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Tenth Publication
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Oswego Historical Society



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* Resigned July 1, 1946.

**Designated by the Board to fill the vacancy caused by Mrs. Riggs' resignation.

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FALL AND WINTER PROGRAM

1946

October 15—"In the Days of the Twin Shires," member of faculty, Pulaski Academy and Central School. Meeting at Pulaski Academy.

November 19—"George Casper Schroepfel, a First Citizen," Thad R. Siver of Phoenix, former Chairman Oswego County Board of Supervisors. Meeting at Sweet Memorial Building in Phoenix.

November 19—"Early Events in Phoenix History," George Chesbro of Phoenix, Local Historian, Town of Schroepfel. Meeting at Sweet Memorial Building, Phoenix.

1947

January 14—Fifty-first Annual Meeting of Oswego Historical Society Tanner Memorial, Oswego. Paper, "Public Entertainment in Oswego from 1891 to 1946," Dr. Charles F. Wells, director of English Department, Oswego State Teachers College. Meeting at Tanner Memorial Building, Oswego.

February 18—"Ballads of Old Oswego," Paper by James Moreland of the Faculty of Oswego State Teachers' College, to be given in Oswego at Tanner Memorial.

March 18—"Story of the Oswego Canal," Paper by Charles M. Snyder of the Social Studies Faculty of the Oswego State Teachers' College to be presented at Oswego.

April 16—"Some Phases of the Excavations at Brewerton and the Significance Historically of their Discoveries." Charles Denman of the Oswego County Historical Society who has shared in these discoveries. Paper to be given at Oswego.

May 20—Meeting at Fulton. Program to be announced later.

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LOOKING AHEAD

For fifty years past Oswego Historical Society has been carrying on under substantially the same by-law provisions which governed the Society's operations back in 1896. So far-seeing were the founding members of the Society in determining the by-law provisions that would be necessary to meet the needs of the Society that the by-laws which they adopted have proven adequate and satisfactory down until the present time. Even now, when the Society seems to be entering upon a new era in its existence—an era that promises to bring bigger and better things to the Society, its members and to the broader community which it serves—with the making of but a few changes, carefully framed to provide stronger and more adequate machinery for meeting of the new problems which the future will bring forth, the present by-laws should, in the main, continue to serve as a satisfactory guide. Some changes in by-law provisions, however, would seem to be necessary to meet changed conditions under which the Society seems likely to be called upon to function in the future in new and enlarged fields.

The year 1947 may bring new responsibilities to the Society growing out of the movement launched by it in October 1946 which has for its objective the permanent preservation as a historical landmark of Fort Ontario and its immediate environs. State action in this matter which is being sought by the Society through the State Department of Education which will have the power to acquire the old fort and its surrounding battlefields of 1756 and 1814 and to provide for the permanent future care as historic sites through funds appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose, may result in our Society being called upon to serve in an advisory capacity to the state in regard to tentative plans for the development of a Regional Museum at Old Fort Ontario and in regard to needed or desirable improvements in the future. Preliminary action in this matter awaits the transfer by the War Department to the State of the control of the former Fort Reservation which the conditions of the original transfer by the State of New York to the Federal government for use as a military post provided should revert to the state if and when it should cease to be used for military purposes.

The year 1947 will also bring into the custody of the Society one of the pieces of real estate which the thoughtfulness, public spirit and generosity of persons whose ancestors were long identified with this Society and the Oswego community, have led them to destine for future ownership by this Society. We are not now well set-up to control and provide for the care of real estate, although we are legally authorized to receive and own it. Members of our Board of Managers now hold office for but a single year. A board, with the terms of office of its members expiring by groups in one, two and three years would seem to be desirable to assure greater stability of policy and the presence upon the board at all times of persons who shall have acquired an intimate knowledge of the problems involved in the administration of the property. In connection with the provision of increased funds that will be necessary to permit proper administration of the property that will be entrusted to the Society's care, attention should be given by the Society to such matters of establishing a permanent endowment fund upon a proper basis, encouragement of the taking out of life memberships in the Society by members able and willing to do so, possible upward revision of the dues, and other kindred matters.

The present president of the Society, who will be retiring from office as the matters set forth on this page are beginning to take shape and press for attention, believes it to be his duty to recommend to the incoming administration of the Society that immediate study and careful consideration be given these matters to the end that wise and appropriate action may be taken in relation to them in the near future to prepare the Society for the task of carrying on successfully the enlarged responsibilities which now lie directly ahead.

"Lest We Forget"



GROVE A. GILBERT

A native of Oswego County, descended from those pioneer Gilberts who settled in 1818 at the site of the hamlet in the Town of Schroepel now known as "Gilbertsville" in recognition of this fact, Grove A. Gilbert of Fulton has been for a decade one of the most interested, active and helpful members of Oswego County Historical Society. He enjoys the distinction of having proposed for membership in the Society a greater number of persons than has any other member of the Society. His reputation with us for purposeful accomplishment has become so axiomatic that the saying, "If you want a thing well done, have Grove Gilbert do it," is frequently heard in our ranks. Mr. Gilbert was first elected a vice-president of the Society in 1939. He has since served it continuously in that office. Only two others of the Society's vice-presidents have served longer in that office than has he. For many years Mr. Gilbert served as chairman of the Extension Committee of the Society. He also served as chairman of the special committee which arranged for the "Historical Tour" of the Society in 1941 and also as chairman of the special committee on Grounds and Dinner Arrangements that contributed so much to the success of the Society's Golden Anniversary Celebration which took place July 15, 1946, at the former VanBuren Inn in the Town of Volney. "In recognition of Mr. Gilbert's sustained zeal in the interests of this Society, and his many helpful contributions to its work," the Board of Managers of Oswego Historical Society had directed the dedication of this volume to him.

Necrology

MISS CORA A. BROWN
February 23, 1946

FREDERICK A. EMERICK
March 21, 1946

RICHARD K. PIEZ
June 8, 1946

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A Century of Public Entertainment In Oswego County-Academy of Music Period

(Second of a Series of Papers of Similar Theme Prepared for Presentation Before the Society by Dr. Charles F. Wells, Director of the English Department of Oswego State Teachers College. This Paper Was Delivered at Oswego January 8, 1946.)

Modern drama came to Oswego with the opening of the Academy of Music in 1875. Public entertainments of various kinds had been an important part of the social and cultural life of the community for many years previously, and public interest in stage plays had grown rapidly after the Civil War, but the presentation of great plays by good acting companies had been impossible because of limited stage facilities. From 1845 to 1875 a few plays, and a great many concerts, lectures, minstrels and exhibitions had been presented in Franklin Hall, Market Hall, Fitzhugh Hall, and Doolittle Hall*. These early theatres, however, had been small, cramped, cold, bare halls with tiny platforms upon which the players performed as best they could. The actors who visited Oswego had struggled against great odds to present a variety of interesting entertainments, but had always been handicapped by a lack of space and stage equipment. Public interest in drama had developed rapidly during the 1860s and 1870s, and had laid the foundation for the great days to come. Plays, actors and audiences were ready, only a suitable theatre was needed to bring a great era of entertainment to Oswego. The Academy of Music provided the place**.

Early in 1875 the old Doolittle Hall, located at the northeast

corner of Water and Market Streets*, was purchased by the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad from Sylvester Doolittle, original owner of the block. After some delay the new owners decided to renovate the old hall, which had served as a makeshift theatre since it was built in 1853, into a modern, well-equipped opera house. Accordingly the place was completely remodelled, and reopened as the Oswego Academy of Music. This new place of entertainment was a real theatre with a large stage equipped with footlights, scenery and a roll-up front curtain. It was perfectly suited for the presentation of plays, and became the principal place of dramatic entertainment in Oswego County for the ensuing eighteen years. Upon its stage most of the famous actors and actresses of the period appeared in the popular plays of the time. The Academy of Music provided a much needed theatre and brought modern drama to Oswego.

Lackawanna Creates Theatre

President Sam Sloan and directors of the D. L. & W. railroad organized the project and furnished technical advisors and laborers for the reconstruction of Doolittle Hall. Plans for the remodelling were drawn by Lackawanna engineers; the work of building the stage and sloping the auditorium floor was done by railroad carpenters, and much of the painting and art work was done by railroad painters under the supervision of outside artists.

Commenting on improvements

*The site is now a large vacant lot on the river front just north of Oswego's first City Hall, erected in 1837 and yet standing.

* For an account of this period see "Public Entertainment In Oswego, 1845-1875" in the 1945 Yearbook of the Oswego County Historical Society.

** The author wishes to express his grateful appreciation to Dr. Lida Penfield and Mr. Frederick Barnes for advice and materials; to Mrs. John S. Parsons, Mr. Edwin M. Waterbury, and the Oswego Historical Society for use of books of theatre programs; and to the Oswego Public Library for use of newspaper files.

made in Doolittle Hall the "Oswego Daily Times" of September 22, 1875, said: "The people of this city can scarcely be too grateful to President Sloan and the directors of the D. L. & W. Co., for this evidence of the interest they take in our city. The property which that company has purchased in this city has evidently fallen into good hands, and while the benefit to Oswego from becoming the terminus of this great railroad line can not be over estimated, the interest the managers have taken in improving and beautifying the property, which occupies a central position in our city, can not fail to be very gratifying to all of our citizens."

The work done on the old building was thorough and complete inside and out. Beginning with the foundation the engineers installed sixteen solid stone piers, resting on a pile foundation, under the building to hold it firm and secure. The east and west walls were strengthened by ten anchor irons on each side fastened to pillars and beams. The outside of the building was greatly improved by a coat of paint.

Large Stage Provided

The stage itself was enlarged and completely rebuilt with all modern improvements and scenery. The new stage was 28 feet deep by 44 feet wide, with a curtain opening 25 feet wide and 16 feet high. The tormenter wings represented a Knight and a Page, and the roll-up front curtain was a handsome piece of art work copied from the famous painting "Washington Crossing the Delaware."

The trend in stage settings during the nineteenth century was toward realism and efficient handling. Scene painters, with great skill, patience and ingenuity, created landscapes and buildings guaranteed to deceive the most cunning eye, and stage designers solved problems of rapid

scene shifting so plays could move forward without long delays. The Academy of Music was well supplied with the most improved sliding scenery; a large assortment of modern flats painted on burlap.

Ample Scenic Equipment

Interior scenes included a palace arch, a plain chamber, a prison scene, a kitchen, a hovel, a center door fancy, and a center door Gothic; exterior scenes included landscape, garden, rocky pass, dark woods, horizon and street scene. Set pieces consisted of one cottage, six rocks, one tree, two statues, one fireplace, two vases, a mossy bank, a set bridge, set waters, and a balustrade. A grand drapery border, three sky borders, three arched wood borders, one straight border, and three straight flies completed the scenery, all of which was painted by Horace N. Smith of Erie, Pa., a scenic artist of established reputation in the theatrical world.

The frescoing and ornamentation of the auditorium were very beautiful, and produced a brilliant effect when the room was lighted. A portrait of Shakespeare adorned the center of the proscenium arch, with one of Mozart on the right and Longfellow on the left. On the extreme right of the arch was an excellent portrait of Mr. Sam Sloan, president of the D. L. & W. RR., and on the left, one of Moses Taylor, the great capitalist and active director of the company. On the proscenium walls were large figures representing Tragedy and Comedy, painted from original designs of the French artist Chapin. These portraits and figures were all the work of Albert L. Thomas, an artist from Syracuse.

The frescoing which attracted much attention by its exquisite beauty, was the work of David L. Brown, boss painter of the D. L. & W. car shops in Oswego. Center pieces on the ceiling represented

Israel Putnam*, in the field of his Connecticut farm with his plow and team, receiving news of the Battle of Lexington; another painting showed Commodore Perry transferring his flag from the "Lawrence" to the "Niagara" during the battle of Lake Erie. On the ceiling were also coats of arms of the United States and of the D. L. & W. RR. Co.; and in the four corners the coats of arms of England, Ireland, France and Germany.

Seating Capacity 1,000

Early theatres in Oswego had been poorly and dimly lighted for dramatic entertainment, but with the introduction of gas lights it became possible to light the stage brightly enough to make visible every detail of scene and action. It also became possible to control the lights in such a way as to brighten or darken the stage as required to fit the mood of the play. The Academy of Music was equipped with the latest developments in theatre lighting by gas. The auditorium was lighted by two six foot cone reflectors, each containing 36 gas burners, and by 15 double brackets distributed in various parts of the hall. The stage was brilliantly illuminated by sunken foot-lights, also of gas, and by four lines of border lights, ten gas burners to each border. All of the lights on the stage and in the auditorium were governed by apparatus at the prompter's stand just off the right side of the stage. In spite of all these modern improvements the chief objections of flickering lights and an unpleasant odor of escaping gas were never wholly corrected in Oswego theatrical centers until the introduction of electric lights at the Richardson Theatre of a later period. Gas fixtures used in the Academy were from Iden and

Company of New York, and were installed by Richard Walpole.

The floor of the auditorium inclined upward from the stage to the rear of the hall, the rise being four feet and eight inches in seventy feet. Each row of seats was two and five-eighths inches above the row in front to give spectators better visibility of the stage. The parquette was provided with 360 Koeshling patent folding opera chairs upholstered in green plush, while the dress circle, family circle in the side gallery, and the back gallery were provided with iron frame settees upholstered with drab enamel cloth. Seat frames were manufactured at the Kingsford Iron Works, and upholstered by David Sinclair, and Moore and Fineron of Oswego.

Galleries, extending around the entire body of the hall in the shape of a horse shoe, rested upon self-supporting trusses and were further supported by six enlarged pillars which had been placed in Doolittle Hall a year previously. Two stairways led to the side galleries, and one to the back gallery. Each row of seats was raised sufficiently above those in front to give a full view of the stage from any seat. The theatre was capable of seating 1,000 people, by placing stools and extra chairs in the aisles.

Appointment Details

A hot air furnace, installed by Milo Plank with Kinyon and Company, heated the auditorium through three large registers in the center of the hall. These registers often served in playful pranks of local young bloods, who after spending an intermission in a nearby bar, would amuse themselves by jumping over the wide registers as they were moving to regain their seats. Six floor ventilators and two dome ventilators in the roof carried away fumes from the lighting fixtures, and furnished fresh air for the audience.

Floors of the aisles and vesti-

*Israel Putnam before the American Revolution was a visitor in Oswego when he came as a participant in the French and Indian War, and particularly as an officer in General Jeffrey Amherst's expedition to receive the surrender of Montreal.

bules were covered with matting which deadened the noise made by people moving around. Doors at the side of the stage leading to a back stairway were thrown open at the close of entertainments to afford additional means of exit when the hall was crowded.

A property room of ample dimensions, and seven dressing rooms, provided with all the modern improvements and conveniences, were located upon the stage and in the rear of it.

A flag staff, surrounded by a handsome railing, was erected on the roof of the building. A hall flag, bearing the inscription "Academy of Music" in red letters, was raised upon this staff on days when an entertainment appeared in the hall. At the summit of the flag staff was a weather vane, consisting of a lyre and dart, under which were the four cardinal points of the compass.

All of these wonders moved the "Daily Times" editor to write: "If some person, familiar with Doolittle Hall, as it was four months ago, could have been kept in ignorance of the work that has been going on there, and could now be suddenly dropped into the Academy of Music, it would be difficult to convince him that he stood between the same four walls which formerly enclosed the dismal and uncomfortable hall, which was then the best place of amusement the city afforded. And after convincing him that such was the case, it would still be hard to persuade him that the marvelous transformation is the work of human skill and art, and has not been accomplished with the aid of a magician's wand. The tales of 'Arabian Nights' are brought to mind as one gazes upon the beauties of the interior of this magnificent temple of art, and we wonder if Supt. William B. Phelps, who supervised the work, is not the happy possessor of a wonderful lamp, a magic ring, or something of that sort, by means of which he summons one of the powerful genii of the oriental

fables to his assistance. The Academy of Music is a model of beauty, elegance, comfort and convenience, and every citizen of Oswego is proud of it."

"Corporal" Phelps First Manager

Mr. Phelps was at that time division superintendent for the D. L. & W. R.R. in charge of all the railroad's business and property from Oswego to Binghamton having been appointed to that position when the Lackawanna leased the former Oswego & Syracuse Railroad in 1869. Because of his small size and his stern and vigorous manner as well as the fact that he had been one of the first corporals to serve the "Oswego Guards" when they were organized in 1838, he was commonly referred to as "The Little Corporal." He was not experienced in theatre management but was assigned the task of operating the Academy of Music along with his many other duties as freight and passenger agent for the busy railroad. One day, shortly after the Academy was opened, his assistant informed him that a certain theatrical company wished to play an engagement in the theatre. Phelps wanted to know what kind of a show it was to be. The assistant said, "It's a kind of low comedy, with considerable horse-play in it." To which Phelps replied, "Write and tell them that the theatre is one flight up and there is no way to get their horses up there."

Mr. Phelps is also reported to have carried a railroad lantern with him at night to light his way about the gas-lighted streets, and when he came to the theatre he would carefully extinguish the lantern at the entrance and carry it with him down the aisle to his place in the auditorium. The spectators were always amused, but too discreet to make any comment directly to "the little Corporal."

In spite of his lack of theatre experience, Mr. Phelps managed

the Academy with great success until May 30, 1885, when John R. Pierce took over as business manager.

Formal Opening Sept. 30, 1875

The Academy was formally opened on Thursday, September 30th, 1875, with a "Grand Concert" presented by sixty distinguished artists, under the direction of Theodore Thomas, and featuring Madame Madeline Schiller, a celebrated pianist. The event drew together the finest audience ever assembled in an Oswego public hall, with President Sam Sloan and Moses Taylor of the D. L. & W. RR. Co., and Mayor William A. Poucher of Oswego among the prominent citizens present. A special train, which brought a large number of people from Fulton, was routed through the tunnel under West First street, across Bridge street and down Water street to the main entrance of the Academy. As soon as the theatre doors opened, people began to pour in, a great many arriving early in order to examine and admire the building before the concert. By 8 o'clock, the advertised hour for the concert to begin, the audience was nearly all seated.

After a short introductory overture by the orchestra, Mayor Poucher arose from his place in the audience to express to President Sloan the appreciation of the citizens of Oswego for the splendid theatre. President Sloan responded briefly, after which the concert was resumed. The stage in front of the conductor's stand was decorated with flowers and evergreens, with the name "Sam Sloan" wrought in evergreens a prominent feature.

Offered 1,117 Attractions

This modern, well-equipped theatre was at once a great success, and during the next eighteen years housed a large assortment of public entertainments which contributed substantially to the

cultural and social life of Oswego and the surrounding territory. The Academy of Music brought to Oswego what might be called a "Golden Age of Drama" since the finest plays of the English and American theatre were presented there by some of the greatest actors and actresses of the American stage. During the eighteen years the theatre was in operation a total of 1,117 different attractions was presented; an average of about 60 a year, or more than one attraction every week the year around. Actually the theatre was usually closed during the summer months, and open for a ten month period from September through May, approximately forty weeks out of the year. The average was therefore one and a half attractions every week during the theatrical season, and since many companies played engagements of several days to a week in length, the theatre was rarely dark for a single evening. The season of 1885 was the busiest of the 18 years with a total of 108 attractions, an average of two and one-half a week during the 40-week season.

"Enoch Arden" Opener

Legitimate drama with 670 plays out of the total of 1,117 attractions was by far the most popular form of entertainment at the Academy of Music. Operas and musicals were second in popularity with a total of 135 musical events scheduled during the eighteen year period. Minstrel shows came third with 73 different engagements, and 59 amateur entertainments a close fourth. Variety shows appeared 47 times for fifth place, and 31 lectures barely won over 30 burlesque shows for sixth place. Humpty-Dumpty companies appeared 23 times, and a miscellaneous assortment of magicians, mesmerists, and political orators completed the list of events scheduled at the theatre.

"Enoch Arden," a five-act

drama starring Edwin Adams and C. W. Couldock, was the first play to appear at the Academy of Music after the grand opening concert. From the date of this performance, October 7, 1875, until the theatre closed in 1893, a great variety of drama was presented for Oswego theatregoers. The plays included domestic and social comedy; historical drama which brought to life famous figures and events of the nation; plays of the frontier; romantic comedies and heroic tragedies of Shakespeare; classics from English and American literature; foreign importations; melodrama, farces, spectacles, propaganda plays, and serious drama; and all of the latest New York successes direct from long Broadway engagements.

Shakespeare Revivals Brought Great Names

The plays of Shakespeare were shown regularly year after year, though not as frequently as the lighter and more entertaining pieces by contemporary authors. Out of 670 plays presented during the eighteen year life of the playhouse, only 22 were by the Bard of Avon, a modest three percent of the total. Small though the figure may be, revivals of Shakespeare's plays were especially significant to the theatrical life of Oswego since they brought most of the great actors and actresses to the city: Edwin Booth in "Othello," Lawrence Barrett and Edward L. Davenport in "Julius Caesar," John McCullough in "Richard III," Maurice Barrymore and Modjeska in "As You Like It," Mary Anderson in "Romeo and Juliet," and many others to be discussed later in this report.

Oswegonians admired the genius of Shakespeare; his fine ear for the melody of words, his depth of human understanding, his amazing vitality, and his brilliant creative imagination which could send onto the stage hundreds of

characters as alive as any seen in everyday life. The great Shakespearean dramas presented everything on the stage that an audience could desire: hosts of characters, murders, royal processions, the gruesome, the ghostly and the ridiculous. Into his romantic tragedies Shakespeare put clowns, gravediggers, drunken servants, and garrulous soldiers, as well as noble and lofty characters to provide a great range of emotion and a variety of atmosphere. No emotion and no spectacle of Elizabethan drama, apparently, was too excessive for local audiences, if the advertisements, programs and reviews may be accepted as true.

"Othello," with its struggle arising from the troubled course of profound and passionate love, and "Romeo and Juliet," with the struggle between the lovers and a hostile world dominated by the hatred of families and the chances of Fortune, were evidently the most popular of the Shakespearean dramas since each appeared for six different engagements. "As You Like It" appeared three times; and "Hamlet," "The Merchant of Venice," and "Richard III" each two engagements to complete the list of Shakespeare's plays presented for the more discriminating devotees of serious drama.

Renowned Plays Produced

Among the more substantial dramas by famous authors, to be presented along with the plays of Shakespeare at the Academy were Jules Verne's "Michael Strogoff," Alexander Dumas' "Count of Monte Cristo" and "Camille;" a dramatization of Charlotte Bronte's "Jane Eyre;" Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton's "Richelieu;" Richard B. Sheridan's "The School for Scandal;" Steele MacKaye's "Hazel Kirke;" and Dion Boucicault's "Rip Van Winkle," "The Octoroon," and "The Shaughraun." This last named was one of the best Irish plays

written by the author, and was important because of the truthful delineations of Irish temperament. The principal character of Conn, a lovable and irresponsible wanderer, "the soul of the Fair, the life of every funeral, and the first fiddle at all weddings," was played by John Mackay when the drama was first presented in Oswego in 1877.

"Hazel Kirke" by Steele MacKaye was probably the most popular Broadway success to appear in Oswego, it having been played at the New York Madison Square Theatre for 486 consecutive performances. The plot resembled popular melodramas of the day. Hazel, a miller's daughter, is promised by her stern father in marriage to an old family benefactor. She loves a young lord in disguise, with whom she elopes, but when she finds that the marriage ceremony is not legal she throws herself into a mill race. She is saved in the nick of time, and everyone is reconciled for a happy ending. When the piece was played in Oswego on November 22, 1882, Mrs. E. L. Davenport, wife of the famous Shakespearean actor, appeared in the role of Mercy Kirke; C. W. Couldock as Dunstan Kirke; and Effie Ellsler in the title role. The play competed with "Uncle Tom's Cabin" for public favor, but was never played in Oswego as often as the anti-slavery melodrama.

"Uncle Tom" Hardy Perennial

"Uncle Tom's Cabin," dramatized from Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous novel, was unquestionably the most popular and frequently played drama to be presented at the Academy of Music. The play had been given a few times in Oswego before and during the Civil War, but reached its greatest height of popularity during the Reconstruction period. Though lacking in literary merit the dramatization had a tremendous influence on public opinion,

and did much to arouse sympathy for the newly freed slaves.

The story of Uncle Tom, the faithful slave, his great love for little Eva, his loyalty to his master, and his death at the hands of Simon Legree, became a classic that never failed to thrill Oswego audiences. Little Topsy's statement that she was not born but "just growed" was its most humorous line, Eliza's escape from the bloodhounds the most thrilling moment, and little Eva's death the most touching scene of the play.

Long after the Civil War the piece continued to be extremely popular because it contained the elements of successful melodrama, and did not require the slavery issue to stir up interest. It became a part of the repertoire of every stock and touring company in the United States for more than fifty years after the war ended. Between 1875 and 1892 "Tom Shows," as they were called, played at the Academy of Music every year except three, for a total of 27 different engagements, an all-time record for any one play. Since many touring companies presented the melodrama in tent theatres during the summer months it is possible that Oswegonians may have seen the play many more times than this record indicates. The season of 1881 brought three different troupes to the Academy in three weeks, and all of them played to full houses.

Mrs. Howard As Topsy

Mrs. G. C. Howard, who created the character of Topsy in the first stage production of Uncle Tom's Cabin, was the most famous player to act the part in Oswego. She had first played the role in September, 1852, at the Museum Theatre in Troy, New York, where the play ran for one hundred nights. Later she had acted the character two hundred times in New York City, and then toured England and the United States. Mrs. Howard made her first ap-

pearance as Topsy at the Academy of Music on October 22-23, 1875, with George Kunkel as Uncle Tom, Mabel Leonard as Eva, and G. C. Howard as St. Clair. Commenting on the event the "Oswego Daily Times" said:

"Mrs. Howard and her excellent company produced the play Uncle Tom's Cabin before a large and delighted audience last night. The irresistible comicalities of Topsy, and the fine acting of Uncle Tom, Eva and St. Clair were the leading features of the play. The entire company is made up of first class talent."

Most of the "Tom Shows" to visit Oswego advertised their company as "the greatest in the world," and spared no adjectives in describing the gorgeous scenic effects, the large pack of ferocious bloodhounds, the superb acting, and the clever specialties presented between acts. Mammoth street parades with brass bands, bloodhounds and gaily costumed actors marching down Bridge street also did much to stir up interest whenever Uncle Tom came to town. Jarrett, Palmer and Slaven's company outdid all competitors by including an imitation log cabin filled with darkies as a part of their street parade.

Double Tom Shows

As time went on Uncle Tom's Cabin became more of a farce comedy than a serious social drama, and "double Tom shows" began to appear. To heighten the comedy these troupes presented two Topsy's, two Mr. Marks as eccentric lawyers, and two comedians, Sambo and Gumbo, as plantation workers for the double pleasure of Oswegonians, possibly with the idea that two of everyone would be twice as humorous or twice as tragic. When William J. Abbey's Uncle Tom's Cabin Company appeared at the Academy on January 28, 1884 with the first "double Tom show" to be seen in Oswego the "Times and Express" reviewer was amaz-

ed at what he saw. In his review next day he wrote:

"The good old play of Uncle Tom's Cabin was foully murdered at the Academy of Music last evening. If Harriet Beecher Stowe could have seen the version of her dramatic story as rendered by the Abbey Company she would have disowned it. There was a great audience, many of whom applauded in the pathetic parts and looked solemn at every attempt at a joke. It is one of the dark mysteries which will never be explained how such a libel on a popular play as that of last evening is so successful, but the fact remains that the company has been playing to crowded houses, while really meritorious combinations can scarcely pay expenses. It may be that the price of seats had something to do with it. We can only admire the patience of the large audience which not only sat out the play, but appeared to enjoy it."

Many interesting and amusing anecdotes concerning touring "Tom shows" have come down out of the past. One, for instance, tells of a struggling stage manager who enticed three old, lazy, hungry bloodhounds across the stage in pursuit of Eliza by waving a juicy beef-steak from the opposite side of the stage, and then spent the rest of the evening fighting with the dogs so he could save the precious steak for his own dinner. And another story of a classic review of a particularly poor acting company. The reporter wrote: "Uncle Tom's Cabin was performed here last evening. All we can say is that the bloodhounds were very poorly supported."

Despite double companies, poor acting, inconsistencies and makeshift scenery, a generation of theatregoers followed with unflinching sympathy the fortunes of little Eva, Uncle Tom, Simon Legree, Topsy, St. Clair and all the others. The play was played as straight drama, farce comedy,

burlesque, and operetta, but its popularity continued undiminished for many years. From the number of different companies appearing in Oswego, and the length of each engagement, it is easy to see that Uncle Tom was the favorite at the Academy of Music.

"Yankee" Plays Popular

American dramatists wrote many plays during the nineteenth century but most of them were not great in a literary sense. They were frequently naive and homely, written by pioneers for pioneers. Yankee plays such as "The Mighty Dollar," "Solon Shingle," "The Yankee Peddler," "Josh Whitcomb," and "Dan'l Druce, Village Blacksmith" brought to the stage the shrewd Yankee as an interesting character.

Following the March 21, 1881, appearance of Barney Macauley in E. A. Locke's original American comedy, "A Messenger from Jarvis Section," the reporter for the "Palladium" devoted most of his comments to the play itself. The review is interesting since it describes a type of native drama which was popular with Oswego audiences:

"The principal character Uncle Dan'l is a quaint conception and happy interpretation of that higher type of manhood that may be often met with in the rural walks of life, rudely picturesque, droll, and in a somewhat uncouth form, irresistibly funny. It is the diamond in the rough, the unpolished marble.

"Uncle Dan'l is the embodiment of frank, simple, genial, honest, true-hearted manhood, whose life down in Maine as deputy-sheriff of Jarvis section, has made him familiar enough with the ways of the wicked world to enable him to successfully outwit the scallawags and scoundrels of the scum of Boston.

"The plot is simple yet smooth-flowing and sufficiently intricate to enlist in it, as well as the

character of Uncle Dan'l, the attention of the audience at the very outset. Like the play of 'Josh Whitcomb,' it is one of the most touching home narratives which our dramatic literature possesses. Skinny Smith, the professional landlord, is indeed a repulsive personage, and the Boston roughs are sufficiently realistic in some of their barroom scenes to awaken one's disgust and displeasure.

"Standing out in bold relief as, next to Uncle Dan'l, the most important personage in the cast is Clip, a bright, impulsive child whose youthful loveliness strangely contrasts with every feature of her evil surroundings, and whose struggles to free herself from the continued use of slang with the aid of Uncle Dan'l's watchfulness forms a very attractive portion of the play."

Denman Thompson As Uncle Josh

Other types of Americans were portrayed by Denman Thompson, as Uncle Josh, an old Jackson Democrat, in "Joshua Whitcomb;" Sol Smith Russell in J. E. Brown's comedy "Edgewood Folks;" Frank Mayo in the title role of the play "Davy Crockett;" John T. Raymond as Colonel Mulberry Sellers in a dramatization of Mark Twain's "The Gilded Age;" and by William F. Cody, better known as "Buffalo Bill," in such plays as "Life on the Border," and "Buffalo Bill at Bay."

The German as a comic type was portrayed frequently by various actors, the two most notable being Joseph K. Emmet, founder of German dialect comedy, who appeared in Oswego several times in his own drama, "Fritz in Ireland, or the Bell Ringer of the Rhine;" and Gus Williams acting the part of J. Adolph Dinkel, a retired brewer, in "Our German Senator."

Irish manners and customs also provided a wealth of material for dramatizations, and offered the stage Irishman as an amusing

character in a variety of plays. The celebrated Irish comedian Joseph Murray charmed Oswego audiences in "Kerry Gow" written by Fred Marsden, and later in "Shaun Rhue" by the same author. Barry and Fay convulsed Oswegonians with laughter in the play, "Irish Aristocracy at Muldoon's Picnic." George Hill appeared in "Rose of Killarney," and Hubert O'Grady's great original Irish Company presented "Eviction" to show the serious aspects of Irish life. Edward Harrigan, who wrote many plays in the "Mulligan Guard" series for use with his partner, Tony Hart, played several times at the Academy of Music in old favorites which included a variety of national characters, the Irish, the English, the German, the Italian, and the Chinese.

The "type" characters of these various plays, the Yankee, the German, the Irishman, the Indian, and the pioneer, were not realistic but had a stamp of familiarity which made them enjoyed by Oswego audiences, and assured the plays of great success whenever they appeared at the Academy.

Melodramas Won Favor

Melodrama, with its simple inconsistent characterizations, its untrue portrayal of life, and its excitement of the moment, was a favorite form of drama with with average theatre-goers. The characters and the events of these sentimental plays had no significant meaning, and only a superficial resemblance to real life. The author did not try to make his audiences think; in fact, the less the spectators thought the more likely they were to enjoy the play. With few exceptions melodramas were for entertainment only. In these thrilling episodes desperate crooks, blackmailers, gamblers, bandits, greedy landlords, and other villains of the deepest dye were constantly pitted against handsome, stalwart

heroes and modest, courageous heroines in exciting adventures in which honesty, justice and virtue eventually triumphed. In one the heroine was seen dangling from the clapper of a church bell so "the curfew shall not ring to-night." In another the hero was tied to a log and about to be sawed apart in a burning sawmill, only to be saved at last by the timely arrival of the fearless heroine. Another play had the heroine thrown from a pier into a river, and the hero bound to a railroad track in front of an on-rushing train, only to be saved by the heroine at the last possible moment to save both actor and audience from an untimely death. The spectators were so relieved at this last moment rescue that they never stopped to ask how the heroine saved herself from the river. Audiences always knew that in spite of false accusations, lost wills, mortgage foreclosures, and long separations everything would be righted in the nick of time, and a happy ending would occur at the final curtain.

Under the Gaslight

"Under the Gaslight," by Augustin Daly, was the first of the American melodramas to have the villain tied to a railroad track and rescued by the heroine just before the train arrived. The dramatis personae included such type characters as: Peanuts, a newsboy and bootblack; Sam, a high-toned colored citizen; Raffardi, an Italian organist; Laura, a belle of society; Byke, one of the men whom the law is always reaching for and never touches; Peachblossom, a girl who was never brought up; Officer 999; and an assortment of toughs, tramps and policemen. Titles of the four acts gave a clue to the sensational events of the play: Act I—The Wolves of Society; Act II—A Morning With Justice; Act III—The 10:30 Express; and Act IV—Chloroform and Burglary.

East Lynne Came Many Times

Supreme example of tearful melodrama was Mrs. Henry Wood's "East Lynne," which was presented at the Academy of Music on thirteen separate engagements to make it the second most popular piece played for Oswegonians. The story concerned Isabel who was turned out by her husband and instructed to "never darken my door again." It was the first heart throb melodrama to be written around "the woman pays" theme, and became one of the most popular ever written. The death of little Willie was similar to the death of little Eva in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and appealed to the most sentimental tastes. Many tears were shed over "East Lynne" by the same kind of audiences that today weep over melodramatic moving pictures.

Other melodramas that frequently moved Oswego audiences to tears were: "Too Late, or Fallen Among Thieves," a stirring drama of life in the underworld; "Orange Girl, or Saved from the Flames," an exciting drama with startling fire scene; "After Dark;" "A Heroine in Rags;" "Out of Bondage;" "Lights of London;" and "Streets of New York."

Oswego newspapers regarded sensational melodramas as great moral lessons, and often urged readers to attend certain plays. Sometimes this urging was regretted afterwards. The day that Lottie and Company arrived in Oswego to present "The Streets of New York," the "Times" editor boldly stated, "Our advice is for everybody to take their sisters and their cousins and their aunts to see Lottie. The prices are within reach of all." Next day, however, the writer remarked, "The Lottie combination had a fair audience last night to look at 'The Streets of New York.' There was unusual unanimity in the audience, strange as it may seem, in pronouncing the show very bad."

On another occasion a reporter for the "Oswego Herald" wrote: "We wish to remind our readers that the great moral drama entitled 'Ten Nights In the Bar Room' will be performed tonight at the Academy of Music. The company is good, the play is interesting and instructive, and we assure those who wish to witness a fine performance for a low price of admission to see this play. Admission is twenty-five cents."

But in spite of this advertisement for inexpensive entertainment the house was small, and on the 3rd of January, 1879, another item stated "The Ten Nights In the Bar Room company played to a very small house New Year's night. They went north yesterday morning, just in time to be snowed in." This same play was received by a better audience when it played here again in September of 1887. The reviewer commented:

"The presentation of the great moral drama, 'Ten Nights In the Bar Room,' at the Academy of Music last evening drew forth a fine audience proving conclusively that the drama, like 'Uncle Tom's Cabin', never fails to please. The company was a fine one, all the members being well up in their parts, Ogden Stevens as 'Sample Swichel' rendered the character in an admirable manner. The many new features introduced relieved the piece of the monotony usually experienced in witnessing a familiar play. The audience did not tire throughout the entire six acts. The tableaux were excellent and the orchestra unusually fine."

The Color Guard

"The Color Guard" by Colonel Alfred Calhoun was an extremely popular play, especially with Union soldiers and their families after the Civil War. The play had little dramatic structure, but had a strong appeal because of the courage of the hero who saved the colors for his company. This military drama, starring "the

mirth-provoking and inimitable Charles Collins, in his specialty character of Peter Hygley," was brought to Oswego under the auspices of Companies E and K of the 48th Regiment, to play a six-day engagement, October 16 to 21, 1876. The play, which was announced as showing all phases of army life, was a great success and pleased all who saw it.

Other famous plays shown at the Academy of Music included: "Ah-Sin," a four act play by Mark Twain and Brete Hart; "Hearts Of Oak," by James A. Herne; "Elizabeth, Queen Of England;" "The Sea Of Ice," a four-act drama in which Kate Claxton starred; and "The Two Orphans," which had played 180 times at the Union Square Theatre in New York before coming to Oswego.

Many Trashy Plays

Interspersed with the more substantial plays of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were the ephemeral trifles of the day which were designed to entertain and sometimes to shock, but never to educate or uplift the audiences. Most of these trifles were played extensively by minor stock companies and traveling troupes, and then discarded for all time in favor of some more recent sensation. As a result, few of these plays ever appeared in printed form and little remains of them today except their titles. The titles, however, along with occasional program notes cast some light on the type of drama that attracted audiences. A few of these titles selected at random from the hundreds of plays presented at the Academy of Music suggest the trashy plots served to the public under a guise of good drama. It is not difficult to guess the plots of such plays as "Only A Farmer's Daughter," "Cad, the Tomboy," "Sam'l Posen, the Commercial Drummer," "Stolen Kisses," "My Sweetheart," "Led Astray," "Fortune's Fool," and "A Midnight Marriage." A list of the

titles themselves practically outline a plot for an old-time melodrama.

The program for "Led Astray" presented by the Union Square Comedy Company of New York in Oswego, March 19, 1877, listed sub-titles for the six acts that furnish clues to the plot of the play: Act 1—The Meeting; Act 2—Temptation; Act 3—The Quarrel; Act 4—Repentance; Act 5—The Duel; and Act 6—The Reconciliation.

When "the brilliant and cultured society star," Mrs. Henrietta Chanfrau appeared in a new American drama, "Parted," the program gave a synopsis of incidents which included: Act 1—The Croquet Party; a crash in Wall Street, and failure of the Trust Company; Act 2—Falsely accused and the leap into the stream; Act 3—An offer of marriage, human wolves, foreclosure, and the widow's malediction; and Act 4—At her mercy, the missing books, vindicated and avenged.

Lurid Plays At Low Prices

Other plays appeared under the lurid titles of "Pajamas," "The Woman In Red," and "A Grass Widow." This last named play was advertised for January 28, 1888, but because bad weather delayed arrival of costumes and scenery the piece was given next evening. Commenting on the postponement the "Daily Times" said:

"There was a good audience assembled at the Academy of Music last evening to see 'The Grass Widow.' The lady was there, and the rest of the company also, but the play was not presented. The company waited until half past eight and then it became necessary to make the announcement to the audience that no performance would be given owing to the non-arrival of the company's baggage.

"The company arrived here yesterday afternoon and their baggage was expected to follow in season for the entertainment. The

train bringing it, however, became stalled just outside of the city limits, and it was impossible, therefore, to present the play. The audience was informed that their money would be returned, or those who desired it would receive tickets for this evening, when 'The Grass Widow' will certainly appear."

Drama at the Academy of Music was available to everyone at reasonable prices which usually ranged from twenty-five cents for the gallery to seventy-five cents or a dollar for the main floor. A few attractions charged as high as a dollar and a half for the best parquette seats, but low-priced admission was the usual thing. Reserved seats for attractions at the Academy were sold in advance at Peck and Shilling's Music Store, and at Allen's Bookstore. Many touring companies presented old-time melodramas for the small sum of ten, twenty and thirty cents, and as time went on these prices became standard for troupes playing in the smaller theatres of the country; hence the term "ten-twent'-thirt'" became almost universally synonymous with melodrama.

Well Remembered Players

The Academy of Music flourished during what has come to be known as America's age of actors. No great dramatists appeared during the period, but acting flowered and local audiences attended the theatre to judge the relative merits of the players. It was an era of great rivalries in the theatre, and some actors attracted an individual following which is somewhat comparable to moving picture "fans" today. Perhaps there will never again be such an age of actors as during the last of the nineteenth and the opening of the twentieth centuries. It was the era which saw such famous actors as Edwin Booth, Joseph Jefferson III, E. H. Sothern, Lawrence Barrett, John McCullough, E. L. Davenport,

Modjeska, Thomas W. Keene, and Robert Mantell in the limelight of the Academy of Music. Those were the days when Oswegonians were entertained by many fine actors: the comedienne, Maggie Mitchell; the tragic Janauschek; the beautiful Mary Anderson; the comedians, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Florence; the darling of the mining camps, Lotta (Charlotte Crabtree); John T. Raymond, famous as Colonel Sellers in "The Gilded Age;" the sparkling Minnie Maddern; James O'Neill, best known as the Count of Monte Cristo; and many others whose names are almost forgotten to the present generation of theatre-goers.

