training of regulars and national guard anti-aircraft regiments.)

Recognized as the oldest garrisoned post in the country, Fort Ontario today embraces a frontier that has been blessed with peace for over a hundred years. Its story tells not only local history but the destines of nations. As such, Oswego might well move along with its neighboring post, Niagara, in teaching the great and glorious history of the conquest and development of the North American continent.

Early Pulaski History

(Paper Presented Before the Oswego Historical Society, September 30, 1940, by Mrs. F. Earle McChesney of the Pulaski Democrat)

I am not going to begin quite as far back as did Washington Irving in his "History of New York," but in looking up material for this paper I came upon some items that were a surprise to me. For one thing I did not know that the land now occupied by Pulaski was once a part of Albany County. It seems that Nov. 1, 1683 the territory comprising the State of New York was divided into ten counties. Later Albany County was divided and new counties formed. After forming a part of Albany County for almost one hundred years, the territory now included in Oswego County was in Montgomery County for about 20 years. Then for about three years we were in Herkimer County. Then twenty years in Oneida County. March 1, 1816, Oswego County was formed, the part east of the Oswego River being taken from Oneida County and that west of Oswego River from Onondaga County.

The town of Richland was originally a part of Williamstown. It was made a separate town, Feb. 20, 1807. It included at that time the towns of Sandy Creek, Boylston, Albion, Orwell and part of Mexico as well. These other towns were separated from it at different times, the last being Orwell, which was made into a separate town, March 27, 1844, leaving the town of Richland with its present area of 32,251 acres.

Salmon River, so named from the immense quantities of salmon that once swarmed its waters, is not only rich in romantic scenery but also in historic interest. Then, too, the river afforded another advantage to the settler which was of great practical value. In times of high water large numbers of logs were floated down to the mills that had been built on its banks. Various efforts were made at different times by the state government to retain the fish that gave the river its name in its waters but without permanent results.

A canal was contemplated to furnish the "City" of Port Ontario with water power. Long afterward in 1888 the plan was seriously considered of taking water from our river to supply the city of Syracuse. How amazed our ancestors of those early days would have been if they could have known of the marvelous results that would one day be accomplished by the waters of Salmon River through the development of electric power.

First Town Meeting in 1807

The first town meeting in Richland was held at the house of Ephriam Brewster, east of Pulaski Village, in the spring of 1807. A partial list of the officers chosen included the names of Joseph Hurd, supervisor; William Hale, town clerk; George Harding, John Meacham, and Joseph Chase, assessors; Isaac Meacham and Gersome Hale, overseers of the poor; Simon Meacham, Elias Howe and Jonathan Rhodes, highway commissioners; Elias Howe, Pliny Jones, collectors; George Harding, pound master and a long list "pathmasters", "fence viewers" and "constables".

The first settlement in the town, as nearly as I have been able to discover, was at the mouth of Salmon River in 1801. The same year Benjamin Winch also settled near the outlet, but he soon removed to the present site of Pulaski Village where he opened the first tavern in town about 1806. Being a surveyor he helped in surveying the original town of Rich-

land and was a useful and influential citizen.

Reliable data concerning the early settlers is in many cases lacking. Of those, the exact date of whose settlement here is known, I find there was Thomas Jones who came in 1804 from Bridgewater, N. Y. He had five sons and three daughters. The sons were Pliny, Israel, Horace, Chauncey and Lyman. They settled at what was long known as "Jones Corners". L. J. Farmer now living near there was a grandson of Pliny Jones. Israel Jones built the first saw mill in town. The first wedding in town was that of Joseph Spaids and Clara Jones, the grandparents of Dr. J. F. Braduer. Spaids was obliged to go by boat to Oswego for a magistrate to perform the ceremony.

Benjamin Ingersoll, born Aug. 28, 1804, was the first child born in Pulaski.

First School Cost $8,514

The site for the old academy on the bank of the river was purchased in April, 1854, for five hundred dollars and in May the same year the planning and building of the brick structure was commenced. When it was completed and turned over to the New York Board of Regents in 1855 it represented an investment of $8,514.00. Two additions were constructed to the original building at different times and the building served its purpose well till it was destroyed by fire in 1937 and replaced in 1939 by the present splendidly equipped Pulaski Academy and Central school.

The remaining portion of this paper is taken from reminiscences entitled, "Bits From Pulaski" written by Miss Metalill Huntington in 1910 for presentation at the celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the establishment of the Congregational church of Pulaski:

Perhaps it would please you to wander for awhile through our village as if it stood on a foreign shore, and the distant roar of Ontario were the voice of some many-storied lake under the shadow of the Alps, or mirroring at its brink, the purple moors of Scotland. If there were but a guide book—odds and ends of one at least—if my Baedeker but took it in! And why should Pulaski not have a guide book of her own however fragmentary, and why should we not take bits from it to tell us of odd or lovely things?

What would you say to a lost stairway—an outer stairway laid long ago of heavy stone cut from the rocks by the river, then covered level with earth no one knows when or why. What a surprise when a stairway was to be built there, to find the old one, solid and shapely emerging as if just laid. This was located just south of Dr. Abbott's office.

Early Threat to the Railroads

A few of the fine old doorways and porticos still remain; beautiful with pairs of slender, delicately tapering pilasters or with deep sunken windows of small heavily, sashed panes. One of the finest is in the old Lewis' house where Canal (now Glenn Ave.) merges into Lewis street. In this Lewis house lived for many years the man for whom it was named, owner of several lines of stages, running between Watertown, Syracuse, Rochester and other cities. When the first railway was built he announced his intention of running them out of business.

The old Methodist church stood on the east side of Salina street, high above the street, on the site where Mrs. Roy Austin's home now stands.

Do you remember the old Congregational church? I walked to it many a Sunday morning wearing my little Nan-Keen sun bonnet and holding a head of carraway which I had just picked. Then I sat in the high backed pew, so high that I could

not see the minister unless I stood on the seat. Over the minister's head hung a sounding board—a fearful and wonderful thing in my eyes, for I was sure it would fall some day and crush the minister's head flat.

Do you remember when a row boat was tied to the Mathewson piazza in time of flood and the pigs were rowed safely to dry land? My respect for Spring freshets has been high ever since then.

President Jackson's Great Cheese

In 1835, Col. Thomas Meacham who lived at Agricultural Hall on the road to Sandy Creek made an immense cheese to be sent as a gift to President Andrew Jackson. It was made from the milk of his own one hundred cows and much more that he bought. When it was completed it was placed on a specially-built dray and drawn downtown by ten white and gray horses each mounted by a boy in uniform. After appropriate ceremonies in front of the court-house, the cheese was drawn to Selkirk and placed on a canal boat, accompanied by a delegation of citizen who were to present it to the President. The President appointed a "Cheese day" in Washington when all the inhabitants were invited to come to the White House to eat the cheese. The large tree which stands north of the former S. P. Carpenter house on the Sandy Creek road now marks the location where the cheese was made.

There was in early days a tribe of Oneida Indians that lived in their wigwams on "the lake road". The little Indian princess wore a heavy petticoat fringed closely with silver dollars which were to be her dowry when she married.

At one time there was a brewery which stood on the west side of Salina street near where Mrs. William Peach now resides. The house just south of it once was a comb factory. Years later quantities of the combs, cut but not separated, were found in the attic by a small boy of the family who was curious as to what the strange looking articles were.

How Pulaski's Name Was Chosen

The first building erected in the village was a little log cabin of a tavern located where the Randall Hotel now stands. When the village was to be named, a meeting of the citizens was called at this Winch's Tavern, to which each one came bringing a name. The one suggested by Mr. Thomas C. Baker, grandfather of Mrs. William Elliott Griffis, who greatly admired Count Pulaski, was the one chosen.

The Village paid $75 to have South Park cleared and freed from stumps. It took a man with his yoke of oxen two weeks to draw out the stumps.

The upper part of Maple Ave., was formerly called "Tallow Hill" because when it was much steeper and the mud much deeper, than now, it was almost impossible for wagons to go up or down it after rain.

Sixty years ago Charles Tollner came to Pulaski to take charge of the tile factory which Mr. Otto had established with his funds. From the first he noticed the bubbles in the river and declared that some day he would heat and light Pulaski with her own gas. It was long before he could carry out his prediction, but at last that day came. He started the electric works also. But I need not dwell upon the great benefits he conferred upon our village—all the older ones recall them as well. What a keen intelligence he had! what a force!—never content unless things were pushed as far as human power could push them.

Many years ago we had with us a Danish sculptor, a pupil of the great Thorwaldsen. Gottfried Borup, heartbroken over the death of his young wife and child, came to America hoping

to find courage and inspiration to work. He made the beautiful bas-relief of Thorwaldsen's "Night" and "Morning" and then encouraged by Mr. Brockman, he moulded the fine bust of Lincoln which bears his name and is prized by connoisseurs.

It is well to look back on "the days of old" and to fix the image of by-gone times more firmly in the mind, that we may recognize the part which the past plays in the present for "Nothing happens without a sufficient reason why it should happen so and not otherwise" and the life of today is woven of strands which were spun in far off years.

Land Titles In Oswego County From Sovereign To Settlors

(Paper Presented Before the Oswego Historical Society, September 30, 1940, by Merritt A. Switzer, Member of the Pulaski Bar)

From the moment of the discovery and occupancy of land there is an indissoluble union between its tenure and the lives of those by whom it is peopled. The manner of its holding is determined by and in turn determines the future of its inhabitants. In retrospect the history of the title to land is an integral part of the history of its inhabitants. Only for that reason do I, a member of the legal profession, feel free to appear before a body of historians and speak upon a subject which otherwise would be of interest solely to students of the law.

Tonight, briefly as I may, I shall strive to present a verbal picture, in panorama, of the devolution of land titles in eastern Oswego County from the discovery of America until the land of which the area was a part was patented to individuals by the State and from those individuals passed into the hands of settlers. I will also touch upon some subsequent events in the early days of our commonwealth in which land played a part.

England, as you know, claimed title by right of discovery to all land, known as "Newe England in America . . . from the Atlantick and Westerne sea and ocean on the east parte, to the south sea on the west parte". King James the First "by letters patente bearing date at Westminster the third day of November, in the eighteenth yeare of his raigne", that is, in 1620, granted a charter by which he conveyed to the Council established at Plymouth, in the County of Devon,

> "All that parte of America lyeing and being in bredth from forty degrees of northerly latitude from the equinoctiall lyne, to forty eight degrees of the saide northerly latitude inclusively, and length of and within all the bredth aforesaid throughout the maine landes from sea to sea . . . Provided, always, That the . . . premises . . . intendend and meant to be graunted were not then actually possessed or inhabited by any other Christian Prince or State, nor within the boundes, lymitte, or territories of the Southerne Colony then before graunted . . . to be planted in the South partes".

The reference to the "Southerne Coloney" is to a grant or letters patent given to the Virginia Colony. The Council Established at Plymouth, in the County of Devon, is not to be confused with the Plymouth Colony composed of William Bradford and his associates. The Council Established at Plymouth was a body corporate, having its headquarters at Plymouth in Devonshire, England, where the Mayflower had landed on her way to America and from which place she finally set sail, on September 6th, 1620, two months before the charter to the Council was granted. On March 19th, 1628, the Council Established at Plymouth deeded to Sir Henry Rosewell, Sir John Young, knightes, Thomas Southcott, John Humphrey, John Endicott, and Symon Whetcombe, their heirs and associates, a portion extending from sea to sea of

the land included under the King James grant, and on March 4, 1629, King Charles the First confirmed that deed to Rosewell and his then associates and created them, under the names of the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay, "one bodie politique in deede, fact and name" with perpetual succession and with power to hold and convey land. This grant is deemed to have embraced all or a large part of New York State, and certainly included the entire area now comprising Oswego County.

Conflict With Dutch Claims

In 1620, when the charter was granted to the Council Established at Plymouth, a portion of New York State was already inhabited by the Dutch. In 1609 Hendrik Hudson had brought the Half Moon into the Hudson River and before the Massachusetts Bay Charter was given the Walloons were settled on Manhattan Island and as far north as Albany. They instituted, in 1629, the patroon system of feudal tenure, and great estates were rapidly established along the Hudson under Dutch rule.

