1945

Ninth Publication

of the

Oswego Historical Society

1945

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1945

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October 20—Regional Meeting of New York State Historical Association with Oswego Historical Society Acting as host at Oswego State Teachers' College.

November 20—"Spiritualism and Mormonism, Products of New York State", Dr. Clayton Mau, Author of "Development of Central and Western New York," professor of History at Geneseo State Teachers' College.

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January 8—Fiftieth Annual Meeting of Oswego Historical Society at Tanner Memorial, Oswego. Paper "Public Entertainment in Oswego from 1875 to Turn of Century", Dr. Charles F. Wells, director of English Department, Oswego State Teachers' College.

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May 12—At Fulton. "The Forts of Oswego County" with special emphasis on the 150th Anniversary of Fort Ontario Under American Control by John W. O'Connor.

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"Lest We Forget"

DANIEL A. WILLIAMS

A life-long resident of Oswego County, having been born in Oswego September 25, 1875 as the son of Captain George and Jennie E. (Culkin) Williams, Daniel A. Williams served in many capacities, and with distinction in each, the Oswego County Historical Society and the cause of the preservation of local history in his home community.

Mr. Williams first became interested in the Society a quarter of a century or more ago while he was a resident of the Town of New Haven associated there with the late C. Sidney Shepard, the latter a life-member of our Society, and one who was himself a devotee of local history. Upon his return in 1937 to Oswego to make his residence permanently following the death of Mr. Shepard, Mr. Williams became immediately actively interested in the Historical Society. For nearly a decade he served it as a member of its Board of Managers. For several years he had been chairman of the committee which had charge of the donation and collection of items of historical interest for the Society's collection, working diligently in this capacity, and often placing at the disposal of the society his private premises for temporarily housing gifts to the society's collection which were so bulky that they could not be received in the Society's presently restricted quarters.

Of Daniel Williams it may be truthfully said that he never failed to respond readily, cheeerfully and wholeheartedly to any call made upon his time or services to forward the work of our Society. He prepared with meticulous attention to detail and presented before our society papers upon various subjects, his most notable effort in this direction, having been his paper upon "Oswego County Painters" who attained distinction—J. Francis Murphy, James G. Tyler and Charles H. Grant. His most recent literary contribution to the Society was made on October 20, 1945 when he read a brief paper upon the history of Fort George, one of the three that Montcalm captured here in 1756, before members of our society and many visiting historians of note gathered at that time in Oswego for a Regional Meeting of the State Historical Society, Mr. Williams' paper having been given in his own historically interesting and charming home, as the final stopping point of the pilgrimage to locations of historic interest arranged by our society as one of the events for the entertainment of our guests. Mr. Williams was a most gracious host on this occasion. His final appearance upon a public occasion just before he was stricken ill, was at the meeting of this Society held on November 20. His death occurred at Oswego Hospital on November 30.

Mr. Williams' services to his community were important and many, all being administered with conspicuous fidelity. He was vice-president and chairman of the executive committee of Oswego Hospital; trustee of Oswego County Savings Bank, President of the Oswego Community Chest in 1939 and 1940. He was treasurer of St. Paul's Cemetery, and a charter member of Oswego Council of the Navy League of the United States. He served as chairman of a committee of distinguished Oswego citizens who went to Albany to make an appeal to Governor Lehman for prompt action in providing funds for the reconstruction of the Assembly Hall at Oswego State College following the fire which visited that building in 1940. He was a member of Oswego Council, Knights of Columbus, and of the Fourth Degree, of the Oswego Country Club, the Fortnightly Club and a former member of the Oswego Kiwanis Club. As one of the executors of the C. Sidney Shepard estate, he shared in the administration of the largest estate ever to become subject to the jurisdiction of the Oswego County's Surrogate Court.

In recognition of Mr. Williams' long continued and distinguished services to this Society and to the cause of New York State Local History, Oswego Historical Society appreciatively dedicates this volume to his memory.

TWO ANNIVERSARIES OF 1946

On July 15, 1946 Oswego Historical Society will celebrate the 50th anniverstry of its foundation. Plans for some form of observance of this event in which the general public may have a share as well as the members of the society have been informally discussed for a year or more, but thus far have not taken definite form, but it is expected that the matter will come up afresh early in the new year for the reaching of final determinations by the incoming administration in regard to the several forms of observance that have been suggested. The fact that the new year will also mark on July 15, the 150th anniversary of the yielding up by the British of Fort Ontario to the United States would seem to offer a most unusual opportunity for a dual observance commemorating the two events.

It is by no means a mere coincidence that these two events transpired on July 15; for it was the celebration by the people of Oswego of the 100th anniversary of the delivery of Fort Ontario into the hands of its first United States garrison on July 15, 1896 that led to the simultaneous establishment and incorporation of the Oswego Historical Society after the desirability of the organization of such a society had been a matter of general discussion as far back as the early 1840s and definite steps had been taken towards that end in the 1860s when an organization was formed to accomplish that purpose, officers chosen and steps taken looking to its incorporation. For some reason, now lost in oblivion, the movement of the late 1860s never got beyond the formative stage. But early in the year 1896 when plans for the observance of the events which ushered in the beginning of Oswego as a United States community, and the first establishment of a permanent civilian settlement at Oswego with a non-military population, were being discussed in earnest in Oswego, then leading citizens in the community took the initiative in organizing the Oswego Historical Society as an aid to quickening public interest in Oswego's unusual history and developing civic pride in the community which would aid in the carrying through successfully of the planned-for observances of the year.

The early historical society confined its membership to men. Its meetings were, at the outset, held principally in the homes of members. Occasionally the members were privileged to be accompanied by their ladies. Refreshments were frequently served at the close of the evening's program, which was generally featured then, as now, by the reading of a paper upon some phase of local history by a member of the society or some visiting guest who had been invited to address the members. Later meetings were held at the Fortnightly Club which for many years became the unofficial headquarters of the society where its annual meetings were usually held and upon the walls of which there came to be displayed in time framed copies of letters, documents and other memorabilia of historic interest, chiefly related to the history of Oswego, as, at that time less interest, was taken in the county's history as a whole by the members, than is characteristic of the members today, although the society's charter envisioned from its outset that residents from points throughout the county would be eligible for membership.

Organization of the society proved a spur to the interest of the entire community in matters historical. Persons began to become interested in searching out heirlooms that had come down to them from pioneer settlers in the county from whom they were descended. Many of these were exhibited at the Fortnightly Club during "centennial week", and some were given to the society for its permanent collection. As years passed the number of these gifts increased until today the society owns some very interesting relics which will eventually adorn the permanent home towards which its members are eagerly working, and for the establishment and maintenance of which they expect soon to undertake the establishment of an endowment fund. Theodore Irwin, one of the early Society presidents, acquired the Louis XV Medal commemorating Montcalm's victory at Oswego, which he later presented to the Society. So far as is known this is the only one extant of the medals which Louis caused to bestruck-off. The society also owns the chair in which Alvin Bronson was seated when he was swung over side of a British man-of-war as a prisoner of war following the capture of Fort Ontario by the British under Admiral Yeo in 1814, a notable Civil War Collection of Photographs, the John S. Parsons Collection of Photographs of Great Lakes Ships and models of ships, a Dr. Mary Walker collection, documents related to Oswego's history signed by Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's successor as president, and many other collections and individual items of note.

Long before there was an historical society in Oswego there were historically minded persons living in Oswego, or connected with Oswego, to whose foresight in taking measures to preserve the early history of the community, the present generation owes much. Edwin W. Clarke, first village clerk, did much along this line. It is due to his thoughtfulness that records filed in the City Clerk's office today were fully covered and safely preserved. The early cemetery records were preserved principally through his foresight. George H. McWhorter, long collector of the Port of Oswego, a personal friend of President Martin Van Buren whom he used to entertain in his home, as a voluntary editorial assistant of the "Palladium" in the days when John Carpenter was its editor, frequently made references in his editorials to Oswego's early history. Captain James Van Cleve's narrative of early maritime events on Lake Ontario, illustrated with sektches and drawings by the author, preserved at the Oswego City Clerk's office is a work of surpassing historic interest frequently consulted by historians today.

Despite some unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances that have arisen that may militate against the carrying through of the project, ways may yet be found to carry through the pageant earlier planned by the society definitely for the year 1946. If so there is an abundance of material connected with old Fort Ontario about which the episodes may be centered and stirring events of the past 200 years re-enacted. For the pleasure and information of thousands of persons the "Pageant of Oswego" sponsored by the Historical Society in 1925 was witnessed by more than 20,000 persons and was an outstanding success from every standpoint. History is known to have a way of repeating itself, and this rule may hold equally strongly in Oswego as elsewhere.

Study of Local History Develops Patriotism

(Paper Read Before Oswego County Historical Society at Oswego January 16, 1945 by Dr. Albert B. Corey of Albany, New York State Historian.)

Dr. Albert B. Corey, recently appointed New York State Historian, told the members of the Oswego County Historical Society gathered for their annual meeting at Tanner Memorial, Oswego, January 16, 1945, that during his term of office he will give much attention to strengthening of the basis upon which the work of gathering and preserving historical facts and material throughout the state rests. His policy will be to encourage the appointment of full time, salaried historians in all counties of the state, and the naming of an increased number of city, village and town historians for communities not now served. He envisions that these appointees will work in close cooperation with existing local historical societies and supplement and augment the work of these societies.

At the present, Dr. Corey said, there are but three counties in the state—St. Lawrence, Montgomery and Nassau—which have full time, salaried historians. There are a number of other counties which have part time historians, some of whom are paid, or partially paid, and others who work without compensation. County historians working upon a salaried basis are appointed, under a state statute governing the matter, by county Boards of Supervisors which also fix their compensation which becomes a county charge.

Statutes Confer Power

There are two statutes of the state which authorize the appointment of local, city, village and town historians at present. In some respects that statute lacks the degree of specificness that is desirable in that they do not provide any specific length of term during which the incumbent shall serve or provide specific means for the exercising of controls. Some of the local historians now in office were appointed under the provisions of one statute, and the others under the provisions of yet another statute.

Might Name 1600

All-told there are a total of 46 county and city historians who have been named in the state. Some of these receive expenses only, while others receive a salary of some type. Most town historians have been appointed under the provisions of a different act. Out of a total of 1600 appointees who could be named in the state under the statutes, if all possible appointments were made, there are now 900 who have already been named. Not all those appointed are active, not all are satisfactorily performing their work, but they have been named at least and as there had been no length of term provided at the time of their appointments they are still at least nominally serving.

In St. Lawrence county, which is the home county of the present state historian, every community in the county authorized to name a local historian has done so. St. Lawrence enjoys the distinction alone among all the counties of the state to take this action, although Lewis county has a record almost as perfect. In St. Lawrence salaries of local historians run from $50 yearly paid by some towns up to $350 or $400 paid in larger communities.

There is a state-wide organization of local historians which

includes the names of several hundred such historians upon its membership rolls. This group was organized at Albany in October 1944.

Continuing his paper Dr. Corey spoke as follows:

Study of Local History

"The study of the history of any community should provide a challenge to a great many people because the variety of experiences that one finds in a community are as varied as the interests of people themselves. This means that those who are interested in genealogy will find ample opportunities to study family histories. Those who like folklore and folk tales may gather evidence of this kind while those who like to collect old books, or papers or pictures should find plenty of opportunity to fulfill their own interests. Others may be more interested in the historical geography of the community, or in its early settlement, or in its institutions such as schools, churches, public offices, businesses, and fraternal organizations. Whatever one's interests are, local history provides the opportunity which he may seek.

"Local history therefore presents to us a picture not of the dead past but of the living past. It deals with the vital interests and developments of bodies of people at various times in the past. If one should take the date 1845, for example, he would find that men and women thought and looked at life much as men and women do today. They met in public assemblies. They carried on their local government. They had their stores and church and schools. They shipped their goods by lake, canal, river and road. They were interested in the state of the nation and in foreign affairs. They made up the throbbing and vital communities of their day.

"The study of local history is therefore important to us today because it gives us the background upon which we can understand the present. It also should give us a sense of pride in our communities and should develop in us a local patriotism which is now just as essential, if not more essential, than one hundred years ago. The pull exerted by great industries and by the cities tends to take our people away from the smaller communities and to bring them together in the large industrial areas of the nation. This is a consequence of our modern industrialism.

"The very forces which tend to take our people away from their early home environment tend also to diminish their interest in and their loyalty to their own communities and to local institutions there. This is one of the most important reasons why we should encourage in every way we can the development of a spirit of loyalty and of pride in our communities around the state. The study of local history and the preservation of the records of the past are the best ways in which to develop this loyalty and pride.

Sources of Local History

"What then can we find out about any community?

"First, come the family histories.

"Second, biographical studies of people who have contributed to local development.

"Third. there is the whole field of folklore to be explored. This includes songs and stories.

"Fourth, there is the whole field of local history which includes the actual settlement of the area, the development of industry, of the arts, of religion, of trade and of travel, of architecture, of writing, and of the fine arts.

"It is not only important to know what one can find out. It is equally important to know how one can study the story of the community. One of the most interesting ways is to visit the older settlers whose

memories of their younger days are still clear. Their reminiscences should be taken down and should not be allowed to go with them to the grave. It is important to preserve old letters, account books, family Bibles, newspapers, pictures and photographs, and even stamps. Church registers often give valuable information. Names on gravestones in the older graveyards can be copied together with dates and inscriptions. Historical markers give useful information. Old houses sometimes contain material which should be preserved and occasionally an old house should also be preserved.

Many Can Share

"The preservation of the history of a community can become an enterprise undertaken by a great many people. Pageants and commemorative exercises kindle interest. The local library and the local museum can be made centers for the collection of historical materials. The local historical society and the local historians, such as the county, town, city and village historians, can all cooperate to the end that records of the community may be saved.

"No community can expect to grow strong in the affections of the people unless the children and young people acquire a wholehearted pride in their town, or village, or city, or county. And so it is most important that the schools be encouraged to undertake various kinds of projects and that the children be encouraged to engage in community enterprises and that they should be taught the real significance of the past of their own communities. Unless pride in local achievements is instilled in our young people we may hardly expect the vigorous growth which we all look forward to in the older generations."

A Century of Public Entertainment In Oswego

(Part I of a Paper Read Before Oswego County Historical Society at Oswego March 20, 1945 by Dr. Charles Wells, Director of the English Department of Oswego State Teachers' College.)

Public entertainment in Oswego a century ago consisted mainly of lectures, concerts, exhibitions, circuses and other forms of amusement. Scarcely a week passed that did not see one or more of these entertainments, and in the course of a year an interesting and varied program of events was presented to the people of the community. Oswego in 1845 was a village of 6,818 people, and was evidently an excellent show town, for many of the entertainments played here two or three days at a time, often for a full week, and certain groups returned year after year.

Formal Drama In 1845

The formal drama of the theatre, however, was practically unknown. It would be obviously unture to say that the drama did not exist in Oswego a hundred years ago since the first decade of the nineteenth century had brought a growth of the theatre in centers of population such as New York and Philadelphia, and undoubtedly the influence was felt in the smaller towns and villages. However, a careful study of the newspapers of that early period does not disclose much of what is considered to be legitimate drama. Since there were few railroads or good highways at the time, travel in upstate New York was slow, difficult, and often a dangerous venture. The small groups of entertainers that did appear here were forced to travel by boat on Lake Ontario, by packet on the canal, by horse and wagon or, by stage coach over plank roads. This transportation difficulty may explain why large theatrical companies did not play in Oswego until later in the century. After the Syracuse-Oswego railroad was built in 1848, better groups of entertainers began to visit Oswego, and the theatre started to develop.

First Theater in 1875

The lack of a playhouse in Oswego suitable for formal drama was also a reason why acting companies rarely appeared. No theatre in the modern sense of the word was available in Oswego a hundred years ago. There were several halls, such as Academy Hall on West Third street, Franklin Hall on West Second street, Market Hall on Water Street, and a hall over the Woodruff Block, at West First and Cayuga streets, but no well-equipped theatre. Details concerning the architecture, equipment and seating capacity of these meeting places are extremely scanty. As the name implies they were simply large rooms, illuminated by gas light, furnished with chairs, and equipped with a platform upon which the entertainers appeared. The stages were cramped and bare, with very crude scenic and lighting effects; the scenery and costumes were meager and worn, and served for many different productions. Because of the bare stages some of the later acting companies advertised special lighting and splendid costumes as principal attractions. Not until the Academy of Music was opened in 1875 could Oswego boast of a real theatre with footlights, scenery and a roll-up front curtain.

Another factor that discouraged theatrical companies in the middle of the last century was adverse public opinion. The Puritan influence of New England was still strong in Oswego County, as in most of the state

at that time, and this influence frowned upon the frivolity and display of the Theatre. Yet the citizens of Oswego could not completely resist the lure of public entertainments, and many novel attractions were offered as "concerts", a type of entertainment which met with universal approval. A concert was considered to be respectable, whereas a "show" was thought to be detrimental to public morals. Thus it was that a minstrel show published in the "Oswego Palladium", July 16, 1845, a very discreet advertisement which announced:

"Grand Concert
At the Court-House

(Front seats reserved for Ladies)

"Chrysty's far-famed and original Band of Minstrels have the honor of announcing to the ladies and gentlemen of Oswego that they will give one of their inimitable concerts in this village, which have been patronized by the elite and fashion of all the principal cities in the United States, to an extent unprecedented by any amusement ever previously introduced, on which occasion, they will introduce a variety of new and original songs, duets, glees, choruses, etc. Performance to commence at 8 o'clock."

This so-called "Concert" by the Chrysty Minstrels met with the approval of the editor of the "Palladium" for he commented in a news item: "The papers in the different parts of the country speak very highly of their performance. We expect lovers of fun and amusement will have a rare time, and that there will be a great bursting of vest buttons."

Drama Came With War

The legitimate drama, as it is known today, did not appear until about the time of the Civil War when road shows and stock companies began to present formal drama for local audiences, and not until the Academy of Music was opened did the theatre really flourish in Oswego.

Circuses and menageries were frequent visitors to Oswego, and like all other forms of commercial entertainment appeared under the guise of "educational presentations." To ilustrate this subterfuge, and to indicate the size and quality of these early circuses a paid announcement is quoted in full from the "Oswego Palladium" of September 9, 1845:

"IMMENSE MENAGERIE

"Will visit Oswego, on Wednesday, the 17th of September, 1845, the extensive collection of Beasts, Birds and Reptiles from the Philadelphia Institute, consisting of about 100 specimens, 50 people and 80 horses.

"Elephant-Drawn" Music

"On the entrance to Oswego, on the morning of the 17th, about 10 o'clock, the Great Four Elephant Team will appear, drawing the music, followed in train by some twenty wagons, filled with animals and drawn by 70 beautiful horses.

"The science of natural history must, in some degree, have occupied our race in all ages, and in every degree of civilization, as we depend upon the objects around us for food, shelter and amusement. Why should not man, in state of refinement and wealth, explore the great museum of nature, to enhance the temporal gratification, add to his source of knowledge, and increase his veneration for the wonderful Author of all things?

"The advantages derived by a visit to a well arranged menagerie are apparent. It is the concentration of all that is beautiful and sublime in nature's mighty work; one of the most elevated sources of human enjoyment, and one wholly divested of every moral objection frequently made use of against places of amusement in general.

"Herr Driesbach, the renowned lion king, is also attached to this menagerie, with his carniverous

family, caressing, fondling, magnetizing and even driving them in harness.

"Canvass to hold 5,000 people. Elevated seats to accommodate 1,500 ladies.

"Location for pavilion on the hill, first street north of the United States Hotel."*

Early Circuses

These early circuses were presumably well attended because three or four played in Oswego every season. However, the editor of the newspaper evidently did not approve of this form of public entertainment since he never made editorial comment, or gave any news item to the many circuses that appeared in the village. The only information concerning them is therefore taken from advertisements which may be slightly exaggerated. To illustrate the various types of circuses that came to Oswego a few of these advertisements are quoted. On August 11, 1847, Welch's National Circus announced in the "Palladium":

"This splendid equestrian company composed entirely of star performers will exhibit under their superb water-proof pavilion, commodiously furnished for the comfortable reception of 3,000 persons, at Oswego Wednesday, August 11, 1847, afternoon and evening.

"In the evening the Pavilion will be illuminated by the patent Sylvic Gas. It is an entirely new method, giving a superior light, free from all nauseous effluvia, and casting a light scarcely less brilliant than the noonday sun.

"The company will be saluted on their entrance, by Mr. Wallace's String Band, playing airs from the most popular operas.

"Constituting this company will be found Mr. J. G. Cadwallader, who will ride in his much admired acts of the Russian Envoy on two, three and four horses. Clown Dan Rice whose infinite jest and fun, unstained by rudeness or vulgarity, places him far beyond the reach of imitation.

"Madame Louisa Howard, the great native female equestrian, whose admirable personations on a single horse charm and delight all who behold her, justifying public opinion in awarding her the high position she has so successfully held amidst a host of rival stars."

Circus Long Popular

In September of the same year Van Amburgh and Company's collection of wild animals exhibited in Oswego at the Walton lot on Oneida Street. The cavalcade of horse-drawn vehicles entered the town from Fulton lead by a new "colossal chariot, constructed after the model of the chariots of the ancient Roman conquerors and painted in the most gorgeous style." The chariot was drawn by eight black Flemish horses, of prodigious size and weight, and was followed by a procession of wagons containing the animals. Dapple grey horses, "purchased regardless of expense," drew the wagons through the principal streets of Oswego to a spacious pavilion erected for the exhibition of the animals. Mr. Van Amburgh, "whose dominion over lions, tigers, and leopards has been acknowledged in Europe and America," then presented his death-defying acts for the entertainment of all who paid the admission of twenty-five cents, children under nine years of age, half price.

An all-time record for circuses was reached during July of 1850 when three appeared in Oswego in the short space of two weeks: July 4th, G. C. Quick and Company's "Mammoth Menagerie"; July 10th, Welch's National Circus; and July 18th, Robinson and

*This would have been West Schuyler street, between West Sixth and West Seventh streets, if the direction is correctly stated in the advertisement. Quite likely this was the plot now known as Montcalm Park.

Eldred's Great Southern Circus. This form of entertainment continued to appear year after year through the century, in good times and bad, in war years and peace time. It is one form of public amusement that has gone on without much change in form or loss of public interest.

July 4th Celebrations

The Fourth of July celebration was another time honored form of entertainment much enjoyed by the citizens of Oswego. A century ago the day was observed with street parades, orations, twenty-eight gun salutes, excursions on the Lake, contests, and displays of fireworks. The celebration of the Fourth of July, 1846, inspired Beman Brockway, editor of the "Oswego Palladium", to comment:

"The Fourth passed off finely in our village, which was literally thronged with people who came hither to witness the festivities of the occasion, and to unite in the rejoicings which it inspired. The day was ushered in by the roar of cannon and the pealing of bells; and the first rays of the sun were greeted by the 'Stars and Stripes' which had been unfurled from our shipping, the Fort, and the public squares. At noon, the procession which had been formed in Franklin Square, West Oswego, under the direction of the Marshall of the day, John W. Judson, Esq., escorted by a detachment of Capt. Barnum's U. S. Infantry and the Oswego Guards, marched through several streets, during the firing of a National Salute and the ringing of bells, to the Baptist church in East Oswego, where some very appropriate exercises were performed. The music discoursed by the band and choir, was most excellent, sweet, harmonious and inspiring.

"The Declaration of Independence was well read by T. H. Bond, Esq., who made some appropriate and thrilling remarks respecting its adoption. The Oration delivered by Hon. Orville Robinson was eloquent and patriotic, and was attentively listened to by many more persons than could find room or seats in the church. The patriotic sentiments of the orator, and his well-timed and happily-conceived allusions, elicited frequent plaudits from the audience, in which a few gray-haired and time-worn veterans of the Revolution united. All the exercises at the church passed off with spirit and in good order.

"During the day, several pleasure excursions were made upon the Lake by steam and sail boats, which were well loaded with passengers.

"At four o'clock in the afternoon, there was target shooting at Fort Ontario, which was witnessed by a considerable number of spectators.

"At sundown a National salute of 28 guns was fired from the Revenue cutter and the Fort, and the festivities of the day closed by a very good display of fireworks in the evening in Franklin Square, and a brilliant torch light procession of the fire companies.

"On the whole, the 70th Aniversary of our National Independence was well celebrated in Oswego. Let it ever be so."

General Tom Thumb

Charles S. Stratton, better known as "General Tom Thumb," the famous dwarf, who was exhibited by P. T. Barnum in all the principal cities of the Union, came to Oswego in 1847 to appear in what were called "public levees". This world-renowned "Man in Miniature" appeared with his pony equipage,* Royal presents and Court costumes, and presented a very elaborate program of entertainment at Academy Hall. The "Palladium" ad-

*The pony-drawn carriage in which General Thumb rode resembled in appearance an egg shell cut with doors and windows. In later years Mrs. Thumb rode with the General as a bride.

vertisement announcing his appearance in Oswego gave many details concerning the General and his program:

"General Tom Thumb

"This distinguished man in miniature, weighing only 15 pounds, 15 years of age, but 27 inches high, who has been received with the highest marks of Royal favor by all the principal crowned heads of Europe, and who has performed before five millions of persons during the last four years, will hold his Public Levees at Academy Hall in Oswego, on Friday and Saturday, August 20th and 21st.

"The little General will appear in all his performances, including songs, dances, Grecian Statues, etc; and also represent Napoleon Bonaparte, Frederick the Great, etc. He will also appear in his beautiful Scotch costume, and his elegant Court Dress, worn before Her Majesty, Queen Victoria; the King and Queen of the French; Nicholas, Emperor of Russia; and all the principal crowned heads of nobility of Europe.

"It is now six years since the little General appeared in public for the first time, and his weight is precisely what it was at that time, viz: Only Fiftteen Pounds.

"He is perfectly symmetrical in all his proportions; intelligent and graceful beyond belief; and smaller than any infant that ever walked alone.

"The magnificient presents, jewels, etc. received from the Kings, Queens and nobility of Enrope, will be exhibited.

"His beautiful miniature equipage, presented by Queen Victoria, consists of the smallest ponies in the world, and chariot, attended by elfin coachman and footmen, in livery, will promenade the streets each day, and be seen in front of the Hall at 12 and 4 o'clock.

"Notice to the Public: This is positively the last time General Tom Thumb will ever be seen in Oswego, as he retires forever from public life as soon as he has paid a brief visit to the principal cities of the Union."

This last statement was a slight exaggeration for the General continued to appear in the principal cities of the United States for many more years, and returned to Oswego in 1852 and again later for a repeat engagement which is still remembered by a few Oswegonians.

Commenting on the General's first visit the editor of the "Palladium" wrote:

"Tom Thumb, the greatest as well as the smallest curiosity living, visited us last week. His levees were well attended by our citizens, and the appearance in our streets of his tiny ponies and miniature chariot, accompanied by their elfin attendants, clothed in appropriate livery, attracted crowds of spectators and afforded infinite amusement to the juveniles.

"The General left us on Saturday afternoon, for Ballston, Saratoga County, where he makes his next appearance."

The General must have made a considerable impression on the editor of the newspaper because items concerning the travels of Tom Thumb continued to appear in the local press for many months after his visit.

Aztec Lilliputians

The success of P. T. Barnum with Tom Thumb inspired other showmen to exhibit curious human beings in Oswego. In June of 1851 the famous Aztec Lilliputians, Maximo and Bartolo, appeared for three days at Franklin Hall where everyone could view these "wonderful natural curiosities" for the admision price of only one shilling. A month later Angus McKaskill, "the Nova Scotia Giant Boy," gave grand reception levees at the old City Hall (Market Hall) for one week. This young giant was nineteen

year old, eight feet tall, and weighed four hundred pounds. Acording to report "he had a truly majectic form, a pleasing and intelligent expression of countenance, and was sociable of his audience."

First Oswego Balloon Ascension

In August of 1847 one of the most spectacular outdoor entertainments ever witnessed in Oswego up to that time was given for the education and enjoyment of the citizens. For several weeks, early in the month the "Palladium" printed reports of balloon ascensions being made by a Mr. Wise in Auburn, Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, and other cities of upstate New York. On July 27 a half-column news story told of the 60th ascension made the day before in Syracuse. Later stories related the adventures of Mr. Wise in Buffalo when on his 63rd ascension the balloon landed in Lake Ontario near a brig which sent a boat to the rescue, and brought the soaking balloonist and his aerial ship safely into port.

These stories created great public interest, and at last Mr. Wise the aeronaut, arrived in Oswego on August 23 to attempt his 65th "Grand Atmospheric Voyage." The advertisement, which was decorated with an illustration of a ballooon in full flight with many flags flying, announced:

"BALLOON ASCENSION!

From the Public Square, East Oswego

"At the earnest solicitation of the citizens, Mr. Wise has been persuaded to visit Oswego, and takes this opportunity of informing the ladies and gentlemen of this village and vicinity, that he will make his 65th Grand Atmospheric Voyage on Wednesday afternoon, August 25, between 3 and 4 o'clock, in his new aerial ship the 'Rough and Ready.'

"Order of Ascension: Doors open at 12, when the inflation commences. At 1 o'clock a small balloon will ascend. At 2 a Pioneer Balloon will be launched. At 2½ a pilot balloon will point out the direction of the wind. At 3 o'clock Mr. Wise will attach his car to the Aerial Vessel, and after floating a few minutes between earth and air by a single cord, will detach himself from the terra firma and ascend to the region of clouds."

Evidently a balloon ascension was more to the liking of the editor than other types of entertainment that appeared in Oswego for he prepared an editorial in which he made a plea for public support of the enterprise: "By reference to our advertising columns it will be perceived that Mr. Wise, accounts of whose ascensions in various parts of the State we have heretofore published, has made arrangements for an aerial voyage from this place tomorrow afternoon. Our citizens will thus be afforded an opportunity of witnessing in person a scene at once grand and uncommon—one which, in interest and value to the observer, can not be compared with all the circuses and puppet-shows, of whatever name or nature, in creation. The latter are mostly perfect leaches to the public purse, and generally so to public morals; but such a scene as Mr. Wise will afford us, is not only productive of no injury to the public, but is full of the most exciting interest and valuable instruction to all classes, —to the Philosopher, the man of science, the educated and the uneducated,—and we sincerely hope our citizens and those of the adjoining towns will furnish Mr. W. with a large audience—one that will occupy the inside inclosure, and thus aid in defraying the heavy expenses which he is compelled to incur for their benefit. In some places Mr. W. has been honored with a much larger outside than inside audi-

ence; but we trust he will not have this to say of the citizens of Oswego. The price of admission to the inclosure is so reasonable that we hope those at least who can aford to pay for admission to a circus, will be willing to do so in this case."

First Flight Over Oswego

The balloon was described as containing 436 yards of yellow silk, and holding 40,000 gallons of lighter-than-air gas. During the inflation the balloon was covered with a network of fine white cord, from which large cords reached to a number of 56 pound weights on the ground. When the balloon was inflated the cords were disengaged, and the balloon held down by several men while lines were attached to the willow basket in which Mr. Wise was to ride. To the "immense" number of people assembled the spectacle was entirely new, and everyone appeared to be highly pleased with it. The intense excitment, almost breathless eagerness, with which the assembled thousands awaited the moment when the fearless navigator of the air should detach his aerial ship and ascend to the region of the clouds attested to the deep interest which all felt in the experiment.

Nor did the enthusiasm of the multitude cease when after a momentary suspension in the air, Mr. Wise severed the slight cord which held the "Rough and Ready" to the earth, bade his audience "good-bye", and sailed off in his wicker chariot. As the balloon took a south-westerly direction over the western part of the village, there was a rush of the spectators, men, women and children, in that direction. There was such a crowd of people rushing over the bridge, some on horseback and some in carriages, it was feared the structure would collapse; but the bridge held up and the eager multitude passed on. The wind not being favorable, Mr. Wise did not ascend to the height or travel to the distance which some of his audience had expected. As a result he was severely criticised by a few members of the crowd. In defense of the aeronaut the editor of the Palladium wrote next day. "The height and distance attained were amply sufficient for the success of the experiment, and to prove that traveling in the air is not only practicable, but, to skillful navigators, safe and highly interesting."

Speaking of what was probably the first flight by man over Oswego, and replying to his critics, Mr. Wise said in an interview:

"While over the center part of West Oswego, I threw out considerable ballast in order to keep above the spires and house tops, and sailed off to hte south-west in the lower current until I reached open ground on that side of town. While floating over the town the scene below was truly animated. The clattering of vehicles and horses' feet, and the shouts of the juvenile army that was pursuing the direction of the 'Rough and Ready', fairly made the mid-heaven reverberate with the trumultuous sounds that rose from the earth. For the reasons why I did not go out on the Lake. First, there was no vessels out in the direction of the Lake where I would necessarily have been compelled to alight; and secondly, because I did not fancy the idea of a bath in the cold water of Lake Ontario."

Lectures and Lyceums

Literary, political and scientific lectures were an important part of public entertainment in Oswego a century ago, and were particularly significant because of the educational and cultural values to the community. The annual lecture series began to develop in Oswego about 1845, and continued to develop and flourish through the Civil War period until early in the twentieth century when the lyceum movement gradually faded away. The purposes of these lectures was

"to awaken a general spirit of inquiry, and to excite a desire for knowledge." The lectures did not aim to produce scholars but to disseminate information of interest to the public. Various branches of science, social problems, political economy, practical education and other useful topics were presented.

The lectures exercised a powerful influence upon the political, as well as the social, life of the community.

People from neighboring towns and villages came to hear discussions of the important problems and questions of the time. During the Mexican War agitation, the Oregon controversy, the Missouri compromise, and the Texas annexation the political and social implications of these questions were discussed pro and con by speakers on the lecture series. The anti-slavery struggle of 1850 to 1860 was reflected in many of the lectures given in Oswego, and some of the most prominent abolitionists of the time appeared upon the local lecture platform.

Lectures On Science

There were also science lecturers who made use of simple scientific apparatus, and employed many ingenious mechanical devices to demonstrate and illustrate new scientific theories. Many of these theories are considered ridiculous today in light of modern discovery, but in the 1850s they were thought to be true and extremely important.

The lectures were usually organized and supported by a local organization of people interested in entertainment and self-improvement. Membership was open to everyone in the community, and membership fees were small, the funds being used for such necessary expenses as hall rent, advertising and speaker's honorarium. A few news items and advertisements from local newspapers indicate the type of subjects and speakers that appeared on the lecture platform. On July 16, 1845 the "Oswego Palladium" carried this advertisement:

EXPERIMENTAL LECTURES
On Electro Magnetism, Magneto and Thermo Electricity

"F. A. Hall, A. M., respectfully announces to the citizens of Oswego, his intention of lecturing on this subject, on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, of this week, at the Market Hall, at which place he will exhibit between 30 and 40 machines combining the latest improvements in the sciences. Morse's Electro-Magnetic Telegraph, conveying intelligence 200 miles in a minute; Colt's sub-marine battery, designed for blowing up ships. For particulars, see large bills at the several hotels in this place. Admittance 25 cents."

Commenting on the coming lecture the editor of the Palladium wrote:

"The attention of our readers is directed to an advertisement in another column, in which Mr. Hall proposes to lecture on the subject of Electro-Magnetism. We have the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with Mr. Hall, and take it upon ourselves to say that he is every way competent to do justice to the subject. We bespeak for him large audiences. His apparatus is new and in good order, and we anticipate for lovers of science an intellectual feast."

Lectures on science were very popular and were frequently given in Oswego. In September of the same year a news item announced:

"Lectures on Geology. Rev. Mr. Morse will deliver a course of seven lectures, commencing this evening, on the interesting science of Geology at the Mechanic's Hall, in the Market Building.

"The lecture this evening will be on the history of the ancient worlds of animals and plants, showing that no less than six

have arisen upon this globe and pasesd away, previous to the creation of the present world.

"Terms 50 cents for the course, for one gentleman and two ladies; 12½ cents each for a single lecture."

The "Oswego Palladium" of November 23, 1847, carried the following advertisement:

"CHEMICAL LECTURES

"A course of lectures and experiments on the subject of Chemistry and kindred sciences, will be given in the Hall of the Mechanics' Association, in this village, by Doctor William Mather, of Fairfield, N. Y.

"Doctor M. has been for many years engaged in lecturing upon this highly interesting and useful science. Some years since he filled a professorship in Castleton Medical College, Vermont, and has been recently engaged as a lecturer at the Hamilton Institution*, connected with the Baptist denomination. His apparatus for experiments is extensive; in addition to the usual chemicals it embraces several interesting articles in the subject of Magnetism and Electro-magnetism, some of which will be exhibited at the introductory lecture, such as the Electro-magnet, Magneto-electric machine, Powder cup, Revolving Armatures, and the Electromagnetic Telegraph. The newly discovered power of electro-magnetism will also be illustrated by the use of an Electro- Magnetic Engine moving upon a circular railway.

"The introductory lecture is gratuitous to subscribers, to persons introduced by subscribers, and to all those who are desirous hereafter of becoming patrons of the course. An opportunity to subscribe will be afforded at the close of the first lecture."

Public Showed Approbation

When a series of educational lectures concluded it was a custom of the audience to pass a resolution commending the speaker for his instructive presentation, and for his gentlemanly behavoir. Frequently these resolutions were published in a newspaper for the information of the general public. One such resolution taken from the "Oswego Palladium" of December 21, 1847, comments on the chemical lectures of Dr. Mather:

"At a meeting of the very large class who attended the course of Lectures delivered by Professor Mather during the past four weeks, the following resolutions were reported by D. H. Marsh, Esq., and Drs. Van Dyck and Potter, and unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, That we have heard and witnessed, with much pleasure and instruction, the course of Lectures and Experiments in our village, by Professor William Mather, on Chemistry and its kindred sciences.

"Resolved, That, in his gentlemanly deportment, his intimate acquaintance with the subjects upon which he lectures, and the extensive apparatus and ability with which he exemplifies his theory, he has fully sustained the high recommendations with which he came among us.

"Resolved, That we most cordially recommend Professor Mather to the confidence and support of the public.

"Resolved, That the above resolution be published in the village papers.

John W. Smith, Chairman"

Tells of Unknown China

As a leader in community affairs the editor of the "Palladium" reminded his readers in December, 1847, that a lecture series for the winter had not been announced, and suggested that a series be organized:

"There is scarcely a village in the county containing half the number of inhabitants of our place, which does not manage to get up and maintain a course of Public Lectures during the winter season. To say that the same

*An early name for the institution now known as Colgate University.

thing can not be done here, augurs poorly for the literary taste and habits of our people. We believe a series of good lectures would be well patronized. Who will take hold of this matter? It seems to us that Mr. Smith, the indefatigable president of the Mechanics' Association, is just the man."

The suggestion was well received for soon a series of seven lectures was advertised, and then presented for the citizens of Oswego. The same winter a lecture on China was delivered by Mr. S. Wells Williams at the First Presbyterian Church. Mr. Williams had just returned from a twelve years residence in China and in his lecture spoke on the history, manners, customs, and prospects of the Chinese. The editor of the newspaper said concerning the lecture: "No other American has acquired that extensive knowledge of the character, and habits, literature and laws, of this peculiar and, until a few years past, almost unknown people, which this gentleman possesses, and which he is well qualified to impart. We hope he will meet, as he deserves, with a full attendance."

A Distinguished Galaxy

As time went on public interest in lectures increased steadily, and funds became available to support a series of talks by some of the most prominent literary men, social reformers, and political leaders in the United States The Franklin Hall* series presented during the winter of 1851-52 probably set an all-time record in Oswego for famous lecturers. On the lecture platform appeared such famous personages as the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Season tickets for the course of sixteen lectures were sold at two dollars for gentlemen, and one dollar for ladies; with single admissions twenty-five cents for gentlemen, and twelve and a half cents for ladies.

Following the lecture by Henry Ward Beecher the "Palladium" devoted two full columns to a summary of the event. A few of the comments made by the editor were:

Henry Ward Beecher

"Franklin Hall was filled to its utmost capacity on Thursday evening by our most intelligent and respectable citizens, to listen to the second lecture of the series now being delivered in Oswego. The lecturer was Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, of Brooklyn; the subject, 'The True Sources of a Nation's Prosperity: Its Men, not its Money.' A subject full of interest, and which was treated in a most searching and masterly manner by the distinguished lecturer. Widespread as is his reputation, and high as were the expectations of his audience, the one was fully sustained and the other more than realized.

"To be fully appreciated, Mr. Beecher must be heard and seen. The mere reader of his productions loses the earnestness of manner, the eloquence and impressiveness of gesture and of accent, for which he is distinguished, and which take the battlements of the mind by storm, compel convictions, enforce the approbation of conscience, and elicit the applause of the heart.

"The subject was divided into three parts or inquiries, viz: 1st What constitutes the elements of national prosperity?, 2nd, What are the institutions which tend to develop that prosperity? and 3rd, What are the duties which citizens owe to these institutions?