Sothern In Lord Dundreary

The visit of the inimitable comedian, E. H. Sothern, in his world-renowned role of Lord Dundreary, the original character played by him in America, England and France, nearly five thousand times, was an important event in Oswego. First, because the play, "Our American Cousin," had brought the actor international fame as a skillful player of eccentric characters, and second, because it was the part Sothern was playing at Ford's Theatre in Washington the night President Lincoln was assassinated. The "Oswego Palladium" review on March 22, 1876, was full of praise for the actor's superb characterization. The reviewer wrote:

"The audience was, as usual, kept in an almost constant fit of laughter from the beginning of the play to the end. His trenchant humor penetrated the utmost recesses of the hall, and found susceptible victims in every member of the large assemblage. Mr. Sothern's characterization of the foppish nobleman is a satire, and Mr. Sothern's embodiment of that idea is perhaps perfect. The unvarying suavity of my lord, together with his uncertain wit, unreliable memory, and a peculiar faculty of getting the cart before

the horse, are the superficial points of the performance, but the work of the artist, which is the power behind the throne, so to speak, was not so apparent, but was there nevertheless. Mr. Sothern's acting in this part has much to commend it beside the laughter which it provokes."

A story is told about a member of the audience who unintentionally paid a great tribute to Sothern's acting. There was one scene in which Lord Dundreary asked another character, "Does your brother like cheese?" The other replied, "I have no brother." To which the comedian asked, "If you had a brother, would he like cheese?" This exchange of dialogue was considered high comedy by everyone in the audience except one very serious-minded Oswegonian who remarked loudly to his neighbors, "That's not funny, the man is a fool." Which was precisely what Sothern was trying to portray, and had succeeded so well that he had convinced the most unsympathetic member of the audience.

Sothern was received with acclaim when he returned a second time in the same play on May 12, 1880, less than a year before his death. His character of Lord Dundreary is still remembered as one of the most witty and jovial impersonations ever presented at the Academy of Music.

Maggie Mitchell Local Favorite

Maggie Mitchell, a popular American comedienne and sou-brette for over three decades, was the player to appear most regularly and frequently at the Academy of Music. She played in Oswego every season for twelve years in many of the old favorite plays of the period, "Mignon," "Pearl of Savoy," "Lorle," "Little Barefoot," "Little Savage," and "Maggie the Midget." Her most brilliant success was in "Fanchon, the Cricket," which had been translated for her in 1860 from the French play "La Petite

Fadette," written by George Sand. As an artist Maggie Mitchell never reached the heights of national prominence, but as a popular actress she remained unsurpassed from the time of her first Oswego appearance in 1876 until her farewell engagement in 1889.

The next great actor to appear was John T. Raymond, who had toured Europe with Sothern in "Our American Cousin," and later achieved the greatest success of his career as the colorful gambler, Colonel Mulberry Sellers, in a dramatization of Mark Twain's "The Gilded Age." It was this role Raymond played in Oswego on May 26, 1876, and again on April 19, 1879. His second appearance did not meet with huge success, however, according to a report printed in the "Oswego Morning Herald":

Lotta Had Oswego Admirers

"There was a beggarly array of empty seats at the Academy of Music Saturday night, the occasion of John T. Raymond's presentation of 'Colonel Sellers'. Notwithstanding the arctic absence, the play was excellently given. The only reason we can assign to the slim attendance is the price. In these times of reduced wages and expenses, one dollar is too much for a reserved seat. One-half the sum is a plenty and the sooner showmen come down to popular prices the better it will be for them. We are not as we were in the flush times of the war, a fact that showmen, like many politicians, seem to either not know or forget."

Mr. Raymond returned to Oswego in 1881 in the play, "Fresh the American," and for two later engagements in the play "In Paradise." These appearances were well patronized by the public, but the actor never gained the recognition he had received in "The Gilded Age."

Lotta (Charlotte Crabtree), an amiable, lovely and ambitious actress who had been the pet and

pride of her native California, was another popular actress to appear in Oswego. She met with great success throughout the county in such plays as "Zip," "Musette," and "The Little Detective," and amassed a fortune which she eventually increased by wise investment to over four million dollars. Most of her plays were written especially for her, and were usually sentimental dramas centering around a waif among miners in California.

Lotta, as she was always called, came to Oswego in five of her best known plays: "Musette" in 1877; "Zip" in 1878; "Bob" in 1882; "The Little Detective, or A Woman's Curiosity" in 1883; and in "Pawn Ticket No. 210," a four-act play by Clay Green and David Belasco, in 1887.

A Second Lotta

Because the famous Lotta had been confused with a lesser actress who advertised herself as "Lottie," the "Oswego Times" went to considerable pains to assure the public that the real Lotta was to appear at the time of her first engagement in Oswego. Several of the news items are interesting because they show the warm enthusiasm with which the actress was received. The "Daily Times" said on November 13, 1877:

"The announcement that the only real genuine Lotta is coming will please lovers of comedy in this city.

"Lotta is a great comedienne and a bright star, and will be supported by Henry E. Abbey's fine dramatic company from the Park Theatre, New York.

"She will produce on this her first appearance in Oswego her favorite comedy 'Musette' when the seating capacity of the Academy of Music will be fully tested."

Next day another item appeared in the "Times" concerning the actress:

"For the benefit of those who are in doubt we wish to assure our readers that the Lotta who appears at the Academy of Music

next week is the real genuine famous Lotta, (Charlotte Crabtree). We make this statement in her interest from the fact that actresses of similar name have appeared in this and adjacent places, and amusement goers have been misled by the advertisements."

The day after tickets were placed on sale at Allen's Bookstore the "Times" commented:

"It looked like old times to see the rush at Allen's this morning to procure tickets for the Lotta entertainment next Thursday evening. Before ten o'clock nearly all of the orchestra chairs were taken, assuring her a very cordial and hearty reception. Those who are so unfortunate as not to be able to attend will miss one of the rarest treats of the season."

On the day of the performance the "Times" continued:

"Charming, lively, jolly, hilarious, magnetic little Lotta will be at the Academy of Music tonight. Lotta pleases everybody. She proves an irresistible attraction, no less to the high bred, fastidious and critical than to those of less refined tastes."

And the day after her performance the newspaper reported:

"The best paying house of the season was drawn out by the appearance of Lotta last evening. As a delineator of a certain class of character, of which Musette is a type, Lotta has no rival. She is bright, dashing and winsome as ever and her performance last night gave unbounded satisfaction. Encouraged by that warm reecption, given them last evening, we understand Lotta and her company will visit Oswego again during the winter."

Barrett and Davenport in "Julius Caesar"

Lawrence Barrett and Edward L. Davenport, two great Shakespearean actors of the American theatre, appeared together in Oswego on November 1, 1876, in Shakespeare's historical tragedy "Julius Caesar." In the play,

which had just finished an unparalleled run of over one hundred consecutive nights at Booth's Theatre, Mr. Barrett appeared as Cassius, the role in which he became most famous during his later tour with Edwin Booth. Mr. Davenport played Brutus, one of his outstanding parts. As a special dramatic feature of the evening the play concluded with a tableau of the burning of Brutus' body on the plains of Phillippi.

Mr. Davenport, who was considered second only to Booth as a Shakespearean actor and who became famous as leading man to Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt in "Romeo and Juliet," favored Oswego with another visit on January 30, 1877, in a famous contemporary drama "Dan'l Bruce, Blacksmith."

Played with Booth

Mr. Barrett, who had played with Edwin Booth and Charlotte Cushman before the Civil War, and later became a famous star with his own company, returned to Oswego in February, 1877, to present his impersonation of the Cardinal in the play "Richelieu," by Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton. This performance received favorable comment from the "Palladium" reviewer who noted:

"Lawrence Barrett appeared as Richelieu, last evening, at the Academy of Music, and was greeted with the enthusiasm and received the applause due so fine an actor from a critical audience. His appreciation of the fine points of the play, his magnificent rendition of them, his figure and costumes were perfect. Probably no actor who has visited us has so ingratiated himself into the good will of Oswego audiences as Lawrence Barrett, and Richelieu is one of his best characters. His support was first class in every respect."

Barrett made his final Oswego appearance on January 9, 1879, as Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice," and as David Garrick in a play by the same name. The

actor was long remembered by Oswego theatregoers for his beautiful voice, his remarkable elocution, his tragic face, and the fine intelligence he brought to his acting.

Maurice Barrymore And Georgia Drew

December 5, 1877, brought Augustin Daly's Comedy Company in a brilliant comedy of society entitled, "Life, A Comedy Of City Types." The role of Schuyler Samples, a type of the unwise who roam but do not soar, was played by the New York favorite, Maurice Barrymore. His wife, Georgia Drew, also appeared in the play as Mrs. Masham Mallory, a rich widow with a widow's mite of a million dollars and one little dog.

Maurice, a handsome man with a gift for winning the hearts of all, was the matinee idol of his time and achieved considerable success as leading man at Wallack's Theatre, and later as co-star with Modjeska and Fanny Davenport in Shakespearean roles. Georgia Drew, who had played with Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett, John McCullough and Helena Modjeska, had met Barrymore in a Daly company and married him in 1876. Their first child Lionel, of later stage, screen and radio fame, was born a year after their appearance in Oswego. Georgia then retired from the stage for a few years to care for Lionel and the other two children Ethel and John, and did not play again in Oswego until some years later. Maurice Barrymore continued to be an important figure on the American stage, and returned to Oswego several times as leading man with Modjeska.

Helena Modjeska, a Polish actress of distinction who had made an enormously successful American debut in 1877, appeared at the Academy of Music, March 23, 1883, in one of her best known roles, Rosalind in Shakespeare's "As You Like It." Maurice Barry-

more, making his second Oswego appearance, played Orlando. The local newspapers were full of praise for the actress, but did not have much to say concerning Barrymore, though he was at the time a leading figure on the American and English stage. The "Palladium" review said:

"A large and appreciative audience awaited until almost half past eight, last evening, the rising of the curtain and the representation of that unique comedy "As You Like It;" awaited also a glimpse of one of the great stars in the theatrical heavens, Modjeska, who at last by some happy eccentricity, her orbit favored Oswego by her appearance.

"Throughout the evening Madame Modjeska was charming, bewitching, quite the light and airy Rosalind that our fancy has so long entertained. In her masculine role, she was most coquettish and feminine and the rendering of the epilogue seemed to set the seal upon the evening's entertainment, as a most rare and delightful affair. Barrymore as Orlando was graceful and manly; the wrestling good; the support fair."

Modjeska Comes

The "Times" review was equally flattering:

"The interpretation given of the character of Gannymede in the forest of Arden by Modjeska was something wonderful. The slight accent which she has not been able to overcome perhaps added a charm to her impersonation. The audience forgot her personality and saw only Rosalind in her boyish garb, playing her pretty part to perfection, but yet too womanly to quite disguise her love for the hero of the play.

"She was called before the curtain several times. Maurice Barrymore made an effective Orlando. W. F. Owen a capital Touchstone, and Frank Clement gave a good representation of the melancholy Jacques.

"Modjeska has never before appeared in Oswego and her appear-

ance here on any future occasion will test the capacity of the Academy to the utmost. It would have done so last night had it not been Good Friday."

The Barrymores third and final appearance in Oswego came on October 12, 1883, as support to Modjeska in "Camille," Maurice in the role of Armand Duval, and Georgia Drew in the minor role of Olympe. The "Palladium" reviewer devoted a full column of praise to the beauty of the costumes and the excellence of the acting. A few excerpts will give the flavor of the review:

"Modjeska's Camille

"We shall probably never witness a more perfect piece of acting than Modjeska's last evening, yet we cannot refrain from expressing regret that one must listen to Camille in order to see and hear Modjeska.

"The support was excellent. Mr. Barrymore is always a favorite and attention was at all times divided between him and the star when both were on the stage. Madame Modjeska undertakes supplementing her beauty and her art with dresses whose elegance defies description. Camille first appeared in a costume of white satin, over a skirt of white, brocaded in delicate browns and purples, both under and over dress trimmed with crystal fringe. In the next scene her dress was of the most delicate peach color, embossed with leaves of the highest brown. In the country house where for a few short months Camille is so happy with Armand, she wore a white muslin simply made, and for ornaments a spray of simlax and roses.

"Modjeska's acting in the scene with Duval's father and in the struggle with herself when he left her reached the heights and was simply magnificent."

Modjeska returned in January of 1888 at the head of her own company in "Romeo and Juliet," with a comparatively unknown actor, William Morris, in the role of Romeo. The play was not well

received by the local press, principally because of the inferior supporting company. But the fact remains that she appeared before Oswego audiences as Rosalind, Camille and Juliet, the three roles which brought her fame as one of the greatest actresses on the English-speaking stage. She possessed an amazing ability for emotional acting in scenes of rage, fear, love, hate, tenderness and misery, and was equally versatile in comedy, melodrama or poetic drama. For many years after her three Oswego appearances Helena Modjeska continued to be the brightest feminine star in the American theatre.

John McCullough

An eminent Irish-American actor, John McCullough, who had played at various times with Edwin Booth and with Edwin Forrest, made his first appearance at the Academy of Music, January 2, 1878, in the drama "Virginius," which was considered to be his greatest role. As a player of such heroic roles as Virginius and Othello, he was well equipped with a powerful voice, classic facial features, a fine physique and a noble manner. His acting was full of passion, variety and sincerity. The "Palladium" review of "Virginius" praised McCullough, but severely condemned the poor supporting cast:

"People who were in the Academy of Music last evening witnessed one of the most perfect and heroic representations of tragedy ever enjoyed in this town, in Mr. McCullough's Virginius. While columns of praise might be written on McCullough's acting, this single and comprehensive statement seems to us to cover the ground. His mastery and delineations of the passions are grand and overwhelming, and the audience so testified in calling him before the curtain after the second act and at the conclusion of the performance

"Miss DeForest was a fair Vir-

ginia, and Levick an average sort of an Icilius, but aside from these there was nothing in the support to warrant attention. The supernumeraries were wretched, and their ludicrous ignorance of the state and of their respective positions, situations and parts would have turned the whole play into a burlesque except for the immense power of McCullough who rescued the performance from such ignominy.

"With proper support the play Virginius would have been a wonderful and delicious memory to the audience; but in spite of these discrepancies we now know what McCullough is and will know how to receive him should he come again."

The criticism was evidently heeded for the review was much more favorable when the actor returned later in the same play. The following May, McCullough appeared in the title role of "Othello," with the celebrated tragedian, Charles Barron, as Iago. Next evening the two actors presented Shakespeare's thrilling tragedy, "Richard III," with McCullough as the Duke of Gloster, and Barron as Richmond. After the performance of this play the "Oswego Palladium" reported:

"The lovers of Shakespeare's tragedy were treated last evening to such a feast as is rarely enjoyed outside of the larger cities. Never have we seen an audience as thoroughly carried away, so enthusiastic, so frequently moved to applause. The play Richard III, is regarded by many as Shakespeare's greatest tragedy. The character of Richard is one of the most difficult for tragedians to portray, McCullough gave us a masterly impersonation of it. Old play-goers, who have seen other great actors in the same character and thus had the opportunity for comparison are among the most enthusiastic admirers of McCullough. They say that his Richard is unequalled. Oswego has been greatly favored in having an opportunity to witness such

a finished dramatic performance as that of last night. Not only was the leading character sustained with such matchless ability, but the support was so excellent that no fault could be found with any member of the cast, and a great deal might be said in praise of all."

An incident happened during this engagement that points up the effectiveness of McCullough's acting. During an especially tense and emotional scene when the actor was about to kill a man, a young woman in the audience was so carried away by the acting that she cried out, "Look out, he's going to kill you." Ordinarily an actor would have been annoyed at such an interruption, but in this case McCullough was pleased and accepted it as a tribute to his ability to convince spectators of the reality of the situation

Fechter In "Hamlet"

Charles Albert Fechter, a French actor, famous as the original Armand in "Camille" and as the foremost romantic actor of his time, came to Oswego, February 20, 1878, in "Hamlet". He was supported by the accomplished Lizzie Price and J. W. Albaugh. After a successful tour of America Fechter became manager of the Lyceum Theatre in New York City. There he made many innovations in directing and staging plays. His interpretation of Hamlet was also something of an innovation according to the review in the "Palladium":

"Those who have accepted the conceptions of Booth and Barrett, as given by their enactment of the melancholy Dane; were doubtless disappointed, and not agreeably. Indeed, we are of the opinion that a majority of those present at the play last night would vote for Booth's or Barrett's Hamlet in preference to Fechter's. But, whatever difference of sentiment may exist on this point, there can it seems to us, be but one opinion as to the high order of genius and

art possessed by Fechter. He plays Hamlet, his Hamlet, with consummate art, and with the force and effectiveness inseparable from true art. He discards the dreamy melancholia; the refined and effeminate intellectuality combined with the weak and nerveless physique of the old school, and gives us instead a Hamlet of rare and admirable qualities, of exquisite sensitiveness, yet at the same time having a resolute will, a determined and well marked purpose to bring punishment to the slayer of his father. Fechter's Hamlet is masculine, intense and strongly lined. We like it. If Mr. Fechter comes here again he will have a large audience."

Fanny Davenport's First Visit

The beautiful and talented Fanny Davenport, daughter of the famous Shakespearean actor Edward L. Davenport, played many engagements in Oswego during her long and successful career. She had begun acting at the age of four, and for seventeen years was a leading lady for Augustin Daly. Some of her critics were unkind enough to say she succeeded because of her beauty instead of any great talent in acting. This criticism, however, appears to be unfounded since she met with great success in plays by Sardou, and in the Shakespearean roles of Ophelia and Rosalind. This last-named character she played in Oswego, January 24, 1878, to receive a very favorable press notice in the "Palladium":

"Miss Fanny Davenport As Rosalind"

"None of the persons prominent in the theatric world have ever been so greatly complimented by the citizens of Oswego as was Miss Fanny Davenport at the Academy of Music last evening. It was a splendid audience; literally splendid by vastness of number, elegance of dress, intensity of attention and all the auditorial ele-

ments that make the theatre a brilliant and fascinating place. We believe the Academy has not held so large an audience since opening night. While this was mainly complimentary to Miss Davenport's reputation as Rosalind in 'As You Like It,' it was also in some sense so to the strength of the Fifth Avenue Company which supported her. The fine example of Shakespearean comedy which was the play of the evening, has always been a delight to the cultivated mind and became doubly so in the fine action of Miss Davenport, whose dressing of the cast, action, reading and singing of the cuckoo song are all consistent and delightful parts of Shakespeare's conceit.

"It was a real Rosalind without too much or too little other personality showing through it. The audience expressed their admiration by repeated calls to the curtain.

"Mr. Charles Fisher's Jacques was also a great piece of reality, as well as Mr. Herbert Barrymore's Orlando. Mr. Fawcett's representation of the Duke, and Mr. John Drew's Oliver were highly consistent parts of the play, while Mr. Davidge's Touchstone was ideally clever.

"The play 'As You Like It,' as cast on this occasion, must long stand conspicuous among our amusements. We now think it plain that there is no risk to a manager who brings us such a performance, but at the same time it must be recollected that such a cast is seldom to be secured outside the great theatrical centers."

Miss Davenport returned to Oswego in May of the same year to play the role of Mabel Renfrew in Augustin Daly's original play "Pique," a part which had first established the actress as a universally recognized star. The main plot of the play revolved around a young woman who out of pique married a man she did not love, was forced to live with his family, and suffered great unhappiness. A

minor plot, which was concerned with the abduction and thrilling rescue of Mabel's child, gave the actress an opportunity to demonstrate her ability as a great emotional actress. Her appearance at the Academy of Music came at the end of 238 performances in the play in New York City, and as a part of a long tour of the United States.

Her most famous roles after leaving the Daly company were in the Sardou plays, "Fedora", and "La Tosca," in which she toured the country at the head of her own company. "Fedora" was presented in Oswego, April 5, 1886, with the great emotional actor, Robert B. Mantell, in the chief supporting part. Miss Davenport played "La Tosca" here on March 27, 1890, with Melbourne MacDowell as the male lead. Also in the cast was Theodore Roberts who later became famous as a moving picture character actor.

Robert B. Mantell

A Scotch actor by the name of Robert B. Mantell, one of the last great Shakespearean actors in the old tradition, who had made his American debut in 1878 in Modjeska's production of "Romeo and Juliet," played in Oswego many times during his long and successful career. He first appeared as leading man to Fanny Davenport in "Fedora," and twice later as star in the sensational melodrama "Tangled Lives," and again in a five-act romantic drama, "Monbars."

The review of "Tangled Lives" in the "Daily Times-Express" of November 17, 1886, is interesting since it gives an account of the play which brought the young actor national fame.

"When Robert B. Mantell appeared at the Academy of Music as the support of Fanny Davenport in 'Fedora' he made a decided hit, and his appearance in 'Tangled Lives' was looked for with a great deal of interest. The audience last evening, which was

mainly in the orchestra and dress circle, was a critical one.

"'Tangled Lives' is an odd play and the strong dash of Bohemian life which runs through adds to its effectiveness. Raymond Garth (Mantell) is desperately in love with Edith Ainsley (Effie Shannon), but is debarred from marriage by the simple fact that he has married, without the usual ceremony, Helen Garth. Around the love of Raymond and Edith a pretty romance is woven, enlivened by scenes of Bohemian life.

"Of course the interest centered around Mantell, but the part of Raymond Garth does not give the actor the opportunity which he had in 'Fedora,' but the play, on the whole, is excellent and each and every member of the company was so strong in the part assigned that it gave general satisfaction."

Mantell's public could not forget his first appearance as support to Fanny Davenport, and after his second engagement in "Tangled Lives" the review opened with another reminder:

"Mantell made himself popular in Oswego as the support of Fanny Davenport in 'Fedora' where he fairly outshone the star. On his return with his own company, having left the Davenport company, he was well received and every one was pleased to see him return. Mantell was magnificent as Raymond Garth, but Nelson Wheatcroft as Josephus Howson fairly divided the applause with him. 'Always Welcome' will be the motto in Oswego when Mantell is coming."

This actor was given an enthusiastic welcome when he returned in September, 1888, to score a great success in the French play "Monbars," and again in the same play in November, 1889.

Mary Anderson

The distinguished young American tragedienne, Mary Anderson, made her first of five appearances

in Oswego, in "Ingomar, The Barbarian," supported by John W. Norton. She was one of America's most popular tragic actresses from 1875, when she made her debut in Louisville, Kentucky, until she married in 1890 and retired from the stage. She was reported to be very photogenic, and her pictures appeared in newspapers and magazines, and in advertisements for soap and hour-glass corsets. The "Palladium" review of "Ingomar," April 30, 1878, devoted considerable space to the youth and beauty of the famous actress.

"Mary Anderson's Genius"

"Last night Mary Anderson played Ingomar at the Academy of Music to a large and highly appreciative house. Her acting is conceded to be high art, and the audience gave decided expression to their admiration of it.

"The Parthenia of Miss Anderson shows something above and beyond talent; it evidences genius of the purest ray. This combined with youth, beauty, ardent love of art and towering ambition, has placed Mary Anderson among the first of American tragediennes. Her performance last night was one of the finest our people have witnessed.

"A tall, straight and shapely girl, with head firmly poised on a faultless neck, regular, clean cut features, the nose prominent, eyes set well apart and looking straight out from beneath a broad forehead partly concealed by the light hair, a short chin, firm mouth and white, even teeth. Such, at first glance are the most prominent features of Mary Anderson's face. It is not a classical face, but purely American, or a type that no one could hesitate to match against any competition from the old world. It is a singularly expressive face, and even in the most ordinary conversation the play of features and the motion of the hands aid in conveying the meaning of the words.

"Quiet and self possessed, without a particle of self consciousness, she looks the woman of twenty-one. Her nineteenth birthday has not yet come, and when it does she will look five years older than she really is, while at thirty she will look five years younger."

Miss Anderson returned to Oswego in November, 1878, to star in "Romeo and Juliet," with Joseph Wheelock as Romeo; in May, 1879, in a repeat performance of "Ingomar, The Barbarian;" in December, 1879, to play in "The Hunchback" with Milnes Levick as leading man; and finally in September, 1880, in "The Countess In Love."

Janauchek

Madame Fanny Janauchek, a Czech actress, considered to be one of the greatest tragediennes of the last century, was best known for her portrayal of Lady Macbeth, and for Mary Stuart, a role she played on her first Oswego engagement, April 28, 1879. She had toured the country during 1867 in classic dramas which she acted in German, later she studied English, and after 1873 played parts in that language. Janauchek as "Mary Stuart," Queen of Scots, was received in Oswego without great enthusiasm. The "Palladium" reported:

"Only a fair sized audience assembled at the Academy of Music last evening to see Madame Janauchek. The audience was very attentive but rather cool and undemonstrative. They enjoyed the thoroughly artistic acting in a quiet way, but evidently the play is not one to arouse any degree of enthusiasm, and Madame Janauchek either has not the power to move an audience or else was unable to exercise it in playing Mary Stuart. There were one or two scenes which formed an exception to the rule. With the aid of the magnetism of a crowded house, acting and reacting upon

the actress and the audience, no doubt a different feeling would have prevailed the assembly, the players would have shown more spirit and the applause would have been more frequent and hearty."

Her greatest work was in the heroic roles of great dramas, but unfortunately in later years, as public taste changed, she was forced to perform the crude melodramas of the period to gain a livelihood. Her second Oswego appearance, in an unimportant play "Zillah," February 25, 1884, was given a warmer reception than her earlier performance, though the production was far from being an artistic triumph. At the age of sixty Janauschek returned in "Meg Merrilies," a romantic three act play, dramatized from Sir Walter Scott's novel "Guy Mannering." It was in this play that the aging actress attained considerable financial success. Supporting her at the time of this final appearance in 1890 was Tyrone Power, father of Tyrone Power, the moving picture actor.

Mr. And Mrs. William Florence

"The Mighty Dollar," a satirical picture of society life in the nation's capital, first brought Mr. and Mrs. William Florence to Oswego. William Jermyn Florence, an American actor, dramatist and comedian who specialized in Irish and Yankee characters, appeared in his best known characterization, The Honorable Bardwell Slote. Mrs. Florence, the former Malvina Pray Littell, famous as the first American actress to appear before an English audience, played Mrs. General Gilflory, a part she eventually repeated more than 2,500 times in America and England. The "Palladium" of January 11, 1878, reported:

"Seldom is an audience so handsomely entertained as was that in the Academy of Music by the Florences in 'The Mighty Dollar.' The play is a rich com-

bination of scenes in two of the most ludicrous phases of American life: the rural congressman with a scheme, and the relic of an American general, who has traveled abroad, seen the sights, and gets them all mixed up and believes that blood is what tells.

"In their respective characters Mr. and Mrs. Florence are absolutely inimitable and above fair criticism. The manners of Hon. Bardwell Slote, M. C., his dress, his notions of the duties of a congressman to his constituents and to himself—that phenomenal combination of stupidity, self-consequence and ignorance—are reproduced by Mr. Florence in all their original drollery and deformity.

The Mighty Dollar

"Mrs. Florence dresses and plays the no less phenomenal character of Mrs. General Gilflory with a degree of brilliancy and reality which makes the part one of the most successful and wonderful on the stage of the present day. Her costuming is a marvel of Parisian art. The support was good, and the audience was completely overcome with enjoyment. At the close of the first act Mr. and Mrs. Florence were called before the curtain and complimented by continuous applause for several minutes."

The Florences repeated their success in the same play in November of the same year, and again on October 29, 1881; and returned in 1884 to present a new comedy, "Facts, Or His Little Hatchet." They made their final appearance at the Academy of Music, December 10, 1887, in a play entitled "Our Governor," which was the old play "Facts" with a new title. The newspaper again greeted them with enthusiasm:

"Florence outdid the aborigines, who appeared at the Academy of Music recently under Captain Jack Crawford, by the manner in which he branished his little hatchet last evening. 'The Governor,' the play 'Facts' revised, is

suited to him better perhaps than 'The Mighty Dollar.' At least it gives him rare opportunities and the 'facts' which he gives are of an outstanding nature. He is aided and abetted by his talented wife, who as an English authoress looking for facts which are kindly furnished for her by the governor, gives an inimitable performance. Her costumes which are magnificent, attract much attention from the ladies. Florence has an excellent company, each one peculiarly adapted for the role assigned and everything went smoothly to the close. Mr. and Mrs. Florence are always welcome in Oswego."

The Count Of Monte Cristo

James O'Neill, father of the famous playwright, Eugene O'Neill, was an Irish-American actor best known for his portrayal of Edmond Dantes in "The Count of Monte Cristo," which he played for years in cities all over the country. Following his first Oswego appearance, September 22, 1885, the "Times-Express" reported:

"In spite of the inclement night there was a large audience at the Academy of Music last evening to hear James O'Neill in Monte Cristo. The character of Edmond Dantes is particularly adapted to Mr. O'Neill who made the most of it. He was supported by an excellent company in every respect. The company will be welcome at any time."

The second appearance of the actor in the same play on October 30, 1889, however, did not meet with the warm reception predicted four years earlier. The comment in the "Palladium" was brief and none too complimentary of the supporting company.

"James O'Neill, who appeared at the Academy last night in Monte Cristo was greeted by a crowded house. It has been truly said that no actor on the American stage can compare with O'Neill in 'Monte Cristo.' His acting last night was all that it ever

has been, but his support was very indifferent. The scenic effects were good and, as a whole, the play was enjoyed by the large audience. The costumes were elegant."

Edwin Booth In Othello

Edwin Booth, who was probably America's greatest Shakespearean actor, if contemporary criticism can be believed, appeared at the Academy of Music on Christmas eve, 1886, in "Othello." He played the role of Iago, and was supported by Charles Barron as Othello, Emma Vaders as Desdemona, Owen Fawcett as Roderigo, L. J. Henderson as the Duke of Venice, and Mrs. Augusta Foster as Emilia. Mr. Oliver Dowd served as stage director, and Ormand H. Butler as agent for Mr. Booth. Historically correct costumes and armor for auxiliaries was from Eaves Costume Company, New York. A program note also announced that the piano used in the theatre was supplied by Frank Schilling's Music Store, Oswego.

Booth's visit to Oswego came toward the end of his glorious career on the stage, a career which had brought him world-wide fame as an actor. He had risen to the heights in the theatrical world during the 1850's, but had retired from the theatre when the insane act of his brother, John Wilkes Booth, in assassinating Abraham Lincoln, had plunged the nation into mourning. At public insistence Edwin Booth had returned to the stage and was again hailed with great enthusiasm. In 1869 he had opened Booth's Theatre in New York City at a cost of a million dollars, but in 1874 had lost everything in bankruptcy. From that time on Booth devoted himself to starring tours that took him throughout the United States, and to Europe where he enjoyed brilliant success. Booth visited Oswego when he was at the very peak of his career, and it is a great tribute to the tastes of

local play-goers and the business acumen of the theatre manager that the greatest figure on the American stage should have appeared at the Academy of Music.

The actor had often been criticized for surrounding himself with poor supporting players, but the company with him in Oswego met with the approval of the "Time-Express" critic who wrote:

"Booth As Iago

"The Appearance of the Great Actor at the Academy of Music Friday evening. A Brilliant and Delightful Assemblage.

"It was a bold venture of Manager Pierce in making an engagement with Edwin Booth to appear at the Academy of Music. All the more so when it is considered that the holiday week is always one that is dreaded by theatrical managers, as social events more or less monopolize the time and attention of the usual patrons of the drama. The large guarantee Manager Pierce was obliged to assure was of itself sufficient to deter a less enterprising manager from assuming such a risk in a small city at a season, too, when festivities of various kinds were certain to decrease receipts. But Mr. Pierce was determined that the patrons of the Academy of Music should have an opportunity of seeing and hearing the greatest of living American actors, even if he sustained a personal pecuniary loss. Such was not the case, however, and he has the satisfaction of knowing that his efforts to cater to the lovers of the drama in this city are appreciated.

"It was a brilliant assemblage, notwithstanding the weather was anything but propitious. The play of "Othello" is regarded by many as Shakespeare's masterpiece.

"Edwin Booth was, of course, the great attraction, but the playing, as a whole, was on a much higher level than that to which small cities like Oswego are often treated.

"The playing of Booth as Iago was remarkable for its unity. He was always the cunning, plotting villian—always himself. His gestures and facial expressions were true to the character. He did not once "slop over", did not once render the villainy so broadly as to disgust his audience. He was the graceful, self-contained villain from first to last.

"Barron as Othello was also consistent throughout, a wiry man, compact of muscle and sinew, brave, commanding, introspective, weak in his strong faith in Iago, incapable of large loving, thinking most of self when fancying himself most in love with Desdemona, or blind that he cannot see her purity, so selfish that he wants every corner of her love, killing her finally for his own sake. Only once when the thought that she may be false first possesses him do his tones fill his audience with sympathy. At the smothering scene, the hearers are not greatly moved, because even here, it is Othello thinking of Othello.

"At first we were inclined to criticize Barron, in that he did not move us more, but reflecting, we see that the Othello Shakespeare created could not move us: hence, we say his playing was consistent throughout.

"Desdemona was a true, simple, loving, young creature. The part was played well but not masterfully.

"Emilia was the only one who ranted and this only at first. Her playing at the close was strong and now merited applause.

"The dramatic treat enjoyed by the audience will be remembered with pleasure. The large attendance proved that high prices will not deter the amusement loving element of the city from witnessing the drama when presented by such a brilliant company as the one Manager Pierce treated his patrons with on Friday evening."

Reminiscence Of Booth

Christmas Day the Booth Company left Oswego by train for Syracuse. Mr. Frederick W. Barnes of Oswego was also a passenger in the same coach, and was able to observe the actors off stage and out of character. Booth, a dark, handsome man 53 years old, sat quietly reading a French novel in the original, while the rest of the company carried on a gay, hilarious conversation.

"What was the name of that hotel in Oswego?" asked one of the actors.

"The Doolittle House," someone answered.

"Oh," said the first, "I thought it was the 'Get-little' House."

As the uproarious laughter died away, one of the actresses remarked that as she was coming out of the hotel the day before she had asked a small street urchin, "Sonny, where is the Opera House?"

The youngster, not knowing he was addressing a member of the dignified Booth Company and not a "Tom Show" player, answered, "Oh missus, be you one of them show people. When you gonna have the street parade?"

Management Changes In 1887

A change in management of the Academy of Music took place in July, 1887, when Wallace H. Frisbie, proprietor and manager of a rival Oswego theatre, the Casino Opera house, leased the Academy for an indefinite period. The newspapers announced the change as an important event in the theatrical history of Oswego:

"A change in management of the Academy of Music will occur July first, it will then be Manager Frisbie. Mr. W. H. Frisbie has leased the Academy and will take possession on July 1. Great improvements will be made in the house and everything changed behind the orchestra railing. The stage will be widened 8 feet and the scenes lifted 6 feet higher, and there will be a better opportunity

to put on pieces which have heretofore been cramped for room. It is an improvement long desired, as Oswego has lost many attractions and others have been impaired from the fact that they found it impossible to get scenes properly set. The Casino will be closed entirely to theatricals and will be for rent and used only for renting purposes, for which it is peculiarly adapted. Manager Frisbie will secure the coming season the best attractions and give Oswego a rare season of theatricals.

"Oswego will bid good-bye to Manager John R. Pierce with regret and hope that he may be equally successful in any other field of labor which he may choose. The change is simply a business matter and the best feeling exists between all the parties concerned."

Staff In 1887

Mr. Frisbie was assisted in the management of the Academy by James McDonough as treasurer, Professor E. E. Favreau as orchestra leader, John S. Parsons as head usher, and Fred Wallace and George Chetney as ushers. A few years later the theatre program listed Mr. Parsons as treasurer, Clarence S. Martin as chief usher, and Charles O'Geran, James A. Frisbie, B. Thompson and H. F. Cavanaugh as ushers. Professor Favreau continued for many years as leader of an orchestra which included Frank Schilling at the piano, Sol Hunt on the double bass, and a musician named Janauschek on the clarinet.

Minnie Maddern's Four Appearances

For the opening play under new management, Mr. Frisbie engaged the youthful star, Minnie Maddern, to present her latest New York success "Caprice," Howard Taylor's fireside idyl, under the direction of Arthur Miller. In this play Miss Maddern made her greatest success, and brought to popularity the song "In The

Gloaming." She was supported by an excellent cast which included Arthur Forrest, Harry Wilson, Odette Tyler, and her own sister, Mary Maddern. The review next day praised both the star and the new manager of the Academy for a pleasant evening in the theatre.

"There was a large audience at the Academy of Music last evening to see the popular little actress, Minnie Maddern in her new play, 'Caprice,' in which she has toured the country.

"Miss Maddern appeared in a double character, that of Mercy, the bright but ignorant country girl who by her witchery captured a rich and cultured husband, and later as Lucy Ashton when she had grown to be a lady. In the character of Mercy, Miss Maddern appeared to particular advantage and there was some brilliant character acting which seemed to suit the audience. The little star was called before the curtain twice. She was supported by an excellent company, and the interest did not flag from the start.

"We hear only good words from the manner in which the Academy has been fitted up by Manager Frisbie. The stage is so much enlarged that it is in view from all parts of the house, and the scenery and stage fittings are so greatly improved as to call for universal commendation."

Miss Maddern made four appearances in Oswego, once in Charles Callahan's romantic comedy-drama, "Fogg's Ferry," once in "The Puritan Maid," and twice in her greatest success, "Caprice." The little actress was long remembered for her personal charm and acting ability which was well suited to both serious drama and comedy. A year after her fourth appearance in Oswego on April 3, 1889, she was married to Harrison Grey Fiske and retired from the stage for four years. When she returned to the theatre she was known as Mrs. Fiske, and under this name achieved great success as a serious actress in the plays by Ibsen.

Joseph Jefferson III was another celebrated actor to tread the boards at the Academy of Music. He made two different appearances in "Rip Van Winkle," the triumph of his career, which brought him fame and fortune. After a successful run in New York City, Jefferson played the part all over the United States and came to Oswego on September 23, 1887. The role of Gretchen was played by Emma Vadders, who less than a year previously had appeared as Desdemona in Booth's production of "Othello." Charles Duval played the part of Hendrick Hudson. According to the newspaper report the play and Jefferson met with huge success in Oswego:

Jefferson In "Rip Van Winkle"

"There was a magnificent audience at the Academy of Music last evening when Joe Jefferson appeared in his grand representation of Rip Van Winkle. It is one of the rare characters which is never old but which touches the heart as quickly as in the early days when Jefferson made for the quaint old vagabond of the Cat-skills the place it has ever since retained upon the American stage. It is not the acting merely, but the audience seemed to be looking into the real life in the old Dutch village of Falling Waters as is appeared when Irving wrote it. It was a grand piece of character painting and even such of the audience that had seen Jefferson a dozen times were the foremost to applause. The company is a fine one throughout, but the work of Edwin Varrey as 'Derrick Van Beekman' deserves especial mention. Miss Emma Vadders was magnificent as 'Gretchen,' and May Woolcott was admirable in the character of Mennie grown to be a woman.

"If there is any falling off in Jefferson in any particular the audience did not note it and gave him as cordial a reception as when he first appeared before the Oswego public. May it be many

years before Joe Jefferson leaves the stage."

Jefferson did not again play at the Academy of Music, but since he continued on the stage for many more years it is quite possible that he may have returned to Oswego later to play in the Richardson Theatre. His lasting popularity was based on the magical charm of his acting which blended humor, pathos and beauty, and he was always remembered a gentle, kindly Rip Van Winkle.

Kate Claxton, Rose Coghlan

Time and space do not permit a complete account of all the actors and actresses that appeared at the Academy of Music, to do so would require an almost complete list of the players of that period. Brief mention must be made, however, of a few other outstanding performers who played in Oswego:

Kate Claxton, appeared here several times in her greatest success as the blind sister in "The Two Orphans," a part she had played for one hundred and eighty nights at the Union Square Theatre in New York, and later for twenty years on tour. She also appeared here in the plays "Frou-Frou," and "The Sea Of Ice."

Rose Coghlan, an English actress who made her American debut under Wallack's banner, appeared twice in Oswego as Lady Teazle in "The School For Scandal." Critics believed her to be the greatest Lady Teazle in the English-speaking world.

Admirer Carried Langtry From Theater

Lily Langtry, affectionately referred to as "the Jersey Lily," was an English celebrity who attained success in this country because of her great beauty and clever acting. She toured America under her own management, and appeared twice before audiences at the Academy of Music; "As

You Like It" in 1883, and "As In A Looking Glass" in 1888. An amusing story is told about Mrs. Langtry and a fire at the Academy. On one of her visits to Oswego she was accompanied by an ardent admirer, Freddie Gebhart, who was most solicitous of the actress's welfare and happiness. During an evening performance the theatre furnace became overheated, and though there was no actual danger the management thought it wise to empty the auditorium. The audience filed out quietly without difficulty, but Mrs. Langtry's admirer seeing a splendid opportunity for an act of heroism lifted the actress tenderly and carried her downstairs to the street.

Mr. and Mrs. Nat C. Goodwin starred together in a three act comedy, "The Member For Slocum On A Racket." Mr. Goodwin later to become best known for the number of his wives, was at first a variety actor with Tony Pastor in New York, and later a star on the legitimate stage. He came to Oswego in 1882 with one of his wives to appear in a play which gave him a fine opportunity to show his skill in comedy, burlesque and mimicry.

Herne In "Hearts Of Oak"

James A. Herne was a playwright, actor and manager who believed that a play should improve the morality of the audience. He was thought to be the greatest author of his time, and is best remembered for "Hearts Of Oak," which was enormously popular when it was presented here on April 17, 1883, with the author in the leading part.