England refused to recognize the right of Holland to the land in the area covored by the 1620 and 1629 charters. Charles the Second, by a grant dated March 12, 1664, conveyed the land along the Hudson to his brother James, Duke of York, who caused an English fleet to enforce his title. New York was taken and the territory was ruled by the Duke's Governors until 1673, when it was retaken by the Dutch. It was ceded back to England in 1674 and in that year was regranted by Charles the Second to the Duke of York. When in 1685, the Duke of York took the throne as James the Second, his proprietary title merged into royal title and New York became a royal province. Thus it remained until the Revolution.

State Held King's Grants Void

By the New York State Constitution of 1777 all grants made by the King of Great Britain were declared void. By the same instrument it was required that purchases of lands from the Indians be made only under the authority and with the consent of the legislature. By the Articles of Confederation, finally approved by the legislature on October 23, 1779, it was provided that all controversies between states claiming the private right of soil under different grants should be finally determined by Congress and to Congress was given the sole right and power to manage Indian affairs, but there was reserved to each state legislature rights within its own limits.

Commissioners of Indian Affairs were appointed by Congress who, on October 22, 1784, concluded a treaty with the Six Nations, consisting of the Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneka, Oneida, Cayuga and Tuscarora Indians, whereby the Oneidas and Tuscaroras were secured in the possession of lands they then occupied which included the area now embraced in Oswego County, reserving to the United States six miles square round the Fort of Oswego.

Authorization for the purchase of lands of the Oneidas and Tuscaroras was given by an Act of the legislature passed Nov. 29, 1784.

Hartford Compromise

On May 5th, 1786, the legislature provided for Commissioners of the Land Office to direct the disposing and granting of unappropriated lands within the State. Disagreement existed, however, between the State of New York and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts over the extent of the territory embraced within the bounds of the State of New York belonging to each. Massachusetts had succeeded to the rights under the Charter of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, while New York claimed under

the grants to the Duke of York. The matter was about to be submitted to Congress when, in December, 1786, agreement was reached between the States and recorded in "the Hartford Compromise." By that Compromise the right to purchase the Indian claims to land in the western part of this State was ceded to Massachusetts, and the government, sovereignty and jurisdiction over the same lands was given to New York. By that agreement also both the right of preemption and sovereignty as to all other lands in New York was recognized to be in the State of New York. Thus the way was cleared for the acquisition of Indian lands in northern and central New York and the disposition thereof to private owners. On March 1, 1788, the Leg islature authorized the appointment of Commissioners to make treaties with the Indians and to purchase their lands, and on September 22, 1788, commissioners so appointed including Governor Clinton, Egbert Benson, Richard Varrick and others concluded a treaty with the Oneidas whereby all their lands with certain exceptions, not here important, were ceded to the State.

First Titles In Oswego County

The proprietary system ot land grants which existed in pre-Revolutionary days was not immediately to give way to ownership in settlers. On January 10, 1792, letters patent were granted by the legislature to Alexander Macomb, covering 1,920,000 acres in Northern New York, including all of Oswego County north of the present Patent Line, which extends eastward from the mouth of Salmon River. On December 12, 1794, letters patent were issued to George Scriba covering some 488,135 acres which included all of the southerly part of Oswego County lying east of the Oswego River. Macomb, shortly after his purchased, conveyed to William Constable and in the same year Constable conveyed to Thomas Ward 1,255,000 acres, but Constable, by mesne conveyances, reacquired 406,000 acres in 1796. In that year he sold to Thomas Douglas, Earl of Selkirk, the Selkirk Tract, so-called, consisting of 4348 acres or a little less than 7 square miles, located on Lake Ontario north of the Patent Line. Douglas, being an alien, could not take title to land in this State, for which reason Constable conveyed to Henrietta Marie Colden. In 1798 the legislature passed an act permitting aliens to hold real property, and in 1800 Henrietta Marie Colden conveyed to Douglas. Apparently there was a failure properly to record the deed, as in 1804 an act was passed by the legislature confirming the deed from Colden to Douglas. Selkirk, besides extensive holdings of real property in Scotland, also owned several townships on Prince Edward Island.

The Selkirk Tract

Many parcels of the Selkirk Tract were conveyed by Douglas during his lifetime, others by his trustees and their attorneys in fact after his death. He died on April 8th, 1820, leaving a Trust Disposition, or will, dated August 20, 1805, and a Supplementary Trust Disposition dated August 7, 1819, both probated in Edinburgh, Scotland, on June 6, 1820.

Of some interest may be the fact that up to within the past few years the nature and contents of those documents and their place of record was unknown to those studying titles in this area. Questions arose as to the legality of the appointment of certain of the attorneys in fact who had conveyed land for his trustees, in that less than a majority of those appointed had granted the powers. It was my pleasure, acting through corrres-

pondents in New York, London and Edinburgh, in 1937, to be able to obtain photostatic copies of the originals of those documents, signed "Selkirk", and authenticated by the seal of the Court of Sessions and signature of the Keeper of the Seal of that court, as well as by the United States Consul, and to have the same recorded in the Oswego County Clerk's office at Oswego.

This, in brief, is the story of that part of the land north of the Patent Line. Before leaving the subject, however, I wish to call attention to the fact that no part of Selkirk Shores State Park is located on land at any time owned by the Earl of Selkirk. That fact was called to the attention of the State Historian and the State Council of Parks when it became known that the name "Selkirk Shores" had tentatively been chosen, but efforts made to secure substitution of a name historically more applicable were unavailing.

Alexander Hamilton's Holdings

The story of George Scriba and his connection with the early history of Oswego County has, I am told, been presented before this society by another. His holding of land in the area adjacent to Pulaski, acquired for himself and others, was of brief duration. Having taken title under letters patent in 1794, he immediately entered into an agreement for the partition of so much thereof as had been previously contracted by the Commissioners of the Land Office to John and Nicholas Roosevelt. To attempt to trace the interest of each of the men who shared in "the Roosevelt Purchase" would involve almost endless research. Enough of human interest is to be found in connection with that part conveyed to Jacob Mark in 1795, which included the 21st Township or the southern part of the Town of Richland. Mark mortgaged his portion of the Scriba land. Later he became involved in financial difficulties, and in 1802 the land was acquired by John Laurance for himself, John B. Church and Alexander Hamilton. Laurance held the land in his name until June 28th, 1804, when a partition deed was drawn, setting off to each owner specific lots. The conveyance to Hamilton of his share and subsequent transactions, in the light of history, tell a tragic story.

Aaron Burr was Vice-President of the United States. But for Hamilton's influence he would have been President. In 1804 Burr ran as an independent candidate for Governor of New York but was defeated, a disappointment for which he blamed Hamilton. Alleging an insult he challenged Hamilton to a duel. Undoubtedly foreseeing the outcome of that impending combat and at least preparing for possible eventualities, Hamilton, on July 6th, 1804, deeded, with other land, his holdings in this area to Laurance, Church and Mathew Clarkson in trust for the payment of certain specified debts. On July 9th, 1804, three days later, he made his will, giving all his property, real and personal, to Church, Nicholas Fish and Nathaniel Pendleton in trust for the payment of his debt, remainder to his wife. In that will Hamilton said:

> "Though if it shall please God to spare my life I may look for a considerable surplus out of my present property. Yet if he should speedily call me to the eternal world, a forced sale as is usual may possibly render it insufficient to satisfy my debts. I pray God something may remain for the maintenance and education of my dear wife and children."

Two days after making that will, on July 11, 1804, he met Burr at Weehauken, New Jersey, discharged his own weapon

in the air, and himself suffered a mortal wound from which he died on the following day. The will was probated on July 16th, 1804, in New York County.

A year later, July 5th, 1805, we find Church, Fish, Pendleton, Laurance and Clarkson, trustees under the deed and will, joining in a trust deed to Gouveneur Morris, Rufus King, Egbert Benson, Oliver Wolcott and Charles Wilkes, the trust provision of the deed providing for a sale to repay subscribers to a share agreement by which had been raised $79,600 in $200 shares to protect Hamilton's estate from loss by forced sale. Appended to the deed is a list of the subscribers, over one hundred in number, and including such names as Gouveneur Morris, Richard Varrick, John Laurance, Egbert Benson, Hezekiah B. Pierrepont, DeWitt Clinton, Thomas Buchanan, James Roosevelt and J. VanRennsalear. Appended also to the deed is a statement of his property and debts made on July 1st, 1804, by Hamilton.

Whether the men who thus undertook to save Hamilton's property for his wife and family were reimbursed to the full amount of their investment I have not endeavored to ascertain. Nevertheless the record of their effort is to me one of the most interesting, clearly delineated human interest stories I have yet to find in the ordinarily cold record of property transfers.

Land in this area, before it passed into the hands of settlers, through the will of John Laurance vested in Egbert Benson as trustee, and through John B. Church vested in Rudolph Bunner and William Duer, persons who had holdings in the City of Oswego. (Editor's note: Rudolph Bunner sat in Congress from Oswego County in 1826. He was a son-in-law of John B. Church, commisaire to France during the Revolution and the grandfather of Henry Cuyler Bunner, later a distinguished author and poet and long the editor of the humorous magazine "Puck." The Bunner and Duer families, both resident in Oswego, were related by marriage and the Bunners by marriage to the families of General Philip Schuyler and Alexander Hamilton.)

The Port Ontario Land Boom

The great event for this area after the land quite generally had passed into the hands of settlors was the Port Ontario land boom. Salmon River, then a sizeable stream, flowing along much of its course through virgin timber and unhampered by power developments, afforded at its mouth a harbor of some magnitude. Of that harbor a naval engineer, who made a trip of inspection along the shore of Mexico Bay in 1838, said that a better harbor could be constructed there than at any other point on the bay. Between 1836 and 1844 the United States expended $50,000 on rock-filled timber cribs or piers and the same inspector reported sufficient water and good anchorage for at least thirty vessels. Completion of the breakwaters was followed by the erection of a government light house, which still stands, just north of the Patent Line, on the Selkirk Tract.

Coincident with and probably to some extent productive of the government's interest in the locality was the dream of Colonel Robert Nichols and others of a thriving metropolis to cover the area south of the Patent Line and extending along the lake southward for a distance of a mile and inland about one and one-third miles, or over half a mile above the present Scenic Highway bridge across Salmon River. Modestly named the Village of Port Ontario, it was carefully mapped and hundreds of lots were sold during the boom which attended its proposed develop-

ment. Rivalry existed among owners along the river. Power canals were projected along either bank, and canal and dam rights bought and sold. In part the new village was settled and the considerable community which grew about the river's mouth boasted stores, two hotels, a church and no little commerce. So far had the development progressed that in October, 1837, the first issue of a good sized newspaper, the Port Ontario "Aurora" was published and printed within the confines of the new village.

Auspicious as seemed its plan and growth, the dream soon faded and only a cluster of dwellings at the crossroads and a few cottages along the shore now mark the site. The effect of the land division and sales of lots remains to trouble conveyancers. Variances between the Nichols survey and the old Wright Map of an earlier day still trouble in locating the lines of cottage lots. But for the development of the land along the lake as a recreational area by the building of cottages and the creation of a State Park, that section of the Town of Richland would today be purely a farming community. The harbor remains, however, still capable of development, still needed as refuge for lake craft, and when devolped we may yet see, though on a lesser scale than before planned, a considerable community about that harbor.

As I said at the outset, the history of a people is depicted in its land conveyances. Estates grow as the wealth of their owners increases and disintegrate as that wealth is distributed or disappears. Each change in fortune brings change in land titles, and back of each change is a story, drab or brilliant, waiting only to be sought and told. It marks history in the making.

Two Famous Abolitionists of Oswego County

(Paper Presented Before the Oswego Historical Society, September 30, 1940, by Miss Elizabeth Simpson, Vice-President of the Society)

When Miss Schuelke gave her scholarly paper on the Underground Railroad before this Society last year she quoted from Siebert the names of two local anti-slavery workers—James C. Jackson and Asa S. Wing. Of the former I thought that I had never heard and of the latter name there seemed to be only the vaguest memories in my mind. Investigation showed that I had frequently read James C. Jackson's name in the history of the old Pratville Presbyterian church, and that I had known the grandchildren of Asa S. Wing ever since school-days.