"In regard to the first inquiry, Mr. Beecher entertained the belief that these elements were to be found principally in the men of a nation. These, in his opinion,

*Franklin Hall stood on West Second street on the site now (1945) occupied by the Oswego Theatre. It was later renamed "The Tabernacle" and religious services were held there.

constituted national greatness and power, these were the true elements of national prosperity. A nation would be poor, indeed. though lined with gold, if it had no men, real men, men of purity and integrity of character, men of intelligence, men capable of understanding the true principles, the true philosophy of self-government.

Family Of First Importance

"As to the instiutions best calculated to develop and promote national prosperity, Mr. B. asked his audience to think and answer him which was most important. He had thought, and had come to the conclusion that the family, properly organized, and recognized in the highest, purest, holiest aspect, stood first in importance among these institutions. Where this did not exist and was not recognized, or where it had only a nominal existence, and was employed merely as a cloak for licentiousness, the people were unable to throw off the yoke of tryants, and to mainain a free and independent existance. The family, organized upon correct principles, is the Nursery of Liberty.

"The Church, too, not this, nor that, not any particular church, but the general institution of the Church was next in importance among these institutions. A nation, said the lecturer, was never ruined by too much morality and conscience; but instances were on record where governments had fallen through a lack of these important requisites.

"Common schools are also great promoters of the welfare and independence of a State. Oppression loves blind men, because they are easily led; but common schools, common school teachers. are the ichneumons that destroy crocodile tryants in the egg. Let the liberties of a people be destroyed every year, by political excitments or bad laws, but leave us the Family, the Church, and Common Schools, and we would soon begin to see Freedom rising again and blooming like the green meadow over which the scythe had once passed.

"The closing remarks of the speaker, and, indeed, the whole lecture, abounded with beautiful flights of imagery and spontaneous and impressioned outbursts of eloquence, which thrilled and electrified the audience, and brought down the house in frequent and hearty applause."

Editor Criticizes Seat Oversale

No record is available concerning the seating capacity of the lecture halls a hundred years ago, but evidently they were too small to accomodate the large crowds that attended the more popular lectures. One very pointed comment about the inadequacy of Franklin Hall, and about the manners of the audience, appeared in the "Oswego Journal," December 6, 1851, shortly after Henry Ward Beecher had delivered his lecture in Oswego:

"The lectures just begun at the Franklin Hall this season, are very popular. They draw better than any former course of lectures. More people are in attendance and the number is on the increase. The first night the house was filled, the second it was crowded, and the third, or last, compelled quite a number of people, who had paid for their tickets, to stand during the evening. Now if the Hall will seat only a certain number, it is wrong to sell more tickets than can comfortably be accomodated. Such a thing as providing an entertainment for which the invited guests pay, and withholding seats, is anything but courteous or an exercise of hospitality. The aisles might be filled with benches, and they should be, or the number of tickets restricted. No gentleman will allow ladies to stand in the aisles while he is seated, and yet when one goes early and secures a seat, and waits a half hour for the lecturer to appear, he reluctantly gives up

his position, and stands during the evening. Especially does he do it with ill-grace, if the new female takes possession with perfect coolness, without saying 'I thank you,' or bowing in recognition of civility. We saw this done last night. It should not be repeated."

Horace Greeley

Horace Greeley's appearance on the lecture platform did not create the same excitement, nor bring forth the same lengthy review in the daily press, as did Beecher's. The "Daily Palladium" of January 10, 1852 gave the event a brief paragraph:*

"Horace Greeley's lecture on Thursday evening, was listened to by a very large and delighted audience, and was such as might be expected from so distinguished and able a writer, and one so thoroughly versed in the theme of his discourse, 'The Crystal Palace, and its Lessons.' The subject was admirably, graphically elucidated. and its lessons adroitly and eloquently drawn. The close, particularly was beautiful and impressively eloquent and appropriate, being an 'allusion to the upheaving of the nations of Europe, and the gathering skies that proclaim through Kossuth the progress of Freedom."

The lecture delivered by Ralph Waldo Emerson, February 5, 1852, was given a column in the newspaper:

"The high reputation Mr. Emerson enjoys as a lecturer, was fully sustained by his effort in this city on Thursday evening. He writes as no other man. His thoughts, if not always original, are presented in a manner peculiarly his own. Though he is not what would be called an eloquent man, he secures attention of his auditors at once, and holds it at will. You become interested, both in the speaker and his subject. You feel unwilling to lose a single word that escapes from his lips. There appears to be diamonds of exceeding value in every sentence he utters, and you seem to regret that he employs so few words. Listening to him we should consider something like the employment of digging for gold. You see little particles of shining dust as he proceeds, and wonder that he does not tarry longer where so much is promised. But he stops with showing you the mine, he leaves you to do the digging. His discourse was upon the subject of Wealth, which he treated in his own peculiar way. He had a new definition of Riches. He considered the wealthiest man to be the individual whose revenues were derived from the greatest number or variety of sources. The poorest man in the State, was the one who did the least for the people. Wealth was Knowledge, Virtue, Morality, Religion. Anything which improved the Understanding, enlarged the Heart, and tended to the moral and intellectual growth of man, was an element of Wealth. But we can not follow Mr. Emerson through his lecture. It was a rich intellectual repast, and nothing short of a verbatim report would do it any kind of justice. It was an effort which only a thinking man could appreciate."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The "Oswego Journal", February 6, 1852, gave more detail of Mr. Emersan's remarks, and is quoted here at some length because the story gives an insight into the philosophy which influenced the thinking of Oswegonians nearly one hundred years ago.

*This could scarcely have been a reflection of any antipathy to Greeley on the part of Beman Brockway, then the Palladium's editor and proprietor, for Brockway was soon to dispose of his interest in the "Palladium" and take an editorial position on Greeley's New York Tribune. He did not find that position entirely to his liking, however, and he resigned from it after a few months and took up his residence in Pulaski where he lived for several years before going to Watertown where he was to spend the remainder of his days.

"Wealth begins, said Mr. Emerson, with the common necessaries of life, bread to eat, fire to warm, roof to shelter, a good two-wicked lamp to burn, etc. Acquisitiveness he regarded as a virtue, and a good thing for society, as it stimulates men to become independent; forces the beggar to improve his faculties and fight his way to his own loaf. Man should not be content with the mere necessaries of life, and live upon a handful of dried peas; he is born to be rich, and is tempted to the conquest of this and that piece of nature, until he begins to think that this planet belongs to him.

"He is the best man who avails himself of other men's facilities, and draws benefit from the labor of the greatest number of those who make different articles, both of use and luxury, in all parts of the world. Power is what man wants and not candy. Kings have long arms, it is said, and all men should have long arms, and pluck their living from all parts of the world; from the sun, moon and stars, if possible. He had never seen a man yet so rich as all men ought to be, or having the command he ought to have of all the elements of nature. Only they should own, who can administer, and not they who hoard; those who carve out work for others, and not those who are continually beggars. The accumulation of wealth in single hands is a benefit to society, so far is it is employed in building railroads, manufactories, etc. It is said of party that it is the madness of the many for the gain of the few; and these projects in which capital unites may be called the madness of the few for the benefit of the many. The projectors seldom reap benefits from them, but the community is greatly blessed.

Oswego 53rd City

"He gave an economical analysis of wealth, in its different aspects, showed the relative value of money in different places, and spoke of the various projects to regulate by legislation the descent of wealth. All legislation upon this subject he deemed improper, as such matters would regulate themselves by a natural law much superior to any special enactments."

The Federal census of 1850 listed Oswego as having a population of 12,205, and being the fifty-third largest city in the United States. There were only sixty-two cities in the country with a population over ten thousand, and Oswego was at that time larger than Springfield, Massachusetts; Wheeling, West Virginia and Dayton, Ohio. New York City was then the largest city in the United States with a population of 500,000, with Chicago at only 29,000, and Syracuse 22,000. With Oswego only a small city it is a great tribute to the cultural and intellectual interests of the citizens that such a wealth of stimulating entertainment was made available to the community.

The lecture and lyceum movement continued in Oswego for many years, and resulted in the broadening of intellectual interests and the spread of scientific knowledge. It also developed leadership in public life, and tended to break down class distinctions since all manner of people joined in the common undertaking.

With the arrival of the Civil War period, the wordy style of earlier lecturers was exchanged for one of simplicity and directness. A modification of the ornate style was brought about, and a direct, simple form of oratory developed that was better suited to the discussion of important moral reforms and public questions.

The oratory of this later period was characterized by brevity and simplicity. The learned man of the day, face to face with the plain man, spoke simply and briefly in order to win his point.

Other Lecture Types

Capitalizing on the success of the serious lectures, and the public desire for instruction, many itinerant lecturers began to peddle pseudo-scientific lectures. Talks on clairvoyance, animal magnetism, mind-reading, mesmerism and phrenology were presented to a gullible public eager for more knowledge. In October of 1847 the "Palladium" announced in a news item:

'Professor Rodgers, who has lectured and experimented for several years, with great success, in all the principal cities of the Union , on Human Magnetism, Phrenology, etc., and who delivered a course of lectures in this place about a year ago, has arrived in town and announced another course of lectures and experiments, different from the former at Mechanics' Hall.* The first of the series was given last evening, the others to follow in regular order. We have no doubt that the Lectures and Experiments of Professor R. will prove highly entertaining to our citizens."

Health Lectures

Another news item in November of the same year announced a course of health lectures:

"Dr. Pierce, from New York, will deliver to the ladies and gentlemen of Oswego, at the Tabernacle, a course of four free lectures upon the cause, prevention and cure of consumption and other diseases, and the mysteries and fallacies of the faculty.

"His system of practice is founded upon the laws of nature and common sense principles, which accounts for his universal success. He does not convert the stomach into a drug shop, or cover the body with painful sores; but he prescribes natural remedies, which will assist nature to heal the disease, instead of hindering her."

An Early Winchell

Beginning in the summer of 1847, and continuing at intervals for the next several years, an amazing entertainer by the name of Winchell visited Oswego to present what were sedately announced as "Comic Lectures." He appeared as a one-man show and played an incredible number of different characters. The paid notice in the "Palladium" gave an idea of the actor's evaluation of his own work.

"Winchell will introduce a variety of amazing burlesques, comical delineations, enlivening funnyisms, gleesome humors, innoxious jollities, kindling levities, mirthful novelities, queer reminiscences, satirical truisms, ubiquitous voices, wags, Xantippes, Yahoos, Zanevs, etc. at the Academy Hall, on Tuesday evening, June 15th, 1847.

"With a variety of imitations, including Betty Madagain, an itinerant mendicant from the Emeral Isle, with the song of the Angel's Whisper, which gradually and imperceptibly changes into the crying of an infant, and conclude with Caleb Bundy's Adventures Down East, being an imitation of an original Yankee, whom the imitator met once upon a time."

One of the distinguished American Phrenologists of the last century visited Oswego professionally during October of 1849, and favored the citizens with a course of lectures on the " interesting and important science" of which he was the acknowledged head and teacher in this country. The mayor of the village gave free use of the City Hall for the lectures, and Mr. Fowler, the phrenologist, presented the lec-

*Mechanics Hall was located on the second floor of the old Market House—Oswego's first city hall. It was here that the first men's club to be organized in Oswego for serious study and inquiry held its meetings.

tures free to all. This spirit of generosity was duly appreciated by the citizens, and they gave the visitor a hearty welcome and a cordial reception.

The advertisement of Mr. Fowler's lectures pointed out that:

"The utility of phrenology is new settled beyond quesion, and all that is necessary to reap its advantages is to become acquainted with its principles and apply them, and those who are desirous of so doing have now an opportunity.

"To know ourselves is a matter of the greatest importance, and there is no means by which we can acquire this knowledge so well as by the aid of Phrenology. It teaches us for what occupations in life we are by nature best qualified, and in what pursuit we may be most successful. It is a powerful lever to self-improvement, both moral and intellectual."

The schedule of the lectures as announced in the newspaper indicates the breadth of the science of phrenology:

"Monday and Tuesday: Phrenology as applied to the development of the passions, and the training and government of children.

"Wednesday and Thursday: Analysis of the intellectual facilities, how to educate children and secure good memory.

"Friday and Saturday: The moral organs and moral nature of man, the harmony between man's moral nature as recognized by science and as presented in the Bible will be compared.

Phrenology Found Favor

These lectures by Mr. Fowler were so well received by the people of Oswego that a resolution was unanimously adopted "That we fully recognize the claims of Phrenology to be classed among the Sciences, and that therefore worthy of the attention and investigation of the student of Nature and the lover of truth, no less than the philanthropist, and that the successful presentation of these claims to the minds of the community, is an object of importance, as well to the cause of humanity as of science."

A type of lecturer that must not be omitted from this historical survey was the sidewalk orator who sold merchandise to his audience after he had given his speech. The appearance of one such street vendor brought forth a news item in May, 1851:

"Hastings, the 'renowned soap vendor' is in town. He drew a large audience in the street Monday evening, and after entertaining the crowd for some time with his peculiar, humorous, mirth-provoking oratory he dealt out any quantity of the famous soap, which, if it is a humbug, 'is got up' to perfection. It is completely transparent, richly perfumed, and looks good enough to eat. Notwithstanding the immense sales of this article yesterday, Mr. H. has a 'few more of the same sort left'."

Moving Dioramas

Exhibitions of original paintings, scenic panoramas, and moving dioramas were also an important part of public entertainment in early Oswego. These exhibits usually received favorable comments from the local newspapers, and were well supported by the public. In May, 1848, a beautiful moving diorama of the Fairy Grotto, Island of The Fay and Enchanted Palace, and views of Mexico, taken by an officer of the United States Army, were shown at Academy Hall. Following the exhibit the Oswego "Palladium" remarked:

"Johnson and Co.'s Dioramas were exhibited at Academy Hall on Friday and Saturday evenings last, and, we hesitate not to say, were well worth witnessing. The views of different cities in Mexico are vivid and remarkably life-like, and cannot fail of interesting all who have paid any attention to the events that have trans-

pired in Mexico during the last two years. Other objects of curiosity and interest are introduced during the evening's entertainment, affording one both amusement and instructions."

The showing of Dubufe's original painting of "Adam and Eve in Paradise" at Franklin Hall, April, 1851, inspired the editor of the "Palladium" to write a critique:

"This sublime and unequaled production of art was painted for Louis X, of France, and represents the 'Temptation' and 'Expulsion' of our first parents. The figures are of the size of life, and from their bold relief, distinctness of outline, graceful of attitude, and tone of coloring, most perfectly resemble a finished statue. In the Temptation, the expression of Eve is the very soul of beauty, simplicity, feeling and loveliness. The Expulsion is terrifically grand; the elements are in fearful commotion, and a feeling of commingled awe and admiration insensible comes over the mind that dispassionately contemplates this exhibition of the holy wrath of Heaven upon the guilty, fallen parents of mankind. All is in perfect keeping and harmony, impressive and graphic in sublimity. The power of language is unavailing in describing this noble work of art, it must be seen to be appreciated."

Chemical Dioramas

R. Winter's exhibition of "Chemical Dioramas" of Milan Cathedral, the Funeral Pageant of Napoleon, and the Court of Babylon, with a night view of Belshazzar's Feast created a sensation among Oswego art lovers because one picture would fade away and another take its place. The newspaper reporter said: "We do not understand the process by which a view of the city of Rome is transformed into a view of the Bay of Naples, but the thing is done, and all you know about it is, that one fades away and the other appears in its place. The change is very curious, to say the least." The process was never explained in the newspaper, but it is possible that the feat was performed by a stereopticon, or "magic lantern" built with a double projector to produce dissolving views..

County Fairs

The Annual Cattle Show and Fair of the Oswego County Agricultural Society was another popular form of public entertainment a century or more ago. According to the early newspapers these annual events were well attended by people from all parts of the county, and the exhibits of farm machinery and produce were very interesting and instructive. The program of events in 1847 featured a display of animals and implements of farm husbandry on the Oswego show grounds, and of domestic manufactures, mechanical productions, and fruits and vegetables in the Market Hall. The highlights of the second day at the Fair were a plowing match in the morning, and the awarding and paying of premiums in the afternoon.

The County Agricultural Society held the annual Fair of 1853 at Oswego Falls, with the fair grounds immediatey adjacent to what is today the Fulton depot of the Lackawanna Railroad, then the station of the Oswego and Syracuse Railroad. The grounds were enclosed, and buildings were erected to house exhibits of mechanical, agricultural and horticultural products. Special trains ran from Oswego to Fulton for the convenience of those attending the fair, the railroad fare was reduced to half price, and passengers leaving Oswego at 10 in the morning could visit the exhibition and return to Oswego by 4 that afternoon or 7 o'clock in the evening. The main speaker at the fair was Talmadge Delafield, Esq., of Seneca county, who delivered an address in a large tent erected on the grounds.

The local newspapers always gave the county fairs their hearty support, and urged the public to attend. A few days before the Fair of 1853 the editor of the "Times" wrote:

Newspapers Aided Fairs

"The Fairs of the County Society we have always regarded as more calculated to advanve the interests of Agriculture than the shows of the State Society. There is less noise and confusion about the former, and more practical utility. The County Fairs have always been admirably managed, and they have given uniform satisfaction.

"It is to be hoped, that the approaching exhibition will show an advance upon all its predecessors. Certain it is, that our county is steadily growing in all the elements of agricultural wealth and productive industry. Our city alone can and ought to furnish an interesting and attractive display of its manufactories and workshops. Our artisans are not inferior to those of any part of the state, and they cannot do better than cultivate the acquaintance of the people of the county with their wares and themselves, under so auspicious circumstances.

"We hope our citizens, generally, will be induced to visit the fair, for apart from the interest it will afford, there is a reciprocal duty to countenance these agricultural exhibitions, if they encourage our farmers in their efforts to excell in their profession in which all classes have a direct and deep interests."

The editor of the "Times" visited the fair and found everything to his liking. He reported:

"Yesterday we attended the County Fair at Oswego Falls, and though the day was extremely wet and unpleasant, raining nearly all day, the show of horses, sheep, cattle, swine and poultry, was exceedingly fine. A better show, we venture to say, has never taken place in this county, and had the day been fair, few county fairs in this state would have excelled it.

"In fruits and vegetables there was a very fine and large display. The fruits department was particularly well represented, showing that Oswego is far ahead as a fruit growing county of her sister counties. Our friend Mr. Worden had 20 or 30 varieties, or more, of apples and pears on exhibition.

"As a whole, we were exceedingly pleased with our visit, and happily disappointed in seeing so large and varied an exhibition.

"The ladies were there in large numbers with specimens of their skill. The officers of the Society were as busy as bees in the discharge of their duties, and to their efforts no doubt the prosperity of the Society mainly depends."

Strawberry Festivals

Closely akin to the county fairs were church fairs, bazaars, exhibts of bake goods and fancy work, and the annual Strawberry Festival. These events were usualy held in Doolittle Hall* or Music Hall where adequate space for the displays was available, and were given by various church and community organizations as means for raising funds.

The Strawberry Festival of 1854 was staged by a group of churches working together. The public attended in large numbers to view the exhibits, and to consume large quantities of the ever famous Oswego county strawberries.

The food and fancy work at the church fairs were sold to the highest bidders, and the funds given to the church or to the minister. An 1861 news item stated: "The Fair at Music Hall

*Doolittle Hall was located on the east side of Water street between Market and West Cayuga streets, where the Doolittle Block stood for many years.

last evening for the benefit of Reverend Mr. Clifft was well attended. There was a fine display of useful and fancy articles, and the tables were filled with choice delicacies. The fair will close this evening with an auction sale of all articles remaining on hand."

Vaudeville

Vaudeville shows, often called "variety" were a popular form of public entertainment before the Civil war. Acrobats, jugglers. musical acts, and singers presenting topical songs had long existed in the theatre, and had come to be played as a series of acts for the amusement of the less critical, but highly appreciative, members of the public. For a long time ladies rarely went to this form of entertainment because the jokes were considered off-color, and the crowds were often rude and noisy. These were two of the reasons the theater was frowned upon, and was so long in becoming an acceptable form of amusement. The advertisements of the early days often stressed the "polite" entertainment, and its suitability for the "ladies and gentlemen of the elite society." The attitude of the editor of the "Palladium" towards this type of commercial entertainment was well expressed in a story concerning a concert that had appeared before a very small audience. He wrote:

"We regret that this really meritorious concert was not more liberally encouraged; not only for its own account, but because the fact that it was not is a bad commentary on the taste (of at least some) of our citizens. If it had been a circus, an itinerant theatrical performance, a Negro dance, or anything else of this sort, it would probably have been well patronized for this is generally the case; but a quiet, orderly, respectable musical concert to elevate and improve both the heart and the mind, can be scarcely command an ordinary quorum of spectators.

"Is it indeed a fact that none but that class of performances which we have named, can secure the attendance and receive the encouragement of the citizens of Oswego? This, and other similar illustrations, we confess, almost compels us to believe so."

Vaudeville was later improved and made acceptable to the more conservative members of the community, and enjoyed a rich and interesting life until recent times when it practically disappeared from the American scene.

On July 11, 1848, Mr. Charles Hill, an accomplished actor, with his family, presented a series of theatrical entertainments of a kind approved by the newspaper. The editor wrote:

"Mr. Hill is a gentleman, and has acquired a handsome reputation for his theatre. We understand it is patronized by the elite everywhere, and that the representations are of a chaste and refined character. We bespeak for him a patronage commensurate with his deserts."

The advertisements Mr. Hill published in the newspaper indicated the dignified vaudeville show he presented to Oswegoians:

Early Vaudeville Program

"Mr. Charles Hill, of the Theatre Royal, Convent Garden, encouraged by the flattering remarks of approbation which have been bestowed on himself and family throughout the United States has the honor to announce that he has, at a great expense, constructed a new and elegant portable vaudeville theatre, painted expressly for him by James Lamb, which will open for two nights only.

"The performance will commence with the vaudeville of A Silent Woman, to be followed by a petite sketch called 'Capers and Coronets' and 'The Marquis and the Opera Dancer' with the song 'Vive La Dance! Vive La Guerre!'

"Mademoiselle Flore, (a French opera dance) will introduce a

grand dance from the Ballet of La Sylphide.

'The program to conclude with the laughable farce of 'The Young Widow.' "

Another variety show was given in Oswego a few years later by a comedian, known as Yankee Locke, who presented a "great attraction in the shape of wit, humor, Yankeeisms and dancing." He was assisted by Arline Newton, a celebrated danseuse; and by J. Fontaine, a distinguished violinist, who introduced a great variety of comic inmitations on the violin.

Legerdemain and Magic

Closely related to the variety show, and very popular with the public, were feats of legerdemain and magic presented by various wizards, necromancers, and magicians. In 1848, Herr Allen Stuart, a celebrated magician of that period, presented one of his Oriental Soirees at Academy Hall. His performance included a variety of new and surprising experimental wonders based on chemistry, optics, pneumatics and magic. The stage was maginficently illuminated for the occasion, and splendidly decorated to represent a temple of enchantment.

Performances by magicians were always well patronized, and as a result many such entertainments were presented in Oswego. The appearance of a magician at a local theatre was cause for great excitement, and frequently received editorial comment in the newspaper. The "Palladium" of October 30, 1851, announced in an editorial:

"The Great One is Coming. Now, all minor wonders and magicians must hide their heads, for lo! the Great Wizard is about, and may be expected here. All necromancers, who have appeared before him, are indebted to him for their many seeming wonders. He is celebrated the world over, not only as the greatest magician living, but as the inventor of thousands of feats. In the Wizard we see no common performer, but a gifted artist, and a gentleman. He is consulted by wealth, fashion, and beauty. Wherever he appears he creates a tremendous excitement. With an unsparing hand he presents the ladies with choice bouquets, and baskets of delicious confectionary. He makes the old look young, and the ugly pretty. He makes you laugh when he likes, and weep at his command. And not only that, he will make your eyes the fools over your other senses. A gentleman, who has seen this wonderful man, has just been telling us of some of his wonders, and we must say, if they are as great as they are said to be, he must be the D—l in the the shape of Dr. Faustus."

The Wizard played to full houses in Oswego for two weeks, and the newspaper continued to express enthusiastic approval of his performances. Among the many comments which appeared in the press one suggested that the magic show was a desirable antidote for a public too excited over a coming election. The item stated:

"His houses have been nightly filled with fashionable and admiring audiences, notwithstanding the intense excitement of the election. We hope our good people will go and see him, and by that means allay any dangerous symptoms resulting from over excitement. He's some."

Barnum In Oswego

The celebrated Lancashier Bell-Ringers and the wonderful Chinese Family, brought to this country by P. T. Barnum, gave two concerts and levees at Franklin Hall, March 20 and 21st, 1851. The bell-ringers included five artists, each holding four bells at a time making a total of twenty bells on which the musicians played the popular airs of the day. The combination produced the most astounding and charming peals of harmony which reminded the listeners of a colossal music box.

The Chinese Family consisted of one lady of royal blood with tiny feet only two and one half inches long, a Chinese professor of music, an interpreter, and two Chinese children. The family performed upon various Chinese musical instruments much to the delight of the audience.

Since P. T. Barnum was the manager of the Chinese Family, as well as General Tom Thumb who had appeared in Oswego a few years ago before, the editor of the newspaper reported an incident which may or may not happened in Oswego. A young lady present at the entertainment said aloud, "Is that Barnum?" as a man of large proportions advanced to the front of the stage, "What does he play on?" To which a gruff voice of an old gentleman a few feet away growled. "He plays upon the people."

Barnum Discovers Jenny Lind

While this paper does not deal with the history of musical entertainment in Oswego the story of Jenny Lind may well be included since it furnished public entertainment for several years, mostly through the local newspapers. Early in March, 1850, the "Palladium" carried a news story that P. T. Barnum had concluded arrangements with the Swedish Nightingale to visit this country for a series of one hundred and fifty concerts. In September a full column report of Jenny Lind's first New York concert was re-printed from the "New York Tribune," and was followed in the same issue by a brief report of her second concert. A news item in December announced that Jenny had sung in Washing , D. C., to a large crowd which included President and Mrs. Fillmore, and many members of both houses of Congress.

Public interest in Jenny Lind was further aroused in May of the next year when the newspaper reported that expenses for the singer and her company were $3000 a day, that Barnum was still making $20,000 a week profit, and that up to them Jenny had accumulated from $800,000 to $1,000,000 in spite of her generous contributions to charity. Interest grew to excitement when the "Palladium" announced in July:

"Jenny Lind sang in Albany on Wednesday and Friday evening, and is to sing in Utica on Monday evening. She should now be invited to Oswego, either upon her route to or from Niagara Falls. Jenny must favor us with at least one concert."

This excitement mounted when four days later the newspaper added:

"Jenny Lind is to sing at the First Baptist Church in Syracuse this evening. It seems to us measures should be taken to get her here, and now is the time to move in the matter. She will visit the Falls, and doubtless go or return by way of Oswego, if she is asked. Let her be invited to come."

But on July 17th this excited anticipation was dashed to earth by the announcement:

"Our citizens, we suspect, are not to hear Jenny Lind, unless they go abroad for it. We believe she has decided not to come here, or rather, her agents have done so for her. Well, no matter. She probably loses as much in staying away, as Oswego will. We shouldn't wonder if she was no great shakes after all."

Jenny Lind Pays Visit

All was forgiven, however, in August of the same year when Jenny passed through Oswego on her way to another engagement. It is true she did not give a concert, but her mere presence in Oswego inspired the newspaper to comment:

"The Swedish Nightingale honored our city with a flying visit on Saturday morning. She came in on the "Bay State,' Capt. Ledyard, and departed on the six o'clock train for Syracuse. She walked from the boat to the cars with Capt. Ledyard, who,

being a single man, was of course particularly affable and attentive. The morning was a lovely one, and she expressed herself highly delighted with the appearance of our beautiful city. The story that she is soon to return to Europe is all idle. She informed Capt. L. that she did not think of leaving the country earlier than May, 1852; that the more she saw of the country the more she was delighted with it, and the more difficult she found it to get away. The Captain found her an intelligent, unassuming lady, with whom he was well pleased. Of course, she was pleased with the boat and her commander, for the Captain is one of the finest men in the world, and the "Bay State" is a paragon in neatness and order. A better steamer does not float upon the American waters.

"Few of our citizens saw Jenny, for she passed through town before many were up. This is another case illustrating the importance of being up in the morning."

Traveling Theatrical Troupes

Along with lectures, concerts, magicians, medicine shows, and exhibitions of natural curiosities ocasional theatrical troupes began to appear in Oswego shortly before the Civil War. The old prejudice against the stage was slow to die, and during the fifties, when the moral sense of the people was being stirred by the question of abolition, it revived in full force. During this period the usual entertainments were given, and there is a record of a few acting companies. In July, 1851 the Syracuse Theatre Company under the management of W. Henderson, presented a short engagement in the Upper Hall of the Woodruff Block. "Black-Eyed Susan" and "Crossing the Line" were the first plays given, followed the next evening with "Honeymoon, or How To Tame a Woman" and "Loan of a Lover." A stirring melodrama "The Drunkard," and the play "Perfection" were also included in the repertoire.

As the feeling against the drama died away acting companies visited Oswego with increasing frequency, and the 1850's witnessed the gradual development of this new form of entertainment. There were traveling companies of actors with one play. These stayed in town for a day or two, or until public patronage dwindled, and then moved on to the next town. Traveling stock companies with a repertoire of many plays stayed until all of the plays had been shown one or more times for the local audiences. The development of these "stock companies" during this period is of particular historical significance because of the later influence on public amusements.

"Stock" Encouraged Versatility

The "stock" system led to versatility rather than excellence in acting, and produced acting groups capable of presenting a wide variety of plays, including new plays and revivals of so-called "stock pieces' from the older dramatists. One evening the group might give a Shakespearean play, and the next night the latest of the thrilling melodramas or amusing farce-comedies. A stock company was usually a group of players working together under an arrangement known as a "sharing system" by which each performer received a share of the proceeds. The "season" for such a company would be a week or two, or until all of the plays in repertoire had been presented once or twice for the townspeople. At the conclusion of a run, the chief performer would be given a "benefit" from which he would receive the total proceeds of the performance. Frequently the manager of the hall would donate use of the theatre rent free for the benefit. If the performance was a success, benefits would be given for other members of the cast,

then a benefit for two or three of the minor actors collectively, and, finally, for some local charity. This system of benefits was profitable for individual members of the company, and often extended the season for a week longer than originally planned.

Hough's Dramatic Company

Hough's Dramtic Company, a stock group which had just finished a run at the National Theatre in Syracuse, came to Oswego in 1852 for a limited engagement. The engagement however, lasted two weeks by the time the benefit performances were completed. Included in the repertoire were most of the latest New York plays: "Black-Eyed Susan," "Rising Wind," "Who Speaks First," "Irish Tutor," "Dumb Bell," and "Charles II." For the benefit of Mr. A. R. Phelps, the leading actor, the company presented "The Maid of Croissey"; and for the benefit of Mr. A. Ross, another actor the players gave "Delicate Ground" and "Honey Moon." This stock company was very popular in Oswego, and returned the next year for a longer run. Their season this second year continued from December 19, 1853 to January 6, 1854, and saw the production of a larger repertoire than before. Then for some reason the company disappeared for six or seven years, and re-appeared in the news when the Oswego "Times" announced on April 10, 1861:

"Garry Hough's Dramatic Company is now perfoming in Syracuse. We have heard a rumor they are coming to Oswego. Time was when we used to have a theatre here as a regular attendant upon the summer months. If Mr. Hough is well supported, and has a good compeny, he can, we believe, do a profitable business in Oswego; but if he has a mere association of supernumeraries forced into leading parts, he had better stay away."

In December 1852 the Abbey Hall, under the management of A. R. Phelps and W. A. Thompson, housed a Shakespearean troupe headed by Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Leonard. During the ten day run in Oswego this company presented "Macbeth," "Richard III," "Othello," and "Hamlet" for large and appreciative audiences.

First Shakespearean Performance

The plays of Shakespeare became increasingly popular so that by 1854 Marsh and Ellsber's Star Museum Company was able to enjoy packed houses at Doolittle Hall for a month. Among the plays which were given over and over were "Romeo and Juliet," "Othello," "Macbeth" and "Hamlet." To round out the season the usual benefits were given for the actors, and a few modern plays presented for the public. All of the plays received very flattering reviews in the local newspapers. A note on the program printed in the newspaper is interesting because it attempts to assure the public of the theatre's dignified and proper behavior. The note stated: "The strictest order and decorum will be preserved, gentlemen will readily comply with the request. Ladies are never at fault."

The behavior of some members of the audiences was long a source of concern for actors, managers, and theatre owners. Unruly spectators often disturbed other members of the audience with catcalls and stamping, and occasionally tried to start a riot or panic. Newspaper editors frequently complained about such ungentlemanly behavior and plead for drastic action to curb the evil. One such item which appeared in the "Palladium" stated:

"It is an outrage that respectable people who patronize shows are to be annoyed and insulted by blasphemy, cat-calls, and stamping of unruly boys. One ruffian in the gallery, when the fire alarm rang, tried his best to

get up a stampede by crying out, "Doolittle Hall is on Fire!" A judicious application of locust would have a beneficial effect, until the street Arabs and their larger consorts learn they cannot run everything."

Doolittle Hall's Appointments

Doolittle Hall, which was to play an important part in the future history of Oswego entertainment, was opened October 6, 1853. This hall was destined to house most of the important public events for the next twenty years, and then to be changed into the Academy of Music and continue to welcome the great and near-great of the American stage until the Richardson Theatre was built and opened in 1895.

Doolittle Hall was not a theatre, merely a hall, but for beauty, size and general arrangements it was not surpassed by any theatre in the state at that time. The forty-two gas fixtures, installed by Mellen and Bradeen, were reported to be the most costly and showy available, and to have reflected much credit upon the taste of the proprietor.

The new place of entertainment opened with the celebrated Dumbolton Troupe of Ethiopean Ministrels, second only in popularity to the famous Christy Ministrels. The large room was crowded for the opening, and the ministrels well received. The "Oswego Daily Times" reported:

"The Dumbolton Company is decidedly the best that has ever visited our city, as the applause with which they were continually greeted testified. Their delineations of the Negro Character are too much for vest buttons, Cool White, Pell and Emmett being capable of making more fun than any three 'darkies' in America.

"Mons. Devani, the contortionist, and Mr. Hooly, the musical director, did not appear last evening, having missed the afternoon train of cars from Syracuse. They will be on hand this evening, however, and it is expected that Mons. D. will be twistyer than ever. The performance of this gentleman is worth the price of admission.

"The Doolittle Hall, lighted by gas last evening, for the first time*, made a very imposing appearance. The Chandeliers are of the most beautiful and costly style, Mr. Doolittle having spared no expense to make his Hall, as it is, one of the finest in the State. It is both an honor to its proprietor and our city."

Advent of Ministrels

Before progressing further into the forms of public entertainment in Oswego during the past century there is a characteristic native theatre form which should be mentioned, the Negro minstrel. It was an American type of entertainment which made its first appearance about 1828, and grew to be among the most important contributions that America has made to theatre art. Negro minstrelsy had its orgins in the singing and dancing of the plantations, and was probably introduced to the stage when Thomas D. Rice discovered "Jim Crowe" as an amusing stage character. Minstrel shows developed a definite pattern with a white master of ceremonies as Interlocutor, a chorus seated in a semi-circle facing the audience, and two or three blackface comedians as "endmen". The first part of the show was generally a series of solos and chorus musical numbers, interspersed with jokes by the endmen. A second part, or olio was usually in the nature of a revue with members of the troupe presenting their musical, dramatic, and dancing specialty acts.

The first minstrel shows visiting Oswego were advertised as "concerts". Among the first to appear was Mr. Lathrop's Ethiopian Harmonists who gave "a grand concert" at Academy Hall in February of 1849. The

*Illuminating gas became available in Oswego for the first time in 1852.

"concert" was well received for the newspaper commented:

"The Concert of the Ethiopian Harmonists last evening, gave universal satisfaction to a large audience. The music of the Harmonists has not been excelled, if, indeed, it has been equalled, in this city by any thing of the kind for a long time. Mr. Lathrop gives another Concert this evening, when all those who admire this species of amusement will do well to attend."

Two years later another group presented a program in Oswego, and received a press notice that indicated the kind of music provided for the enjoyment of the audience:

"Butler's Ethiopian Serenaders will give the second and last of their novel and exciting entertainments this evening at Franklin Hall. They will introduce a variety of new songs, duets, overtures, etc., with instrumental accompaniments on the guitar, banjo, and tambourine, presenting a rich and varied program."

The melodies of Thomas Rice, Dan Emmet and Stephan Foster were used extensively by the minstrels. Of the one hundred and fifty songs written for these entertainments the most popular were: "Old Folks At Home," "Old Black Joe," "Nelly Was A Lady," "My Old Kentucky Home," and "Way Down South in Dixie".

Christy's Minstrels

The most famous band to visit Oswego was known as "Christy's Ministrels." This troupe had played in New York City for eight years before they took to the road under the guidance of George Christy who had inherited the show from the founder, Edwin P. Christy. Their first Oswego appearance was announced in the "Oswego Times" in April, 1861:

"Christy's band of Ethiopian Ministrels will give two entertainments at Doolittle Hall on Friday and Saturday of this week. They are capital vocalists and do not need the extra attraction of burnt cork and plantation extravagances to draw crowded houses."

The "Christys" performed in Oswego as scheduled before a large audience which, according to the report, found parts of the performance good, but the whole show very unsatisfactory. This unexpected failure astonished the audience because the same troupe had recently performed in Syracuse to crowded houses, and had received unqualified approbation from the press of that city. Explaining this sudden change in quality of production the local newspaper reported:

"After the performance at Syracuse, a part of the company left Mr. Christy in the lurch. While deliberating how he should get out of his engagement at Oswego, certain parties at Syracuse, represented that there were performers in that city who could fill the missing places. Mr. Christy consented to give them a trial, and came on here in hopes of being able to give a respectable entertainment. He is sensible that he made a mistake, and is much mortified at the failure of last evening, so much so that he will make no attempt to repeat it tonight."

Christy Made Good

Christy hastened to Albany and New York to re-organize his troupe, and returned to Oswego a week later to salvage his reputation. The new company was good enough to prompt the reviewer to say: "The company has retrieved its fame; the reunion has been sucessful."

The program of the Christy Ministrels illustrates the pattern used by most minstrel shows for the next seventy-five or more years until this type of theatrical entertainment declined in popularity and faded from the scene:

PART I

Overture Instrumental .....
..... Christy's Ministrels

Opening Chorus, operatic ....
..... Full band
Seeing Nelly Home George Gray
The Irishman's Shanty .....
..... W. A. Christy
Annie Lisle .... Charles Carple
Down In Tennessee Dan Holt
I Am Dreaming of Thee ....
..... George Gray
Anvil Chorus .....
... from "Il Trovatore"
Boss Blacksmith .....
..... W. A. Christy
Blowers,, Choristers, Bellows, etc. ... the Company

PART II

Dance—Pas de Corsair .....
.... Master Eugene Florence
Ballad—Viva L'America .. .
.... George Gray
Stump Speech W. A. Christy
The Union is Safe, Banjo Solo
..... Dan Holt
Polka de Zauave .....
Christy and Florence
Dramatic sketches:
"Gaily the Troubador"
"Return of the Star of the West"
Concluding with the favorite plantation song and dance "Who Struck Billy Paterson" by entire company.

There were innumerable minstrel troupes playing every city, town and village in the United States right up to the time of the First World War, when increased railroad rates and competition from the moving pictures finally killed this form of amusement.* Amateur groups today occasionaly produce a minstrel show, and thus help to preserve the music and humorous skits that were an important part of professional minstrels. The once popular negro impersonations of minstrelsy have been succeeded by serious plays concerning the social problems of the Negro.

*Al. G. Field's Minstrels continued to pay annual visits to the Richardson Theater in Oswego for nearly a decade after the close of World War I before they finally "left the road"—the last troupe of traveling American minstrels to withdraw from the field.

Barry Opens Music Hall

Music Hall, located over Gordon & Purse's store on West First street, was opened as a theatre in March, 1861. John A. Barry, who had leased the hall and made extensive alterations and improvements, announced to the public in a paid advertisement:

"Music Hall, formerly Littlefield Hall, has been leased and fitted up as a first class Hall, and is now ready for use. The room is well ventilated and warmed, and contains comfortable seats for six hundred persons. As a concert or lecture hall it is not excelled, charges moderate."

The new hall was evidently a success for many public entertainments were thereafter held there instead of at Doolittle Hall, which up to then had been the most popular meeting place. Also with two theatres it was possible for more entertainments to appear in Oswego. It was not uncommon for rival acting groups to be playing here at the same time, one in Music Hall on West First street, and the other in Doolittle Hall on Water street.