Thomas W. Keene, a well-known tragedian, came to Oswego three different times to play the leading roles in "Richard III," "Richelieu," and "Othello." Following his March 6, 1883, presentation of "Richard III" the "Palladium" noted:

"Thomas W. Keene, the accomplished tragedian, gave Richard

III at the Academy of Music last evening to a good house taking into consideration the fact that it was election night. Mr. Keene's conception of the character of the crook backed king is a fine one, and from first to last the play was finely rendered. There were no long waits and the audience expressed their approbation by repeated encores. The combat in the last act was excellent and the audience went away highly pleased with the performance."

Keene's performance must have been especially inspiring for Mr. Frederick W. Barnes relates that he and a group of 9 to 12 year old boys were inspired by his appearance here later to produce their own version of Richard. After much planning and rehearsing the boys finally presented their interpretation of the immortal drama in the attic of one boy's home. They all agreed afterward that their production was a great success.

A woman playing a masculine role was very unusual, and not always acceptable, at the Academy of Music. The appearance of Adele Belgarde as Hamlet, however, was a novel event which met with at least partial approval of the "Daily Times" reviewer who commented:

"Miss Adele Belgarde made her first appearance before an Oswego audience last evening, and essayed the role of Hamlet. Miss Belgarde is very young, only 17 or 18 years old we are told, and she certainly does not look any older. We must therefore consider her performance as that of a youthful prodigy, and viewed in that light it was truly wonderful and challenged our admiration. That a girl so young should be able to sustain the part of Hamlet passably well, so as not to provoke weariness and disgust in her audience is enough to show that she had considerable histrionic ability. As an exhibition of youthful prodigy the performance was a success. Thus far we go and no further in commendation."

Brougham, Denman Thompson

The distinguished Irish author and comedian, John Brougham, on his final tour of America, appeared in his own exquisite comedy, "Playing With Fire," on October 16, 1877.

Roland Reed, a very popular player of light comedy, appeared in Oswego for seven different engagements in such plays as "Cheek," "Humbug," and "Lend Me Your Wife." Reed never attained the lasting fame he may have deserved, but his performances were more and more enthusiastically received, and he established himself as one of Oswego's favorite actors, especially with the "gallery gods."

Frank Mayor, famous chiefly for his impersonation of a native American type in the title role of the play "Davy Crockett," appeared in Oswego for seven engagements between 1878 and 1890.

Denman Thompson, best known as delineator of rustic types, made four appearances in the title role of the play "Joshua Whitcomb."

Sig Sawtelle's Tented Theater

Mention should also be made of four stock companies that appeared regularly at the Academy of Music to present a variety of classic and popular dramas, including most of the old favorite stock pieces. The four were the Standard Dramatic Company, the People's Theatre, the Forresters' Stock Company, and the Sawtelle Comedy Company. Sig Sawtelle and his troupe first appeared for a one week engagement in July, 1884, and continued to play in Oswego for many years afterward both at the Academy of Music and in their own tent theatre.

Burlesque shows were probably the most sensational, and, at least with the male population, the most popular form of entertainment to appear at the Academy of Music. The performances were somewhat like minstrel shows and variety bills with music, dancing, sketches, and

comedians. The humor was usually broad, and the dancing sensational, chiefly because it introduced dancers clad in pink tights. Fun and noise were the aim of these shows which often ended with a wrestling match, a boxing bout or a hoochee-coochee dancer as an "extra added attraction."

Burlesque

A total of thirty burlesque shows played in Oswego between 1875 and 1893, or an average of two a year. Among the best known to appear here were May Fiske's "English Blondes," in 1878; the Female Mastodons in 1883; the "Black Crook" in 1885 and 1887; the Ida Siddons Mastodon Burlesque Company playing "A Strike In the Harem" in 1886; and the Gussie Bellwood Burlesque company in 1890.

The advertisement of May Fisk's English Blondes announced: "Songs, dances, living art pictures and a grand specialty combination, the most extensive organization traveling. A grand collection of female beauty. The performance will conclude with the latest of sensational extravaganzas, entitled 'A Celebrated Blonde Case, or 'A Blue Bird of Paradise.' In addition to the above great attraction will appear Ira A. Paine, champion pigeon and glass ball shot of the world."

A reporter for the "Daily Times" waxed poetic in his review of the show, he wrote:

"The bald-headed bucks got some terrible steers from the red-legged beauties, 'the little dears'; the reason of which, if appears, was because they sat in the foremost row. The gallery god with the opera glass says things have come to a pretty pass (he received a sly wink from a saucy lass.) The gray-haired patriarch (who didn't know what kind of a show it was going to be) remarks with truth, that such exhibitions are bad for the youth."

Hart and Sullivan's Female Mastodons advertised:

"The grandest female organiza-

tion traveling. Presenting everything fresh, animated, sparkling, mirthful, ticklish, inviting. Full of delicious nonsense, delightful situations, spicy bon-bons, charming music, magnificent costumes and appropriate appointments. Appearance of sixteen beautiful maidens in evening dress. Magnificent orchestra and brass band.

The "Palladium" review of this performance was very conservative, the principal comment being, "There was very little if anything in the performance to commend it to the public."

The Black Crook

The outstanding sensation of the period was the colorful musical extravaganza, "The Black Crook," which set a new style in gorgeous entertainment but added nothing to dramatic literature. The plot was unimportant, the main attractions were magnificent scenes and girl dancers in flesh-colored tights. An item in the "Palladium," October 24, 1885, announced the coming performance:

"The presentation of the great spectacular play, 'The Black Crook,' will occur at the Academy of Music next Thursday evening. The Kiralfy Brothers are widely known, and in the piece have spared no expense to make the spectacle a notable one. The success of the play depends upon the ballet and scenic effects, and these, particularly the latter, almost reach the acme of perfection. The company numbers forty people, and a carload of scenery is used. The performance will be perfectly suitable for ladies, and it is to be hoped that a large number will attend. In all the cities ladies are a large proportion of the audience. An erroneous impression exists that the character of the play is such that ladies cannot well attend it. Such is not the case. There is nothing in the performance that any one could take offense at."

This advance notice was evidently borne out by the performance, the review next day said:

"There was a large audience to see 'The Black Crook.' It was a fine performance and everyone who attended was delighted. The spectacle was put on the stage better than we have ever seen in Oswego and the ballet was very good, excelling in the Amazon March and the Jersey Guards. The opinion expressed yesterday was fully borne out."

Following the appearance of the Gussie Bellwood Burlesque and Novelty Company the newspaper commented: "Everyone was agreeably surprised, for the performance was very much more refined than the somewhat loud lithographs had led people to expect."

Female Minstrel Troupe

Minstrel shows, with their sprightly humor, song and dance, continued to be as popular with Oswegonians at the Academy of Music as during the earlier period when this form of entertainment was first developed. Dozens of minstrels appeared each year, and a total of 73 companies played the Academy during the eighteen year life of the theatre. Happy Cal Wagner's Minstrels, Bryant's Minstrels, Haverly's Minstrel Troupe, Duprez and Benedict's Famous New Orleans Minstrels, Calender's Georgia Minstrels, and many other famous companies appeared at one time or another. Among the unusual troupes that played in Oswego were McGill and Strong's Emerald Minstrels, and Healy's Hibernian Minstrels featuring Irish songs, dances and jokes; Madame Rentz's Female Minstrels, an all-woman company; and Hagues Operatic Minstrels, presenting classical music.

Gilbert And Sullivan Operettas

Music was an important part of the entertainments scheduled at the Academy, and many of the outstanding musical organizations of the period appeared before local audiences. The Holman Opera Company presented many

old favorites such as "Bohemian Girl," "La Grande Duchess," "The Princess of Trebizonde," "Maritana," and "The Chimes Of Normandy." The Oates English Opera Company appeared with Lecoq's romantic comic opera, "Girofle-Girofla"; Payson's Company presented "Martha"; and the Liliputian Opera Company, a group of talented youngsters, appeared in "Jack, The Giant Killer." Strauss' beautiful comic opera, "The Queen's Lace Handkerchief," was presented by the New York Opera Company; and the comic opera, "Little Duke," was given by Alice Oates, the great American prima donna comedienne.

Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas was played regularly by various groups including the D'Oyly-Carter Opera Company, the Saville Comic Opera Company, Henderson and Duff's Opera Company, Pyke's New York Opera Company, and Lehnen's Juvenile Opera Company. This last named was a group of fifty children under the direction of Adele Daniel, and played "Pinafore" in Oswego on September 23-24, 1879. Reviewing this unusual troupe the "Daily Times" said:

"Lehnen's Juvenile Opera Company was greeted last evening by a fine audience of our best people and the entertainment was eminently satisfactory. The performance of the little people is really wonderful. They present the popular opera in a manner which would reflect credit on any company and they certainly excel some of the professionals that have traveled through the country during the past year. The liberal applause which was bestowed on the leading characters, testified to the appreciation of the audience. It was spontaneous and hearty and expressed thorough enjoyment. It is to be hoped that the troupe will visit Oswego again."

A few years later another children's group, the Juvenile Ideal Opera Company presented Van Suppe's sparkling opera, "Fatin-

itza," before an enthusiastic Oswego audience. This same piece was also presented several times by the Philharmonic Society of Syracuse. The Syracuse group returned many times to sing other operas including the "Chimes of Normandy," and "H. M. S. Pinafore."

The famous McGibney Family was the musical group to appear most regularly in Oswego. This large and talented family singing solo and in groups, and playing a wide variety of musical instruments, never failed to draw an appreciative audience.

The Fiske University Jubilee Singers, presenting a program of Negro spirituals, came to the Academy of Music many times to charm Oswegonians with their rich harmonies.

Many instrumental organizations also played their melodies at the Academy, the Boston Philharmonic club being the most outstanding, and the Central New York Zither Club being the most amusing.

Variety Shows Drew Patronage

Variety and vaudeville shows never failed to draw large crowds to the playhouse, though occasionally the spectators were noisy. When Heywood Brothers' Combination and Kate Logan's New York Serenaders appeared in a variety entertainment including clog dancing, serio-comic singing, juggling, plate-spinning, Dutch delineations, and comedy skits, a program note requested:

"Gentlemen will please remove their hats during the performance. Patrons are requested not to beat time with the music. Whistling and anything of a rowdy nature not tolerated. Parties not willing to comply with this reasonable request will be ejected with but little ceremony."

Another note on the program of Dan Shelby's Novelty Company assured the audience that "The manager has spared no expense in selecting a vaudeville company,

free from all coarseness, which the amusement-going public is so often compelled to tolerate by would be traveling managers."

Magic and legerdemain was presented by Frickell, the King of Conjurers, in his drawing room entertainment of mystery, and comic scenes in ventriloquism. As a special drawing attraction Mr. Frickell gave away a beautiful old chromo "all framed, ready to hang on the wall," to everybody who attended on the grand opening night, with "An elegant chamber set valued at forty-five dollars" given as an extra special gift to the holder of the luck number.

Hartz, Magician

Hartz, a celebrated magician, met with a cordial reception in Oswego as indicated by a review of his performance. This warm reception may have been due to the ton of coal and other valuable gifts he distributed to his audience. The reporter wrote:

"Professor Hartz again delighted his audience at the Academy of Music last night, with his tricks and deceptions, which are by far the best of the kind ever seen in this city, and which utterly defy the penetration of the most astute. All are performed in a very neat, graceful and off-hand manner, and give great satisfaction. Last night the professor gave away a silver watch, a ton of coal, and a large number of other valuable gifts.

"Tonight will be memorable, and an immense and costly attraction is offered. It is the last night, and the professor will present to his audience a solid gold hunting-case watch, a complete set of bedroom furniture and a large assortment of other valuable gifts; he will give a handsome present to everyone who purchases a fifty cent ticket. The most beautiful lady in the hall will be presented with a handsome coral necklace, and a present is ready for the homliest man. This places Mr.

Hartz under great expense, but he is determined to leave a good name in Oswego, as he intends returning in the spring, and we are confident he will do all he advertises."

Professor Reynolds, a mesmerist, gave a demonstration before a large audience. The Palladium remarked:

"His entertainment was one of the most astonishing and amusing ever seen here. Several citizens were got entirely under his control and went through the most laughable and ludicrous performances at the professor's will, at which the audience were continually convulsed with laughter. To put the facts in a single statement, it was the funniest thing ever seen here."

Spiritual Manifestations

August 12-13, 1877, The Cecil Brothers gave two entertainments exposing "Spiritual Manifestations." The first night they confined themselves almost entirely to reproducing the manifestations, such as the Davenport rope-tying, cabinet seance, the handcuff trick, the Katy King materialization, and other acts. A committee was appointed from the audience to do the tying, which was done as securely as possible. Then the brothers were placed in a cabinet, released themselves and performed upon musical instruments and bells, and showed "spirit" hands and faces. One of them entered the cabinet and allowed the "spirits" to tie him, after which his coat was taken off and put on again, and he also played upon a mouth organ when his mouth was supposed to be full of water. Each time the cabinet was opened he appeared to be securely tied.

Miss Cecil performed the Katie King materialization trick. A rope was tied securely around her neck, she was placed in the cabinet, the two ends of the rope were passed through holes in the cabinet and tied outside. The cabinet was closed and in a short time "spirit"

hands and faces were exhibited at the apertures, and presently a "spirit form" draped in fleecy white made its appearance and wandered about the stage. The "spirits" re-entered the cabinet, the doors were closed, soon after re-opened and Miss Cecil was found tied in the same manner as when first placed in the cabinet.

The second evening most of the manifestations were repeated and were followed by a complete "expose" in which all of these things were done in full view of the audience so it could be seen that no other agency was at work by the nimble fingers of the "mediums."

Pat Rooney Pays Visit

When the Irish comedian, Pat Rooney, who became famous on the vaudeville stage in later years, made his first of many visits to Oswego the "Morning Herald" announced the entertainment with the comment:

"Reader, if you want to enjoy a rare treat tonight and have a hearty laugh that will keep the blues away for many a day, go to see Pat Rooney and his variety entertainment. 'Yer thare are ye McCarty?'"

A notice at the bottom of the program was amusing in that it announced:

"Mr. Rooney assures the public, that this combination is strickly first class in every respect, as the names of the ladies and gentlemen engaged is a sufficient guarantee as to that fact. Gentlemen can bring their families to enjoy the entertainment, as nothing will be said or done to offend the most fastidious."

Next day the Herald reporter commented on the show, and also on the public taste for entertainment:

"Pat Rooney had a house last night which ought to have warmed the cockles of his heart, the gallery and lower floor being about as full as they could hold. Rooney was very good, but the others did not arouse us to such a

pitch that our pocket book could have been taken without our knowing it. A variety show can fill the hall it seems, while first-class actors of the legitimate drama may have to walk out of town."

Rosina Vokes, who was said to be one of the cleverest and most piquant variety actresses ever to adorn the stage, and "to have the most infectious laugh ever heard in a theatre, and a merry devil lodged in her eye," made two Oswego appearances with her London Comedy Company in programs of one-act plays. Her 1885 engagement featured "The Tinted Venus, of Tweedle's Dream," with Miss Vokes in the role of Venus, a gay goddess. "A Game Of Cards" was the headline play when she returned in 1889.

Popular Lectures

Lectures on a wide variety of subjects were also given at the Academy for the information and entertainment of local audiences. As in the earlier period these lectures were well received and contributed much to the intellectual life of Oswego. Among the most notable lecturers to appear were Henry Ward Beecher, Wendell Phillips, and Robert G. Ingersoll. Beecher spoke on "The Ministry of Wealth," in 1877; Phillips came here in 1878 to talk on "Women, Temperance and Labor"; and Ingersoll presented his controversial lecture on "Orthodoxy" in 1885.

Professor W. C. Richards, of Massachusetts, presented a series of four scientific lectures: first, "The Matter King," or the chemistry of the air; second, "The Matter Queen," or the chemistry of water; third, "Franklin's Kite," or the marvels of electricity; and fourth, "About the Poles," or magnetic wonders.

The subject of social reform was covered by Dr. E. B. Halliday in a lecture entitled, "Vices Of the Period"; by Frost and McElvey on "Temperance"; and by

James W. Brooks on "Civil Service Reform."

Popular lectures included "Lincoln," given by Schuyler Colfax; "Iceland and the Northmen" by Dr. Isaac I. Hayes; and "Tours Of Europe," with visual and oral illustration, by Prof. Cromwell. James Edley, an eminent physiologist, gave a course of eight lectures on "Human Character, and the Art of Reading it in the Face"; Dr. Townsend, acknowledged everywhere as the greatest living psychologist and mental scientist, lectured on "Fun, Science and Mystery;" and Prof. Reynolds, the powerful mesmerist, gave one of his laughable, mystical and wonderfully exciting entertainments consisting of experiments in Animal Magnetism or Mental Electricity.

Humpty-Dumpty Came 23 Times

"Humpty-Dumpty," a pantomime show, quite unlike the other forms of entertainment to be given at the Academy, appeared in Oswego 23 different times during the life of the old theatre. An harlequinade with dancing, music, ballets, burlesque, pantomime, gymnastics and acrobatic feats, "Humpty-Dumpty" was closely related to opera-bouffe and was popular with all ages, though children were frequently in the majority at all performances. The principal characters were Clown and Pantaloon, who in chalk-white face, clown cap and baggy trousers were probably the forerunner of the modern circus clowns; Harlequin, who carried a flat sword with which he banged away at Pantaloon at every opportunity; and Columbine, a dainty, fairy-like character, who appeared as romantic foil to Harlequin. A very loose plot held the pantomime together, but did not interfere with buffoonery. A summary of the scenes indicates the type of entertainment presented: Act 1, Court of Old King Cole, The Fairy and the Poet. The place where "Humpty-Dumpty" was born. Humpty and the pigs. Bold sol-

dier boys. Humpty as a tactician. Arrival of Barnum's circus. Burlesque bareback act on an untamed wooden horse. Humpty in the toils of a giant policeman 12 feet high. Act 2, Chanticleer proclaims the dawn, the Clown in fits, comical hornpipe by clown and Pantaloon. Humpty-Dumpty on police duty. Grand patriotic tableau. Humpty-Dumpty bids all good night.

Amateur Entertainment

Amateur concerts, plays and recitals were given frequently at the Academy to supplement the professional entertainment fare for Oswegonians. Starting in 1881, and continuing for many years, the Kingsford Band, under the direction of Frank Schilling, presented an annual grand concert. In 1882 the band was assisted by Mrs. Leonard Ames, Jr., soprano; Charles Tremain, tenor; and Hubert Hurter, pianist. For the third annual grand concert in 1883 the Kingsford Band was assisted by the Concordia Singing Society, and the proceeds turned over for the relief of German sufferers.

Benefit programs presented by amateur organizations were quite common at the end of the last century. In December, 1875, a dramatic entertainment, for the benefits of the widows and orphans of the lost schooner, "I. G. Jenkins," was presented by a group of Oswegonians. The program included fourteen numbers and is interesting because of its variety:

1. Music by the F. M. T. band under the leadership of Mons. Julian.
2. Duet by Messrs. Mailloux and Kingsley, accompanied by Prof. Dur.
2. Terpsichorean Festivities by Mr. P. Taylor.
4. Select Readings by Mrs. Norman Holley.
5. Solo by Miss Lynch, accompanied by Prof. Dur.
6. Recitation by Mr. P. Fennel.

7. Duet by Misses Lawler and King.

8. Musical Sortie (vocal) by Mr. George Allen.

9. Dutch Eccentricities by Mr. Norman Holley and Master Norman Holley in their songs and dances, with instrumental music.

10. Song by Mr. G. Kingsley.

11. Song and dance in costume by Mr. P. Taylor.

12. Stump speech by Sergeant Murray.

13. Indian War and Scalp Dance by the celebrated Indian Chief Red Cloud, imported from the western wilds for the occasion.

14. The whole to conclude with the laughable farce "Troublesome Servants," presented by F. M. T. amateurs: J. J. White, M. Quinn, Jas. Frisbee, M. A. Clark, John Shepard, Miss Mary Regan, and Miss Maggie Hayes.

Other benefit performances given at the Academy of Music included a home talent production of "The Fallen Saved," for the St. Paul's German Lutheran Church; "The Frog Opera," "Poor Pilligoddy," and "A Husband to Order," given for the benefit of the Oswego Orphan's Asylum, as it was then called; and a Christmas afternoon and evening program given by Barney's Thespian Dramatic Club and featuring John Newton, Oswego's favorite vocalist and comedian, and Tillie Barrett, Annie Barrett, Little Dorrett, and many others in a benefit for St. John's Church.

St. Patrick's Day Home Talents

St. Patrick's Day was always the date for an amateur program at the Academy. In 1876 the amateurs of St. Mary's Academy presented the play "Last Days Of Pompeii," which had been dramatized from the book by the Rev. L. Griffa. Music between acts was furnished by St. Mary's choir with Professor D. Dur at the piano, and aided by Miss Cecelia Kelly, and by the F. M. T. Band. St. Patrick's Day, 1880, brought the drama "Dan O'Carolan, or Horrors of Irish Evictions," pre-

sented by local talent; 1883 a tragic drama entitled "Brian Boroihme," and an afterpiece, "North Creina"; and 1886 the play "Shandy Maguire."

An organization known as the Ladies' Opera Club gave the operas "Lily Bell," "Chimes Of Normandy," and "A Dress Rehearsal" at various times.

High School Commencements

The Oswego High school held its competitive exercises, and Commencement program, annually at the Academy of Music, together with occasional musical and dramatic events. In 1875 a program by the high school included an instrumental duet by Misses Babbott and Manwaring; a solo by Libbie G. Parker; a vocal duet by Misses Churchill and Wright; a solo by Emma Wright; an instrumental duet by Misses Gillett and McCully; and a five-act pantomime, "Mistletoe Bough." Another year the pupils of "A" class, Oswego High school, presented the three act play, "Our American Cousin," directed by Mr. J. S. Mathews; and in 1883, "The Great Republic," an allegory and tableaux, was given by over 300 pupils of the high school, assisted by graduates and others.

Normal Society Entertainments

The literary and dramatic societies of the Oswego Normal school gave occasional programs at the theatre, one included an oration "Know Thyself" by F. N. Jenett; a recitation "Battle of Garta" by Lottie Clary; and a five act drama, "The Wedding Scene," with a cast of twenty-four actors and actresses.

Recitals by local readers were popular during the last century, and many were presented for large audiences assembled at the Academy. Typical of these recitals was a program of readings, and costume personations, including two scenes from "Macbeth," and two scenes from "The School for Scandal," given by Mrs. Sarah

Fisher Ames in 1877. The humorous and dramatic recital given by A. P. Burbank in 1885 illustrates the type of material presented by these "solo artists." Mr. Burbank read "Squeer's School" by Dickens, "Buck Fanshaw's Funeral" by Mark Twain, "The Grave Diggers" by Shakespeare, "Pat's Panorama" by J. S. Burdett, act 1 of "Rip Van Winkle," and miscellaneous material entitled, "Uncle Peet," "The Aesthetic Girl," and "The Last Rose."

Casino Becomes Theater

After 1890 the Academy of Music gradually declined in popularity as the principal place of entertainment in Oswego. The theatre continued to operate for several years longer, but public interest in other forms of amusement, and keen competition from another theatre reduced patronage at the Academy to a point where it could no longer operate profitably. The roller-skating craze which struck Oswego drew a great many people away from the theatre audience. Old and young thronged to the Armory on East First street, to Mansard Hall, and to the Casino where they spent morning, afternoon and evening on roller skates. So popular was the past-time that few people had time to see a show.

When the roller-skating fad died down Wallace H. Frisbie, owner of the Casino, converted his skating rink into a theatre which housed many fine stage attractions in direct competition with the Academy. The Casino was new and novel, and located on the street level instead of up a flight of stairs. Soon the public was going there instead of the Academy to see the old favorites. It was at the Casino that Ida Siddon's Mastodon Burlesue Company presented "A Strike In the Harem"; the comedian Auren Woodhull presented his comedy hit "Eli Wheatfield"; and the same night the Academy was

showing a double company in Uncle Tom's Cabin," the Casino was showing, "Ten Nights In the Bar Room."

Mr. Frisbie took over the Academy of Music in 1887, and managed the theatre with some success for several years. The last available theatre program, dated February 11, 1892, listed Frisbie as lessee and manager, but Oswegonians who recall the final months of the theatre report that Joe Wallace, senior, and Charles Gilmore doing business as Wallace & Gilmore and holding leases on many up-state theatres were in charge at the end.

A news item from the "Palladium", December 16, 1892, reporting the closing indicates that Mr. Wallace was the last manager:

"The Academy Of Music Closed

"Superintendent Schwarz, of the D. L. & W. RR. Company, has decided to make certain repairs to the Academy of Music. Mr. Schwarz was in Oswego this morning, overlooking the place and found that it will be necessary to tear up the stage and make certain changes in the auditorium.

"The building will also be strengthened throughout. The repairs will probably occupy three weeks, and Manager Joe Wallace has cancelled all dates for that period. The Academy will doubtless re-open with Hallen & Hart's new play, 'The Idea.'"

A later news item announced that Mr. Wallace was continuing his theatrical enterprise at another site. The item stated: "Brown's Musee and Theatre, under the management of Joe A. Wallace, will open in one of the stores in the Jefferson Block."

Fitzhugh Hall Temporary Theater

Because the building was old, and almost beyond repair, the Academy of Music was finally closed forever. Mr. Max B. Richardson, a successful real estate operator and patron of theatre arts, became interested in bring-

ing drama to Oswego and opened a small playhouse in Fitzhugh Hall. A "Palladium" news story on January 25, 1893, reported:

"Tomorrow morning workmen under the supervision of Max B. Richardson will commence erecting a stage in Fitzhugh Hall, and on Tuesday evening of next week the Livingstone Comedy and Variety Company will open a two night's engagement there. The entertainment will consist of farces, singing, dancing and other specialties. The stage will be fitted up with fine scenery. It will be twenty feet in depth with an opening of twenty-two feet. The seating capacity of the hall will be five hundred."

This makeshift theatre was a great contrast with the larger and better equipped Academy of Music, but it provided a place for stage plays. Most important of all, however, was the fact that Mr. Richardson became so interested in theatre management that he later built the large, modern Richardson Theatre which was opened in 1895. The story of the

Richardson, however, must be told at another time.

The closing of the Academy of Music brought to an end an important era in the history of Oswego entertainment. Drama in Oswego before 1875 had been in an adolescent phase of development. During the period of the Academy, 1875 to 1893, it gained poise and maturity. Oswego became a good show town, and people came from all over the surrounding territory to attend performances at the Academy. The theatre offered its devotees many incomparable and memorable experiences. Here great plays were presented by famous actors, along with minor trifles played by unimportant people. Here was life being lived, idealized, sentimentalized and satirized. Here was both an escape from life and a realization of it. So the Academy of Music lingers as a bright memory in the minds of Oswegonians who attended performances there, and the famous playhouse remains as a bright page in the history of Oswego entertainment.



A Century of Fire Fighting in Oswego

(Paper Read Before Oswego County Historical Society at Oswego February 21, 1946, by Alderman James R. Jackson of Oswego.)

It has been an interesting study and educational as well, to look for and find many interesting things concerning Fires, Fire Department Activities and Fire Prevention Methods used in Oswego, from its inception in 1828 as a village, down until the present time. And I sincerely hope that it may be an interesting history for you of the Oswego Historical Society to preserve and pass on down to oncoming generations.

The Fire Department was and is necessary to the development of our city and its effective work in controlling conflagrations of such size at times that the whole city seemed in jeopardy, made much of the past history of our city possible. And to realize and learn how our Fire Department has developed in late years is a goal which all residents of Oswego might worthily seek to attain.

It has been my pleasure to talk to some of the old volunteer firemen who served Oswego well in the last century and who have since answered "the last alarm," and also to visit with today's firemen and see for myself the present day methods of fire fighting as they are successfully carried out by our present day fire fighters.

And to the "old vols" and the present members of the Oswego Fire Department from Chief Monty Lass down to the newest members in the ranks, I owe a personal debt of gratitude for courtesies shown me in my endeavors to bring this story to you tonight.

Early Equipment Crude

When Oswego was just a small hamlet of a few homes with a

store or two and a couple of churches, there were men, then as now, who in a small way, acted as firemen. They had no trucks, no hose, not even the old hand carts or pumps to pull, nor did they have uniforms, helmets, rubber clothes and other equipment, such as we associate with the well-equipped fire fighter of today. Their "apparatus" consisted mainly of an old bucket or pail with perhaps a ladder handy. Some may have had axes for wood-cutting but that was about the limit of the villager's fire fighting equipment. There was no organization even. Only the thought of helping one another in case of fire motivated the firemen. This, of course, was before 1828 when Oswego became an organized village.

However in 1828, after some homes had been ruined by fire, the village fathers held a meeting and, after some discussion, took action that paved the way for the organization of Oswego's first Fire Department. Four fire marshalls were named and these marshalls, or wardens, the first ones to be named fire district officials, if they may be called that, were: Henry Eagle, Francis Rood, Thomas Amhler and William Kniffen. Their emblem of office was a seven-foot stick painted red with the words "Fire Warden" painted thereon.

These four men acted as chief firemen and fire prevention officers. Their duties consisted of the inspection of homes and business places, in regards to hazards about fireplaces, chimneys and rubbish accumulations. In case of fire, these men had absolute authority over the citizens. To disobey their orders usually meant a fine of two dollars, and

that was real hard money in those days.

Quaint Fire Ordinances

These Fire Wardens also established local fire laws, and regulations for each citizen to follow. Each citizen was required to keep at least one bucket for fire purposes in his home ready for instant use. If he had more than one stove or fireplace, then his requirements were one bucket for each stove and fireplace in his house. These buckets, usually of leather, were hung in a real handy place, so that when an alarm was given, verbally of course, the owners could grasp them and rush to the fire scene to aid in the formation of "a bucket brigade." These "bucket brigades" were formed by having two lines of men (and sometimes the women helped out too), the one nearest the supply of water (river, well or creek), would dip in his bucket, fill it, pass it to the next man in line who in turn passed it to the man next to him, the procedure continuing until the bucket reached scene of the fire when the man nearest the fire would douse the water on the blaze, hand the bucket to the nearest person on the return line, and grab a full one and repeat the operation. We can well wonder how this man withstood the heat (or cold) as a house or store burned to the ground, as they frequently did in spite of all efforts to save them.

First Fire Company in 1830

In 1830 the first fire company was formed in Oswego village, and some advancement was made as to fire fighting equipment and methods. Practice meetings, at which tested methods of fighting the spread of flames were discussed, were held in a tavern owned by a Mr. J. Raynor. It was located in Water street. One's mind need not be stretched too far to imagine what a meeting night was like at the tavern and one can imagine "the boys"

could really enjoy a fire drill inside the warm, comfortable tavern.

Rules and regulations, adopted at the early meetings, related to inspections to be made by the fire wardens. If construction was not just right, judged from the standpoint of fire hazards, plan alterations were made and recommended changes were carried out, even as in our present day. And we should remember that when these recommendations were made, and are made even today, it is all for our own collective good that the changes are ordered.

In the first fire company W. G. Adkins was made "Fire Captain" (whose duties were similar to those of our "chief" today) and J. C. Case, clerk.

First Great Fire

The year 1830 also witnessed Oswego's first highly destructive blaze, the block bounded by what are now West First Street, West Cayuga, West Second and West Seneca Streets, being burned over with all the buildings that had been standing thereon. One can imagine the efforts made by the then only existing fire company whose members carried water by bucket from the river in their attempt to check the flames. And only by hard work and help of the villagers, was the fire held within the confines of a single block.

Hue and cry by citizens was immediately set up for a new cart and fire engines. But it took another hard fire in 1833 before Oswego was to get these. On December 1, 1833, Oswego received its first fire engines which were pumps operated by hand and back power of several men ranged alongside the rocking pump. By this date, too, alarms were being sounded on the bell of the First Presbyterian church which stood in West Park.

In 1842, the Oswego Fire Department was reorganized and incorporated according to state law. New wardens were appointed, ten

responsible citizens and community leaders. They were: Eli Warner, Luther Weatherby, Timothy Pitkin, Samuel Halsey, Joseph Wellington, Joseph Wilbur and Alpheus Stewart. Their duties were similar to those performed by the preceding wardens, with the exception of the fact that they governed the fire companies as they were formed, acting in a capacity similar to that in which our Commissioner of Public Safety today acts in regards to matters pertaining to the Fire Department.

Many Changes In 1850

In the years following the disastrous fire of 1850 when a large portion of the east side, then generally called "East Oswego", business section was burned out by a fire which destroyed also part of the lower bridge, the city began buying more equipment. Due to this fact there was more interest shown in the department and the city was getting much better protection, due to the increased interest taken in its fire department and its problems by the average citizen.

In 1850, the city bought its first Button fire engine, and that year also brought more and better changes. Oswego had at this time seven volunteer fire companies with a total membership of over 400 men. There were four hand-powered pumpers, two hook and ladder trucks, and the new Button engine. The first fire chief presiding over the enlarged and better-equipped department was John McNair, a prominent citizen and warden of fire in preceding years. He was well qualified for the position.

At that time there was a strong rivalry between the members of the volunteer companies and it is said many fights, due to this cause, grew out of these rivalries. Fights were frequently caused by two companies reaching simultaneously the same supply of water at the same time. As the hydrant men would make

the hydrant and struggle to gain control of it fists would fly and more often than not a third company would take water while the others were "at it again."

Firemen's Social Functions

All equipment was still hand drawn in the 1850s and firemen of those days also participated in a rivalry as to which would enter the best looking cart or engine in the then frequent parades of the volunteer companies. At various times in the year, banquets were arranged by the fire companies for their members as a means of holding their interest in their companies. The big events of the year came when "Firemen's Balls" were held by each of the volunteer companies during the winter season. The dance programs for these occasions were really a work of art and the "Times press" and "Palladium press" surely wrought wonders for the "boys" at dance times. The dances were usually held in public halls. I have several programs of dances given by Niagara Hose No. 3, Halcyon Hook & Ladder Co., Smyth Hose No. 8. Many of these dances were held in Mansard, Richardson and Fitzhugh Halls.

Through the courtesy of Hubert and Brosmer, I am able tonight to tell you something about the Insurance Companies operating in Oswego and the attitudes they adopted in the years gone by concerning the Oswego Fire Department.

When insurance companies first began insuring homes against fire loss, they also took an active interest in fire departments. This was only natural, for the better the fire department, the less the fire losses for the insurance companies to pay. The old line companies, many of them still in business, really contributed much toward fire protection and fire department systems in the old volunteer days.

Insurance Company Activity

But, of course, in the early days

of fire insurance, not everyone could afford to take it out because of high premiums. And so many fires naturally developed in the homes of people who were uninsured that the insurance companies, especially those that contributed financially to fire departments marked the homes that were insured by them.

So when fire broke out, the "old Vols" responding to the alarm would work "like mad" when they found an "insured" marker on the house, and it was charged that when there was no marker on the home that in many instances the firemen's efforts to check the flames were less strenuous. This especially happened in New York City where many fire companies were organized by the aid of insurance companies. However, I was told the "old timers" in Oswego never gave ground for such complaints, but that they would pitch in and help to put out the flames, regardless of fire markers.

You will see the replicas of these fire markers tonight. And I may say for the insurance companies of the present day that they have done a lot for modern fire departments. The National Board of Fire Underwriters, an organization made up of fire insurance companies have laboratories and pass on building codes, electrical wiring and fixture standards, test them, and in general tell us what is safe to use and what is not.

Reorganization Of 1855

Again in 1855 the fire department was again reorganized to better the protection of the city which, growing rapidly, now had many flour mills, lumber and ship yards, cooper shops, malt houses, and iron works. Lumber was being shipped to Oswego from Canada and Michigan. Many lumber yards were found at the river's edge and also in the harbor area in general. Grain elevators occupied the east side of the river from the lower bridge half way

to the lake. There were also elevators on the west side of the river, but fewer.

In fact more dangerous conditions for a conflagration then existed than exist today, for grain, malt and lumber all burned readily and Oswego had only a few fire engines, mostly hand operated and a fire in a grain elevator or cooper shop or wood shop where barrels, shooks and tubs were made meant that the firemen had to "save the cellar."

In the reorganization of 1855 men, who were in business in Oswego and who could be called "first citizens", were named fire wardens replacing those named previously. Wardens named in 1855, bearing names somewhat familiar to us, were: John Dyman, Matthew Soulon, Dick Tobin, Lawrence Johnson, John Hujman, John Comes, James Ryan, James Malone, Volney D. Burr, Sylvester Abbott, Nathan Roberts and William Stewart. Their duties were similar to those performed by the preceding wardens, namely, making rules and regulations for governing the volunteer companies and citizens to abide by in case of fire and also laws in relation to fire prevention.

One can, by hearing of the fire department's growth, learn much of the growth of the city. From the river mouth it had now extended south as far as Utica street and farther on either side of the river.

First Horse Drawn Engine

Oswego citizens received their first glimpse of a real horse-drawn steam fire engine in 1867, when the city bought and accepted a "steamer" bought from the Pawtucket Fire Engine Co. This engine was a horse drawn engine but was also equipped with rope and reel for use in case no horses were available. This engine was sent to No. 5's house.

According to information given by one of the "old Vols" the men upon reaching the engine house on the occasion of an alarm, started,

more often than not drawing the engine, not waiting for a driver with horses to come and offer his services. In those days a teamster was hired to haul the engine but he was permitted to keep the team in his own barn, when he was not working with them as a teamster. Can you imagine waiting for a team at 3 o'clock in the morning?

In 1867 the department was made up of six engine companies and two hook and ladder companies. At this time, the chief, then called "chief engineer", had two assistant chiefs. All from the chief down were volunteers, and great credit is due them for their interest in seeing that the citizens had a real fire department.

Fell Through Bridge

In speaking of the rivalry between the firemen previously referred to, another story of rivalry is brought to mind, as related by John Schurr, father of Joseph Schurr, now a driver in Engine Co. 1. John belonged to Cataract No. 4 which was later to become Engine No. 2 and still later Chemical Co. No. 1. Its fire house was located in East Second street, next to the building now occupied by Dain's undertaking establishment and stood near the Gerrit Smith Library until it was torn down about two years ago. It seems this company used to use the old railroad bridge in going to fires South of Utica street on the West side of the river. On one occasion an alarm was received from the vicinity later occupied by the Long's Chocolate Works at West Second and Utica streets. In proceeding to the scene of the fire the "gang" took their hand-drawn hose reel up East Second street and around the Library building, and down the hill to First street and headed over the railroad bridge, bent upon beating to the scene of fire the No. 7s (Dewolf Hose) which was located in the present No. 1's house. All was well till John Schurr skipped a

tie on the railroad bridge and dropped between the ties and stuck fast there while the "gang", engine and all, continued onward, passing over John and leaving him there alone. He was finally able to extricate himself.

Volunteers at Pinnacle in 1875

In the year 1875, the volunteer department had just about reached its peak, as to efficiency, and the number of active companies of which Oswego could boast. All were uniformed and really did their stuff before the public on parade or in exhibition drills at conventions as well as fighting fires at home. Uniforms consisted of black shoes, blue trousers, black and white belts trimmed with red, belts of course, being leather, red shirts (flannel) and dress blue caps with square visor or peak. Fire and parade helmets were made of leather. At fires, the men could determine to what company each belonged to by the name of his company which appeared on the front piece of the helmet and also by the belts that were worn.

The chief, assistant chiefs and captains had white helmets and white belts with red and black lettering. The men had black helmets with red and white lettering. Some of these practices still continue in use today in the department.

The Volunteer Companies

A list of the volunteer fire companies and the locations at which their apparatus and social rooms were maintained, follows:

Herrick Hose No. 1 and Eagle H. & L. No. 2—West Second St., in present Hook and Ladder House.

Frontier City Hose No. 2—Corner West 4th and Utica streets (Tracy Stone's drug store).

Niagara No. 3—On East Bridge St., between Second and Third; later moved to what is now Engine No. 3 at East Sixth and Bridge streets.

Cataract No. 4—East Second St., near Library.

Kingsford No. 5—Kingsford Starch Factory, West First St.

Victory No. 6—East Tenth near Utica (Dinty Moore's Restaurant).

DeWolf Hose No. 7—West Second St., now No. 1's House.

Smyth Hose No. 8—West Oneida near Ninth street, now a dwelling.

Sam Sloan No. 9—West Utica near D. L. & W. Round House.

Page Hose No. 10—East 10½ and Mitchell streets

Halcyon H. & L. No. 1—With Niagara Engine No. 3 at East Sixth and Bridge streets, now Engine No. 3.

Of the foregoing companies three had steam engines, the rest hand drawn hose carts and hook and ladder trucks.

Firemen's Equipment

Equipment of the older volunteers consisted of leather hose, seamed with copper rivets, and provided with brass butts and brass play pipes. Hand engines had brass reduction pipes or nozzles or discharged the water into buckets for use of the bucket brigades. Hook & Ladder carts carried several sizes of ladders and long hooks used for pulling down plaster and walls. Thus the name Hook & Ladder. These carts also carried heavy rope, axes, and lanterns and torches, used by their respective torch boys for lighting the way at night through the still gas-lighted streets.

Later, cotton jacket, rubber lined fire hose came in and was a decided improvement over the old leather hose which was stiff and hard to handle, especially in the winter.

An "old Vol" and friend now gone who told me many happenings in the old days was "Race" Callahan. Race was actively interested even to the last in the fire department. And to him, I owe a great deal in gaining a knowledge of the old time way of fire fighting.

In the old days if one hollered

"McGuire", it meant fire, and as soon as the cry "McGuire" was heard, the nearest church would be sought and the bell rung as an alarm. In the last years of the volunteers, efforts were made to ascertain the ward in which the fire was located; then, the number of the ward was struck on the church bell summoning the various companies, or on the bell of the clock in the Old City Hall between 1838 and 1870.