Thanks to the latter, Mrs. Jessie Holmes Smith of Dugway and Mrs. Mary Holmes Richards of Phoenix, to Mr. Jackson's cousin, John Jackson Clarke of Mexico City, D. F., and his great-grandson James A. Jackson of Pittsford, N. Y., and to Mrs. Kramer of the Dansville N. Y. Public Library, we may sketch a picture of these two men of our county who did much to create and crystalize the anti-slavery sentiment in this north country.

James Caleb Jackson

James Caleb Jackson was born in Manlius, New York, March 28, 1811, a grandson of Col. Giles Jackson, who was on the staff of General Horatio Gates at the battle of Saratoga and who engrossed the terms of capitulation signed by Burgoyne and a son of Dr. James Jackson, post surgeon of the United States forces stationed at Sackets Harbor in the War of 1812. James Caleb came of equally good stock on the side of his mother, Mary Ann Elderkin. She was born in December 1771, the daughter of Vine Elderkin, a captain in the Revolutionary War, and granddaughter of Col. Jedediah Elderkin, a distinguished Connecticut lawyer. Her mother was Lydia White, daughter of Rev. Stephen White who was for fifty-seven years pastor of the Congregational Church of Windham, Connecticut. At the age of seven, Mary Ann went to live with this maternal grandfather, in whose home she met Washington, LaFayette, Rochambeau, and General and Mrs. Benedict Arnold before his treason. At eleven she was given a year in a boarding school at Providence, R. I. When she was eighteen she traveled alone by canal packet to New York State to live with her father who had been obliged to seek employment at a distance from his family, while the mother worked at home in a store as clerk and book-keeper. When the parents and younger children were reunited, Mary Ann returned to Windham and apprenticed herself to a tailor to train herself for self-support.

At the age of twenty-three, a week after her marriage to Henry Clarke of Lebanon, Connecticut, this young bride traveled to Whitestown, New York, where the bridegroom owned land. After four months, they sold this property and pushed on into the West as far as Pompey. Riding through underbrush and brambles, Mary Ann had her dress almost torn off. The young Clarkes bought one hundred and thirty acres two miles from Pompey Hill and lived in a small log house without doors or windows, and only one chair. There the first baby was born in 1795. Three more were born during the eight years that the family stay-

ed in Pompey and in old age Mary Ann called these her pleasantest years.

In 1803 Mr. and Mrs. Clarke moved ten miles farther into the wilderness and kept a tavern, and later a flouring mill, at Manlius. This property, in turn, had been sold and wild land in Oswego County purchased just before the death of Henry Clarke from typhus fever in 1810. Mary Ann Elderkin Clarke was left a widow with six children at the age of thirty-eight.

In the meantime, her sister, Harriet Elderkin, had married Dr. James Jackson of Manlius in 1807, and in 1809 had died, leaving a new born baby daughter. And so after Mr. Clarke's death, Mrs. Clarke undertook the care of her brother-in-law's baby and home. Later the two were married and had three more children, of whom James Caleb was one.

These details from an autobiography written in her eighty-fifth year by Mary Ann Elderkin Clarke Jackson serve to show with what heritage this first of our two abolitionists was born.

From Mr. James C. Jackson's autobiography we learn that his formal education was interrupted at the age of twelve and, except for one winter spent with a cousin in Seneca Falls, was not resumed until he was sixteen, when a family council resulted in his entering the school of the Rev. Dr. Yates at Chittenango, called Polytechny, with the idea of preparing for college. He described himself as an inexperienced farm lad, dressed in countrified "sheep's grey," obliged to earn part of his fees by splitting wood and kindling fires for the masters, entering a school of one hundred and twenty lads, many of whom came from aristocratic slave-holding families of the South. Like many another new boy, he had to fight his way, taking on a South Carolina boy, a year his senior, step-son of the Rev. Dr. Beman of Troy, but being a good wrestler, he emerged victorious with the nick name "Young Hickory."

Two years later his father's death forced him to leave this school and to abandon all thought of college. To salvage the farm, still unpaid for, Mrs. Jackson formed a partnership with this son of hers, pooling their shares and renting those of the other heirs. Young James had no desire to become a farmer; but making a virtue of necessity, he accepted the roll and announced his intention of marrying. He had known the girl of his choice—Lucretia Edgerton Brewster of Prattville in the town of Mexico—ever since she attended the marriage of her father, the Hon. Elias Brewster, to Harriet Clarke, James Caleb's half-sister. In spite of her opposition to such a youthful marriage, Mrs. Jackson allowed the boy to go to Prattville to visit his sister, Mrs. Brewster. James Caleb made good use of his time and on September 10th, 1830, Lucretia Brewster became Mrs. James Caleb Jackson.

The youthful couple (he was 19) seem to have lived in Manlius, working the Jackson farm until a good opportunity came to sell it. After the sale, James Caleb, borrowing a large part of his mother's "thirds," bought, in 1833, a farm in Lucretia's native town of Mexico. County records show that he bought 145½ acres from Elezar and Mary Peake for $2400, the second house on the right as one goes from Lambs Corners, to Grafton Square. Here the Jacksons settled down with the idea of making it their permanent home and farming their life work. A son was born in 1836 and given the name of Giles for his great-grandfather and Elderkin for his grandmother Jackson. He must have been the baby whose illness, his father explained in a letter preserved by the Historical Society to Edwin W. Clarke of Oswego would prevent his attendance at an anti-slavery meeting

in Oswego in 1838. Mr. Jackson says that his wife was hopeful, cheerful, and happy in this home which he characterizes as simple and humble—the only ornaments on the parlor walls being a mirror and a twenty-five cent picture of "The Soldier's Departure," in a plain cherry frame. But James Caleb had within him stirrings of soul looking toward a broader life.

Anti-Slavery Meeting At Colosse

He was early converted to the ideal of the immediate emancipation of the slaves by the arguments of Theodore Clarke, cousin of Grace Greenwood, and had in his turn, converted his friend, Algernon Savage, an unusually gifted fellow-townsman at Mexico who was teaching in a nearby district school. So when a meeting was called in the Colosse Baptist church to listen to an anti-slavery lecture by a youth from New York, the two friends were, naturally, among those present. The audience was predominantly pro-slavery, or, at the best, favored colonization of the blacks in Africa. On the pro-slavery side of the question were the village lawyer, the Judge of the county court, the Town Clerk, the County Treasurer, a Member of Assembly, and the Baptist, Methodist and Unitarian ministers. After the lecture "Quaker" Wells, an older man, was the only one who challenged the position of these worthies and when it was suggested that a public debate be held on a future date with three speakers on a side Mr. Wells asked young Jackson and Savage, as the only two known abolitionists in the town, to help him defend the anti-slavery side.

Accordingly the debate was held in a large school-house with room for three or four hundred people, on two propositions "that American slavery is a sin and that it ought to be immediately abolished." For six nights the debate continued, with the lawyer, the County Treasurer, and the Assemblyman taking the negative. On Saturday evening after a three and a half hour session a vote was taken on each proposition separately. The affirmative won unanimously on the first, that slavery was a sin; and on the second, that it should be immediately abolished, there was a tie. But the chairman, the pro-slavery Baptist minister, had seen a great light and, to the amazement of all, cast the deciding vote for the anti-slavery argument.

The fame of this debate brought repeated invitations to young Savage and Jackson to go out far and wide to school houses to present their views. As one was a farmer and the other a teacher, Sunday was the only day on which they could answer these calls. It was contrary to the strict Presbyterian upbringing of both Mr. and Mrs. Jackson to hold or attend other than religious meetings on the Sabbath and, when James had decided that he was divinely called to conduct the anti-slavery meetings on that holy day, it was with Lucretia's disapproval that he did so, and in a very quiet but firm manner she made known her attitude. The first Sabbath meeting was held in a large school house five miles from home. The speakers found so many assembled that wagons had to be drawn up to the open windows to hold the overflow. Mr. Jackson tells us that Algernon Savage talked to the people like an inspired prophet for an hour and then Jackson followed, holding the audience for another hour. They walked the five miles home after the meeting and found a good warm supper awaiting them, but otherwise Lucretia's greeting seems not to have been equally warm.

Slavery Debates Wax Popular

After morning service at the Prattville Presbyterian church the next Sunday the two young speakers slipped away at noon

to another school house where they argued either that those who claimed Biblical sanction for slavery misinterpreted the Scriptures or that the Bible was not the word of God. This heresy was too much for their pastor and the next Sunday he preached a mighty defense of slavery and denunciation of their desecration of the Sabbath. When he was challenged to meet the boys in debate he laughed them to scorn. But they succeeded in engaging the school-house only thirty rods away from his church where they might make their answer to his arguments. They invited "Quaker" Wells again to add his eloquence to theirs and they received Ransom Goss Williams of Colosse as a volunteer supporter of their cause. Three or four times as many as the school-house would hold came and some of the leaders of the church opened the meeting-house for their use. Perhaps five hundred people crowded into the body of the house and the gallery. From 2 o'clock in the afternoon until 7 o'clock in the evening, the four abolitionists debated against the whole audience. They "pushed these men from Genesis to Revelation and crowded them back again," insisting upon the New Testament teaching that there was "neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free," rather than the Mossic law of the Old. After five hours they had made many friends but some bitter enemies as well; and none more bitter than Mrs. Jackson's father, Elias Brewster, and her uncle, Dr. Sardius Brewster. For a year the father and son-in-law never met, leaving the wife and daughter between the upper and nether mill stones.

The history of Dansville, N. Y., tells of Mrs. Jackson from 1830 to 1847 having to assume the responsibility of sheltering fugitive slaves in her Colosse home during her husband's numerous absences. One wonders why no mention of this connection with the Underground R. R. is made by her husband in his autobiographical notes; but perhaps the habit of secrecy in this connection was too strong to be broken even in later years. Siebert, however, indicates that Mr. Jackson was one of the forwarding agents for Gerrit Smith's refugees.

Talks On Undeterred By Loss Of Supporters

But in spite of all family or public opposition James C. Jackson in company with his friend, Algernon Savage, continued to spread their doctrines into all parts of Oswego County, when suddenly Mr. Savage sickened and died at the age of twenty-four. Soon the elderly "Quaker" Wells also died and Ransom Goss Williams obtained a clerkship in New York City. Thus Mr. Jackson was left alone, confronted by the temptation to relax his efforts and win the approval of Judge Brewster, thus pleasing his wife, the Judge's daughter. But he resisted the temptation and at the invitation of a son of the Rev. Oliver Leavitt he visited Palermo and there made his first anti-slavery argument without support of another speaker.

That autumn when he was drawing his winter supply of wood, he met with a very serious accident that paralyzed his legs and rendered him helpless for months while he was attended by his wife and his bitter opponent, Dr. Brewster. No sooner had he recovered than he accepted an invitation from Hiram Gilbert, who had heard his Palermo address, and the latter's brother, Andrus Gilbert, to speak at Gilbertsville. He found his host, Hiram Gilbert, a noble and a delightful man and Mrs. Gilbert as fine a woman and cordial hostess. Both husband and wife were very devout and musical as were their half dozen children, almost down to the baby in arms. Meetings were held for four or five nights, resulting in the formation of the Gilbertsville Anti-

Slavery Society, one of the first local societies in this state.

As the "Farmer Boy Speaker" Mr. Jackson, became more and more widely known. At one of his meetings held in Scriba, a delegation from East Oswego, headed by the extremely handsome and cultured Congregational minister, were so favorably impressed with his work that they insisted upon his coming to their city to speak in the Court House which was then serving the Congregationalists as a meeting-house, in spite of his objections that he was not fit to address a city audience. He was entertained at the home of Dr. Deodotus Clarke at the invitation of the Doctor's son, Sidney, whose wife was Olive Jackson, a favorite cousin of James Caleb. When he called upon the minister he had an embarrassing experience with the door-bell, a hitherto unknown quantity. He was seriously embarrassed, too, at the meeting by not being able to find the notes for his prepared speech. This resulted in the discovery of his ability to make a long extemporaneous speech and with this knowledge came added power as an advocate.