Debate Spiritualism

Just before the Civil War an interest in Spiritualism as a new science suddenly flared up in Oswego. Lectures, debates and demonstrations were presented for the entertainment and enlightenment of the skeptics and the believers. On March 22, and 23, 1861, a Professor Grimes and the Honorable Warren Chase, the champion of modern spiritualism, appeared at Music Hall to debate the subject, "Modern Spiritualism, its Philosophy and Phenomena." The debate gave all interested Oswegonians a rare opportunity to hear the subject thoroughly analyzed and ably discussed by two gentlemen who had given considerable attention to an investigation of the subject. Concerning the debate the "Oswego Times" reported:

"Music Hall was filled last eve-

ning, by an intelligent audience drawn together to hear the discussion of Modern Spiritualism by W. Chase affirming that spirits do communicate, and Prof. J. S. Grimes denying that position.

"The two champions sailed into the discussion with a great deal of spirit, not spirits, and the audience was apparently well satisfied with the entertainment. Some truth was uttered on both sides; but we forbear to state our own impressions, preferring that each should judge for himself. Spiritualism is now on trial. It has an able advocate, and an able antagonist. Let the public sift the arguments pro and con, and decide intelligently."

The editor of the "Times" however, could not refrain from expressing his own views on the subject, and the day after the final debate he wrote:

"Our own opinion is that Spiritualism cannot be proved a fact without the evidence. When, where may the phenomena be witnessed? Mr. Chase informed us that there are several rapping mediums in this city. What is the reason that we may not hear them? Why hide their light under a bushel? Why shrink from candid examination?"

Spiritualist Convention

The editor and the public probably got more than they cared for in August of the same year when the Spiritualists of Oswego County held a four day convention at Music Hall. The meeting attracted a great deal of attention and provided entertainment to everyone who attended the sessions, or even read the newspaper accounts of the proceedings.

The Oswego "Commercial Times" reported:

"The Spiritualists Convention is in full blast today. Last evening was devoted to the recital of the personal experiences of lecturers, who reported a general state of interest in the cause. This forenoon the Convention was occupied in discussing a resolution so obscure that, although we heard it read four times, we could not comprehend its meaning. The speakers, however, generally argued that 'What ever is, is right.'

"The convention is continually subject to the interruptions of a man named Barnes, who is afflicted with a mania for speech-making and who announces himself as the 'Angel of the Lord.' Notwithstanding his high character, the 'angel' has been ruled out of order several times, and the Convention manifests a decided repugnance to listening to him."

Mr. Barnes Explains

Apparently these comments by the reporter distressed the spiritualists for the next day the newspaper account of the convention continued somewhat gleefully:

"At the conclusion of an address, Mrs. Spence arose and alluded to the remarks of the "Times" in reference to the conduct of Mr. Barnes in the convention. She attributed the idiosyncrasies of that gentleman to the control of a spirit for which he was not responsible, but she advised that susceptible mediums should not attend conventions if they were unable to prevent the spirit from obtaining control of them.

"Mr. Barnes then came forward, with much humility, and said his foolish acts were to be attributed to the control of a band of spirits which accompanied him. He was continually subject to their control, and by their aid was able to answer mental questions and give many remarkable tests. The spirits directed him to 'go to the convention,' and hence he was here. A year ago the spirits directed him to go to Washington and visit President Buchanan. He said to the spirit, 'I have no money.' But soon he received a letter from an unknown source containing money for his journey. Accordingly he went to Washington, what for he did not know. He visited Congress,

and then called upon the President. Mr. Buchanan said to him, 'Mr. Barnes, how do you like the proceedings of Congress? He replied that he was sorry to see a spirit of Disunion there. Buchanan said I think there ought to be Disunion. Immediately a spirit took possession of him (Barnes) and he spoke to Buchanan, 'By the Eternal, palsied be the arm that attempts to raise Disunion in this country.' Mr. Buchanan was very much affected and trembled violently.

"At the conclusion of this remarkable narrative, the convention adjourned."

Spirits of Another Type

Another highlight of the Spiritualists' Convention was a lake excursion which ended up in a riot and fight in a Canadian port. Efforts were made to procure a large steamboat for an all day trip, but without success, so three small boats were provided instead. Each boat was loaded with as many passengers as it could carry with any regard for the comfort of those on board. The weather was beautiful, the lake placid, and everyone enjoyed the trip. Music and dancing "whiled the happy hours away," to the immense satisfaction of spiritualists and skeptics who made the trip together.

The first landing of the boats was at Lake of the Mountain, with a stop of one hour and a half, to give the passengers time to climb the mountain and eat lunch on the bank of the lake. From there the party went direct to Picton, where a program of speeches was held. An excursion party from Kingston and one from Bellville joined the Oswego party, and then a very unfortunate incident occurred to mar the trip. A dozen rowdies who had over-indulged in intoxicating liquors started a fight and tried to wreck the Globe Hotel in Picton. The police fought a pitched battle with the rioters, and finaly landed five of the leaders in the Picton jail. There was some talk of detaining the boats and searching them for liquor. This possibility prompted the ship captains to take a hasty departure, and in so doing left quite a few of the more worthy passengers behind. All on board congratulated themselves that the persons who started the row were taken prisoners, and hoped the rowdies would each get six months in the penitentiary. It was a great day for the Oswego Spiritualists.

War Had Little Effect

The Civil War affected public entertainment in Oswego to a surprisingly slight degree. Lectures, concerts, minstrels, circuses, stock companies, and other forms of amusement appeared in Oswego as frequently as before. From the number of plays listed in the newspapers, and the length of the engagements, it is possible to surmise that theatre going was increased by the growth of wealth and by the desire for temporary escape from anxiety.

The first entertainment in Oswego after the start of the War came on April 18, 1861, four days after the attack of Fort Sumter, when the Timbuctoo Nightingales, an amateur minstrel organization, presented a grand concert of operatic choruses, songs, dances, burlesques and extravaganzas, including a grand scene from "Il Trovatore". The feature of the evening's performance was the production on a grand scale of the national anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner," with the audience joining in the singing.

A few days later "the Fakir of Ava," a skillful juggler and magician, appeared at Doolittle Hall. In additon to the Fakir's wonderful feats of magic, presents were distributed to the audience, each person being entitled to an equal chance with the rest. Among the gifts advertised were ladies' dresses, gentlemen's shirts,

various articles of jewelry, and a "splended horse" purchased in Oswego at a cost of eighty dollars.

Jim Thayer, the American clown, and Frank Phelps, "the people's jester," appeared in a clown show on the old circus lot, at the corner of Third and Erie streets, on May 22 and 23, 1861. Their show included drama, opera, ballet, comedy, pantomime farce, minstrels, educated mules, and acrobats.

Kate Fisher, who had performed in numerous successful engagements with Forrest at Niblo's in New York City, gave one of her fashionable and unique entertainments at Doolittle Hall in June, 1861. It consisted of Yankee impersonations, recitations from Shakespeare, various humorous pieces, singing, playing, and dancing a special number called "Donnybrook Jig". A news item announced that the program given by Miss Fisher was both "rare and racy".

The Webb Sisters, Emma and Ada, presented a "Drawing Room Entertainment" at Music Hall. The two girls impersonated fifteen characters, sang six songs, and danced three dances. Another sister act appeared in June, 1861, when the sisters Susan and Kate Denin and Company presented a program of selections from "Romeo and Juliet," scenes from "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and from "A Night at the Club". Their second program included "Camille" and "A Day in Paris." The newspaper reviewer did not have much to say concerning the entertainment except to comment on the bareness of the stage and lack of scenery.

Stock Companies Come

Stock companies played in Oswego frequently during the Civil War years. Less than a month after the outbreak of the war O'Harra's Dramatic Company opened their season with two plays, "In and Out of Place" and "Rough Diamond." The review in the "Times" next day was very favorable:

"O'Harra's Dramatic Company opened at Music Hall last evening with a very respectable audience. Our citizens were entertained wtih some excellent music from the brass band on the balcony, and the gentleman who played the leadng instrument was voted a remarkable player, as he certainly is.

"The company is not numerically strong enough to perform heavy tragedy, but is designed for drawing room entertainments of comedy in which they succeed admirably well. Mrs. Frances O'Harra possesses undoubted talents on the stage, of a very versatile character. Last night in the play In and Out of Place, she enacted seven different characters and executed them all, including a Yankee girl, a French lady and an Irishman, remarkably well.

"Mr. O'Harra is a very fair comedian, and the other members of the company sustain their parts well. This evening the plays are 'Pleasant Neighbor' and 'The Yankee Duelist,' interspersed with singing and dancing."

Other plays included in the repertoire were: "Loan of a Lover," "The Secret," "The Seven Clerks," "Man, the Good-for-nothing," "Swiss Cottage," "The Yankee Peddler," and "The Bandit Chief."

At one performance Captain Beardsley's company of war volunteers was present by special invitation from the management, and at the conclusion of a very graceful dance by Mrs. O'Harra, the recruits gave the players three hearty cheers in which the balance of the audience joined with zest.

Fleming's Stock Company

The most outstanding of the early stock companies to visit Oswego was probably William

Fleming's Star Acting Troupe which came here early in July, 1861, and played for a full month at Doolitle Hall. The repertoire of this company incuded most of the popular Shakespearean and modern plays, and introduced to Oswego a new item in theatrical entertainment, the afterpiece. For many years stock companies closed each evening's performance with a one act farce-comedy to relieve the tension or serious mood created by the heavy drama presented first on the program. Since these plays were given atfer the main piece they came to be known as "afterpieces." The titles of these short plays suggest that the audience must have witnesed some very ludicrous bits of drama. One cannot help but wonder at the probable reactions of Oswegonians who saw Shakespeare's great play "Hamlet," and then sat through a farcial afterpiece entitled "Out On A Spree"; or the feelings of the audience that saw "Romeo and Juliet" followed by a ridculous sketch called, "A Day After The Wedding." Such programs must have been acceptable, however, for Fleming and his company were very well received by both the public and the press. Just before Fleming opened in Oswego a newspaper remarked: "We believe our people are really hungry for the drama, having been deprived of it for some time past. Doolittle Hall has been tastefully fitted up as a theare. Let the Hall be filled tomorrow night to greet the manager on his opening."

The season for Fleming started July 9, 1861, with the great moral drama "The Stranger," and the farce "The Eaton Boy." Commenting on the opening the newspaper editor wrote:

"Mr. Fleming's star company was greeted with a large and respectable house last night. We were not present, but we learn from connoisseurs of the drama who did attend, that the performance was of a very satisfactory character. It was voted on all sides that this is the best company that has visited Oswego in many years."

The reporter was present the next evening when "Honey-Moon" was given with "The Young Widow" as the afterpiece. From this first hand observation he was moved to write:

"We were astonished on visiting Fleming's theatre at Doolittle Hall last evening, by the uniform excellence of the company. We expected that one or two supernumeraries would be thrown in, of course; but there was nothing of the kind. The pieces were well played throughout, and not an indifferent actor stepped upon the boards. We have seen playing not half as good at the first class theatres of New York City, and we are compelled to say that if the people of Oswego do not patronize Fleming's company largely, then they will never patronize any, for the probabilities are that many years will pass away before they will see another company equal to it."

"Richelieu" and "Boots at the Swan" as the third bill played by the Fleming company brought forth another review in the "Oswego Times":

"We were much pleased to observe the attendance of the ladies, in almost unusual numbers, at Doolittle Hall last evening. The play of 'Richelieu' was enacted, Mr. Fleming sustaining the leading character with fine effect. His impersonation of an old man on the verge of the grave, who yet could be aroused to vigor by his country's danger, was excellent, and brought down thunders of applause.

"The very funny comedy of the 'Young Widow,' wherein the versatile A. H. Davenport assumes the disguise of a French dancing master, closed the performance. It was the verdict of the audience that a more laughable farce

had never been played upon Oswego boards.

"Superior acting, tasteful scenery, elegant wardrobes and good order make Mr. Fleming's theatrical representations the finest we have ever had in this city, and we look for increased audiences as his stay is protracted."

The drama "Lady of Lyons" and the farce "The Youth That Never Saw A Woman" appeared as the fourth program by the Flemings, followed by Shakespeare's "Othello" and a comedy "The Married Rake" as the fifth performance. The sixth evening brought "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark" and the farce, "Out On A Spree"; the seventh, "Ingomar, The Barbarian" and "The Eaton Boy."

Praise For Fleming Troupe

The Flemings were so well received that the newspaper made an additional observation concerning the merit of the company:

"For a theatrical manager to hazard, in midsummer, a season upon the uncertain boards of Oswego is a best a daring venture. The unusual depression of business and the consequent stringency of the times would seem to render such an attempt at the present more than ever a measure of doubtful success. Therefore we are the more gratified at the encouragemnt which warrants the protracted stay of Mr. Fleming's company of stars. Among them there is not an indifferent actor. Mr. Fleming has a reputation won upon the principal stages of the United States. The versatile Davenport has friends from Boston to New Orleans. Miss Eberle is an accomplished actress, who can only be spared from Philadelphia at intervals. Scallan is a comedian of rare merit, who plays well whatever he undertakes. Miss Fanny Broan is charming, though we may get our ears boxed for saying it. Kingsland is a well-mannered gentleman, and plays with good taste. Lanagan is a capital old gentleman. Mrs. Stoneall and Miss Gimber both act with charming naturalness. Holland, Pike, and in fact all the others, are intelligent players, and the company as a whole is superior to any we have ever had before in Oswego."

With such encouragement the company went on to play "Richard III" and "Irish Lion" as the eighth bill; Dion Boucicault's great comedy, "London Assurance," and the farce, "Out on A Spree" as the ninth; "Romeo and Juliet," and the farce "A Day After the Wedding" as the tenth production; followed by the thrilling play "The Iron Chest" and a farce "The Rough Diamond."

This series concluded the season for the Fleming Company but Mr. Doolittle, owner of the hall, gave the use of the theatre for a benefit to Mr. Fleming. The benefit was given on July 22nd with the company playing "The Merchant of Venice," with "Robert Macaire" as the afterpiece.

The first benefit was so successful the company stayed on for two more days and presented Shakespeare's tragedy "Macbeth" and the farce "The Irish Tutor" one night, and the Indian play "Pocahontas" and a drama "Soldier's Return" the second night as a benefit to A. H. Davenport. With these final presentations the Fleming company moved on to Ogdensburg.

Return Engagement

October of the same year saw the Fleming Company back in Oswego with an entirely new repertoire of modern plays. Instead of famous plays by Shakespeare the program now included such sensational dramas as: "The Doom of Deville, or The Maiden's Vow," "Three Fast Women." "Handsome Jack," "French Spy."

and a burlesque "Jenny Lind At Last." Why this company changed so suddenly to "modern" drama was not explained, and evidently the public did not support the players as generously as it had two months earlier, for the troupe played in Oswego only one week.

Adah Menken Played Oswego

Adah Isaacs Menken, a famous personage of the Civil War period, visited Oswego in October, 1861, as a featured player with the Denin Troupe. Miss Menken, who led a sensational life as a dancer, actress, poetess and sculptress, was born in Louisiana, the daughter of a Presbyterian minister. She had first gained attention on the stage by allowing herself to be strapped to the back of a galloping horse in the play "Mazeppa." Concerning her Oswego appearance in the plays "French Spy," "Maid of Munster,' and "Black Eyed Susan," the "Oswego Times" reporter wrote:

"Miss Menken was loudly encored. Her style of acting is altogether different from those who are counted superior, and yet it cannot be said that she does not possess abilities for the profession she has adopted. She has a style of her own, free, easy, sometimes graceful, but with an air of abandon about it quite fascinating to many. She has always created a furore wherever she has appeared, and has been honored with flattering notices from the press in half the cities of the Union."

Newspaper writers of the early days were fond of writing reviews and playing with words. When Ball and Mead's Variety Show played here January first, 1862, the reviewer was so intrigued with the name "Ball" that he wrote a minor masterpiece of linguistic jargon.

"Ball

"The individual with the globular patronymic ycleped Ball, is a jovial cove from his Circumference to his center; and from the favor with which his Round of entertainments at Doolittle Hall is received we should judge that in the show business he had found his appropriate Sphere.

"We know that it is rare sport sometimes to play Ball; but it is rare sport always to see Ball play. His fund of comicalities has No End, and his mirth, like a puff-ball, is Without Bound. Some people think that when he is telling his funny Yankee stories, he bears a close resemblance to a Ball O'Yarn which is a tolerable 'goak' to Wind Up with.

"We had nearly forgotten the dancing. Have you seen Miss Dupre? If you haven't, do pray go and see her. That limb! those appearance! them style! She goes through the motions about as nimbly and as gracefully as lively muric, small skirts and large muscle will allow. She is an extraordinary d a n s e u s e, but then we expect to see extraordinary dancing at a Ball."

Caustic Criticism

Most of the acting companies visiting Oswego had fairly capable actors and adequate scenery, a few had incompetent actors and a slovenly production. The poor acting and staging did not wholly discourage the public whose interest in the drama could not be stifled. For many years the newspapers were inclined to a tolerant attitude toward poor entertainment, but as time went on newspaper reviews and criticism developed sufficiently to force out inferior productions and to encourage the more capable companies. One of the most scathing reviews of a play ever printed in the local press appeared after an actor by the name of John Jack had appeared in Brougham's latest play "John Garth." The reviewer wrote:

"There was a lage audience at Doolittle Hall to see 'John Garth.' We must say that this audience

was not pleased with the performance. Mr. Jack as 'John Garth' was fine, but, with one or two exceptions, he was badly supported.

"The company, as a whole, is not what we were led to believe. Miss Firman is a doll of a woman, with golden hair, a porcelain face and good clothes. She is not an actress. James M. Cook was excellent, the rest of the company are sticks."

After such a review the company was bold enough to return a month later, and to announce in their advertisements, "return of the favorites." For this return engagement the reviewer wrote:

"John Jack with his company closed an engagement last night to an over-crowded house. It is unnecessary for us to repeat what we said about the company in 'John Garth,' but rather to speak of the performance of the 'Hidden Hand.' Never in Oswego has a play been so cruelly butchered.

"The players become demoralized, and part of the audience seemed to catch the contagion, and for a time it was a question which would contribute the most to make the night hideous."

Beecher Found Favor Here

Lectures and debates continued to be as popular during the Civil War years as the decade before. National and international topics were the chief subject of the lecturers, and reflected the spirit of nationalism rising throughout the United States. Henry Ward Beecher appeared at Doolittle Hall in March, 1861, under the sponsorship of the Young Men's Christian Union, to speak on "Young America." An immense audience crowded into the hall, and even the standing room was occupied. The lecture, however, did not equal the earlier efforts of the gifted orator. Nevertheless, the "Commercial Times" of March 26 devoted four columns to a summary of his remarks.

Mr. Beecher was probably the most popular lecturer ever to speak in Oswego. He returned in January, 1862, to speak on "Past Results and Our Future Policy;" and once again after the Academy of Music was opened. On each occasion he was met by large, appreciative audiences, and given laudatory reviews in the local newspapers.

Other lectures in 1861, included: The Reverend Jacob, who spoke on "Holland;" Mrs. John B. Gough on "Lights and Shadows of Londan Life;" and Dr. James P. Kimball, who told of his suffering, privations and incredible hardships while a captive of the Snake Indians.

Wendell Phillips' Lecture

The annual lecture series of 1861-62 brought to Oswego the famous Wendell Phillips, whose sensational speech at Fanueil Hall, Boston, in 1837, had been one of the first indications of a serious break in public opinion against the abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison. Phillips, an almost unknown young man at that time, had given a speech of great eloquence and such sublime invective that he immediately became famous. His speech in Oswego in 1862 met with a very favorable response, and gave the listeners a sample of the new style of conversational eloquence which Phillips is credited with introducing to America.

Professor A. O'Leary appeared in Oswego during December of 1861 to present a brief course of lectures on Physiology and Phrenology. The editor of the newspaper wrote that he did not believe in phrenology but that he did enjoy hearing the lectures especially when they were as pleasant and humorous as those of Professor O'Leary. As an extra special feature of his lectures, the Professor dissected a manikin to show the digestive organs and their functions, and to explain the laws of health as affected by food and drink. This particular

demonstration made a very favorable impression on the reporter, who suggested that a manikin be used in public schools as an object lesson to save coming generations from a world of misery, quackery and humbug.

When Judge Barlow of Canastota lectured at the Supreme Court room in the old City Hall, on the subject of National History, Dr. Edward Austin Sheldon, first superintendent of Oswego City schools and founder of the Oswego State Normal School, wrote a letter to the editor commending the lecture and urging public support for such a fine educational project. Dr. Sheldon said in his letter, "We particularly hope our teachers, and the pupils of the more advanced schools, will not fail to improve this opportunity of gaining a rich fund of information on this interesting subject."

Popular Local Debates

In addition to the professional lecturers many Oswego citizens conducted their own debates, lectures and lyceum series, as an opportunity for added intellectual stimulation. In March, 1861, a group known as "The Oswego Lyceum" met at a hall in the Commercial College to discuss the question: Resoved that whatever is, is right. A few weeks later the same group debated the subject: Resolved, That self-interest is the primary cause of human action; and at a later meeting struggled with a question involving the reative merits of Republics and Monarchies as forms of government. The Oswego Lyceum opened a new series in the fall of 1861, with a lecture by Ira D. Brown editor of the "Commercial Times," on the subject, "The Radical and the Conservative." At the next meeting the group discussed the topic, "Revolved, That it is expedient for our government to arm the slaves of the South in behalf of the Union."

Comic Lectures

An example of the lighter type of debate, which served as an excuse for mental gymnastics, is the topic announced by the Young Men's Debating Society, "Where does fire go to when it goes out?" At a later meeting this same group argued on "When a house is destroyed by fire, does it burn up, or does it burn down?" To which the editor of the "Times" quietly commented, "There is to be a warm debate on this question."

Among the comic lecturers who continued to visit Oswego, mention should be made of Whiston, the droll, and Robinson, the comic. These two made their appearance at Doolittle Hall during May, 1861, in a program of comic lectures, burlesque elocutions and dialect readings. Eleven years later Whiston returned alone in a variety show appropriately named an "Olio of Oddities." The newspaper reviewer recalled the earlier visit of the humorist, and wrote:

"There is something wonderful in his various accomplishments. Not one audience has he failed to please. This is a remarkable record.

"Laugh and grow fat. There are many Oswegonians who can afford to invest a little for the sake of their avoirdupois. Hear him tomorrow night.

"If you have lock jaw, Whiston will force open your mouth for a jolly good hearty laugh."

In June of 1872, a new theatre called the "West Side Opera House" was announced in the Oswego newspapers. This place of amusement, operated by McFarland and Burch, was located on West First Street, and was open every evening to present "the best talent in the profession." The hall was equipped with a new drop front curtain painted with a scene in the Yosemite Valley, and, as the advertisement discreetly announced, the bar was stocked with choice liquors, wines, brandies, ale and cigars. The local temperance organization did not approve of a

theatre with a well-stocked bar and made a vain attempt to close the place. A news item in the "Palladium" reported the incident:

"A subscription paper was industriously circulated this noon to raise money enough to buy the fixtures of the West Side Opera House, and thus retire that place of amusement. It strikes us as a bad precedent, and one, if carried out, will be an incentive to parties to start places distasteful to many."

Next day the paper mentioned that another subscription paper had been circulated to keep the Opera House open. Thus the matter ended in a tie, and the theatre continued to dispense entertainments and refreshments.

Spelling Bees

The winter of 1874 brought with it to Oswego county folk the development of an interesting and amusing form of entertainment which had spread like wild-fire over the country, the old-fashioned spelling bee. Contests were arranged between various clubs and churches; between prominent individuals; and, as a glorious climax of the winter, a match between the citizens of East Oswego and West Oswego.

One of the first spelling matches that attracted a great deal of local interest was a challenge contest between an Oswego philologist and an editor of the "Palladium". The Oswego "Times" announced on March 20, 1875:

"An Intellectual Treat

"The spelling mania which has prevailed all winter throughout the country has reached this city. William Rattery, Esq., the distinguished philologist of this city, has challenged our friend B. F. Wells, Esq., of the "Palladium," to a contest of skill, and the challenge has been accepted.

"W. G. Chaffee, Esq., author of 'Chaffee's Phonetic Speller' is to be umpire and put out the words. Wagers are about even. The editor's friends back him high because he is an old schoolmaster, while Mr. Rattery's friends rely upon his well known command of the English lanlanguage for the faith which is in them.

"It will be one of the most interesting tournaments which has come off in Oswego for a long time. Doolittle Hall has been engaged and the contest will come off a week from next Wednesday. In the mean time each of the champions is hard at it, getting his lesson. The prize to the winner, contributed by Mayor Poucher, is the unabridged works of Rev. Petroleum V. Nasby bound in sheepskin."

This "intellectual treat" may have been given as planned, but the outcome was never announced in the newspaper. Perhaps Mr. Rattery, the philologist, won the sheepskin bound works of Petroleum V. Nasby, and the newspaper decided to say nothing more about the contest.

A Well-Made Point

Interest in spelling continued to a point where citizens were writing letters to the editor commenting on words used in the contests. One such letter, printed in the "Times," is of interest because it casts some light on the spelling lessons in the public schools at that time.

"Editor of the Times:

"As the spelling mania has spread over the country within a few weeks, I wish to make a suggestion through the "Times" that we have something of the kind in this city.

"I propose that the children of our schools be excluded from the exercises, and that it be confined to all professional men, public officers and teachers, and that the spelling book from which the words are taken be the one, I believe, generally used in this city. The contestants shall give the definitions of the words

just as the children are required to do in our schools. I will give a few words from the first two pages of that book in words of two syllables, for an experiment: Gyron, byard, dynam, gyral, wyvern, bolus, peon, fecal, sural, and com.

"Now as our children under fourteen years of age are expected to learn the definitions of such words as these, of course it cannot be objected on the part of the older portion of the community to try their hand at the same words.

"Now I will select a few more out the hundreds of words employed in our schools from the same book, many of which are obsolete, in our language: Gaffer, mundit, pyxis, myxon, feoffee, feoffment, oestrum, cassine, fabble, pyrgim, syrtis, sorbile, scissile, snaffle, and purfle.

"These examples are from words of two syllables and the reader can judge whether it would not be just as well to select the same number of words from Hebrew and Greek, so far as they can be of any real value to our children."

Spelling Match Rules

All of the spelling bees were governed by a definite set of rules and regulations which provided for all possible emergencies and differences of opinions. The Oswego rules, patterned after the national rules, included ten items:

1. The referees shall be appointed to man the dictionaries and to determine the accuracy of the spelling if appealed to.

2. The umpire shall be president of the evening and shall decide all questions that may arise and appeals.

3. No word that has been missed shall be given to any other contestant, but the correct spelling shall be given by the pronouncer, and the person who spelled it incorrectly shall retire from the contest.

4. Webster's or Worcester's dictionaries shall be accepted as the only authorities, and any spelling authorized by either shall be deemed correct.

5. Each speller shall stand in his place to receive and spell his word. He shall pronounce it distinctly, either before or after spelling it. He shall be entitled to receive its definition before attempting to spell.

6. Spellers as they fail will take their seats, and at the next interval or recess will give place to those who continue to spell, the front ranks being renewed at each recess.

7. No kind of hint by dissent or in any other way should be given to the speller by any person in the audience.

8. Any speller may correct his spelling if it is done before the word is completely spelled.

9. The words will be pronounced to spellers on each side alternately, except, as the sides become unequal in number, in which case the words are to be given to the surplus spellers successively, on the larger side.

10. The pronouncer will exercise great care in giving proper names and technical words, taking care to avoid such as are quite remote from general usage and comprehension.

The spelling bee which closed the 1875 season was a sensational match between the east and west sides of town. With twenty-four contestants on each side, the battle raged on for half the night until the West-siders emerged victorious. The event was given a full column in the "Oswego-Times," on May 15, 1875:

"THE GRAND SPELLING MATCH

"A Four Hour's Contest—Midnight Wrestling with Polysylabic Puzzles—A Signal Victory for the West Side

"No exigency of the weather deters the aspirant for glory upon the bloodless field of orthography from rallying at the bugle's call. Although the rain

poured down in torrents last night, those who had enlisted in the Websterian war were at their posts like true soldiers, and at eight o'clock they were marshaled upon the stage of Doolittle Hall in battle array. The East side was under the leadership of the gallant Captain Poucher, and the West side under the veteran of many fields, Captain Lathrop.

"The state of the weather considered, the audience was as large as could be expected, many who had secured seats being kept away by the rain.

"The meeting was called to order by Prof. E. J. Hamilton*, umpire and president of the evening, who read the rules which had been agreed upon to govern the match. The rolls of the east and west sides were then called and with a few exceptions those whose names were printed in last evening's "Times" answered to the call.

Fifty-six Best Spellers

"After an overture by the orchestra the fun began, with Mr. E. J. Gibson as pronouncer. At the opening of the match there were twenty-eight spellers on a side. They were arranged in four rows and each row stood up until all had spelled, then sat down and gave place to the next row. After several rounds a recess was taken and while the orchestra gave some music the fallen retired to the rear or took seats in the audience.

"For the first round easy words were given out and all was plain sailing. W. J. Herrick, jr., of the West Side was the first victim. He had made up his mind that he couldn't stand up until the last and get one of the grand prizes so he missed the first word that came to him and was thus entitled to a copy of 'The Great Industries of the United States,' one of the prizes offered by E. J. Gibson. He will doubtless "idol-ize" that book as a memento of last evening's contest.

"Among the words which thinned out the ranks for the next two hours were the following: erysipelas, coercion, acquiescence, admittable, battalion, carbureted, chargeable, corruptibility, crescent, laquer, toxicology, ostracize, and proaulion. The last named word did the business for Scriba and there was loud applause from the west siders when it became certain that they had won the victory.

There were still some seven or eight standing on the West side and the final contest for the grand prizes began. Such outlandish and unheard of words were necessary to bring down the best spellers that we were unable to keep track of them and very few of our readers would recognize them as belonging to the English language if we should print them here. Mr. Charles Sheldon, being the last gentleman on the floor, received the "Picture by Mullready," which was quite a valuable prize.

"Finally the contest narrowed down to three ladies, Miss Libbie M. Gibbs, Miss E. J. Nichols, and Mrs. W. A. Poucher. Miss Gibbs was the first of the trio to fall and then it was certain that Miss Nichols and Mrs. Poucher would receive the prizes. Mrs. Poucher had spelled some fourteen syllabled monstrosities but immediately after Miss Gibbs went down, she received a word which she missed and Miss Nichols was entitled to the first prize.

"The hour of midnight had arrived when the match was concluded and only a small part of the audience remained to the close. We think the match last night in regard to number of words given out and the number of difficult words spelled correctly was perhaps one of the most remarkable on record. About eighteen hundred words were pronounced and, deducting the

*Prof. Hamilton was the head of a private school for boys conducted in a building yet standing on the West side of West Sixth street, just south of Oneida street.

fifty-five, which were missed, we have left over seventeen hundred, (many of them the hardest words in the language, and but a few very simple ones,) which were spelled right."

Amateur Theatricals

There may have been many amateur theatricals in Oswego a century ago, but very little concerning them ever appeared in the newspapers. No doubt the feeling against the commercial theatre also opposed amateur acting. There were many musical entertainments given by schools, churches and clubs, and occasionally a few recitations were included on the program. The growth of school and church play-acting groups, and little theatre companies, however, came along after professional drama had been more or less accepted by the community, and the influence of the professionals had inspired the amateurs.

Tableaux, wax works, and simple dramatizations began to appear in the 1870's as a transitional step from concerts and recitations to formal plays. The Congregational Church presented an entertainment March 22, 1875, which illustrates the new style in amateur theatricals. This event was reported at some length in the "Times."

"The basement of the Congregational church was well filled, last evening, and a spicy program of music, tableaux and 'wax figgers' was served to the delight of all present.

"With the exception that the work of the scene shifter was embarrassed by a curtain which obstinately refused to move with that degree of celerity necessary to the smooth and graceful production of tableaux, that part of the entertainment was all that could be desired. The curtain was also made of too thin and slasy material and the audience was treated to a continual shadow pantomime between acts.

"After the singing of several pieces and the exhibition of some fine tabeaux, Madam Jarley introduced to the audience her unequalled collection of exquisite and life-like 'wax figgers.' There was George Washington, who never told a lie with his little tomahawk; Boss Tweed, the biggest rascal of the age; a love lorn maiden, whose disheveled locks and disordered dress indicated that she had it bad; Brother Jonathan, with his jack knife, whittling kindling wood; Betsy Bobbit, who never thought it advisable to get riled at the same time that her better half was sirred up; Oliver Twist, the lad who was so audacious as to present his poringer for more soup, and many other characters celebrated in history and song and all made of the finest wax; none genuine unless bearing the signature of Madam Jarley on the wrapper, beware of base imitations. Madam Jarley introduced each figure, after it had been properly wound up and dusted off, with appropriate remarks. Her exhibition of wax figures was the prominent feature of the evening's entertainment and created an unlimited amount of amusement.

"The entertainment was concluded by the singing of 'Auld Lang Syne' by the entire company, after which Mr. Fort apologized for some shortcomings and announced that one week from next Thursday night the company would present the 'Magic Mirror' when he hoped to see another large attendance and hoped to have the stage fixtures so arranged that everything would move off smoothly. We suggest that Madam Jarley's wax figures be again exhibited on that occasion."

Mrs. Macready As Shylock

As interest in the drama increased, and acting companies visited Oswego with greater frequency, the inadequacy of the various halls as theatres became apparent. Audiences strained the

seating capacity of the halls, and the plays and actors outgrew the tiny stages. When Mrs. Macready, the eminent tragedienne appeared as Shylock, a part never before attempted by a lady, the "Palladium" expressed approval of her efforts but decided that the stage at Doolittle Hall was too small. The editor wrote, in January, 1872:

"Mrs. Macready is famous. But she will not be able to do herself justice. Seven by nine is a small sized stage to present Shakespeare on; we are somewhat afraid that the Merchant of Venice cannot be rendered with due scenic effect."

The newspaper again commented on the inadequacy of Doolitle Hall in a review of a play given in October of 1872. The item stated: "The play was gone through with fairly, considering the difficulty of mounting a piece in our halls." From then on similar comments were a part of nearly every review. Plays kept coming to Doolittle Hall, however, in spite of the limited facilities. A news item in 1873, pointed out: "It will be seen by the following engagements that Doolittle Hall is to be kept warm by entertainments: March 15, Lannier's Theatrical Troupe; March 19, French Opera; March 24, Wallace Sisters; March 25, Lingard; March 29, Amy Stone and Company; April 12, Yeddo Japanese Troupe."

Question Doolittle Hall's Safety

By 1874 Doolittle Hall had become such a popular place of entertainment, and accomodated such large crowds at times that the safety of the structure was questioned. Many citizens expressed the fear that the floor of the auditorium would sometime collapse when the theatre was filled with people. To allay this mounting concern Mr. Doolittle, owner of the building, had additional supports placed under the floor. When the alterations were finished the architect and builder published a joint statement certifying to the safety of the hall. The "Oswego Times," January 4, 1875, printed the statement which read:

"We, the undersigned, were called upon in November last to examine Doolittle Hall. It was found unsafe; but, since then has been repaired, and we believe it to be safe now, for public use.

S. Ormsby, architect
H. W. Seeber, builder."

Lackawanna Buys Theatre

Several months later certain events took place which had an important effect upon the future of Doolittle Hall, and upon the future of the drama in Oswego. At that time the D., L. & W. Railroad, as the successor to the Oswego & Syracuse R.R., owned all of the river front on the west side between the upper and lower bridges and was eager to acquire more property from the lower bridge toward the lake. The local newspapers reported negotiations under way for the sale of Doolittle Hall to the railroad company, but printed frequent denials that the sale had actually been made. The editor of the "Times" expressed a hope that the sale would be accomplished, and was finally able to announce on January 6, 1875:

"The transfer of Doolittle Hall property, and docks, by Sylvester Doolittle to the D. L. & W. Company was perfected this forenoon, the price, the terms, etc., having been accepted on both sides, and the sale completed. It is a large transaction, but is one which is no doubt mutually advantageous."

This real estate transfer was an important event in the history of public entertainment in Oswego. The hall was closed for a few months during which time the old Doolittle Hall was completely remodelled into the modern Academy of Music, and it was there the drama in Oswego rose to its greatest heights.

During the time Doolittle Hall was closed, all public entertain-

ment was held in "Mansard Opera House." It was there Marston and Stone's Dramatic Alliance, featuring Amy Stone, presented Dion Bocicault's new drama "Elfie," followed by the farce "Sarah's Young Man" for an afterpiece, and the next evening "Pearl of Savoy" and the farce "Dodging for a Wife."

Carner In Rip Van Winkle

Mansard Opera House was the scene of a dramatic triumph by J. W. Carner in the title role of the play "Rip Van Winkle." This was the first appearance in Oswego of the play and the principal actor, and both were to return many times in the years to follow. On this particular occasion Mr. Carner was supported by the famous character actor, D. L. Morris, and by a full dramatic company, orchestra and brass band.

Martino, a clever performer, also played in Mansard Hall to large crowds who came to win prizes as much as to see the entertainment. In fact the prizes received more space in the newspapers than the performance itself. An amusing item in the "Palladium" reported:

"The second prize, a lady's hat valued at $8, was taken by a balmy sailor, who hitched his trousers and blasted his tarry top lights as he sailed out of the hall with the filigree head gear for his Susan.

"Tonight a living cow worth sixty dollars will be given to the lucky one ,and a pig for second present."

Most entertainments enjoyed great success in Oswego, and the players received generous financial return from appreciative audiences. However, a few of the inferior companies occasionally met with failure and became stranded in Oswego. To help the unfortunate performers a benefit was frequently given by local artists. One such incident was reported in the "Oswego Times" during the interval when the Mansard was the only playhouse. The story was headlined:

"The Mansard Sufferers Again

"The variety show of Mansard Opera House having ceased, and most of the performers, as usual, being broke, a performance for their benefit under the management of Dan and Josie Morris will take place tonight. Several Oswego volunteers will take part in the performance."

With this serio-comic note the first period in the history of public entertainment drew to a close.

The era of 1845 to 1875 saw a great variety of interesting, stimulating and amusing entertainment in Oswego. From the simple beginnings of concerts, lectures, circuses, vaudeville shows and exhibitions, the legitimate drama began to emerge. Public sentiment against theatrical performances gradually subsided, and an active interest in the spoken drama took its place. Transportation improved from the slow travel by canal, lake boat and stage coach, to rapid travel on steam railroads. Acting companies appeared in increasing numbers. The audience was ready, the plays and actors were available. Only an adequate theatre was lacking to bring the drama to its fullest development in Oswego. The first act in public entertainment was ended. The time had come for the curtain to rise on the second act. This second act was to be entitled "The Academy of Music."

Charlotte Blair Parker, Author, Actress, Playwright

(Paper Read Before Members of Oswego County Historical Society in Oswego April 17, 1945 by Dr. Lida S. Penfield, former Head of the Department of English at Oswego State Normal School)

Charlotte Blair Parker won success as an actress, as a playwright and as a novelist. Her novel was called "Homespun". Her most famous play "Way Down East", was written in Oswego. Her one act play, "White Roses" came to notice in a competition sponsored by the "New York Herald". It was first produced by Daniel Frohman at the Lyceum Theater in New York City, and afterwards in London. Richard Mansfield, a famous actor-manager at the turn of the century, bought her play, "Husband and Lover". Other plays to her credit are "Under Southern Skies" and "Lights of Home", "A War Correspondent", and "The Redemption of David Corson", from the novel by Charles Fred Goss. "Way Down East" was "novelized", made into a silent movie in 1920 with Lillian Gish as the heroine, and in 1935 it appeared again as a "talkie". Mr. Walter Powers, manager of the Oswego Schine Theaters, remembers that in this latest form "Way Down East" was given here at the Strand Theater in the 1930s, but he cannot name the date. Not a copy of any of these writings appears to be available at present in Oswego.

Although as an actress Mrs. Blair never became a star, she gave a good acount of herself in stock companies, making her debut, after a period of training under Wyzeman Marshall, with a stock company at the Boston Theater. Later she travelled in support of Madame Januschek and of Lawrence Barrett. Her last important engagement was in the title role of "Hazel Kirke". After the success of "Way Down East" she turned to writing. Her husband, Henry Doel Parker, was for several years theatrical manager for William Brady, a well-known producer in New York. They made their home in Great Neck, Long Island.

Local Source Material

For the material I have been able to assemble regarding Mrs. Parker I am largely indebted to several friends. Mr. Fred Wright has shared with me his notes about Mrs. Parker taken from local newspapers, or gleaned from neighbors and acquaintances, especially from his aunt, Mrs. Esther Stone. Mr. James Moreland of the Oswego State Teachers' College, has loaned me valuable clippings from New York City newspapers in which are described Mrs. Parker and her famous play. These are from a large collection he is assembling to illustrate the history of the stage in the State of New York. Mrs. John Quirk has told me of living for a few years as next door neighbor to Mrs. Parker at Great Neck, Long Island. Mr. and Mrs. Grove A. Gilbert of Fulton have supplied interesting details they remember about certain contributions Fulton made to the original cast of "Way Down East."