Famous Fires

It has been said, it was a familiar sight to see the men hauling the hose carts or ladder trucks to a fire stretching out a half a block ahead, pulling by means of long ropes the old carts down the street, running as some said, "Hell for leather" or "Hell bent for election".

And so one can imagine what the old "vols" did and what fire fighting was like. Ladders were not much over 20 feet in length and were ordinarily long enough to reach most upper stories with the exception of churches and business places down town, some of which were four or five stories in height.

Having learned of the early history of the Oswego Fire department, let us retrace our course a little to ascertain something about the fires which they were called upon to subdue. In 1830 the first destructive fire as previously stated came in the same block as the Neal-O'Brien Lumber yard fire of 1945 which so many of us then witnessed. The year 1837 saw the loss of Gilbert's Flour Mills, Parker's Machine Shop and the Carrington Furnace Factory. In 1853 most of the east side business section from Oneida street north to the coal trestles and from the river to Fourth street, including a part of the bridge located on the site of the present lower bridge was destroyed by fire. In 1858, a bad fire consumed the Emmons and Ontario Flour Mills.

As time went on Oswego be-

came noted for its lumber yards, starch factory, iron, cooper shops, flour mills, grain elevators, breweries, maltheuses, most all of wood construction, factories that were wood-frame built in those days being without automatic sprinkler systems to check fires before they could get a real start. Fire engines had come to be horse drawn and as 1875 arrived hose carts and hook and ladder truckst were also very largely horse drawn. In 1860 hydrants had come into use with the establishment of the city's water system. There were also many wells, the river and numerous creeks supplying the department fire enquired than the mains of the water company could supply.

Paid Department In 1876

The need of a paid fire department began to make itself apparent at this time. Men now organized to fight fire. In 1876, Oswego, feeling the need of a paid department, with firemen constantly on duty 24 hours a day, took steps which resulted in the organization of our present paid fire department. And so we leave the "old Vols" with many thanks to those fellows who for years protected old Oswego in the past. To them we can give great credit. They were firemen because they loved and lived fire fighting 24 hours a day, their compensation being only the sense of a feeling that a good deed was well done.

Many of the old volunteers were young men when the paid department was organized and some of the most promising of them were naturally appointed to positions in the new department. As the old department was abandoned the new paid men took over its equipment that was needed and with four engine houses, started operations. Of today's fire stations, No. 1 is that formerly occupied by DeWolf Hose, No. 7; No. 2 was formerly the home of Cataract Hose Co. No. 4; No. 3 was formerly the home of Niagara Hose Co. No. 3; Hook & Ladder,

No. 1, was formerly Herrick Hose and Eagle H. and L., No. 2.

Warsop First Paid Chief

Chief George Warsop, the first chief of the paid department, came from the ranks of the old volunteers as did "Bob" Blackburn, "Billy" Williams, "Boney" Nettles, Mike O'Gorman "Billie" Connell, "Ad" Gorsline and many others.

At the outset paid men were on duty 21 hours out of 24, with three hours off each day for meals, breakfast, dinner and supper. A number of men were also made "call men" and slept in the fire houses from 10 p. m. till 7 a. m. The regular men were supposed to have one day off in eight.

As one old regular now retired told me, fire fighting was a disease then, for not every one cared about putting in 147 hours a week and then have to lose his day off. if someone turned up sick. About 8 to 10 men slept in each station at night, the call men going to their places of private employment daily after going home to breakfast. They would report again at 10 p. m. that night. Firemen were paid about 10c an hour or \$55 per month.

No fireman was allowed time off on Christmas or the Fourth of July, because of Christmas tree candles (remember them) and fire-crackers and 3rd of July bonfires (at midnight). So one can see even though other men at work used at that time to labor sometimes 12 hours a day and some longer, the Fire department was no picnic either, for, as has been often said "firemen seldom saw their families growing up."

Elevator Fire Of 1892

One of the first serious fires to be combatted by the paid department was that which attacked the grain elevators which lined lower East First street from the lower bridge north. As related to me by Henry Weigelt, now passed on, who was then driver of the

"Hooks", he was seated out in front of the firehouse, thinking of going to bed when Box 12, located at East First and Bridge streets, started turning in an alarm. He pulled the horses and was hitching, when the other men at the station came sliding down the pole. Pulling out in the night, he swung into Bridge street, and from the bridge he could see fire in one of the elevators.

After a struggle which continued all night and well into the next day, their lives endangered by falling walls, the firemen finally conquered the fire, which left nothing but smoldering rubble in its wake where the day before had stood half a score of grain elevators. That fire happened on May 20, 1892 being discovered at 11 p. m.

Robert G. Blackburn was chief at the time having succeeded Chief Warsop a number of years earlier.

Under Chief Warsop, the box alarm system had been installed. Many other improvements were also made under both Chiefs Warsop and Blackburn. The department soon became one of the most efficient in the state for a city the size of Oswego and in fact, better in proportion to size, than cities much larger than Oswego.

Large fires other than those attacking the elevators during the time of Chiefs Warsop and Blackburn were those at Rathbun Lumber yard in lower West First street about where the Montcalm Dock Company's holdings are now located; the Pardee House from which Chief Blackburn was carried out unconscious from smoke; the Empire Mills, where he was caught beneath falling walls with others; the Holbrook Block, the Ringling House, which stood on the site now occupied by the New York Telephone Company's building, and the East Side Methodist church which stood on the site in later years occupied by A. C. Hall's bakery.

Other fires which can be recalled by many of you included Kingsford Starch Factory in 1904

in which Fireman John Dempsey was seriously hurt and Fireman Dougherty was killed by falling from a ladder, and the Standard Oil Box Shop and Diamond Match lumber yard fires.

As the city grew, the fire alarm system also grew, along with the water works system until nearly every block came to have a fire hydrant, a fact which proved of major importance in increasing the efficiency of the firemen's efforts.

Chemical Co. Comes In 1886

In 1886, the Chemical Company was formed from Engine No. 2, located at the same station. A new chemical engine was bought in Chicago and proved a success gines with water when more was from the start. Many can recall the members of the old company, namely "Boney" Nettles, foreman; "Cal" Pero and "Jackie" Woods, pipemen, and Henry Fogarty, driver. They had a handsome wagon, all brass and copper trimmed, and it sure was a job to keep it shined up. When the chemical was placed in service, one steam fire engine was placed in reserve.

The newly formed chemical company could handle some pretty good sized fires without help from the engine companies. It carried 80 gallons of chemical consisting of water and soda mixed with a bottle of sulphuric acid (which was dumped when needed). The acid and soda formed a gas that forced the water from the tanks through the hose to the fire. This chemical wagon carried about 250 feet of hose and was used most extensively where there were few or no hydrants and at all fires detected in an incipient stage.

A Museum Piece

When the Chemicals' fire house was abandoned in 1921, the engine was sold to Orwell where it was later picked up by an agent of Henry Ford and now reposes in Ford's Museum, namely, Edison Institute, Greenfield village, as a fine example of the old-type of

ornate, horse drawn chemical wagon.

In 1895 two new horse drawn Hook & Ladder wagons were bought for the Oswego department. One a Hayes 65 Aerial with a 10-foot detachable ladder, the whole ladder reaching 75 feet in the air. The other was a Seagrave City Service truck with ladders up to 50 feet in length and carrying lath hooks, ropes, lanterns, and all modern equipment of that time. For some years Assistant Chief Dashnau drove these wagons and was later made captain of the Hook and Ladder Company.

Motor Apparatus

For several years prior to 1917 Chief Blackburn tried to "sell" to the fire commissioners then directing the affairs of the department the idea of purchasing motor equipment for the city. Several efforts were made and finally in 1917 at a taxpayers' special election, motor apparatus was voted. Later it was procured from the American LaFrance Fire Engine Co., Elmira.

Two combination trucks called "triple combination" by reason of the fact that they were built to do the work that three pieces of horse-drawn equipment had formerly been required to perform, namely the steamer, chemical and hose wagon.

One motor driven engine, assigned to Station No. 1, carried 1,000 feet of standard 2½ inch hose, more hose than a horse-drawn wagon could carry, a 1,000 gallon rotary pump (more gallons per minute than our heaviest steamer), and 50 gallons of chemical and 250 feet of chemical hose. The other stationed at Engine 3's house carried 1,000 feet of 2½ inch hose, had a 350 gallon pump and carried a chemical hose. Each motor truck also carried a 12-foot roof ladder, a 20-foot extension ladder, and all necessary smaller equipment.

Shortly after the purchase of this new equipment the Chemical

House was closed, its equipment sold, and the men assigned to the other houses.

Chief Blackburn Retires

After working hard to bring about the motorization of the department, Chief Blackburn retired, but he was on hand to see the new trucks delivered and took a real pride in having had a part in seeing the department modernized. After the modernization became effective, the steamers were junked and the hose wagons and harnesses were sold, thus ending one of the most colorful periods of the Fire department, namely the horse-drawn apparatus days.

And in replacing the horses, one cannot well let the horses go without telling something about them. It seemed for a time after the change became effective that when the horses went, the life went out of the department. And who cannot recall, who remembers the horses, seeing them at full gallop, pulling the apparatus and men at breakneck speed through the streets and around corners. It was an inspiring sight, just as seeing the department today going by with siren screeching and bell clanging quickens one's heart beats and starts his blood flowing more rapidly.

Role Of The Horse

The horses were ordinarily fed at 6:30 a. m., 11:30 a. m., and 4:30 p. m.; then bedded down for the night at 8 p. m. And if the driver was a little late at meal time, the horses usually protested, by kicking gently against the stall doors until they were fed. Even in the dead of night, when man and horse were asleep, when the gong sounded an alarm, the horses were over the door plate and on their way in about 45 seconds. Today anywhere from 30 to 45 seconds are required to receive an alarm and get the motorized apparatus into the street. And the department in the "horse and buggy" days could get to a fire within

two or three blocks of the fire house just as quickly as the motors can cover the distance today, but on the long runs the motorized equipment enjoys a distinct advantage.

When an alarm was received, the captain usually "got the phone" or "got the gong" and counted the taps of the sounding box as the rest of the crew hooked up the horses. One would snap the collar while another would snap the reins, and someone else the belly band; then all jumped on the wagon to replace shoes with boots, much dressing being done enroute to the fire daytimes. At night, firemen slept in their under clothes and shirts, just as they do today when on duty. but with boots inside of pant legs on the floor. On receiving an alarm the fireman would jump from bed, pull on his boots, pull his pants on, snapping their fronts and slide down the pole which descended from the sleeping quarters to the apparatus room below. The same process was then gone through with as in the day time the total difference of maybe 10 or 20 seconds being added in responding at night to the time required for the firemen to prepare himself for the dash to the fire in the day time.

Department In 1923

Chief Blackburn lived to see several occasions when the motors made quick runs and helped to stop serious fires which in the absence of speedy arrival by the firemen at the scene otherwise might have gotten beyond control. In 1927, Bob, as he was affectionately known by the men, passed on. His successor, Chief Joseph Hennessey, appointed just after the purchase of the motorized equipment, also took great pride in his department. He had worked for years under Chief Blackburn, both as driver of the hose wagon and steamer, and also as captain of Engine Co. No. 1, at whose headquarters Chief Blackburn had his office. Among Chief Hennessey's most serious fires was that

of the Northwestern Elevator in March 1922 when the last of Oswego's old time grain elevators burned. Chief Hennessey was stricken with pneumonia after the elevator fire at which he got soaking wet while working without a helmet. He stuck with the fire, went home with a bad cold and later developed pneumonia. After a long rest, Chief Hennessey returned to work, caught cold again, and during a second attack of pneumonia, his heart gave out. He died in 1923 after many years of service in the Fire department.

Lass Enters Department

Our present chief, Monte Lass, then assumed charge of the Oswego department. One of Chief Blackburn's most apt pupils, he had been well instructed by Blackburn, who lived to see Monte take charge of the department. Joining the department as a "call-man", Lass had been appointed a "regular" in 1921, and was assigned to the Chemical House, with older men. His promotion was rapid and he soon became captain, then assistant chief, then chief.

One of the most drastic changes during the regime of Chief Lass was the change over from the single platoon to the two platoon system in 1926. The new system resulted in the creation of two working shifts in the department, one for night, the other for day service, the shifts rotating about every four days. The men worked thereafter an average week of 72 hours, with some part of each day home with their respective families. The night "trick" works 14 hours, from 6 p. m. till 8 a. m., and the day trick from 8 a. m. to 6 p. m. The men generally take their dinners with them to the fire station or send out for them on the day trick, and some cook their own meals at the noon hour. Adoption of the two-platoon system was one of the greatest improvements in working conditions ever made in fire departments. It provides time home for the men and they are thus able to enjoy

their homes and families. What a job it was before the two platoon system came—on duty twenty-one out of twenty-four hours, sometimes for 16 straight days. And over 147 hours a week!

At the present time, at 72 hours a week the firemen are paid \$1,800 per year plus a \$200 a year bonus. Their pay averages 55½ cents an hour. The job may look easy, but after a few years in the department it takes the vitality out of a man. And to go into a real smoky fire is something else again. And everyone cannot stand the punishment either. Some can take more than others.

A pension system is provided by the city which enables the firemen to retire on part pay after a period of years.

The men of the department are allowed 15 days vacation a year. This is about the only time when a fireman can really go and come as he pleases. At all other times he is on call 24 hours a day. Nor can he go out of town on his time off duty even on a short auto trip without reporting and getting permission from the chief.

The Alarm System

Of course the first alarm system we know anything about was the "holler" system. There being no bells, fire alarm boxes and not even a church bell or a steam whistle here when Oswego first came into being, when a fire was discovered, the one who discovered it at once yelled "Fire"! which usually brought help as soon as possible from his surrounding neighbors. Then when churches were built with bells installed, someone conceived the idea of using the church bell as a fire alarm, and this plan was put into use and continued until a bell was installed in the Market House clock tower in 1838 after which that was used to sound alarms.

As the city grew, was divided, and wards were established, someone else thought it would be a good idea to sound out the number of the ward in which the fire

was located on the bell as soon as the location of the fire was known. At the start the one giving the alarm would ring the bell as rapidly as he could, then toll out the number of the ward (such as 7 times for the fires in the 7th ward). This system was carried on for quiet a long time until the electric box alarm system came into use in Oswego in 1876.

Utica-made alarm boxes were then placed throughout the city, especially at the most strategic points of fire hazard. First boxes were located at East and West First and Bridge streets, throughout the heavy population centers and the manufacturing sections. By the pulling of these boxes the location of the fire was immediately made known to the firemen. Under this system, gongs were put in the engine houses, and boxes were installed throughout the city. A battery system with switch board was located at Engine House No. 3, where a fireman was instructed as to the care of the batteries and board, also the repair and maintenance of the system. When a box was pulled such as box 12, the response would come like this: The mechanism would open the circuit and close it once; after a few seconds pause, the alarm would cause it to open and close a second time, these impulses, causing the gongs to hit once, then twice, as 1-2, so the box from which the alarm was being turned in would be identified as 12. The exact location made known, horses were hooked to their equipment and men and apparatus were on their way in seconds, compared to minutes delay that often resulted before the box systems were put in. Of course the boxes were greatly improved as time went on, as were the switch boards and other things connected with the system.

Gamewell Repeater Installed

In 1891 a Gamewell repeater system was installed, after which several alarm circuits were estab-

lished. In other words, the one single alarm system was divided up into four districts, and the repeater would take the alarm as it came in on, say, circuit one, and would repeat it on circuits two, three, and four, and the various gongs on these circuits would also sound out the alarm. Gongs were also placed in houses of the call men, though they were not as large as the "20" engine house bells they worked the same as big ones and were scattered all over the city. Also, the newer type boxes would repeat the alarm four times in a row instead of sounding only a single time.

Again in 1930, a new Gamewell switchboard with room for ten circuits was installed; also new batteries and a transmitter and accessories. Since then the new Gamewell boxes have been and are being installed as fast as the appropriations will permit. Many of the old style "Utica" boxes are still in use locally and are over 65 years old. In the so-called high value and manufacturing sections, new boxes have already been installed. They are vastly different from the old style boxes. By opening the keyless door and pushing the button inside, the new box automatically functions for four rounds or sends in the alarm to fire headquarters four times. In the Engine houses, the gong taps off the alarm four times, and a tape system also simultaneously punches a tape giving the alarm, so that every box alarm is received in two ways at once, both by gong and tape. I have seen instances when circuit trouble arose and the gong was put out of order by a broken wire when the alarm came in properly over the tape alone, the watchman getting it, calling the company and a response being made in seconds.

In some of our manufacturing plants, private boxes have been installed. These boxes are exactly the same as the others only they are located on private property and are only used when fire is discovered on that property. For instance, the Oswego Shade Cloth

Co. has two alarm boxes installed in its buildings. When these alarm boxes "come in", the boys know, not only the exact location of the fire, but that they really have a job and usually a good one, a work often lasting for several hours.

In speaking of the new type boxes, we should not forget the old ones. The old type have a little glass door to break open to gain access to a key to open the main door, then, a hook to pull down the full length of the slot and then let go. This type box also sends in the alarm in four times.

More Alarm Boxes Needed

The city alarm system now has about 85 boxes. There are sections of the city, however, that are not protected by boxes and a survey would probably indicate that the city should have at least 40 more boxes so that no one should have to go more than two blocks in any direction to reach a box. The reason? Well, you wouldn't care about answering your door bell at 3 a. m. some morning because you might think it was someone drunk trying to get in. And then after some minutes' delay to find out that one of your neighbors was at the door, wanting to use your phone, and that valuable time had been lost waiting for you to let him in to call the Fire Department. But where there are not conveniently located alarm boxes, such a danger always lurks.

I have known of instances in which Fire Department officials have asked for equipment, only to be flatly turned down. The citizen should remember that shiny fire trucks do not necessarily make an efficient fire department. It takes all kinds of tools of many types to equip properly a fire department. There are over 1,000 kinds of fire department tools, nozzles and ladders that may be added to the equipment of modern fire trucks.

On The Night Shift

Many of us do not realize it but

at night when most dangerous fires develop, not over 12 men with three trucks answer a first alarm and generally it is only ten men. The night of the Neal-O'Brien lumber yard fire last summer 11 men answered the call, but they were soon reinforced by the "off shift" who were called in to work at 1 o'clock that morning. In time of any serious emergency, the "off shift" may be called in. The "off shift" was called in for the Checkerboard Feed Mill, Oswego Soy Products Corporation, Christ church and other fires of large proportions in recent years.

One recent night ten men answered an alarm from the Church of the Evangelists and we all read in the newspaper about how it was "a mighty fine stop." Thick smoke, hard-to-get-at cellar and boiler room, and yet the boys made it and the church is still standing. A few years ago a similar thing happened in Oswego, the same day that eight firemen lost their lives in Syracuse in the Collins Block fire. At Christ Church in Oswego the firemen also had a battle, for three hours and a half, yet the fire was stopped. About six lines of hose were used, but, not a stained glass church window was broken nor a thing damaged on the altar.

Damage? Well a new floor, new hymn books and prayer books to replace those damaged, and a new paint job in the church, also five men sickened by smoke poisoning, but all recovered. And that was a good stop! That is only one. There have been many more good stops, but usually nothing much is ever said about them. If you do a good job you like to be told about it. Remember, so do these men, too!

False Alarms

More firemen are killed and injured in responding to calls which turn out to be false alarms, than are killed in responding to actual fire calls. Oswego has lost one call fireman killed by a fake call from Box 46, at that time located

at West Eighth and Utica streets, with several other firemen being injured. A citizen and several firemen were injured and an automobilist killed in another call which proved to be false, from the former State Normal school. This same call cost the city a new truck and the loss of one fireman who had to retire on pension as the result of injuries.

In 1916, while responding to a call from Box 46, Callman James Murphy was crushed to death when Engine 3, going west, ploughed into the rear wheel of the horse-drawn Hook and Ladder truck at West Second and Bridge streets. A good many people were on the street as the stores and movies were just letting out. Some smart aleck, going home, had pulled the box, little thinking of what the result of his thoughtless, but senseless, act might be. The tillerman of the Hook and Ladder, Frank Tupper, was thrown up and over a trolley wire in this same accident, landing on his shoulder. A fracture resulted which caused the loss of the use of his arm so that he had to be pensioned. The driver was uninjured luckily. Several of the men on No. 3 engine were cut and bruised but fortunately no one on this machine suffered permanent injury.

In the Normal school call, the driver of the automobile was killed when he failed to heed a policeman's warning and drove in front of No. 3 engine and both machines were totally wrecked. This accident took place at East First and Bridge streets at night. There have been numerous narrow escapes on the way to other false alarms. Why anyone will pull a false alarm must be wondered at.

Modern Department

Of course, the modern motor fire apparatus has everything that preceded it wholly outclassed. For carrying equipment, for carrying hose, ladders and men. One pumper today takes the place of a steamer, a hose wagon, and

a chemical wagon which in the days of horse-drawn apparatus would have required at least ten men and six horses. The modern aerial takes the place of two Hook and Ladder trucks of the horse-drawn days, a city service wagon with equipment and an aerial truck.

Oswego has at the present time three triple combination pumpers and a Hook and Ladder truck. The Hook and Ladder truck carries a 75-foot all steel, 3 section aerial ladder on a turn-table and can be used at any height, from 30 feet up to 75 feet, and at an angle from 45 to 90 degrees. The truck also carries all small equipment, axes, lanterns, hand lamps (electric), lath hooks of various lengths, deluge sets, pails, extra nozzles, cellar pipes, "Y" connections, Siamese connections and many other tools, as well as 288 feet of service ladders. These service ladders are from 10 feet up to 55 feet in length. The aerial truck also carries a turret pipe mounted on its aerial so that it may be used as a water tower to advantage. It is a big improvement over the old truck which carried half a dozen ladders, a few tools, and which had to be drawn by hand. The new aerial was bought in 1939 and is already 7 years old.

Six Hose Lines From One Engine

The most modern pumper, Engine No. 1, bought in 1936, can carry 1,500 feet of 2½" hose, has a 100 gallon water tank connected to its pump, has a booster line of 250 feet of 1½ inch hose for small fires, can pump 1,250 gallons a minute or better, has 12 cylinders, can carry much equipment such as axes, brooms, shovels, rope, nozzles, and clothes for the men. By Siamese connections, six lines can be laid from this machine, modern in every way, although not so streamlined as the newer machines.

Engine No. 3, a smaller machine, is over 20 years old having seen continuous service since 1926.

It replaced the engine wrecked in a false run as previously related. It carries a 750 gallon rotary pump, 1,000 feet of 2½" hose, has a 40 gallon chemical tank, carries ladders, a 12 foot roof and 20 foot extension, as well as a complement of small tools, practically the same as Engine No. 1 carries. Although still in service, it is beginning to show wear and tear and will some day have to be replaced by a modern machine.

The reserve pumper is now stationed in No. 1's house and is used as a fill-in for the other pumpers when they are out of service for repairs. It has a 1,000 gallon pump, a 40 gallon chemical tank and carries 1,000 feet of 2½" hose as well as 250 feet of chemical or booster hose. This truck is nearly 30 years old. It has worked on various big fires, but its longest continuous run was 24 hours or nearly so, at the old Chicken Feed Factory fire at the foot of East Ninth street, on the site now occupied by the Fitzgibbons Boiler Co. Again it was operated continuously for nearly 12 hours at one stretch at Hessler's Foundry fire about a month afterwards. It has pumped many times since for from one hour to five or six at various other fires. This truck was completely overhauled some years ago and as a reserve piece of apparatus, it is well worth keeping.

Ambulance Service

The Fire Department also controls the Ambulance Service afforded to citizens 24 hours a day. The ambulance, stationed at Fire Headquarters in East Bridge street with Engine 3, is taken care of by two drivers, both members of the Fire Department. The drivers work in shifts, one on days, the other nights, so that some one is always available day or night to answer emergency calls. I believe in the past few years the ambulance has been answering around 2,000 calls a year. The present ambulance is in need of replacement, as it is about worn out. The city has no

other ambulance and has called for help from the county using the sheriff's emergency car many times in the last year.

The original ambulance service was started by Mrs. George B. Sloan who gave the first ambulance to the city with the understanding the city should house it and give service free to anyone who might need it. This program has been carried on for many years and be he rich or poor, the same care is given to each individual. The ambulance is equipped with a moveable stretcher and bed. Blankets are furnished by the hospital. It is also equipped with a first aid kit, and an electric fan for summer use.

Fire Department In War

As war clouds gathered for World War II and it became certain we were to go into the fray, maps were posted in the various Oswego Engine Houses. Everyone became interested and then came the service call! From Engine No. 1's House two men, Tom Wells and Benjamin Davis, entered the armed forces. In the Truck Co., Theo McCarthy enlisted. From No. 3 station and the ambulance force went Bob Reed, John Murray, James Muldoon and Edward Ackerly, totalling nearly one shift of the department. These men were replaced by temporary appointees, the last vacancies by returning veterans. These appointments for the most part will continue until civil service examinations are held and permanent appointments made or until all of the boys return. At present, two firemen are still in Germany, Bob Reed and Jim Muldoon, but they are expected back soon.

As we tell you of these boys, some of whom went into the Army and some into the Navy service, we will stop long enough in this story to pay tribute to one, the only member of the department who made the supreme sacrifice, Benjamin Davis. "Bennie" was one of the first to go, entering the Army in 1942 and after

training, he went across to England, where he was stationed for some time; thence to France. While he was moving with troops by truck, the truck he was riding in figured in an accident and turned over, catching fire.

Ben Davis was burned severely and after being hospitalized, he died. He died as he lived, in service for you and me. May he be long remembered as a good fireman and a good soldier!

Chemicals For Special Fires

As this paper closes we can look back over the years and see that great progress has been made in fire fighting. It is really a science now, for there are many extinguishing agents for use in combatting many different kinds of fires. There is the water fog, good for most any kind of fire; carbon-tetrochloride for electric fires; carbon dioxide for oil and gas and electric fires, and many other agents. About the only thing used years ago was water and plenty of it. It is hoped that the Oswego Department can get some of the needed new equipment now that the war is over and the equipment is procurable.

Great Fires Of The Past

In closing I list a few fires that have brought a loss, a great loss to our city in by-gone years. They are:

1. 1830—Oswego's first very destructive fire between First and Second streets and between Cayuga and Seneca.
2. 1837—Gilbert Mills, Parker Machine Shop.
3. 1853—East Oswego's business section.
4. 1858—Emmons and Ontario Flour Mills.
5. 1892—Grain Elevators and Flour Mills on river, east side, from Bridge street north to Schuyler street.
6. 1904—Kingsford Starch Factory.
7. 1904—Lake Shore Hotel.
8. 1910—Standard Oil Box Shop Lumber Piles.

9. 1912—Neidlinger's Malt House.

10. 1914—Hennessey's Drug Store (14 below zero).

11. 1914—Schwill Malt House.

12. 1915—Diamond Match Lumber yards (hot day).

13. 1918—Chicken Feed Factory Fire.

14. 1918—Hessler's Foundry.

15. 1920—Street Car Barn (20 below zero).

16. 1922—Northwestern Grain Elevator.

17. 1936—Guimares Block, June

1.

18. 1940—State Normal School Auditorium Fire.

19. 1942—Soy Products Corporation Fire, December 11, 1942.

20. 1943—Building housing Burnside's Drug and Alfred Bros., Clothing stores at 211-213 West First street, gutted.

21.—1943 Checker Board Feed Plant.

22. 1945—Neal-O'Brien Lumber Yards.

No one knows where fire will strike next. And so in closing we should all become somewhat fire conscious and do what we can for a better Fire Department.



William Goodell -- Reformer

(Paper Read Before Oswego County Historical Society at Oswego, March 19, 1946, by Wesley P. Frost, Former U. S. Ambassador to Paraguay and Now a Member of the Faculty of the Oswego State Teachers College)

The subject of this sketch serves all the better as a type of the New York reformers of a century ago in that his personal life and history were simple: he was a spirit rather than a man—like Emmanuel Kant. Having acquired a way of looking at things early in life he used it undeviatingly through all that came, and his star led him amid boisterous cross-currents. It was my design to deal principally with the evolution of the anti-slavery movement in this state, with incidental appearances of William Goodell; but in reading I came to feel that the unfolding of the drama flowed from the characters of the actors, as in the Greek tragedies; so that to know the personality of one of these actors is to understand the nature of the action.

The progenitor of the family, Robert Goodell, came from (Suffolk) Ipswich, England, in 1634 to Danvers and Salem, Massachusetts, and his descendants were numerous and on the whole prominent in New England affairs. His great-great grandson, Zechariah Goodell, a farmer and Revolutionary officer, lived at Pomfret, Connecticut, and married Hannah Cheney of Roxbury, Massachusetts, of whom more anon; and their eldest son, Frederic, taught the Pomfret school and later taught in Dutchess County, New York. There he met and married Rhoda Guernsey, the daughter of a John Guernsey who was known in pre-Revolutionary days as a pacifist. He was never at any time known as a Tory. (John Guernsey's brother, Peter, was an ardent advocate of independence, and many were the debates between the two. When either of them started on horseback the seven miles across the mountain to his brother's home, the country folk left their plows in the furrow

and gathered to hear the two Guernseys argue.)

Born In Chenango County

In 1790 Frederic Goodell and his wife removed to Chenango County, New York, where their third son, William, was born on October 25, 1792, in a log-cabin in the virgin forest, with wolves and Indians about, the first white child, it is said, born in the county. His health was poor throughout his boyhood, and he was kept in or near the house close to his mother. Rhoda Guernsey's library consisted of the Bible, Watt's Psalms and Hymns, Hart's Hymns, the Methodist Pocket Hymnal, Pilgrim's Progress, Wesley's Sermons, Fletcher's Appeal and a volume or two of the "Spectator" and the "Guardian," and in these books the lad steeped his mind.

"I seem to see my mother as she was then," he wrote later, "somewhat tall and slender, with fair complexion, light blue eyes, but glossy black hair. Her voice was singularly soft and musical, her motions easy and graceful, her manners gentle, her bearing sedate, calm and thoughtful, her smile sweet . . . During my feeble childhood I experienced from her unusual attention and tenderness, and enjoyed the advantage of that instruction with which her mind was richly stored and which she had a faculty of imparting with ease." "Nature had given her the most lively feelings, but Christian meekness had endured her with a patient fortitude more noble and unconquerable than stoical firmness." "Whenever anything troubled me she would call me to her and begin to repeat a hymn, line by line, which I was to lisp after her. This she would do as if conferring a privilege, comforting

and consoling me. 'Pretty verses' were the sugar plums with which she quieted my little troubles." When William was 7 years old he was "converted," and when he was eight he was already composing religious poetry on bits of bark.

Mother's Death Came Early

In his 11th year William lost his mother, a loss which in view of their close association gave a melancholy tinge to his whole youth. Two years later he was sent to his Uncle John Guernsey at Amenia in Dutchess County, and in the following year to his grandmother Hannah Cheney Goodell at Pomfret. His father visited him there shortly afterward; and then returned to Chenango County to die at an early age, as his wife had died, from the rigors of frontier life. The formation of William Goodell, begun by his mother, Rhoda Guernsey, was then continued for five years by another exceptional woman, his paternal grandmother. She had been reared in Boston as a member of the Old South Church, was a convert of Whitefield, and had heard Jonathan Edwards preach. Her knowledge of public matters was prodigious, and her daily conversations ran not only on theology and reform but upon the tariff, the paper currency (she had lived through Shay's Rebellion as well as the Revolution), and similar topics; so that a leading statesman said of her that "she ought to have been a Congressman."

"In this atmosphere of plain living and high thinking the sensitive and intelligent young man spent five years, and it gave a bent to his entire career. (The plain living was very real. "Our diet was frugal and simple. Brown bread, made of rye and Indian meal, since wheat was dear, was supplemented by bean porridge—that 'Spartan broth of New England.'") He mentions also the salt pork and salt cod, the parched rye for coffee, and cider (which he

personally considered unrighteous). Another feature of his rearing was its interdenominational character. His father was Presbyterian, his mother Baptist and their church at Coventry was Methodist, while his grandmother was a Congregationalist. As a result he early acquired a realization of the essential oneness of the Protestant faiths, and much of the good he did in later life sprang from his convictions on this subject.

Visits China

Thus prepared for life, William Goodell at the age of 18 repaired to Providence, R. I. to "accept a mercantile opening;" and until he was 35, except for teaching a winter school at Pomfret, he was engaged in the import and export trade. When he was 23 he had his own store, and his letters speak of his vicissitudes from winter floods and from the liberal bankruptcy laws by which the radical Rhode Island legislature relieved his creditors from settling their debts to him. In 1817 when he was 25, he was sent by Cyrus Butler as super-cargo on the clipper "Integrity" to China and the East Indies, where he was impressed by the high character of the Chinese merchants whose friendship he made. During his two and one-half years on the "Integrity" he was in Europe at least twice. He tells of visiting the showy Royal Palaces in Holland, and philosophizes characteristically: "There is enough of littleness stamped, methinks, upon all the cob-web grandeur of man, even in its very perfection and completeness, to make one say to himself as he views it—'And is this all?'"

More important perhaps were the long months at sea during which he read and studied unceasingly, sprawled on the ship's transom, acquiring the science of navigation and familiarizing himself with the pre-Victorian writers then current. Throughout these years, as during those which pre-

ceded and followed, he was constantly penning poetry and essays, in the vein of the sacred writings in which he had been saturated; and he made tentative attacks upon the then common practice of flogging seamen, which struck him as "disgusting and mortifying."

Removes To Virginia

Returning to Providence in 1819 he entered the firm of Cyrus Butler, and later became a partner in William Butler and Company, spending a year at Wilmington, N. C., and another year or two at Alexandria, Virginia, during which he lived the life of a prosperous merchant. He saw slavery at first hand, and formed a poor opinion of the slaveholding aristocracy, whose members he described as—

..... nabobs proud—
Who crack their whips, and swear
and rave,
And count themselves most
wond'rous brave,
That they can boldly lash—a
slave."

But he added—
"Even midst this Carolian fen
I pluck some flowers: I find some
men."

In 1820 he wrote a poem, denouncing the Missouri Compromise, which caused some spirited comment in Rhode Island.

In 1823 at the age of 31 the long attachment between him and Miss Clarissa Cady, a daughter of Deacon Josiah Cady of Providence, culminated in marriage—a marriage which ran peacefully and harmoniously well beyond the Golden Wedding span. Through her he was connected with Elizabeth Cady Stanton; and she bore him two daughters, Maria and Lavinia.

In 1825 we find him in New York city, as his firm had suffered from what were euphemistically called "Unexpected fluctuations in trade," with the house of Phelps & Peck (subsequently Phelps-Dodge). His interest in seamen impelled him to help or-

ganize the Mercantile Library Association of New York, of which he was for years a director.

Establishes "Investigator"

It was only in 1827, when he was 35 years of age, that William Goodell followed the call of his conscience into full-time reform activities, returning to Providence to found a weekly, the "Investigator," whose opening announcement soberly proclaimed—"Truth and Righteousness is the motto of our flag, and we nail it to the mast head, content to sink or swim beneath it, as an all-wise Providence may determine." His friend, Arthur Tappan, in New York started the "Journal of Commerce" at the same time, and with the same ends in view—but needless to say with a different evolution.

At Providence he was sought out by Benjamin Lundy, the Philadelphia Quaker, who is regarded as the real originator of the Anti-Slavery movement; and, partly as a result of Lundy's subsequent conferences at Boston, Goodell went in 1829 to the Massachusetts capital to take over the "National Investigator" which William Lloyd Garrison had founded and had been constrained to give up. In the 4-volume Life of Garrison by his children the writers state: "The 'Investigator' was now edited, and ably edited, by William Goodell, a close reasoner but rigidly Calvinistic." They proceed to mention the intimate and warm friendship which sprang up between Garrison and Goodell, and continue, "Many were the long walks which the two took together discussing every phase of the temperance and slavery questions."

At that time the favored solution for slavery was the colonization of freed negroes in Africa, and Goodell espoused Garrison's belief that the Colonization Society's plan was a temporizing and timid one which militated against the more radical remedy of Abolition. When Garrison made his

vital Park Street Church address, the meeting was jointly presided over by Goodell and John Greenleaf Whittier, with Lowell Mason (the great hymn-writer) leading the singing. During this period Goodell was a member of Lyman Beecher's church, and made the acquaintance of Wendell Phillips, Lucretia Mott and the principal New England reformers.

Late in 1830 Goodell felt a call to transfer his work to New York, stating that he was like Jonah who did not wish to preach at Tarshish but 'was brought to do so.' His new organ, the "Genius of Temperance," placed him in contact with Arthur and Lewis Tappan, Theodore Weld, Joshua Leavitt and the New York coterie which was to play so large a later role. He attacked not only the evils of liquor and slavery but also of political corruption, gambling and immorality; and published on the side a small semi-monthly called the "Female Advocate," one of the very earliest defenders of a better position for women in society.

Goodell was often visited by Garrison from Boston, and the two were on several occasions in New York City the joint victims of mob violence and pursuit. Once the pro-slavery forces issued a poster offering \$2,000 reward for the apprehension of Garrison and \$1,000 for the apprehension of Goodell. Always interested in welfare work, he remained in New York during the devastating cholera epidemic of 1832, sending his family to the country. Another of his enthusiasms was the dietary reform work of Sylvester Graham, from whom our Graham flour takes its name. One of his table companions at the Nichols Grahamite boarding-house was a fledgling journalist named Horace Greeley, who absorbed from him many points of view eventually disseminated to the country at large through the columns of the New York "Tribune". When Sylvester Gra-

ham staged his national assemblage in 1839 he sent for Goodell to speak on the economic aspects of "physiological reform" (vegetarianism, anti-nicotinism, etc.) with Gerrit Smith to discuss its moral and religious aspects. (I cannot ascertain whether they accepted.)

National Anti-Slavery Society

In 1831 Garrison commenced the publication of his famous "Liberator," and in this same year in New York (according to Dr. Harlow's "Life of Gerrit Smith") Lewis Tappan, Theodore Weld, William Goodell, Theodore Joselyn and Joshua Leavitt began to plan for a national anti-slavery society. Elizur Wright and Beriah Green raised the standard of "immediate, universal emancipation," which the New York group adopted. Early in 1833 Garrison felt obliged to quit Boston temporarily, and repaired to New York, telling his associates to address him there in care of his friend William Goodell. He then set sail for England, leaving a farewell letter for publication to the American people, addressed to William Goodell. By the time of Garrison's return in the autumn the plans of the New York group for a national anti-slavery organization were completed, and Garrison was brought into the movement by Goodell. The American Anti-Slavery Society was created at Philadelphia in early December 1833, behind locked doors and with mobs in the streets outside. Arthur Tappan was elected president, John G. Whittier, secretary, and William Goodell was placed on the committee which drafted the public "Declaration" and on the executive committee. On returning to New York Goodell changed the name of his organ to the "Emancipator," and in the following year it became the official publication of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

In the opening months of 1836 the Legislatures of many southern states sent synchronous official communications to the Legisla-

tures of the northern states adjuring the latter to pass effective laws to buttress the legal right of slaveholders to the return of fugitive slaves, and the Legislature of Massachusetts ordered a public hearing on these requests. Garrison, who was not considered a strong public speaker, arranged to have William Goodell present the anti-slavery case to the Legislative committee; and Goodell's speech on this occasion was so trenchant and fiery that the hearings were cut off by the committee. He then spent three days in preparing a pamphlet which was circulated to the members of several Legislatures; and the Massachusetts body did not pass the laws which the south had demanded. This incident caused nationwide comment and figures still in several standard texts on American history in the treatment of the development of the anti-slavery movement. Pointing to the southern letters on the committee's table, Goodell had said, "These are fetters for northern freeman," and demanded of the chairman, "Sir, are you prepared to attempt putting them on?"

Buys Shipload of Slaves

In lighter vein there may be mentioned an incident arising from the philanthropic purchase by Goodell and a group of associates of the last ship-load of negroes reaching New York, to be returned to their homes in Africa. Several Senegambians were lodged in the attic of the Goodell home on lower Broadway, and on one hot summer day Mrs. Goodell returned from shopping to find a crowd staring at her roof. A thunder shower had come up, and the Africans had gone out on to the eaves to enjoy its cooling downpour *puris naturalibus* in an innocent state of nature."

Meanwhile the national Anti-Slavery Society was proving less vital than had been anticipated because the individual state anti-slavery societies were disposed to operate independently of it.

The principal focus of Abolitionism in New York State was at Utica, and in 1835 the New York State Anti-Slavery Society was founded at Utica under the leadership of Alvan Stewart, the eloquent and genial lawyer (sometimes known as "the humorist of the Abolition cause"). Stewart and his friends, including Theodore Weld and Beriah Green, were soon negotiating with William Goodell to induce him to reside at Utica and edit the official organ of the New York Society. He was loth to leave his "Tarshish," and corresponded with Garrison as to a decision. Garrison, who disliked the Tappans and their national society, advised him strongly to make the move; and in the autumn of 1836 he did so. He founded a newspaper which he called the "Friend of Man," and thus became the spokesman and logician of the New York, as distinguished from the New England, anti-slavery movement throughout its most active period. The "Friend of Man" was the vehicle through which were given forth the utterances not only of the leaders already named but also of Gerrit Smith, Myron Holley, Jabez Hammond, Joshua Giddings (of Ohio) and Cassius M. Clay (of Kentucky). During a portion of its life Goodell issued it at Whitesboro, near Utica, and resided there. His labors in the lecture field were indefatigable throughout New York and New England; and his home became one of the stations on the "Underground Railroad" for slaves escaping to Canada.