Jackson Heads Peterboro Pilgrimage

In October 1835, Mr. Jackson answered the call for an Anti-slavery Convention in Utica and the formation of a state society, and en-route on the packet boat from Fulton, he was introduced to Gerrit Smith who was destined greatly to influence Mr. Jackson's future career. When the good citizens of Utica drove the delegates out of their city and Gerrit Smith invited them to reconvene at his home in Peterboro, James C. Jackson was one of the two enterprising youths who hired a canal boat to carry one hundred and four men to Canastota, where, after a voyage of twelve hours, they were landed on the bank of the canal at 3 A. M. October 22. Thence they marched a hundred strong singing, praying, laughing, shouting to Peterboro for ten miles up a succession of mountains, as Mr. Jackson called them, for he said, Peterboro rose at least a thousand feet above Canastota. Given their breakfasts by the people of the village, the delegates reconvened at 11 o'clock in the Presbyterian Church and heard Gerrit Smith renounce his former belief in colonization in Africa as a solution for the Negro problem and proclaim his adherence to the doctrines of the Abolitionists. At the close of the meeting Mr. Jackson and his companion, young Sweesey, son of the New Haven minister, were taken to Canastota by Gerrit Smith's team and from there walked forty-two miles back to the Jackson home in Colosse.

Jackson Removes to Peterboro

A wider field of work began to open up before Mr. Jackson. In spirit he was no longer a farmer but became Oswego County Agent for the State Anti-slavery Society. In 1837 he attended a state convention of the society at Penn Yan and spoke of slavery as a legal question that must be settled in accordance with the law. His presentation of this view appealed so strongly to Gerrit Smith that he urged the speaker to give up farming and devote himself entirely to the emancipation cause. Mr. Jackson states that Mr. Smith bought his Mexico farm and gave him a home in Peterboro whither he moved his family in the spring of 1838. Whatever financial arrangements were made, title to the farm must have remained with the Jacksons, for the record of deeds shows that James C. Jackson and wife Lucretia sold the farm which they purchased in 1833, to Minor Calkins in 1839 for a consideration of $3,-302.

Mr. Jackson was concerning himself with Oswego County pol-

itics in 1838. In Mexico's local history collection we have a draft of a long letter that he wrote to Thurlow Weed urging the necessity of electing abolition Whigs to Congress in the forthcoming election and in another letter he begged our local Whig leader, Starr Clark, to offer himself as such a candidate.

Friendship With Greeley and Garrison

In September 1838, the Massachussetts Anti-slavery Society engaged the services of Mr. Jackson as their agent and speaker at a salary of $800 and traveling expenses. On his trip to Boston he sought out in New York a boarding house conducted by a disciple of Sylvester Graham, advocate of diet reform, and in Boston he was directed to another Graham house by Horace Greeley whom he chanced to meet and who then became his life-long friend. In Boston, too, he met William Lloyd Garrison, editor of "The Liberator."

Mr. Jackson began his lecturing in Massachussetts dressed in a swallow tailed coat of blue broadcloth with gilt buttons, grayish pantaloons, and a vest of picturesque velvet, rustic in effect, he knew, but quite in character for the part of "The Farm Boy Speaker," he felt. Friends finding the outfit good but unfashionable gave him a well-tailored suit of green or brown broadcloth and taught him that there was a philosophy of dress and, no doubt, bolstered his morale and gave him new power over his audiences. Within a year he was called to even a wider field by the New England Society and as their agent he spoke in all the Eastern states, except Maine and in the Central states.

In the winter of 1839-40 the abolitionists split on the question whether or not to organize a political party of their own. The politically minded group seceded from the American Society and took with them "The Emancipator." Accordingly the American Society set up a new paper, called "The National Anti-slavery Standard" and made Mr. Jackson acting editor; but his duties as the newly elected Secretary of the American Society forced him to resign the editorship in which he was succeeded by Lydia Maria Child of Boston. The next winter Gerrit Smith issued a call for a meeting at Warsaw, N. Y., to form an anti-slavery political party and Mr. Jackson was sent to oppose such action. In susequent meeting at West Bloomfield, two colored men arrived pursued by their owner and the sheriff of Ontario County. The delegates turned them over to the Underground Railroad and they were smuggled across the border to Niagara Falls. While Mr. Jackson was influencing the convention to vote against the organization of a political party he became converted to the idea himself. Although he did make one more speech at Leroy against his own new views, he repented and refused again to take that stand for the American Society. He remained in their employ as agent and Secretary until the winter of 1842.

Johnson Becomes Partner in Ownership of Albany "Patriot"

At that time at the suggestion of Gerrit Smith, he became associated as editor with a paper of the Liberty Party, published at Cazenovia, "The Madison County Abolitionist," and thus earned the personal enmity of William Lloyd Garrison. For a year this editorial work continued in conjunction with lecture tours in Madison County with only week ends in Peterboro where there was now another son, James H., now two years old. Ownership of the paper changed and the name became "The Liberty Press," and Mr. Jackson continued as editor until 1843. In that year he formed a part-

nership with the Rev. Abel Brown in the ownership of The Albany Patriot," which Mr. Jackson edited until 1846.

Turned To Medicine Through Illness

That winter while at Honeoye, N. Y., on a lecture tour Mr. Jackson was stricken with an illness that kept him there all winter, cared for by Mrs. Jackson, who left the house and family in Peterboro under competent care. In the spring of 1847, recovery being considered impossible, Mr. Jackson sold his Albany paper and was taken home to Peterboro to die, as all supposed. But hearing of a Dr. Silas O. Gleason who was using the Priessnitz water cure at Cuba, N. Y., he went there in a forlorn hope for help. Convinced of the efficacy of the treatment by the improvement in his own condition and that of other patients, he formed a partnership with Dr. Gleason, and they opened a Water Cure called "Glen Haven" at the head of Skaneateles Lake. Here Mr. Jackson continued to improve, studied medicine, and eventually received the M. D. degree from Syracuse University. At the end of three years he purchased Dr. Gleason's interests in Glen Haven Water Cure and continued as proprietor and physician for eight years. At some time during these years the establishment was burned with the loss of all of the doctor's records and historically valuable anti-slavery correspondence.

Perhaps as the result of this fire Dr. Jackson moved to Dansville, N. Y., in 1858 where on October 1, he opened another "Water Cure" called "Our Home on the Hillside," later to be called the Jackson Sanatorium. Besides treating his patients, Dr. Jackson lectured and wrote extensively on the laws of health and psycho-hygiene, advocating dress, diet, and medical reforms. He prepared what was, perhaps, the first health cereal food "Granula" and the cereal beverage "Soma." The Mexico Independent of July 6th 1866 records the burning of the Water Cure at Dansville; but the buildings were restored and for many years used for their original purpose and after the retirement of the Jackson family, for several other purposes.

In both the Glen Haven and the Dansville establishments, Mrs. Jackson, known as "Mother Jackson" by the patients, continued active in household management until 1868 when she gave over these duties to her daughter-in-law, Mrs. James H. Jackson. She was said to have been proud of her Puritan descent from Elder William Brewster of Plymouth Colony and to have had a wonderfully developed character, to be noted for quietness, steadfastness, sunny disposition, and all Christian graces. Possibly these were just the needed complements to her husband's nature, for he is described by his cousin, John Jackson Clarke, former Oswegonian, as "a human dynamo in the pursuit of his many and varied interests."

The Doctor died in Dansville July 11th 1895; but some years before had passed on the management of the Sanatorium to his son, Dr. James H. Jackson and he, in turn, was succeeded by his son Dr. James Arthur Jackson, the fourth physician in direct descent in the Jackson family. I believe that Mr. James A. Jackson of Pittsford, N. Y., is today the sole surviving descendant.

Asa S. Wing

Asa Smith Wing, according to his family, friend and fellow-worker of Dr. James C. Jackson, was the son of William Wing and Esther Follette, and was born "down East" or "back East", as our early settlers used to say, which meant, in this case, the vicinity of West Winfield or Bridgewater, N. Y. As a child he was brought to Oswego County when the family settled

in the town of New Haven.

The boy Asa attended the Rensselaer-Oswego Academy (now Mexico Academy and Central School) and one episode of his school-days was told at the semi-centennial of the Academy in 1876 by his school-mate, the Rev. Dr. Henry Kendall. These two and ten other boys subject to militia duty reported on training-day at Colosse in 1836, armed with alpen-stocks made from sticks picked up at the site of the new Academy building, then under construction. This infraction of military regulations displeased the Colonel and he ordered Private Kendall and Orderly-Sergeant Wing and nine of the ten other school-boys under arrest. Borrowing a fife and drum and taking along the Corporal who had been put in charge of the prisoners, the boys staged a parade of their own that stole the Colonel's show and left him speechless with rage. After dinner he so far recovered as to be able to tell the mutineers with blistering vocabulary what he might have done to them.

Even as a student Asa Wing spoke out for temperance and against slavery. Unpopular as these reforms were in many quarters, his personality won the respect and devotion of all. One old lady who knew him told his grand-daughter, "Everyone just about worshipped him."

After his marriage in 1848 to Caroline Mitchell, daughter of Levi Mitchell of Mexico, their home was at Colosse on the right hand side of the road between the corners and "the million dollar bridge" (now the home of Mrs. Spoor). Three daughters were born to the Wings, two living to womanhood, Myrtis who became Mrs. Jesse Holmes of Dugway and Frances who married F. M. Wills, and their son, James, I believe, lived in Pulaski or in the town of Richland. A dark closet in the Colosse home seemed to Myrtis to have been especially designed as a hiding place for runaway slaves.

Mr. Wing's diary of 1850-51, put at our disposal by his grand-daughter, Mrs. Jessie Holmes Smith, shows that he was living the life of a farmer, doing "chores", buying and setting out cherry, pear, and plum trees, grape vines, gooseberry bushes, grafting apple trees, going to the County Fair at New Haven and buying three new kinds of seed potatoes, paying off a small mortgage on the farm to P. N. Allen. He attended and spoke at the funeral of his neighbor the wife of "Quaker" Wells. He had his younger daughter vaccinated, for small-pox was epidemic in town. He contracted the disease himself and was then vaccinated, with seemingly mitigating effect, for within ten days from his first recorded symptoms he was repairing the cellar-way and again doing his own "chores."

Early Contact With Dr. Jackson

The very first entry in the diary on February 19th, 1850 indicates some association with Dr. Jackson for he notes that he took the stage for Syracuse and Glen Haven. Mr. Wing's general health was poor and he was suffering, and had been for four years, with a disease of the throat that interfered with articulation and finally allowed him to speak only in whispers. In Syracuse, he consulted a "clairvoiant" and was assured that his throat was not in itself diseased but was indirectly affected by organs weakened by overexertion, that it was doubtful if any treatment would restore his voice. In Syracuse, too, he listened with interest to stories of "the Rochester knockings" or rappings of spirits, as recounted by some of his anti-slavery friends. But when this group sought answers to their questions, the spirits gave no reply.

The real purpose of the Syracuse visit, however, was to attend on February 20 the Liberty

Party Convention, where Gerrit Smith received Henry Clay's compromise proposition. On the 21st Mr. Wing attended the Anti-sectarian Convention, a movement in which Gerrit Smith was also interested, believing that all Christians should belong to one church-Christ's—and that alone. This belief brought Mr. Wing into conflict with his church, the Baptist, in which he lost his membership because he chose to take communion with other denominations.

Oswego Convention Names Smith For Presidency

In October 1850, he attended the National Liberty Party Convention in Oswego at which Gerrit Smith was nominated for President and S. K. Ward for Vice-President of the United States in 1852. On the 17th the whole family attended a meeting of indignation against the Fugitive Slave Bill in the Town Hall in Mexico which was well filled, with great excitement prevailing. On the 23rd he was off for Canastota and an Anti-slavery Convention. In January 1851, he was in attendance on the State Convention against the Fugitive Slave Law and served on several committees. In the meantime he had received through J. B. Edwards from Gerrit Smith a deed for 42 acres of land in Franklin County with $10 in money in recognition of his intense interest in the work of the abolitionists.