In "Who's Who in America" there is a brief account of Mrs. Parker. For other details I have searched through old directories and hand-written volumes of the Census at the office of the County Clerk, as well as records at the office of the Oswego Board of Education.

As an introduction to the dramatic entertainments of the people of Oswego when Lottie Blair

was growing up, we are fortunate to have enjoyed that altogether delightful study given by Dr. Charles Wells at the March meeting of the Oswego County Historical Society. The paper Dr. Wells has promised to give us on the period of the Academy of Music in the entertainment life of Oswego will coincide approximately with the years Lottie Blair was on the stage. The third section of Dr. Wells's study will deal with the Richardson Theater period and the advent of the movies. These latter were the days when Mrs. Parker retired from the stage and wrote her plays and novel. Thus, this study of Mrs. Parker is an extended footnote to the series of papers of Dr. Wells which collectively will cover a century of entertainment in Oswego.

Pupil of Anna Randall

When Lottie Blair was a little girl, Dr. E. A. Sheldon, as superintendent of Oswego City schools, was building the unified system of public education which developed the Teachers Training School and the Normal School that were to make Oswego famous in the Educational World soon after the Civil War. Among the teachers there was one especially able and interested in elocution. She was Mrs. Anna T. Randall, who was the first woman to hold office in the National Education Association, which she served as secretary. Mrs. Randall taught Lottie Blair and thereafter they remained friends. Mrs. Randall left Oswego to teach in Falley Seminary at Fulton and later to marry Mr. Diehl just about the time that Lottie Blair, after being graduated from the Oswego State Normal School, with the class of 1872, set out to teach, first in Bay City Michigan, then in Dubuque, Iowa, before she found her way to New York City and her chosen career.

The Blair family came from Ireland to Oswego in 1832. Andrew Blair brought with him his wife, Charlotte, his older daughter, Mary, and his two small sons, George and Andrew. Two other children were born in Oswego, Lewis and Susan. In 1855 George was 21, Andrew, 18, Lewis 12, Mary 30 and Susan, 7. The family home was on West Bridge Street, west of Eighth Street. George and Andrew as young men in Oswego were both sailors. In time George Blair who became the father of Charlotte Blair Parker, advanced to become shipmaster and captain; Andrew became a carpenter and builder; Lewis became a plumber and worked for John O'Geran. Susan was a milliner.

Cared For Family Plot

The Blair family burial lot is located in Rural Cemetery at Fruit Valley. Recently on a bright spring morning Mrs. James G. Riggs and I went out to find the record on the Blair monument. Mr. R. M. Pierce, for many years caretaker at the Rural Cemetery, kindly guided us to the pleasant knoll, where the graves are. On the way he told us how Mrs. Parker came regularly, as long as she was able to do so, to visit the cemetery.

She came in her automobile, driven from New York City by her Negro chauffeur, usually about the end of May. She provided for the care of the lot during her life and arranged for its perpetual care in her will. Mr. Pierce remembers her as handsomely dressed and a most interesting talker, because she had travelled and known many kinds of people. She provided the stone upon which are the names of her Grandparents, Andrew and Charlotte Blair, her father, George Blair, 1829—1895, his first wife and the mother of Lottie, Martha E., 1829—1865, and Eliza, his second wife, 1841—1916, Mrs. Parker was named Charlotte for her Grandmother. I have wondered if the M. was for Martha the name of the mother she lost as a child?

Mr. Wright begins his notes

about Mrs. Parker with the notice of her death, fittingly, for it was the obituary that reminded Oswegonians afresh of her career that began in Oswego. This is the notice that appeared in the "Oswego Palladium-Times" January 6, 1937:

PLAYWRIGHT AND AUTHOR, OSWEGO NATIVE, IS DEAD

Mrs. Lottie Blair Parker Won Fame As Writer of "'Way Down East."

NEW YORK, Jan. 6, (AP)—Mrs. Lottie B. Parker, author of that old time hit, "'Way Down East" died yesterday at her home in Great Neck at the age of 78.

Widow of Harry Doel Parker, Mrs. Parker was an actress before she entered the playwrighting field, in which she was one of the first women of this country to participate.

She was born in Oswego, the daughter of a ship captain, and joined the Boston Theater Stock Company, playing supporting roles to John McCullough, Mary Anderson, Dion Boucicault, and others.

She started writing "'Way Down East" in 1887, ten years before its production on Broadway. It had one of the longest runs in American theatrical history.

She also wrote the plays, "Under Southern Skies" and "Lights of Home." She had no children. Funeral services will be held Friday in Chicago, where her husband is buried."

"The death of Mrs. Lottie Blair", Mr. Wright continues, "recalled to Oswego friends many of the earlier incidents in the life of a woman who for a number of years was a most successful playwright."

Mrs. Parker's Life In Oswsgo

Mrs. Parker, born Charlotte M. Blair, daughter of Captain and Mrs. George Blair, 117 West Bridge Street, as the house was then numbered, attended the Oswego city schools, being graduated from the Oswego High School in 1870, and from the Elementary Course at Oswego State Normal School in the July class of 1872. She left the following Fall to teach school and never returned to make her home permanently in Oswego. From childhood, it was recalled by friends of her girlhood she had a flair for the dramatic, and in school days always was on programs of entertainments to appear in recitations calling for marked elocutionary expression. She studied whatever of elocution was then a part of the Normal School Course and later, while teaching in New York City, attended elocution classes with the plan of becoming a teacher in the art of expression. While following teaching and elocution she met in New York City Henry Doel Parker, son of a family engaged in the wholesale lumber business in New York. He, too, had ambition for the stage and was studying drama and elocution.

After her marriage to Mr. Parker, she studied dramatic art, and for several years was on the stage in popular dramas with her husband, playing in stock or week-end stands.

The companies with which Mr. and Mrs. Parker toured covered the New England states and New York, with now and then a tour along the Atlantic Cost states. She acquired a considerable knowledge of plays and of people and gained a wide acquaintance among actors and actresses of the time.

Parkers Wintered In Oswego

These dramatic tours were not always financially successful, and during one such tour, in which the company broke up in or near Oswego, Mr. and Mrs. Parker spent one winter with her mother at the family home in West Bridge Street. Her father, George Blair, had been a lake captain, sail-

ing first as mate with Captain Stephen Lefaiver, who afterward became one of the best known lumber dealers of Oswego. Some years after Captain Blair died, Captain Lefaiver married Mrs. Blair, who, however, was not the mother but the step-mother of the playwright, her own mother having died while Charlotte was a child.

Friends recall that during the winter in question, Henry Parker being out of funds, borrowed ten or fifteen dollars from Captain Lefaiver. The next day Mr. Parker went down town, returning with a new silk hat. The ways of actor folk were strange to Oswego people, and that incident was remembered as an instance of erratic economic ideas.

That winter in Oswego was productive of Mrs. Parker's success as a writer. She had during her travels in stock companies made the acquaintance of an aged actor who had dabbled in writing plays; Mrs. Parker and her husband, thus Oswego friends recalled the story as she told it, aided him in many ways and were kind to him on tours. When he died he left his possessions to Mrs. Parker; among these was a trunk of manuscript plays, part plays, scenes, and the usual potpourri of literary attempts scribbled in odd moments between rehearsals and performances.

First Success Written Here

Because she did not find much to do in Oswego that winter, Mrs. Parker went over the manuscripts and from scattered scenes and dialogues together with the skeleton of a plot she found in the old trunk brought out "'Way Down East." The finished form was hers, put together from her own experiences, her knowledge of people in Oswego County and in New England and their reactions to emotions of the elementary sort in the atmosphere of the small town; the gossip, ill times, minor neighborhood jealousies, made the play a definite cross-section of life as it was known intimately by the people of the generation who went to see the melodrama acted; and not once, but many times.

In the play the village constable sings, "All Bound Round with a Woolen String", a homely folk song, familiar fifty years ago. This song Charlotte Blair heard for the first time sung by her stepmother, Eliza Blair, at a family gathering. It was touches of this sort that made the success of "'Way Down East." Within two years after it was written at the Blair home in West Bridge Street, Oswego, the play was first produced in New York City.

It became a current success that ran for years with metropolitian and road companies, winding up as a favorite in popular priced stock companies. Two or three years ago it was revived by neighborhood players in Massachusetts as one of the better plays of its tpye and period.

After she was fully launched upon her professional career, Mrs. Parker returned only occasionally to Oswego. As the seasons passed, more and more she withdrew from active connection with the stage, to concentrate upon her writing.

"Under Southern Skies"

From the trunk of the unidentified actor previously mentioned later came another adaptation, the play "Under Southern Skies" in which the author captured the spirit of "Way Down South" as she had that of New York and New England."

Mr. Wright remembers seeing "'Way Down East" and "Under Southern Skies" at the Richardson Theater. Probably these presentations were made by road or stock companies.

Many of the reminiscences Mr. Wright has gathered came from his aunt, Miss Esther J. Stone. She lived in the same block with the Blairs and the Lefaivers, and knew almost everybody in that neighborhood. In parenthesis he

confesses that his Aunty Stone's cookie jar was a time-honored institution in her pantry. No wonder he was often where there were to be had good cookies as well as good stories. His own memories of Mrs. Blair are pleasant. "I have often seen Mrs. Lottie Blair Parker on the street and going to and from the home of Captain Stephen Lefaiver on West Bridge Street. To me as a boy she always appeared to be a very handsome woman, always dressed like a fashion plate from the "Delineator," a person a young man would notice as a person of class."

"Annie Laurie" First Name

Turning from personal memories that center in Oswego to the arrangements for producing "'Way Down East," I have been told that Mr. and Mrs. Parker undertook to stage the play for themselves at first. They put all they had in to the venture. In recruiting the cast they wanted to find just the right one to play the comic part of Hi Holler, the chore boy. It was Hi who had the cue time and time again to enter at a tense moment of the action and drop with a bang his armful of firewood. Mrs. Parker wrote to her friend and former teacher in Oswego, Mrs. Anna Randall Diehl in Fulton for help. Mrs. Diehl sent to New York in answer to Mrs. Parker's appeal a boy who had had the name of being a natural funmaker all through school.* Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert remember the lad both in private life and on the stage where he carried Hi Holler all through the years of the runs of "'Way Down East".

The play was at first named "Annie Laurie". The Parkers opened with it at the Boston Theater. Without attracting great attention the production was rapidly depleting the invested resources of Mr. and Mrs. Parker, when Mr. Brady's partner from New York came to see "Annie Laurie". How he bought the play, and took it to its great succes in New York is reported in a clipping from the collection of James Moreland of the faculty of the Oswego State Teachers' college:

Success Snatched From Failure

"One of the biggest money makers in American theatrical annals was 'Way Down East,' a play which swept the country after an amazingly halting start. Written by Lottie Blair Parker under the title of "Annie Laurie" the drama was first seen in some of the smaller New England cities without creating anything in the way of a sensation. Then Joseph R. Grismer, a partner of William A. Brady, saw possibilities in the play. He was credited with 'elaborating' it but it is not very clear how much he changed the original play. He gave it a new title, 'Way Down East', and his wife, known on the stage as Phoebe Davis was given the heroine's role. She could not escape the part for many years, so eager was the public to see the show. Miss Davis would have liked to try something else, but year after year, she appeared as Anne Moore because the public would not stop coming to sympathize with her misfortunes.

"'Way Down East' is not so well remembered as 'The Old Homestead' and 'Shore Acres' but it earned more than the latter and probably almost as much as the play by Denman Thompson, which had a much longer life. For eight years, 'Way Down East' earned nearly $100,000 a year for its fortunate producers, and in ten years the total had amounted to about $750,000. There have been more sensational successes but this showing was spectacular for the period.

"Just why 'Way Down East' was so extraordinarily popular is not easy to determine, beyond the obvious fact that it was a skilful mixture of old theatric devices which have seldom failed to please

*The boy was Harry Roach of Fulton. He is now living in Vermont where he operates a motion picture theater.

audiences. It was rural melodrama, although the program said that it was a 'story about plain people told in simple fashion.'

Something of the Plot

"Anne Moore was the young woman more sinned against than sinning. She had been betrayed by a plausible scoundrel who had tricked her by a mock marriage. As the play opened, she came to a New Hampshire farm home to find refuge from her memories and her shame. Squire Bartlett did not want to take her in but finally yielded to the importunities of his son, David, who had, without realizing it, fallen in love at first sight with the stranger. The betrayer, driving tandem through New Hampshire, naturally appeared and told Anne that she must leave the farm. Once more David intervened and prevented her departure.

"Eight months passed and Martha Perkins, the village gossip, told a story that she had heard and Squire Bartlett drove Anne out into a raging snow storm. His son followed, found the girl when she was at the point of death, saved her and saw a bright future at last dawning.

Spectacular Staging

"There was nothing very original about this but it scored an amazing hit. The rustic types, lavish introduction of farm animals and the snow storm were perhaps more than helpful. The doctor drove on the stage in his tumbledown wagon; the village constable tried in vain to get speed from an old horse; Hi Holler, the chore boy, drove the cows across the stage; the villain made his entrance on horseback; the village choir rode to a party in an open sleigh, and some of the searching party were driven in a big open sled. There was also a glimpse of a flock of sheep (I've heard, a load of hay drawn by a yoke of oxen too.) Altogether more animals were seen than most people saw in a whole theatrical season, although horses were not quite such rarities then as now.

"The snowstorm devised by Mr. Grismer, was the most realistic that the stage had seen up to that time. It was simple and inexpensive but it made spectators feel that they were out in a driving, wild storm. One merit of the play, from the producer's standpoint, was the fact that it was an inexpensive show to send out. As contrasted with 'Ben Hur', for example, it cost almost nothing. Big salaries were occasionally paid for all-star revivals but the average weekly payroll was under the average.

"In 1920 the play was put on the screen in a version featuring Lillian Gish, which scored another hit. The play produced as 'Annie Laurie' in 1896, had its first production as 'Way Down East' at the Tremont Theater (in Boston) in 1898, and for ten years was one of the biggest money makers of the age."

The play had a long run in New York. Mr. Prouse Neal saw it there. He tried to see Mrs. Parker to congratulate her, but she was not at her office in the theater building when he called. Mr. Waterbury remembers that both "Way Down East" and "Under Southern Skies" were hardy perennials of the theatrical years, coming year after year, like "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and towards the end of its popularity as a "Ten-Twent-Thirt" attraction.

Living in Great Neck, Long Island, for three years with her family of lively youngsters in a house facing Manhassett Bay, Mrs. John H. Quirk declares that never in that time did she lay eyes on Mrs. Parker, her next door neighbor, perhaps, she thinks, because Mrs. Parker was busy in New York. The children got the impression that Mrs. Parker did not care much for children and their numerous pets, so prone to stray into the territory adjacent to their own abode.

Born in Oswego in 1854

At the City Library in Syracuse I was able to supplement what Oswego has furnished for our information about Mrs. Parker. In the "New York Times" for Wednesday, January 6, 1937, Lottie Blair Parker held firstplace on the page of obituaries. New material afforded by this notice includes the statement that Lottie Blair was 18 when she graduated from the Normal School. Counting back 18 years from 1872, indicates as the year of her birth, 1854.

A list of her plays and date of publication appearing in the "Times" obituary gave: "Under Southern Skies", 1901; "Lights Of Home", 1903; "The Redemption of David Carson", 1906. Before "Way Down East" Mrs. Parker had written "Dick of the Plains', presented by the Empire Theater School of Acting, and a similar work, "The Broken Sword" which was first given by the students of the American Academy of Dramatic Art.

"Who's Who in the Theatre", published by Small, Maynard and Company in 1914 establishes the fact that Mr. Parker was then living, for his address is given at 1,402 Broadway, New York City.

Sound Motion Pictures

Early in November 1935 at the Center Theater of Radio City, New York, the second screen version of "Way Down East" was being shown this time as a "talking-picture". Two reviews of the production come to light, one from "News Week", the other from "Time Magazine". Each contrasts the two screen plays—silent and talkie—and both offer interesting examples of play reviewing of a decade ago.

The "News Week" says:

The original "Way Down East" film produced fifteen years ago by David Wark Griffiths, made motion picture history, stirred the first movie censorship, and grossed $1,400,000 before the last print ended up on a shelf. Its talking successor, released last week, will likewise end up on a shelf, but will accomplish little else in common with the earlier version. Fox, under the guiding hand of Winfield Sheehan, former head man, made many changes in the script Griffiths used, adapted the Lottie Blair Parker play. The original never disguised the fact that it presented melodrama. The new picture moves closer to farce.

Sound, unfortunately, gave Director Henry King opportunity to inject a tap dance and two songs. The rural strains of "Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party" and "The Little Brown Jug" float pleasantly enough over the sound track but seem out of place in a plot which won fame as a ten-twent-thirt melodrama. And because the plot lies—roughly—in the Calvin Coolidge part of the country, some one thought of using an old yarn once credited to Coolidge:

Wife: What did the preacher talk about today?

Husband: Sin,

Wife: What did he say about it?

Husband: He's against it.

Brady's partner from New York came to see "Annie Laurie". How he brought the play, and took it to its great success in New York is reported in a clipping from the collection of James Moreland:

The producers sent cameras to Maine to film snow-covered outdoor shots and the breaking up of the river ice which climaxes the film. These are used as backgrounds. But the players never left California, and even the rescue scene on the ice-jammed river took place on the Fox sound stage. Sydney Sokolsky, syndicate columnist, reports that during the filming of the blizzard the actors and production crew used five gallons of sunburn lotion.

In Griffiths' 1920 version, the late Lowell Sherman as the villain who lured Anna, the innocent country maiden, into a false marriage and deserted her when she

had a child, played his role so menacingly that audiences hissed him. Edward Trevor, this year's bad man, displayed almost no villainy. Nor did he frame a marriage—just a modernized breach of promise.

Henry Fonda, in his second film, plays the part of David Bartlett—the Richard Barthelmess role—with a pleasant grace. He and the comedian, Slim Summerville, and Margaret Hamilton, as the gossipy spinster, ring true to life.

Rochelle Hudson, a pretty feature player, fell heir to the Lillian Gish part after Janet Gaynor—first scheduled for the role—suffered an injury during the first days of rehearsal. She plays it with the same cloying sweetness with which Miss Gaynor endows her characterizations.

Time Magazine's Comment

"Time Magazine" recognizes the fundamental appeal of the story of simple people in Mrs. Parker's play:

"Way Down East" (Fox) is an effort to redistill for the sophisticated audiences of modern talking pictures the elixirs which their predecessors found so stimulating many years ago. The 1920 production of Lottie Blair's classic grossed $2,000,000 and the scene in which Lillian Gish floundered toward a happy ending probably drew as many tears as anything David Wark Griffith ever directed.

The current version, infinitely more sophisticated, is chiefly noteworthy as an example of directorial tact. Aware that much of the motivation in "Way Down East" is of the sort contemporary cinemadicts have been taught to consider comic, Henry King must frequently have been tempted to burlesque the story rather than risk having audiences discover their own laughs in its sentimental climaxes. Instead with the aid of a sympathetic script by Howard Estabrook and William Hurlbut, he gave it a straightforward treatment, emphasized the backgrounds rather than the plot. The result is that "Way Down East" has a disarming charm which is almost a satisfactory substitute for the emotional impact of its famed original.

"The details (of Anne Moore's unfortunate deception by Lennox Sanderson) are not introduced until the quaint character of the New England villagers in general and of grim Squire Bartlett (Russell Simpson), kindly Mrs. Bartlett (Spring Byington) and their son, David (Henry Fonda) in particular have been emphasized at length. Thus when the picture swings into action suddenly with the march of gossip, Martha Perkins, (Margaret Hamilton) to a skating party to tell the Squire that his hired girl has had a past, the audience's appetite for action has been whetted so thoroughly that the anarchronistic qualities of the scenes in which the Squire orders poor Anna into the blizzard and the one in which David rescues her from an ice cake, leaving her seducer there to drown are easily forgiven.

Typical shot: Henry Fonda, currently the cinema's No. 1 exponent of bucolic charm, indicating infatuation with Anna (Rochell Hudson) by giving her a drink of water."

These reviews give us the metropolitan view of the talking picture of "Way Down East" ten years ago. They also are of interest because when they were published, Lottie Blair Parker was alive and interested in the screen play.

Interviewed At 80

Returning to Mr. Moreland's clippings: the "New York World-Telegram" sent their staff writer, Earl Sparling to interview Mrs. Parker at her home in Great Neck. He took her picture —or some one did—for it was printed with the interview, October 31, 1935. The headlines were:

MRS. PARKER, WHO WROTE "WAY DOWN EAST" IN 1887, LIKES COCKTAILS, CIGARETS AND PEACH VELVET GOWNS

The sub heading continued:

NOW 70 OR 80 YEARS OLD, BUT DOESN'T CARE TO DISCUSS HER AGE

And tell her age she does not, claiming exemption on the ground that she has become "legendary" with the years. Of the play (movie version) she said:

"I hope it is a success." I hope they make money out of it. I want anything even remotely connected with my work to be a success. Of course I am only remotely connected with 'Way Down East' now. I sold the play outright to Mr. William Brady years ago when it was first produced on Broadway. That was about 1897. It has made thousands, I suppose, for everyone connected with it, but I have had nothing to do with that. I wrote the play and I sold it. Today I know better and I wouldn't sell that way. . I was one of the first women playwrights in America. Martha Morton had been writing plays before me, but I was among the first of them. . . .

"We were not very much relished by the men back in those days. . . . I remember the old New York and I regret its passing. When I first came to New York, I remember it was a scandal when the first horse cars were allowed on Broadway. . . . The young playwrights think the public wants something sexy, something startling, about people who never lived on land nor sea. For myself, I don't like the abnormal, and I think millions of Americans feel the same way."

Made Oswego Bequest

Even though it is good to recall that in her will, disposing of an estate of $100,000, probated a couple of years later, in March of 1937, Mrs. Parker left a bequest to The Oswego Home for the Homeless, still it is pleasant to leave our account of Charlotte Blair Parker with the picture of the lady, still handsomely dressed (Peach velvet hostess gown and black satin slippers) intelligent, tolerant, with a mind of her own, distinctly up to date, still wishing success for her work, still the would turn to notice, a person of kind of a woman, "a young man class."

The Smiths of Peterboro

(Paper Given Before Regional Meeting of New York State Historical Association at Oswego October 20, 1945 by Dr. W. Freeman Galpin of Syracuse University, Author of "A History of Central New York.")

The Smiths of Peterboro had extensive realty holdings in Oswego after Gerrit Smith acquired his first holding of local realty at the public auction of state lands held in 1827 just about the time the Oswego Canal was being completed to connect Oswego with the Erie Canal, and Oswego was about to become a village, down until a number of years after Gerrit Smith's death which did not come until after 1870. Gerrit Smith eventually controlled much of the East Side water front along the Oswego river where he built wharves which he used to lease and receive in return rentals which in connection with his other Oswego properties, brought him in the 1850s and 1860s as much as $65,000 a year annual income.

Other properties which Smith held here included the Oswego Hotel erected in 1828, later known as the "Munger House" and as the Fitzhugh House which stood on the site today occupied by the East Side branch of the Oswego County National Bank in Oswego, the East Cove property, and after 1850 the Grampus Bay property, the Oswego Canal Company (water power), a flour mill, shares in many Oswego-owned steamboats and in a cotton mill. Acting in his own behalf or as agent for Peter Smith, his father, for half a century Gerrit Smith maintained a business office in Oswego with John B. Church as manager.

Gerrit Smith Here Much

Gerrit Smith himself spent a large portion of his time in Oswego when he was known in many circles, but he never established a permanent home here, unlike his brother, Peter Skenandoah Smith, who established a law practice in Oswego and resided here for a decade or more in the 1830s during which he served the village as a member of its board of trustees and Scriba as a supervisor. He was also very active politically in the same period as a leader of opposition against the Whigs. He was a general in the militia, and was fond of wearing his uniform on the streets of Oswego even when there was no apparent reason for it. He later removed to Florida.

Cornelia Smith Cochrane

The sister of Gerrit and Peter S. Smith, Cornelia, who married John Cochrane, an Oswego lawyer, also resided in Oswego, making her home on the East side. For a time during the excitement due to the patriot war, Cochrane was an editor of the "Oswego Patriot", an organ of the patriot sympathizers in the border troubles, of 1838. Later, after leaving Oswego he served as a member of Congress from New York City. In the late 1860s he was attorney general of New York State. Gerrit Smith was also related by marriage to Henry Fitzhugh, an early mayor of Oswego and for many years one of its most prominent business men.

Gerrit Smith in 1853 gave $25,000 for the establishment of the public library in Oswego which bears his name, the building having been erected in 1855. Later Smith gave other substantial sums to this library for particular purposes.

Gerrit Goes To Congress

In 1853-1854 Gerrit Smith represented in Congress the congressional district of which Oswego County was a part, Madison, Smith's home county, being the

other county in the district. Oswego county gave him a substantial majority in the election largely on the strength of his advocacy of reciprocity with Canada in which Oswego business folk were much interested in bringing about.

A considerable part of the early business that Gerrit Smith carried on at Oswego related to the fur trade in which his father, Peter Smith of Peterboro, had been engaged before he asked his son to take over the management of his affairs. The elder Smith's purchases in the west of furs at trading posts maintained by him along the Upper Lakes passed through Oswego, as did the elder Smith's west bound goods sent from his store at Utica to the scene of the western trading operations there to be used in barter with the Indians by the Smith representatives.

At the joint meeting of the New York State Historical Association with Oswego County Historical Society held at Oswego State Teachers' College in October, Dr. W. Freeman Galpin read the following paper on "The Smiths of Petersboro":

October 2, 1780—and Tappantown was agog with excitement. Major John Andre of His Majesty's North American Army was to be executed as a spy. And this sleepy little Westchester County hamlet had been selected as the place for the execution. Small wonder it was that its men folk milled around, chattering as though the fate of the Revolution hung on every word. Harings, Van Houtens, Blauvelts, Smiths—Dutchmen all so far as ancestry was concerned—and others made up this noisy throng. The execution, so tradition records, took place on the farm land of Gerrit P. and Wintje Lent Smith. And one may be certain that the 12 year old son, Peter, had eyes as big as saucers that eventful day. Possibly he actually witnessed the death of the unfortunate Andre. In any event he never forgot the vivid incident and never tired of telling of that fateful day to his children and grandchildren in years to come.

Peter Utica Store Keeper

Peter Smith was too young for military service at the time and, so far as is known, remained on his father's farm until about 1784. Then he went down the Hudson to New York City where for a time he served as an apprentice and clerk in the merchant house of one Mr. Haring. Ambition, however, was made of sterner stuff and in 1785 Peter opened a small book shop of his own, with theatrical supplies as a side line. Four years he passed in this fashion, amassing a small sum of money and much valuable experience. Early in 1789 he bade goodbye to New York City, paused for a brief visit with his aged parents at Tappantown ,and then plunged northward to Albany and west along the Mohawk until he arrived at Old Fort Schuyler—later to be known as Utica. Here he opened a general store, selling groceries, hardware, and other supplies to the pioneer settlers of Oneida County. Nor did he overlook his Indian patrons who eagerly bought such things as inlaid scalping knives and kegs of potent fire water. Not that Peter would so much as taste a drop of whiskey himself—no, that would constitute an unpardonable sin; but for others, especially the lowly Indian, there could not be anything wrong, in so far as the safety of his own soul was concerned. Yes, Peter was a man of deep religious conviction. Indeed, an examination of his Fort Schuyler Account Books reveal that he frequently assigned religious names to otherwise unknown Indian patrons. Here one encounters a "Big Christian" and there a "Little Christian." And I have often wondered if Peter saw the humor in the fact that his entries showed "Little Christian" as most circumspect about paying his debts, while "Big Christian" was always in the arrears.

Peter Enters Fur Trade

As a store keeper, Peter did right well for that day and age. His bank account, so to speak, slowly grew and as it grew he branched out and became vitally interested in the fur trade. During the course of these ventures he met John Jacob Astor—the beginning of a life long friendship. Astor recognized Smith's ability to deal profitably with the Indians and at an early date, possibly around 1791, entered into a partnership with Peter. Astor provided the latter with the groceries and other supplies that crowded the shelves and floors of the store, while Smith gathered the furs and shipped them on to New York where Astor disposed of them for a nice profit. Several years later the two began to speculate (jointly) in land and from that time until 1829 the two shrewd partners conducted a most profitable enterprise.

In the meantime, as wealth began to crown the efforts of Peter, his eyes cast longing glances at Elizabeth Livingston, daughter of James Livingston. Surely, Livingston, a veteran of the Revolution and a lawyer of no mean standing, must have questioned at first the ardent approaches of this young man. Smith, however, had money, and money not only talked but gave promise of security for his daughter who looked with favor upon Smith. Thus it came about that in February, 1792, Peter and Elizabeth were married; from that time on, Smith's standing among the aristocrats and blue-bloods of the state was not questioned, and that in spite of the evident eccentricities displayed by Smith.Of this marriage, six children were born though only four lived to maturity; Cornelia who married the future John Cochrane of Civil War fame (and lived for a period of years in Oswego), Peter Skenandoah, Gerrit and Adolphus Lent. The mother of these children died in 1818 and for several years Peter remained a widower. However, as time passed he began to think seriously of a second marriage. Accordingly, he scanned the horizon for one worthy of the honor he intended to dispose. Honor, indeed, and much wealth and reputation. Truly the first Judge of Madison County, a man of undoubted wealth, and one whose religious standards were ostensibly correct, would be a handsome prize for any maiden.

Peter's Second Marriage

Peter, however, forgot one essential—he was no longer a young man. Probably this explains why several fathers found him unbecoming and turned a deaf ear to his proposals. The day came, however, when at Philadelphia, Smith met Sarah Pogson. Now Sarah had been born at Hampton Court, England, a number of years before. She was the daughter of a former West India merchant and her brother was a priest in the Church of England. Precisely why Sarah accepted Peter's offer of marriage is not known. Nor should one attempt to draw back the veil of mystery that attended this union, though a study of the sources might indicate that there was an absence of both mental and physical compatibility. In a word, Peter was too old to marry a woman who in the prime of life deserved a more virile companion. Be that as it may, Sarah soon found her life at Peterboro a living hell. Her husband laid down the law. She was not to use his carriage without his permission; she was not to go to the general store without his approval; she must attend family prayers and see to it that every whim of a crotchety and cantankerous old man was satisfied. Soon the marriage was on the rocks and Peter proposed divorce. Sarah, loyal to her beloved Church of England, flatly refused, whereupon Peter sent her off with the promise that he would provide for her maintenance. In his will, he left her a life annuity of seven

hundred dollars provided she relinquish all claims to the estate. This was asking too much and it was only after Gerrit, the son, raised the ante to twelve hundred that she surrendered her claims to the estate. Sarah lived until 1870.

Peter's Business Morals

The most interesting aspect of this affair, however, was that Peter felt and believed that he had acted as a Christian gentleman throughout. But that was true of everything he did. According to his standards, there was nothing wrong in purchasing from the Oneida Indians a tract of land of some 60,000 acres, even though the State Law expressly forbade all purchases from the Indians. And when confronted by the State, Peter calmly maintained that it was not a purchase, but a ninety-nine year lease. The State bluntly refused to honor the same, whereupon Peter dug deep into his bag of tricks and pulled out one legal technicality after another until at length the State recognized his title. In such a manner, he gained 60,000 acres at the rate of three and a half dollars an acre. Peter's questionable practices did not stop at this. A favorite device was to buy for a song land sold by the State for non-payment of taxes. Then, when time came for him to pay taxes he would default, allow the taxes to accumulate and then "bid them in at the tax sales." Here was a clever way of acquiring title at a low cost—and many thousands of acres of land were purchased by him in this manner.

"Skin-Flint" Smith, the Oneida Indians called him and that in spite of his repeated solicitations about their spiritual well-being. Now Peter was an active member of the New York Tract Society and wherever he went he always took with him a supply of tracts. As he approached a village, he would send ahead a man to place posters on fences and the walls of taverns announcing that the Second Coming of Christ was nigh, prepare to meet your maker, and other such platitudes. Having thus set the stage, Smith would then dash into the village, blowing a horn as though he were Gabriel himself and then proceed to scatter his tracts among the astonished people.

Peter Sken Smith

By this time, you may well have guessed that Peter was slightly off balance. One may not call it insanity, but surely it was only one step removed. And this unfortunate streak was transmitted to his off-spring. Peter the Second (known in Oswego as Peter Sken Smith) lacked his father's business ability and preferred to travel through life as a gentleman. He loved to parade about the streets of Oswego where he lived for a time in the 1830s practicing his profession as a lawyer, in his military uniform, for he was a general in the State Militia, though he knew nothing about the army. He delighted in extensive travel and for a time lived in what was the Territory of Florida. He sought to save America from the foreigners by supporting anti-alien societies. In Oswego he took a most active part in politics. He served the village as a trustee and the town of Scriba two years as supervisor. He drowned his earthly troubles by copious drinking. The latter soon caught up with him and in time drove him to an early grave. Shortly before his death he became a believer in spiritism. His letters to Gerrit fairly echo with references to communions with his dead parents, and believe it or not the medium for these strange meetings was no other than Joan of Arc.

Then, there was Adolphus Lent Smith—a harmless country swain who wondered and wandered as he walked through life. Everybody at Peterboro knew Adolph and had it not been for the fact that he was Gerrit's brother he would most certainly

have been subjected to much ribbing and torment. As he lay in his death bed, he expressed the wish that he might be buried in a bear robe in the garden where he might rise and scare the boys who pilfered his previous apples.

Gerrit's Mental Peculiarities

Now there are some who insist that Gerrit was none too normal. Those of you who have read Dr. Harlow's recent study of this great abolitionist and humanitarian will recall the care with which he treats this subject. Heritage, Dr. Harlow states, was heavily against him. Nevertheless he lived his seventy-seven years with only one mental breakdown—that over his role in the John Brown affair. On the other hand he always worried about his health. He went through life, so to speak, with a clinical thermometer in his mouth. Whether this worry and his zeal in the cause of reform "were evidences of neuroses, only a psychiatrist could tell."

Gerrit's life is well known to you of Central New York. It would be presumptuous, therefore, to relate his many activities. His land investments, his devotion to the anti-slavery crusade, his espousal of temperance, women's rights, peace, and a dozen or more other reforms are common-place to all. Gerrit was a lad of nine, when his father moved from Utica to Peterboro, and during the remainder of his boyhood he walked the straight and narrow path prescribed by the austere parent. Later he went to Hamilton and acquired a cultural background that was to serve him in good stead when he fought for the Lord in days to come. Also at Hamilton he gained the affections of Wealtha Ann Backus, daughter of the college President. The marriage took place in January 1819, and for several months Gerrit walked around with his head in the clouds. Fate, however, was unkind as Wealtha died that summer of "dropsy of the brain"—whatever that was. For a brief time, Gerrit remained aloof of friends and family, brooding over his loss and composing verses to his dead wife. Here is a sample:

"Sweet Image of a sweeter far
Original! a lovely star
To light the doubtful steps of memory
As 'mid the waste of time that's been
She treads her haunts of ling'ring green
And calls her fruits for Fancy's reveries."

Even for one who cares little for poetry and who cannot compose a single line of verse, this stanza makes me sick.

Gerrit's Gifts

Shortly thereafter, Smith was rudely snatched from these vagaries by the unexpected action of his father. Peter was going to retire, and so upon the shoulders of the young Gerrit fell the load of managing an estate that taxed his attention throughout life. Gerrit viewed his ever mounting fortune as a trust placed in his hands by Providence. Those broad acres of choice farm land in New York, Northern Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan, those village lots in Peterboro, Oneida, Detroit and Oswego, the harbor and docks at Oswego, the Canastota Plank Road, the investments in railroads, and a thousand other enterprises were not his own. It is true that he lived at the Peterboro Homestead like a country squire, it is true that he never knew what it meant to be without luxury, but in spite of all the comforts that surrounded him and his family, Gerrit never forgot his responsibility to God. Thus his hand was forever digging deep into his pocket. Slaves were bought and freed, others speeded to safety by the underground railroad. Young and promising young men found their financial problems at college solved by his generosity. Struggling churches were put on their feet. Hamilton and Oberlin colleges were the recipients of handsome gifts, Oswe-

go was given a library, and so on in almost endless procession.

Gerrit Liked To Entertain

To his home came many people such as Charles Sumner, Wendell Phillips, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, William Ladd, Henry C. Wright, Theodore Weld and John Brown. Gerrit delighted in entertainment and his black house servants were most attentive to all guests. One of the most interesting of these visitors was that eccentric preacher and non-register, Henry C. Wright. Wright wanted Smith to leave the safe and honorable company of the American Peace Society and throw his lot in with Garrison's Non-Resistant Society. And let me add parenthetically that John Humphrey Noyes of Oneida was somewhat responsible for Garrison's espousal of non-resistance. The "way of the Lord," Wright told Gerrit, is the non-resistant way. And so the conversation ran between these two men. Princes, principalities, rulers, governments and men were earnest topics and Smith floated higher and higher into the clouds. And while completely enraptured by the arguments of Wright, he took time off to write the latter a check for one hundred dollars.

Gerrit continued to walk about in a trance long after Wright left. And that in spite of the good advice offered by others like Lewis Tappan of New York City. Writing to Smith, Tappan said "When I reflect that perhaps you may become a member of the 'non-resistant' sect, my heart sinks within me, not that I am not a lover of peace, but because I look upon the doctrines as part and parcel of a system of innovations that will so far as they succeed overthrow all that is valuable. May the Lord guide you, dear Brother, I have no confidence in the piety of Mr. Garrison."

Smith was visibly agitated by this appeal and wrote so to Wright and Garrison. Immediately they rushed to the attack—they did not want to lose so important a follower. Edmund Quincy penned Smith a lengthy letter which ran in part as follows:

"I regard the position in which you stand ...as one of imminent moral peril. I tremble for your soul... I regard the present struggle with ineffable interest as I see your soul yearning to love the one and yet not quite willing to give up all hold upon the other. The conflict which is now waging in the kingdom within is a more sublime spectacle than the battle-fields of earth or of Milton's heaven ever witnessed. God and angels and good men are spectators of the strife. May God give you the victory, the greatest of victories, the victory over yourself."

Well, that touched Gerrit to the quick and like a good Christian of that day closeted himself with God and asked for advice. The advice was forthcoming in a series of letters from Tappan and other opponents of Garrison. Thus, at length, he wrote to Boston telling them he could not join in non-resistance. "With all the credit I have," he wrote, "for being an independent Christian, I believe I am very much swayed by the authority of Great names—very much afraid to stand out against the mass of the wise and good." And great was the rejoicing among the anti-Garrisonians. Among the Garrisonians, however, there was deep sorrow and they told Smith that he had sacrificed his soul to political ambition and that he had "fallen like Lucifer from Heaven."

Smith Gets Rid Of A Visitor

By this time Smith's name had become common place throughout the nation. His generous gifts, his association with the Colonization Society, the Anti-Slavery Society, his prominence in the temperance movement, and the like, were known to all that read the daily papers. And so one day a carriage drove up to the Homestead and a lady alighted with a

well packed suitcase. She asked for Smith and on being greeted by the latter, she told him that she had heard so much of him that she had come to see what he was like for herself. Gerrit was flattered and invited her to spend the night. She did, and the next night, and then the next night, and another besides. By this time, Smith was wondering what it was all about. Was he being taken in? To ask her to leave, he could not and would not. But at morning family prayer he solved his problem. As he finished praying for the well-being of the family and its guest, he added an additional petition—"And may the Good Lord watch over and protect our departing guest." She took the hint and left that morning.

Gerrit Smith Miller

Gerrit's daughter, Elizabeth, may be remembered by some of you. More of you, however, surely recall her genial son, Gerrit Smith Miller. It was my good fortune to have known Mr. Miller. I first met him in the spring of 1927 when I sought permission to use his grandfather's papers and manuscripts for a study I was then undertaking. He greeted me with open arms, made my research a complete success and then reacted most favorably to my suggestion that he give these papers to Syracuse University. As the years passed, I found myself a frequent visitor at his home. I well recall that one of these visits coincided with that of his departed wife's birthday. How pleased he was with the many remembrances his friends had sent him! And with great pride he showed me the floral pieces that just then were still in an old fashioned bath tub. So many flowers had come that there were not enough vases, and so some were kept at night in the tub. I admired one large bouquet, and with just the sign of a tear in his eyes, he said "they came from me."