Establishes New Church

In 1843 there once again transpired a change in the life of Goodell. He had been publishing a minor periodical called the "Christian Investigator," "for discussing the religious and ecclesiastical questions involved in the moral struggles of the country;" and to Whitesboro in the year mentioned came a church Convention to consider church reform

and the duty of the churches in relation to slavery. (Many of the churches were very hostile at that time to the anti-slavery cause.) Two of the delegates who attended from Honeoye, in Ontario County, urged Goodell to take up his abode there and found a church upon the basis of the non-sectarian and anti-slavery principles he advocated. This he decided to do, and when past his 50th year, although he had never been ordained, he began a ministry at Honeoye which lasted until 1852, nine years later. His church-union congregation was drawn from seceding liberal members of churches from several towns, and the afternoon service was devoted to a discussion of the morning discourse. Persons of both sexes and both colors were communicants. There was "neither bond nor free, male nor female," and the Bible was the only creed. For that time and place the church was a real portent, and it thrived as long as he remained with it.

This interlude did not mark Goodell's withdrawal from the Abolitionist movement, however. He lectured unceasingly throughout the state, both on slavery and on other topics. His Far Eastern voyages had left an interest in foreign missions, and he was one of the ardent souls who gathered at Albany in 1846 to found and establish the American Missionary Association. He bore a prominent part in this convention, and wrote the "Address" issued by it—"full of seed-thoughts," Dr. Patton subsequently said, "on every part of Missionary work."

Writes Slavery History

Most significant of all, it was during the Honeoye years that William Goodell produced most of the valuable volumes which assure him at least a footnote place in the history of the country. Indeed we may suspect that the Honeoye ministry was arranged with this in view, as he had long desired to reap his mind of the multiple ideas and convictions ac-

cumulated through his years and experiences. His greatest work was a comprehensive history of "Slavery and Anti-Slavery," which became a compendium and arsenal of facts and arguments in this crucial issue. It is frequently quoted by historians to this day; and Lord Charnwood's biography of Lincoln states that Lincoln's famous "Cooper Union speech" (February 1860) in which the Illinois statesman was measured for the Presidency by the East, was based in part on ideas drawn from Goodell's "Slavery and Anti-Slavery." It was followed by a work called the "American Slave Code," which analyzed and summarized the provisions of the state laws in the South regarding slavery. After its publication the foes of Abolition could no longer urge that the South in reality was clement and humane in the rights it afforded to the bondsmen; since statute and clause could readily be adduced to demonstrate the contrary. The "American Slave Code" was reprinted in England, and played a part in creating the sentiment which kept Great Britain from recognizing the South when the Civil War supervened. (Incidentally Goodell undertook to qualify himself in jurisprudence as a preparation for this work, and was told that he could be admitted to the bar—a suggestion which he rejected as "a vain gesture" in view of his age.)

An earlier polemic volume, of 150 pages, gave, "Views of American Constitutional Law in its bearings upon American Slavery," which undertook to defend the principles of the New York Abolitionists against those of the New England group. He also published, "Our National Charters," in this connection, with exegetical commentaries showing that these charters were far from committing the nation permanently to slavery as a practice. Other pamphlets treated of "The Kansas Struggle of 1856," "The Crittenden-Lecompton Compromise," and "American Slavery as an Obstacle

to the Conversion of the World." Apart from these works on slavery he published a monumental treatise entitled, "The Democracy of Christianity," which might still be utilized in debates against the doctrines of modern Nazism and Fascism.

Break With New England

It may be well at this point to review very summarily the astonishing scissions which drove away from Garrison and his group the Abolitionists of New York State. These discussions made the New York reformers the fathers of the Liberty Party, the Liberty League and the Free Soil Party, and the latter in turn paved the way for the Republican Party. In this tangled story William Goodell figures constantly as one of the principal actors and particularly as the expositor, arbiter and historian all combined.

It was in 1837 and 1838 that the idea of using Abolition sentiment to affect the course of practical politics was conceived, primarily by Alvan Stewart, and formulated by Goodell in the "Friend of Man" in the ringing phrase, "We will vote for no man who votes against liberty." Garrison himself at first endorsed this principle, and in the autumn of 1838 it was adopted by the Massachusetts Convention at Worcester, with the presence of the two friends, and of Beriah Green and Henry B. Stanton. The Convention was presided over by Wendell Phillips. When William Ellery Channing entered the lists with a conciliating doctrine Garrison felt that Channing was plagiarizing Goodell.

Sought To Win Churches

The extremism of Garrison, however, was already becoming sadly apparent, especially with reference to the relationship between Abolitionism and the Protestant churches. Garrison came to feel that those churches—and they were greatly in the majority—which did not denounce

slavery root and branch were so lacking in basic morality that their members were inadmissible to Abolition organizations. Goodell deprecated the attitude of the churches, but was unwilling to proscribe those of their communicants who as individuals were sincerely attached to simon-pure Abolitionism. Garrison then went further and violently assailed the churches as too hypocritical as to be rotten at the core; his diatribes leading him to the very verge of anti-Christianity. The churches were "habitations of Satan!" He likewise developed the doctrine of "non-resistance," by which he meant the withdrawal of Abolitionists from the churches and also their withdrawal from all participation in the functioning of the country's government. For he believed that the Constitution not only sanctioned slavery but was actually so framed as to preclude any effective action to remedy the slave evil. In the quotation which became known throughout the land he and Wendell Phillips branded the Constitution as "A covenant with death and an agreement with hell." They would therefore have no part or lot either with the organized Christianity or with the organized government of their country.

Break With Garrison

To these exalted and ultra-fanatical lengths William Goodell was unable to go, and his break with Garrison is mentioned touchingly in the life to which we have alluded. Goodell's 17 years in the Work-a-day world of commerce had given him a grip on reality which counselled a modicum at least of conciliation, not to say common-sense; and he and his Utica friends carried the New York Abolitionists with them. Aided by H. B. Stanton, Alvan Stewart and others he organized the Albany Convention of 1839, which urged all Abolitionists to vote in a manner to bring about "Immediate Emancipation," based on the view that the rectifi-

cation of slavery was perfectly feasible under the Constitution. As to participation in the churches, the course of the New Yorkers had always been one of high-minded tolerance. The Albany gathering left open the vexed question whether a separate Anti-Slavery political party was advisable; and when the convention at Warsaw in the autumn of '39 nominated James G. Birney as Anti-Slavery candidate for the Presidency, not only Goodell but also Gerrit Smith were at that time still very dubious as to an Abolition party.

Founds Liberty Party

Gerrit Smith, it will be recalled, had been a leader in using the method of posing questions to regular party candidates as to their attitude on slavery, and in this he had been seconded by Alvan Stewart, William Goodell and even by Wendell Phillips in New England. It was the failure of this tactic to pin down the practical politicians satisfactorily which caused many New York reformers to abandon it in favor of creating a party of their own, while Phillips abandoned it because of Garrison's tangential secession on a course of non-resistance or non-participation in the functioning of any processes under the iniquitous Constitution. By early 1840 the New York group, including Smith, Goodell, Stewart and Myron Holley of Rochester, had evolved to the point of approving and sponsoring a separate and distinct Abolition party, whose Convention was to be held at Albany on April 1st; and in a letter to William Goodell on February 8th Gerrit Smith proposed a name for the new organization: the Liberty Party.

This historic convention, usually considered the beginning of the party, adopted a declaration written by Goodell, and nominated for the presidency James G. Birney and Earle Garrison, now became the arbitrary autocrat of

Massachusetts Abolitionism, attacked the movement with ex-cathedra virulence; and his old friend Goodell retorted with a satirical editorial about him in the "Friend of Man" entitled, "How To Make A Pope." But Birney in November secured almost 7,000 votes.

Garrison Splits Movement

In May of 1838 Garrison had chartered a steamer to carry his adherents without charge from Boston to the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society at New York, and by thus mustering 550 of the 1,000 delegates he was able to capture the society and dedicate it to "non-resistance." As a consequence the Tappans and the mid-state Abolitionists founded a rival national society, and the bickering between the old and new societies carried both to quick decay and left the field to the various state societies. The failure of the new Tappan-Leavitt Society was laid in part to the growing strength of the up-state Liberty Party, and a jealousy developed which wrought no good for either body. Two state societies were now in existence in Massachusetts, while the Ohio Society did not see eye to eye with either of them or with the New York Society or Liberty Party. Gerrit Smith was sick at heart from these quarrels, and in 1841 wrote a series of articles in Goodell's "Friend of Man" urging "the reconciliation of the irreconcilable" (in Harlow's phrase) antagonists. He fomented a gathering at Albany which Garrison attended, its bickerings accentuating rather than attenuating the schism.

The Liberty Party made gradual gains, however, and its various "conventions" continued to nominate Birney. The Tappans finally came in as did many Democrats who were offended by the nomination of Polk over Van Buren. The party reached its apogee in 1844, with 60,000 votes. Judge William Jay, a close friend of Goodell, was

the candidate for the governorship of New York, at Gerrit Smith's behest.

Nominate Smith For President

These successes were temporary, unfortunately. Jabez Hammond of Cherry Valley warned Smith that he could never build a successful political party without a broader base and broader platform; and in 1845 Hammond, Goodell and others held a convention at Port Byron which set in motion a movement for the adoption of planks favoring not only abolition but tariff and banking reform, land distribution and internal improvements. In 1846 in connection with the revision of the New York Constitution many members of the Liberty Party in order to secure broader negro suffrage made coalitions with Whig politicians, and this action seemed to foreshadow the disappearance of the party. In the presence of this threat an attempt was made to commit the party to a general platform on public affairs, and a convention at Macedon Lock in 1847, led by William Goodell, adopted proposals similar to those formulated at Port Byron. It considered itself the successor of the moribund Liberty Party, and called itself the Liberty League, nominating Gerrit Smith for the presidency.*

Seek To Broaden Party

Smith had hitherto been hesitant with regard to the espousal of issues other than Abolition, but the sharp attacks to which the Liberty League was at once subjected had the effect of deciding

him to throw in his lot with it. Goodell's theory, which Smith adopted, was that the Liberty Party had been a temporary expedient to be used until one of the major parties should plant themselves on Anti-Slavery ground; and that since it was now clear that neither would do so a broader-based Abolition Party was necessary, viz. Goodell's Liberty League. Quickened into new life by this rival campaign, the old Liberty Party called a fresh convention at Buffalo, and nominated John P. Hale of New Hampshire, hoping that he might win New England votes. When the elections of 1848 drew near the Liberty League met again at Rochester and renewed its nomination of Smith. The latter also organized what Dr. Harlow refers to as "a rump convention" of some of his old Liberty Party friends at Buffalo, and was nominated by them. He was also nominated by a so-called Industrial Congress, meeting at Philadelphia. These three nominations, all taken together, proved ineffectual in the face of the Free Soil movement which sprang from the discontent of the anti-slavery "Barnburner" Democrats over the nomination of Lewis Cass, of Michigan, by the Democratic Party. The "Barnburners" met first at Utica in June and nominated Martin Van Buren. Later they secured the presence of the old Liberty Party members and a number of Whigs at Buffalo in August, when John P. Hale withdrew his candidacy in favor of Van Buren. Their slogan of "Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor and Free Men," had originally been coined by Smith, but they used it so effectively, and possessed such political strength, that the success of their Free Soil Party threw Smith far behind in the electoral voting.

Goodell Named For Presidency

During the three years which followed persistent efforts were made by Smith, Goodell, the Tappans, Weld and Jay to resuscitate

*At a national convention of Abolitionists held in Oswego's first City Hall (yet standing) in October, 1850, Gerrit Smith was nominated for the presidency to make the "run" in 1852. A colored man was nominated for the vice-presidency. Smith, however later declined the nomination, although he was present when it was made. He had decided to stand for Congress in the Oswego-Madison district in 1852. His declination paved the way for Goodell's later nomination at Syracuse.

the Liberty Party. Smith called a convention at Buffalo in September 1851 in the hope of nominating Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio and thus attracting new life; but the Ohio brethren were unresponsive and no nomination was made. Smith's associates then planned a new gathering; but Smith himself attended the Free Soil Convention at Pittsburgh in August 1852, which nominated John P. Hale once more. By September, Smith was dissatisfied with the evasive answers of Hale to his published doctrinal questionings; and with characteristic energy he undertook to get out the fire-engine horses for one last run. He assembled a Liberty Party Convention at Syracuse on September 30, wrote and secured the adoption of a platform, and induced the nomination of none other than William Goodell himself for the presidency of the United States, with S. M. Bell of Virginia as running-mate. His optimism was not justified by the event. "You might as well try to galvanize Daniel Webster into new life as the Liberty Party," wrote a friend. The party's days were done, and the Syracuse convention proved to be its expiring gasp. Goodell's vote in the elections was negligible. There was, however, a certain poetic meetness in the fact that this gallant veteran who had fought so courageously throughout the noble struggle should have been the standard-bearer in its twilight skirmish of final defeat.

Goodell's Views Prevail

The truth was that both the Abolition movement and its political action wing (the Liberty Party and its progeny) had in a broad sense done their work and achieved their contribution. William Goodell's history of these movements, "Slavery and Anti-Slavery," published in the very year of his unwanted candidacy, established this situation in its impartial and convincing final chapters of recapitulation. The

fervent Abolitionists of New England, and no less those of New York and the west, had held up the moral issue so unflinchingly and cogently that the very churches which a decade or more previously had loosed the vials of Garrison's wrath by their time-serving apologies for human servitude were by now shamed into taking higher ground. Few and perfunctory were the pulpit defenses of the southern pro-slavery theology. Similarly the insistence upon practical partisan activity by Alvan Stewart, Myron Holley, Gerrit Smith and William Goodell had awakened the great political parties to the strength of anti-slavery sentiment as a factor in elections. They came to see the accuracy of Calhoun's analysis that the five per cent of voters who regarded the slavery issue as paramount held the balance of power between the evenly matched northern Whigs and Democrats. Goodell's contention that our Constitution and government did not preclude a solution of the slavery problem had come to be universally accepted. As he stated, "It would be a difficult, nay an impossible task, to carry the question back to where it stood twenty years ago. There is an indefinite amount of latent, half-developed, incipient abolitionism in the country." The validity of this estimate was demonstrated by the strength of the Free Soil Party in 1852 and the phenomenal vigor of the Republican Party in 1856.

New Paper Supported Smith

Upon the publication of "Slavery and Anti-Slavery" in 1852 it was at once seized upon as a manual and vade mecum for the advocates of the repression of the "peculiar institution." It was read and quoted publicly by Charles Sumner, Salmon P. Chase and many other leaders; and its author was invited to New York city to continue his writings. It was followed, in 1853, by the "American Slave Code," with an

introduction by Judge William Jay, which had not only a national but an international success. In 1854 appeared "American Slavery," and in 1856 "The Kansas Struggle." A year later a new exposition of Goodell's constitutional arguments was printed under the title, "Our National Charters"; and in 1858 came a trenchant criticism of the Crittenden-Le-compton Compromise. William Goodell had now become the Nestor of the anti-slavery forces, in his middle 60s, the good grey head and careful reasoner who inspired confidence and commanded general respect.

While he was now a resident of New York city, he remained in constant association with his up-state friends. He was prominent among the New York delegation to the National Kansas Committee convention at Buffalo in 1856. He was one of the main organizers of the "People's State Ticket" convention at Syracuse in August 1858, which nominated Gerrit Smith of Oswego and Peterboro for the governorship of New York; and in the campaign which followed (to quote Dr. Harlow) "the most important publication devoted to Smith's candidacy was the "Gerrit Smith Banner," a newspaper in New York city edited by Smith's old abolitionist associate, William Goodell."

Influenced Lincoln

During these years, too, Goodell regularly edited a monthly entitled the "Radical Abolitionist," soon converted into the weekly "Principia," in which he was assisted by Dr. George B. Cheever, who became one of the leading clergymen of the time. In 1859 William Lloyd Garrison visited New York and met his old friend and later opponent, Goodell, and the two venerated reformers shook hands in a reunion of hearts. They sat together to hear Dr. Cheever preach, and Garrison confided in a letter to Boston, "Goodell must have taken satis-

faction in the sermon, as it was a rehash of all his old arguments."

A more notable incident was his trip to the White House, with Cheever and Dr. Brown, to confer with Abraham Lincoln on the evening before the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. The three enthusiasts were closeted with the President until midnight, and a tone of "Thus saith the Lord" rang through their utterances, until Mr. Lincoln remarked with his dry humor, "Really, gentlemen, this is the first time that I ever had the honor of being waited on by a delegation from the Lord!" Mr. Goodell quickly responded, "President Lincoln, believest thou the Prophets? I know that thou believest;" and preceeded to quote passage after passage from the Biblical denunciations of oppression and human injustice. "He afterwards had the satisfaction of seeing some of his own expressions embodied in the Proclamation which was issued the next day at noon."

Long Remained Active

The long autumn of William Goodell's life was a natural sequel and continuation of his active years of dedication, and recalls the dictum of the Roman poet, "Pulchrorum autumnus pulcher," ("Of the beautiful the autumn is beautiful"). In 1865 he removed from New York to Lebanon, Connecticut, at the age of 73 in feeble health; but the country air and quiet gave him strength for many articles in the Boston and Connecticut Valley newspapers, dealing among other subjects with his first reform projects against the liquor evil. In 1869 when the National Prohibition Party was created at Chicago he went by pressing invitation to participate in that historic convention, a fitting culmination to his labors in a field in which he had pioneered as a temperance editor 42 years earlier.

In 1870 he made his final transfer of residence, to the home of his daughter Maria Goodell Frost,

whose husband was a pastor at Janesville, Wisconsin; and in 1874, when 82 years of age, he attended the reunion of Abolitionists held at Chicago. His mind remained active till the last, and he wrote on the wrongs of the American Indian, prison reform, international peace, civil service betterment and other similar questions. He passed away, like a tired child falling asleep, on February 14, 1878; and his funeral services were impressive and touching. His family cherishes a letter written a few years earlier by John G. Whittier to his grandson, beginning, "I knew and loved thy Grandfather," and paying a tribute such as only Whittier could have penned.

Summarization Of Goodell's Work

William Goodell had no son; but his daughter, Maria, was the author of several "Sunday School books" and the guide and inspirer of Frances Willard when the latter was in girlhood, while his daughter Lavinia was the first woman admitted to the bar of Wisconsin. He lived again, in a closer approximation to reincarnation than is often seen, in his gifted grandson, William Goodell Frost, the first great educator of the southern Appalachian mountaineers, who gave to Berea College in Kentucky the significant place it still holds in the progress of the middle South.

It may be said that New York

state can well feel a modest pride in this modest and faithful worker for so many of the reforms on which large areas of our present social advancement are based. True-hearted, intelligent and consecrated, it was given him to find usefulness in a remarkable diversity of fine initiatives. Few laborers in the vineyard can perhaps equal a record which includes participation in the impulsion or founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society, the American Missionary Association, the Liberty Party, the Emancipation Proclamation and the National Prohibition Party. What a span of effort! And the two admirable women who gave him his character and training, Rhoda Guernsey Goodell and Hannah Cheney Goodell, must be recalled with gratitude in connection with the life-work he left behind him. The keynote of his career may be found in a passage from the epic poem on the Salvation of Mankind which he left unpublished—the words of Adam to the sons of men:

"Take courage, then, my children,
and be strong:

Resist the Serpent, whom the
Lord shall bruise

Under your feet; and put his
hosts to flight—

Yet not without sore conflict,
patient faith,

And firm endurance . . .

As poetry views may differ on
this: as an epitaph—an earned
epitaph, it is glorious.



Oswego State College In War Times

(Paper Read Before Oswego County Historical Society at Oswego April 16, 1946, by Dr. W. Seward Salisbury of the Department of Social Studies of Oswego State Teachers' College.)

A noted American historian has defined history as "the record of things seen and heard." We have just passed through one of the greatest periods of crisis and peril in the history of our nation. In order to better understand ourselves and for future generations to understand our period, it is necessary that we get a complete and objective record of this period and the many varied and complex ways it affected us as individuals and as a community. The time to gather this record of our participation in this greatest of all conflicts is now while the memories are fresh of the men and women who have seen, heard, and participated in the great events of our time.

It is the hope of the officers and program committee of the Oswego County Historical Society that many groups and organizations throughout our county will likewise compile a record of the war activities of the members of their respective groups, organizations and communities, and will, furthermore, make these records available to the public through the Historical Society. The papers given before the society are published in the annual year books of the society's proceedings. These reports are deposited in the libraries of the cities of Oswego and Fulton and the other libraries throughout our own and neighboring counties. As such the reports become a living part of the documentary history of the period, available alike to both the citizen and student of the present and of the future.

One-Third Were Commissioned

A total of at least 556 students or former students of Oswego State Normal School and Oswego State Teachers' College served in the armed forces. World War II

was a war of machines and industrial organization. The technical and engineering training which these young men received at Oswego prepared them for positions of leadership and responsibility. One hundred and sixty-one, 30 per cent, earned commissions. Getting a commission was, at the same time, partly a question of when the individual entered the services. Regardless of a man's qualifications, if he entered the services during the winter of 1943-1944, he was shoved into the front lines as a combat infantryman.

This war, like all wars, was a young man's affair. Seventy-two per cent of the Oswego college students and alumni in service belonged to the classes of 1941 through 1948, and interrupted their education to serve in the armed forces. Twenty of the twenty-four fatal casualties which affected these men occurred in this younger age group. Oswego collegians served in the respective branches of the services as follows: Army, 392; Navy, 120; Marines, 20; Coast Guard, 4; Wacs, 7; Waves, 8.

Twenty-four Lost Lives

Twenty-four men were killed in action, died in the service, or were reported missing. The fatal casualties among the Oswego college group is 4.31 per cent of the total in the armed services. This is almost twice the overall fatal casualty ratio for the entire armed services, and shows the high ratio of combat personnel included in the Oswego group. Thirteen of the twenty-four casualties were commissioned officers. The per cent of men in the air forces was high. Eight of the pilots, navigators, and bombardiers were killed in action or in training. Combat infantry men accounted for the greatest group

of fatalities; with the winter fighting along the Siegfried Line taking the greatest toll. Aside from combat Air Force men, the Marine Corps was the most dangerous service for the Oswego collegians. There were three fatalities out of the total of twenty from the college who served in the Marines. This is a flat casualty ratio of 15 per cent, and is almost four times greater than the ratio for either the Army or the Navy.

Ten War Prisoners In Europe

Ten men were captured by the European Axis powers and lived to be liberated. Six of these POWs were shot down over Axis territory on combat missions as members of Air Force units. One pilot of a pursuit plane shot down over Sicily spent almost two years in a prison camp. Other air men spent 17 months, 15 months, 14 months, and one month in prison camps before liberation. A parachutist, member of the 82nd Airborne Division, was captured in Normandy D Day and spent 11 months in German prison camps. Three combat infantrymen were prisoners. Two were taken prisoner during the Battle of the Bulge. One served six months in a prison camp. The second was captured for two hours by SS troops and believed his recapture within two hours by American troops meant the difference between life and death.

The third infantryman was captured in the fall of 1944 during the battle for Metz. After spending some time in two different camps along the Rhine he was moved to a camp near Kustrin, some thirty miles east of Berlin. His camp was overrun in the initial Russian surge toward Berlin during January. With two fellow prisoners he worked his way back through Poland and to Odessa where he was repatriated. It took thirty days to walk and hitch rides back through eastern Europe.

Fought In Many Zones

No one is more conscious of the

fact that this has been a world war than the veterans of our group. Our group includes men who crawled patrol in the snow in the Vosges Mountains; who dug the Germans out of the rocks of Northern Italy with the famous Tenth Mountain Division, and then drove them out into the valley of the Po and to surrender. Some landed at Oran, fought at El Guettar, suffered defeat at Kasserine Pass, and came back to sweep the Germans out of Tunis under Bradley and Montgomery.

They landed at Sicily; established a beach head at Salerno; dug in and held out at Anzio; plowed through the mud of an Italian winter; butted their heads against the impregnable defense of Cassino. Some spent an exhausting two years of boredom in the Aleutians; where the fortunate fought and returned to the states, and the unfortunate remained to guard. They manned the warships, the battleships, the cruisers, the destroyers, and the submarines. They manned the supply ships, the transports, and the tankers.

Some landed at Omaha and the Utah beaches, and miraculously escaping death or wounds fought all the way across France to the Siegfried Line and finally into the heart of Germany itself. Almost every available able-bodied combat soldier was in the Battle of the Bulge. They crossed the Rhine in gliders, or rubber boats, and on pontoon bridges, and over Remagen Bridge. They plunged deep into Germany, rubbed elbows with the Russians along the Elbe, in Berlin, and in Vienna. They parachuted into Sicily, Normandy, Nijmegen, and the Rhur.

In The Pacific Area

They fought in the jungles of Guadalcanal, Buna, Hollandia, Aitape, and Bougainville. Besides the Japs, they endured mosquitos, mud, jungle rot, dirty natives, heat and rain. They fought in the clear air and bright sun throughout the Carolines and Marshalls—

at Kwajalein, Saipan, Guam, and Iwo. They fought through the long, bitter, and bloody battles of the Philippines and Okinawa.

The air men of this group were everywhere. They flew transports across Africa, India, and over the "hump" into China. They patrolled the Atlantic in Liberators for subs. They battered Fortress Europe from England, Africa, and Italy in Forts and Liberators, Mitchells and Marauders. They flew fighter escort for Berlin-bound bombers in Mustangs and Thunderbolts. They wore the Japs down in China with P-40s.

The naval air force was represented in dive bombers, torpedo bombers and fighters flying from carriers, escort carriers and land bases. They flew with the Marines against Munda, Bougainville, and Rabaul.

In addition to the combat personnel, there were weather observers, medics, ordnance men, quartermasters, clerks, air force ground men, M. P.s, physical instructors, interpreters, armorers, O. S. S. men, truck drivers, etc.

Earned Seven Battle Stars

Some men became casualties in their first battle. Others never saw an enemy in combat. One man lived through and received seven battle stars with the famous First Division as a combat infantryman.

The records of the original 556 Oswego collegians are not yet complete. Many of them are still in the services. We do have fairly complete records of the 240 G. I.s who are now registered at the college. Approximately half of this group are former Oswego students who have returned to complete their education. The other half have entered Oswego for the first time following their discharge from the armed forces. The war records of this group do, however, give a good cross-sectional view of what war meant to the men and women in uniform.

Many Wounded Now In College

Twenty-eight, 11.7 per cent, of

this group of 240 suffered wounds and injuries that required hospitalization. Nine of the hospitalization cases suffered wounds and injuries through air operations and combat. The record runs like this: Face and hand wounds from flak over Linz, Austria; face wounds from fighter interception over Rome; shoulder wound from fighter interception over Styre, Austria; cracked up on take-off, internal injuries; back injury due to crash; lung injury from dive bombing; fracture of arm from flak burst; glider crack-up, internal injuries. The above casualty cases required from one to nine months hospitalization.

In World War I shell fire was the greatest single cause of wounds. Since this war was more mechanized than the last one, it was expected by many competent observers that shell fire, aerial bombs, and the newer forms of warfare would cause the overwhelming proportion of casualties. It is surprising to find that more men from this group were wounded and hospitalized from small arms fire than from shell fire. The final winning and holding of the battle field lay with the combat infantrymen with the traditional forms of infantry arms operating, against the enemy infantrymen similarly armed. For example: Arm wound from sniper fire, leg wound from sniper fire; wrist wound from machine pistol; broken fistula from multiple gunshot wounds; leg wound, 25 caliber machine gun (Jap) etc.

Shrapnel Caused Casualties

Shrapnel was the form of artillery fire causing the greatest number of casualties: For example; thigh wound from shrapnel, Battle of the Bulge; wrist wound from shrapnel, Metz; leg wound, shell, Normandy beach; hand wound, shrapnel, Gladbach, Germany.

Land mines played a large part in the defensiveness tactics of both allied and Axis armies. Three of the wounded were casualties

from this cause. In addition to these battle wounds, a soldier injured a finger, an infection developed which brought about amputation of the finger. Another soldier got a hand badly lacerated in a motor vehicle, which required three months of hospitalization before he was considered fit to return to duty.

The services were most successful in controlling disease and keeping the service man in an efficient state of health. Only 22 out of the 240, 9.17 per cent, were sick enough to lose time and combat efficiency through hospitalization.

Malaria was the greatest single cause of sickness. There were ten cases of malaria requiring hospitalization in the Pacific theatre, and five in the Mediterranean area. There were several cases each of dengue fever, amoebic dysentery, jaundice, pneumonia, as well as single cases of jungle rot, sand fly fever, hepatitis, battle fatigue, and arthritis.

Boredom And Adventure

The experiences of these men were varied. To some, their service was two or three years of boredom in unpleasant and distasteful surroundings both in regard to location and climate and in regard to associates and type of work. Others found a great deal of excitement and adventure. Some faced danger and death almost constantly in line of duty. Others had only occasional moments of danger.

There are numerous examples of high courage and heroism. Many examples of heroism and courage can never be recorded, for all parties to the occasion were lost. Wherever possible, these stories of courage and heroism should be recorded, that we contemporaries who directly benefited may be made humble, and those who come after may be inspired from the high example of this generation.

Courage Of Harmonica Player

The following account of cour-

age, sacrifice, and dignity in the face of death recently came to my attention. In February, 1943, one of our present students was enroute to Iceland in a large convoy during the height of submarine activity. His transport was torpedoed at 4 o'clock in the morning 300 miles out of Iceland. Four of the lifeboats were wrecked in the explosion or damaged in launching. All of the remaining lifeboats and rafts were overloaded. His raft, built for 12 men, actually had 21 crowded on it. The sea was heavy; it was either raining or the fog hung heavily. The raft capsized several times. Each time after it was righted, one or two men had disappeared.

One shipmate who played the harmonica and was wont to entertain his buddies could find no place either on a lifeboat or on a raft. He finally found refuge on a bouyant mattress which with his own life belt was sufficient to keep him afloat. For a time the wind and seas kept him alongside of the raft. He took his harmonica out of his pocket and began to play. Gradually he and his improvised raft slipped out of sight into darkness. His comrades could still hear him play when he could no longer be seen. Slowly the music fell away into the distance. He was never seen again.

Acts Of Heroism

The ship was torpedoed at 4 o'clock in the morning, and remained afloat for 45 minutes before slipping beneath the waves. It did not get light until six hours later. Three ships had been torpedoed during the night. The convoy proceeded ahead. Two escort vessels were sent back to pick up survivors during the day. They had to work fast because of the few hours of daylight. Submarines were all around in the vicinity, as the sonic devices were constantly making fixes on them. Their raft was one of the last to be picked up around 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The men could not have held out much longer, as the cold and

exposure were weakening even the hardiest.

It took considerable maneuvering and seamanship in the heavy seas to pick the men from the various rafts and lifeboats. The corvette was working towards the last survivors in the vicinity, three men on a rubber inflated life raft. The corvette was picking up sonic signals from a submarine approaching and maneuvering for attack. Finally the captain called out by public address to the men on the raft telling of the approaching submarine and asking them whether he should keep the ship there until they were picked up and take the chance of losing the ship and all aboard, or leave them to their fate. As the men heard the captain, two of them stood up and signaled with their arms for the ship to go on. They were never seen again.

Faculty Participation

Twenty-five percent of the members of the regular faculty received leaves of absence to participate directly in some phase of the war effort. Eight of these members served with the armed services. Service with the armed forces included training officer specialists in the Navy; technical specialist in the Coast Guard; instructor in the Merchant Marine Academy; administrative officer in the Air Corps; medical officer with extended duty in the South West Pacific; instructor in Army rehabilitation program; recreation instructor for Red Cross overseas. Two men served in a civilian capacity as educational and training specialists in the training program of two of the large aircraft concerns.

During this academic year, 12 new members have been added to the faculty who have served with the armed forces. Most of these men and women served in the combat theatres. Participation with the armed forces included such varied service as: Navigator with 113 combat missions in

China theatre; bombardier with 58 combat missions in the South West Pacific; skipper of PT boat in South West Pacific; combat engineer with service in both Europe and Far East; communication officer on Navy tanker in both Atlantic and Pacific; cryptographer with Army in the Philippines; intelligence officer with the Eighth Air Force in England; ordnance specialist with Army in Europe; Red Cross worker in Africa and European theatres.

A number of special evening courses were given at the college by members of the regular faculty for training in such specialties as electronics, metal skills, aircraft model construction, glider construction. Teachers for classes at war industry plants were provided by the college, the instruction being designed to improve the efficiency of the war plant workers.

324th Training Unit

The last prewar year found the Oswego student body to be composed of more than fifty per cent men students. Due to the engineering nature of the Industrial Arts curriculum many of the male students were soon called into war industries in various technical capacities. The rapid expansion of the armed forces in a short time took a majority of the remaining male students.

In an attempt to make the greatest possible contribution to the war effort, the college volunteered the use of the facilities thus freed to the armed services. The Army Air Services accepted this offer and entered into a contractual arrangement with the college through the state to train a corps of 300 pre-flight aviation cadets.

A total of 808 air cadets underwent a five-months training program during the period extending from March 31, 1943, to May 30, 1944. Each month, 60 men would complete the program at Oswego and move on to the next phase of their training. Each month the outgoing group was replaced by a

like number of incoming cadets.

The cadets were housed on the ground floor of the main building. The dining hall was enlarged to provide mess facilities for the corps. The laboratories, shops, and classrooms not used by the regular college teacher-training program were made available for the training of cadets.

A commanding officer, three lieutenants, and a staff of non-commissioned officers exercised military control over the group. With the exception of military discipline, drill, and flight training, all the instruction was provided by the resident faculty. The curriculum for which the resident faculty were responsible for and gave instruction in, included courses in English, geography, history, mathematics, medical aid, physics, physical training, and civil air regulations.

The college received several commendations from the Air Forces for the quality of instruction given the air force cadets. On the basis of overall comprehensive examinations, the cadets from the 324th detachment consistently stood in the upper 20 per cent in competition with the cadets from the several hundred other similar pre-flight college training units.

The Casualties

The Oswego State Teachers College is searching for a proper tribute and a fitting memorial to the 24 Oswegonians who made the supreme sacrifice. They are already enshrined in the memories of their wives and children, fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters, sweethearts and intimate friends. There is nothing that our institution can or should do to add or detract from the immortality they have achieved in the hearts of those who knew them best and miss them most.

But they did not die for their intimates alone. They were urged and commanded in the name of the national community to go forth and become the shock troops

for the American Way of Life. It is most fitting that those institutions that go to make up the American Way of Life, of which Oswego State Teachers College is a representative example, should keep their memories and sacrifices as individuals appropriately before us.

We will betray their trust if we allow their individual entities to become merged into such a nebulous expression as the "Oswego College War Dead." We will betray their memories if we confine our recognition of their sacrifices to an annual routine and stereotyped memorial program.

They, in effect, gave us who remain the most valuable gift anyone can make—a young person's chance at life. They died enthusiastic, full of optimism, with an infinite capacity for the enjoyment of the unfulfilled desires of youth and life. We should remember them as that this year, and fifty years in the future. Such a picture and such a memory should inspire us and future generations to make a contribution and effort in peace worthy of, and commensurate with, their contribution in war.

Who were they?

James F. Ruddick

James F. Ruddick entered Oswego State Teachers College September, 1940. He played on the soccer team, was a member of the German band, and was affiliated with the Psi Phi fraternity. In January, 1942, he enlisted in the Army Air Forces. One year later he was commissioned a second lieutenant at Lake Field, Arizona. After some further training he was sent over seas in March, 1943. From March until July he flew a number of combat missions during the Tunisian and the Sicilian campaigns. The B-17 of which he was first bomber pilot was reported missing, July 16, 1943. It is believed that his plane was shot down by German fighters over Bari, Italy. James was awarded the Air Medal and several Oak

State College War Casualties

| NAME | SERVICE | KILLED |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Ruddick, James | Army Air Corps | July 16, 1943 |
| Dahlstrom, Joseph | Army Air Corps | Aug. 28, 1943 |
| Diment, James | Army Air Corps | Sept. 19, 1943 |
| Verber, Albert | Navy Air | Nov. 7, 1943 |
| Duell, Charles | Army | Dec. 3, 1943 |
| Parrish, Frank | Navy | Jan. 20, 1944 |
| Trass, Wilford | Army Air Corps | March 6, 1944 |
| Clements, John | Army | June 6, 1944 |
| McAllister, William | Navy Air Corps | July, 1944 |
| Lockwood, John | Marines | Aug. 10, 1944 |
| English, William | Army Air Corps | Sept. 21, 1944 |
| Del Bove, Mike | Army | Nov. 10, 1944 |
| Jacobs, Norman | Navy Air Corps | Dec., 1944 |
| Craley, Walter | Army (Paratroops) | Jan. 5, 1945 |
| Glatte, David | Army | Feb. 14, 1945 |
| Chase, James | Marines | Feb. 19, 1945 |
| Tintera, William | Army | Feb. 28, 1945 |
| Schuler, Robert | Army | March, 1945 |
| Roos, Charles | Army | April 2, 1945 |
| Fein, Eli | Army | April 6, 1945 |
| Schmidt, William | Marines | April 21, 1945 |
| Liberati, Don | Army | Oct. 16, 1945 |
| Brewer, William | Navy | March 7, 1946 |

Leaf Clusters. He was the first former Oswego State College student to lose his life in the war.

Joseph Dahlstrom

Joseph Dahlstrom from Selden, New York, entered Oswego State Teachers College in September, 1937, and was graduated in June, 1941. He was a prominent member of the Debate Club and the Dramatic Club. He was a regular on the varsity basketball team. He served as president of the Student Christian Movement and was a charter member of the original Longfellow Club.

In April, 1941, he enlisted in the Air Force Reserve and was called into service October of that year. He received his training at Strather Field, Kansas, and Laughlin Field, Texas. On April 29, 1942, he was graduated as a cadet and received his second lieutenant's commission. He was

appointed an instructor, specializing in high altitude flying with B-24s. On August 28, 1943, during a training flight in Idaho his plane caught on fire and crashed. Joe and one other member of the plane crew lost their lives. All others survived. He is survived by his wife and an infant daughter.

James Diment

James Diment entered the General Elementary Division in September, 1938. He was especially interested in athletics, played on the basketball team, and was honored by his team mates by being chosen its captain during his senior year. He represented his class on the Student Council, and was a member of Sons of the Wilted Wallet, a social club. He sang in the symphonic choir.

He joined the Air Force in the summer of 1941, and left for training January 1, 1942. He was commissioned the following sum-

mer. His first assignment was as training officer at Marianna Field, Florida. He took further work in high altitude flying and tactics. After applying for overseas duty, he was made squadron commander of a squadron of fighter pilots. He was killed on a training flight while serving as squadron leader of his unit just prior to the units embarkation for duty in England. He was promoted to the rank of captain shortly before his death.

Albert A. Verber

Albert A. Verber spent several summers in Oswego as an instructor in the making of jewelry in the Industrial Arts Division. He was a native of the Bronx and a member of the New York City school system. He was an enthusiastic flyer, owned his own plane, which he brought with him to Oswego. In the early days of the war he was a member of the Civil Air Patrol. In September, 1942, he enlisted in the Navy, and after a period of training received a flying commission. He was assigned to the Ferry Command and engaged in flying planes from the factory to the respective training and combat centers. He was killed in a take-off crash at Lynchburg, Virginia, November 7, 1943. He was piloting a FM-1 Wildcat fighter. Shortly before his death he had been given special recognition for delivering aircraft for a total distance of 75,000 miles.

Charles Duell

Charles Duell, of Iliion, New York, was enrolled at Oswego State Teachers College from September 1939 to June 1940. While in school Charles was active in sports and numerous clubs.

After receiving his officers training, Lt. Duell was assigned to the 80th Division, 317th Infantry, Camp Forrest, Tennessee. Later he was located at Camp Shenango, Pennsylvania. From there he was assigned to the European theater of Operations in October, 1943.

Lt. Duell was killed in action in Italy, December 3, 1943, in the

bitter fighting before Cassino.

Frank R. Parrish

Frank R. Parrish of Bronxville, New York, was a graduate of the General Elementary Division of Oswego State Teachers College in the class of 1943. Frank was active in Student Council; the Frosh Orientation Committee of 1943; Symphonic Choir; the Speakers Union and the "Oswegonian" while attending college. He enlisted September, 1943, at Seattle, Washington, in the United States Naval Reserve V-7 program. He was a member of the 16th class, U. S. N. R. Midshipman School, Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois.

He received his commission as Ensign December 22, 1943. He was hospitalized immediately after receiving his commission for injuries received while in training. He died January 20, 1944, of intestinal gangrene. Captain B. B. Wygant, commanding officer of the Midshipman's School wrote of Frank as follows: "He was an exceptional athlete, very popular among his classmates, and his academic average was above normal." Ensign Parrish was the son of Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Parrish, 1200 North 7th street, Kelso, Washington.

Wilfred Lyn Trass

Wilfred Lyn Trass from Georgetown, New York, was graduated from the Industrial Arts Department of the Oswego State Teachers College in June, 1942.

While attending college, Wilfred was active in the Flying Club, the Student Christian Movement, bowling, the Rifle Club and the Industrial Arts Club.

After completion of his course Wilfred engaged in war work in Oneida. He entered service from there January 29, 1943.

2nd Lt. Trass, United States Army Air Force, a co-pilot of a twin engine medium bomber, was killed March 6, 1944. His plane crashed ten miles northeast of Castor, Louisiana, about forty

miles from his training base at Shreveport. Five other members of the crew were killed when the plane exploded as it hit the ground. Gasoline was the probable cause of the explosion, but the hundred pound practice bombs aboard did not go off.

Lt. Trass was stationed with the 475th Bomb Squadron, 335th Bomb Group, Barksdale Field, Louisiana.