Mr. Wing was also going in for local politics. At the spring caucus of 1850 he was nominated by the Democrats for Justice of the Peace. In the ensuing campaign, some of his French neighbors, having lingered late at the Colosse tavern, went home, lashing and racing their horses, singing at the top of their lungs "Wing, Wing's the man for us," in spite of his well known stand on the temperance question. At town meeting on March 5, he was elected Justice of the Peace, along with the rest of the Democratic ticket. That evening the newly elected officials gave an oyster supper at R. Kelly's hotel for some sixty guests at a cost of $25. Apparently they paid for it themselves for Mr. Wing had to pay $2.00, after paying fifty cents toward a team to bring voters to the polls. Stopping in at the Democratic Convention at Union Square in September he found that "Hunkers and liberty men got nothing. They have the exalted privilege of voting for the Barnburners, I think I shall be excused." After consultation with other adherents of the Free-soilers, and finding general distrust of their policies, he formally withdrew from that group in a letter of September 29. Throughout October he had charge of the Liberty Party ballots of his district, distributing them to Redfield, Constantia, Sandy Creek, and Richland. On November 5th, he attended election at Colosse and found everything quiet, "in spite of a free rum shop on the corner"; but he had, as he wrote, "some confab with sham Democrats because I would not sustain their ticket." Seventeen Liberty votes were cast in that precinct.

Active in Underground Railway

Mr. Wing's opposition to slavery took a practical turn when he kept in his home for several days a fleeing slave family, consisting of a father, mother, and five little daughters. While waiting for their team to rest the father made himself useful by chopping wood for the Wings. Finally the refugee Thompsons left for Mexico village, intending to cross at some point into Canada over the ice. But when they were never heard from, it was feared by their benefactors that they had all been drowned. This may have been only one such experience at the Wing home out of many, for it was to Jackson and Wing that Gerrit

Smith was accustomed to forward many of his fugitives to be sent through Oswego, Mexico Point, or Port Ontario to Canada. Asa Wing was also the agent to whom a thousand anti-slavery tracts were sent to be distributed in communities too poor to pay for a speaker.

But, undoubtedly, Asa S. Wing's greatest contribution to the cause of the slave consisted of his constant and unremitting efforts as an orator. Even when he could speak only in a whisper, such was his eloquence and power that audiences would eagerly strain their ears to hear his pleas for emancipation of the negroes. Much of this work was done in Oswego and Fulton, but he was also called to Connecticut where he spent considerable time. The Local History Museum of Mexico has his expense account for the journey to New England which was to be paid by the Friends Of Liberty.

Due in part to over-exertion and strain in this work, Mr. Wing's health continued to fail and Dr. Jackson took him to his Sanatorium in an effort to save his life. Many of the Doctor's ideas on dress and diet reform were introduced into the Wing household and carried by the daughter, Mrs. Holmes, into her own home. In the days of long skirts, she wore short work dresses. Her graham gems made by a Jackson recipe, calling only for well beaten graham flour and cold water dropped into iron gem-pans and baked in a hot oven, were of delicious flavor, though her husband, accustomed to his mother's rich food, did not appreciate their wholesome plainess.

Asa S. Wing died of consumption March 8th 1854, at the early age of thirty-eight. An obituary said: "The first time we saw him was ten years ago. We heard of him before, that he was a young man of great heart, abilities, and eloquence; but then we saw and heard him holding thousands of men and women by the force of his logic in the great grove of Syracuse, pressing the claims of the noble Birney against Van Buren and Clay, breasting the storm of '44 pregnant with Texas Annexation and continental despotism. From that time, he was a public man and identified with the first class of anti-slavery orators in the State, including Gerrit Smith and J. C. Jackson, certainly inferior to none in innocence, purity, benevolence and all that is lovely in human character."

Thousands Attended Wing Monument Dedication

On September 11th 1855, between two and three thousand people gathered in Mexico for the dedication of a monument in honor of Asa S. Wing. Charles G. Case of Fulton presided at the ceremonies and Frederick Douglas was orator of the day. A poem eleven pages long was read by A. C. Hills; a hymn written for the occasion by John Pierpont of Boston was sung to the air of "God Save the King." George W. Clark and his two daughters of Rochester furnished the music and prayer was offered by Rev. Luther Lee, a prominent Wesleyan Methodist minister of Syracuse, first pastor of an anti-slavery group. Copies of these tributes are in the possession of Mr. Wing's grand-daughters. Just recently a program of the day's ceremonies was discovered and presented to our local history collection by Mrs. Ralph Shumway—perhaps the only existing copy. The only additional information it gives is that the placing of the cap-stone was part of the ceremony and that the benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Thomas A. Weed, pastor of the Mexico Presbyterian Church (1847-1870).

The monument was the first one erected in the village cemetery. It bears the inscription:

ASA S. WING

Died March 8th 1854 aged 38 years.

He Trusted God and Loved His Neighbor.

Erected by the Friends of Freedom

Sept. 11th 1855

In his oration, Frederick Douglass said:—"I think I never met a man in whom the fountains of benevolence and sympathy with the injured were deeper and purer. Certainly I never met with a zeal, more noble, untiring and invincible than his. To him was allotted to possess a spirit greatly beyond the strength of his physical constitution. The earnestness of his sympathy, the warmth of his temperament, his natural abhorrence of oppression and the coldness and indifference manifested on all sides to the overshadowing and stupendous crime of slavery deeply disturbed him and swept him on to labors far too arduous for his slender frame.—He poured out his life for the perishing slave, pleading for him with an eloquence and earnestness which could have scarcely been more direct, pathetic, and touching, had his own wife and children been on the auction block."

"He did not shrink from the perils and hardships of the cause in the day of small things. He dared to be called an abolitionist when the demon of slavery made inquisition for blood and mob violence howled from one end of the state to the other."

"He died a martyr, a glorious martyr, to the cause of emancipation."

Early Van Buren Residents of Oswego County

(Paper Presented Before Oswego Historical Society at Fulton, October 28, 1940, by John E. Horrocks of the Faculty of Fulton High School)

Cornelis Maesen Van Buurmalsen, the first of the American line of the present Van Buren family, sailed for the new world in the summer of 1631, bringing his wife, Catalyntje Martense and a son, Martin. Cornelis came as an articled servant of the patroon, Van Renssalaer, and settled on the Van Renssalaer holdings at a place called Papsknee, on the east side of the Hudson, near Greenbrush. A descendant, thinking the name Van Buurmalsen cumbersome in its new environment, changed it to Van Buren, though, since he was unable to write, he never did get around to setting it down on paper.

Cornelis' son, Martin, in turn had a son, Peter Martense, who following the precepts so ably set forth in Genesis, in turn had a son Martin, who becomes of interest to us, because in 1669 he moved to Kinderhook, the town from which his grandson, John, the ancestor of the Van Burens of this vicinity, moved to come to Oswego county. Apparently Martin had risen above the station in life occupied by his ancestors, for in Kinderhook he settled on land deeded to him by Derick Wessels of Albany. Incidently, Martin was the grandfather of the man who was one day to be President of the United States, a distinction that he could hardly have anticipated as he looked at the infant form of the baby named for him. The Van Burens, down through history, have kept certain names for their own and have given them to their offspring with, to us, bewildering regularity: John, David, Peter, Martin, and Volkert—over and over again.

While the Van Burens of Kinderhook and Rennsalaerwyck were growing used to the country that they must have found so different from their native Holland, there was a vast tract of land to the west to which white men had never penetrated. We of Oswego County today look upon ourselves as "Easterners" in every sense of the word, except perhaps that we lack the twang of the real down east Yankee, but in those days, following 1670, the Oswego River wended its way to Ontario in the midst of a vast tract of unchartered and, except for the Indians, unpeopled, wilderness.

Oswego River in the 1750's

An early writer (Cooper) speaking of the 1750s, was able to describe this vicinity from Three Rivers to Oswego thus: "The Oswego . . . was a deep, dark stream, of no great width, its still, gloomy looking current winding its way among overhanging trees, that, in particular spots, almost shut out the light of the heaven. Here and there some fallen giant of the forest lay nearly across its surface, rendering care necessary to avoid the limb; and, most of the distance the lower branches and leaves of the trees of smaller growth were laved by its waters . . . . The entire scene was . . . . luxuriant, wild, and full of promise, even in its rudest state." It is true that a fort did exist at the mouth of the river and the lake was used, but "there existed a blank space of 100 miles between the last fort

at the head of the Mohawk and the outlet of the Oswego."

Soon after the formation of the United Colonies the new government received the land in this vicinity as a cession from the Iroquois tribes and soon, in 1790, made arrangements to dispose of it as bounties for Revolutionary services. But few of the land patents issued, however, went to the soldiers who had done the fighting as most of them had already sold their claims to others. On the west side of the river, including the present site of Fulton, were the survey townships of Hannibal and Lysander, which had been surveyed into lots comprising about 600 acres each. Within these survey townships was the political township of Granby, which did not, of course, coincide wholly with the Granby of today.

Early Settlers Suffer Hardship

To this vicinity, in the spring of 1792, there came together three settlers from Stillwater, in what was then Albany County, but is now Saratoga. These men were Major Lawrence Van Valkenburgh, Captain Henry Bush, and a Mr. Lay. Captain Bush had purchased Lot 74 of Ganse-voort. The nearest settlement at this time was at "Salt Point," (modern Syracuse) where Major Van Valkenburgh bought a yoke of oxen to lighten his labors as a settler. The men at once set to building cabins. Captain Bush built his near the west end of the present lower dam. It is supposed to have been quite a good one for the period. The first several years were hard ones which included a death and at least one serious brush with the Indians. The Indian trouble seems to have arisen as a result of a love affair between Valentine, one of Van Valkenburgh's hired men, and an Indian squaw.

The winters were very severe for the new settlers and forced them twice to abandon thir homes during the winter season. One winter (1794) was so severe that Major Van Valkenburgh spent the whole winter at the fort in Oswego with his family as the guest of the Hessian commander, Captain Schroeder.

Captain Bush seems to have been particularly ambitious, for he built, during the first years of his residence, a barn which was afterwards quite celebrated; being about 30 feet long, 20 feet wide and 12 feet high. It was built of logs over a foot in diameter. Despite all this work he moved away in 1797, and on the land that he had left vacant moved John Van Buren, a cousin of President Martin Van Buren and the grandson of the Martin whose new station in life had permitted him to become a Kinderhook landowner.

First Van Buren Settler Came In 1796

John was born in Kinderhook in 1753 and after the usual, married Catherine Van Valkenburgh, who died after presenting him with a son named, Peter. Catherine was a relative of the Major Van Valkenburgh who moved here in 1792. John married again, this time, Elizabeth Sharpe, and by her had four sons, John, Jacob, David, and Volkert. Not long after his second marriage, in 1790, John moved from Kinderhook to Canada. While there he corresponded with Major Van Valkenburgh and finally decided to join him here in what is now Oswego County. In 1796 he came down the Oswego river and located on "Indian Point" near the lower landing on the west side of the Oswego river. From there he moved to Captain Bush's property and came into possession of the "fine" house and the big barn. It was there that David, the youngest of John's five sons, was born in 1798.

One day while the family were living on the Bush place the father was working some distance from the house, and Mrs. Van Buren, confronted with the appetites of a lusty male family made some

porridge and placed it outside to cool. Some time later she went out to get it and discovered the last of it vanishing down the throat of a bear who also had a lusty appetite.

Shortly afterwards (1798) they moved once again, this time to the east side of the river. (One account gives the date of this moving as 1796). As a matter of fact, by 1799, everyone of the early residents who had settled on the west side of the river, with the possible exception of the Frenchman, Penoyer, had left for a new location on the East side of the river.

It would be interesting to know the real reason for such an egress from the west side. Possibly it may have been because of the swampy nature of the ground; or possibly because of the fact that there had been a great deal of difficulty about the titles of many of the lots on "the miiltary tract" since some of the soldiers who drew grants of land had sold them over and over again. Or perhaps it was just fashionable to move across.

The Van Burens Were "River Men"

In any event, John Van Buren and his family moved to the east side of the river and built a temporary log cabin on some land which Major Van Valkenburgh had purchased from George Scriba. Soon after the family moved over, John's wife died, and the other boys were left with the care of their one-year-old brother, David.

John Van Buren and his sons gained a great deal of their livelihood on the river, along which they became quite celebrated. They rafted logs, boated, canalled, and after a time became proprietors of several riverside business ventures.