With that he quickly led me up to the top floor to show me, among other things, the room in which as a boy he saw his grandfather and John Brown talk over the Harper's Ferry Raid. He also pointed out the barrel-organ given to Peter Smith by William Astor, brother of John Jacob Astor. My interest in this organ led him to wind it up and as it began to play some early nineteenth century patriotic air, he picked up the tune and sang the same with vim and gusto. Time had dealt kindly to this fine old man, whose contributions to the Holstein cattle industry has won for him the applause of the nation; but time was catching up. And on my next visit I found him at death's door. He would see me, however, and for a few minutes we chatted about this and that. But before I left, he called my wife, who was with me, and asked her to lean over and kiss him. I never expected to see him again. Fortune spared him for a time and when next I was at Peterboro, we looked out together upon the burned ruins of the Old Homestead. In those ruins he saw his life, that of his mother's, grandfather, and great grandfather, and he proceeded to tell me again his story of the Smiths of Peterboro. And as he finished, I could not but feel that, prominent as Peter and Gerrit had been, the real Smith—one whom everybody loved and admired—stood by my side. He kept alive the tradition of the Smith family—alive at a distinct financial loss to himself, and he combined in his personality all the good and great of his ancestors. But he added a warmth and geniality that they lacked. You who have seen him fishing for trout in the little stream that ran through the estate, you who have heard him chat about his son's birds, and you who have had the pleasure of being a guest, know full well what I mean and how impossible it is to do justice by words to that grand old man—Gerrit Smith Miller.

Significance of the Oswego Movement In Education

(Paper Read Before Regional Meeting of New York State Historical Association at Oswego October 20, 1945 by Dr. Donald Snygg of the Faculty of the Oswego State Teachers' College.)

Edward Austin Sheldon, the founder of the Oswego State Normal School and originator of the famous "Oswego Movement," came to Oswego in 1847 as a young man of 24. Ill health, possibly coupled with a nervous depression similar to that which he later suffered in 1879-80, had forced him to abandon Hamilton College and his plans for a legal career. When the nursery firm with which he was associated in Oswego failed he became interested in the plight of some 1,500 young people and adults in the city who could neither read nor write. With the missionary zeal that thereafter characterized his activities he began to raise money to provide a free school for poor children. When it became apparent that the money could be raised only if he agreed to remain in charge and teach the school himself he gave up his plans to attend Auburn Theological Seminary and prepare for the ministry and in the early winter of 1848 opened what was called the "Ragged School". He became a leader of the local movement in Oswego for a city system of free schools and in 1853, after two years as superintendent of schools in Syracuse, he was called back to Oswego to serve as secretary of the board of education, a position which was then equivalent to that of superintendent. In fact, Sheldon has been called the "first professional school superintendent in the country" (11) and by his own account he was both energetic, efficient, and autocratic:

"For the next two years he dismissed most of the old district teachers, employed new ones, educated his board, instituted a 'straight jacket system of examinations' and built a systematic machine of which he says . . . .'I venture the assertion that a more perfect piece of educational machinery was never constructed. (8, p. 104)' 'By looking at my watch, I could tell exactly what every teacher in the city was doing.' (8, p. 115)' "

Moral Training Plus Discipline

"Dr. Sheldon constantly kept the local community appraised of his plans through the newspapers and the professional people through lectures at teachers' institutes and state meetings. To publicize further his perfect machine he invited national educators to visit his schools. On these occasions he staged big publicity stunts. He says: 'In this way I kept up a high pressure in the schools. The rivalry and competition was tremendous. It took me a long time to learn that there was a better way.' (8, p. 115). Moral training and rigid discipline were his professional tenets during this period. 'From the very first I emphasized moral training, and had a course of formal lessons arranged in this, as in other subjects.' (8, p. 115)" (4).

After the "educational machine" was complete and in good running order Sheldon began to realize that his perfectly organized schools lacked interest for the children and he began to cast about for improvements. In the National Museum at Toronto he found an exhibit of "colored balls and cards, bright colored pictures of animals, building blocks, boxes in which were silk-worm cocoons, cotton balls, samples of all kinds of grain, specimens of pottery and glass, (9, p. 40)" together with reading charts and instruction

books for teachers. All of this material, he found, was used for instructional purposes by the Home and Colonial Institute of London, a training school for teachers conducted on a rather formalized adaptation of the principles of the Swiss educator Pestalozzi. Sheldon had never heard of Pestalozzi but he at once perceived the educational possibilities of the materials and became a Pestalozzian on the spot. He purchased the entire exhibit out of his own pocket, paying an amount equal to about one-third his yearly salary, and brought it home with him. There have been three great movements in American education: the Oswego "Object Teaching" movement; the Herbartian movement; and the progressive movement. Sheldon brought the first of these home with him from Toronto in 1859.

Sheldon Adopts Object Teaching

During the next two years Sheldon, with his customary zeal for organization and efficiency, introduced into the Oswego schools a very detailed plan for formal lessons in form, color, size, weight, animals, plants, the human body, moral instruction. This instruction, called "object teaching", was justified by Pestalozzi's principle that all knowledge is derived in the first instance from the perceptions of the senses and therefore all instruction should be based upon real objects and occurences.

It was difficult for teachers indoctrinated in the methods and subject matter previously in use to adapt themselves successfully to the new methods and the shortage of teachers in the local system became acute. Sheldon explains in his autobiography that his methods of training teachers were so effective that the system was constantly raided by other cities who enticed his teachers away with better salaries. There is some possibility that a zealous, enthusiastic, hard-driving superintendent of schools who held meetings of the teaching staff from 9 a. m. until 12 m. every Saturday may also have had something to do with the migration of teachers.

At any rate, in an effort to get the new system off to a good start and build up a local supply of trained teachers, Sheldon determined to start a training school under the direction of a teacher from the Home and Colonial Institute of London itself. He was unable to persuade the Oswego Board of Education to pay anything toward her salary but he had better fortune with his teachers and persuaded a number of them to give up half their salaries (which ranged from $300 to $500 a year) and thus raised the required amount*.

The board approved the use of the school building for the instruction when its members were assured that outside teachers attending the class would not only pay tuition but would serve as free teachers during their periods of practice, thus saving money for the city.

Training Class Established

The training class began in May 1861 with 39 students, one of whom was Sheldon. At the end of the year the first teacher and principal, Miss Margaret Jones, returned to London. Mr. Sheldon became principal of the Oswego Normal school, then a municipal and not yet a state institution, and Hermann Krusi, the son of one of Pestalozzi's assistants, was employed as a teacher. The prin-

*This account of how some teachers gave up half their pay to bring Miss Jones to Oswego was first published by Mary Sheldon Barnes, daughter of Dr. Sheldon. It has been often repeated with various morals attached. However, since this paper was delivered, I have been informed by Dr. R. K. Piez that the story was categorically denied, in his presence, by Dr. Poucher, second principal of the school and a member of the class in question. It is Dr. Piez's impression that the necessary money was contributed by a small group of private citizens.

ciples of Pestalozzi were definitely adopted as the principles of the new school.

Knowledge Should Precede Words

Dearborn (2) has summarized these ideas and principles as follows: 1. The end of education is fitness for life. 2. The nature of the child is the fundamental basis of all teaching. 3. Education to be complete requires the 'harmonious development of all the faculties of man, physical, mental, and moral, into a well-ordered organic whole. 4. Education is essentially moral and religious. 5. Education must recognize individual differences. 6. Education must be gradual and progressive and should in such a process embody the principles of unity. 7. The material world, its relation to human affairs, and the inter-relationships of human beings must be reduced to their simplest terms if education is to progress effectively and efficiently. 8. Education is based upon habits of accurate perception. 9. Activity is inherent in childhood and must be accompanied by liberty, restrained only when social rights are endangered. 10. Education should proceed in an atmosphere of domesticity and maternalism. As summarized by Dearborn, these Pestalozzian principles, with minor changes in terminology, would win the approval of the most advanced educators of the present day. We recognize in order such present day concepts as education for life, child development, personality development, citizenship, character education, recognition of individual differences, pacing, readiness, training in scientific method, learning by doing, and the need for emotional security.

Pestalozzi himself had written "The ultimate aim of education is not perfection in the accomlishments of the school, but a fitness for life; not the acquirement of habits of blind obedience and of prescribed diligence but a preparation for independent action."

The thing that made the most impression on the Oswego group was Pestalozzi's teaching credo that (1) the knowledge of things should precede that of words; (2) in Sheldon's words "All knowledge is derived in the first instance from the perceptions of the senses, and therefore all instruction should be based on real objects and occurrences"; (3) the first objects to be studied by the child are those immediately surrounding it and instruction should therefore begin with familiar objects. With his customary genius for organization Sheldon seized upon these principles and, taking his cue from the Home and Colonial Institute methods, devised a formal technique for teaching with and about objects and experiences which could be rapidly learned by teachers in training and which were, by comparison with the verbal rote memory methods then in vogue, of considerable interest to children.

This mechanization and formalization came at a very opportune time from the standpoint of the Oswego group. Educators throughout the country had for some years been familiar with and favorably impressed with the teaching of Pestalozzi but for lack of trained teachers had been unable to put them into effect in the schools. The poorly paid teachers who made up the great majority of elementary school staffs had so little knowledge of either subject matter or pedagogy that they were unable to teach except by the old textbook-recitation method. Sheldon's formal and therefore easily learned method of object teaching made it possible for these teachers, after one or two years of intensive training, to teach from objects instead of books and apparently brought the Pestalozzian objectives within reach. Perfect teachers, it was hoped, could now be produced by mass production and were ready to invade the low-price market.

Oswego Wins National Interest

When a committee of Normal School principals from other

states visited Oswego in February 1862 and approved the new methods, with a warning against their use by untrained teachers, the Oswego school became a center of national interest. The second year's class contained students from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, and Michigan. So widely did Oswego become known that of the 23 members of this second class 17 accepted positions outside New York State. When the National Educational Association sent a committee to investigate the Oswego methods in 1864 and the committee reported favorably the stage was set for a radical change in public school methods. An indication of the extent to which object teaching and the Oswego Movement swept the country between 1862 and 1881 may be seen in the lists of positions held by Oswego graduates during that period.

Graduates Taught in 44 States

According to records compiled in 1886 (9) there were 948 graduates of the Oswego Normal during its first twenty years; 485 of these, or more than half, taught outside New York state. By 1886 Oswego graduates of the first twenty years had taught in 44 states, the District of Columbia, and six foreign countries.

Speaking at the 25th anniversary of the school in 1886 A. D. Mayor said, "Every normal school, as far as I know, State or city, between Pittsburgh and San Francisco, has been organized on the Oswego plan and hundreds of her graduates have been at work in them since 1865." (9) By 1886, according to Dearborn (2) Oswego graduates had held 892 positions outside New York state. And these were in most cases influential positions. A study made in 1877 showed that the male graduates of Oswego were receiving more than two and one-half times the average salaries of men teachers in the same states and women graduates were earning more than twice the average pay of women teachers in the same states. (2) Since many of these graduates were teaching in normal schools and were training their own students in Oswego attitudes and methods the cumulative effect of the movement on American education was tremendous and from one generation to another it still exists. There is still no reason to revise the statement of Hinsdale in Nicholas Murray Butler's "Education in the United States" in speaking of the leading teacher training schools that "Perhaps no school on this list has exerted a greater influence than the Oswego school." (1)

In a sudden burst dozens of normal schools, founded on "the Oswego plan", mushroomed all over America. The results were not always happy. Since the formal methods, which at their best involved more activity by the teacher than by the children, were more easily learned than was the progressive philosophy on which they were based it was only natural that many teachers should adopt object teaching as merely a new method for acquiring knowledge and reduce it to the same verbal level as the textbook methods that had preceded it.

Object Teaching Wanes

In the long run object teaching failed to live up to early expectations for reasons prophetically stated by the committee of leading educators who had approved the method in the investigation of February 1862: "Resolved, that this system of primary education, which substitutes in great measure the teachers for the book, demands in its instructors varied knowledge and thorough culture; and that attempts to introduce it by those who do not clearly comprehend its principles and who have not been trained in its methods, can only result in failure". (8, pp 151-2) Too few of the young and quickly trained teachers of the time had the varied knowledge, thorough culture, and clear comprehension demanded and 'Object Teaching",

after holding the center of the stage through the sixties, seventies, and early eighties, fell more and more into disuse.

Results Of Oswego Methods

The actual effects of this period have been, from the point view of the present, both good and bad. On the credit side the Oswego movement greatly reduced the dependence of teachers and children upon textbooks and advanced the revolt against the mere memorization of verbal symbols. The movement was, at least theoretically, seeking the enlargement of the child's field by personal experiences suited to his stage of knowledge. The natural and inevitable consequence of this idea was a focussing of attention upon individual differences, the introduction into the curriculum of such concrete and active subjects as industrial arts and nature study, the advent of the kindergarten, special classes for the mentally deficient, and the development of new methods in geography and history. In all of these developments Oswego played a leading role. (6)

The following paragraphs from pages 113 and 114 of Sheldon's autobiography are indicative of the extremely modern character of Sheldon's thinking:

"I realize now that I have grown away from many things that I now condemn. In only one direction is this so evident to me as in the matter of discipline. My tendency was to restrain the activities and impulses of children, while now I would encourage and cultivate them by giving them proper direction. My influence then (in the '50's) was toward repression, but now I would give the greatest liberty possible. Repression tends to stultify and deaden the activities of the soul; freedom tends to give growth and vigor. That work is of most value to the pupil which is voluntary, which is done without restraint or compulsion. That teacher who has to resort to forceful methods to secure order or study is of very little value. The best work is done where there is a warm, sympathetic relation between teacher and pupils. The children are drawn into right doing, not driven. There is a vast difference in the value of the two processes."

In going on to discuss the value of compulsory attendance laws he says 'If you cannot draw a pupil to school by the interest he feels in the work, it is very questionable whether you will benefit him very much by driving him. The whole tendency of such a process is to disgust him by the driving."

"From the very first I emphasized moral training, and had a course of formal lesson arranged in this, the same as in other subjects. The teacher was not to depend on these formal lessons alone, but to seize every occurance on the school grounds and in the school and treat it as an object lesson. Much must also be done in an indirect way in the life, manner, and work of the teacher. For the formal work we used pictures, books, and everyday incidents. As time went on, the formal work dropped off, and the indirect influences were more and more emphasized."

Essentially, Sheldon's views of the purposes and basic principles of education have won general acceptance among educators if not with the general public. The inadequacies which beset the practice of the Oswego principles lie not in Sheldon's views on education but in his necessary dependence upon the now disproved faculty psychology that was in vogue at his time. By the assumptions of this now discarded theory the mind is made up of a number of independent faculties such as attention, memory, judgment, reasoning, and a host of other. The task of education, it follows, is the development, through practice, of these faculties. This theory of psychology, which still persists in popular thinking, has had a pernicious effect upon education by making plausible the idea that

subject matter is important chiefly as a means of exercising and developing these hypothetical faculties of the mind and that it is therefore more important for subject matter to be difficult than for it to be useful. This particular doctrine, however, had little effect upon the development of the Oswego movement as it is in direct conflict with the Pestalozzian philosophy.

The serious defect in faculty psychology, as employed by the Oswego group, was that it provided them with no adequate explanation of motivation or of individual differences among children. No one at the time had any idea of the importance of the role played by emotional factors in learning and as a result the methods of teaching were designed in the belief that sufficient repetition would insure learning, an erroneous theory that still plagues the schools today, although not necessarily as an inheritance from Oswego.

Oswego Movement Appraised

Sheldon himself realized the inadequacies of the psychological knowledge of his time and by 1886 had come to feel that the need for a better knowledge of child psychology was his greatest problem. (8) It does not appear that all his pupils and followers shared his concern. The movement from the beginning had been plagued by a basic defect that gradually became apparent. In an effort to secure teachers competent to secure the Pestalozzian objectives the Normal schools, led by Oswego, had subjected their students to an early specialization in the methods of instruction which led many of them to become preoccupied with method to the exclusion of all else. This was for long the unfortunate legacy of the Oswego movement but it is difficult to see how this result could have been avoided.

The general recognition of the importance of Pestalozzi's educational ideas made it inevitable that they be put into practice. The Oswego movement was a revolutionary attempt to do this within the economic, educational, and scientific limitations of its time. The time for training teachers had to be short because the salaries paid them were low. This necessitated a narrow technical rather than a broad professional course of study. Within these limits the Oswego movement was a brilliant success. Sheldon, as the leader of the first great American education movement based his work upon principles which still, after almost a century seem to be, more than ever, fundamental truths. The students of the Oswego State Normal school who learned only the techniques taught there were good teachers by the standards of their day; but the many students and faculty members who acquired from Sheldon and his colleagues an understanding of and allegiance to the principles upon which the object teaching techniques were based were a source of intellectual fertility to thousands of students in normal schools and training classes all over America.

Herbartian Movement

In the late eighties interest in Oswego, as all over America, shifted to the Herbartian movement which attacked the problem of motivation and of method construction with a more adequate psychology than had previously been available. This movement in many ways represented a return to the basic ideas of Pestalozzi. In the sense, however, that the Herbartian movement was more concerned with the nature of learning than the nature of the child it was a backward step. The did not remain submerged for Pestalozzian principles, however, long. Coupled with a more adequate body of psychological knowledge they shortly emerged as part of the Progressive movement to determine the direction of progress throughout the twenties, the thirties, and so far

in the forties. Along with the methods teaching at Oswego and in the daughter normal schools throughout the country there was also taught in some degree the philosophy of Sheldon and of Pestalozzi. In the sixties, the seventies, and the eighties it was planted too firmly in American educational thinking to be uprooted and when the formal methods were abandoned the philosophy remained. For modern education, in 1945, that remains the solid, enduring contribution of the Oswego Movement and the Oswego State Normal School. For that philosophy of democracy, citizenship, and individual worth has become one of the enduring traditions of American education, as it is the proudest tradition of this school.

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Shipbuilding Days In Old Oswego

(Paper Read Before Regional Meeting of New York State Historical Association at Oswego October 20, 1945 by Dr. Harold D. Alford, Director of Education of Oswego State Teachers' College)

The trunk of a tree hollowed out by fire or by such primitive tools as are fashioned and used with singular patience and dexterity by savage races, represents man's first effort to obtain flotation which depended on something other than mere buoyancy of material. Whether or not the observation of shells or split reeds floating on the water first suggested the idea of hollowing out the trunk of a tree, the practice may be traced to a very remote period in the history of man. The hollowed trunk itself may have suggested the use of the bark as a means of flotation. Whatever may have been the origin of the bark canoe, its construction was a step onward in the art of ship building.

That strand of silver flowing into Ontario's blue waters at Oswego provided the highway for the first Americans. Iroquois war parties frequently passed over it on their way to almost certain victory; possibly a French bateau occasionally landed on its shore, or a French scout glided over its surface, listening every moment for signs of the vigilant Iroquois. Missionaries passed through here on the way to the missions maintained at Onondaga and elsewhere among the Iroquois. Dutch and English traders made their way up the Mohawk and down the Oswego to Lake Ontario.

Some Of The Shipbuilders

Certain canoe routes came to be commonly used, first by the Algonkians, then by the Iroquois, and finally by the white men who were guided by the Indians. The best known of these routes of war and trade was probably that from the Mohawk River to Oswego. If yesterday the Oswego brought a cargo of romance to blue Ontario, we must assume, therefore, that on its timbered banks of green were those who were interested in providing the means for this cargo—the boat builders.

The story of ship building in Oswego is a distant subject. Its history was neglected by those who lived during the era. There must have been interesting facts and rich details which were not recorded. From its beginning as a fur market in an untenanted wilderness, Oswego has been a pivot for water-borne commerce. Oswego was a thorn in the side of France, the peep-hole through which the British spied upon the French fur-traders, explorers and men of arms on their way to and from the western parts. It was the first, and for many years the only, British port on the Great Lakes. Oswego has a wealth of historic and human associations.

The Early Period

The canoe, the bateau, and the Durham were the first boats built in Oswego. The North American Indians brought the canoe to its highest state of perfection. The craft was so light that it could be carried by one man, and yet so strong and buoyant that it could carry a considerable load. A framework of light but tough wood was covered with strips of birch, spruce, or elm bark. This was sewed together and the seams were waterproofed with resinous gums from balsam and fir. It was a wonderful boat, created from the raw materials at hand, and capable of bearing the traveler thousands of miles.

The bateau was a light, flat-bottomed river boat introduced to this country by the French. The

Durham was a boat decked over a short distance from either end, with running boards along each side, on which were nailed cleats to give a man a foothold while he propelled the boat with a long pole pressed against the bottom of the stream.

In 1739 there were over 150 traders at Oswego. Boat after boat loaded with furs came up the river. On the banks of the lake the Oswego traders waved bottles of rum to attract the attention and invite the patronage of the Indian paddlers who had passed other bottles of rum waved by the French traders at Fort Niagara or elsewhere along the route.*

The British Period

The year 1755 marked the beginning of the second period of ship building in Oswego. This was the British period. At last England had decided to challenge the long-standing French control of Lake Ontario.

The armchair strategists of the day could see that Oswego represented the might of England in the forest. One columnist of 1757 stated that Oswego not only commanded the passage to the Great Lakes, but all of the inland navigation of North America. He further contended that if England were firmly possessed of this one place she would be free from the French, and all their encroachments and devastations.

William Shirley, governor of Massachusetts, was the father of British shipbuilding in Oswego. He had a violent dislike for anything French, since Massachusetts had been one of the greatest sufferers from the atrocities of guerilla warfare by the French Indians.

*John Bartram Pennsylvania naturalist and traveler, who was a guest of the Ft. Oswego commandant in 1743 in his "Observations" records that the commandant was then exercising great care to see that traders gathered at Oswego had no opportunity to supply liquor to the Indians and then swindle them while they were in an intoxicated state.

Sloop "Oswego" Launched

On June 28, 1755, the British symbol of might and purpose was exemplified by the launching of the 43-foot sloop "Oswego", the first English vessel built on the Great Lakes. This warship was designed by Sir G. Acworth, surveyor of the Navy, and it was built at the Oswego dockyard under the direction of Captain Housman Broadley, R. N. The shipyard was located on the west side of the river near the present location of Van Buren street. The "Oswego" was built wholly of green timbers under conditions of extreme danger, yet she performed well.

A romantic description of the little warship has been recorded by Harlan Hatcher. He wrote:

"The 'Oswego' was a warship, armed with twelve cannon, five guns, and a swivel on each side. She was a trim figure against the late summer blue of Ontario's surface and sky. She wore a wide, orange-yellow girdle around her middle and a black band above and below it to the water edge, where it met the line of the white tallowed bottom. Her spiring single mast, filled with billowing canvas sails, was fifty-three feet tall, and her graceful main boom was fifty-five feet long. She was fifteen feet in the beam amidships. Her draft was only seven feet when loaded, because Oswego's harbor was but eight feet deep. She was swift and quick on the turn. Under her quarter-deck were the staterooms for the officers, and in her forecastle were a cooking stove and cramped bunks for her crew—'the beef on the rope'—twenty-six men in all. The magazines were amidships.

"As this ship went down the ways she was cheered by traders, soldiers, builders and the onlookers—including many Indians who had watched with doubt the building of so large a 'wooden canoe'."

In a few days after the launching of the Oswego, a sister ship, the "Ontario," was ready for serv-

ice. These were followed by the "George," "Lively," "Vigilant," "London," "Halifax" and "Mohawk," all built at Oswego in 1755 or 1756.

By late September (1755) preparations were completed for the British expedition to Niagara. Provisions and troops were placed on board the "Oswego", but Shirley was destined to disappointment. The weather became exceedingly stormy, adverse winds and severe storms kept the boat in port thirteen days. Many of the men became sick and discouraged. The few Indians whom he had induced to accompany him deserted, declaring that it was too late to make the trip. The weather and other conditions over which he had no control were responsible for his failure to take either Forts Niagara or Frontenac; the loss of his two sons*; and his retirement as commander-in-chief of the British forces. Shirley was an unfortunate man.

First Great Lakes Naval Battle

The "Oswego" was privileged to have only one short run with the enemy. This was to prove the first battle between war ships on the Great Lakes. On the morning of June 27, 1756, Captain Broadley while on patrol sighted two French ships. He tacked sharply into the wind and sailed for them. The French opened fire at about 1,000 yards. For some reason, Broadley decided not to slug it out with the enemy. While the French shots were yet falling short of their mark, he turned and made a run for Oswego which he reached in safety.

On July 3, 1756, the "London" was launched. She was a brig, implying that her tonnage was about two hundred gross. The sloop "Oswego" was about one hundred tons. The "London" was built on the usual model of contemporary vessels in His Majesty's service but with the underhull rather small for a square rigger to accommodate the shallow draft at Oswego. Because of this, she was a vessel that was liable to make leeway, which it seems she did.

Her dimensions were : length between perpendiculars, sixty feet; boom, twenty-one feet; and depth of hold, seven feet. She used only seven gun ports a side, carrying in all fourteen six-pounders and four pounders. She was built for a crew of 36 officers and men.

On July 29, Captain Broadley transferred most of the guns and crew of the "Oswego" to the "London" and made her his flagship. On July 30, a bad wind carried away the "London's" gaff and she was forced to return to Oswego port for repairs. She could not sail again until August 2 because of high winds. She then cruised the lake until August 6 and then had to return to Oswego, as the wet,green, lumber of the magazine had damaged her powder and cartridges. While she was entering Oswego harbor, a high wind caught the "London" before her foresail could be shortened, and she ran ashore. Later she was towed in and it was found that her upperworks had not been sufficiently caulked in the haste to complete her construction before Montcalm, whose purpose was known to the English, should arrive at Oswego. The ship was repaired, but this was destined to be her last voyage as she was captured and burned by the French a few days later. Montcalm having taken advantage of the fact that she was held fast on the shore approached by water much closer than would otherwise have been possible to Fort Ontario with his heavy cannon, some of them captured the year before from Braddock, which

*While Shirley's force was moving to Oswego with his two young sons, members of his command, the party were attacked by French and Indians at a point up the Oswego River above Fulton, the Indians firing on Shirley's boats from ambush as Shirley's boats rounded a bend in the river. Shirley's sons were among members of the party who were slain during this attack.

he would use to reduce the Oswego forts.

The Halifax

The Halifax was a snow. This type of ship had three masts, square-rigged on the fore and main masts. No official discriptions could be found for building this type of ship, except that it was larger than a schooner or a brig. The snow provided a type of ship with a sail area, and manoeuvering ability that permitted greater dimensions and tonnage than a brig. The Halifax had the following dimensions: length over all on upper deck, eighty feet: keel, sixty-six feet; beam, twenty-two feet; and depth of hold, ten feet.

This ship was only partly armed when it became necessary to send her to reconnoitre the enemy. Hardly had she left the harbor of Oswego and turned eastward when she was fired upon from a rocky point just east of Fort Ontario where subsequent events proved Montcalm's advance guard had already landed in Baldwin's Bay. She returned to Oswego and later was hauled athwart the harbor and used as a temporary fort. Soon Oswego was filled with Montcalm's yelling mob of Indians and Canadians who made for the liquor supplies and food. Broadley and his officers were sent as captives to France along with the members of the military garrison, the forts and shipyards of Oswego were razed, and the warships that had been built at Oswego with so much expenditure of effort in the past year, were destroyed. On August 15, 1756, Oswego was given over once more to the wolves, bears, and foxes. This ended for a time English naval power on Lake Ontario.

Great Activity In 1760

By 1760, however, Oswego was again the scene of great activity. England and her colonies rallied their forces to strike the final blow at French dominion in Canada. General Jeffrey Amherst, commander-in-chief of the British armies in North America, arrived in Oswego during the latter part of July. Johnson in his history of Oswego county says:

"Four thousand regulars, resplendent in the gaudy uniform of England, moved with martial port about the frontier fortress, ...Six thousand provincials, mostly sturdy New York Dutchmen, whose uniforms, if not so brilliant, were generally new, and who had seen too much woods service to be despised as soldiers, proudly marched and countermarched to martial strains."

Amherst was joined at Oswego by about 1,300 Indians, now anxious to be on the winning side, under Sir William Johnson.

Oswego must have been a scene of great color and activity during these days, with the scarlet uniforms of the British, the more sombre dress of the colonials troops and the war vestments of the Iroquois and the resounding of axes and hammers of hundreds of carpenters who built the boats to take them to war. This was one of the great boat-building times in Oswego.

The boats built during this period were 35 feet long and drew about a foot and a half of water. Each boat carried approximately 30 men, with eight at the oars and a big sail for favorable winds in open water. Howitzers were installed in the bows, with shields to protect the gunners.

Shipbuilders Worked In Danger

Frontier ship building was a dangerous and laborious undertaking. It was not always easy to persuade boat builders to travel through a savage wilderness to a small village menaced by unfriendly Indians and the French. In 1755 Indians attacked a party of ship carpenters at work only 300 yards from Fort Oswego, killing nine and capturing three. There were other similar incidents and timber cutters and ship-carpenters worked constantly in

danger from covert attack by the Indians in the pay of France.

The work of ship building was arduous. Trees had to be marked, cut, trimmed and hauled to the site chosen for the construction of the ships. The green oak logs were reduced to thin planks and timbers, by one man standing on top a platform and another in a pit directly beneath, each pulling one end of a heavy saw. The planks had to be steamed or placed in boiling water in order to make it possible to bend them into shape around the hull. Then there were such jobs as caulking the seams, hewing the mast and seeing that it was rigged and made fast.

The proportions of ships were limited by the nature of the structural materials, while the type of structure had been evolved by long experience and was incapable of any radical modification. Speed depended much on circumstances independent of the design of the vessel, such as the state of the wind and the lake. The speed actually obtainable was slow even under favorable conditions when judged by present standards. Stability depended principally on the amount of ballast carried, and this was determined experimentally after the completion of the vessel. Under these conditions there was little room for striking originality of design. One ship was patterned so closely on the lines of another, that the qualities of the new vessel could be determined for all practical purposes by the performance of an almost identical boat in the past. The theoretical science of shipbuilding, the object of which is to establish quantitative relations between the behavior and performance of the ship and the variations in design causing them, was generally neglected.

The weather was not always ideal for shipbuilding. Mrs. Grant, who lived in Oswego in the winter of 1760-1761, stated that when winter set in, Oswego became a "perfect Siberia". This reputation after 185 years has not been wholly lost. She says that the "vigorous winters brace the frame and call forth the powers of mind and body to prepare for its approach."

The British period of ship building in Oswego ended in 1796 when old Fort Ontario at Oswego unfurled its third flag, the stars and stripes.

The Later Period

When the British departed from Oswego in 1796 they left behind few signs of peaceful civilization. There remained only two white traders named John Love and Ziba Phillips. The land on the west side of the Oswego River was covered by trees, largely second growth, the original forest having been cut away many years earlier by the garrisons in the fort. A large clearing had been made on the east side after the construction of Fort Ontario. This was now overgrown by second growth woods except near the fort, where gardens and grassland had been maintained by the British garrison.

The first fifteen years following the departure of the British constituted an important period in the growth of Oswego. This period witnessed an increase in the number of settlers, the building of homes, mills, and boats; the founding of schools; and finally a war, which for two years checked advancement.

Paisley Matthew McNair

In 1802 Mr. McNair moved to Oswego. This was an event of importance, for it was he who started lake commerce at Oswego. He bought a sloop named "Jane" and in 1804 built a schooner of 50 tons called the "Linda." By 1823 McNair had constructed the schooners "Hunter", "Traveler," and the "Betsey". He was prominent in community life, held many local offices and was supervisor of Oswego Town in 1830. He died October 19, 1880.

Eckford & Eagle

In 1807 relations between the United States and Great Britain were becoming critical over the questions of sailors rights and free travel. Captain M. T. Woolsey, later a Commodore of the United States Navy, was sent to Oswego for the purpose of building a warship of 16 guns on Lake Ontario. He was accompanied by Lieut. James Fenimore Cooper. The event of 1808 at Oswego was the building of the brig "Oneida" by Henry Eckford* and Henry Eagle, under the supervision of Woolsey and Cooper. Eagle was a native of Prussia and after the ship was completed continued to make his home in Oswego where he became a well-known resident.

Leon N. Brown in a paper read before the Oswego Historical Society, December 16, 1941, states:

"Eckford went into the forest which then stretched for miles east of the Oswego River, marked his trees, had them cut, trimmed and hauled to the site chosen for the construction of the ship. The timbers were cut in the forest, moulded and placed in the brig frame within the month. The dimensions of the brig made her one of about 240 tons, carpenter measure, but her draught was not greater than that which would properly belong to a sloop of 80 tons. This was done to enable her to enter the mouths of the rivers on the south shore of Lake Ontario, nearly all of which had sand bars. From conversations with salt traders at Oswego, Woolsey learned that the schooners employed in the salt trade between Oswego and Niagara, which were built of half-seasoned timbers, seldom decayed about the floors. He applied this knowledge and had the brig filled with salt from her plank-sheer down. Although it is understood that she was sound for many years, the salting process made the brig sluggish."

Ball Followed Launching

In 1809 the "Oneida", the first United States naval vessel to appear on Lake Ontario was launched. This called for a big celebration. It was decided to have a frontier ball. The only difficulty was a scarcity of ladies. By sending out boats along the river and carts through the woods, a sufficient number of females were finally secured. At the ball a delicate question of etiquette arose in regard to the position of the ladies in the dances. Woolsey solved the problem as follows: "All ladies, 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."

When the brig was ready for sea, she was taken out of the harbor and her armament was placed aboard. After this had been done, it was found that the "Oneida" could not return to the harbor over the bar at the river's mouth. It was never inside Oswego harbor again. In spite of the fact that the "Oneida" rolled like a fat pig in the Ontario wash," she was active and had several engagements with British warships.*

Eckford and Eagle built a number of smaller ships at Oswego. The disadvantages at that time of the Oswego harbor, shallow depth and lack of protection from frontal attack, compelled the United States Navy to select

*Henry Eckford became one of the best known American shipbuilders. He built at Sacket's Harbor during the War of 1812 most of the ships of the United States fleet on Lake Ontario placed under the command of Commodore Chauncey. Eckford required only about six weeks construction time in which to turn out a ship of war.

*After the war the Oneida was reconverted as a merchant ship. As such she continued in service on Lake Ontario. She was still in this service in 1828.

Sacketts Harbor as a base for operations and ship building. Thus Oswego actually became only a store depot and not an extensive shipbuilding yard during the War of 1812.

Townsend, Bronson & Company

About 1810 the firm Townsend, Bronson & Company was formed. The first boat built by them was a schooner, the "Charles and Ann." This ship was later purchased and armed by the U. S. government for use in the War of 1812. Her name was changed to the "Governor Tompkins." This company was encouraged to build a number of little schooners around 50 to 150 tons which were all fast sailers. It was the idea of the United States Navy that in case of war these vessels could be taken over and armed as small gun boats. The "Fair American," another of the small schooners, was noted for her speed.

Captain James Van Cleve gives an interesting account of the launching at Oswego of one of Townsend & Bronson's ships. He says:

"A small vessel, though a large one for those days, had just been built by Messrs. Townsend, Bronson & Company. She was built on the bank of the river at what is now the foot of West Cayuga street, that being for some years for the launch came and with it the population of all the country about, for a launch was a great occasion in those days, only equalled by the Fourth of July.

"William Cooper, a brother of James Fenimore Cooper, was an Oswego merchant then, and he had asked to christen the ship and break the bottle of brandy over the bow. Everything being ready and in waiting and the people excited and impatient, William Cooper stepped up to Mr. Alvin Bronson, one of the owners, and asked her name, which had not been told to any one, and as bland as a May morning, Bronson answered, 'Judy Fitz-Goly Hog Magol'. 'What?' said William Cooper. The name was repeated and Judy Fritz-Golly Hog Magol glided into the water, a thing of life.

"Such was the launch of one of the first score of American vessels that navigated Lake Ontario. She was sold to the government during the war of 1812. The horrible name by which she was christened was obtained from a then-popular parody on one of Scott's poems. Her name was of course shortened into 'Judy', which answered all practical purposes."

Many of the vessels that had been sold by Oswego owners to the government early in the war, were re-sold at public auction at the end of the war. Townsend, Bronson and Company purchased a large number of these ships and soon had them employed in reviving the commerce of the port of Oswego.

Van Cleve's Book

In 1877, Captain James Van Cleve who had commanded some of the best ships on Lake Ontario, presented to the City of Oswego his book written or printed by hand, on the ships of Lake Ontario. Van Cleve was a skilled water color artist as well as a historian, and his book is illustrated by sketches of Lake Ontario harbor entrances, shipyards and of vessels. This book is a thing of rare beauty. The history was dedicated to Alvin Bronson. Its dedication reads:

"To Alvin Bronson. A Pioneer in the Commerce of Lake Ontario, and for more than 50 years an active participator and keen sympathizer of all things pertaining to its advancement and the prosperity of Oswego this volume is respectfully dedicated."

Alvin Bronson was a ship-builder, store keeper, flour-miller, manufacturer, commercial forwarder and served as State Senator. His name was connected with practically every worthwhile undertaking during the early days

of Oswego. He was the first president of the village in 1828 and a keeper of naval stores during the war of 1812. He was the first president of the Oswego & Syracuse Railroad. He died on April 2, 1881.

George S. Weeks

By 1840, Mr. Weeks had achieved the reputation of a first rate ship builder at Oswego. His shipyard was located on the east side just within the mouth of the Oswego River.*

In 1838 the Steamer St. Lawrence was launched. Her owners were Henry Fitzhugh of Oswego, Gerrit Smith of Peterboro and Oswego, and Van Rensselaer of Ogdensburg. She had a beam of 23 feet and was 180 feet long. The first commander was Captain J. Evans. Mr. Evans was a newcomer to Lake Ontario and was not acquainted with its navigation. On the vessel's first trip she was run on to a shoal near Alexandria Bay. This accident not only resulted in the loss of time but cost the owners a considerable amount of money. Captain Van Cleve was requested to take command at the most convenient port. Captain Van Cleve continued in command until June, 1847. The St. Lawrence was finally broken up at Washington Island, near Clayton in 1854.

The Oswego "Palladium" in its issue of September 30, 1845, contained the following account of the "Steamboat St. Lawrence":

"This excellent boat has long been a favorite one with the travelling public, and its officers so long enjoyed the confidence of all, as to hardly need any commendation of ours; yet we cannot refrain from expressing our preference. We have heretofore been partial to the 'St. Lawrence,' but a recent opportunity of judging of the merits of the several boats satisfied us that in the matter of convenience and gentlemanly attention to the comfort and interest of the passengers, this boat compares most favorably with any on the lake. It is owned by the St. Lawrence Steamboat Company, the enterprising proprietors of the splendid new steamboat 'Niagara', which two boats leave Oswego, one for Lewiston and the other for Ogdensburg, on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday of each week.

"Lake Ontario and the River St. Lawrence form one of the grandest thoroughfares in the country with which all must be impressed who have made a trip upon this noble Lake and magnificent River....but even this route may be made tedious by the repulsive or distant conduct of the officers of a boat, which we are assured, will not be found to be the case on either of the above."

"Rochester" Became Ferry

In 1842, Mr. Weeks completed the building of the Steamer "Rochester". She was a vessel of 350 tons. Mr. Weeks was her first captain. From 1849 to 1854 the "Rochester" was run between Lewiston and Hamilton. In 1855 she was sold to the Rome and Watertown Railroad, and was used as a ferry between Cape Vincent and Kingston.

During the same year, the "Lady of the Lake", a steamer of 425 tons, was built by Mr. Weeks. This ship was the first steamer on Lake Ontario with an upper cabin. For three years Captain J. H. Hoag was her commander. It has been said that 'he was as fine a man as ever paced the deck of a vessel.' Later, Captain Hoag moved to Toledo and became a member of Congress. After five years of service the 'Lady of the Lake' received a new dress. A description of her new ensemble appeared in an April issue of the 1847 "Palladium". It reads:

"This noble steamer, which has long been a favorite with the travelling public, comes out this spring, as the printers say, 'in an entire new dress'. In her external appearance, she is second to no

*The yard was built on the shore of "the basin," an inlet which then existed at this point.

vessel upon the Lakes. A hurricane deck has been erected forward of her machinery, which adds much to her good looks, as it will to the comfort of those who travel upon her. Her interior has been thoroughly overhauled, and refitted....new carpets take the place of the old one....and everything about her has an air of neatness and comfort. Her late attentive and gentlemanly clerk, Mr. Hoag, assumes the command. With such a vessel and such officers, it deserves a liberal patronage from the public."

In 1847, Mr. Weeks launched the "Pathfinder", the "Mackinaw", and the "Comely." The Propeller "St. Lawrence" was built in 1848 and sold to parties in Canada.

The steamer "Northerner," a ship of 905 tons, was launched in 1849. She came out under the command of Captain R. F. Childs. In 1869 she went down the St. Lawrence River to the sea. She was later used by the United States Government.

Sylvester Doolittle

Sylvester Doolittle was a shipbuilder of rare skill. His shipyard was located at the East end of West Cayuga street. Churchill in his Landmarks of Oswego County has this to say of Doolittle:

"Sylvester Doolittle was born in Whitestown, Oneida County, January 11, 1800. While a young man he went to Sodus Point, where he learned the ship carpenter's trade. In 1822 he removed to Rochester and built there the first boat that went through the canal to New York—— Through the influence of Mr. Varick, Mr. Doolittle settled in Oswego in 1836. Here he had a shipyard and built several vessels, advancing the carrying capacity of lake craft.——Late in life he erected the Doolittle House*, at an expense of more than $200,000. and also expended a large sum in developing and placing on the market the Deep Rock Springwater. Mr. Doolittle died October 11, 1881."