John Clements

John Clements from Yonkers, New York, was graduated from Oswego State Teachers College in 1936. His extra-curricular activities consisted of Dramatics Club 2nd year, Debate 1st and 2nd year, Speakers Union 3rd year, and Tri Kappa Fraternity. He enlisted in the Army, May 15, 1942, at McDonough, New York.

"Johnny" was killed in Normandy (Omaha Beach) France on June 6, 1944, D-Day, during his first combat assignment. He was leading his platoon forward to eliminate an enemy pillbox overlooking the invasion beach when he was struck and killed by small arms fire. He is buried in the United States Army Cemetery at St. Laurent-Sur-Mer, France.

At the time of his death he was a 2nd Lieutenant and serving in Company A, 116th Infantry, 29th Division. His citations were the Purple Heart and Presidential Citation awarded posthumously.

Francis A. McAllister

Francis A. McAllister entered Oswego State Teachers College September 1938 after attending Watertown High School. He was one of the first men to leave Oswego for military service. He enlisted in the Naval Reserve July 1941. He served four months as a seaman 2c in the V-5 program; was an aviation cadet for the next seven months, winning his wings and commission at the completion of his course. He saw service in both the Atlantic and the Pacific Theatres of action. After eight months as an ensign he was pro-

moted to lieutenant junior grade and served in this grade until his death 12 months later. He was a dive bomber pilot and a member of Bombing Squadron 18. He was officially reported missing as of July 2, 1944, following a night flight over the Pacific from which his plane did not return. It is thought that he lost his life in the naval operations protecting the landing of the Army and Marines on Saipan and Tinian. He was presumptively recorded dead July 3, 1945.

John Lockwood

John Lockwood, from Cortland, New York, was a 1941 graduate of the Industrial Arts Department of the Oswego State Teachers College. While a student he was president of his Junior Class, played on the varsity tennis team, and was a member of Beta Tau Epsilon Fraternity. For a year following graduation he taught at Alexandria Bay.

On August 13, 1942, "Johnny" enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. He attended Officers Training School at Quantico, Virginia and received his commission February 10, 1943. In overseas service, John was sent to the Marshall Islands, Kwajalein, Eniwetok, and finally Saipan where he was killed the third day of that campaign, June 18, 1944, by a Japanese sniper. He is buried in the 4th Division Marines Cemetery on Saipan.

For citation, "Johnny" received the Purple Heart and Purple Heart Certificate, Presidential Unit Citation, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal. The Bronze Star was also awarded posthumously to him, and received by his mother February 16, 1946.

William H. English

William H. English who was twenty-nine years old at the time of his death, was a graduate of the Industrial Arts class of 1940 at the Oswego State Teachers College, his home being at Amsterdam, New York.

Bill, even before the war, became interested in flying and received his civilian license in 1941. In December of that same year he enlisted in the Army Air Corps, and received his wings at Selma, Alabama on September 5, 1942.

He then volunteered to specialize as a bomber pilot. After this training he was sent to Puerto Rico and South America, and from there he went to Africa in time to serve in the Tunisian campaign. The Sicilian and Italian campaigns followed. He was in the squadron of Martin B-26 Marauders which led the raid of 500 planes that bombed Rome in 1943.

Completing his forty missions in December, 1943, he returned home for a rest, followed by a period of service as an instructor in this country. On September 21, 1944, his parents received the telegram telling them of William's fatal accident. The "Amsterdam Recorder" said:

"After braving death on many bombing missions over enemy territory in foreign lands, 1st Lt. William English died in an airplane accident over Lovettsville, Virginia, Thursday afternoon, thus bringing to an unfortunate close, the career of a young man who gave loyal and patriotic duty to his country, and was one of Amsterdam's leading sons in the war."

Michael del Bove

Michael del Bove received his preparatory education at the Stuyvesant High school of New York City. He entered Oswego State Teachers College in the Division of Industrial Arts September, 1940. He joined Beta Tau fraternity, and was active in the affairs of his class as well as in the intramural program of the college. In the spring of 1943 he left for the Army and received basic training at Camp Wheeler, Georgia. He qualified for Armed Services Training Program and was assigned to Boston College where he pursued an engineering course. With the growing need for

combat infantry for the coming invasion of France, he was sent back to an infantry unit. Shortly afterwards he went overseas with the 328th Infantry. He was killed in Northern France by sniper fire on November 10, 1944.

Norman Jacobs

Norman Jacobs from New York City attended Oswego State Teachers College from September, 1939, to January, 1941. At that time he left with a group of students who had accepted positions as Civilian Instructors at Chanute Field, Illinois.

While a student at Oswego State Teachers College, "Norm" was interested in athletics and participated in such sports as soccer and varsity baseball. He was president of his class the year he left for war service.

"Norm" entered the United States Naval Reserve in June, 1943, and was sent to Athens, Georgia, to pre-flight school. He received his Ensign's commission in May, 1944, at Pensacola. He was first assigned to Melbourne, Florida, and later to San Francisco. In September, 1944, "Norm" was reassigned to the Pacific Fleet.

He was declared missing December, 1944, while flying a combat mission off a carrier.

Walter Craley

Walter Craley was a native of Oswego. His early education was obtained at the college campus school. He attended Oswego High school where he participated actively in track, Camera club, the student Chamber of Commerce. An excellent swimmer he served as life guard at Sheldon Beach during the summer of 1942.

In September, 1942, he entered Oswego State Teachers College and became a member of Psi Phi fraternity. He was inducted into the Army February, 1943, and after his basic training placed in the 256th Field Artillery. In January, 1944, he volunteered for service in the paratroopers and

after the necessary training was shipped overseas on the Queen Mary, arriving in England on D-Day, June 6, 1944. He was assigned to the famous 82nd Airborne Division. His regiment was the first to jump in the great attempt to turn the German lines at Arnheim in the fall of 1944. His regiment landed at Holdras Vachel, Holland. He came through the bitter fighting characteristic of this operation. The Division was withdrawn to the Riviera for rest, recuperation, and was hastily rushed into the Bastogne sector in the German break through in the Battle of the Bulge. He was killed January 5, 1945, when an anti-tank mine exploded destroying the truck in which he was then riding in company with a group of his comrades.

He is survived by his parents and a sister, Mary Louise Craley, a graduate of the class of 1943.

David Glatter

David Glatter prepared for college at Abraham Lincoln High school, New York City. He and his brother, Franklin, entered Oswego State Teachers College in the Division of Industrial Arts during the fall of 1942. He took a prominent part in the Debate club and the Speakers Union, representing the college in several interscholastic debates. He was inducted into the armed services in the spring of 1943, and was sent to Fort Benning, Georgia, for basic training. He then qualified for the Armed Services Training Program, being assigned to Clemson College, South Carolina. Along with the other A. S. T. P. students, he was returned to the infantry during the spring of 1944. In a short time he was sent overseas to combat.

He died February 14, 1945, of wounds suffered two days before in military operations in Luxembourg. He was 19 years of age. For heroic achievement on February 12 in Luxembourg he received posthumously the Bronze Star. During bitter fighting in the

town of Vianden, the citation reads, for a part of the time he stood alone on the river bank and delivered telling fire on a group of the enemy only 100 yards away. On another occasion when his platoon was pinned down by a German machine gun, he took his automatic rifle into the street and made a bold effort to silence the enemy gun.

James B. Chase

Sergeant James Burling Chase, from Tully, New York, was enrolled at Oswego State Teachers College in the General Elementary Division 1940-1942. On February 12, 1942, he enlisted in the Marine Corps at Syracuse, New York.

As corporal, Chase guarded the house of Secretary Frank Knox of the U. S. Navy, now deceased. From this assignment he was moved to Pendleton, California, then Pearl Harbor, and finally to Iwo Jima where he was killed.

He had charge of traffic on the beach at Iwo Jima and was killed when a mortar shell struck his head the first day of the island's invasion, February 19, 1944. He was buried in the Fifth Marine Cemetery, Grave 214, Plot 1.

James had been offered a chance to attend Officers Candidate School, but felt that the best way for a Marine to be an officer was to take his training in the field.

He was twenty years old when he enlisted and leaves a wife and a son, who was only nine days old when James was killed.

William Tintera

William Tintera entered Oswego State Teachers College in September, 1937, and graduated four years later in June, 1941. He was an outstanding student leader throughout his four years at Oswego, and served as president of the student body—the highest honor a student can win—during his senior year. He served as treasurer of the student body in his junior year; was a member of Pi Tau Epsilon, honorary society.

He served as president of his fraternity, Psi Phi, and was very much interested and active in intramural athletics.

After graduation, he operated a pattern and model shop, constructing models for the war industries. He entered the Army during the winter of 1944. After training in the states he went overseas and joined the 9th Army during the fall and winter campaigns. He won a battlefield promotion to staff sergeant in the combat infantry. He was killed in the fierce fighting leading up to the capture of Duesseldorf and Cologne, February 28, 1944. He leaves a wife, Jane Culeton Tintera, class of 1942, and an infant daughter.

Charles Roos

Charles Roos entered the Industrial Arts Division of Oswego State Teachers College in September, 1942. He was prominent in the activities of his class and became affiliated with the Beta Tau fraternity. He was inducted into the Army in the spring of 1943, and after receiving basic training he qualified for, and was sent to Armed Services Training Program at Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee. Like the other men in the A. S. T. P. he was returned to a combat unit when the demand for infantry replacement became acute. He was attached to the 88th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron mechanized in February, and was killed in a village ambush in Germany April 2, 1945 within a month of the end of hostilities. He is survived by his mother of Wellsville, New York, a former student at Oswego, and a brother, George, who has returned to Oswego to finish his studies on separation from the Air Forces.

Eli Fein

Eli Fein prepared for college at the DeWitt Clinton High School, New York City. He was affiliated with the Sons of the Wilted Wallet social fraternity.

He left for the armed services in the spring of 1943 and was sent to the Aberdeen Proving Grounds for basic training. Later in the fall he qualified for Armed Services Training Program and was assigned to North Central College, Naperville, Illinois. He was returned to a combat unit until June 1944, and shortly afterwards went overseas with the combat engineers. His unit was attached to the Eighth Armored Division which fought with the Ninth Army in the final battle for Germany. He was killed in the Ruhr in action with other members of his company on April 6, 1945.

William Schmidt

William Schmidt from St. Albans, New York, attended Oswego State Teachers College from September 1942 to June 1943. During his year here, "Bill" was very active in athletics. He played on the Basketball Team and was a member of the Block "O" Club. He was a member of Psi Phi fraternity.

"Bill" enlisted in the Marines June 19, 1943 and was stationed at Newport, Rhode Island. He was classified as an electrician and assigned March 15, 1944 as Corporal in Company B, 16th Marine Engineers, 5th Division, Camp Pendleton, California. From Camp Pendleton Bill was sent to the South West Pacific for combat duty.

Corporal Schmidt participated in the campaigns on many of the smaller Pacific islands. He was killed March 20, 1945 in the battle for Iwo Jima.

William Brewer

William Brewer of Oswego, was a member of the General Elementary Division class of 1943. Bill was called to active duty with the United States Naval Reserve during his sophomore year, May 1941. While a student at the College "Bill" was well known for his musical ability and served on the Student Recreational Association Committee. He was assigned to

duty aboard the "Chemung," a navy tanker. "Bill" served on the "Chemung" for two years and was then transferred to a mine sweeper operating in the Newfoundland area.

In April 1944 "Bill" received an appointment to the Midshipman's School at Columbia University. At Midshipman's School "Bill" was active in the choir and gave several piano recitals at social hours for the midshipmen. He graduated and received his commission August 10, 1944 and was assigned to a cargo ship. Ensign Brewer was killed in an automobile accident in Hongkong, China March 7, 1946.

Daniel Liberati

Daniel Liberati entered Oswego in the Industrial Arts Division September 1940. He left for the armed services December 1941. He trained at Morrisson Field and West Palm Beach Florida. In June 1943 he was promoted to the rank of sergeant. He served with the Army Air Forces as a member of the 406th Service Squadron. After extending duty in Newfoundland he was hospitalized back to the United States. He died following a brain operation at Holleran Hospital, November 16, 1945. He is survived by his parents who make their home in Port Chester, New York.

Robert Schuler

Robert Schuler was a native of Oswego. His early education was obtained at St. Mary's School. He attended Oswego High School taking a major interest in sport activities. He entered Oswego State Teachers College in September 1932, where he continued his interest in the college sports program. In the community he was one of the founders of the Little Theatre Group. In May 1942 he enlisted in the Army, and a year later was graduated from Officer Candidate School with a commission in the Quartermaster Corps. He was assigned to the South West Pacific Theatre and in Sep-

tember 1944 at Finchhaven, New Guinea, was promoted to captain's rank. He was killed in a motor mishap during the spring of 1945. He is survived by two sisters, Mary and Albertine, and two brothers, John and Richard.

To Consider A Memorial

These are the Oswego College dead—men who at one time were identified with our college. It is our desire to create a memorial or memorials worthy of their sacrifice and appropriate to the nature and purpose of our institution.

Any memorial should reflect or otherwise be consistent with the ideals and principles for which they died. One of those ideals was the democratic principle of tolerance and brotherhood. Even in death these men reflect the cosmopolitan and democratic nature of our student body, as well as that of our state and nation. Four of the preceding names were Jewish or of predominantly Jewish extraction; four of Italian extraction; four of Irish; two, possibly more, of German extraction; one of Swedish; one of French; and the remaining probably largely of British descent. A memorial which would tend to engender and nurture the spirit of tolerance and goodwill, which they represented in life and hallowed in death, might well command our first attention.

It is now approaching a year since the cessation of hostilities. Many people surprised by the chaos, suspicion, and lack of understanding among the peoples of the earth profess to fear their sacrifices were in vain. The three hundred thousand odd Americans did not die in vain. By fighting with our allies in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Islands of the South Seas, they saved the rest of the 140 millions of us from the tragedy and horror of fighting on our own soil, and in our cities, villages, and homes. Their sacrifices may have saved many of us from such horrors as the con-

centration camp and the gas chambers. They saved the rest of us, and for that alone we should be grateful.

Sacrifices Not In Vain

Their sacrifices did more than that. They made it possible for us to dictate our own fate, and control our future and the future of the world.

In two successive generations, events have proved that all wars are world wars, that peace is indivisible. As these men went off to war they were told and had every right to believe that their contribution would make it possible for the American people to assume the leadership in organizing the world for peace and justice. Unless we as individuals and in groups put just as much of our energies, intelligence, and enthusiasm into the peace effort as they did into war effort, we will have broken faith with them. For the fate of my generation or of yours alone is not worth the expenditure of theirs.

Their sacrifices will be worth while only if we act in a positive and constructive manner to work towards a world state where clashes of interest are resolved by appeal to the law of nations rather than by reversion to the law of the jungle. I can think of no more appropriate memorial than for the College to take an active and effective part in bettering relations

and understanding between peoples and nations in the name of our men who died for these principles.

Aid For Refugee Shelter

Approximately one thousand refugees from Nazi persecution were brought to Fort Ontario August 1, 1944 on the initiative of President Franklin D. Roosevelt as wards of the Federal Government pending final solution of the problem of their permanent residence. Oswego College carried on a variety of activities to make the stay of the refugees in the community more pleasant and profitable. A number of the children from the Shelter were admitted as pupils to the several grades of the Campus School. Several of the young people qualified for and entered the College as special students. Various members of the faculty organized and participated in a series of lectures and discussions of the Shelter to acquaint the adults with some of the outstanding characteristics of American culture. Others of the faculty organized and conducted special courses to teach the children English and orient them to American life. Residents of the Shelter reciprocated by presenting musical and dramatic programs before the college assembly, and by conducting language classes in German and French for groups of college students.



Society Observes Two Anniversaries At Famed Van Buren Inn July 15, 1946

Evacuation of Fort Ontario by British Preceded by Just
100 Years Foundation of Oswego Historical Society
in 1896 Assembled Guests Are Told

Several hundred persons assembled at the former Van Buren Inn, on the East bank of the Oswego river midway between Fulton and Seneca Hill, Monday afternoon, July 15, 1946, for observances arranged by the Oswego County Historical Society in celebration jointly of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the society and the 150th anniversary of the evacuation of Fort Ontario by the British garrison, which marked the beginning of Oswego as a United States community. The event was opened with a basket picnic at 1 o'clock, and was followed by a literary program and the reading of historical papers until 4:30 o'clock when the ceremonies were concluded.

While there was a touch of chill in the air, the weather proved quite ideal for the gathering otherwise and proved a welcome relief after the run of exceptionally warm weather which had afflicted the Oswego county area during the preceding two weeks. Rain which had fallen during the night was not sufficient to produce any unpleasant reactions to those of the picnickers who sat upon the ground to enjoy their picnic dinners. Some removed seats from their cars to provide a cushion against the moist earth while others sought out sunny locations where the ground had dried sufficiently so that a newspaper made an acceptable substitute for other form of ground covering. Many of the picnickers had brought along folding chairs and card tables for use at the dinner hour. The committee of arrangements had provided benches,

long tables and chairs up to its ability to procure and transport them. The tables were placed in the open under the rays of the not uncomfortable sun. The entertaining society provided hot coffee and lemonade in abundance for those who came for the dinner.

Welcomed By Owners

Persons began arriving at the inn as early as 11 o'clock in the morning. They were met and greeted by Miss Priscilla N. Myers, the present owner of the former inn, which she uses as a summer home. It was purchased by her father, the late Mr. Myers, many years ago. Miss Myers was assisted in receiving the visitors by her sister, Mrs. Choice McLean. The ladies bade the guests to make themselves at home about the premises, inviting them to enter the interiors of the ancient buildings which were once a part of a canal service station of no mean proportions and contained much of interest for the visitors to admire and wonder at architecturally in these days of lumber shortages and dwarfed houses.

Dr. Arthur C. Parker, president of the New York State Historical Association, guest speaker of the occasion arrived at noon, having driven from his summer home on Canandaigua Lake at Naples. He was accompanied by Mrs. Parker and their daughter, Miss Martha Anne Parker. They were welcomed by Ralph M. Faust, principal of Oswego High school and vice-president of the Historical society and by E. M. Waterbury, president of the Historical

Society. They were seated with Mr. and Mrs. Faust and Mr. and Mrs. Waterbury for the picnic dinner at a large table placed in the sunlight alongside the barn which was at one time used at the Inn for sheltering mules which in early days hauled canal boats on their way to Oswego.

Towards 2 o'clock other persons who were not present for the picnic dinner drove from Fulton, Oswego and elsewhere to be present for the program. Early in the proceedings the president presented the following who were generously applauded for the parts they had taken in the arrangements for the day: Miss Priscilla Myers and Mrs. Choice McLean, hostesses; Grove A. Gilbert of Fulton, chairman of the committee on dinner and ground arrangements; Dr. W. Seward Salisbury of Oswego, chairman of the program committee and Asa C. Pease of Oswego Town, chairman of the committee on attendance and reception of visitors.

President Waterbury read letters of regret at their inability to be present from E. B. Mott of Oswego and John D. Higgins of New Canaan, Conn., the only two survivors of the 20 men who became incorporators of the Society in 1896. Mr. Mott, first treasurer of the Society, has served as its curator for more than 40 years. He is president of the Oswego City Savings Bank, but by reason of health considerations was unable to attend the day's observances, much to his regret. Mr. Higgins, who is the only former president of the society yet living, and who was mayor of Oswego in 1896 when Oswego first formally celebrated Evacuation Day, is now a practicing attorney in New Canaan despite his advanced years.

Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York state historian, was prevented from being present for the day's events owing to the fact that

he is in Maine on his annual vacation for which arrangements were made before he received the invitation to be present. A message of congratulation which he sent was read, however, by Thomas A. Cloutier, recording secretary of the society.

Dr. Wells Reads Paper

Dr. Charles F. Wells of the faculty of the Oswego State Teachers' College read as the first number of the afternoon's program the paper prepared in 1896 by George Tisdale Clark, Oswego lawyer and charter member of the Historical Society, on the grounds of Fort Ontario for the ceremonies held there on the afternoon of July 15, in commemoration of the centennial of Evacuation Day and of Oswego's historic past. Mr. Clark's paper was printed in the first publication of the Historical Society in 1899, but he had died, unexpectedly, a few days before. Other members of the society who read papers during the afternoon appropriate to the occasion were: Miss Mabel Osborne of Fulton, great granddaughter of John Van Buren, the first of the name to settle in the Fulton vicinity, who spoke on "The Van Buren Homestead;" Dr. John W. O'Connor, deputy collector of U. S. Customs at Oswego, whose theme was "The Story of Fort Ontario Between 1896 and 1946" and E. M. Waterbury who spoke on "The Oswego Historical Society—Fifty Years Young and Still 'Going Strong'".

President Waterbury presented Ralph M. Faust, vice-president of the society and its former program chairman, who introduced Dr. Parker as the first speaker of the afternoon's program. The text of Dr. Parker's address on "Whence and Whither Oswego" will be found elsewhere in this volume.

Whence and Whither Oswego?

(Paper Read Before Oswego County Historical Society July 15, 1946, by Dr. Arthur C. Parker, President of New York State Historical Association, on the Occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Evacuation of Fort Ontario at Oswego by the British.)

Every place name in the Empire State brings up memories, if only memories of human effort to establish a community of security and peace. Oswego, however, is a name of peculiar luster, for it stands out among a dozen other New York names as a symbol of heroic attainment and ceaseless drive. Indeed, the name itself means an outpouring. It is derived from an Iroquoian expression applied to the confluence of living streams.

Oswego to the Indians was an outpouring of the river of the Onondagas and the particular emphasis was upon the falls that broke over the cliff to pour into an inviting bay of Lake Ontario. So greatly loved was Oswego that the Iroquois had a legend that they emerged from the earth at the apex of a hill nearby, there to behold the world that was to be theirs. They saw it as a strategic spot even though the Onondagas in whose domain it rested retreated southward to the hills where they might eye those who might wish to claim it.

In later times as the European came it was clearly seen that Oswego was of vast importance to the frontier of England in the new world. France saw this too late, and until the close of the French and Indian War, Oswego remained a thorn that scratched the tender side of the tenuous line that stretched between Cadarcqui and Niagara. If Niagara can be called the key of the continent, so Oswego can be called the key to Niagara. It was the base from which the forces of Britain under Prideaux, Johnson, Haldimand and Amherst finally launched the successful drive that resulted in the crumbling of the hopes of New France. Under Johnson's thrust Niagara fell, and then fol-

lowed Cadarcqui, Montreal and Quebec.

Oswego Key To Empire

In passing it is of interest to recall that Sir William Johnson long had been concerned with Oswego and realized the importance of this post. New York's bickering Legislature because of its fight with the Governor was not inclined to pay for the supplies that Sir William had furnished (to Fort Ontario) over a term of years, nor to recognize bills that were thoroughly just. When his own trade was threatened with ruin the Baronet withdrew his shipments of food and other supplies, though the garrison was hungry. The failure of the Legislature to value Oswego as the wall between Quebec and the colony of New York was one of the strong reasons why Johnson, as Superintendent of Indian Affairs, resigned his commission.

Oswego's position as a bastion of commerce was known to all contestants but the English were first to seize it as a post to which the fur-selling Indians might come for cheaper goods, better prices and closer contact with powerful allies. Thus it came to the notice of the kings of two great European nations, to their lords of trade and to the military masters of the New World. Even the gallant Montcalm did not count its taking a minor success, nor did the ambitious Pontiac fail to know the way to its gates. If Oswego were a key to trade and empire, it was a key that passed from hand to hand, to be recovered through the will of destiny and given into the keeping of those who in the end secured it for its ultimate owners and a sovereign people who

should make it a place of peace.

This community and locality that we here revision in historic setting is a worthy example of the American scene for it not only embraces the long struggle of red man, Briton and Gaul, but the will of a people to find establishment. The whole story on inland America is here, its racial, its national, its social and its economic struggle to be what the people will.

Factors That Made Oswego

There are several factors that have made the Oswego of today. The military struggle has its part but it is not all of history, much as this conflict has been discussed. In addressing this gathering I wish to take another view of the picture and to call to mind other factors that led to a city having regional significance. There are those who will stress the port and the waterpower, but neither harbor nor the gravity of water aid in building a city unless man finds a way to reach such a locality and apply what he finds there for human advantage.

Oswego became a center of interest in the first instance because it could be reached by the waters of Lake Ontario, and because it was a stopping place between the great French centers along the St. Lawrence and Niagara. It came upon the awareness of European minds when ships were the reliance of travel, and when waterfronts were the termini of voyages. Hinterlands ever were wilderness, and unknown terrors faced the venturesome who penetrated the bewildering paths of the hart and aurochs. This had been so since early European days when the Nord and Mediterranean tribes were held to the strands of oceans and of estuaries by the all-covering forests that marched down to the seas and made mankind dependent upon the shellfish that were brought from the depths by flood tides.

Import of Hewing of Trees

Only when mankind learned how to hew down trees and burn them could land be conquered and populations spread. Even then coracles and dugouts were the principal means by which men followed the windings of streams to places where the wild boar and the stag might be found. For centuries, at least twenty-five of them, Europe remained a land of fighting men and of great forests that made large political groups impossible. Then, about 1800 B.C. bronze came into Europe and lagging behind it came the wheel and the cart. Ships were now larger and sought out convenient harbors where metals might be brought down from the mines, as in Wales where there was tin to mix with copper. Only when the Romans pressed for the expansion of empire did another means of reaching places inland appear in the form of roads. Barbarism marched upon roads that became better as the goals of trade became more alluring. The narrow, obstacle-avoiding path of the aborigines gave way to wider trails over which lumbering carts might be drawn by the ox or horse, a trick of transportation long known to Egypt, Babylon and the kingdoms along the Euphrates and Tigris.

Frontier Posts On Water Ways

Such was the pattern of commerce for a thousand years when imagination and invention had subdued most of the forests of the old world and provided the implementation of larger political societies that struggled, not to unite, but to consolidate self-centered groups called nations, which, in turn were ruled by master lords called kings. Such, largely, was the pattern when two of these nations struggled for the domination of the northeastern portion of the American continent. Each came into this area by the traditional means, by ships and each at first clung to the sea

for its settlements, but reached far inland for trade. When it was necessary to travel by land the trader and courier du bois followed age-old Indian trails, sometimes even difficult for horses because of the lack of grain and grass. Horses starved in the woods, and trails were far too narrow for carts. Thus frontier posts were along the inland lakes and edged close to great rivers. The only hope of laying hold of the land was by a conquest of all-enshrining woodlands, even as in old Europe. The axe and the flaming pyre of mighty tree trunks became the tools of conquest. Without them there was no field, no clearing, no townsite and no road.

Thus, the axe became a symbol of the pioneer's energy and with it he rid the land of its trees to enlarge the area about his harbor and his fort. In such places as Oswego the non-military work of the soldier was largely devoted to the felling of trees and in opening woodland trails to inland depots of supply, to Fort Brewerton, to Salt Point and on to Niagara. A civilization could not be extended or trade carried on without roads. The boat was essential for entrance but the road was vital for penetration.

Oswego County Emerging

Oswego's first roads were those built by military necessity, and by the end of the American Revolution they had been rutted deep with wagon tires and with boots of tired marchers. When Britain's flag went down with characteristic reluctance and the new flag of the United States ascended the rotting ramparts of old Fort Ontario, there were roads to and from Oswego, but not roads that led to homes and towns where peaceful settlers dwelt. The forest still was monarch, but wherever its bed was scratched by wooden share grain grew in abundance and cattle could pasture. It was good soil and called men to its potentialities. Oliver Stevens from

Fort Brewerton, says Crisfield Johnson's History of Oswego County, was the first resident of the county, his business being that of an Indian trader and tavern keeper whose wares catered to the liquid tastes of Oneida lake boatmen. There was a Major Bingham and the storied Count Hiliary, hero of Frenchman's Island, and he continued the romance that before and since has hovered over the county that was destined to bear the name Oswego, after being set aside and finally bounded.

Early Land Purchases

Early after the cessation of the War for Independence this region became one that attracted the adventurer, and when the time came, the surveyor grew busy running his lines that hundreds of thousands of acres might be listed for sale. As early as 1791 the great land patents began to be issued, and we hear the significant names of Macomb, McCormick, Constable, Ward and Boylston, and of land transactions involving millions of acres. Not less important was another name that has illumined the pages of history, that of Roosevelt, then represented by John and Nicholas, purchasers of a mere five hundred thousand acre tract. It was a satisfactory deal, evidently, for a little later this land bought at 39 cents an acre was sold to George William Augustus Scriba, a native of Holland, but like the Roosevelts, hailing from New York city. Thus came the survey of James Cockburn. After such dealings in real estate, adventure and commerce began to pick up, but the British fort still remained to dominate the scene, rivaled only by the wild beasts of the forest—bears, rattlesnakes and wolves.

As the county took form townships were laid out and named, some of them with seeming good reason, but others having strangely foreign appellations, like Mexico, Vera Cruz, Palermo and Hannibal. The original Vera Cruz had

been projected by Scriba as a new metropolis, but when the Duke de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, visited this region during his journey through the new land that had so suddenly become American, he found there but a scant dozen log cabins. The boastful hope was typical, and reminds us of the ambition of Capt. Charles Williamson to build a great metropolis at Williamsburg on the Genesee, and at about the same time. However nearly all accounts mention a road, and it is with roads throughout this territory that we are now concerned.

Early Roads Poor

Those who can recall the country roads of the '70s and '80s may conjure a picture of what the finest of roads about such a settlement might be. They were cleared trails, that became almost impassable sloughs in wet weather, and deserts of dust when summer's heat had left the muck and ruts to be pulverized by wide-rimmed ox carts and clanking wagons. There was no such thing as comfort, but rather an ordeal of jarring, sliding, plunging and bouncing through ruts and depressions, wet or dry. Roots and logs impeded progress, and broken vehicles littered the way. Horses strained and lamed themselves, and some died along the trail, lying down in sheer exhaustion and hunger, to leave their festering bodies as a protest. The best of roads were poor roads, and even when they were worked by road gangs, they were scraped to the center with roots, stones and clods of clay as a miserable ridge for a team to straddle.

Winter travel was far more comfortable, for then long runnered sleighs could slide over pits and elevations, and speed was better. However, only a few of Oswego county's townships had either settlements or roads. Sandy Creek, Boylston, Orwell, Richland, Albion, Williamstown, Amboy,

Parish, West Monroe, Palermo, and Hannibal remained with their virgin timber and with paths trodden only by the beasts of the forest, the explorer and surveyor, and Oswego still remained the incipient capital, though its forts were fast falling into ruin.

As the eighteenth century closed bulk transportation was still by boats, and roads remained hazards that few desired to risk. There was neither sufficient manpower nor machinery to make highways that would graciously unite settlement with settlement and stand the burden of freight traffic. Occasionally a settler would drive his ox and cart from distant places, toiling with his unwilling cow and straying sheep, and preserving them by tethering in log cribs or within a settler's fenced yard until the land of Oswego was reached, but once here or in this neighborhood, so the story goes, sneaking packs or lone wolves would take a heavy toll. There was land to be settled, it is true, but no cohesion without adequate roads. How few these were may be known by Historian Johnson's statement that there was not a church in all this area up to 1812, though there were religious societies.

Pioneer Road Builders

Though the streets of Oswego might be called roads, they pertook of the nature of heaven, or at least its adjoining spheres, and appeared in the galaxy of stellar names usually applied to classical astronomy. But then, the thoughts of our forefathers and their civil engineers were perhaps higher than their descendants who in 1946 have come down to earth to find butter at 90 cents a pound, catch as catch can. There were few other roads until 1804, when, according to Johnson's history "x x x the progress was sufficient so that it was determined to have land communication with the outer world, and C. B. Burt as path-master was chosen to build a road from Oswego as far as the Falls, Fulton).

Then came one King from Cato who offered to construct a road from his village to Oswego for \$40. After some consideration the amount was raised, and even at the price, history discloses that the amount was well earned. It must have been a marvelous achievement for when the road had been hacked out for its contracted length, roadmaker King and his three companions found that it was midsummer, whereupon they mounted an ox-sled and were dragged from Cato to Oswego all the way in triumph, and amid the cheers of their admirers. The road was not what one might today envision as "improved," however, but was simply a leveled slashing without ditches or solid foundation. Its success as an enterprise led to other attempts, and soon the farmer and his creaking cart were familiar sights in the budding town, but in general roads were so poor that even mail had to be carried to Oswego by an Indian runner from Onondaga Hollow* and it was punctually and faithfully done, whatever the weather.

Oswego County Erected

When the second war with Great Britain was over, and the year 1816 had been ushered in the county as such was fully established, and Oswego captured the county seat, but had to share it with Pulaski. Twenty years had elapsed since the British flag had been lowered at Oswego, and the town had the advantage of population. It was the cold year, too, when there were frosts every month, even in July, and when crops were much of a failure. But even in a cold year, it was still apparent that water roads were the kindest to cargoes of any size.

With the Grand Erie Canal as a state project under the celebrated DeWitt Clinton, Oswego's ambitious legislators spurred the legislature to give it a canal, since

it was quite justly a port of considerable traffic. Moreover when the Erie Canal needed construction engineers the task was assigned to two Oswego county men, Benjamin Wright and James Geddes, amply proving the wisdom of Joseph Ellicott who had argued for local talent. There was much discussion concerning this system of inland waterways and Oswego quite naturally wanted the canal terminus but not for ten years (in 1826) was the Oswego branch begun. It was completed in 1828 at a cost of some \$525,000. Thus for another eighteen or twenty years the canal carried the load of commerce, the land roads being still uneven lanes of traffic that were characteristic of the times—full of mud holes and ascending into clouds of dust whenever a horse stirred up the dirt. For a few brief years the land road was eclipsed by the canal, and then enterprise and capital brought about innovations that raised the quality of the road and served in time to render the canal of secondary importance.

Oswego Pioneered Plank Road

As early as 1839 a company had been formed and a survey made for a railroad that would tie Oswego by means of rails of steel with Central New York, vie with canal and lake steamer and make Oswego an incomparable center of commerce. By October 1848, after many delays, the Oswego and Syracuse railroad had been constructed and trains ran down the west bank of the Oswego river with regularity. As the railroad was building its bed another idea came into fruition; it was that of building a plank road from Salina to Hastings, Oswego county, thus providing the first even surfaced road of the kind in the United States and the pattern for the plank road movement throughout the country. It was the highway's first major improvement since the days of the Romans, and a useful employment for the great quantity of lum-

* Syracuse's early name.

ber that grew everywhere. For many years thereafter the clatter of the board highway was a characteristic sound that literally boomed the countryside. Oswego County pioneered this innovation, and before the surfaces of the first experiment were scuffed there were new roads of plank connecting Rome and Oswego, and running through Scriba, New Haven, Mexico, Albion and Williamstown. Coach traffic now became unprecedented, and as many as 85 passengers, including the drivers of the five coaches scheduled, left Oswego in the morning for exhilarating rides. A new era of roads had begun, and with them came a new era of county development.

The American Pattern

With good roads came good homes, and with good homes came expanding business, cultural institutions, professional men, and a new prosperity. Oswego and its neighboring towns had emerged from the Indian path, the military trail, the mud road to the plank road, and this meant prosperity. In fact as roads made travel possible and remote places accessible, an era of speculation seized the whole country, and Oswego vied with Buffalo in extravagant land prices. It was a time of coach travel, when cities and towns were linked by stage, as well as by canal, and numerous taverns flourished along the way. It was the time of formulative prosperity when the American pattern was being indelibly fixed by its pioneer business houses, by its mansions, its great statesmen. It was the time of Daniel Webster, Henry Clay and the growing Lincoln.

Influence Of Railroads

As population increased in this county business increased for its 62,198 people as of 1850. The steam road was flourishing, and its freight and passenger traffic seriously affected both plank roads and stage coach travel. The

railroad with its speed and ability to find its way almost anywhere over the land had begun to threaten the canal, but there was still enough support to make men believe that the canal was far more stable as an agency of heavy traffic than the railroad. The state continued to pour hundreds of thousands of dollars into canals, while private capital developed railroads, but in the end free and unsubsidized enterprise captured the business of haulage as well as passenger transportation. But even so, the Grand Erie Canal had its place in New York's history, and Oswego is still a port in the new barge system.

Changes In 150 Years

One century and a half has passed since the British flag came down from the tall pole of the fort that commanded Oswego harbor and threatened the sovereignty of the new nation behind it. In that span of time the continent of America has been transformed from a land of Indian trails to one where almost every route that can be traveled has wide, smooth roads of concrete or macadam. Oswego city and county have lived to witness this change from forest path to matchless lanes of traffic. Because of the urge to build roads of cement and steel, over which the steam engine and automobile may travel, business has grown and risen to heights of which the past could not dream. From the little march of ambitions feet the pageant has grown in numbers and size, and we may note the transforming changes that came as men and women marched on into this new age. They came by roads, and as roads improved the wilderness went down and the land blossomed with progress—material progress, and we have entered a new and bewildering state of existence.

Wilderness Of Worries

Another kind of wilderness has

grown up, and paths in this new world are primitive again. Our material progress has far outstripped our moral capacity as we have allowed it to be developed. It took faith to build as we have built, faith in the future of this republic and its people. It was a faith that was great enough literally to remove mountains by material means. But that type of faith has grown into a danger so great that humanity shudders at its import, for in seeking the riddle of the atom and nuclear fission, we have found the means, not only to remove the mountain, but to destroy civilization and humanity. A wilderness of worries, of new and unpredictable circumstances has developed which our confused thinking cannot penetrate. The paths are winding, mirey and inadequate; there is no plank road to peace, no concrete highway to one world. Our moral invention did not keep pace with our material progress, and we stand appalled by our inadequacy.

World's Herculean Task

I cannot help but think that if history has any lesson for us in this sequicentennial, it points out

the grim necessity of a faith that will remove the mountain that stands in the way of the brotherhood of man. All nations in this year of 1946 stand halted at the foot of that menacing barrier, and every nation, not excepting our own, hesitates to acknowledge its character, but all the long roads from man's beginning end here, and there is no way around that will not mean new and terrible wars. The mountain must vanish through the application of a faith that in the aggregate is as great as all the faith that mankind has put in material advancement—and the sacrifice in pride, and wealth and prestige must be as great. It is a terrible alternative to extinction, and the task is herculean.

The decision and the outcome will be conditioned by men and women such as we are. We meet to celebrate a great freedom, freedom and a period of progress greater than all that went before. God grant that our 200th anniversary may find that the hand of history has shown that we of America, we of Oswego—had faith great enough to face the mountain and remove it.



Historical Sketch of Oswego

(Paper Prepared in 1896 by George Tisdale Clark, Charter Member of Oswego Historical Society, and Read at Fort Ontario July 15 of That Year as a Part of the Centennial Observance of Evacuation Day by the Citizens of Oswego. This Paper was Re-read July 15, 1946, by Dr. Charles F. Wells of Oswego State Teachers College on the Occasion of the 150th Anniversary Celebration of Evacuation Day Sponsored by Oswego Historical Society.)

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

The territory of Oswego County was originally, without doubt, a possession of that celebrated confederacy of the natives of this continent, the Iroquois or Six Nations. Morgan in his "League of the Iroquois" asserts that three of the nations laid claim to parts of the territory now constituting Oswego County—the Cayugas on the west, the Oneidas on the east, and the Onondagas between. It appears that no tribe held its seat or even any considerable village in Oswego County. It seems to have been a happy hunting ground, and the frontier protection between hostile races of Indians occupying Canada on one side and the present territory of New York on the other. From the Iroquois the locality derives its name, Osh-wah-kee, Os-wa-go, thence Oswego, meaning "the flowing out of the waters"—the waters of the Os-

wego. This river pours into Lake Ontario, where now is the site of the City of Oswego, the waters of the lakes of Western and Central New York—Canandaigua, Seneca, Cayuga, Skaneateles, Owasco, Onondaga, and Oneida, lying in the heart of the land of the Iroquois.

As early as 1615, five years before the landing of the Pilgrims of the "Mayflower," Samuel de Champlain, the great discoverer and soldier, passed across the territory of Oswego County against this powerful band of aborigines. Here also came the French Jesuit fathers from Montreal and Quebec, Poncet, Le Moyne, Chaumont, Dablon, and others, proselyting among the heathen of this wilderness. In 1644 the English succeeded to the Dutch proprietorship of New York, and the long contest between the French and English for the supremacy and for the fealty of the Indians began. In 1684 M. Le Febvre de la Barre, the French Governor-General of Canada, led a band of white men onto Oswego territory. Their mission was to induce the Indians to reject the English and form an alliance with the French. Louis de Bonade, the famous Count Frontenac, making this locality his base of operations, sent forth armies to compel their submission. Neither policy succeeded, and the Six Nations made alliance with the ancient foes of the French.

The existence of the Oswego River in this locality and the water communication obtained in every direction—with the far west by Lake Ontario, with the Valley of the St. Lawrence River and the French possessions on the north and east, with the heart of the Iroquois country, and with Albany,

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

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

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

John and Nicholas Roosevelt, of

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

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

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

So generally important and so distinct is the history of the locality in Oswego County, now the site of the City of Oswego, that it seems to demand distinct consideration. Space allows only a brief rehearsal of its career.

As early as 1722, William Burnet, Provincial Governor of New York, hardly less distinguished as the son of the celebrated prelate, author of "Burnett's History of His Own Times," built a trading-house at Oswego. The following year fifty-seven canoes went from Oswego to Albany with seven hundred and thirty-eight packs of beaver and deer skins. The French post at Niagara and the later one at Toronto in vain essayed to intercept this trade. The Abbe Piquet, a Jesuit priest and chron-

icler, writes in his diary: "Oswego not only spoils our trade but puts the English into communication with a vast number of our Indians, far and near. It is true that they like our brandy better than English rum; but they prefer English goods to ours, and can buy for two beaver skins at Oswego a better silver bracelet than we sell at Niagara for ten."