In those days, before the Oswego canal was built, goods were brought down from the East through the Mohawk River, Oneida Lake, and Oswego River to a point just above the falls in the Oswego River at what is now Fulton in what were called "Durham" boats—large flat-bottomed boats carrying about twenty-five tons of freight each and propelled on the river by men going from stem to stern on "running boards" provided with cleats and pushing poles against the bottom. When the "Durham" boats reached the falls the freight was transferred to ox wagons on one side of the river or other, carried down stream a mile and a quarter and re-embarked below the rapids in bateaux propelled by oars, and carrying about eight tons each. The bateaux then moved down to the mouth of the Oswego. Sometimes "Durham" boats might be found below the falls and still more frequently bateaux were found above them. The Van Burens, big, burly men that they were, were well suited for the tasks that this sort of work involved.

The land history of the east side of the river, the new home of the Van Burens, forms an interesting chapter in the history of the state. Members of the Roosevelt family purchased a great deal of land (about 500,000 acres) from the State of New York, paying three shillings, one penny (39 cents) an acre, and in 1792 the Roosevelts sold the land to George Frederick William Augustus Scriba, who had it surveyed into townships by Benjamin Wright. Town No. 17 was called "Fredericksburg" after George Scriba's son, Frederick. Town 17 is of particular interest to us because it was in "Fredericksburg" and its vicinity that much of the subsequent history of the Van Buren family centers.

Van Valkenburgh's Tavern

In the spring of 1795, Major Lawrence Van Valkenburgh had left his location on the west side and purchased "Cluet's location" on the east side of the river below the falls which is just south of the boundaries of Town 17. He

built his summer home on the peninsula afterward called "Orchard Lock." Perceiving the need of a tavern for accommodating travelers using the River highway, he opened his home for that purpose. The house was a frame structure with log compartments at either end, the middle parts being used for parties, dances, town meetings, and other entertainments. It became a headquarters for the people of the surrounding country. Salina Church, the girl who afterward married Jacob, John Van Buren's son, related that the first dance she ever attended was at Van Valkenburgh's tavern, where the music consisted of the melodious voice of a colored woman, a servant of Peter Sharp.

The British at that time still held Oswego, and a story is told that one time some British soldiers from the fort were holding a drinking party at Van Valkenburgh's tavern. During the party the soldiers began to cheer for King George. John Van Buren, who had been drinking on the other side of the room, sprang to his feet and gave three cheers for George Washington. For this act of patriotism he was obliged to take to horse with the soldiers in hot pursuit. John was an interesting character who during his lifetime had done enough hard work for several men. One time when asked why he kept up such a pace replied, "It is better to wear out than to rust out."

Carried Corn To Salt Point On Back

Even as late as the above incident (shortly before 1800) the entire population of what is now the site of Volney was scattered along the river bank a little above, but principally below, the site of the present city of Fulton. At that time the place was celebrated mainly for its portage and fisheries. The few improvements that had been made were crude and unimportant. No dams or bridges had been thrown across the river. Quantities of silver eel, salmon and other fish were caught in aboundance. The Van Burens, who had begun to grow corn on their property, usually took it to Salt Point (Syracuse) on their backs, finding their way there by blazed trees. One day one of the Van Buren boys was taking some corn into town when he was chased up a tree by a bear and was forced to stay there all night. Soon after that the Van Burens built a boat and rowed their corn a good part of the way.

The Van Burens now found themselves becoming prosperous and substantial citizens of the region. The log cabin was abandoned for a wooden house which was distinquished because it bore no nails in any part of it.

Terms of a Scriba Lease

The eldest son, Peter, who was born in Kinderhook in 1781, had married Elizabeth Althouse, and on October 12, 1805, he entered into an agreement with George Scriba which made him a landholder. He leased twenty-three and a half acres in lots 10 and 12 of the village of Fredericksburgh (town 17). The lease ran for a period of fourteen years and cost Peter $4.70 rental a year, the first rent to be paid three years after he took possession. But this was not so easy as it sounded, for he was supposed to plant 70 apple trees "of good fruit, not less than eight feet in height when planted, to be set in due season, and arranged in regular and proper form for an orchard, at least forty feet distant from each other, and to be enclosed with a good, strong, lawful fence". As though that were not enough—"and it is further agreed . . . that the . . lessee . . shall leave for the accommodation of his neighbors, a road or a street around the said lot of one rod wide." And in addition, to make sure that there was no loafing, "and

shall also . . . cut and clear off all the wood and timber on said ground so left for a street; and also . . inclose said lot with a good straight fence, leaving said street as aforesaid." All of which had to be completed in the first three years of his tenancy.

Peter also rose to prominence as constable of Mexico in 1803 and 1804. (This was before Volney was formed.) He had three children, Janet, Rachael, and John, known as "Black John" or "Black Jack."

In the meantime the Fredericksburg settlement was beginning to grow. John Van Buren had finished his frame house and had rented a second one from George Scriba. While this was happening, John Van Buren's friend, Whitman Church, hearing of the advantages of this country had moved here in 1809 from Kinderhook and put up the second frame house in the town not far from John's. He must have found the country a bit more frontierlike than Kinderhook for his life was made miserable by wolves who took a fancy to the sheep he was trying to raise. One night the wolves crept under the house and killed six or eight sheep without disturbing the family who slept overhead. John Van Buren called on Church the next morning before he was up and startled him with, "Hallo, Neighbor! Are you going to sleep all day and let the wolves kill all of your sheep?"

Descendants of Early Van Burens

Mr. Church had a daughter, Salina. Jacob, another of John Van Buren's sons, wishing to be neighborly, often took her to Van Valkenburgh's tavern to dance. Propinquity at last got in its deadly work and they were married. There were five children, James, Mary, Thomas, Martin, and John. This John was called "White John," to distinguish him from Peter's "Black John." Bert and Cora Van Buren, who live in Fulton now, are descended from James Van Buren, and Harry Payne, another Fulton resident, is a direct descendant of "White John."

John Van Buren's third son, John, Jr., who was probably baptized in Canada in 1791, married a girl named Elizabeth Althouse, who was a niece of his elder brother Peter's wife who was was also named Elizabeth Althouse. They had five children, John, called "Stub" to distinguish him from the other Johns in the family, Dan, from whom the Osborne sisters (Helen and Mabel E.) of Fulton are descended, Charles, Morgan, and Elizabeth.

Volkert Amassed Fortune

Volkert, John's fourth son, was in some ways the most successful of his family. He owned, among other things, the grist and flour mill at Battle Island, and the sawmill on nearby Black Creek. His land holdings totaled 1,000 acres, and he owned land a mile each way from the Bennett house near Black Creek. As a matter of fact, he built of brick the Bennett house which in its day was known as one of the finest mansions in Central New York. (It stands on the west side of the East River road opposite the point where the Black Creek road enters the East River road.) Volkert married Phoebe Fredenburgh and had three sons, Volkert, Jacob, and Edward. The Bennett family some of whose members reside in the old Volkert Van Buren mansion today, are descended from Edward Van Buren.

David, the baby of John Van Buren's family, possibly lived the most interesting life. He first went to school at the foot of what is today known as "Seneca Hill." His teacher was Benjamin Robinson who taught in this vicinity from 1804 on. Afterwards David went to school

one summer in Van Valkenburgh's barn. Later, in 1810, the Van Burens and others got together and built a schoolhouse a quarter of a mile south of "Orchard Lock". While he was in school one of David's classmates was Andrew Althouse, brother of John, Jr.'s, wife and nephew of Peter's. David first married Eunice French, and after her death he married her sister, Lucretia French. There were three chldrien, Henry, Eunice, and Alice. When David finally died in 1887 at the age of 88 years, he had the distinction of being the oldest inhabitant of the town of Volney. His grave may be seen today at the old and abandoned cemetery on Black Creek on the Bennett property. He rests under a fine big stone, flanked on one side by Eunice, whom her stone calls his "consort" (died 1830) and on the other side by sister Lucretia (died 1888) whom her stone calls his "wife." At least David knew two synonyms for the marital state. This cemetery, containing as it does the graves of many of Oswego county's early settlers, is of great interest. It is a shame that it has been allowed to deteriorate to the extent that it has.

John Van Buren's Tavern

As John Van Buren's family became more prosperous he decided to build a fine large mansion which would serve the double purpose of a tavern and a dwelling. He had observed the success that Van Valkenburgh had had at the same type of venture, but he determined to build a much finer house. Work was started immediately which resulted in the very fine old brick house, now owned by Miss Priscilla N. Myers, and located on the east bank of the Oswego river on part of lot 19, town 17. It is one of the county's finest extant examples of the art of the early builders. (The exact year in which it was built is not known at this time, although continuing efforts are now being made to ascertain this fact from old papers belonging to the Van Buren family.)

While the house was being built the family lived in a wooden house, still standing today, near the brick house. Even after all these years, after surviving use as a schoolmaster's house, a milk house, a tenant house, and a sort of tool house, the building is still rugged and absolutely true. There are, of course, no nails in its construction.

Labor Cost Eight Cents Daily

It took John Van Buren eight years to build his house at a cost of $5,000. He paid 8 cents a day for labor. When one considers the comparative cost today, the result is staggering. The brick that went into its construction was made in a nearby brickyard. Its walls are sixteen inches thick. There is not a single pieced board in the house, and the boards are three inches thick. The downstairs included a barroom, several other rooms, and a kitchen. The floor of the kitchen is made of half logs finished and planed only on the surface side. In the kitchen there is also a huge fireplace with a built-in oven.

The second floor was a ballroom which was run commercially and as such was the scene of a great many gay parties in early vears attended by persons from all parts of the surrounding region. The ballroom ran across the entire length of the house with windows facing out on the river. One entered it by means of a staircase at the head of which was a ticket office and dressing room. At each end was a fireplace, and on the two ends of the ceiling provision was made for chandeliers, which, however, were never put up. Above the ballroom is an attic in which the hired help may

have slept. In the attic, with their necks sticking through the ceiling of the ballroom below, were two large sounding bottles which served to ampify the sound of the music heard in the ballroom.

John Van Buren died in 1821, and his son, Jacob, carried on his work in the brick house. The canal was finally constructed and business improved. The tavern now became a packet house at which river traffic might stop and at which fresh horses might be secured. From time to time various outhouses were added until the vicinity took on the appearance of a small community. Included among these buildings were tool houses, a blacksmith shop, a grocery store, and a horse stable. Over the horse stable hung a sign bearing much testimony to its painter's national origin: "Ye 'Orses' 'Ome". The grocery bore the proud title of the "River Grocery".

The land upon which the house was located was very fertile and returned to its owners many good crops. The river was the center of its existence. In those days people used the canal towpath when they wished to go anywhere. The land where the present concrete highway runs was in those days a woods in which pigs and cattle were allowed to run.

Governor Clinton Came to Open Canal in 1828

When the Oswego canal was first opened in 1828 Governor Dewitt Clinton came up to assist in the ceremonies, which included a canal boat ride from Syracuse to Oswego by the Governor and his staff. Jacob Van Buren was engaged to pilot the craft. He took his biggest horse and his eight year old son, "White John", and while he steered the Governor's boat John drove the horse on the towpath by riding on his back. This was the first canal boat to pass over the canal other than the work scows.

Life at the tavern built and conducted by John and Jacob Van Buren must have increased immensely in tempo after the building of the canal. It is perhaps best seen through the eyes of "White John," the son of Jacob and the same boy that rode on the horse that drew Governor Clinton's barge through the canal. It seems that the rivermen and neighbors would often gather in the blacksmith shop near the tavern and swap stories until the early hours of the morning. Ghost stories were apparently high favorites, and John related that more than once after listening in on their stories he was too terrified to attempt to go home to the big brick house.

Canal Quickened Life At Van Buren Tavern

"White John" owned a monkey which provided much amusement. One night he was gravely sitting on the bar watching the antics of a group of rivermen who had settled down to a bout of serious drinking. They were making eggnog and had a number of glasses sitting on the bar. The monkey grabbed an empty one and made as though to drink from it. One of the rivermen filled the glass and the monkey drank it down and dropped the cup; whereupon he jumped to the floor to retrieve it and cut his foot on one of the broken pieces. The next day he sat mournfully on the bar nursing both a hangover and a sore foot. Sometime later someone offered him some more eggnogg, whereupon he threw the glass at the would be donor. In the words of one of the Van Burens, "he had more sense than some humans".