"Vandalia" Built In Doolittle Yard

The Vandalia was more than a ship. She was a revolution in movement in water. For some time marine engineers had believed that the screw principle of propulsion would be more effective than paddle wheels. John Ericsson, a Swedish engineer, developed the principle of screw propulsion. His work, however, received little attention in Europe. He came to America and in 1840 placed the screw propeller on exhibition in New York. Through a combination of circumstances, Captain Van Cleve happened to see the propeller and at the same time had its principles explained. He tells of his visit and describes the "Vandalia" in the following words:

"While on visit to New York in December, 1840, I was called upon by Josiah L. Marshall, formerly of the firm of Bronson, Marshall & Company of Oswego, who told me that a friend named Sanderson, in Brockville, Ontario, had asked him to examine Ericsson's propeller and give his opinion as to its application for propelling boats on the Rideau Canal.

"I don't know anything about propellers and I am wondering if you will go with me," suggested Marshall.

"We went to the engine works of Hugg and Delemater and looked at a propeller which was hung from a shaft. I looked at it very carefully and told Mr. Marshall that in my opinion its applications would revolutionize steam marine on the Lakes as well as the canals. He then introduced me to Captain Ericsson, the inventor, who had rooms at the Astor House.

"After a conversation with Captain Ericsson, regarding traf-

*The Doolittle House, long Oswego's largest and best known hotel stood on the site now (1945) occupied by the Pontiac Hotel.

fic on the Lake the inventor became excited and walking up and down the room made me the following proposition:

' " Van Cleve, if you will put a vessel in operation with my propeller, and do it within the year, I will assign to you one-half interest in my patent for all the North American Lakes.'

"I accepted the proposition. The papers were drawn and I left for Oswego. I concluded an arrangement with Sylvester Doolittle for building the vessel. Doolittle then owned a ship building plant in Oswego. Interested with me were Captain James Brown, Bronson and Crocker, and Captain Rufus Hawkins. The vessel was named the 'Vandalia'. She was sloop rigged and made her first trip in November, 1841, to the head of Lake Ontario. Her dimensions were ninety-feet on deck; twenty feet, two inches in beam; and eight feet, three inches in depth of hold with 138 tons burden."

George A. Cuthbertson, in his book, "Freshwater, a History Of the Great Lakes," states that the Vandalia was not only the first commercial propeller driven steamship on the lakes, but in the world*. The boilers and engines were located aft. This made it easy for the vessel to load and to unload certain types of cargo. On the other hand, the placing of the machinery aft made it necessary to devise some means of bracing the wooden hull. This was done by placing longitudinal arch braces the full length of the ship on the upper decks. This vessel was practical and successful. Each year that passed saw more and more ships of the propeller type coming into use.

Propeller "Chicago"

The schooner "Chicago" was built by Doolittle at Oswego in 1842. The "Palladium", in its issue of June 1, 1842, states:

"This beautiful and staunch vessel which has just been completed at the shipyard of S. Doolittle and propelled by the Ericsson improvement, leaves this port for Chicago.—She was built with particular reference to this route —has handsome and convenient accommodations for sixty cabin passengers, and of sufficient capacity for 150 tons of freight. She is to be commanded by our fellow citizen William S. Malcolm, whose nautical skill, experience and gentlemanly deportment, eminently qualify him for that post.

"We learn that the enterprising proprietors, Messrs. Bronson and Crocker of Oswego, intend to dispatch a steam vessel of the above class for Chicago, on the 1st, 10th, and 20th of each month, touching at the intermediate ports on Lake Erie, Huron and Michigan, thus affording unusual facilities for the conveyance and transportation of passenger and freight. It seems to us, that travellers, particularly families, moving with goods, will find this line of boats admirably adapted to their wants. The price by this line is much less than by any other steam conveyance, which is a consideration in these times."

Passenger Steamer "Oswego"

In 1843, Sylvester Doolittle completed the building of the Propeller "Oswego". The "Erie Observer", in a June issue of 1843, contained an item which gives some information concerning the "Oswego". The item follows:

"A boat bearing the name 'Oswego' and propelled on the Ericsson plan touched here on Wednesday last. She left Oswego a few days before, came through the Welland Canal, and is bound for Chicago.

"In appearance, the 'Oswego' partakes equally of the qualities of the schooner, canal boat, and steamer. She was very heavily

*This statement attributed to Cuthbertson is erroneous as propellers had been completed both in Europe and the United States before the "Vandalia" was launched at Oswego. The "Vandalia" however was the second propeller to be completed in the United States.

loaded with freight, and had nearly 300 passengers. Owing to the small amount of the fuel required to supply the engine, and the cheapness of the machinery, passengers are carried at prices far below those charged on the side-wheel-type of steam boats. The steerage price from Oswego to Chicago, a distance of 1,300 miles, is only six dollars. We understand that there are several large boats building on this plan, and we have no doubt that the enterprise will be successful."

The "Palladium" of July 12, 1843 carried an account of the return of the "Oswego" from the run described by the "Erie Observer". The account reads:

"Oswego" Makes Time Record

"The steam schooner 'Oswego', under the command of Captain Davis, arrived at the port on Saturday, from Chicago, with 900 barrels of pork consigned to Messrs. Bronson and Crocker. This vessel has performed the trip from this port to Chicago and back discharging and receiving freight at nearly all ports on Lake Michigan and at Cleveland and Detroit, in 23½ days, being the shortest passage ever made. The distance traversed during this time by the 'Oswego' is about 3,000 miles—equal to a voyage across the Atlantic."

The "Maid of the Mill," the "Vandalia" and many other vessels were built by Sylvester Doolittle. Without exception they were among the best upon the Lakes.

Peter Lamoree Built First Tug

Peter Lamoree was born in New Baltimore, New York, in 1812 and died in Oswego April 6, 1892. A ship carpenter by trade, he came to Oswego in 1827. He built many small vessels. It is interesting to note that he built the first tug in Oswego, the "Howard."

George Goble

Born in Ireland in 1819, George Goble came to Oswego in 1837. He followed the trade of a ship carpenter for nineteen years before going into business for himself. His shipyard property was located on the lake front almost exactly at the foot of West Second street so that the barge canal terminal is considerably east of the old shipyard property.

In 1859, after the burning of a grain elevator which stood at the foot of West Second street, Mr. Goble constructed a dry dock there. For many years the business was operated under the firm name of Goble & MacFarlane. This business was conducted by Mr. Goble and his sons continuously until the property was taken under condemnation proceedings by the State of New York when the present Barge Canal Terminal was contemplated.

The U. S. Dredge "Frontenac", built in 1891, was the last boat constructed at the Goble shipyard. For some years thereafter the business was carried on as a repair yard, as this was the only dry dock on the American shore of Lake Ontario capable of servicing schooners.

Goble-Built Ships

The following is a list of the vessels built in the Goble shipyard:

Titan	1856-7
William Sanderson	1857
Bermuda	1859-60
W. I. Preston	1861
George Goble	1861-2
T. S. Mott	1862
Senator Blood	1863
James Platt	1863
Montauk	1863-4
Bahma	1863-4
Knight Templar	1864-5
Tug F. D. Wheeler	1864-5
Henry Fitzhugh	1865-6
G. C. Finney	1866-7
Jamaica	1866-7
Nevada	1866-7
Florida	1868
Guiding Star	1868-9
John T. Mott	1869
West Side	1870-1
Madiera	1871
Tug Alanson Sumner	1871-2

Nassau 1872
Daniel Lyons 1872-3
Atlanta 1873
Sam Cook 1873
M. J. Cummings 1873
J. Maria Scott 1874
Leadville 1879
Tug Charley Ferris 1883
Steam Yacht Aida 1885
U. S. Dredge Frontenac .. 1891

Mr. Goble was one of the best known builders on the Great Lakes. His vessels were considered the staunchest of their class. He died in Oswego on October 15, 1906.

Oswego a Passenger Center

During the 10 years from 1845 to 1855 the population of Oswego increased from approximately 10,000 to almost 16,000, a growth more rapid than that of any other city in the state. Seventy-one Oswego-owned vessels, including steamers, propellers, and schooners rode in and out of the port.

Thousands of persons were making their way by the "all water route" through Oswego to settle in the West. Capitalists invested large sums of money in the construction and operation of steam-propeller passenger ships. In 1847, twenty-six vessels slid down the ways of Oswego shipyards into Lake Ontario, each one a symbol of Oswego's commercial superiority and the craftsmanship of her shipbuilders.

Regular passenger service between Oswego and Chicago became a reality. There were sailings in either direction each day of the week except Sunday. Records show that they were loaded to capacity with passengers and freight. The vessels were advertised as having commodious cabins, handsomely fitted, with special arrangements for the accommodation of families. Emphasis was placed on the improvement of steerage accommodations. The quarters were enlarged so as to furnish at least 75 passengers with good comfortable berths between the decks. Most of the advertisements stressed the fact that steerage passengers would not have to sleep in the hold.

Edwin M. Waterbury, president of the Oswego Historical society, has collected some valuable and interesting data relating to these ships. In regard to the cost of travel, he states:

Passenger And Freight Tariffs

"The fare charged for passengers from Oswego to Detroit was $7.50 per passenger with 'found' (food) provided and $5.00 'without found'. Steerage fare was $4.00 between Oswego and Chicago. The cabin passage and found was $14; a cabin without found, $10; steerage, $6.

"Freight rates were quoted by the bulk barrel. The barrel bulk was estimated at 7 cubic feet. Four chairs were called one barrel. The charge between Oswego and Chicago was $1 per bulk barrel.'

"Children between two and twelve years of age traveled at half fare; those under two years of age were carried free. One half a barrel bulk of furniture or luggage was allowed each full passenger without cost. A cooking stove 'not exposed to the weather' was provided for the use of those who wished to board themselves."

From 1855 on, there was a gradual but persistent decline in ship building at Oswego.*

When Ontario's Blue Turns To Gray

Old salts might scorn the fresh water of Ontario, but there is no record of any complaint that the gales, blizzards, squalls and thunderstorms over this lake were not sufficiently boisterous to hold the interest or test the seamanship of any sailor. Two conflicting masses of air often meet and fight over the shipping lanes of this body of blue water. Atmospheric pressures

*The most recent craft of sizable nature to be built in Oswego were several steel barges built for the United States Government about 1925 in an improvised yard in the west harbor near the Diamond Match Company's plant.

run up to 1,045 millibars and then down the scale, temperatures slide up and down with equal abandon, and warm air blows in from the fields over the cold water, where it is reduced to a blanket of fog. In sailing ship days the most competent seamanship was required. Many ships were wrecked, but on the whole the sailors were skilled and resourceful.

The lakes were not charted until 1889. There were few lighthouses, no red and black buoys marking the channels, no ship-to-shore radios, and no system of harbor lights, although there were, of course lighthouses at many points. The captains knew little of air masses or millibars, but they did know that:

"If the clouds seem scratched by
a hen,
Better take your topsails in
When the wind shifts against the
sun,
Watch her, boys, for back she'll
come."

Disasters made these men weather-wise, and according to reports they had plenty of opportunity to learn.

On November 24, 1846, the "Palladium" stated:

"The wind shifted last night from the South to the West, and blew a gale this morning——The British ship Grampus, loaded with timber and the schooner Ainsworth, with salt, parted their fastenings, and were driven ashore in the harbor. They have sunk and partially blocked the entrance to the East Harbor at that point. The "Grampus" was not removed for many years. The name "Grampus Bay" was given to this part of the Harbor from this circumstance.

Then again on December 1, 1846, the paper carried this item:

"We were visited by another storm of wind and snow on Wednesday and Thursday of last week. The wind blew a perfect hurricane for upwards of 48 hours. A Canadian vessel went ashore in our harbor on Thursday morning. This is the fourth vessel which has been beached here during the late storms. About 40 feet of the East Pier of our harbor was carried away..... It is hoped that Congress will try to frame a bill which the President will not veto. An appropriation is necessary at the present time."

Marine Disasters

In reminiscences of Lake Ontario, published in the Cleveland "Marine Record" in 1884, the writer lists the following disasters:

1798—Schooner "Washington" foundered with eight lives.

1806—Brig "Speedy" foundered and all lost, twenty-five lives; Schooner "Waterbury of Kingston" foundered and all lost, eight lives.

1848—Schooner "Ellen" foundered with all hands, eight lives.

1851—Steamer "Comet" exploded, in Oswego harbor, eight lives lost; schooner "Christina" capsized and all lost, eleven lives; schooner "William Penn" capsized and three lives lost.

1852—Schooner "Anawan" capsized and five lives lost.

1853—Steamer "Ocean Wave" burned. 23 lives lost.

1854—Schooner "Adelia" foundered and five lives lost.

1855—Schooner "Emblem" sunk by collision, five lives lost.

1856—Propeller "Finto" burned and all lost, eighteen lives; Propeller "J. W. Brooks" foundered and all lost, 22 lives.

1857 — Steamer "Montreal" burned in the St. Lawrence River with 264 lives lost; brig "Iceberg" foundered and all lost, seven lives; propeller "Inkerman" exploded and three persons were lost.

1858—Schooner "Ida May" foundered, two lives lost; tug "J. H. Bloore' 'exploded and three lives lost.

1860—Barque "Tornado" foundered and all lost, ten lives.

1862—Propeller "Bay State" foundered and all lost, 22 lives; schooner "Mary" foundered and five lives lost.

1863—Steamer "Clyde" exploded and three lives were lost.

1866—Schooner "M. Billard" foundered, nine lives lost.

1867 — Propeller "Wisconsin" burned, all lost, fifty lives.

1868—Schooner "B. Doran" foundered, six lives lost; propeller "Perseverance", burned, fourteen lives lost.

1869—Schooner "Mary O'Gorman" foundered and eight lives lost.

1870—Tug "Tornado" exploded and killed three; schooner "Jesse" foundered, all lost, eight lives.

1871—Propeller "Maine" exploded, four lives lost.

1873 — Steamer "Bavarian" burned, 20 lives lost.

1875—Schooner "J. G. Jenkins" foundered, all lost, nine lives.

1876—Schooner "Maggie Hunter" foundered, all lost, seven lives.

1879—Schooner "Pinto" foundered, four lives lost.

1880 — Schooner "Northman" foundered, all lost, eight lives; schooner "Olive Branch" foundered, all lost, nine lives; schooner "Belle Sheridan" foundered, nine lives lost; propeller "Zealand" foundered, all lost, 19 lives; schooner "Norway" foundered, eight lives lost.

1882—Schooner "H. Folger" wrecked, seven lives lost.

1883 — Barge "Milwaukee" foundered, four lives lost.

The foregoing list gives a total of 672 lives lost from causes noted. Numerous other casualties from like causes were set forth in a previous article.

In the early days the custom was to write odes to the ships that met with disasters. We quote two verses of a twenty-four verse "Ode on the Wreck of the Schooner Medora". The Ode was published on February 29, 1836. The first two verses are quoted:

"Come, all kind husbands, now behold
A scene that makes my blood run cold;
All loving wives may now appear:
In solemn mourning drop a tear.
"Come let us weep for those who weep
For their lost friends plung'd in the deep;
And let us now all take some port
In grief which breaks the tender heart."

These were colorful days, the ship building days in Oswego. Much could be written about the ships, personalities of the builders, captains, crews, and adventures with ice, storms, fire and collisions. These days have passed, but Longfelow's words still sing the spirit of the time:

"Build me straight, O worthy Master!
Staunch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle."

This paper is a brief history of shipbuilding in Oswego. It is not within the province of this undertaking to mention all ship builders or all vessels built. The ships and builders chosen indicate primarily the progress attained in this historic city in response to the demands of war and peace.

The writer of this paper wishes to thank Mr. Waterbury for the use of his historic files, Miss Kersey and the staff at the City Library, Miss Haggar, librarian at the State Teachers College, and many others who have helped to add to our knowledge of ship building in Oswego.

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Dixon Ryan Fox Publication Fund Announced

(Dr. Arthur C. Parker, President of New York State Historical Association Makes First Public Announcement as to Its Creation at Regional Meeting in Oswego October 20, 1945 Through Dr. A. B. Corey, New York State Historian)

Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York State Historian, read to the Regional Meeting of the New York State Historical Association, held under the auspices of Oswego County Historical Society at the Oswego State Teachers College October 20, 1945, the address which Dr. Arthur C. Parker of Rochester, president of the State Association, had planned to give to the meeting in person until illness prevented his attendance at the last moment. The text of the address as prepared by Dr. Parker follows:

"Officers, members and friends of the Oswego conference:

"It is a rare privilege at any time to come to Oswego, and it is a most fitting circumstance to have a conference upon historical subjects held here. Few places in the tradition-rich Empire State have more to offer than this very spot. The lake, the stream, the gorge, the uplands, all have been prizes for which nations have fought, because of Oswego's strategic value. And, just as it has been the cynosure of fighting men, so now it is one of our state's fairest cities, having unique qualities and advantages all its own.

"Members of the New York State Historical Association, with their trustees and administrative staff are more than happy to participate with the officers and membership of the Oswego County Historical Society and contiguous and affiliated groups in a regional meeting. The State Historical Association looks with approval upon local meetings, stimulating as they do a deeper interest in the inspiring and instructive episodes of the past. Indeed your State Association is ever glad to note the historic consciousness of our distinctive regions and to assist in promoting meetings for discussion and visitation. We mention visitation especially, for a pilgrimage to the actual site of the stage whereon was enacted a decisive drama of the past, gives a deeper understanding of the setting. It is something to stand where they stood and to gaze upon the natural landmarks that commanded their attention. The spot marked X combined with the tale place us in rapport, and our imaginations give us clearer pictures of events. Oswego is one of those situations within whose arena many important conflicts were dramatized unrehearsed and finally concluded. If we wish to know what they were we must reconstruct them in meetings such as this, and in publications that recount what has been spoken.

New Publication Fund

"It is in the preservation of the facts, their description and exhibition that our State Association is interested, but for all of us, it is also concerned with research, well-kept archives, adequate library facilities, a publication plan that meets high standards and gives news about all the activities of historical societies throughout our area. Our publication plan, indeed, has grown until we now contemplate the establishment of the Dixon Ryan Fox Publication Fund, for the publication of significant works upon subjects that have been overlooked or inadequately touched upon. A finer publication series was one of the dreams of our late President, Dr. Fox, and I believe it fitting that we should mention this subject for the first time be-

fore a regional conference here at Oswego, where another remarkably able president, James G. Riggs, once lived. We invite all of you to participate in this new plan.

"Our State Association, indeed, feels no hesitancy in inviting a contributing interest, since its exceptional circumstances give it opportunities to do so much for its membership, and, indeed for the many societies scattered throughout the state. One of these services that directly help the local society is the group called the Junior Historians who meet as chapters of our State Association, and yet remain intimately tied to their own localities. To unite boys and girls in their separated localities the association publishes 'The Yorker.' Let your boys and girls become proud Yorkers. They will later become the builders of your societies and provide them with the needful young blood which all of us need in our corporate arteries.

Invitation to Cooperstown

"Our administration, moreover, invites you to visit our new central offices at Cooperstown where facilities have been provided and a magnificent estate placed at our disposal. No other historical association in America can equal the advantages or the setting that has there been provided for you as a member at Ticonderoga and Cooperstown. The very fact that we give our members a $3 magazine of history with local news about your own society, and a share in an enterprise and in properties worth over a million and a half dollars is ever a source of wonder to me. You will exclaim at the sheer beauty of our Fenimore House on the Glimmerglass and say that it is worth our small membership fee just to enter the portals of the building. When then you see the Farmers Museum with its vast space and its exhibition of the tools of American craftsmanship of our elder years you will be even more greatly astonished. And added to that is the Country Store and other buildings of our early stateshood period. Our Ticonderoga museum is beautiful as well as historically significent, and is well worth a special trip.

"Our Dixon Ryan Fox Fund contemplates as within its scope the sponsorship of an institute of history to be held at Cooperstown. Our plan is to invite recognized authorities who will address us in a subject and sequence course that will make history live again in our minds. The beautiful lecture hall of Fenimore House will be available, as will be the broad lawns that slope down to Otsego Lake, or, perchance popular addresses and entertainments for even larger crowds will be given in a new auditorium at the Farmers Museum. And these glimpses at facilities and plans do not exhaust the wealth available to our membership.

"We want you to be a loyal supporter of your own society, and after that to look to the State Association as an interested sponsor that will make your interests broader and provide wider acquaintance with the men and women who are making history a living influence that helps the present, and guides toward a better future. My purpose has been to open the door a little ways and let you see what your initial local interest opens up to you in broader vistas, and then invite your further inquiry, and eventual response. You are cordially welcome.

"My one regret is that I am not able to have the pleasure of being with you on this occasion. It is a sore trial to be absent from this meeting, and prevented, because of that circumstance from bringing this greeting to you personally. But, I feel that you are in competent hands and will have a rare treat in what you hear, where you go, what you do while at Oswego. Let us give new emphasis to our rich inheritance by reviewing its history in this session."

An Oswego Man Opens the Door of China

(Paper Read Before Regional Meeting of New York State Historical Association at Oswego October 20, 1945 by Miss Mary E. Cunningham, Acting Editor of "New York State History".)

Like New York, our sister commonwealth of California has many claims to fame—as we may have heard before. California oranges, climate and motion picture celebrities are all without parallel. To be a native son of California is a proud boast, and the only thing necessary to complete such felicity is to be able to add that at one time your family possessed one of the old school Chinese servants—or was possessed by him. It is a nice point to decide which statement is more accurate, for the old style Chinese houseboy was at the same time, houseworker, housekeeper and general manager. He not only cooked and cleaned, he told the head of the house when to buy and when to sell, he told the mother what to wear and the daughter whom to marry. Many apt and amusing yarns are told about various of these oldentime Chinese servants. I like particularly the one about Ah Foy, who had shared his master's family so long that one day it occured to him it might be only fair to share his own family with master. So he brought his employer a handsome photograph of a Chinese mother and children posed against the brocade backdrop of some studio back in old China. For some time the employer exclaimed and admired while Af Foy grinned and bobbed in satisfied pride, but, as he admired, it gradually became increasingly clear to the Californian that there was something rather odd about this picture. At last he could contain his curiosity no longer. "Your wife and children home in China?" he asked. "Yes," Ah Foy smiled his answer. "All your children, Ah Foy?" Again the smile, "Yes." "But Ah Foy, this little boy, here on the corner, he can't be more than four years old, and I know for a fact you haven't been home to China in ten years." "Oh," said Ah Foy, no whit disturbed, "I got flend."

Now China, the nation, is very like to this particular son of China. She, too, for many a long year has had "flends," most of whom have exhibited the same brand of over-zealous friendship we should consider Ah Foy to have benefited by. We have just seen the latest of such unfortunate intimacies—Japan's attempt to include Mother China in the span of its "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"—come to its deserved end at a peace table. May it be the last of such shotgun wedlock of China and other powers. It was certainly not the first instance.

Russian Treaty In 1689

After the Manchu conquerors, Russia was the first to breach the great wall of Chinese isolation, negotiating a treaty with China as long ago as 1689. Nearly two hundred years elapsed between that date and the outbreak of armed conflict between China and the West. These years constitute the period euphemistically known as "the opening of China." This was the period of treaty ports and extraterritorialty. It was the era when clipper ships raced around "the Horn" bringing home the tea and spices, the delicate Canton cups and rare sandalwood fans to grace the parlors of New Bedford and Bloomsbury, returning with holds laden with bolts of cotton grown in the Carolina fields and spun on the bobbins of Manchester. It is a period familiar to us largely from novels and we think of it as a romantic

time. Well, there is undoubted romance in men braving the unknown, risking wide seas, far places, strange races. But there is little that is romantic in the battening of a parasite on a great carcass, sucking its life blood, and that is largely what these settlements of avaricious white men were, fastened along the searim of China, draining its riches, but knowing little and caring less for the swarming life, the rich ancient culture they exploited.

Even with the weakling inefficiency of the Manchus, such conditions could end in only one way —war—first with Great Britain and her ally, France, in 1857, and then with Japan in 1894. Such wars could end in only way—further humiliation for China, the loss of Northern Burma and Sikkim to Great Britain, of Tongkin and Annam to France, of the Liuchiu Islands, Formosa and the Pescadores to Japan. Korea, too, was loosed from the mother country to become an independent state of whose tottering independence we shall hear more later.

The skin was off the orange; now the tender fruit within was ripe for the slicing. The Sino-Japanese War had reavealed to the world the weakness of China, but Japan must not be allowed to profit alone by this weakness—so thought the western powers. The Dowager Empress of the Celestial Empire might be without power to stop the onslaughts, but she was not without perception to observe them. "The Various powers," she noted, "cast upon us looks of tiger-like voracity, hustling each other in their endeavors to be the first to seize upon our innermost territories." In 1897 and 1898 Russia took Port Arthur and the Liaotung Peninsula, giving her access to the interior of Manchuria; Germany seized Kiaochow Bay, adjoining Indo-China; Italy got Sanmun Bay, south of the Yangtze river; and England added to her holdings the port of We-hai-wei. England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, which of the great powers at the turn of the century is absent from this roster of "friends" of China? Yes, there is one—the United States of America. No wonder that China has always regarded America as somewhat different among the catalogue of her friends, that she has always believed the friendship of America to be on a different level.

But in 1898 the United States had another reason still besides her traditional friendship with China for regarding with horror the encroachments of the great powers. This was the year when for the first time in her history America acquired by conquest territories outside her continental domain. An uneasy whisper was running the chancelleries of the world that a competitor was entering the realm of power politics. America was becoming empire minded. Be that as it may, and we shall have more to say of that later, with the acquisition of the Philippines, American interest in the Chinese trade was vastly enhanced. She could not look with equanimity on the dismemberment of China. England, too, resented seeing others threatening her prestige and her markets. So, on September 6, 1899, John Hay, Secretary of State of the United States, with the support of the British Foreign Office, announced what has come to be known as the "Open Door" policy in China.

Hay Proclaims Open Door

In its simplest form this much discussed, disputed and abused tenet of American diplomacy was simply a circular note addressed to the major European powers, recognizing the existence of "spheres of influence" and requesting from each power a declaration that each in its respective sphere would maintain the Chinese customs tariff and levy equal harbor dues and railway rates on the ships merchandise of all nations. All the powers, but Russia, expressed approval, but only Great Britain formally

agreed. Hay, however, promptly announced the agreeemnt of all as "final and definitive."

The Open Door policy, as originally announced, was concerned only with safe-guarding American commercial interests in China, but within a year after its promulgation, it was given a new and far-reaching implication by a turn of bizarre fate, for that summer of 1900 an organization of Chinese, known as Boxers, suddenly rose against the foreigners living in or near Pekin.

The story of the rebellion may be briefly told, though its course could not have seemed brief to the frightened missionaries and merchants herded behind the walls of the British Legation in Peking, hundreds of whom had been massacred before they won through to the shelter of the compound walls. An expeditionary force to rescue the beleagured whites was promptly organized and at Manila General McArthur, father of a later and greater General MacArthur, readied a company of five thousand American soldiers to join the expedition. The Boxers fought stubbornly, but their resistance was useless against the might of the west and on August 28, 1900, the joint force swept into the Forbidden City. Their conduct there afforded no pleasant example to the Chinese. The American General Chafee himself reported "The city of Pekin has been sacked; looted from corner to corner in the most disgraceful manner imaginable; I had no idea that civilized armies would resort to such proceedings. I have kept my own command fairly clean, thank God, but with all my efforts it is not spotless."

Against such conduct, the United States stood boldly. Again using the medium of a circular note to all the powers, Secretary Hay announced the objectives of the joint intervention.

U. S. Policy After Boxer Outbreak

The policy of the government of the United States is to seek a solution which may bring about permanent safety and peace to China, preserve Chinese territorial and administrative entity, protect all rights guaranteed to friendly powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire.

These were not the objectives of Berlin, St. Petersburg and Tokyo, but the powers had no alternative but to agree. For the moment China was saved, though at the cost of the outrageous indemnity of $333,000,000. Some $24,000,000 of this was to come to the United States, but half of that was eventually refunded to the Chinese government, which established therewith a fund for sending Chinese students to American colleges.

By this last movement of John Hay's the United States was committed not only to an "open door" in China but to the maintenance of the political integrity of the great colossus of the East. Note that the commitment was an executive one only, not sanctioned by Senatorial approval nor perhaps by public opinion. The only chance of success for such a policy lay in economic implementation. In 1900 China stood at a crossroad curiously like the spot whereon she stands now. If there was to be a strong, prosperous China—and the security of the entire East demands such a China—then western capital must be poured in to develop the country to a level somewhere approximately that of the west. Furthermore capital must be poured in by those countries willing to take only a reasonable profit, committed to maintaining Chinese national sovereignity, not by those countries committed to the entirely opposite doctrine of strong eat weak. The United States should have been first of such countries.

And in the early 1900's there was a time when it appeared she might be. She had completed the

round of her continental expansion and was ready to look beyond both oceans that rimmed her shores. She had reached that point, in population, in wealth, in maturity, when she was ready to face the international obligations that were daily being forced upon her. True, she was as yet only a novice in world affairs. Her representatives, official and unofficial, were to make many mistakes, but in the decade following the turn of the century it seemed that she would keep on the path where she had set her feet.

She gave signs of the intent to take her place in the larger world, the one world of later days.

Willard Dickerman Straight

We know now that America did not take that place, at least not as soon as she ought, that internal dissensions and reforms and the blistering criticism of nourishing "imperial designs" turned her back, and that she was to pay the price of two World Wars and a depression before she was brought again to international mindedness. But in the first years of the 1900's they did not know this. The prospect of achievement on a larger than national scene looked bright to the young men graduating from college in the class of 1901. Particularly they looked bright to a young man who graduated from Cornell University that year — Willard Dickerman Straight.

It was natural that this young man's eyes should turn to the East when he thought of a career, for one of the most important, formative periods of his childhood had been the years he spent in Japan while his mother taught English at the Girls' Normal School in Tokyo. It had been an unusual experience for an American boy of the 1880's but then Willard came of an unusual family. Both his parents were teachers at the State Normal School, today the State Teachers College, in Oswego, N. Y.

From the delightful and informative paper on the Oswego Movement which Professor Snygg favored us with this morning, we know what an enthusiasm for progressive education was fermenting in our little lake town in the 80's. Henry and Emma Dickerman Straight were part of that yeasty ferment. Emma was herself a graduate of Oswego, in the class of 1871, two years after that great leader Edward Austin Sheldon had taken over the presidency. Henry, though born in Chautaqua County, had gone west to Oberlin for his schooling, and it was in the west, at the Normal School in Peru, Nebraska, that he met Emma Dickerman and at Warrenburg, Missouri, where both held positions in the Normal School, that they were married. In 1876 both returned East to the faculty of Oswego Normal School, Henry as teacher of natural science, Emma to teach English. Henry Straight, though, soon extended his field, for a few years after he came to Oswego we find him director of the practice school and later giving courses in the history and philosophy of education. It was the heyday of Pestalozzi and Henry Straight was a throughgoing Pestalozzian. "He devoted himself," says a friend, "to the extension of the Pestalozzian method not only through all the public school grades, but through the high schools and even the universities. He saw the whole problem, while others were hammering away at details in the kindergartens and the lower and primary grades. He chose work in the Normal Schools because it offered him the best opportunity of equipping and inspiring teachers to go and train the youth of the country in the new methods." In the meanwhile, Emma Straight, as jealous an educator as her husband, had found material even closer to hand than the classroom, for on January 31st, 1880, her first child and only son was born and christened for her father, Willard

Dickerman, colonel of a Civil War Infantry brigade.

Emma's enthusiasm for shaping this bit of plastic human stuff delivered into her pedagogic hands may be measured by the fact that from almost his first breath she kept a diary of his daily progress. As we read this diary today, we find it a curious little document, redolent of the spirit of the days when every human problem could be solved if only man could put his hands to the right educational key, a little silly, completely touching. Unintentionally it tells us more of the character of the mother than of the son it is intended to picture, but of him also we catch some revealing glimpses. Of the time, for example, when Willard was calling for the usual drink of water after he was safely bedded down for the night. His father's answer, however, differed from his usual reply, for going upstairs Henry Straight told his son, "John Locke is a very wise man and he says if babies have too much water it will give them the stomach ache, so I can't give you any." Willard evidently saw the futility of rebelling against the edict of John Locks, for it is solemnly recorded "He went to sleep without another word."

Henry Straight's Death

But even into this gentle, otherworldly educator's paradise, the harsh winds of reality blew. Henry Straight had tuberculosis. The Oswego winters were cold. I understand they have not changed materially. The elder Straight sought first the presumably milder climate of Illinois, then Florida, and at last California. There he died, a few months before his son's sixth birthday. His widow stepped into his position at Normal Park but not into his salary. Even in the advanced atmosphere of normal schools it was still a man's world. Emma Straight was only a woman and being a woman who was doing a man's work and with two small children to support her wage was naturally cut from $1800 to $1100.

It was than that a Japanese who had been a pupil of Emma Straight at Oswego and was now Superintendent of Schools in Tokyo came forward with a flattering offer from the Girls' Normal School in that city. The atmosphere in which he was now to move was quite different from that to which Willard Straight had been so far accustomed. His mother's position was somewhat unique in the Japan of the day in that she was not compelled to conform to native usage. Part of this usage was the well established Japanese custom of deferring to the man of the family, even though that man might be, as in this particular case, an eight year old boy. Remember Willard Straight was being progressively raised. He reacted to the situation as any progressively raised child would. His sister later recorded: "The ingenuity of his pranks gave him a local reputation of no mean proportions. Mother was constantly interrupted in her work by a breathless courier announcing his presence in some absurd or forbidden place. His imagination flared out in countless bizarre expressions with a sudden violence, a splendid novelty as surprising to himself as to others." How distressing all this was to his mother may be imagined when we know that she was already suffering from the disease which had claimed her husband's life. But it is undeniable that these years exerted a profound impression on a susceptible boy with a taste for adventure, stamping the Far East on his mind as the place where his abounding personal initiative and instinct for self-assertion would find a freer outlet than ever they could in his native country.

Tumultous Oswego Days

His mother's disease was, however, worsening and she had only time to bring her children back to America before her death. Willard and his younger sister were sent back to friends of their

mother's at Oswego, Dr. Elvire Ranier and Miss Laura Newkirk. Dr. Ranier, one of the earliest women physicians in New York State, a tall, masterful person, was to have special charge of the boy, Miss Newkirk of his sister*. There can be no doubt of the unselfishness of Dr. Rainer's devotion to her charge, nor can there be much doubt that Willard did not always see her discipline in just that light. Pestalozzian methodology had not exactly fitted the boy for the public schools of Oswego, and his career there ended in a monumental row in which Willard hurled books, inkwells, rubbers, pencils, etc., at his principal. The only solution seemed to be a military school and the Academy at Bordentown, New Jersey, was selected. Here Peck's Bad Boy seems completely to have turned his coat, for at military school he was a tremendous success, and even more of a success at Cornell, where he entered the College of Architecture in the fall of 1897. In fact Straight's bright college years seem to have lingered in his mind with more than their usual glow in the heart of an old grad. It was right that when his widow searched her mind for a fitting memorial to build him, she found nothing more appropriate than a student union building where later-day Cornellians might enjoy some of the richness of life he seemed to find so abundantly on the hills "far above Cayuga's waters." Many of us know Willard Straight Memorial at Ithaca today.

Straight Goes To China

Straight had been enrolled in the Cornell College of Architecture, but it is doubtful if he ever thought seriously of architecture as his career. It had been more of a line-of-least resistance, traceable to his skill with the drawing pencil. Through with school, his way to make in the world, he gravitated inevitably back to his beloved Orient. The first opportunity opening there was with the imperial Maritime Customs and to a post in the Customs at Nanking the young Cornellian went out a few months after graduation. Perhaps this organization of the Imperial Customs needs a word of explanation, for in itself it is illustrative of the peculiar status of China in the world economy. The Customs was an administrative agency of the Chinese government for the collection of customs duties, the distribution of mail and the policing of the ports. Yet it was independent of Chinese control and its ultimate authority was lodged in one man, an Englishman, Sir Robert Hart, and its personnel was gathered from every nation in Europe, from the United States and Japan. Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, Dutchmen, Italians, Russians, Austrians, Danes, Swedes, Norweigians, Portugese were all tumbled together to collect revenue for the great Yellow Emperor. Not only was the service cosmopolitan, but it was recruited from different social classes. There were sons of diplomats and consuls, noblemen, counts, barons, and even princes. In this polyglot group, the old Cornell boy seems to have done right well, for it was not long before he could report in a letter home: "Pekin is the Mecca of the Service and here I am after five months of study in Nanking, a great privilege in itself, under the eye of Sir Robert Hart, the great man, who holds our fortunes in his own absolute power." The great man, Sir Robert Hart, obviously knew a coming man when he saw one.

Becomes War Correspondent

Others, too, were not slow in recognizing the quality of the newcomer. Pekin in his day was

*Willard Straight's Oswego home in the early 1890s was at 33 West Sixth Street. The house at this address, still standing, faces Montcalm Park. It is the present home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mackin.

a tight little colony, still haunted by the ghost of the Boxer uprising, and in such a society personality was everything. A fellow Pekinger of the day later reported of Willard Straight: "There was no other young man in the Pekin of that time who so quickly became known and fell into such popularity. He was soon at home at the dinner tables of the American and British legations and in a wider set. He was interested in everything Pekin had to offer and every phase of Chinese and foreign life, and he soon became a conspicious item of the latter." Straight's career in the Customs might have been brilliant, but 1904 was drawing on and the Russo-Japanese War looming on the horizon. Larger adventure was calling the young man. "The Service," he saw, "will never be my life nor Success in the Service my aim. It will rather be to draw the Chinaman as he is, to write of him or to know him so well that someday I can put my finger in the 'international pie.' " After turning down several flattering offers, in February of 1904, Willard Straight left Pekin and the Imperial Maritime Service to go to the front as war correspondent for Reuters.

But journalism was not to be his life, either. The new job was only an episode, a particularly exciting episods, however, one to introduce him to the Russian mind and method and reintroduce him to the Japanese. It was an episode that was to broaden his experience, enlarge his already large circle of friends and pave the way for his most characteristic enterprise. In this way the circle of Cornell friends was once more potent for it was through their mutual friendship with Professor Morse Stephens of Cornell that E. V. Morgan, American Consul to Seoul became interested in Straight, and from journalism Morgan plucked the young man to be his vice-consul and secretary. Willard Straight was at last started on his life work, as official agent of his country in a land sorely in need of his country's assistance, a land eminently qualified to repay that assistance in the dividends of world security and world stability.

Straight As Diplomat

Ironically enough, prefiguring as it did the later defeat of his more ambitious schemes, Straight's first job in his country's service was to sit by, an unwilling but more or less powerless spectator, while Japan tore the last vestiges of independence from Korea. The American position, to which Consul Morgan and Vice-consul Straight were committed, was impossible from the first. Japan had fought the Russo-Japanese war at least in part to force Russia out of Korea. America had not interfered in that war. She could not interfere now. The only hope for Korea lay in a bold appeal against the Japanese to the United States Senate and president and this Morgan, through Straight, advised, but the vacilating Korean Emperor and Cabinet could not force themselves to take this daring step, relying to the last on their age-old tactics of intrigue. The Korean government fell to Japan, the western powers withdrew their Legations, and the United States was the first to go. Theoretically American skirts were clean, actually there was much truth in the Korean belief that we had betrayed them. We had promised to use our "good offices" to proect Korea. At the least that should have meant verbal representations; probably without a backing threat of force verbal representations would have been fruitless and would have exposed our government to a humiliating diplomatic rebuff. But not to make them was to turn John Hay's "open door" declaration into a scrap of paper.

Edward Morgan and Willard Straight were out of their jobs but they were not out of work. A few days before the State De-

partment withdrew them from Seoul, the president had appointed Morgan to a vacancy in the American Legation in Cuba and he took his assistant Straight with him. But Straight's metier was not the Antilles. Strings were pulled, and 1906 found him back at Mukden, Manchuria, this time head of his own show, as Consul-General. "I fancy the Manchurian job for many reasons," Straight wrote. "First and foremost it's a Consulate General, and also it's at Mukden that the biggest game in the East, save Peking itself, is being played. It's a responsibility which I dread although it's a chance I've longed for. In any case the road runs pretty straight and there are no more side paths for Willie."

Consular Record Unique

The work of a consul is usually similar to that of the manager of a small well-established business who sits in his shop and satisfies the demands of familiar customers. But Willard Straight at Mukden was rather in the position of a man who was starting a new business of huge possible proportions but of a precarious nature and against stubborn but elusive obstacles. The new business was the promotion of American national interests in Northern China. The obstacles were the formidable rivalry of Russia and Japan. How fast he made the running may be gathered from the State Department's later verdict: "Straight's official record at Mukden is unique in the history of the Consular Service."