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

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

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

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

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

Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts, first commander-in-chief of the British forces in America, regarded Oswego as more important than any post, and to it he first gave his attention. By his orders, Colonel Mercer constructed, in October, 1755, Fort Ontario, very nearly, if not precisely, on the site of the fort of that name now existing. It was a substantial fortification, one hundred and eighty feet on each side, built of pickets eighteen inches in diameter, rising nine feet from the ground, and surrounded by a ditch eighteen feet wide by eight feet deep. A third and inferior fortification, known as "Oswego New Fort," or Fort George," he also erected on the high ground of the west bank, on what is now the southwest corner of VanBuren and Montcalm streets, and where is now the residence of Hon. Edwin Allen. It was one hundred and seventy feet on each side, with ramparts of earth and stone twenty feet thick and twelve feet high, encompassed with a ditch fourteen feet broad and ten feet deep.

The French and Indian war was formally declared in May, 1756. On July 3d of that year the command of Colonel Bradstreet, returning to Albany from Oswego, where he had been with stores and reinforcements for the garrison, was waylaid near Minetto, about four miles up the river, by French and Indians under De Villiers. Brad-

street withdrew his men, about two hundred and fifty in number, to Battle Island, repulsed the enemy after a sanguinary fight, and, crossing to the mainland, finally put them to flight.

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

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

Montreal and Quebec and hung like votive offerings in their cathedrals.

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

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

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

The forts being demolished, Oswego was suffered by the French to slip back to the English. In August, 1758, General Bradstreet,

*Montcalm's landing place was in Baldwin's Bay, a short distance east of the present St. Paul's cemetery.

with Major-General Schuyler and three thousand men, crossed from Oswego in batteaux, whaleboats, and a small schooner, and took Fort Frontenac, now Kingston, from the French—a disheartening loss. July 1, 1759, General Prideaux, with two thousand regulars and Sir William Johnson, with one thousand Indians from his seat on the Mohawk, proceeding from Oswego, captured Fort Niagara after a long siege. While they were gone the Chevalier de la Corne attempted in vain to retake Oswego, then guarded by six hundred provincials under General Haldimand.

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

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

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

In the summer of 1766, Pontiac, the great Ottawa chieftain, who had captured all but three of the

western posts, and for years defied his enemies, at length submitting, journeyed to a great council fire at Oswego from his seat in the West, to meet the English and the Iroquois, with Sir William Johnson at their head. The pipe of peace passed around, and Pontiac and his dusky followers voyaged homeward on the lake, each with a medal bearing this inscription: "A pledge of peace and friendship with Great Britain, confirmed in 1766."

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

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

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

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

Thus it has been attempted to outline the important part played by Oswego in the great drama of the continent. It fell to her because of her location; by reason of that it was as inevitable as are

any human events. Thereafter, until the War of 1812, she was a passive quantity in the controversies and parleys that arose over the terms of peace of 1783, to finally subside in the evacuation by the British in 1796.

Oswego was not evacuated by the English until July 14th of that year. Together with the frontier posts of Point au Fer, Dutchman's Point, Ogdensburg, Niagara, Erie, Sandusky, Mackinac and Detroit, the post of Oswego was retained by the British for twenty years after the colonies had declared their independence, and for thirteen years after articles of peace were signed. The occasion of this interesting anomaly, which has been the subject of no little historical research and controversy, is probably as follows: The treaty of 1783 provided that private debts on each side should be paid, and that Congress should recommend the State Legislatures to restore estates confiscated from British citizens and their American sympathizers. The debts referred to were for the most part obligations incurred to English merchants for goods sold prior to the commencement of the war.

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

*Fort Ontario was rebuilt during the summer of 1782 under orders of Governor Haldimand of Canada and regarrisoned in the fall of that year.

**Captain John, Willett's guide, an Oneida Indian, friendly to the Revolutionary cause, followed the imprints of a snowshoe party in the snow when these left the ice of the river over which Willett's men were advancing near the present hamlet of Minetto, under the cover of darkness, believing that the party were headed for Fort Ontario. However, the imprints led gradually away from the river to the east and away from Fort Ontario. When the error had been discovered and Willett's men changed their direction, daylight was breaking as they reached the summit of Oak Hill, now included in Oswego City limits. Their presence being detected, Willett was under the necessity of ordering an immediate withdrawal as Washington's orders to him were specific that he should not attack the fort unless he could surprise the garrison which was sufficiently strong to repel a force of Willett's strength if they were forewarned of the attack.

***The original minutely detailed instructions to Colonel Willett in Washington's own handwriting throughout, and consisting of four letters, two of which are of several pages each, are now (1896) in the collection of the Vice-President of this Society. Mr. Theodore Irwin.

*Extant records prove that the correct date for the evacuation was July 15, 1796.

ferment. They vented their wrath by seizing batteaux of goods in charge of the Johnsons, the ancient allies of the British, at Three Rivers, on the Oswego.

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

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

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

These and other poignant hos-

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

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

He sailed on the 12th of May, 1794. While he was upon the sea, affairs at home were rapidly approaching war. Three companies of a British regiment invaded what is now Northern Ohio to establish Fort Miami there, and in a message to Congress Washington suggests the propriety of preparing for the dread event. But the celebrated treaty known by the name of its negotiator, signed in London on the 19th of November, 1794, averted a catastrophe. By its terms the United States undertook to compensate British creditors. British troops were to withdraw from all territories of the United States on June 1, 1796. On June 24, 1795, the treaty was

ratified, and on August 15th Washington signed it. The occasion for the delay of the surrender of Oswego and the other frontier posts after June 1, 1796, the date stipulated for their delivery, arose from the failure of Congress to pass the appropriation necessary to carry their transfer into effect.

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

There is slight record of the circumstances of the transfer. Like many significant events in history, it transpired in quietness and simplicity. One eye witness of the event says that the British garrison marched out and gave possession to the American troops, who marched in with their field pieces, planted the standard of the United States on the ramparts of the fort, and fired a salute of 15 cannon. He further declares that the British officers behaved with great politeness.

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

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

ated the centennial of the close of England's rule over territory of the United States.

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

Thus briefly indicated is the history of Oswego. It partakes of the history of two continents; it recounts the strange intermingling of savage and civilized men in the wilderness of the new world.

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

G. T. C.

Oswego, N. Y., 1897.

*Fort Ontario was taken by the invaders, but it did not surrender, although the British and Canadians hauled down its flag. Col. Mitchell and the regiment of artillerymen who had been the backbone of the defense, had gone outside the walls of the fort in an effort to repel the British who had landed in small boats and were advancing from the East. Unsuccessful in this aim, Mitchell slowly withdrew his men, with their faces still to the enemy, falling back towards Fulton to protect the naval supplies, which had occasioned the British attack, and which had been halted there. He was successful in this purpose although the British pursued him as far as Black Creek where they turned back.

** Fort Ontario was regarrisoned December 20, 1898.

The Story of Fort Ontario Since 1896

(Paper Read by Dr. John W. O'Connor of Oswego before Oswego County Historical Society Assembled at VanBuren Inn, Volney Town, July 15, 1946, to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Evacuation of Fort Ontario by the British.)

John W. O'Connor, deputy collector of customs in charge of the Oswego Customs House, gave one of the papers at the Oswego County Historical Society's celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Evacuation by the British of Fort Ontario carried out at the former Van Buren Inn in the Town of Volney on the afternoon of July 15, 1946. Dr. O'Connor's paper dealt principally with that portion of the history of Fort Ontario which has transpired since 1896 when the centennial observance of "Evacuation Day" was held with the Historical Society playing an important part in connection with that locally famous celebration. The period has witnessed a series of significant changes that have taken place at Fort Ontario and Dr. O'Connor's summarization of these will be found of much interest by historians. The text of his paper follows:

Activity Succeeded By Lethargy

From the earliest days of colonization, the foreign policy on this continent has been definitely reflected in the activities of Fort Ontario. In its earlier days, of course, before the process of war became so highly mechanized, its unique position as the gateway to the West, and its strategic location throughout the intermittent clashes between the French and the English, gave it an importance which has been somewhat lost in later years. But through nearly two hundred years of existence, it has followed a pattern of wartime activity and peacetime lethargy.

In order to enlarge upon this pattern, it is necessary to outline a brief resume of its early history: Fort Ontario was built in

1755 upon orders from General Shirley to Colonel Mercer. Fort Oswego on the west side of the river had been in existence since 1727, but because of the imminence of the French and Indian War, it was felt necessary to provide a further stronghold on the East river bank. The original fort was about 800 feet in circumference. It was made of square-cut logs from 20 to 30 inches thick, the wall being 14 feet high, and with a deep ditch at its foot of the same width. In May of the following year (1756), war was declared and Oswego was called upon to give protection to the fur traders and neighboring settlers fleeing from Indian outrages. Although the fort had been strongly garrisoned under command of Colonel Mercer against this war, the value of holding this important post was not clearly realized by the British high command until too late, and it was lost through the mismanagement of the English authorities.

After an artillery battle in August 1756, the able French General, Montcalm, captured both Fort Ontario on the east bank and Forts Oswego and George on the West side of the Oswego, together with 1700 prisoners. Colonel Mercer was killed. To allay the suspicions of the Indians that the French might be planning on trying to hold Oswego permanently, Montcalm razed the forts and left Oswego to solitude.

Fort Ontario was rebuilt in 1759 by British troops under the command of Gen. John Bradstreet. Seven years later, in 1766, Sir William Johnson met with the great Ottawa chieftan, Pontiac, around the Oswego council fire and ratified a solemn pledge

of fidelity to the English king. During the period prior to the Revolution Fort Ontario became again a training post for British regiments. The list of names on the headstones in the Old Fort cemetery indicate that here, in this humble outpost, some of the sons of the foremost families in England, following the traditions of the Empire, received their military training at Fort Ontario.

The Revolutionary Period

In June, 1775, the Tory leader, Guy Johnson, nephew of Sir William Johnson, assembled a large party of Tories and Mohawk Indians at Fort Ontario with other Iroquois in an effort to enlist their aid on the side of England for the forthcoming struggle. At a similar meeting in July 1777 at Fort Ontario plans were formulated to encourage these tribes to join St. Leger's expedition toward Albany, in support of Burgoyne's advance by way of Lake Champlain. The last military movement of the Revolution was directed against Oswego. Conscious of its importance to the British in their relations with the Indians, Washington sent Colonel Marinus Willett, with a force of five hundred men, to surprise and capture Fort Ontario. News that terms of peace had already been agreed upon in Europe had not yet been received when Willett's expedition set out from Ft. Schuyler on February 8, 1783. When they reached Oswego, they found the British garrison prepared and ready, and in accordance with Washington's order, retreated without an attack as Willett's force was not sufficiently strong to carry the fort by storm.

One of Last Forts Evacuated

Fort Ontario was one of the last posts on the frontier to be surrendered by England after the Revolution. Owing to various contentions by the British which were not settled until the ratification of the Jay treaty, it was

held until July 15, 1796. On that day, the English garrison under Colonel Fothergill and Captain Clark evacuated the Fort, and the American forces, led by Captain Elmer, marched in and raised the Stars and Stripes over the old fortifications.

From then until the war of 1812, Fort Ontario was peacefully garrisoned, while Oswego and the surrounding territory gradually grew in population and importance. In the Spring of 1814, the British made several attempts to capture the fort. On May 6th, after a naval bombardment of three hours, followed by land attacks, it was forced to capitulate to Sir James Yeo. The British had received information that a large supply of Naval Stores for use of the new ships being built at Sacket's Harbor, was being held in Oswego. The Americans, however, had anticipated the attack, and Lieutenant M. T. Woolsey, in charge of the stores at Oswego had transported them in nineteen boats to Oswego Falls and safety. The English made no attempt to retain Fort Ontario, and quickly withdrew after doing what damage they could to the fort. Woolsey later got the supplies through to Sacket's Harbor.

Grant And Jackson At Fort

Again the country settled down to its peacetime, commercial activities, and the Fort remained empty, blackened and ruined until 1839, when Congress authorized the first of several appropriations for its renovation. By 1844, it had been completely rebuilt, and during the Mexican War, was a training post for the regular army. There are only fragmentary records to show the type of army training carried on at Fort Ontario or the identity of its personnel during the following years. There are however, two items of interest which might be mentioned: On August 1, 1850, one of the officers at court-martial in Fort Ontario was Brevet Major T. J. Jackson, later

to become famous as "Stonewall" Jackson, the Confederate General. At another court-martial held in Fort Ontario on September 8, 1851, one of the officers was Brevet Captain U. S. Grant, later commander of all the forces of the Union.

Perhaps the Fort's highest point of activity was reached during the Civil War, when thousands of "Father Abraham's" Boys in Blue were hurriedly trained and hastily commissioned to stem the rising tide of the Confederacy. But again, when the war was over, the Fort settled back into a one company garrison, and thus remained until 1899. And a peaceful, sleepy garrison it was on July 15, 1896 when Oswego celebrated the centennial of the surrender of Fort Ontario, and the close of England's rule over the territory of the United States, so much so that a regiment of regulars had to be sent to the fort for the occasion to permit a respectable showing of regulars to participate in the parade.

The Spanish War Period

When the battleship Maine was sunk in the Spring of 1898, the entire nation was aroused to military fervor against Spain. Fort Ontario had been lightly garrisoned for some years, and when as a result of the trouble with Spain, Congress seemed inclined to appropriate funds for the expansion of the military program, a great effort was made by several leading citizens of Oswego to have the facilities at the Fort enlarged. General Merritt, commanding officer of the Department of the East was very much in favor of this move, and made every effort to establish two extra companies at the Fort. The delayed Army bill was finally passed, and in September, 1898, General Nelson A. Miles issued an order transferring four companies of the Thirteenth Infantry to the Fort. Because of the fact that only 100 men could be accommodated in the Barracks, it

became necessary for the remainder to encamp on the Parade Ground. The men were put through a severe course of training before being transported to Cuba.

When in 1898 the 9th U. S. Infantry, garrisoning Fort Ontario was ordered to the Philippines, about 15 Oswego men left with it. Some of them later lost their lives in helping to put down the Filipino insurrections. These men later saw service in China during the Boxer uprising. Their colonel, Liscum, was killed enroute with his command from Tientsien to Peking, China.

During the next few months, several other regiments came to the Fort as replacements for those who were being sent overseas almost daily. On April 8, 1899, however, the War Department rescinded its order providing for training at Fort Ontario, making no explanation, and the Fort was again reduced to a caretaker basis. All supplies were transferred to Madison Barracks.

Root Brought Action

During the next several years the Fort was virtually abandoned. The Parade Ground was used by the towns people as a baseball diamond, and the historic old buildings gradually deteriorated. In the Spring of 1903, the War Department was again petitioned to regarrison the fort, and on June 12th, Elihu Root, then Secretary of War, paid an official visit to Oswego to inspect the Fort. His recommendation resulted in the appropriation by Congress of \$500,000 for the rebuilding and constructing of a modern four company post. The old earth embankments were torn away, but the stone wall and the interior of the fort were preserved. The new works were completed in September, 1905, and in the same month, a company of the Twenty-third Infantry from Sacket's Harbor was

quartered in the modern barracks.

The Fort in the Movies

During the years of peace that followed, the Fort continued to be active. Between three and four hundred men were stationed there at all times. It was an easy life, for the most part. No pressing responsibilities. Most of their needs were provided by the Government. Even their work did not entail much hardship. Occasionally some film company would come to Oswego to use the Fort as a historical background. In 1914, Charles Mack brought a company of 35 to the fort to make a picture. In 1915 a company with Pearl White and Lionel Barrymore as the leads were sent here by the Pathe Film Company to make a picture built around a story of the Underground Railroad Movement prior to the Civil War, in which Oswego had taken so prominent a part.

Hospital Center In 1917

Towards the end of this period, in 1914, the first rumblings of world trouble were heard, and the effect was mirrored in the increased military activity at the Fort. Major W. H. Bertch was in command, and in April, 1914 had received orders to prepare his men for possible transfer to the Mexican Border. During the following year an intensive training program was instituted, including maneuvers in the Adirondack mountains. However, the Mexican trouble was temporarily adjusted, and it was not until 1916 that the troops began to march. In August of that year, all Army reserves were called to Fort Ontario to register. They were then put through a refresher course of training and transferred to the Mexican Border. For some months, a small group left Oswego every Sunday evening.

When the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, the War Department, after a series of inspections, determined to use Fort Ontario as a

Medical Center and Hospital. Most of the regular troops were transferred to Camp Dix or Madison Barracks, and Captain A. R. Edwards, with a staff of 75 men took over the Hospital. Numerous improvements to the facilities were made, new equipment installed, and under Captain Edwards' guidance the old fort gradually took on the new identity of a base hospital.

Coast Artillery Withdrawn

In July, 1917, the first group of recruits, 75 in number, were installed in the fort, and were put through an intensive training course in field hospital work. A large staff of medical officers was in charge of these recruits, and by August of the same year, there were more than 400 recruits of the Army Medical Corps in training here. With the departure in August, 1917, of the 4th Company of the Coast Artillery, the Fort passed completely into the hands of the Medical Corps, with the exception of a small group retained by the Quartermaster's Corps.

As more and more recruits came, the facilities at the Fort became dangerously overcrowded. Since the fort was built to accommodate not more than 400 men, it became necessary to put up tents and temporary barracks when the ranks had swelled to 1,000. Congress appropriated \$200,000 for the purpose of erecting new buildings. With the arrival of an Army Nurse Unit in September, the need for more private, modern facilities became paramount. On September 5th, the first patients for the Hospital arrived from Syracuse. Until the capacity of 250 beds could be filled, the patients were transferred here as quickly as possible.

All during the first World War, and for some years thereafter, the Fort continued to be used as a base Hospital. It had been completely modernized, and was considered by competent authorities to be one of the best-equipped

hospitals of its kind. After the war, however, the Veteran's Administration authorized the building of Veteran's Hospitals throughout the country, and gradually the population of the Fort was depleted.

National Guard Trained Here

In 1921, the Fort was returned to an infantry post status, and thus it remained for nearly 20 years. During much of this period, a single battalion of the 28th Infantry was stationed here. Many of the post's successive commanders later became famous during the recent war. During this period, the Fort was utilized summers as a training post for several National Guard Regiments while the "regulars" were receiving special training at the Stony Point Rifle Range or at Camp Perry in Ohio. Every summer, several of these Guard units would be successively stationed here for their two weeks' encampment period. While most of these came from New York City, guard regiments from as far away as Chicago, Ill., came here for training during this period.

Fort Ontario was during the late 1930s also considered a splendid training post for winter maneuvers. When the Russian-Finnish War showed the value of ski training and winter fighting, Brigadier-General Philipson, then commander of all the forts in the eastern area, set up a schedule of winter training at Pine Camp and at Fort Ontario. Using snowshoes and skis, the men made forced marches through the deep snow, carrying full equipment for several days' existence. They carried their own rations and slept in sleeping bags without shelter. This type of training, strenuous as it was, was amply justified a few years later in the high mountain passes of Italy and the snow covered forests of Germany.

Short Commanded Here

As a junior officer, Major Gen-

eral Walter Short was stationed here. He later returned as brigade commander after Fort Ontario had been made a brigade headquarters and left Oswego for Hawaii where he remained in command until relieved from duty following the Pearl Harbor tragedy.

Fort Ontario continued as the headquarters of the 1st brigade of the regular army for nearly a decade following its designation in 1933 as brigade headquarters.

Fort Enlarged In 1940

During this period a Headquarters Company was at all times stationed at Fort Ontario in addition to the regular garrison. The garrison units, which had also been increased in size and number during this period, were commanded by the post commander and not by the general officers who were assigned to the brigade command. General Charles D. Roberts was assigned in 1933 as brigade commander at Fort Ontario, being transferred here from Madison Barracks. He was successively succeeded in command by General Irving J. Phillipson, who later was in command at Governor's Island during the early part of World War II and by General W. T. Short.

About this time a "flight strip" was projected to serve as a take-off runway for planes aiding in the anti-aircraft training program at the fort. Oswego County Board of Supervisors procured options on the purchase of the lands needed in the vicinity of South Scriba and appropriated \$25,000 to buy the site for the runway should the program be approved by the War Department. As the Department failed to approve the program for the enlargement of Fort Ontario's facilities and program the "strip" was never purchased or developed and the funds appropriated were later used in the development of airports at Fulton and Pulaski.

Lt. Col. George A. Herbst, Col. John J. Fulmer, Col. Ellery Farmer, and Col. Willis Shippam were successively detailed to command

the garrison at Fort Ontario between 1924 and 1944, the latter who had seen many years of active service in the Philippines, remaining in command at the post during the early part of World War II.

Shortly after the passage of the Selective Service Act of 1940, the War Department made a survey of the fort facilities in anticipation of its use as an induction center for new draftees. For some reason this plan was not adopted. In October, 1940, the War Department decided that because of its proximity to Lake Ontario, and other natural resources, Fort Ontario would be an ideal site for the establishment of an anti-aircraft artillery unit. Accommodations were extended to provide quarters for a full regiment of wartime strength, plus the necessary service and quartermaster details. New barracks* were built, existing buildings renovated and officers quarters modernized. Before the work was finally completed over a million dollars had been spent and Fort Ontario had facilities which could accommodate 3,000 men.

Colored Guardsmen Come

On January 15, 1941, 14 officers and 108 men, constituting an advance guard of the 369th regiment of the New York National Guard, colored troops from the Harlem section of New York City, and officers, arrived to make preparations for reception of the remainder of the command. On January 23rd, the rest of the regiment which was completely equipped, arrived in command of Colonel Chauncey Hooper. The training program which followed was intense and complete. It was designed to transform a shuffling mass of civilians into hardened, well-trained, experienced soldiers in as short a time as possible.

* In all about 60 new buildings of frame construction were built at this time. Besides barracks, mess halls and warehouses, a chapel, a fire department headquarters, a theater and other types of new buildings were built. The post hospital facilities were enlarged and reequipped.

Every day, long lines of troops were marched out of town, to Minetto, to Fulton, sometimes all the way to Pine Camp. In the meantime, anti-aircraft equipment was set up on the Parade Ground, as well as on the Johnson Farm, east of the Fort. The firing was done over Lake Ontario and an area extending along the southern shore of the lake was restricted to their use, and no boats were permitted in this zone.

An account of the colored troops and their activities here would make a story in itself. In spite of early fears to the contrary entertained by some Oswego residents, these troops conducted themselves in a highly exemplary fashion. Cut off as they were from association with people of their own race, because up to that time, Oswego had practically no Negro population, they nevertheless, maintained a system of politeness, even of gallantry in their outside contacts. While the Fort itself remained under the command of Colonel Willis Shippam, a regular army officer of wide experience and discretion who had come here several years before after a long period of service in the Philippines as an artillery officer, the troops themselves were commanded by Colonel Hooper, who in every way was of the highest type of Army officer. When the 369th Regiment was transferred to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, on September 4, 1941, for further training they took with them the sincere good wishes of the community. This regiment later served with great distinction on the Italian front.

Governors Inspect Troops

Governor Herbert H. Lehman came to Fort Ontario to inspect the Fort while Col. Hoover's men were here. He reviewed the regiment and was afterwards the guest of Col. Hoover and his officers at a dinner at the Hotel Pontiac, at which a number of

Oswego business men and civic leaders were also Col. Hoover's guests.

The 198th Anti-Aircraft Regiment came here from Camp Edwards to replace the colored troops. This regiment had originally been a Delaware National Guard organization and shortly after its arrival here, its strength was augmented to 74 officers and 1,800 men. During their training period here, the city was honored by a visit from Walter W. Bacon, Governor of Delaware, who had come to inspect the troops. The 198th received the same type of training as their predecessors, and remained here several months.

Military Police Training

After their departure, the anti-aircraft equipment was removed to various coastal areas, since by that time, the War Department had decided that such facilities should be maintained closer to possible points of attack. Once again the Fort changed its identity. It now became a training center for Military Police. This group was made up, almost entirely, of new recruits. Most of the personnel was highly educated, many of them professional men who had been drafted. Their course of training was rather brief, and there were constant changes as new recruits arrived to replace those transferred to other areas. The military police training program was finally completed. Many of those who had trained here were transferred to various colleges for further educational training in special service activities. Others were transferred directly to the distant points, where the American Army was already established.

With the departure of the Military Police, the question of what was to be done about the Fort was once again raised. Since before the war, there had been a Quartermaster's detail, as well as the 1212th Service Battalion stationed there. The personnel of these outfits remained constant,

and for awhile it seemed as if no other training would be provided here. The problem was settled by an unusual decision of the War Department. Almost from the first application of the Selective Service Act, it had been discovered that a fairly constant percentage of young American men were completely illiterate. Others had received only sporadic education. There were also in the country, thousands of men who came within the purview of the Act, but who had been born and educated in other countries, whose education, consequently, was almost completely foreign so that many of these men could not even speak or understand English. At first these selectees had been rejected and given a "4F" classification. However, as the demand for more and more soldiers was raised, the long arm of the draft law probed deeper and deeper into American community and family life, and not wishing to unduly upset the delicate balance between industry and the actual demands of the military, these rejects were called back. The War Department set up two training centers for these men, one of which was Fort Ontario.

Special Training Provided

Professional educators were transferred from other branches of the services and given a free hand in the establishment of the equivalent of elementary schools here. The results were tremendously successful. Using the most modern methods of education, those who were illiterate were put through such an intense program of training that after a residence of only a few months, they had received the equivalent of a fourth grade education. They came here unable to read or write. Some of them hadn't even the slightest knowledge of arithmetic. Many of them were even unable to speak English. Before they left, they were able to read and write, to solve simple arithmetical problems, and most im-

portant, to understand and obey specific army orders and instructions. They were transferred to various army units, and as a result of their training here, will become more useful citizens now that they have returned to civilian life.

Training Ceases

The completion of this program March 15, 1944, when the special training officers were transferred to Pine Camp and the departure of these rehabilitated troops marked the end of Fort Ontario as a strictly military post at least for the time being. During the summer of 1944, the Fort was abandoned except for the presence of a small caretaker force. Even the Quartermaster's Corps and the 1212th Service Unit had been shipped out.

During the period when large groups of troops had been stationed here, it was natural that local business would expand. When it was finally learned that no more troops were to be stationed here, the business men of the city made every effort to keep the post alive. The Oswego Chamber of Commerce appointed a special committee to work for that end.

In the meantime, President F. D. Roosevelt had conceived the idea of bringing a token group of selected European refugees to this country. It is said that he was mulling over the matter in his mind when a brief of the Chamber of Commerce Committee reached the White House desk and suggested to the president's mind Fort Ontario for use as a refugee shelter. President Roosevelt promised the refugees shelter at Fort Ontario, and directed the Army in Italy to select a group of 1,000 for immediate immigration. He acted on his own responsibility and without seeking the approval of Congress.

Arrival Of Refugees

On August 1, 1944, the Refu-

gees arrived. It was a sorry sight that early morning when they stepped off the train for their first glimpse of American freedom and hospitality. From the four corners of Europe, out of the towns with unpronounceable names, across the rivers and through the forests, fleeing, hiding, fleeing again with Tyranny always a short step behind, leaving a few more of their worldly possessions and a great deal more of their courage behind at every point at which they were forced to stop, they had converged on Rome, but their true destination was America. They wanted freedom, these people. They had suffered untold hardships for it. They had lived on somehow when even hope was gone. Some of their companions had died for it. Now America wanted them, had thrown open its arms to receive them. They had arrived. They were Free. This was what we saw in their eyes that morning, deep down in their eyes behind that last, lingering, furtive glance of fear. And the dirt-encrusted faces were smiling, and bedraggled garments hung jauntily from shoulders thrown back for the first time in years, and in their home-made sandals or their bare feet, they stepped out gladly, eagerly into the land of unlimited opportunity. They had come to Fort Ontario directly from the ship on special trains, without stopping at New York, and an augmented force of Customs officers was on hand to examine and segregate their baggage. Whatever money or securities they had been able to bring with them, whatever articles of value they had been able to salvage were retained by the Government. They were permitted to keep their clothing and other articles of no intrinsic value.

Captain Korn of the Army had been responsible for their safe arrival at Fort Ontario, traveling with them from Europe. The Army had made preparations of their quarters. But, from the moment they arrived, they were,

upon orders of the President under the jurisdiction of the War Relocation Authority, a branch of the Department of the Interior. During the first few days after their arrival they were registered, given complete physical examinations and assigned quarters. Most of them were housed in the wooden barracks that had been newly erected at the beginning of the war. Each individual was assigned the equivalent of one room. Family groups were kept together and the rooms were adequately, although modestly, furnished. They were not permitted to leave the Fort during the first month, and after that for a time only with permission. After Christmas they were permitted to leave the fort during certain hours to shop. Eventually all restrictions as to visits to Oswego were removed except that the refugees had to be back at the fort by 11:30 P. M. and they had to sign a register when they checked out or in.

Prior to their arrival, the War Relocation Authority, under the direction of Mr. Joseph C. Smart, appointed as the first director of the Shelter, had set up complete fire, police and maintenance authorities. A community store was established in the quarters formerly occupied by the Army Post Exchange. Plenty of food was provided which the shelter members prepared for themselves in community kitchens.

Education For Refugee Children

Shortly after the refugees arrived, an Oswego Advisory Council, made up of civic leaders in Oswego, was formed to meet with officials of the War Relocation Authority for the purpose of discussing the immediate problems of recreation, education, religion and social adaptation. This council, in time became very actively identified with the activities at the Shelter.* Since there were more than two hundred children in the group, a first problem was that of educa-

tion. It was solved by throwing open the public schools of Oswego to them. They were, for the most part, good students, and soon took on a veneer of Americanization. A system of adult education was later set up at the Fort under the auspices of twelve Oswego teachers. The emphasis, of course, was on the study of the English language, and the results were very satisfactory.

In the meantime, a series of recreational programs were being established. Among the residents of the Shelter were several who had been professional entertainers in Europe. Scene designers, actors, singers, musicians and stage directors joined together with various entertainment groups in Oswego. An orchestra was formed, singers and other concert musicians were invited to appear before many civic and fraternal groups. There was a weekly vaudeville show, and several plays were given. Many of these plays were translated into English before production and other were given in the native language of the group. Since ninety percent of the group were of the Jewish faith, most of their religious needs were adequately taken care of by various Jewish organizations throughout the country. The others attended religious services in the churches of Oswego. For some time prior to their departure, a representa-

* The Advisory Council played an active part in effecting the final disposition of the problem much mooted in Oswego and elsewhere as to whether the Shelter Refugees should be deported to Europe following the termination of the war, or if those otherwise qualified for admission to the United States as immigrants should be permitted to remain in this country if the immigration quotas available to the respective countries from which they originally came would permit. The Advisory Council advocated the latter course. It framed a printed appeal addressed to the President, the Congress, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior and other government officials urging the latter course of action which was finally adopted. Several Oswegonians served on a national committee, later organized, to work for the adoption of the same solution.

tive of the Society of Friends was resident at the Fort. Throughout their stay, a series of lectures was given weekly. These lectures were prepared and given by representatives of various civic, industrial, political and commercial groups. They were designed to quickly familiarize the residents with the customs and social aspects of American life, and to hasten their adoption of American manners.

Causes of Dissatisfaction

The fact that many of the residents had relatives and friends in other parts of the country who were ready and anxious to take care of them, and whom the refugees were not even permitted to visit was the cause of some dissatisfaction. There was also a feeling in many quarters, abetted by certain periodicals, that these refugees were not being treated in the usual kindly American fashion. It is not the purpose of this paper to editorialize, but merely to report conditions. During the early part of their stay, they were grateful and entirely satisfied with conditions. But, as time ran on, with no definite, official decision as to their future status being announced, and especially after hostilities ceased in Europe, many of them felt the restrictions keenly. Efforts had been made from time to time to obtain an official statement from the Washington Administration as to whether they would be permitted to become legal residents of the country or be forced to return to their native lands. Experts and Congressional committees from one department or another came here from time to time, to take testimony, and inspect conditions. Finally, in February of this year, it was decided that those who wished to remain would be permitted to make legal entry into

the country from Canada, and during that month, through the cooperation of Canadian officials, groups were transported daily by buses from Fort Ontario to the Canadian border at Niagara Falls, Ont., there to receive visas entitling them to enter legally the United States as immigrants, unless they elected to go to other countries and some did.

With the departure in April of the last of the refugees, Fort Ontario was once more turned over to the War Department by the War Relocation Authority. The Fort, as a military post had outlived its usefulness. Similar posts throughout the country were being declared surplus by the War Department. The emphasis for future military training was no longer on small, scattered forts, but on huge military reservations. Consequently the military authorities welcomed the suggestion that it be turned over to New York State Housing Authority.

Veterans Occupy Buildings

Because the returning veterans were being given unprecedented opportunities to further their education, the enrollment at the Oswego State Teacher's College had greatly increased, and as a result, the housing problem in Oswego had become acute. Competent authorities thought that the shortage could be somewhat relieved by using and expanding the facilities at the Fort. Negotiations were entered into and an agreement reached between the City of Oswego, acting through its Industrial Commission and the State Housing Authority, for the use of the Fort buildings for providing additional housing for veterans and their families in Oswego.

Military Post Abandoned

On April 3, 1946, the flag was hauled down at Fort Ontario and the property formally turned over to the State. As this is written in

July of 1946, the work of transforming the historic old fort into a sort of real estate development is rapidly progressing.* The sound

of the morning gun or the thin, sharp blast of the bugle is no longer to be heard over the city. The old order passes.

* During 1946 nearly all of the new construction provided for the fort during World War II was razed while the permanent brick and stone structures of the former military post were reconstructed to provide housing units for 116 families. The State of New York paid for the alteration of the buildings and then

leased them to the City of Oswego for a period of five years. The city leases the units to the tenants and collects the rents, but most if not all the rental proceeds are to be paid over eventually to the State of New York to liquidate the cost of the reconstruction of the buildings.



Story of John Van Buren Mansion

(Paper Read Before Oswego County Historical Society July 15, 1946, at the Former VanBuren Inn in Volney by Miss Mabel Osborne of the Oswego Historical Society, Great Granddaughter of Builder.)

The story of the Van Buren Homestead, which yet stands on the East bank of the Oswego River about midway between Fulton and the hamlet of Seneca Hill, and is still occupied as a family dwelling so sturdily was it built nearly 150 years ago by John Van Buren and his five stalwart sons who were among the earliest settlers in Oswego County, was told by Miss Mabel Osborne of Fulton, a great granddaughter of John Van Buren, to members of the Oswego County Historical Society and their guests at the gathering held on the lawns of the old homestead in the Town of Volney on the afternoon of July 15, 1946, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the society. For nearly 90 years after its construction, the homestead was used by John Van Buren and some of his descendants as an inn maintained for the convenience of river men and later the "canalers" who succeeded them, and in the entertainment of river and canal travelers, but since the 1890s it has been used entirely as a private dwelling by the Myers family.

The expansion of the old Oswego Canal as a part of the New York State Barge Canal which started in the late 1890s only as a deepening and enlargement of the old canal, but ended about 1915 as almost an entirely new canal, closed the days of the old inn as such. In the 1890s the wharf at which canal boats used to tie up at the inn while their masters and crews went ashore to refresh themselves at the famed "Oak Spring," located at the foot of a giant oak which then stood in the front yard but a few feet south of the inn, or stopped for a change of horses at the canal stables maintained in connec-

tion with the inn for that purpose, was removed along with the large piles which had supported it, in connection with dredging operations conducted by the state. Thereafter there was no convenient means for "canalers" to utilize the facilities at the inn. For years afterwards, however, Miss Priscilla N. Myers, the present owner and occupant of the old mansion, recalls that the members of the household were accustomed to drive to Fulton to do their household shopping by traveling over the now abandoned canal tow path. At other times they traveled on the river by row boats which were tied up at a convenient point in Fulton while the shopping was being accomplished.

The text of Miss Osborne's paper follows:

The Van Buren Homestead

In 1796, just one hundred fifty years ago this spring, John Van Buren came to Oswego county with his wife and four sons, the youngest about a year old. He had left the home of his Dutch ancestors in Kinderhook about 1791 and had gone to Canada but for some reason he decided to join Major Lawrence Van Valkenburg who had settled here (Fulton) in 1792. (Mr. Van Valkenburg was a relative of John's first wife.)

John (who was then in his early thirties) spent the first winter in a cabin on the west side of the Oswego river near Indian Point. The next year he moved into the Bush house that stood nearer the lower falls of the Oswego River. Here, another son, David, was born in October 1798. A year or so later the family moved to the east side of the river and built a log cabin near Major Van Valkenburg's home. This was on a point of land opposite the north

end of Pathfinder Island. It was later known as "Orchard Lock."

At this time John's oldest son, Peter, was about seventeen years old. The other boys (children by his second wife) were John, aged seven; Jacob, five; Volkert, three; and David, slightly more than one year of age.

I often think of the courage and fortitude the young mother must have had to care for a family of young children and undergo the danger and hardship in this new country with its severe winters. However, she did not have the physical strength to endure the rigors of a pioneer life and she died soon after they moved to the new log cabin near Orchard Lock.

At this time other settlers began to arrive. Most of them came from Kinderhook or other sections near Albany. Quite a settlement grew up and Van Valkenburg's Tavern became a social center.

Older House Still Stands

Soon John Van Buren purchased a tract of land farther north opposite Battle Island. He erected there a small frame house in a clearing south of the spring near the site of the later inn. Here he and his motherless family of boys lived until the large brick house was completed. As soon as little David grew older he was left to do the housework while the other boys were busy with heavy work outside. This small frame house is still standing (on the premises of the former inn). It is the little cottage which stands a few feet behind the big house. It is still sound and true, and is now used as a tenant house. The framework is made of hewn timbers fastened together with pegs. The original windows with their shutters may be seen in each end of the house. The visitor will notice that the chimney and fireplace are now missing.

River Bank Changed

The river bank is today greatly changed; there is no evidence of the wharf—only the spring, once

guarded by a sturdy oak, remains. The piles which supported the wharf were removed by dredges at the time the old Oswego Canal was succeeded by the new and enlarged "Barge Canal."

We do not know just when this big house was started but it was soon after 1800. The bricks of which it is constructed were all made in a brickyard located just north of the house where a group of willow trees are now growing. The sandstone was quarried nearby and the timber was cut from John Van Buren's own land. Eight years were required to complete the house at a cost of \$5,000. Laborers were paid eight cents a day. (What would it cost today with the present price of labor?) The walls are sixteen inches thick. Many of the boards are three inches thick. The floor in the kitchen is made of half-logs smoothed on only one side.

Description of the "Big House"

I often wonder who planned the house. To me the arrangement is most interesting. Approaching from the river and entering the front door, one would notice the carved pillars and windows on each side. There was no porch in those first days, only wide steps with a seat on either side. The front door leads into a spacious hall. On either side of the hall is a large, square room with a fireplace. The room on the north was the parlor, while the south room was the barroom of the inn, which had also an outside door. Behind each of these rooms is a small bedroom. You will observe that the one on the north side, which was used by the family, has a built-in dresser. It is said the wide drawers were later used as beds for Jacob's children.

In the south bedroom can still be seen, the pegs on which clothing was hung. This room is smaller because a narrow hall extended from the barroom to the dining room. In this hall were stairways leading down to the

wine cellar and up to the ballroom on the second floor. Thus, the barroom and bedroom formed a unit that could be completely closed from the rest of the house. After Mr. Myers purchased the property the stairway was removed and the space made into a bathroom.

Dining and Ball Rooms

The halls and bedroom lead into a dining room that extends across the house. At the far side is a large fireplace and brick oven. Both fireplaces and oven open into the large chimney (nearly eight feet wide) that reaches from the cellar up through the roof. On the north and south sides of the dining room and kitchen is a porch twenty feet long. A trap-door in the floor of the north porch leads to the cellar. At some later date the west end of the south porch was enclosed to form a sun room and the east end of the north porch, next to the kitchen, formed a pantry. From the kitchen a back stairway leads to low rooms over the kitchen and dining room. These were probably used as bedrooms.

The stairway in the main hall led to the ballroom which extended across the entire front of the house. There was a fireplace at each end. Behind the ballroom, at each side of the hall, was a small dressing room. The ticket office was at the head of the stairs. In the attic above the ballroom were two large demijohns or bottles placed so that the large open neck of each reached through the ceiling into the ball room below. These served as resonators to intensify the sound of the music. Thus, they were a forerunner of our present amplifying system. Can't you hear the fiddlers calling off the figures for the square dances? This ballroom was used for parties until the early nineties but has now been remodeled to form bedrooms.

Life Along River

At first when John Van Buren settled here, there were no roads.

Dense forests covered the land. Therefore, the Oswego River was the main artery of travel and transportation between Oswego, Salt Point (Syracuse), Rome and the east. Goods were transported in flat-bottomed boats pushed by means of long poles or with oars. When the falls were reached at what is now Fulton, the boats were unloaded and the cargo carried by man power, or later in wagons drawn by horses to the next level, where it was again placed in other boats and moved on down the river to Oswego. Logs were floated downstream in rafts. Men often carried bags of corn and other crops on their backs along the trail through the forest to places up or down the river.

The important occupations in the newly settled community were farming, lumbering, trapping and fishing. Thus, the young men, as a result of their vigorous exercise in clearing the land and propelling the boats and rafts on the river, developed strong, lean, healthy bodies. Although the Indians were numerous, they were not especially troublesome but they stole and demanded much food. Bears, wolves and other wild animals were a constant menace.