On another occasion a customer in "the River Grocery" called the clerk's attention to

the monkey who had cornered the store's supply of eggs and was dropping them on the floor, one by one.

"White John" in Oswego During Civil War Period

"White John", growing to manhood and observing the success of his father, moved to Oswego where, during the Civil war period, he opened a canal grocery and a barroom and let horses out to canallers. Things did not go so well with him in a business way at Oswego and he returned to the old homestead at the tavern which remained in the possession of his family until about 1900, when it was sold to Charles E. Myers whose descendants still occupy it. (Editorial note: The former tavern, the oldest standing house of the many early Van Buren houses, is now the home of Miss Priscilla H. Myers, daughter of C. E. Myers, who lives there from late spring through December of each year. Miss Myers is a retired teacher of the New York City School System. Her two sisters come each summer to visit Miss Myers. For a time, years ago, the old tavern was the dwelling on a rich tobacco farm but the soil is no longer tilled. The location is a most attractive one scenicly).

After the tavern was built David Van Buren, a brother of the builder of the tavern, constructed a very handsome brick house next door which is still standing. Its main feature is a series of white Ionic pillars. (This house is now owned and occupied by Mrs. David Van Buren, widow of a grandson of the builder.)

It has always been a source of pride to the Van Buren family that they were related to Martin Van Buren, President of the United States. The story of Martin Van Buren's life has been too well recorded in other places to need repeating here, but his financial connections with this area are not so well known.

Martin Van Buren's First Visit in 1805

Martin Van Buren knew this region quite well as he had frequent business in Oswego, and his political connections and activities often times made him well aware of this section. His first recorded visit to what we today know as Fulton came in the year 1805 when he and John Hudson (afterwards Canal Commissioner of the state), on their way to Oswego on business, stopped at the house of Ebeneezer Wright, a justice of the peace residing on the east side of the river. It is strange that he seems to have made no attempt to stay with any of his relatives while on this journey.

In any event, after supper Mr. Wright invited his guests to cross the river with him and to be present at a marriage ceremony which he was to perform. Wright and his guests, Martin Van Buren and John Hudson, accordingly crossed the river and went to a house some distance above the lower landing where the marriage, between Polly Huguenin and Jack Waterhouse, took place. The bridegroom was 19 and the bride 16. The wedding was further distinguished by being the first ever solemnized in the territory now composing the town of Granby.

How "Van Buren Tract" Originated

Seventeen years later, in 1822, Martin was once again in Oswego county, this time as counselor to one of the claimants to Lot No. 6 in the Military Tract over which there was a dispute. By the end of 1822 the contest was decided in favor of Van Buren's client. The counselor's fee more than equalled the value of the land in dispute and so the winner thought himself well off when he transferred what was then

considered quite inferior land to his lawyers. This land, a part of which is included within the city limits of Oswego, now worth many hundreds of times what it was then, was thereafter designated as "the Van Buren Tract". It was divided into lots, and sold and rented to the highest bidders. E. M. Waterbury, president of the Oswego Historical Society, is the owner of a deed signed by Martin Van Buren, transferring the property where he now lives, in Montcalm street, Oswego, to the owners whose title succeeded that of Martin Van Buren.

(Editorial note: Martin Van Buren's land operations in Oswego county largely antedated the period of his greatest prominence in the state and nation. He acquired the "Van Buren Tract" in 1822, but it was not until five years later, in 1827, that he resigned as United States Senator from New York to become Governor of the state. In March 1829 President Andrew Jackson appointed him as Secretary of State. Van Buren succeded Jackson in the presidency, taking office in 1836. Martin Van Buren made considerable money through his sale of lands in Oswego County, clearing about $12,000, it is recorded, on one single, early transaction. In respect to his gains through his real estate sales in Oswego County, Martin Van Buren's experiences seem to have been much more fortunate than were those of Alexander Hamilton, the Roosevelt Brothers, George Scriba and other prominent men in the early nation who speculated in real estate in territory now included in Oswego County most of whom made little or nothing through their realty ventures and some of whom lost the fortunes they had invested.)

Why Van Buren Did Not Vote For Oswego Canal

There were a few regrets for Martin Van Buren over the land, though. In the Albany legislature it was proposed to build a canal from the Erie Canal to Oswego. Martin, then, a state senator, among others, was in favor and intended to vote for it when it came up. Some of the opponents of the bill, hearing this, took Martin aside and told him that if he, an Oswego landholder, voted for the canal which would increase the value of his land, they would expose him to the people of the state as a dishonest political grafter. Martin did not vote for the canal.

Thus members of the Van Buren family have been a considerable factor in the development of Oswego county. It is said that the family once owned land for ten miles along the Oswego river and for ten miles back. It would be rather difficult to establish that claim, but it may be true. In any event, on a land map published in 1867 there were 17 houses shown as inhabited by Van Burens between Fulton and Black Creek, and most of the rest of the houses in that vicinity were occupied by more or less near relatives. It must be remembered that there were five children in the first generation, nineteen in the second, and the family numbers went up in leaps and bounds from that point on until today there are probably hundreds of descendants of the family, known by one name or another, yet resident in the county.

The New J. Fenimore Cooper

(Address Given Before Members of the Oswego Historical Society, November 26, 1940, by Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Director of the New York State Historical Association)

In the Fall of 1790, one hundred and fifty years ago, William Cooper decided to remove his family from their neat home in Burlington, New Jersey, into the wilderness of Central New York. But William Cooper's wife, Elizabeth, was a somewhat strong-minded woman who did not relish the prospect of leaving civilization for the western frontier. When the time came to depart, she sat herself down in her chair and refused to budge from it, whereupon her equally determined husband had the chair, wife and all, loaded upon the wagon. More significant than this amusing family tradition is the fact that Mrs. Cooper brought with her to Cooperstown a year-old baby boy named James.

This boy grew to manhood in Central New York, and he brought the region and, indeed, the whole State immortality with his great stories. But, unfortunately, his reputation suffered somewhat in later days. Part of the responsibility for this fact lies with Cooper himself. Perhaps a little sore in spirit after his encounters with the newspapers of the day, he requested his family not to authorize a biography. Thus when Thomas Lounsbury wrote his excellent "James Fenimore Cooper" in 1882, he was forced to work without access to the personal papers of the novelist. Professor Lounsbury's book still remains a classic of biography, and his judgment of Cooper's literary merit is undoubtedly sound, but he was too often forced to evaluate Cooper's personality through what the newspapers said, without benefit of Cooper's frank and colorful personal letters. Thus the impression has arisen that Cooper was most harsh, snobbish, and irascible.

In 1897 Mark Twain set out to demolish Cooper's reputation as a literary craftsman in an article entitled "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences." This analysis dwelt upon the heaviness of Cooper's style and upon such slips as the one in "The Pathfinder" of having Natty Bumppo see a bullet enter a target one hundred yards away.

Inventive Mind Talent Source

But such criticism is unfair in that it ignores the fact that Cooper's great talent lay in invention—the creation of intricate plots and heroic characters—and not in subtle characterization and style. He also usually was his own editor and did not have the advantage our modern novelists enjoy of having the obvious slips eliminated by skilled editorial minds. Cooper was a hard worker, who wrote nearly every day, no matter how he felt or whether he was in the mood. He was a great extemporizer, and the genius of his creative imagination is not damaged by superficial flaws.

There can be no doubt of Cooper's just claim to fame as a story teller. A novelist should be judged somewhat by the standards of his day, and the novel of the time in which Cooper's work appeared was a weak thing, filled with sentimentalism, melodrama, and moralizing, all written in an extremely stilted style. Its chief audience consisted of romantic young "females," who shed tears over the misfortunes of the heroine and shuddered before what Carl Van Doren has

called "the unceasing menace of the seducer." Cooper's books with their American background and fast-moving action were fresh, original, and even comparatively simply written.

Another test of a novelist is his ability to create a great character that will live forever. If any American were asked to name ten great characters of our literature, he would at once think of Leatherstocking, or Natty Bumppo. It is ever a matter of surprise to Americans how much Cooper is read abroad. He has always been more popular with the French than has Sir Walter Scott; Balzac had some very glowing things to say about "The Pathfinder;" and one French statesman, on hearing of the entrance of America into the World War in 1917, said, "The Spirit of Leatherstocking still lives on." Of course, as William Lyon Phelps points out, every time Cooper was translated, he was improved, because superficial errors of style were eliminated.

Cooper Now Better Understood

Cooper is also coming to be better understood as a personality. James Fenimore Cooper, the grandson of the novelist. generously gave a large collection of Cooper's papers to Yale university and edited the two-volume "Correspondence of James Fenimore Cooper," which Yale published in 1922. Since that time three books, making use of the Yale manuscrips, have appeared to change our former evaluation of Cooper—Henry Walcott Boynton's "James Fenimore Cooper" (1931); Professor Robert E. Spiller's "Fenimore Cooper; Critic of His Times" (1931); and Dorothy Waples' "The Whig Myth of James Fenimore Cooper" (1938). This fresh work throws new light on the novelist and makes one realize that, despite "a certain emphatic frankness in his manner" and his "always bringing a breeze of a quarrel with him," he was to those who knew him, a loyal, even sentimental, friend, a fascinating conversationalist, and an inspiring companion. The tart rind of the man's personality but added to his humanity.

Young James Cooper grew up on the western frontier of the day. There were bears, wolves, and panthers in the forests of Otsego, and even an occasional Indian. There was also one "Shipman, the 'Leather Stocking' of the region, who could at almost any time, furnish the table with a saddle of venison." But though Cooper lived on the frontier, where he could know its color and hear its stories, he was the son of the "manor lord" of the region, Judge William Cooper, and thus provided with enough leisure to use his imagination and give thought to what he saw and heard.

In about 1800 young Cooper was sent to Albany to study under the Rev. Thomas Ellison, rector of St. Peter's church. There he grew to know the young Van Rensselaers and other scions of old New York State families. In 1802 at the age of thirteen he entered Yale but became involved in several mischievous college scrapes and was expelled during his Junior year. So far as his future career went, this dismissal was no catastrophe, because the colleges of that day were not teaching men to write well, and Cooper's experiences during the next two years were much more valuable to him.

The young man decided he wished to join the United States Navy, and since there was then no Annapolis to train midshipmen, in the Fall of 1806 he shipped on the "Sterling," of Wiscasset, Maine, Captain John Johnston. The "Sterling" went twice to London and also encountered a Moorish pirate felucca in the Mediterranean. Such adventures gave Cooper a great love for the

sea, and he was glad to receive his commission as midshipman, January 1, 1808.

Cooper's Activity At Oswego

In the Fall of 1808 Cooper was one of a small party under Lieutenant Melancthon T. Woolsey sent to Oswego on Lake Ontario. Lieutenant Woolsey was directed to build the "Oneida," a brig-of-war of 240 tons, pierced for 16 guns, for service on Lake Ontario in case the unfriendly relations then existing between Great Britain and the United States should result in war. Two smaller gunboats were also to be built by Woolsey on Lake Champlain.

The arrival of five naval officers and a gang of carpenters, blacksmiths, and other workers gave Oswego, then a village of a score of houses on the West side of the Oswego river, a great thrill, and during the Winter a small detachment of infantry under Lieutenant Christie arrived at the old Fort Ontario. Life at Oswego was generally dull, and Cooper and his friends amused themselves with such pranks as crawling out on the roof of their neighbor's house and dropping snowballs down his chimney.

The launching of the "Oneida" was celebrated with a frontier ball. Ladies were hard to find, but by sending boats miles in one direction, and carts miles in another, enough of them were gathered to make the affair a success. A delicate question of etiquette then arose—how should the position of the ladies in the dances be determined? Lieutenant Woolsey solved the vexatious problem as follows: "All ladies, sir, provided with shoes and stockings, are to be led to the head of the Virginia Reel; ladies with shoes and without stockings are considered in the second rank; ladies without either shoes or stockings you will lead, gentlemen, to the foot of the country-dance."