But in the race the cleavage already apparent between the possibilities Straight saw in Chinese-American relations and those that official Washington was willing to undertake became ever wider. It was a cleft already apparent in the old days in Korea. It was to widen into a chasm that ended Willard Straight's career in the East. "Mr. Rockhill" (American minister to China), a colleague of Straight's reported, "was content to affirm the doctrine of the "Open Door"; Straight jeopardized his life and nearly brought about a break in diplomatic relations with Japan by his insistence on maintaining the Door in Manchuria actually open."

Joins Banking Group

Under such circumstances it was natural that Straight should turn from what must have seemed the small-time policy of the State Department to the larger view of the international financier. After a brief period with the Department in Washington, on his return from Mukden, he went back to the Orient in 1909 as representative, first of a group of American bankers, then of a similar international group, interested in developing railroads. The negotiations which accompanied these efforts formed the most startling departure in American diplomacy since the Monroe doctrine, and they could largely be attributed to a young man of thirty, Willard Straight. Other people, the railroad king, E. H. Harriman, Secretary of State Philander C. Knox and President William Howard Taft all had a hand in these negotiations, but the initial energy and most of the spade work were Straight's. For years the State Department had affirmed the "Open Door," Willard Straight was trying to enter.

Finally Quits Orient

That his effort failed was in no sense a criticism either of the maganitude of his design, nor of his eficiency of his method. Forces beyond his control, beyond the control of any one man, were turning America back from "foreign entanglements," while the hurying years were bringing on in China revolution that would make Chinese entanglements in particular seem all the more undesirable to the American mind. Straight's last attempt was in behalf of an international loan to the Chinese government by a consortium headed by Jacob Schiff. But the Revolution wrecked the

last hope of this loan, and in 1912 Straight left the Orient forever.

Although the rest of his life can in no sense be said to be without effort or accomplishment, in a sense Willard Straight's active career was over—at thirty-two. That he himself recognized this was evident in the backward glance he took at the Orient in his establishment of the "Journal of the American-Asiatic Association", later shortened to "Asia". His marriage to Dorothy Whitney, daughter of the millionaire banker William C. Whitney, had given Straight entree to the funds which enabled him to start the weekly journal, "The New Republic", under the liberal editorship of Herbert D. Croley. During these years he was also a guiding spirit in the American Asiatic Association, the American Manufacturers' Export Association, and India House, a club in New York started to encourage foreign trade.

Died In Paris

With the entrance of the United States into World War I Straight promptly volunteered for service, was commissioned major and attached to the Adjutant General's Office, a great disappointment to him since he had hoped for an active command. In the first October of the War he was put in charge of organizing the overseas administration of the War Risk Insurance Bureau and in one month and sixteen days he and a handful of assistants arranged a canvas of 250,000 American soldiers and persuaded them to sign up for insurance to the value of more than $1,000,000,000. After a period at the staff college at Langres, Straight was placed in charge of liaison for the Third Corps in June of 1918 and in that post he distinguished himself by preparing a liason manual which was adopted almost in toto for the American Expeditionary Force. He was in Paris assisting with preparations for the peace commission when in November of 1918 he contracted influenza. On December 1 he died of pneumonia.

At the bar of judgment every man has the right to be briefed on two counts: what he is, in himself, the intrinsic worth of the man, and what he has accomplished in the world where he found himself. Keen in intellect, strong in will, still Willard Straight's greatest talent was for people, for human relationships. From the thousands of condolences that poured in to his wife from his country's leaders after Straight's death, a few might be culled: "His native gifts and varied experiences esuipped him to render distinguished service to the cause and country for wh' he spent his powers without stint,,; "His organizing genius was exactly what the moment needed"; "I don't think I ever knew anyone who had so many friends in every class—so much beloved by all." Or perhaps his best epitaph may be found in a letter he wrote to his little son. part of which is inscribed over the mantle in the Willard Straight Memorial Hall at Cornell:

"Be honest and frank and generous even if others tell you you are quixotic. Be gentle and strong. Defend those who are weak. But do not let those who may try to do so mistake your gentleness for weakness. Fight if you must and if you fight, fight hard and fight fair. Make up your mind, but respect the opinion of others. Hold your head high and keep your mind open. You can always learn."

As to Willard Straight's accomplishments—there are not many men who did as much in the thirty-eight years allowed him, and yet he considered his own life a failure, and in a certain sense so it was, for he had not accomplish his great aim, the incorporation of a strong, stable China in the commonwealth of the world, a China which should combine the best of the old and the new,

which should join East and West in bonds of friendship and not of fear. The years have swung round again; it is nearly half a century since an Oswego man went out to China with this high purpose, and, contrary to the old saw, opportunity has knocked again. Once more this golden chance lies before America. Perhaps it will be an Oswego man who takes up the challenge.

Spiritualism and Mormonism, Products of New York State

(Paper Read Before Oswego County Historical Society November 20, 1945 by Professor Clayton S. Mau of Geneseo State Teachers' College, Author of "The Development of Central and Western New York".)

Professor Clayton S. Mau, in his paper, read before the Oswego County Historical Society at Tanner Memorial, Oswego, November 20, said that in order to gain a true appreciation of the beginnings of both Mormonism and Spiritualism in the New York of 100 years ago, it is necessary to be familiar with what historians call the "spirit of the times" and the "climate of opinion." One hundred years ago, Western New York State was in the frontier epoch. Social life and cultural institutions reflected both the good and bad features of the frontier psychology.

"The greater part of the settlers of the western part of the state came from New England," said the speaker. "They migrated for the usual reasons. They were the younger sons for whom there was not room enough on the family homestead in New England. They were moving west because of the greater opportunity afforded by the better and the cheaper land. Or they moved west because they were by nature dissenters. They did not like the doctrine or the rigid discipline enforced by Calvinist New England. They moved west to escape the ever encroaching arms of government.

"Frontiersmen were individualists above all. They were self-reliant and independent in politics, in the manner in which they pursued a livelihood, and in the peculiar forms of religion or non-religion which they chose to follow. The typical Western New Yorkers of this period were not highly educated in the formal sense. At times they were most credulous and great believers. Again they would be great haters and most intolerant.

High Death Rate

"Patent medicines were widely advertised and bought as cure-all for every imaginable form of disease. The death rate was very high due to many forms of epidemics, of which cholera was one. It was in this 'spirit' and 'climate' that the great waves of religious and emotional feeling swept the frontier. Revivals, camp-meetings and every form of odd and unorthodox religious sect received its hearing and retained its following. Spiritualism and Mormonism were only two of the many religious sects that originated during this period.

"These sects are more significant historically than many of their contemporary and competing sects, not because their origin and interpretation was so unusual and unorthodox. There were at that time, many religious expressions and cults just as unusual and if anything more spectacular. They are significant because of the tremendous vitality which followers of these doctrines have shown in the social life of modern times.

"Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, was a product of the frontier climate. He had been attending the revival meetings of two of the Protestant sects. He felt inclined towards the acceptance of one of the current religions, but was undecided which to accept. It was during this period of indecision that he claimed to have received the vision which told him that neither of these religious interpretations was the correct one. The proper interpretation was, rather, that of the angel Moroni, as revealed through the gold plates said to

have been uncovered at Mormon hill, Palmyra.

"Under the leadership of Smith, Mormonism rapidly took form, achieved the status of a going religion and gathered in its fair share of followers. How the intolerance of the frontier community forced the followers of Mormonism from place to place across the country until they finally sought refuge in the territory of Utah is well known. At that time Utah belonged to Mexico. The Mormons had reason to believe they would find a tolerance and recognition from the more urbane and tolerant culture of these peoples of Spanish culture that they had not been able to find among their fellow Anglo-Saxon compatriots.

Give Up Polygamy

"According to the officials of the modern Mormon church, the sect embraces some million followers. Upon the admittance of Utah to the union, the Mormons officially gave up the belief of the morality of polygamy. In all its essential features and practices, Mormonism and the Mormons are today onservative and traditional rather than radical and unorthodox. They believe and practice the gospel of hard work, that the only proper way to get ahead in the economic world is by diligence, and thrift. They are good businessmen. The late Senator Reed Smoot, a Mormon, was considered the leading financial mind of the Senate during his tenure of office. The first time the nation saw fit to select a governor of the Federal Reserve System from west of the Mississippi, it chose Mariner Eccles, a Mormon.

"The modern Mormons are characterized by a highly developed and closely integrated family life. Leadership plays an important part in the social life of a Mormon community. The Mormon Church shows a high sense of responsibility for its members. In the early days of public relief it was the boast of the church that none of its indigent members had to look to the state for support. They were cared for by the Church community.

Spiritualism Starts

"Spiritualism originated and took root in Western New York during the early part of the nineteenth century. The Fox sisters in their early teens claimed to have developed the ability to communicate with the spirit world. Their ability to produce knocks or sounds with no apparent outward influence made a great impression upon their parents, particularly their mother. Soon their little home was overrun by the believers and the unbelievers; either to verify their tendencies toward acceptance of the belief or to uncover the hoax.

"The family was forced to move to Rochester. There the sisters continued their demonstrations of their powers of communication, known in the literature of the times as the 'Rochester rappings.' The present home of Spiritualism is at Lilydale in the western part of New York State. The devout followers of the movement had the original Fox cabin moved to Lilydale where it now serves somewhat in the nature of a shrine for the believers.

"Spiritualism cannot be shrugged off with a smile and a story. As long as men believe that the mind and the spirit are something greater than the body and the material world, there will be followers and believers in some refinement of the religion of spiritualism.

"Spiritualism and Mormonism took root in a spiritual climate characterized by all the liabilities as well as the assets of frontier life. Revelation played a great part in the experience of the typical Americans. To understand these movements, it is necessary to understand and appreciate the times. These movements were neither much better nor much worse than times in which they originated."

St. Leger's Expedition From Oswego Into Mohawk Valley To Join Burgoyne

(Paper by Edwin M. Waterbury, President of Oswego County Historical Society, Reprinted from Centennial Edition of Oswego Palladium-Times November 20, 1945.)

General Barry St. Leger led out of Fort Ontario and Oswego July 28, 1777 an army which was but another unit of the three-phased plan conceived by General John Burgoyne and put into execution in that year with expectation of cutting off New England from the other revolting colonies and thereby making it possible for the British armies to effect the conquest of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania and other colonies to the south while New England would be held helpless unable to come to their assistance or vice-versa. St. Leger was directed to move from Oswego up the Oswego River and through Oneida Lake to the Mohawk Valley destroying crops which General Washington was relying upon to feed his armies as he swept through, and to meet at Albany Burgoyne's main force descending from Montreal through the Champlain Valley, and Howe's force which was expected to march up the Hudson from New York to Albany to effect a juncture with Burgoyne and St. Leger, thereby completely separating New England from the rest of the colonies. Through St. Leger's failure to get through to Albany after Herkimer had met and turned back his forces in the Battle of Oriskany, the bloodiest of the Revolution in proportion to the numbers engaged, and through the failure of Howe to receive his orders in time to permit Clinton's effective co-operation with the program, Burgoyne knew that his plan had failed and that his army was beaten even before the Battle of Saratoga was fought.

Defeat of St. Leger's force, in the Mohawk Valley, proved to be the first and most-telling setback to the accomplishment of Burgoyne's carefully worked out plan which had been approved in England where he had taken it the winter before the campaign opened, and had "sold" it to the British war ministry.

Fort Stanwix First Objective

Before his advance guard arrived in Oswego in mid-July St. Leger had moved up the St. Lawrence River Valley from Montreal to the village of Lachine which was the rendezvous for his troops. For weeks in advance of his arrival there, however, ship carpenters had been busily at work at Carleton Island, in the St. Lawrence River near the outlet of Lake Ontario, building the batteaux on which his army was to be transported from the St. Lawrence to Oswego, and thence later up the Oswego River to the Oneida, and thence through Oneida Lake, Wood Creek and past the Great Carrying Place to the Mohawk down which his army was expected to move with the capture of Fort Stanwix, which stood within the present limits of the City of Rome, and was his first objective.

Building St. Leger's boats at Carleton Island was Lieutenant John Schanck of the British Navy, destined to win fame because of his capability as a builder of fleets and his introduction of new ideas for fighting ships which included the construction of gun boats with removable sides and the inclined-

plane for gun carriages. Further down stream Lieut. William Twiss, another distinguished naval architect of the future was building "King's boats" each of which would accommodate about 40 men along with the provisions and supplies they would need. The boats were ready and waiting when St. Leger arrived from Lachine with the last of his troops in early-July.

St. Leger had come to Canada in the spring of 1776 along with troops sent from England to reenforce General Carleton. A colonel in rank, he had been elevated to the rank of a brigadier for the purpose of the important campaign upon which he was about to embark.

Boats Loaded For Oswego

The orderly book of Sir John Johnson's regiment of Tories called "the Royal Greens" indicates that 48 batteaux were delivered to the Royal Regiment of New York on July 19, along with 45 felling axes, three broad axes; 75 broad axes and 2 broad axes, and to the 34th Regt., to be distributed among the boats as the officers might direct, thole pins for each boat along with two fishing lines and hooks. The King's Royal Regiment of New York was delivered 440 barrels of provisions on the same date, 10 barrels to each batteau. The rum and brandy for the regiment was ordered placed in the officers' boats "for security". Boats for the other units of St. Leger's army were similarly supplied.

The artillery brought to Oswego on the boats especially built to carry it consisted of two six pounders, two three pounders and four cohorns.

As St. Leger was moving up the St. Lawrence towards Oswego a considerable part of the company made up of Canadians under the command of Captain Rouville deserted, largely, Sir Guy Carleton, governor of Canada and in command of the British forces in North America wrote to General McLean, as the result of conversation discouraging in nature as to the probable outcome of the expedition which arose in its ranks and resulted in destruction of morale,. St. Leger was officially informed that he "ought to have seized and sent down in arms" to headquarters "those Canadians whom he mentions as having held such conversations." Carleton ordered that two replacement men be demanded from each district from which a man deserted "upon pain of military execution" if they were not furnished. Captains of militia from the parishes to which the deserters belonged were enjoined to hunt up the deserters and bring them into McLean's presence "there to be tried and punished."

Scouts Take Prisoners

Some time before St. Leger had moved from Lachine Col. Daniel Claus, superintendent of Canadian Indians, who had been delegated by London to take charge of and supervise St. Leger's Canadian Indian allies on the expedition, advised Guy Johnson that according to the most recent advices received from Col. Butler, commander at Niagara, that there were only 60 men at this time at Fort Stanwix, "in a picketed place". Doubting from past experience the veracity of this information, Claus dispatched John Hare, an active Indian officer, with John Odiseruney "to pick up a small party of Indians at Oswegatchie (Ogdensburg) and reconnoiter Fort Stanwix as well as possible and bring off some prisoners, if they could." As St. Leger was ascending a few days later the St. Lawrence moving towards Oswego he met Captain Hare and his party of Indian braves returning from Fort Stanwix with five prisoners in tow, one of them being a lieutenant; they also had four fresh scalps as the result of their attack upon a party of 15 "rebels" who were attacked as they had been at work cutting sods for the repair

of Fort Stanwix. Hare reported that "Fort Stanwix was a regular square and garrisoned by upwards of 600 men; the repairs well advanced, and, were acquainted with our strength and route". Claus sent the prisoners at once to St. Leger and soon himself joined the latter and "talking over the intelligence which the rebel prisoners gave, St. Leger owned that if the rebels intended to defend themselves in that fort our artillery was not sufficient to take it."

Warned of Artillery Lack

Recording this information in a report prepared in October after the expedition had failed Claus observed: "And here the brigadier still had opportunity and time for sending for a better train of artillery and wait for the junction with the Chasseurs which must have assured us success, as every one will allow. However, he was still full of his alert, making little of the prisoners' intelligence."

Claus's reference to the "alert" refers to a representation Claus asserts to have been made to him by St. Leger during the ascent of the St. Lawrence river, that the Missisagues Indians and the Six Nations Indians in St. Leger's army should join him, St. Leger, and accompany him in an alert —or would proceed to Ft. Stanwix by a short cut through the woods from Salmon Creek on Lake Ontario, 20 miles East of Oswego, in order to surprise the garrison, that he could take it with small arms. Claus had not "enthused" over the general's idea.

At Carleton Island where St. Leger's force was still in camp on July 13th a general order was issued which throws interesting sidelights on the soldiers' daily ration and army camp conditions at that time. Verbatim the order follows in part:

"No person to draw more than one ration per day, viz: 1½ pound of flour, 1½ of beef or 10 oz of pork, & such troops as choose to draw one pound of flour per day shall receive from the D. Q. master General the value weekly of the remainder at 1½ pounds; all public stores not immediately pertaining to any particular corps to be put in charge of detachments under the orders of Capt. Potts of the King's Regiment at this post; the detachment of the King's under the command of Captain Lanott, will furnish a relief of 1 sergt, 1 corpl and 12 privates every day to the above detachment. The D. Quartermaster General will direct a hut to be built within the lines of the encampment of Capt. Pott's detachment to receive all public stores and is to be sufficient to protect them from the weather; each corps shall receive under their charge a certain number of boats; all the overplus boats for public stores will come under the charge of C. Pott's detachment and each corps will be answerable for the particular attention for the safety of the boats given unto their charge, and to report to the superintendent any repairs they may want. Each corps after expending what provisions they have received, to draw weekly their rations, and they will sign an order for all drawn for such persons on this expedition in his majesty's service who do not belong to any particular corps.

Rations Regulations

"Col. Claus will ascertain the number of Indians absolutely necessary to be fed at this post of which he shall give directions to the brigades who will give directions that the S. rations will be issued daily to the Indians, and Col. Claus will appoint a person from the Indian Department who speaks the Missisagues' language to attend the delivery of said provisions which by him is to be received in bulk delivered in camp to Indian Department, and the D. Commisary General will deliver no privisions to any persons but under the assignment of commanding officer of corps and de-

tachments and the DQC. Lieut. Burnet of the King's Regiment is appointed superintendent of the King's Batteaux."

St. Leger Speeds Up

It was eleven days after the fall of Ft. Ticonderoga to Burgoyne's main army before that news reached St. Leger, then at Carleton Island preparing to embark his army for Oswego, although at the time Burgoyne and St. Leger were within 150 miles of each other by airline. Upon receipt of the news St. Leger immediately announced the news of Ticonderoga's fall to his troops in an order of the day dated July 17. Simultaneously fearing that lest his command make more rapid progress Burgoyne would outstrip him by being the first to arrive at Albany, St. Leger speeded up the making of the final arrangements for his men to depart for Oswego, and began to prepare for his advance party to push onwards at once from Oswego for Ft. Stanwix.

St. Leger ordered that the troops at Carleton should prepare and hold themselves in readiness for departure on an hour's notice. Forty days' provisions were to be immediately sorted and made ready to be embarked upon boats which were to be designed to carry them. Lieut. Collerton was directed to prepare ammunition for the artillery and 50 ball cartridges per man for 500 men, and to requisition the number of large boats that would be necessary to carry these. The bakers were directed to bake at once a six-day bread supply taking great care that the bread "will be well soakt in that time, each corps to find what bakers they have and to report to the deputy commissary general at 10 o'clock" and "all ovens to be set at work." The King's Regt., the 34th Regt. and Captain Watts detachment "to be completed with 50 rounds of ammunition immediately. All those corps who have it not in their own stores will make a demand on the artillery and give a receipt agreeable to the forms they require." The officers commanding the corps were directed to provide their men "with some sort of cases to keep their (gun) locks dry through the woods in rainy weather."

Advance Guard Set Up

The advance guards consisting of all officers and 80 rank and file of the King's and 34th Regiments, the tribe of Missisagues Indians, the Six Nations' Indians, and the officers and rangers, were ordered to move from Carleton Island at 4 o'clock in the morning of July 18 for Oswego. The regiments were to receive 10 batteaux each for the transportation of their men and 20 days provisions. The officers were to be allowed a proper portion of boats for their luggage on the way to Oswego, the boats to be manned by supernumeraries of each corps. The boats containing the provisions and the officers luggage to be loaded the evening before departure "ready to push at a moment's notice in the morning. The advance corps to carry six-days provisions in bread and pork to shut out any possibility of want of provisions from delays or disappointments of the King's vessels". "The officer commanding in chief finds himself under the painful necessity of putting a short stop to the currency of trade by ordering that the crews of boats that come to unload on the island (Carleton's) may go one trip with provisions to Oswego for which they will be paid. Every brigade of provision boats, which arrives before the return of the vessels from Niagara, Capt. Potts will push forward to Oswego with all expedition."

Indian Council Ordered

From Carleton Island on July 19. Col. Claus was simultaneously ordered to proceed directly to Oswego with Sir John Johnson's Regiment of Royal Greens and a company of Chasseurs lately arrived, there to convene a Council

of the Six Nations Indians and to prepare the Indians to join the Brigadier at Ft. Stanwix. On arriving at Oswego on July 23, Claus found Joseph Brant here who acquainted him with the fact that his party consisting of about 300 Indians, would be (arrive) on that day, and having been more than two months upon service, were destitute of necessaries, ammunition and some arms. Brant complained at the same time of having been very scantily supplied by Col. Butler with ammunition when at Niagara in the spring, "although he had acquainted Col. Butler of his being threatened with a visit from the Rebel General Herkimer, of Tryon County, and actually was afterwards visited by him, with 30 men with him, and 500 more at some distance, when Joseph had not 200 Indians together; but he resolutely declared to the rebel general that he was determined to act against him for the king, and he had obliged them to retreat with menaces, not having 20 pounds of powder among his party."

Advance Guard Moves To Oswego

Although the order had been issued for the army to move July 18, they was subsequently altered to call for the departure to be made, July 19.

New orders directed that at the first bugle call the advance corps should assemble, and that at the second bugle they should embark for Oswego. Each corps was to be allowed to carry such things as will be immediately wanted, to move with the artillery and provisions to Ft. Stanwix. The remainder were to "stay at Oswego till a general clearance of that port." The whole brigade of Canadians that brought up the Hessians to be employed in carrying provisions to Oswego after giving eight hands to strengthen Captain Rouville's Company.

"Three of the Rebel prisoners now in the provest guard who have taken oath of allegiance to the King, are to be employed as batteau men to Lt. Glennie's detachment to which shall be added 10 men of the Royal Yorkers." The several corps were directed to proceed "in two lines dressing, the leading boats (to carry) the officer commanding in chief (St. Leger) and the staff in the lead, the lines to be followed by the Artillery, the King's Regt., Captain Rouville's Company and 2 merchant boats and the 34th Regt."

The detachment of the Royal Artillery under the command of Lieut. Glennie, the Regiment of Royal New Yorkers, the companies of (Hessian) Chasseurs Corps, destined for the transport of provisions were to embark at 4 A., M., the boats to be loaded that evening and "all ovens to be employed this evening in baking for the Hessians." The whole of this command would proceed next day in the following order: First, the commanding officer "with such of the staff and Indian department as on the ground."

Indians Give Trouble

In his report of the expedition written at Oswego by Col. Claus after St. Leger's forces had fallen back upon Ft. Ontario in September after the battle of Oriskany had been fought, Claus records:

"The 24th of July, I received (at Oswego) an express from Brigadier St. Leger, at Salmon Creek, about twenty miles from Oswego, to repair thither with what arms and vermillion I had, and that he wished I would come prepared to march through woods. As to arms and vermillion I had none, but prepared myself to go on the march, and was ready to set off when Joseph (Brant) came into my tent and told me that as no person was on the spot to take care of the number of Indians with him, he apprehended in case I should leave them they would become disgusted and disperse, which might prevent the rest of the Six Nations to assem-

ble, and be hurtful to the expedition, and begged I would first represent the circumstances to brigadier by letter.

"Brigadier St. Leger mentioned, indeed, my going was chiefly intended to quiet the Indians with him, who were very drunk and riotous, and Captain Tice, who was his messenger, informed me that the brigadier ordered the Indians a quart of rum apiece, which made them all beastly drunk, and in which case it is not in the power of man to quiet them. Accordingly, I mentioned to the brigadier by letter, the consequences that might affect his majesty's Indian interests in case I was to leave so large a number of Indians that were come already (to Oswego) and still expected. Upon which representation, and finding the Indians disapproved of the plan, and were unwilling to proceed, the brigadier came away from Salmon Creek, and arrived the next day at Oswego with the companies of the 8th and 34th Regiments and about 25 Indians.

Adjourn to Three Rivers

"Having equipped Joseph (Brant's) party with what necessaries and ammunition I had, I appointed the rest of the Six Nations to assemble at the Three Rivers, a convenient place of rendezvous, and on the way to Ft. Stanwix, and desired Col. Butler to follow me with the Indians he brought from Niagara, and equip them all at Three Rivers. The 26th of July left Oswego."

The "plan" which the Indians had disapproved as mentioned in the second paragraph above would have called for a part of St. Leger's forces to have proceeded by a short-cut overland through the woods from the mouth of Salmon Creek to Fort Stanwix to rejoin there the advance guard, and make a surprise attack upon the garrison. St. Leger had been laying out and mulling over such a plan for days, referring to it as an "alert."

Sangerachta, Seneca chief, had arrived at Oswego with 200 Senecas and Brant soon arrived with 300 more gathered from several tribes before St. Leger himself reached Ft. Ontario. Other parties arriving increased the number of Indians assembled here to between 800 and 1000 men before the main body of the British left Oswego to ascend the Oswego in the move to Ft. Stanwix. But it soon became evident to those whose duty it was to command the Indians that a majority of those assembled had come without any intention of fighting.

Three Rivers Appeal

Claus had decided to make one more appeal to them and to Six Nation Indians not then present at Three Rivers before abandoning hope of obtaining recruits from the Indian ranks. At Three Rivers, accordingly, he met in council on July 30, the rest of the Indians. Promises there made brought other Indians to the point of agreeing to share in the undertaking. Blankets, arms, powder and other supplies Claus issued to them there.

Col. Claus had spent a part of the preceding year in England, and he had returned from there with a commission appointing him superintendent of all the Indians to be employed in the expedition against Ft. Stanwix. Governor Carleton of Canada had been compelled to recognize this commission, but he had been so well pleased with the service rendered by Col. Butler as Indian superintendent that he declined to displace Butler from the command of the Indians taking part in the expedition, but had asked him, however, to act as second in command under Claus. Butler accepted the situation and consented to serve under Claus, although the two men were enemies.

St. Leger's Force Over 2,000

Sir John Johnson with his regiment, made up largely of Tories who had been his neighbors in the Mohawk Valley, before John-

son had fled the year before to Canada through the Adirondack woods from "Johnson Hall" near Gloversville of today, had arrived at Oswego somewhat earlier in July than St. Leger. Of his "Royal Greens", as his regiment was called by reason of the fact that they had adopted a green-coated uniform, about 200 were to participate in the operation near Ft. Stanwix. Col. Claus, Indian superintendent, Joseph Brant, full blooded Indian, whose sister, Mollie, had been Sir William Johnson's common-law wife and who himself had been Sir William's secretary after having been educated in England, was here with 300 Mohawks. Captain John Butler had arrived from Ft. Niagara accompanied by his party of 500 Six Nations Indians, mostly Senecas, Cayugas and Onondagas. When St. Leger arrived with 400 Hessians, mostly Wurttemburg Chasseurs, 200 regulars of the 8th and 34th Regiments, Captain Rouville's company of French Canadian rangers and boatmen there were a total of about 2,000 men including 40 artillerymen gathered at Oswego to participate in the expedition. This number was increased a few days later by other members of the Six Nations who joined the Indian group at Three Rivers following the Council called there of all the Six Nations at which Claus made a further appeal to the Indians cupidity to induce more of them to accompany the expedition, although with what degree of success we have found no record. It is known, however, that the Indian representation was considerably increased as the result of Claus's appeal and his distribution of blankets, guns, and presents to those who joined.

Oneidas Declined Aid

Those Oneidas who answered the summons, however, did not agree to join the expedition stating that they elected to live in terms of peace with their white neighbors. Soon afterwards a party of about 40 of them would join Herkimer's force advancing to relieve Ft. Stanwix, volunteering their services in defense of the fort against the British.

Silas Towne Gives Warning

From his island hide-out at the mouth of Little Salmon Creek (Mexico Point) 20 miles east of Oswego and Fort Ontario, Silas Towne, a Continental spy, observed St. Leger's landing with his Indian allies on July 24 at the mouth of Salmon Creek. Next day he saw St. Leger's men reembark and move off towards Oswego. That night Towne paddled in a canoe up the Salmon River until he came to a pathway leading to a short-cut through the forest to the Mohawk Valley. (The short cut had existed for more than 20 years at least and it had been used by Montcalm to send a force into the Mohawk Valley in 1756 to ward off the arrival of re-enforcements at the Oswego forts, and to cut off Col. Mercer's communications with Albany until Montcalm should have had opportunity to accomplish at Oswego the task to which he had set himself, without the possibility of having his plans hampered unexpectedly through the arrival at Oswego forts of help from down the Mohawk Valley.) Down this short cut Towne hurried through the night to warn Col. Peter Ganse-voort, commandant at Fort Stanwix where the Third New York Regiment of Continentals was in garrison with other troops from Massachusetts that the British and Indians would soon be descending upon Fort Stanwix from the direction of Oswego.

Even before Towne got his word through that an attack upon Ft. Stanwix was apparently imminent, General Nicholas Herkimer, commanding the Tryon County militia in the Mohawk Valley, had learned that the British, Tories and Indians were planning a raid into the valley from Oswego and he had caused a warning proclamation to that effect to be circulated throughout

the valley bearing date of July 17 which read as follows:

Herkimer's Warning

"Whereas, it appears certain that the enemy, of about 2000 strong, Christians and savages, are arrived at Oswego, with the intention to invade our frontier, I think it proper and most necessary for the defense of our country, and it shall be ordered by me as the enemy approaches, that every male person, being in health, from sixteen to sixty years of age in this county, shall, as in duty bound, repair immediately, with arms and accoutrements, to the place appointed in my orders, and will then march to oppose the enemy with vigor, as true patriots for the just defene of their country. And those that are above sixty years, or really unwell and incapable to march, shall then assemble, also armed, at the respective places where women and children will be gathered together, in order for defence against the enemy, if attacked, as much as lies in their power.

"But concerning the disaffected, and those who will not directly obey such orders they shall be taken, along with their arms, secured under guard, to join the main body. And as such an invasion regards every friend to the country in general, but of this country in particular, to show his zeal and well affected spirit in actual defense of the same, all the members of the committee, as well as those, who by former commissions or otherwise, have been exempted from other military duty, are requested to repair also, when called, to such places as shall be appointed and join to repulse our foes. Not doubting that the Almighty Power, upon our humble prayers and sincere trust in him, will then graciously succor our arms in battle for our just cause, and victory can not fail on our side".

Girls Slain By Indians

Sunday July 28, three girls picking raspberries within 500 yards of Ft. Stanwix, but yet within sight of the fort, were shot by four Indians from a point of concealment. A detail from the fort rushed to the scene to investigate the cause of the shots, found two of the girls tomahawked and scalped, but the third had managed to escape although shot twice through the shoulder. In consequence of this act Col. Gansevoort recalled to the fort the next day woodcutters who had been felling trees across Wood Creek in order to impede the progress of the invading force, now almost hourly expected. He also sent to the settlements down the Mohawk Valley women and children who had been with the garrison up until that time and the sick and wounded in the hospital, including the girl who had escaped the Indians the preceding day.

Oneidas Show Friendship

Thomas Spencer, half breed Oneida blacksmith, who on many occasion had befriended the whites in these troublesome times, at this juncture wrote from Oneida Castle to Col. Gansevoort as follows:

Sir: Just now came heere an Indian named Cannawayyande has told a friend of his that he Left Oswego full 2 days past, that the troops are in this Side Oswego & Some of them Over the falls & the others in haste. they are a mind to git to Wood Creek before it is stopped. he Thinks they will be Heer in two Days; they are to cross the Oneida Lake in the night; he says the River is full of boats from Oswego to the falls; the Indian Lives in old oneyda & is one of Brant's party that was in oquage; he says there will be some boddy at Oswego to attend if treaty; there was some Strings of Wampum here today to acaquaint the Ind. the treaty is to be at the 3 Rivers.

Yours & c Tho Spencer

Please to pay the meesenger. A party of 80 Indians is to come by the way of Rehoehage who

will come a crost Fish Creek at the fishing Place at the Indian field.

Oneidas Disturbed

The Oneidas were becoming disturbed by the developments that were taking place about them. Only a few miles away from their homes lay the route over which St. Leger was advancing against Stanwix with a thousand or more warriors attached to St. Leger's forces who had been their lifelong allies. The Oneidas feared that these Indians would resent the fact that they were not to make common cause with them in the projected attack on Ft. Stanwix. They had been summoned by Claus to attend a council at Three Rivers where it would be necessary, if they attended, to make known their position, and that they would not join the British. In such a case they feared resentment by the other Indians. On July 29 they forwarded a letter to Col. Ganse-voort with the request that it be forwarded to General Schuyler. The letter read:

"The chiefs desire the commanding officers at Fort Schuyler not to make a Ticonderoga of it; but they hope you will be courageous.

"They desire that General Schuyler may have this with speed, and send a good army here; there is nothing to do at New York; we think there is men to be spared—we expect the road is stopped to the inhabitants by a party through the woods; we shall be surrounded as soon as they come. This may be our last advice, as these soldiers are a part of those that are to hold a treaty (council). Send this to the Committee—as soon as they receive it, let the militia rise up and come to Fort Schuyler (Stanwix).

"Tomorrow we are going to the Three Rivers to the treaty. We expect to meet the warriors and when we come there and declare we are for peace, we expect to be used with indifference and sent away.

"Let all the troops that come to Fort Schuyler (Stanwix) take care on their march, as there is a party of Indians to stop the road below the fort, about 80 or 100. We hear they are to bring their cannon up Fish Creek. We hear that there is 1000 going to meet the enemy. We advise not—the army is too large for so few men to defend the fort—we send a belt of eight rows to confirm the truth of what we say."

The party of British to whom Spencer had referred was the advance party of St Leger's army which had left Oswego July 27, under the command of Lieut. Bird of the 8th or King's Regiment and proceeded to Oswego Falls where they camped that night. They were followed next day by the main army.

Bird had trouble with his Indians enroute. At Three Rivers where he encamped the night of July 28, 70 or 80 Indians overtook him. They had lagged behind, stolen two oxen and refused to proceed further until they had had a feast. Bird moved on leaving them behind and encamped at Nine Mile Point in what is today the Oswego County Town of Constantia. Next day he reached Wood Creek, and there the Senecas refused to go further unless small scouting parties were sent out in advance.

St. Leger to Bird

Bird sent a messenger from Nine Mile Point back to St Leger telling of his intent to move forward at all hazzards and invest the fort. St Leger's reply follows:

Nine Mile Point, Aug. 2, 1777

Sir:

I, this instant received your letter containing the account of your operations since you were detached, which I with great pleasure tell you have been sensible and spirited; your resolution of investing Ft. Stanwix is perfectly right; and to enable you to do it with greater effect I have detached Joseph (Thayen-

danegea) and his corps of Indians to reinforce you. You will note that I will have nothing but an investiture made; and in case the enemy, observing the discretion and judgment with which it is made, should offer to capitulate, you are to tell them that you are sure that I am well disposed to listen to them: this is not to take any honor out of a young soldier's hands, but by the presence of the troops to prevent barbarity and carnage, which will ever obtain where Indians make so superior a part of a detachment; I shall move from hence at eleven o'clock, and be early in the afternoon at the entrance of the creek.

I am, Sir, your most obt. and himble ser't.

Barry St Leger

Lieut. Bird, 8th Regt.

On Wednesday July 30 an Indian runner delivered to Col. Gansevoort from Oneida Castle a belt of wampum and a letter from the sachems of Caughnawaga in which the colonel was assured that these Indians were determined to continue at peace with their American brethren. The letter also stated that St. Leger's army was then at Three Rivers and that two detachments were to be sent forward before the main body would move—one group of eight would be directed to take prisoners and one of 130 men would endeavor to cut communications along the Mohawk. The letter was sent forward as the authors requested to the military commanders down the valley.

Joins Stanwix Garrison

There also arrived at Ft. Stanwix on July 30, Major Badlam with 150 men belonging to Col. Weston's regiment at Fort Dayton and Captain Dewitt and 50 men belonging to Lt. Col. Marinus Willett's regiment who had been left at the lower fort when Willett moved through the Valley to Fort Stanwix several weeks earlier. These men brought news that seven batteaux loaded with ammunition and provisions were enroute up the Mohawk to Fort Stanwix.

Johnson's Greens Leave Falls

Johnson's "Greens" meanwhile were at Oswego Falls on Thursday July 31, after having left Oswego a day earlier enroute to Ft. Stanwix when orders were issued them and to the Royal Artillery under Lieut. Glennie, the Royal Regiment of New York and Captain Rouville's company of Canadians to load their batteaux immediately. Each captain's boat in the Royal Yorkers was directed to carry 4 barrels of provisions: 10 lieutenants' boats to carry 5 each. Lieut. Anderson J. Wilkerson's boat was to carry 4, and the privates' boats to carry six barrels each. These units were commanded to hold themselves in readiness until 2 o'clock that afternoon when they were to proceed in the following order: Royal Artillery, Six companies of the King's Royal Regiment of New York, Captain Rouville's company of Canadians, Lieut. Colonel's Company of King's Regt. The officers commanding were cautioned not to let their boats fall ba :k or put ashore without order or signal for that purpose.

On this same day Lieut. Bird's advance party with 36 Indians had joined near Wood Creek the party of Lieut. John Hare whose duty is was to command detachments of the red allies. "Many savages being with us proceeded to the Wood Creek a march of 15 miles", Bird recorded. "Ordered the rangers to compleat our party to 36 men, divided these into three watches of 12 each, six centries one hour and a half and 6 another—at the end of 3 hours the first watch relieved by the second and so on; either Mr. Clerges or myself up all night.

"Friday the savages hinted an intention to send (scouting) parties to Stanwix, but to proceed in a body no further" Bird's note continued. "I called a council of the chiefs—told them I had orders to approach near the fort—

that if they would accompany me, I should be content; but if they would not go, I should take the white people under my command and proceed myself. The Messesaugues said they would go with me. The Senecas said I had promised to be advised by the chiefs—that it was their way to proceed with caution. I answered, I meant as to fighting in the bush, that I had communicated my intentions to them in the former camp of preventing them (the Americans) from stopping the creek, and investing their fort, but since I had promised to be advised by them, I would take it so far as to wait till next morning—and I would then certainly march at daybreak. They after some counselling seemed pleased with what I had said—said they would send out large scouts to prepare the way. Accordingly 18 or 20 set off this evening."

Delay Proved Costly

The overnight delay proved unfortunate to the British cause as on Friday morning August 1, three Oneida Indians had arrived "express" at Ft. Stanwix from Oneida Castle to report to Col. Gansevoort that they had met three strange Indians who had told them there were 100 or more Indians at the Royal Block House which was located near the entrance to Wood Creek into Oneida Lake, and that those Indians were to march against the fort. Supposing this to be the party sent to cut off his communications, Gansevoort placed 100 men under the command of Captain Von Benschoten and sent them to meet the batteaux carrying up the Mohawk the ammunition and provisions, Stanwix-bound, and to reenforce the guard that had been sent with the boats from Fort Dayton.

St. Leger's army invested Ft. Stanwix on August 3. His plan had been in sending forward Lieut. Bird's advance party with 30 British regulars of the King's Regiment and 200 Indians commanded by Captains Hare and Wilson and Chiefs Joseph and Bull, to seize and hold the Lower Landing Place and thereby cut off the American's communuications with the lower valley. His advance guard failed to accomplish the misison that he intrusted to it; for the boats carrying the ammunition and supplies for Ft. Stanwix's garrison had not only arrived at the Upper Landing of the Mohawk under the protection of 100 men from Ft. Dayton under Col. Mellon, and the 100 men sent from Ft. Stanwix sent out under command of Lieut. Von Benschoten, but the cargo had been carried inside Ft. Stanwix before Lieut. Bird or any of his command reached the banks of the river.

The batteaux brought ammunition and particularly cannon balls which were seriously needed by the garrison. Had these not arrived there is doubt that Ft. Stanwix could have withstood the assaults of a vigorous enemy. The delay, therefore, to which Bird had consented to humor his Seneca allies the preceding night proved in the end a severe blow to the invaders' cause.

Stars and Stripes Go Up

On Sunday August 3, the day upon which St. Leger's forces invested Fort Stanwix, Lieut. Colbraith, a member of the garrison at Ft. Stanwix, made the following entry in his diary: "Early this morning a Continental flag, made by the officers of Col. Gansevoort's regiment, was hoisted and a cannon leveled at the enemy's camp was fired on the occasion". Thus it came about that the stars and stripes were displayed at Fort Stanwix that day for the first time in history under battle conditions. The flag had been described and authorized by resolution of Congress the preceding June 1. It was put together at Fort Stanwix with such bits of appropriate clothing, male and female, as were available to the officers at that time.