Midshipman Cooper remained in charge of the brig at Oswego early in June, 1809, when Lieutenant Woolsey went to Lake Champlain to look after the gunboats, but on the latter's return in September, the two set out with a small party in a launch on a journey to Niagara Falls. Food ran low during the trip, but Cooper killed a hedgehog with the sword of a cane, and Woolsey diplomatically persuaded a transplanted London Cockney to sell them a sheep, silencing the wife's protests by praising her fine children, "three as foul little Christians as one could find on the frontier."

Material for Pathfinder Gathered Here

But Cooper was restless at the prospect of another Winter in Oswego, and in September he sought a furlough to take a trip to Europe. His request was granted, and he left Oswego, but in November relinquished his planned journey and instead did salt-water duty in the man-of-war "Wasp," Captain James Lawrence. After a Winter on this vessel, Cooper took a furlough because of his father's death.

His stay in Oswego furnished Cooper with a knowledge of the region which he later used in "The Pathfinder," one of the Leatherstocking Tales. Cooper himself regarded it as one of the best things he had ever written, and Washington Irving, William Cullen Bryant, Herman Melville, and Balzac all praised it very highly. The book was published almost simultaneously in England and America in 1840. It was written in Cooperstown and Philadelphia during 1839. A good commentary on Cooper's writing habits is the statement in his letter from Philadelphia to Mrs. Cooper, October 19, 1839: "The first volume of "Pathfinder" is printed—the second is not yet written." Another letter of December 19 shows that he had

nearly completed the work. In its first two months, "The Pathfinder" sold nearly 4,000 copies, a "great success, in the worst of times," as Cooper wrote.

The fate that so frequently overtakes a young man soon befell Cooper. As he wrote: "Like all the rest of the sons of Adam, I have bowed to the charms of a fair damsel of eighteen. I loved her like a man and told her like a sailor." James Cooper was married to Susan DeLancey on January 1, 1811, and Susan, not relishing having her husband away on long and dangerous sea voyages, persuaded him to resign from the Navy. In a way it is too bad he did not continue his naval career. He was a most active and decisive person and should have gone far in the Navy during the War of 1812.

How First Book Was Written

The secret of Cooper's career is his remarkable energy. Though the estate left him by his father and the inheritance of his young wife (The De Lanceys were, of course, one of the great families of colonial New York) would have allowed him to coast through life in easy fashion, he soon tired of the life of a country gentleman and restlessly sought an outlet for his energies and talents. He plunged into farming at Cooperstown and in 1817 served as secretary of the Otsego County Fair, the first county fair in the State. In 1818 he purchased a two-thirds interest in the "Union," which went whaling from Sag Harbor to the coasts of Brazil and Patagonia, and he frequently went to Sag Harbor to busy himself with refitting the "Union' 'and marketing whale oil.

But in 1819 while the "Union" was filling her hold with whale oil, the incident took place which changed Cooper's whole future. He was reading a poor English novel to his wife, when, becoming disgusted with its trashiness, he exclaimed: "I could write you a better book myself." When Susan De Lancey Cooper laughed at the idea with true wifely scorn, Cooper sat himself down and began to write a novel about English drawing-room society, called "Precaution," published in 1820, and probably one of the dullest novels ever written.

Many people have set out to write books; a few have completed a single work; but very few have ever written a second one. Cooper, however, persevered, and in 1821 he published the first great American novel —The Spy. This book dealt with the American Revolution in Westchester County, a topic and setting which Cooper thoroughly understood. Two years later Natty Bumppo, or Leatherstocking, was introduced to the world in "The Pioneers," whose setting is Cooperstown and Otsego Lake. In that same year (1823) appeared "The Pilot," a new literary type—the tale of adventure on the sea with accurate nautical details. All three of these works were remarkable successes. During the remainder of his life, Cooper systematically wrote novels, critical essays, books of travel, and histories; when he died in 1851, fifty-two works were credited to him.

The Bread and Cheese Club

In 1822 Cooper moved to New York City, where he organized the Bread and Cheese Club, sometimes called The Lunch, or Cooper's Lunch. The chief men of the day drawn from every walk of life belonged to this literary club, men like Fitz-Greene Halleck, William Cullen Bryant, Samuel F. B. Morse, William Dunlap, James Ellsworth De Kay, and Chancellor James Kent. Cooper was affectionately referred to as "The Constitution" of the club, and we have two excellent descriptions of him during this period.

William Cullen Bryant, the poet, writes thus of him:

"I remember being struck with the inexhaustible vivacity of his conversation and the minuteness of his knowledge in everything which depended upon acuteness of observation and exactness of recollection. I remember, too, being somewhat startled, coming as I did from the seclusion of a country life, with a certain emphatic frankness in his manner, which, however, I came at last to like and to admire."

Lawrence Godkin, also a member of the Bread and Cheese Club, was impressed by the contrast between Cooper and Bryant:

"Cooper burly, brusque and boisterous, like a bluff sailor, always bringing a breeze of quarrel with him; Mr. Bryant shy, modest, and delicate as a woman —they seemed little fitted for friendship. Yet Bryant admired not only the genius, but the thorough-paced honesty and sturdy independence of Cooper; and Cooper . . . once said, 'We others get a little praise now and then, but Bryant is the author of America'."

Friend of Scott and LaFayette

In 1826 the Cooper family left New York for Europe, and during the next seven years the novelist resided abroad. He was treated as a literary lion, met Sir Walter Scott, and became a close friend of the aged LaFayette. He wrote constantly and took the lead in liberal movements, such as trying to obtain a Polish Republic.

Cooper was a patron of the arts, who lent money to struggling painters and sculptors, introduced them to prospective patrons, and sometimes gave them small commissions. On March 16, 1832, he wrote his friend William Dunlap a letter concerning his daily life and his good friend Samuel F. B. Morse, which runs as follows:

"I get up at eight, read the papers, breakfast at ten . . . work till one—throw off my morning gown, draw on my boots and gloves, take a cane that Horace Greenough gave me, and go to the Louvre, where I find Morse stuck up on a high working stand, perch myself astraddle of one of the seats and bore him just as I used to bore you when you made the memorable likeness of St. Peter. 'Lay it on here, Samuel—more yellow—the nose is too short—the eye too small —damn it if I had been a painter what a picture I should have painted.'—and all this stuff over again which Samuel takes just as good-naturedly as good old William. Well there I sit and have sat so often and so long that my face is just as well known as Vandyke on the walls. Crowds get round the picture, for Samuel has quite made a hit in the Louvre, and I believe that people think that half the merit is mine. So much for keeping company with one's betters. At six we are at home eating a good dinner, and I manage to get a good deal out of Morse in this way too."

Champion of American Life

But, most important of all, Cooper dared to defend the American form of government and American way of life everywhere he went. This was considered poor taste by most Europeans who were sure that their culture was far superior to that of the materialistic and uncouth Americans. Cooper even did not hesitate to support Lafayette's statement that a democracy was more economical than a monarchy. Not only did certain foreign newspapers criticize him harshly, but the Whig papers in the United States, disliking his expressed admiration for and defence of some of President Andrew Jackson's measures, began to join in the critical chorus.

It is useless to argue whether Cooper's controversies arose because he was abnormally sensi-

tive to criticism or because his active nature led him to enjoy a good fight The fact is, that upon his return to America in the Fall of 1833, he found the country he had been defending abroad seemed changed. He thought he saw excesses of democracy and vulgarity of taste about him, and he characteristically decided to do what he could to remedy the situation. For a time he stopped writing romances and began to produce social tracts; he became "the critic of his times." Undoubtedly America needed some such criticism but its author brought a flood of abuse upon himself.

Sued Greeley for Libel

In those days newspapers were rarely sued for libel, and editors said what they pleased about literary productions, not confining their remarks to the merits of the books but daring to cast aspersions upon the characters of the authors themselves. As soon as this sort of criticism began to appear about Cooper, he determined to fight the editors in the courts. Systematically and carefully he prepared his cases with the assistance of his nephew, Richard Cooper, and he sued the leading editors of his day—Horace Greeley, Thurlow Weed, William Leete Stone, James Watson Webb, and others. In all of these cases, save one, he won damages or secured a retraction from the defendants and the cases firmly established the enforcement of the libel law of New York State.

Despite his quarrels with the press, Cooper's everyday life remained serene. The Coopers had returned in 1834 to Otsego Hall, the home built by Judge William Cooper at Cooperstown in 1798 There the novelist wrote much of his social criticism, but also many of his finest romances, including The Pathfinder and The Deerslayer. Usually he wrote in his Gothic library each morning 'till about eleven, when he would drive to his farm, the Chalet, on the east side of Otsego Lake, his wagon drawn by Pumpkin, his faithful old horse, and filled usually with the children of the neighborhood. Frisk, his little black dog, would protect the expedition from the rear. Seraphina, his cow, was also well known in the village, for she persisted in trying to get into the garden at the Hall.

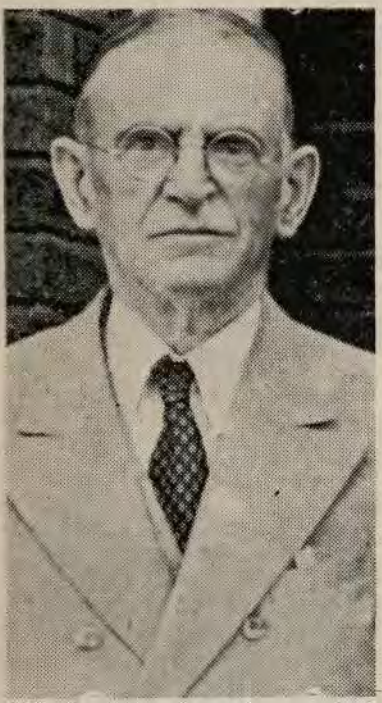
Argued Much with Nelson

Many people in the village disliked Cooper, especially at the time of the Three Mile Point controversy, but they listened with awe when he and Justice Samuel Nelson of the United States Supreme Court, another of Cooperstown's famous men, exchanged opinions before the pot-bellied stove of the village hardware store. Old Nancy Williams liked Cooper, too, though she sometimes called to him as he passed her doorway, "James, why don't you stop wasting your time writing those silly novels, and try to make something of yourself?"

In his own home Cooper was much beloved. He was always making little jokes, and his humanity is illustrated by the frequent entries in his diary concerning his games of chess with his "Dearest Sue." One of these runs: "Chess, wife beat me one of her slapping games, but I beat her two afterwards. One of these beats puts her in good spirits for a whole evening, and I delight to see it."

Today, then, we are beginning anew to evaluate Cooper as a man. We are coming to understand his personality better, to appreciate his rugged strength, his courage, and his honesty. Perhaps, after all, Herman Melville was right when he wrote in 1852: "A grateful posterity will take the best care of Fenimore Cooper."

DONOR OF NOTABLE MARINE COLLECTION



JOHN S. PARSONS

During a period of 60 years, extending from sail-boat days down to the those of the large, modern steamers which now carry the commerce of the Port of Oswego, John S. Parsons, intimately associated with those who owned and piloted these various craft, devoted himself to the collection of oil paintings, photographs and memorabilia relating to the commercial life of the Great Lakes and particularly to Lake Ontario. Carrying on as a hobby his acquisitive efforts, he assembled what is considered one of the finest and most complete collections of its kind to be found in all the Great Lakes area. Always interested in Oswego and its history, in later life Mr. Parsons became actively interested in carrying on the work of the Oswego Historical Society which he served for several years as a member of its Board of Managers and in other capacities. In defference to a desire he had often expressed while living that the Society should receive and become the permanent custodian of the collection he had assembled with such zeal, Mrs. Parsons, after the death of her husband on May 3, 1940, presented to the Society in his name the Parsons Marine Collection which has now become an important feature of the Society's museum. This gift is one of the most notable ones yet made to the Society.

LONG SERVED OUR SOCIETY

FRED P. WRIGHT

Fred P. Wright, who resigned in August 1940 as Recording Secretary of the Oswego Historical Society, had served the Society faithfully and devotedly in that office since April 26, 1926. He was given a vote of deep appreciation by the Society's membership at the November meeting for his efforts in the Society's behalf.

Necrology

JOHN S. PARSONS
May 3, 1940

MRS. MYRON S. LOVELL
May 19, 1940

STEPHEN R. LOCKWOOD
July 2, 1940

CLAIRE K. LIGHT
September 2, 1940

MRS. RICHARD K. PIEZ
October 28, 1940