The camp at which the gun re-

ferred to in Colbraith's diary was aimed was undoubtedly that established during the preceding night by Lieut. Bird's advance guard of St. Leger's force, which had taken refuge in the woods after firing upon the batteaumen who arrived late the preceding evening with four batteaux containing the ammunition for the fort, three of the boatmen being wounded by the fire, one so badly that he later died, having been shot, stabbed and scalped. The master of the batteaux was taken prisoner and one man was reported missing after this assault. All the goods brought by the batteaux had been gotten safely inside the fort, however, before Bird's men arrived about dusk and opened fire upon the men yet lingering at the boat landing. That night members of the fort garrison saw for the first time the camp fires of Bird's men burning in the woods near Fort Newport where the advance party had arrived six days after they had left Ft. Ontario at Oswego.

Gansevoort Declines to Surrender

At 3 o'clock that Sunday afternoon on the morning of which the American flag had been first displayed, the British forces appeared at the edge of the woods, on all sides surrounding the fort, and one party advanced into a field near the fort and carried off a quantity of hay which had been cut and left there. Soon afterwards Captain Tice of the investing force came forward under a flag a truce bearing a proclamation signed by St. Leger in which the general called for the surrender of the fort. Col Gansevoort promptly replied refusing the demand.

Because of the effective work of the axmen in blocking Wood Creek the investing force was unable to bring up its cannon before the fort for some days or its bulky camp equipment, and therefore found it necessary to create temporary shelters for its men. While they were busy with this detail the garrison went forward with the work of completing the repairs to the upper works of Ft. Stanwix. Also the garrison brought in hay from the fields for the cattle which had been placed for safety's sake in the ditch which surrounded the walls of the palisaded fort. The presence of these cattle was a safe guard as a potential food-supply for the garrison in case of a prolonged siege.

St. Leger's Indians began on August 4 creeping up under the cover of bushes, stumps etc. as close to the fort as they could come without exposing themselves to fire, and firing upon the garrison with small arms. Some Indian "snipers" took refuge in the top of pine trees from which they fired upon members of the garrison inside the fort walls. A shot from one of the guns of the fort was turned upon one of these trees from which several telling shots had been fired, with the result than an Indian fell with the top most branches of the tree when the gun took effect.

Herkimer Moves With Relief

General Herkimer had begun mobilizing 900 Tryon county militiamen as soon as word reached him that the advance guard of St. Leger's men were nearing the valley. On August 4 he marched from Ft. Dayton for the relief, of Ft. Stanwix at their head with the regiments of Cols. Klock, Cox and Visscher augmented by many volunteers. Although the people of the valley had been recently represented as being apathetic towards the Revolutionary cause by their committeemen and others the alacrity with which they had responded to the call to defend their homes indicated that their attitude had been wrongly interpreted.

Herkimer's force camped the night of August 5, east of the present village of Oriskany and east of the creek of the same name after having crosed from the north to the south side of the Mohawk at old Fort Schuyler,

now the site of the City of Utica and but 12 miles away from Fort Stanwix. On the same day the Indians had kept up a continuous fire on Ft. Stanwix, killing one defender who had mounted the northeast bastion. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon the Indians had set fire to the recently constructed barracks of the fort which had, oddly, been built some hundred yards outside the fort walls, the buildings burning to ashes.

It was during the period that the barracks were burning that St. Leger was informed for the first time that General Herkimer's relief force had started up the valley on the way to succor Ft. Stanwix, the word having been given him by Joseph Brant, who had received it in a communication which had arrived from his sister, "Dark Lady Johnson", then living near Canajoharie on lands left her by Sir William. St. Leger issued an order for 400 Indians to be sent out to reconnoitre the advancing force, but when Sir John Johnson sought permisison to join the Indians with his company of light infantry, he was given the permission and was placed in command of the reconnoitering force which Col. Butler and other officers in charge of Indian forces also were sent to join.

In his official report of the matter compiled some time later to be sent to Burgoyne General St. Leger said:

Reconnoitering Force Sent Out

"I did not think it prudent to wait for them (Herkimer's militia) and thereby subject myself to be attacked by a sally from the garrison in the rear while the reinforcement employed me in the front. I therefore determined to attack them on the march, either openly or covertly, as circumstances should offer. At this time I did not have 250 of the king's troops in camp, the various and extensive operations I was under an absolute necessity of entering into having kept employed the rest, and therefore could not send above 80 white men, rangers, and troops included, with the corps of Indians. Sir John Johnson placed himself at the lead of this party, and begun his march that evening at 5 o'clock."

General Herkimer dispatched that night from his camp near Oriskany Creek, on the site of the present village of Whitesboro Adam Hellmer, John Demuth and a third man whose name has not been preserved, to inform Col. Gansevoort of the advance of his reinforcing column and to request the commandant, in case the enemy should offer resistance to Herkimer's force, to send out a sally party to attack the enemy's rear. These men had to cover the 12 miles to the fort on foot at a time when ordinary water and land routes were held by the enemy and to get through the enemy lines and into the fort without being intercepted. They had been instructed to request Col. Gansevoort to fire a gun at the fort at the time of their arrival within its walls as a signal to Herkimer that he was ready to cooperate as Herkimer had suggested.

While Herkimer was still, at the Whitesboro site, he was joined by 60 Oneida Indians among whom was Thomas Spencer, the half-breed blacksmith from Oneida Castle, who had frequently demonstrated his friendship for the revolutionists, and Chiefs Cornelius and Honyerry.

Officers Wrangle With Herkimer

General Herkimer before starting his column on the advance on the morning of August 6, wished to await the signal gun from the fort which would advise him that one of more of the trio of messengers he had dispatched the night before had gotten through safely to Ft. Stanwix and Col. Gansevoort understood his plan of action and would co-operate in case Herkimer was attacked. As the head of the column was now only 8 miles from the fort at the juncture of the Oriskany

Creek with the Mohawk River, several of Herkimer's officers objected to the delay which they thought useless. Cols. Cox and Paris and various other officers waxed sarcastic as General Herkimer held firmly to his plan for a brief delay. The discussion grew so warm that Herkimer was called to his face a "Tory", a "coward" and various other names because he yet refused to proceed. Failing to convince his officers that his position was was right, as subsequent events proved that he undoubtedly was in his position, Herkimer irritated by the unwarranted and undeserved accusations of his officers, finally gave the order "MARCH ON."

The little army shouted approval at the giving of the command, and swinging into quick step down the road, with the baggage wagons moving at the center between the van and the rear guard. Herkimer put out flanking parties and sent a small party ahead to cover his advance. Three of the advance guard were cut off, captured or slain before they had opportunity to fire or give warning, according to a report made by Conrad Mowers who with two brothers was in the advance party.

Flankers Forced In

The flankers, as the army approached the narrow ravine through which the old Albany-to-Oswego military road passed as it descended the side of the heavily wooded slope on one side and rose on the other after following a narrow, tortuous route through the ravine, over a bridge, along a corduroy road, found it necesary to draw back alongside the marching column in order to cross the bridge over a small brook which ran through the ravine at a point where the land on either side of the brook was swampy. This action left the advancing column's flanks briefly without the protection that flankers would have otherwise have given it at this critical point in the march.

Herkimer Ambushed

Col. Ebenezer Cox, heading the regiment from the Canajoharie district, was the first to descend into the depths of the heavily shaded ravine which the marching force entered at about 9 o'clock that morning. Beneath giant hemlocks he crossed the bridge over the stream ever afterwards to be known as "Battle Brook" from that day, and without the slighest warning of the presence of an enemy ascended the less steep western bank and reached the plateau at the top. He was followed successively by Cols. Jacob Klock and Peter Bellinger with their commands. The baggage wagons were in the ravine, and Col. Visscher's rear guard regiment was about to follow, when concealed Indians on either flank suddenly opened with a murderous fire on the attenuated column and simultaneously with a rush closed the road on the eastern plateau thereby severing the rearguard from the baggage train and dividing Herkimer's force as only two companies of Col. Visscher's regiment had succeeded in getting into ravine to join their struggling comrades. They gave a good account of themselves in the battle. These were the companies commanded by Captains Jacob Gardenier and John Davis. "The causeway was already hopelessly choked with their unwieldy wagons, when the eagerness of some of the drunken Indians precipitated the attack and saved the rearguard from the fate which overtook the rest of the column" says Cruikshank in his account of the battle. "The first deliberate volley that burst upon them from a distance of a very few yards was terribly destructive", the Cruikshank account continues. "Elated by the sight and maddened by the smell of blood and gunpowder, many of the Indians rushed from their coverts to complete victory with spear and hatchet. The rear guard promptly ran away in a wild panic."

Herkimer, Wounded, Carries On

Taken completely by surprise by the opening volley fired by the Indians from their places of concealment upon the banks of the ravine and the thickly screened plateau at the top, the Americans, nevertheless quickly regained their composure. General Herkimer, mounted upon a white-horse, was riding up in the van with Cox's troops when the first shots were fired. He rode back along the narrow roadway, partially blocked with baggage wagons, attached to rearing struggling horses, rallying and steadying his men. The general ordered Cox to wheel his men into line along the road, and this movement was attempted but the fire was so severe before it could be completed that General Herkimer ordered the men to break ranks and take shelter behind a tree to fight in the Indian fashion. The general was wounded in the leg below the knee by the same shot which killed the horse beneath him. His men removed the saddle from the horse and supporting the general on this carried him to a huge beach tree up the slope in a sheltered position where he sat on the saddle, smoking his pipe and calmly giving orders for the rest of the battle.

By this time the Indians had broken from their shelter and rushed down the slope of the ravine intending to end the battle by killing the Americans in hand-to-hand fighting with knives, tomahawks and axes with which they were armed. Observing that it was the Indians' tactics to wait until a militiaman had discharged his rifle, and then rush upon him with club or tomahawk and fell him as he reloaded, Herkimer gave orders for two of his men to take positions behind every tree so that one man could stand guard with a loaded rifle while the other man fired and then reloaded. These tactics put an end to the mad slaughter the Indians had carried on up until that time, especially after Herkimer had further ordered his men in groups to form in circles while continuing to fight from behind trees.

Herkimer's attempt at the opening of the battle to rally his men had had the effect of their crowding back upon the wagon train in the midst of the ravine. As the enemy's fire was coming from the high land in the west, east and south, the bed of the ravine leading off to the north seemed to offer the most reasonable means of escaping the hail of bullets and striking the enemy in the rear. Also it is thoroughly established that the second phase of the battle was fought on the plateau on the western side of the ravine, after Herkimer's men had in some manner extricated themselves from the predicament of composing a long, thin line in the center of the road at the bottom of the ravine where thy were exposed to direct enemy fire in full sight of the enemy, and from whence they could fire only upwards along steep enbankments at an unseen enemy, a situation which stripped the branches of the trees from their trunks to a height of 40 feet or more from the ground and filled the tree trunks with lead, but which killed only a few of the enemy. Once having gained the wooded plateau, the Americans were able to form themselves into a fairly compact mass. From that time forward they were able to stand off further attacks.

Loss Figures Vary

Col. Cox, Captain VanSluyck of Klock's regiment and Captain Davis of Visscher's were killed in the early fighting of the day. St. Leger reported the American loss in killed and wounded as 600 and the British at 73; Cruikshank reports British losses of 142 against 200 Americans dead and 300 wounded. Stedman put the American loss at 400 in killed and wounded; Marshall, total loss 300; Durant, 200 killed, 200 wounded. Pomroy Jones placed the Indian loss at 100 killed, 100

Johnson's Greens killed, many wounded, Americans killed 200 and many wounded. There seems to be no way of arriving at a definite figure of casualties on either side. The German Flatts committee, immediately after the battle, declared that all but 150 of Herkimer's men had been killed, wounded or captured after deducting those of the rear guard who had fled from the scene. Col. Willett at Albany later estimated the British dead at 300 and the American dead at 160.

Rain Fell During Battle

As to the manner in which Herkimer's men escaped from the bed of the ravine so to gain the western plateau above we can not be positive today. Certain it would have turned out had they stood at the bottom of the ravine in a compact mass for 45 minutes as some writers have stated they would probably all have been killed in that length of time. It seems quite probable that they charged in open order up the west side of the ravine towards the plateau, and the Indians, not accustomed to withstanding charges, turned and fled and that in this manner the pursuing Yorkers reached the western plateau. That the Indians were at least for a time dispersed appears from various passages in the later statements made by surviors of the American participants in the battle. The fact that Herkimer's men were able to carry him to a point on the high ground after he had been wounded points to a similar conclusion.

All participants in the battle agreed that a heavy rain fell at some time during the battle. It put many of the firearms out of commission and turned the rest of the struggle largely into a hand-to-hand struggle with knives, tomahawks and clubbed muskets as the weapons. The skeletons and battle relics found in later years were dispersed over so wide an area as to indicate that that the fighting reached an open and pursuit stage at some point, possibly when the Indians may have been fleeing back to their camps pursued by some men from Visschy's rear guard and others.

No Eyewitness Account

Oddly the story of the Battle of Oriskany has never been told, and now never will be told. in a detailed, contemporary account from the pen of an eye-witness. It has, therefore, been necessary for the historian who has attempted to give an account of the battle to draw his own conclusions from such fragmentary evidence as is available. The task has been rendered far more difficult, even then, because of the marked divergences that exist in the extant papers as to time, dates and facts. The time of the sounding of the gun at Ft. Stanwix to proclaim to Herkimer that his messengers, Hellmer and the latter's companions, had reached Ft. Stanwix has been placed by various writers at "between 9 and 10 o'clock in the morning", "10 A. M." "about 11" "2 P. M." and "1 P. M., to give an illustration of the conflict of opinion and fact. Adam Hellmer himself placed the hour as 1 o'clock P. M., and seemingly he should know, if anyone did, the hour of his arrival at the fort.

As most accounts agree that the fighting went on for six hours, it would appear that it must have opened,shortly before 9 o'clock in the morning and terminated around 3 o'clock in the afternoon when St. Leger's Indians, Tories and regulars were recalled to their respective camps by information that a sortie had been made from the fort against their camps. As the sortie was made some time before the signal gun had been fired at the fort at 2 o'clock this would seem to make the hour of 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a most probable one as the end of the conflict at the ravine as some time would have been required for word of the sorties to reach the still fighting army

at Oriskany after the shot had been fired.

Col. Willet's sortie from Ft. Stanwix at 2 o'clock in the afternoon was accompanied by cannon fire. Almost immediately the British, Tories and Indians began to hoot, turned about and ran back towards their respective camps correctly construing from the cannons' roar that an attack on their camps was in progress. By the time they arrived, however, Willett had captured two of the camps, seized large quantities of supplies, blankets, brass kettles, clothing and the like and gotten back to the fort in safety. It was said that the plunder he procured would have filled seven large wagons. Willet suffered no losses in the sortie, which was a bravely and boldly executed move, requiring courage as the Americans had no knowledge as they moved against the camps that many of the normal defenders had left the camps to go to the assistance of the hard pressed Tories fighting Herkimer below.

In the midst of the lull that followed the sudden withdrawal of the enemy in numbers to investigate the commotion in the direction of their camps, Captain James Davis of Col. Visscher's regiment stood behind a tree with his ensign, Richard Putnam. The latter remarked: "I believe the red devils have pretty much all left us". To this the captain replied: "They are not all gone, some of them are lurking around here yet". Scarcely had these words passed Davis's lips when a bullet passed through his throat and he fell and expired.

Herkimer Died of Wounds

General Herkimer's wound proved serious, and his physician amputated his leg. Infection set in and his death followed at his home some days after the battle. Thomas Spencer, the friendly Oneida, fell in the battle. Col. Isaac Paris, a member of the legislature, was carried off by the British as a prisoner to Oswego and later murdered by the Indians.

Among the killed on the British side had been Captain Mc Donald, of Johnson's greens. Captain Stephen Watts, a brother-in-law of Sir John Johnson and a native of New York city who had thrown in his lot with the Johnson family, was seriously wounded. Captains Wilson and Hare were both killed and an unnamed subaltern among the Canadian rangers. General St. Leger and Cols. Claus and Butler reported 70 casualties among the Indians and 8 among the British Tories. Scott rejects these figures as improbable considering the six hours of close-range fighting and the fact that at the end of the battle there were at least 150 of the militia who were unscratched and yet physically capable. "Moreever, the wide distribution of the skeletons upon the field, attested by many who visited it in later years, shows that the tales of innumerable hand-to-hand conflicts, and of the individual pursuits of enemy, on the part of one side of the other, were not wholly fanciful", comments Scott.

Indians Killed Prisoners

A few prisoners were captured by the American militia. Some of the militia in turn were captured by the British and taken to Canada; others were taken a short distance from the battlefield and slain and still others forced to march to the British Indian encampments before Ft. Stanwix and there be tortured and killed. Cruikshank, a British writer says: "The Indians butchered many after they had surrendered in revenge for the comparatively petty loss they had themselves sustained, through their unwonted recklessness in engaging in a hand-to-hand fight."

Captain Martin of the batteaumen who had brought the relief supplies to Ft. Stanwix, just before the advance party of the British had first reached Ft. Stanwix on August 3, was taken pris-

oner by the British, and later delivered to the Indians at Oswego, and tortured to death, according to an affidavit made in 1777 by Dr. Moses Younglove of Hudson who was a surgeon in General Herkimer's militia brigade and who participated in the Battle of Oriskany and was himself carried off prisoner to Canada, stripped of his clothing and all valuables and denied what he considered proper food. The same affidavit tells of the murder of Col. Isaac Paris by the Indians after some Tories had kicked and abused him.

Americans Held Control at End

When it became finally apparent that they had been left victorious in possession of the field, the 150 able-bodied survivors of the day's fighting on the American side withdrew down the valley, after gathering up on litters their wounded including General Herkimer.

While they had no idea when they withdrew what had happened in connection with the sortie, they knew that there were too few of them to hope to make a successful entry into the fort against opposition, but even if they had known that the garrison at the fort was strong enough to hold off the enemy should they have approached to enter, they undoubtedly considered that their first duty now lay in the direction of caring for the large number of their own wounded for whom there was no help available except back at the settlements miles away.

Herkimer undoubtedly commanded his army during its withdrawal from the field in which they had been left in full possession as he had during the long battle. The night following the battle the militia army spent at Old Fort Schuyler, now Utica. From that point Herkimer and others of the more seriously wounded were placed in boats and floated down the Mohawk, Herkimer being taken to his own mansion at Danube where he was to die. Another one of the wounded taken down the river by boat as a member of the same party was Captain Seeber who had suffered a broken leg. When the leg was amputated he bled to death, a similar fate to that which was soon to overtake General Herkimer.

There have been many disputes in years gone by as to which side won the Battle of Oriskany. St. Leger unquestionably succeeded in preventing the relief of Fort Stanwix by Herkimer's expedition. Just as assuredly Herkimer remained master of the battlefield at the close of the battle. As he turned about and retraced his course down the valley, some inquisitors ask why he did that, if victorious? The answer lies in his desire to care for his wounded, and the difficulties which would have been experienced in approaching Ft. Stanwix because of the many swamps which lay between it and the battlefield. Another question frequently asked is why, if he was victorious Herkimer's army did not remain to bury their dead? Apart from the probable fact that they did not have tools along to make this possible, and the fact that such a task would have been almost impossible of accomplishment in a primeval forest filled with a tangle of tree roots, there is the fact that the survivors first thoughts turned to their wounded comrades and of their need for help and gave their attention to the constructing of litters on which they might be carried back to Fort Dayton.

St. Leger Appeals to Fear

For a period of two weeks or more after the Battle of Oriskany, St. Leger attempted a campaign of fear, cajolery and bombardment and annoyances against the garrison at Fort Stanwix, with the single purpose of endeavoring to bring about capitulation by Col. Gansevoort and the surrender of Ft. Stanwix.

St. Leger sent officers under flags of truce into Stanwix to offer what he endeavored to color as "generous terms" to the Americans, if they would but lay down their arms, always adding, however, that if they did not do so that he would not be responsible for what might happen to the garrison as he was with difficulty holding the savages of his command in control, greedy for booty that might accompany the sacking of the fort and burning for revenge upon the Americans as the result of their losses at Oriskany. Col. Gansevoort and his officers so far from being softened by these tactics, became convinced that St. Leger would not keep on making such offers and threats if he thought that there was possibility that he might take the fort by storm or otherwise. Then St. Leger would try again, placing virtually the same offers and the same implied threats in letters which he dispatched to Gansevoort. Then he would send a delegation down the valley in an effort to strike fear in the hearts of the residents of the valley and discourage any effort on their part to send up another force in an effort to raise the siege on Ft. Stanwix.

Seeks to Break Morale

Next, discovering that the garrison were moving out at night to a stream of water which ran near the fort to bring in supplies of water from the stream to augment the single well in the fort, St. Leger caused the course of the stream to be changed at night so that it no longer ran near the fort. The garrison dug two more wells within the walls of the fort, however, and thus restored an adequate supply. Indians would sneak up under the cover of darkness close to the fort walls, watching for opportunities to tomahawk members of parties sent out after dark to bring fire wood into the fort, and watch for every possible means to harass and annoy the garrison and destroy its morale.

Determined not to let the fort fall in a surprise attack, Col. Gansevoort under date of Aug. 19 directed every man in the garrison to take his alarm station at 2 o'clock each night and continue there all night from that time forward. In every way the officers and garrison were alertly co-operating with the commandant to keep up morale and to make sure that every move of the enemy was detected in time to be thwarted, if possible. The garrison consisted of about 650 men at this time or only about one-third the size of the attacking force.

Cannonading continued irregularly at all hours of the day and night. Also rifle fire. Occasionally a cannon ball killed or wounded someone in the garrison, but the damage done was small in proportion to the ammunition expended.

There never seems to have been the least belief on the part of General St. Leger that he might carry Fort Stanwix by storm after he first observed its works. He never made the attempt. Early he had learned that his artillery was insufficient in power and quantity to be a threat to the fort, the cannon ball entering the sod works about the fort and penetrating them without explosions causing any damage. Finally as a last resort he took up the plan of digging trench approaches to the fort which would permit him to bring up under cover his artillery close enough to the walls of the fort to bring it within destructive range, or from which he could undertake the construction of mines which might be exploded under the bastions.

Trenching Started

A trench was started, probably on the high ground north of the fort near where one of the batteries had early been set up by the British. It was run at first

in a westerly direction, and thereafter was zig-zagged in such a manner as to be always out of range of direct fire from the fort's guns while at the same time approaching the strong, northwest bastion of the fort. Twelve days elapsed before the trench was to get near enough to the fort to give the garrison any particular concern.

Colbraith's diary mentions under date of August 19: "The enemy threw some shells at us near noon. They were busy at their trench all day. At night they struck their trench towards the point of our northwest bastion and by day light had got within 150 yards of the ditch. We fired some grape shot at them now and then all night. At every shot we fired they threw shells at us but did no damage." On Aug. 20. Colbraith recorded that the enemy "could work but little on their trench, it being so nigh that our small arms, as well as our cannon shot, was too hot for them. In the evening they began their trench again and worked all night on it, under fire of our cannon and small arms but did not approach any nearer."

Learns of Arnold's Approach

On August 21, General St. Leger received word for the first time that General Benedict Arnold was on his way to Ft. Stanwix with a relief expedition which was then only about 30 miles away. That day and night the general seems to have intensified his activities in further effort to "throw a scare" into the garrison with the hope that it might possibly lead to an offer to accept his terms. At 2 o'clock in the morning during a night of cannonading and bombardment, the garrison sent a detachment out which, undiscovered brought into the fort the first great quantity of firewood. The enemy's trench was brought nearer to the fort, and a bomb battery was started where they had left off the preceding day. Two deaths from wounds previously received were reported on that day, and a desertion. Colbraith reported: "Our guard kept a constant fire at those working in the trench, and in the evening 12 of the best marksmen were picked out to harass them at work in the night which galled them so much that their Indians were sent for to draw our attention, who advanced near the fort, which caused a general alarm, by which a heavy and continued firing was kept up for near two hours, during which their cannon and mortars were playing on us very briskly, in which interim we had a man of the artillery wounded and a woman wounded in the thigh." A corporal and three privates deserted the garrison that evening and one private in the morning.

What St. Leger Told Burgoyne

"In the midst of these operations intelligence was brought in by our scouts, of a second corps of 1,000 men being on their march" wrote St. Leger in his report to Burgoyne. "The same zeal no longer animated the Indians; they complained of our thinness of troops and their former losses. I immediately called a council of the chiefs; encouraged them as much as I could; promised to lead them on myself, and bring into the field 300 of the best troops. They listened to this, and promised to follow me, and agreed that I should reconnoiter the ground properest for the field of battle the next morning, accompanied by some of their chief warriors, to settle the plan of operations.

"When upon the ground appointed for the field of battle, scouts came in with the account of the first number swelled to 2,000; immediately after a third, that General Burgoyne's army was cut to pieces, and that Arnold was advancing, by rapid and forced marches, with 3,000 men. It was at this moment I began to suspect cowardice in some and treason in others; however, I re-

turned to camp, not without hopes, with the assistance of my gallant coadjutor, Sir John Johnson, and the influence of the superintending Colonels, Claus and Butler, of inducing them to meet the enemy. A council, according to their custom, was called, to know their resolutions, before the breaking up of which I learned that 200 (Indians) were already decamped. In about an hour they insisted that I should retreat, or they would be obliged to abandon me. I had no other part to take, and a hard part it was to troops who could do nothing without them, to yield to their resolves; and therefore proposed to retire at night, sending on before me my sick, wounded, artillery, etc., down the Wood Creek, covering them by our line of march.

"This did not fall in with their views, which were no less than treacherously committing ravage upon their friends, as they had lost the opportunity of doing it upon their enemies. To effect this they artfully caused messengers to come in, one after another, with accounts of the near approaches of the rebels; one and the last affirmed that they were within two miles of Captain Lernoult's post. Not giving entire credit to this, and keeping to my resolution of retiring by night, they grew furious and abandoned; seized upon the officers' liquours and cloaths, in spite of the efforts of their servants; and became more formidable than the enemy we had to expect."

Hon. Yost Schuyler's Role

Here we interrupt St. Leger's report to interpolate one of the several stories told on the arrival of Hon. Yost Schuyler posing as a simple-minded boy, among the British encampments. Schuyler, after arrest, had earlier been allowed his freedom by Arnold on condition that he carry the news of the advance of Arnold's relief column to St. Leger with exaggeration. Stone thus relates the subsequent proceedings:

"Before his departure (from Arnold's camp) several shots were fired through Schulyer's clothes, that he might appear to have had a narrow escape; and an Oneida Indian, by taking a circuitous route to Fort Schuyler (Stanwix), was to fall into the enemy's camp from another direction, and aid Hon Yost in creating the panic desired. The emissary first presented himself among the Indians, who were in a very suitable state of mind to be wrought upon by exactly such a personage. They had been moody and dissatisfied ever since the battle of Oriskany—neither the success nor the plunder promised them had won them over, and they had previously received some vague and indefinite intelligence respecting the approach of Arnold. They had likewise been holding a pow-wow, or were actually convened in one, for the purpose of consulting the Manitto touching the dubious enterprise in which they were engaged, when Hon Yost arrived. Knowing their character well, he communicated his intelligence to them in the most mysterious and imposing manner. Pointing to his riddled garments, he proved to them how narrow had been his escape from the approaching army of the rebels. When asked the number of troops Arnold was leading against them, he shook his head mysteriously and pointed upward toward the leaves of the trees. The reports spread rapidly through the camps, and reaching the ears of the commander, Hon. Yost was sent for to report at the tent of St. Leger himself. Here he was interrogated, and gave information that General Arnold, with 2.000 men, was so near that he would be upon them within twenty-four hours. He gave St. Leger a pitiable narrative of his captivity, trial, and condemnation to the gallows. Meantime the Oneida messenger arrived with a belt, and confirm-

ed to the Indians all that Schuyler had said; adding, that the Americans had no desire to injure the Indians, and were intent only upon attacking the British troops and rangers. While making his way to the camp of the besiegers, the ingenious Oneida had fallen in with some two or three straggling Indians of his acquaintance, to whom he communicated his business, and whose assistance in furthering the design he engaged."

Indians Believed Selves "Used"

St. Leger's own scouts had given him information of Arnold's movements, as St. Leger states in his report and that statement may well be accepted in view of the accurate information he had previously received as to Herkimer's advance. But as Arnold had not yet moved from Fort Dayton up to the night of August 21st, we may credit his ruse in employing Hon Yost Schuyler with having had much to do with the stampede of the British forces. However, in this connection there are certain features that must not be overlooked:

The Indians had been disgruntled ever since their losses in killed and injured at Oriskany and in property before Fort Stanwix as a result of Willet's sortie. It has not, however, been remarked how St. Leger's admitted proposal that they again go forth in an endeavor similarly to ambush Arnold, must have appeared to them. Thus far not more than a handful of the white troops had been brought into actual combat with the enemy. The Indians felt that this was a complete reversal of the expected positions of the two groups in the expedition. Instead of supporting the whites, they were being asked to take the brunt of every engagement. St. Leger seems to have felt the justness of this reproach or he would not have offered to go out with the best of his troops to meet Arnold. But between the effecting of that agreement and the morning inspection of the proposed battleground occurred the night affray in the trenches, when the British commander had sent a hurry call for his Indian allies.

It will be interesting here to insert the brief summary of the raising of the siege penned in the following October by Colonel Claus in his official report, keeping mind the fact that Claus was officially responsible for the conduct of the Indians attached to the St. Leger expedition:

"The Indians, finding that our besieging the fort was of no effect, our troops but few, a reinforcement, as was reported ,of 1,500 or 2,000 men, with field pieces, by the way, began to be dispirited and fell off by degrees. The chiefs advised the brigadier to retreat to Oswego, and get better artillery from Niagara, and more men, and so return and renew the siege; to which the brigadier agreed, and accordingly retreated on the 22d of August."

Colbraith's Account

Picking up the story once more from Colbraith's journal we read: "August 22—This morning the enemy bombarded very smartly. The sergeant major and two privates were wounded. At noon a deserter came to us, whose examination was: that the enemy had news in the camp that Burgoyne's army was entirely routed and that 3,000 men were coming up to reinforce us, and further that the enemy was retreating with great precipitation and that he, with another, was conveying off one Lieutenant Anderson's chest, when he made his escape, and that most of the baggage was gone. Upon which the commanding officer ordered all the cannon bearing on their works to fire several rounds to see whether they would return it, which partly confirmed the report of the deserter.

"Some time after four men came in and reported the same (facts), and that they had left

part of their baggage. Upon which the colonel ordered 50 men and two wagons under command of Captain Jansen to go to their camp where they killed two Indians and took four prisoners; one of them was an Indian. After they had loaded the wagons with what baggage they could carry, they returned, but night coming on, they could not return to fetch what baggage was still left in their camp. At night, two men came in; one of them was assisting the first deserter in carrying off Lieutenant Anderson's chest, the other Hon Yost Schuyler, who informed the commanding officer that he was taken prisoner at the German Flatts and confined at Fort Dayton five days. That General Arnold had sent him to General St. Leger, commander of the king's troops, to inform him that 2,000 militia were on the march to this place to reinforce the garrison, that he had informed General St. Leger of it and in consequence of which he ordered his troops to strike their tents and pack up. And further, after he had done his errand, he hid himself in the woods till night, and coming across the above men they came in together. He likewise informed that 17 Indians were at Fort Newport quite d r u n k; upon which the colonel ordered a party of men under the command of Major Cochran to go and take them, who in about an hour returned and informed the colonel he had been there and did not find any, and that he went to Wood Creek and found eight new Batteaux, which the enemy had left behind. While they were out, the woman who was wounded with a shell splinter last night was brought to bed in our southwest bombproof with a daughter. She and the child are like to do well, with the blessing of God. Our blockade ended, and the garrison once more at liberty to walk about and take the free air we had for twenty-one days been deprived of. At 12 o'clock this night the commanding officer sent off three of his regiment to inform General Arnold of the precipitate retreat of the enemy. A deserter came in who said he had just left the enemy's cohorts below Wood Creek bridge."

St. Leger at Fort Brewerton

"Most of the boats were escorted that night beyond Canada Creek, where no danger was to be apprehended from the enemy," continues St. Leger's report to Burgoyne. "The creek at this place, bending from the road, has a deep cedar swamp between. Every attention was now turned to the mouth of the creek, which the enemy might have possessed themselves of, by a rapid march by the Oneyda Castle. At this place the whole of the little army arrived by 12 o'clock at night, and took post in such manner as to have no fears of anything the enemy could do. Here we remained until 3 o'clock next morning, when the boats which could come up the (Wood) creek arrived—or rather that the rascally part of all nations of the Indians would suffer to come up—and (then) proceeded across Lake Oneyda to the ruined fort of Brewerton, where I learnt that some boats were still laboring down the creek, after being lightened of the best part of their freight by the Massassagoes. Captain Lerncult proposed, with a boatful of armed men, to repass the lake that night to relieve them from their labor, and supply them with provisions. This transaction does as much honor to the humanity as to the gallantry of this valuable officer.

"On my arrival at the Onondaga (Oswego) Falls, I received an answer to my letter from your excellency, which showed, in the clearest light, the scene of treachery that had been practiced on me. The messenger had heard indeed on his way that they were collecting the same kind of rabble as before, but that there

was not an enemy within forty miles of Fort Stanwix."

Indians Robbed Tories

"August 23—This morning the colonel sent out a party under the command of Major Cochran to take them (the British cannon) below Wood Creek bridge," says Colbraith's Journal, "who returned with prisoners and four cohorns and some baggage, and reported there were seventeen batteaux lying there. Another party was sent to the enemy's north camp to bring in the rest of the baggage left by us last night, consisting of ammunition, camp equippage and entrenching tools. Another party was sent to the enemy's southeast camp, who brought in fifteen wagons, a three-pound fieldpiece carriage with all its apparatus. Most of the wagon wheels were cut to pieces as were the wheels of the carriage.

"Several scouts were sent out today, one of whom took a German prisoner, who reported that the Indians had, when they got about ten miles from this fort, fallen on the scattering Tories, took their arms from them, and stabbed them with their own bayonets. And that for fear of said Indians, he and nine more German (Hessian) soldiers took to the woods. The rest are not yet found. Their design was not to come to the fort, as Butler and Johnson told them, when orders were given to retreat, that those who fell into our hands, would be hanged immediately. Another scout proceeded to Canada Creek, found a carriage for a six-pounder and three boxes of cannon shot, which they brought in."

When St. Leger wrote Burgoyne that there had not been "an enemy within forty miles" of them when the British retreated from Fort Stanwix, he was short of the truth, since Fort Dayton was barely 30 miles away. However, Arnold had not moved from that place of rendezvous until after St. Leger's fleeing troops had passed their night of terror on the banks of Canada Creek. We now pick up the movements of Arnold and his forces, through the following letter which Arnold sent to General Gates, who was now in command of the Department of the North after displacing General Philip Schuyler. The letter was dated: "Mohawk River, 10 miles above Fort Dayton, Aug. 23, 1777, 5 o'clock p. m." It read as follows:

Arnold to Gates

"Dear General: I wrote you Aug. 21st inst. from the German Flatts that from the best intelligence I could procure of the enemy's strength it was much superior to ours, at the same time inclosed you copy of the resolutions of a Council of War, and requested you to send me a reinforcement of 1,000 light troops. As the enemy had made their approaches within 200 yards of the fort, I was determined at all events to hazard a battle rather than suffer the garrison to fall a sacrifice.

"This morning I marched from G. Flatts for this place. The excessive bad roads and necessary precautions, in marching through a thick woods retarded us so much, that we have but this moment reached this place, where I met an express with the inclosed letter from Col. Gansevoort acquainting me the enemy had yesterday retired from Fort Schuyler with great precipitation. I am at a loss to judge their real intentions, whether they have returned home, or retired with a view of engaging us on the road. I am inclined to think the forfer from the account of the deserters and from their leaving their tents and considerable baggage which our people have procured.

"I shall immediately detach about nine hundred men and make a forced march to the fort in hopes of coming up with their rear and securing their cannon and heavy baggage. My artillery, tents, etc., etc., I shall leave here,

the batteaux with provisions follow me. As soon as the security of the post will permit, I will return with as many men as can be spared. As I come down in batteaux, shall be able to make great dispatch. I have sent an order for the light troops, if you have sent any, to return to you immediately, and the militia to go home."

St. Leger Wrote Report Here

Under date of August 27th, St. Leger penned at Fort Ontario, Oswego, his official report to General Burgoyne, most of which has already been given herein. He closes his report with the following paragraphs:

"Soon after my arrival here I was joined by Captain Lernoult with the men and the boats he had been in search of. I mean immediately to send off for the use of the upper garrison, all the overplus of provisions I shall have, after keeping a sufficiency to carry my detachment down (the St. Lawrence) which I mean to do with every expedition in my power the moment this business is effected, for which purpose I have ordered here the Snow. The sloop is already gone from this (place) with her full lading.

"Officers from each corps are sent to Montreal to procure necessaries for the men, who are in the most deplorable situation from the plunder of the savages, that no time may be lost to join your army."

Colonel Claus writing his official report of St. Leger's expedition, addressed to Secretary Knox, from Montreal in the middle of October, after his mind had had opportunity to mull over the events of the expedition, concluded that document as follows:

Indians Reclothed

"On our arrival at Oswego, August 26th, and examining into the state of the troops' necessaries, the men were found without shoes and other things, which only could be got at Montreal, the brigadier at the same time having received a letter from General Burgoyne directing him to join him, either by march through the woods back of Tryon County (which was impracticable) or the way he came. He adopted the latter on account of procuring necessaries for the men. The Indians were as much as possible reconciled to this resolution, with the promise that they should be convened as soon as Colonel Butler could return from Montreal with some necessaries for them. There being Indian traders at Oswego, I saw myself under a necessity to clothe these Indians which lost their packs by the rebels at Fort Stanwix, which made them return home contented.

Claus's Final Conclusions

"Thus has an expedition miscarried merely for want of timely and good intelligence. For it is impossible to believe that, had Brigadier St. Leger known the real state of the fort and garrison at Fort Stanwix, he could not possibly have proceeded from Montreal without a sufficient train of artillery and his full complement of troops. And yet, by what I find, very large sums have been expended on account of government at Niagara, upon the Indians these two years past, and they at the same time kept inactive; whereas, had these presents been properly applied, the Six Nations might not only have prevented Fort Stanwix from being reestablished, but even let not a rebel come near it or keep it up,—it being almost in the heart of their country, and they with reluctance saw the crown erect a fort there in the last war.

"All the good done by the expedition was (that) the ringleaders and principle men of the rebels of Tryon County were put out of the way; but had we succeeded, it must be of vast good to the northern operations, and its miscarrying, I apprehend, to my deep concern, to be the reverse."

Indians Blamed to Conceal Panic

At the opening of the Battle of Oriskany according to both General St. Leger and Colonel Claus there were 80 whites and 800 Indians participating on the British side. Granting that the Indians lost "some 70 of their chief warriors", also as officially reported, implies that there were many more other warriors killed or wounded. Of the surviving Indians nearly all remained with St. Leger at Ft. Stanwix from Oriskany day to August 26, when St. Leger moved out under the cover of darkness in a hurry. From Claus' report it appears that he outfitted many of the Indians at Oswego, purchasing goods from the traders he found here to accomplish this purpose, to replace the losses they suffered when Willet raided the Indian camp while the Indians themselves were fighting for their lives on Oriskany's bloody battlefield. Claus would have provided no such replacement articles had there been a large-scale disintegration of the Indian contingent during the retreat to Oswego from Ft. Stanwix, or if any considerable number of the Indians had attacked and robbed what remained of Johnson's "Greens" or the Hessian chasseurs. In all probability had many of the Indians turned upon the whites to rob them on the return journey to Oswego, there would probably have been very few of the British regulars, the Hessians or Johnson's Tories left alive to get back to Oswego.

Apparently what happened was that some of the Indians, including principally the Canadian Missisagues, grasped the opportunity to plunder the officers' liquor supplies and became badly intoxicated, after which there was no way for controlling them. If the whites had not permitted themselves to be so thoroughly frightened as to become panic sticken their losses to their Indian allies would probably not have developed at all. In the end their highest officers ascribed to theft by their Indian allies the loss of many articles and supplies that had really been abandoned by the army in its precipitate flight and which later was taken into Fort Stanwix from the abandoned camps.

From Oswego Butler led his Indians, freshly clothed by Claus, back to Fort Niagara, Johnson's Greens left for Oswegatchie and St. Leger's regulars, and the remainder of his Hessians and the Canadian rangers and boatmen returned to Montreal by sailing ships and smaller boats whence they proceeded down the Champlain valley to join Burgoyne above Saratoga. They were a part of the army that he surrendered there in October. After their withdrawal from Fort Ontario the fort was left wholly ungarrisoned for the time being.

Necrology

MISS CORA F. Van BUREN
May 28, 1945

DR. FRED P. HICKEY
July 9, 1945

EDWIN J. MIZEN
July 19, 1945

MRS. NEVA DRURY MacCORDY
September 7, 1945

MRS. JOHN M. GILL
November 21, 1945

DANIEL A. WILLIAMS
November 30, 1945

MRS. NORMAN L. BATES
December 25, 1945