Canal Increased Activity

John Van Buren's new home became the center of another little community. River boatmen visited the tavern and later, as roads were constructed and the canal was opened in 1828, the tavern did a thriving business. Barns were erected near the brick yard for the accommodation of boatmen who wished to change their mules of horses and feed them. For many years there was a sign on the barn reading "Ye 'orses 'ome." Nearby was a "River Grocery," a blacksmith shop and many other buildings. Most of these have gone but two of the old barns may be seen near the frame cottage. They are well worth your inspection. The upper part of the larger

building was used as a cooper's shop. The boatmen found plenty of food, drink, entertainment and good company at the tavern. This, for many years, was the scene of much social and commercial activity.

Governor Welcomed By Jacob

John Van Buren died in 1821 but his son, Jacob, and his family remained in the homestead. It is recorded that when the first boat bearing Governor Clinton and his staff passed through the Oswego Canal inspecting the new waterway for the first time, Jacob Van Buren was at the helm and his eight-year-old son, dressed in gala attire, rode the cockaded white horse that towed the boat. It was a gala occasion.

Although President Martin Van Buren is known to have visited in this vicinity both before and after he became President, there is no record of his having stayed with his cousins, or of his having visited the inn, although he may have done so.*

Before the house was completed, probably sometime between 1810 and 1812, Peter, the oldest son, left home, married Elizabeth Althouse and went to Mexico, New York. It is known that he was a constable there in 1803. In 1812, John married a niece of Peter's wife and built a modest home that is now standing on the east river road across from Pathfinder Island. Volkert acquired

land farther down the river near Black Creek. Here he built an imposing house, in outward appearance somewhat resembling his father's. It is now occupied by his great grandchildren, Mrs. Lena Chapman and Mrs. Jennie Smith. David's home is the one you see across the road just north of this house. It is now called "The Pillars" and is owned and occupied by his descendants. David died in 1887 at the age of 89.

As I think back to my childhood days, I can see David, John C. Van Buren and other old settlers. The picture I recall most vividly is that of an old gentleman slouched over in his open buggy, pipe in mouth, an arm resting on one knee, the hand loosely holding the reins as the horse jogged along past my grandfather's house on the way to or from the village.

John Van Buren and all his sons, except John, are buried in the old cemetery near Black Creek. Here most of the early settlers of this region are peacefully sleeping where their thoughts live on as epitaphs on the old tombstones.

* Martin VanBuren owned the Van Buren tract at Oswego and appeared at Oswego in court at times. On one of his visits made while he was President, he was an overnight guest at the home of George H. McWhorter, the latter, Collector of the Port of Oswego, being at the time the ranking Federal officer in Oswego.



Oswego Historical Society Yet Strong After Fifty Active Years

(Paper Summarized Before Oswego County Historical Society July 15, 1946, at the Former VanBuren Inn, by Edwin M. Waterbury, Its President, on the Occasion of the Observance of the Society's Fiftieth Anniversary.)

Oswego County Historical Society is celebrating today the 50th anniversary of its foundation July 15, 1896 at the same time that Oswego citizens were celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Evacuation of Fort Ontario by the British, an event which drew more than 25,000 visitors to Oswego from many parts of the State of New York and from Canada. The idea that the county should have an organized historical society grew out of the increased interest in local history which pervaded Oswego County at that time as the result of the development of plans for the elaborate celebration that was held at Oswego to commemorate the event which ushered in Oswego's history as a United States community.

The charter list of the founders of the Historical Society was signed on July 10, by the 20 original incorporators—just five days before the big celebration took place, yet the society entertained in connection with that event representatives from many similar societies from cities throughout the state who had been invited to be represented at the celebration and many other distinguished visitors.

Society's Incorporation

Oswego Historical Society was organized and incorporated under the provisions of Article 2 of Chapter 559 of the Laws of 1895. Its certificate of incorporation was approved by M. L. Wright, then a justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, resident in Oswego County, and it was filed in the Oswego County Clerk's Office (File No. 430) September 30, 1896, more

than three months after the society had commenced activity in the county.* The Chapter of the Laws of 1895 under which it was incorporated has since been repealed and replaced by Chapter 40 of the Laws of 1909 where it is now included in the Membership Corporation Laws.

This certificate of incorporation sets forth that the official name of the society is the Oswego Historical Society; that its operations are to be carried on in the City and County of Oswego, and that the principal office thereof is located at Oswego. The particular objects of the Society are set forth as "collecting and preserving historical, genealogical, scientific, commercial and literary material and mementos, books, charts, pamphlets, magazines, papers, relics and facts in any form having connection with any of said objects."

From the October days of 1615 when Samuel de Champlain, celebrated French explorer, led twice

* There were two certificates of incorporation, in fact, prepared, signed and filed in the office of the Oswego County Clerk. The first certificate had as its filing date July 25, 1896. In this first certificate the names of Leonard Ames, Jr., and Dudley M. Irwin appeared as directors for the first year but the names of both disappeared in the list of directors published in the second or "last certificate" as it was identified. The names of F. A. Emerick, Swits Conde and Elisha B. Powell which did not appear in the "first" certificate as directors were added to the final list of directors in the "last certificate." Aside from the correction of the spelling of some names and the substitution of correct for erroneous surnames the only change in the provisions of the "last certificate" from those of the first was the addition of a provision reading as follows which did not appear in the "first certificate": "The territory in which its operations are to be principally conducted is Oswego City and County, New York."

across the area now known as Oswego County a band of French soldiers, the first white men ever to visit this area so far as recorded history discloses, bent upon a punitive expedition on behalf of an accompanying band of Huron Indians against their ancient Iroquois enemies as personified in the Onondaga tribe then resident in a village on the shores of the pond in what is today known as Madison County and as "Nichol's Pond," which for the French and Hurons resulted disastrously, there seemingly has been much that has transpired to invite the interest and inspire the pens of both the makers of history and the historian in this community which we today proudly claim as home. Jesuits, military men, traders, hunters, travelers, settlers, clergymen, statesmen, authors, educators, painters, actors, farmers, inventors, shipbuilders, mechanics, sailors, business men, manufacturers and others—have contributed, each in his own way and in his own sphere of activity and interest, to the making of the history of this community and in the telling of its story.

Two Early Local Historians

Less than 40 years had elapsed from the date when Oswego County's modern history began with the delivery of Fort Ontario at Oswego into the hands of the United States Army July 15, 1796, by the British garrison which had continued to hold it for 13 years after the close of the American Revolutionary War, when George H. McWhorter, prominent Oswegonian of the period, village president, and later for many years Collector of the Port of Oswego, began writing for the local newspapers occasional items concerning Oswego's historical past. These dealt chiefly with the old forts* at Oswego, of which in

the late 1830s only vestiges remained, and with events which centered about those forts. While he never was employed by the "Palladium" and was never associated in its ownership Mr. McWhorter had a natural "bent" for newspaper work and during the 15-year period of the ownership and editorship of that newspaper by John Carpenter, between 1830 and 1845, Mr. McWhorter from sheer fondness of the work contributed many items to that newspaper, some political in nature, but many others with historical themes which contributed much to awakening the interest of the villagers in Oswego's unusual past.

Edwin W. Clarke, son of Dr. Deodatus Clarke who settled in Oswego in 1806 as one of the county's first physicians, a lawyer, who served for many years as village clerk was another early resident who was historically minded. He long served as secretary of the early village cemetery, and it is to the fact that he incorporated in the minutes and other papers of that organization and in village records many facts relating to the early history of Oswego as a United States community that we possess today much information which is today of great interest to the local historian which would undoubtedly have been lost for all time had not Clarke been the type of man that he was.

First Society In 1845

It was Edwin W. Clarke, also, who led the first movement for the formation of an historical society in Oswego of which there is record. After having suggested the desirability of the formation of such a society in articles contributed to the local newspapers, Clarke took the initiative in issuing a call through the newspapers in 1845 for a meeting to be held "at the Market House", as the village hall (later Oswego's first City Hall) was at first called after its completion and oc-

* Forts Oswego, George and Ontario. Only the latter at that time was still standing and it was in a dilapidated condition until it was rebuilt about 1840.

cupancy in 1837, for the purpose of organizing such a society. Unfortunately no account of the organization meeting is extant so that we do not know what the formal name of the society was, if it adopted one, or who the officers or members were, except as one comes across announcements in the old newspaper files that have been preserved of the society's meetings which continued to be held at Market Hall from time to time. The names of the persons who were to address the society on a particular date and the subjects that would be discussed were published in advance of the meeting in the local papers. The society seems to have been comparatively short-lived, however, and to have suspended meetings after a year or two.

Society Chartered In 1865

Again during the period immediately following the Civil War in which many historical societies were being chartered in the state, a small group of Oswegonians met in 1865 in a local law office and determined upon the incorporation of the Oswego County Historical Association. This association was incorporated and by-laws were adopted. These reveal that this early society had the same designations for its officers as those which are in use by the Oswego County Society today. The minute book of the 1865 society contains the accounts of the first two or three meetings of the society at which by-laws were adopted and other proceedings taken, and thereafter it remains without further entries. It would appear, therefore, that this second early society was also short-lived. Few, if any, accounts of its later activities are to be found in the files of the contemporary press.

So long as there resided in the county bodies of people who were interested in the history of the region in which their lives were being continued, however, it was

inevitable that gatherings would be held from time-to-time for the discussion of local history whether or not any formal organization existed to sponsor regular meetings and arrange for programs. The Oswego County Old Settlers Association which annually brought together the pioneer residents of the county then living started holding its annual reunions at various points in the county in the 1870s and continued to meet for many years thereafter—well into the present century. Addresses historical in nature relating to the early life and conditions in the county were frequently given by men of prominence in the county at its yearly gatherings held at different points in the county. In the City of Oswego groups of friends met from time to time at one another's homes to enjoy the reading of papers upon subjects of local historic interest that were contributed by members of the group.

Authors Of Source Material

With such a wealth of manuscripts, documents, official reports, diaries, letters and other forms of written records available each telling something of the story of the many stirring events relating to the early history of our country that had centered here, or tending to throw additional light into historical corners that would otherwise have been enshrouded in darkness, it would have been strange indeed if interest in historical matters had not early taken root here. Contributions to the source material of Oswego's history, to mention at random only a few, have come from many persons who attained considerable prominence or fame during the periods when the territory now included in our county was successively controlled by the Iroquois, the French, the English and the United States. Utterances concerning historic matters affecting Oswego County have been

preserved from the following who constitute only a few among the much longer compilation which it would have easily been possible to make:

Samuel de Champlain, M. Le Febvre de la Barre, Major Begon "of the town, castle and Government of Quebec," M. De la Chauvignerie, columns of the "New York Mercury, Sir Charles Hardy, J. V. H. Clark, Colonial Governor George Clinton, Colonial Governor William Burnet, Alexander Hamilton, John Lawrence, John B. Church, Simon Le Moyne, Sieur Du Puys, Count de Frontenac, M. de Meulles, Marquis de Nonville, M. de Vaudreuil, M de Longueuil, Marquis de Beauharnois, Louis XV of France, John Bartram, Gov. Clarke of the Colony of New York, Sir William Johnson, Lieut. John Lindsay, Captain John Butler, Captain Stoddard, Lieut. Holland, M. de la Galissonniere, Gov. William Shirley of Massachusetts, Captain Pouchot, Gen. John Bradstreet, Governor DeWitt Clinton of New York, Captain de Villiers, Commodore Bradley of the British Navy; Marquis de Montcalm, Lt. Col. John Littlehales, Major Philip Schuyler, Gen. John Philpiaux, Abbe Picquet, General Thomas Gage, Annie McVicar (Mrs. Grant), Major Alexander Duncan, Major Robert Rogers, Sir John Johnson, Daniel Claus, Joseph Brant, Col. Guy Johnson, Gen. Barry St. Leger;

Also Gen. George Washington, Col. Marinus Willet, Francis Adrian Vandercamp, Major Lawrence Van Valkenburg, George Scriba, Captain F. Elmer, M. de Lery, Gen. Jeffrey Amherst, Col. Mercer, Alvin Bronson, Morgan Robertson, James Fenimore Cooper, Governor Haldimand of Canada, Gen. Winfield S. Scott, Captain James Van Cleve, John Ericsson, E. B. O'Callaghan, Thomas Kingsford, George H. McWhorter, John Haines Lord, Gerrit Smith, John B. Edwards, Edwin W. Clarke, Dr. E. A. Sheldon, Dr. Richard K. Piez, Ralph M. Faust, Crisfield Johnson, John C. Chur-

chill, Dr. James G. Riggs, Chester Hull, Jr., Richard Oliphant, Benjamin Brockway, Daniel Ayer, Charlotte Blair Parker, Dr. Lida S. Penfield, Edward Hungerford, Dr. Arthur Paund, Commodore Melancthon T. Woolsey, Martin Van Buren, Abraham Lincoln, George B. Sloan, DeWitt C. Littlejohn, Thaddeus C. Sweet, Francis D. Culkin, Dr. Mary Walker, Abraham B. Valentine, Francis J. Murphy, Francis Parkman, T. J. Smollett.

With information available upon matters related to the local history of the region from men with a contemporary knowledge of events, it is little to be wondered at that for more than a century Oswegonians through succeeding generations have produced so many folk who have taken a deep interest in the history of their locality. It is more to be wondered at that a community with one of the richest historical backgrounds of the entire state has not yet attained to the happy state of possessing permanent quarters for housing its historical treasures and affording headquarters for the carrying on of its quests. Much has been accomplished in the direction of the preservation of our local history in past decades, but when we consider that outside of New York City and of Albany, that those who are in a position to know and judge best, consider Oswego's early history the most eventful and the richest in human interest of all the communities in the state, it becomes apparent that much yet remains to be done to unearth the facts, give them proper emphasis, and arrange for their permanent preservation.

Birth Of Historical Society

The impetus which brought into being the Oswego Historical Society as we know it today when we gather together to observe the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation was a concerted movement on the part of citizens of Oswego to observe with ap-

propriate ceremonies and in a fitting manner on July 15, 1896, the one-hundredth anniversary of the termination of British rule in the area we now know as Oswego county, as symbolized by the transfer of Fort Ontario at Oswego on July 15, 1796, from the control of a British garrison to the custody of the United States Army. As the transfer of the control of the fort from British to American hands cleared the way for the first time for the development of a truly American and enduring community at the mouth of the Oswego river and hence paved the way 20 years later for the establishment of Oswego County, Oswego citizens wisely and patriotically determined in 1896 under the leadership of their mayor, John D. Higgins, and of their then recently organized historical society, that the significance of the event of July 1796 should not be lost to the consciousness of the new generation then resident here and to further generations of Oswego citizens yet unborn.

Community Celebration

The "Palladium" and the "Times" devoted much space to the plans for the celebration as they were being gotten under way early in 1896. Public interest in the event soon became widespread. There was a lack of agreement at the outset as to whether Fort Ontario's custody had passed into the control of the United States on July 15, or July 16. Finally it was determined through the production of a letter written to George Scriba at Rotterdam (Constantia) by Captain F. Elmer, commander of the United States forces at the time of the evacuation, on the very day that he accepted control of the fort from the British garrison, that the official date for the exchange was July 15. This discussion, however, and the other circumstances attendant upon the arrangements for the celebration had the effect of quickening public interest in all matters histor-

ical in so far as they affected the Oswego County Community. Soon thereafter a group of citizens was called together at the Fortnightly Club on the initiative of William Pierson Judson, then a United States engineer stationed in Oswego, and it decided that Oswego County should have an incorporated historical society, authorized to receive and hold property, to carry on permanently the work of gathering and preserving local historical information and to collect and preserve articles of historic interest connected with local history. Committees were appointed at a subsequent meeting of the group to take steps to bring about the incorporation of the society, and to nominate officers who might be elected at the first meeting of the corporation and other committees to attend to other details of organization of the Society and to arrange for its participation actively in completing arrangements for the forthcoming celebration. One such committee was authorized to send invitations to the other historical societies and patriotic organizations in the state inviting them to send representatives to the Oswego celebration. Many who came to Oswego for the celebration in pursuance to these invitations were guests of Oswego Historical Society during their visit here.

Charter Members Sign

On July 10, 1896 the last of the twenty men who had been designated to become charter members of the society signed the charter. They were: William Pierson Judson, Assistant United States Engineer at Oswego who had charge of the reconstruction of the breakwaters of Oswego harbor and was an Oswego Hospital trustee and later Deputy State Engineer and Surveyor; Theodore Irwin, banker, grain elevator owner, miller, collector of rare books; John C. Churchill, editor of "Landmarks of Oswego County," retired Supreme Court Justice, a

founder and for more than 30 years secretary of the Riverside Cemetery organization; George C. McWhorter, insurance agent, vestryman of Christ church, book purchasing agent for the Gerrit Smith Public Library, descendant of John Lawrence, the first United States Senator from New York; Frederick O. Clark, junior partner in Penfield, Lyon & Company, capitalist; George Tisdale Clark, lawyer and local historian; John Dauby Higgins, lawyer, starch manufacturer and Mayor of Oswego; Francis E. Hamilton, lawyer and former City Attorney of Oswego; George Beale Sloan, banker, State Senator, later Chairman of Republican State Committee, trustee of Orphan Asylum, Home for the Homeless and many other Oswego organizations; Frederick Bemester Shepherd, manufacturer, member of first Oswego Harbor and Dock Commission, and later President of Oswego County Savings Bank; Rev. Philip Nelson Meade, rector of Christ Episcopal church; Frederick Augustus Emerick, manufacturer, banker, donor of Battle Island Park presented to State of New York; Swits Conde, textile manufacturer; Elisha Barclay Powell, lawyer, trustee Oswego Hospital, former city attorney of Oswego; Thomas Pettibone Kingsford, starch manufacturer, banker, trustee of Colgate University; Col. John T. Mott, utility owner, yachtsman, member Republican State Committee, president First National Bank of Oswego; Elliott B. Mott, utility owner, manufacturer, capitalist, and later president Oswego City Savings Bank, yachtsman; Leonard Ames, Jr., iron master, manufacturer, real estate holder; Robert Sage Sloan, Annapolis graduate, served as officer of U. S. Navy in World War I, member of firm of Irwin & Sloan, malt house owners in Oswego; Arthur Birney Cogswell, manufacturer, secretary of Fort-nightly Club for many years and

officer of West Baptist church of Oswego.

Evacuation Day 1896

On Wednesday, July 15, 1896, after months of careful planning and preparations by committees of local citizens who had been named by Mayor John D. Higgins to perfect arrangements for the occasion, Oswego celebrated the 100th anniversary of Evacuation Day. It is estimated that Oswego entertained 25,000 visitors on the day which witnessed the presence of the greatest throng ever to gather in Oswego up to that time. Special trains were run by three railroads; many came from Canada by steamer. Representatives of many of the county and local Historical Societies of the State were present by invitation of Oswego Historical Society which acted as one of the hosts of the occasion. Thousands of visitors and former residents were being entertained in the private homes of the city, hotels and elsewhere. Among them were men who had attained distinction in the State and Nation.

The Rev. John Calvin Meade had as his guests for the occasion Lt. Governor Saxton, of New York; the Rev. Dr. Spaulding, of Syracuse; the Rev. Dr. Clarke, pastor of the Park Presbyterian Church, Dr. McMaster of Baldwinsville. Colonel John T. Mott had as his house guests: Speaker Fish of the New York Assembly, Senator Stranahan, Colonel Ashley W. Cole, Secretary to Governor Levi P. Morton and Senator Joseph Mullin of Watertown.

Many Distinguished Visitors

Neil Gray had as his house guests General Nelson A. Miles, Commander of the U. S. Army who led the parade in the afternoon and reviewed it from the reviewing stand erected in front of the City Hall.

Major General Horace Porter, then head of the Empire State Chapter of the Sons of American Revolution who delivered the

principal address of the day at the Fort Ontario grounds, was the house guest of George B. Sloan, former Senator and chairman of the Republican State Committee. Senator Sloan gave a luncheon at noon in honor of General Porter to which many of the distinguished visitors and Mr. Sloan's personal friends were invited. Colonel Charles Chickering was a guest at the Doolittle House. United States Senator Thomas C. Platt who had expected to be present sent his regrets at the last minute to John S. Parsons, Secretary of the Oswego Committee which had general charge of the arrangements for the observance of the day.

Participating in the huge street parade was the 9th U. S. Infantry which had been sent by the War Department to be quartered at Fort Ontario and to participate in the ceremonies. The 5th Battery of Syracuse fired salutes at daybreak from a location in East Mohawk street west of East First street.

The Big Parade

At the head of the first division of the parade which was given over to the military with Colonel W. J. Lyster of the United States Infantry commanding, was the band of that regiment preceded by a detail of mounted Oswego police. Members of the regiment 500 strong followed.

Participating in the parade were the 8th Separate Company of Rochester; the 2nd Provisional Battalion of Utica; the 20th Separate Company of Binghamton, Capt. H. C. Rogers; 28th Separate Company of Utica, Lt. Hersberg; 31st Separate Company of Mohawk, Capt. Wethsten; the 3rd Provisional Battalion, Capt. W. N. Kirby of Auburn, commanding; 39th Separate Company of Auburn; Separate Company from Watertown, James S. Boyer commanding; 2nd Separate Company of Auburn, Lt. Barber; the 48th Separate Company of Oswego, Capt. A. M. Hall of Oswego commanding; the 4th Provisional Bat-

talion, Capt. James H. Lloyd, Troy, commanding; 21st Separate Company of Troy; 44th Separate Company of Utica, Capt. Legoodier; the 2nd Separate Division of Naval Reserve of Rochester, Lt. E. N. Woolridge commanding and the 5th Battery (mounted) of Syracuse, Capt. A. P. Hayes commanding.

Acting with General G. S. Graham commanding were the following Grand Army of the Republic staff officers: General Frederick Cossum, commander; Col. H. S. Redman, assistant Quartermaster general; Col. Thomas C. Hodgson, chief mustering officer, and Col. James R. Chamberlain, chief aide-de-camp with A. R. Penfield and J. D. O'Brien post of Oswego; and George Lester of M. H. Stacey Post No. 586 of Oswego as aides.

The following G. A. R. posts participated in the parade: Melzar Richards Post of Mexico; Louis B. Porter Post of Pulaski; Daniel F. Schenck Post of Fulton; Louis P. Porter Post of Scriba Corners; J. D. O'Brien Post of Oswego; J. B. Butler Post of Pulaski; Joe Gould Post, Phoenix; A. J. Barney Post, Sandy Creek; E. L. Bentley Post, Altmar; S. M. Olmstead Post, Orwell; Isaac Waterbury Post, Central Square; Hiram Sherman Post, Vermillion; Hannibal Post, Hannibal; May H. Stacey Post, Oswego; Post Doyle, New Haven and Post John Stevenson, Southwest Oswego.

The Civic Division

Colonel E. A. Cook, of Oswego, commanded the Civic Division of the parade with Captain Alfred Seligar as chief of staff with R. G. Jermyn as adjutant and the following aides: John S. Harris, R. A. Downey, James P. Doyle, Norman L. Bates, Louis Weigand, Claude P. Boyle, M. D. Bond, W. R. Hindhaugh, John M. Burr, Richard Oliphant, C. M. Doyle, H. S. Lavere, Fred Westfall, Fred Loomis, C. J. Vowinkle, A. P. Murdock and J. T. Dwyer.

Participating in the Civic Di-

vision which was lead by Oswego's famous Kingsford Band, followed Grand Canton J. W. Stebbins No. 2, Capt. John C. Moore, Commanding, there were: Canton Syracuse, Capt. E. J. Sterns; Canton Ridgley, Capt. John Ward; Canton Utica, Capt. S. W. Frame; Canton Cortland, Capt. C. G. Ingraham; Canton Bently, Capt. W. J. Watson; Canton Lincoln, Lt. Col. Sambeck; Canton Oswego, Col. C. A. Bentley; Washington Camp No. 9 Patriotic Sons of America, Addison E. West, commanding.

In this division also were the Minetto band; Grace church; George Taylor, 1st Lt.; George Henry, 2nd Lt.; Priory of St. Paul's church; Capt. McGowan; Young Men's Catholic Union, Frederick Riley in charge; Clayton Band; City Schools companies; St. Paul's Parochial school company; John Tiernan commanding; John Hayes, Fred Noonan, James Collins and Thomas Quigley aides; Fulton Band; the Old Continentals, Capt. S. B. Meade commanding; and Minetto Fire Department.

A feature of the platform decorations at Fort Ontario where the program was carried out in the afternoon following the parade in the presence of thousands was a mounted American eagle which was received by former Mayor McCaffrey by express on the day preceding the celebration. This bird had been killed in the Hudson Bay area and was shipped from Aurilla, Ontario by T. W. Blair to Mr. McCaffrey. The inscription upon the box read as follows: "This bird could not stand Dominion Day in Canada. He wanted to go home to H. D. McCaffrey at Oswego, New York."

Mayor John D. Higgins, of Oswego, presided at the commemorative exercises at Fort Ontario. Music was provided by the massed bands made up of the 9th United States Infantry Band, Dorey's Band of Troy and the Kingsford Band of Oswego. Prayer was offered by Benjamin

Bacon, D. D. The introductory address of the day was made by Mayor John D. Higgins, who introduced Major General Horace Porter, as principal speaker of the day. The historical address of George Tisdale Clark of Oswego Historical Society followed. The program concluded by the playing of the Star Spangled Banner by the massed bands and the delivery of the benediction by Rev. Michael Barry, D. D., of St. Paul's Church, Oswego.

First Officers Are Chosen

First officers of the Oswego Historical Society chosen at its first meeting after the incorporation papers of the society had been filed were: President, William Pierson Judson; Vice-President, Theodore Irwin; Corresponding Secretary, George Tisdale Clark; Recording Secretary, Frederick Bemister Shepherd; Curator, The President; Treasurer, Elliott Bostick Mott; Members of Board of Managers: John Charles Churchill, George Cumming McWhorter, Swits Conde. These same officers were re-elected in 1897 and in 1898, but changes in the list were made in 1899.

Membership in the society consisted of the incorporators and charter members through 1896, but by January 7, 1899 the membership had been increased from the original 20 to 64 through the election of the following to membership: Charles Henry Bond, Charles Henry Butler, S. Mortimer Coon, Horace Day Diment, James Dowdle, Robert Downey I, Alonzo Haverton Failing, Oren Fitzhugh Gaylord, Neil Gray, James G. Halleran, James Ford Johnson, Thomson Kingsford, Gardiner Tracy Lyon, John H. McCollom, Dr. Carrington Macfarlane, Gilbert Mollison, Gilbert Mollison, Jr., Luther Wright Mott, Richard Oliphant, Alonzo Summer Page, John P. Phelps, Maxwell Bennett Richardson, Louis Cass Rowe, Dr. Edward Austin Sheldon, George Beale

Sloan, Jr., William C. Todt, Sidney Van Auken, Charles Wendell, Maurice Lauchlin Wright.

Place First Marker

In the summer of 1898 Oswego Historical Society received and permanently placed at West First and VanBuren streets a bronze tablet marking the site of Old Fort Oswego erected in 1727 as the first English fort in Oswego by Colonial Governor William Burnet of New York. The tablet itself was provided by the Society of Colonial Wars as the result of a resolution offered at its annual meeting in New York City December 20, 1897 on motion of William Pierson Judson, then president of Oswego Historical Society, and seconded by Col. John T. Mott, another member of the Oswego Society, appropriating funds of the society "for preparing and placing as near as possible to the site of old Fort Oswego, in the City of Oswego, New York, a suitable tablet properly inscribed, to commemorate the important military works there erected by the colonial author-

ities in 1727 and 1755, and destroyed by the French and Indians in 1756; said tablet to be embedded in and attached to the side of a boulder of as large size as can conveniently be placed to receive it."

Abraham B. Valentine, historian of the Society of Colonial Wars, and corresponding member of the Oswego Historical Society spoke in support of the resolution which was thereupon adopted by a unanimous vote. The members of the Oswego Historical Society who had sponsored the resolution were named with Mr. Valentine and W. Gedney Beatty of New York as a committee to arrange for the designing of the tablet and its later placing at Oswego with funds to be provided by the Oswego Historical Society. Mr. Beatty designed the tablet in oval form twenty-four inches wide and thirty inches long and caused it to be cast in fine bronze. Surrounded by circlets of Indian arrow-heads, Tudor roses and colonial bullets, the tablet bears in raised letters the following inscription:

THIS-TABLET
MARKS-THE-SITE-OF-FORT
OSWEGO-SOMETIMES-CALLED-FORT
BURNET-CHOUAGUEN-OR PEPPERELL
BUILT-IN-1727-BY GOV.-BURNET
STRENGTHENED-AND-ENLARGED-IN-1755
BY-GEN.-SHIRLEY-GARRISONED-BY 1700
ROYAL-AND-COLONIAL-TROOPS
CAPTURED-AND-DESTROYED-ON AUG.
14-1756-BY-5000-FRENCH
AND-INDIANS

ERECTED-BY-THE-SOCIETY-OF
COLONIAL-WARS-IN-THE-STATE
OF-NEW-YORK-MDCCCXCVIII

A red granite bolder weighing approximately seven tons was placed as near as possible to the center of the site of Old Fort Oswego, the tablet being embedded and anchored in the side thereof. To protect the tablet the Oswego Historical Society procured from Washington a portion of a wrought-iron fence which stood in front of the White House grounds during Lincoln's occupancy there-

in front of the White House in of and until 1888. The fence enclosed Lafayette Park directly the Square sometimes called Jackson after the equestrian statue which occupies it.

Honorary Members Elected

The society elected to honorary membership therein in 1898 Bradley Benedict Burt, son of a pioneer settler in Oswego, No-

vember 24, 1896, the first person to be so honored. Mr. Burt died July 27, 1898. On December 12, 1896, the society elected to honorary membership John Clark Cooley, of Oswego, Brigadier General John Porter Hatch of the United States Army, native son of Oswego who served with distinction in the Mexican War and in the War between the States during a part of which time an Oswego County regiment (the 24th New York Volunteers) was a part of his command, General Hatch at the time being president of the Aztec Club of New York City; also General Horace Porter of New York City, President General of the Society of the Sons of the American Revolution who had delivered a principal address at the time of the Oswego Centennial Celebration in the preceding July was elected to honorary membership. So far as extant records disclose the honorary members just listed were the only ones to be honored by the Oswego Historical Society by such election in the first 25 years of its existence.

First Necrology

During the first three years of its existence the society lost through deaths the following members: Dr. Edward Austin Sheldon, founder of the Oswego City School system of which he was superintendent and founder and first Principal of the Oswego State Normal School, whose death occurred August 27, 1897; Bradley Benedict Burt, pioneer settler in Oswego who died July 27, 1898; George Tisdale Clark, Oswego lawyer and local historian who had delivered an address on Oswego's history prior to 1896 at the Centennial Celebration in July 1896, whose death occurred unexpectedly December 7, 1898, at his home in Oswego while he was still a young man, and Robert Downey I, Oswego business man, whose death occurred January 16, 1899.

The First Publication of the Historical Society was printed for

distribution to the members and to others interested in 1899. The book was of the same page size as the year books which are published now each year by the society containing its proceedings for the previous year. It was bound in boards, and bore the imprint of the society's seal upon its cover and the year of its issuance, 1899. It was printed at the R. J. Oliphant Shop in Oswego. It consisted of 40 pages. Its contents included lists of the Society's officers since its foundation three years earlier. "An Historic Sketch" (of Oswego) by George Tisdale Clark whose death preceded the issuance of the book by only a few days, the sketch being the paper Mr. Clark had read at Fort Ontario on the afternoon of July 15, 1896, in connection with the memorial exercises held there as a feature of the Centennial Celebration; an article telling of the placing by the Society in 1898 of the Old Fort Oswego Tablet to mark the site of the first English fort in Oswego; the Constitution and By-Laws of the Society, the list of its members and its Necrology.

Later Publications

In general interest to historians and to the people of the Oswego County this first publication outranked the two succeeding publications brought out under the society's seal during the next six years succeeding, both compiled in their entirety by William Pierson Judson, the Society's first president. In 1903 there was published the "History of the Various Projects, Reports, Discussions and Estimates of the Canal Routes Across the State of New York for reaching the Great Lakes from Tide Water". Therein Mr. Judson, a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and a member of the Institute of Civil Engineering, set forth in 22 pages of text matter, illustrated by a single map, a factual account of the various projects for Hudson-Great Lakes canal routes from that set forth

by Sir Henry Moore, colonial governor of New York in 1768 through the reconstruction project provided for by the State Legislature in the Laws of 1903 which aimed at the deepening of the Erie and Oswego canals to a depth of seven feet, and other improvements to the canal. Before the changes then authorized had been completed, the state's canal policy had again been changed and the construction of the Barge Canal, largely as we know it today, had been authorized, but this change was not foreseen or referred to in Mr. Judson's excellent paper which proved highly informative to engineers, students and historians interested in the development and rise of the state's canal system, and particularly of "the Oswego route". Mr. Judson's paper recounted changes affecting the canals as they had been accomplished or were in prospect through 1901.

Ancient Maps

In 1905 Mr. Judson published under the seal of the Oswego Historical Society the third and final publication to be sponsored by that group until after 20 years or more should have elapsed. This work was entitled "Ancient Field Notes and Maps". Its text sets forth facts, largely from an engineer's standpoint, certified as to the correctness of the surveys and facts, concerning the Totten and Crossfield Purchase of 1772, the old Military Tract (1787-1797) which included as part of its area the territory now embraced in the several Oswego County towns which lie west of the Oswego River including Oswego, Minetto, Granby and Hannibal towns. Maccomb's Purchase of 1796 which included a large area within the confines of what is now Oswego County including the towns located in the northeastern portion of the county which lay to the north of of Scriba's Patent and eastward of the mouth of Salmon River, the location marked today by the old Light House at Selkirk Beach,

is also delineated and described. The text of this work covers 83 printed pages. There are included several maps, the correctness of the photographs of the originals on file with the State of New York, upon which the engravings of the maps were based being certified to by Mr. Judson as Deputy State Engineer and Surveyor.

Fortnightly Club Association

From its very earliest beginnings the Historical Society had been closely associated with the Fortnightly Club of Oswego, organized in 1889. This club had its origin at the Congregational Church of Oswego and originally admitted to membership only men associated with the Congregational Church. By the time the Historical Society came into being, however, it had become a social club with membership open only to men of the Oswego community after due election. It still was a social club made up largely of serious minded intellectual men of the community who gathered there on frequent occasions during the winter months to hear addresses upon subjects of current interest, to discuss current events and to hear occasional talks upon travel, history and other topics. When the Historical Society was organized most, if not all, of its members, were also members of the Fortnightly Club. This community of interest led to the adoption of the policy by the Historical Society of holding most of its meetings at the Fortnightly Club which practice continued for a period of more than 25 years. Succeeding Oswego city directories of clubs, societies and literary organizations announced concerning the Historical Society after listing its officers: "Meets on call of the president at the Fortnightly Club."

Annual meetings of the Historical Society seem to have been held at the Fortnightly Club House down until the year 1924. This club house was chosen to display the collection of historical

relics which was arranged for by the Historical Society as one of its contributions to the success of the Centennial Celebration of 1896. Again in 1913 when Oswego entertained for the first time the New York State Historical Association meeting for its 15th annual session, the facilities of the Fortnightly Club House were placed at the disposal of the visiting historians who flocked to Oswego for this event. Another historical exhibition was arranged by Oswego Historical Society to take place at the Fortnightly Club in connection with this latter event.

Women Not Eligible

The fact that the Historical Society did not in the early years of its existence invite or accept women as members may have been due in large part to considerations connected with the close working understanding that existed between the Fortnightly Club members and the members of the Historical Society. As the former did not offer membership to ladies, and they were seldom, if ever, admitted within its portals in the early days of the club, it would naturally follow that if the Historical Society meetings were to be held at the club house that women could not be eligible for membership in the Historical Society. But be this matter as it may, it is a fact that it was not until reorganization of the Historical Society was brought about in 1924 under the leadership of Dr. James G. Riggs, then principal of the Oswego State Normal School, Judge Louis C. Rowe, F. A. Emerick, Elliott B. Mott and others of its members interested in the development of a more vigorous historical society in Oswego than the society had proven during the preceding decade, that women were made eligible for membership in the Historical Society and eligible to hold office. Within a few months thereafter many women had applied for and been elected to membership in the Society.

Oswego Meeting Notable

When, however, the New York State Historical Association came to Oswego in September 1913 for its fifteenth annual meeting, the Oswego Historical Society's membership was still being confined strictly to men in contrast with the policy of the State Association which admitted women as members. Several Oswego County ladies joined the State Association while its meetings were being held in Oswego. The gathering here was notable in several respects, but especially for the fact that here for the first, and I believe to date the only time, the state meeting took on an international flavor as not only did residents of the City of Kingston, Ont., come across the lake to give papers at the Oswego meeting on subjects of great historical interest to the people on both sides of Lake Ontario but officers of the State Association, its members, delegates and guests and members of the Oswego Historical Society journeyed to Kingston, Ontario, on one day of the week for a session of the State Association held at Queen's University in Kingston with the faculty and citizens of Kingston as hosts for the occasion. The 1913 meeting of the State Association held at Oswego was also notable for the fact that, with the single exception of one meeting held at Buffalo, it was the first meeting of that Association to be held outside of the Eastern area of the state.

Tribute To Hospitable Oswego

Official minutes of the State Association in speaking of the Oswego meeting say in part: "The members looked forward with pleasurable anticipation to a meeting in that fine old city, situated so delightfully at the outlet of the Oswego River into Lake Ontario, and it is a pleasure to record that none of our anticipations failed of realization. Many of the best citizens of Oswego

joined the Association so that they might be in a position to give us a warm greeting; the meetings were well attended, and the Pontiac was found to be ideal headquarters. The meetings were all held at the Old First Presbyterian Church. A fine exhibition of relics, collected by members of the Association, was shown at the Fortnightly Club. The members of the Association were offered the privileges of the Fortnightly Club while in the city."

Mayor D. D. Long welcomed the visitors on behalf of the City of Oswego at the first session held Monday evening September 29. P. W. Cullinan made the address of welcome on behalf of the Historical Society. Dr. Sherman Williams, vice president of the State Association made the response. The principal address of the evening was made by George A. Plimpton of New York, then owner of the largest collection of American school books, whose subject was "Education During the Dutch Period in New York."

At the Tuesday morning session Frederick W. Barnes (now a vice president of Oswego Historical Society) read a paper on "The Early Fur Traders of Oswego". Avery W. Skinner of Mexico gave a paper on "The Old Trail from the Mohawk to Lake Ontario". Frederic C. Foster, professor of history at St. Lawrence University, read a paper on "The Old Ontario Canoe Route". W. L. Grant, professor of Colonial History at Queens University in Kingston, Ont., presented a paper on "Kingston and Oswego in 1756".

Roosevelt Makes Address

Montcalm Park, the site of old Fort George, which was the second of the three forts at Oswego to fall to Montcalm in August of 1756, which had in 1913 recently been presented to Oswego by the State, was formally dedicated on Tuesday afternoon, September 30, members of Fort Oswego Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, being in charge

of the dedication ceremonies, Mrs. M. S. Lovell, Regent, presiding. An American flag was raised on a new staff provided by the D. A. R. with Luther Wright Mott, Jr., and John Kellogg, son of Mrs. Karl Kellogg, yet an active member of our society, manning the halyards during the ceremony. Mrs. Frederick Leighton of the D. A. R. chapter read the act conferring the custody of the park upon Fort Oswego Chapter. James A. Holden, State Historian, presented the park for the State of New York and Mayor D. D. Long accepted it for the City and Mrs. Lovell for the D. A. R. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, then assistant secretary of the Navy, later to be Governor of New York State and for four terms President of the United States, made the principal address at the ceremonies, the occasion being the only one at which Mr. Roosevelt addressed the New York State Historical Association. Mr. Roosevelt had been escorted to the park by a detachment from the Rochester Naval Reserve Unit and by the Third Infantry, then garrisoning Fort Ontario, under the command of Major W. H. Bertsch.

Oswegonians Speak

From the park a large portion of the assemblage which had been present for the exercises moved to the First Presbyterian Church where addresses were made by Miss Harriet E. Stevens, of Oswego, later to be one of the first ladies elected to office in Oswego Historical Society when she was elected recording secretary in 1924, by Mrs. Willard Augsbury of Antwerp, State D.A.R. Regent, Assemblyman T. C. Sweet of Phoenix and Secretary Roosevelt. Francis D. Culkin, then district attorney of Oswego County, but later Judge of Oswego County and Representative in Congress, read at this session an address which had been prepared for the occasion by Congressman Luther W. Mott, both men members of and benefactors of Oswego Coun-

ty Historical Society. Mr. Mott was detained in Washington by business. Dr. Alphonso T. Clearwater of Kingston, N. Y., gave the annual address Tuesday evening. There followed a reception in honor of the visitors at the Hotel Pontiac arranged by members of Oswego Historical Society and the ladies of Fort Oswego Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution.

Visit Kingston

Wednesday morning those assembled here for the State meeting were taken by special train from Oswego to Cape Vincent where they embarked upon a boat which took them to Kingston, Ont., where they were to spend the day, the program for the third day having been planned to be held at Queens University, with the Kingston Historical Society in general charge of arrangements for the day. Following luncheon served in Grant Hall, Very Reverend Dean Starr, president of Kingston Historical Society, extended a hearty welcome to the New Yorkers. Mayor T. J. Rigney of Kingston also welcomed the visitors. President Gordon of the university also spoke. Dr. William O. Stillman of Albany, vice president of the State Association, responded.

The formal session of Wednesday took place in Convocation Hall at the University with Judge Grenville M. Inglis of Hudson Falls, president of the State Association, presiding. Dr. Henry William Elson, historian and author, read a paper on "Lake Ontario in History". Thomas R. Kneil, school superintendent of Saratoga Springs, gave a paper on "Bradstreet's Expedition." R. M. Spankie of the Kingston Historical Society, presented a paper on "Wolfe Island".

While they were in Kingston the visitors were driven by automobile to the following locations of historic interest in Kingston: Residence occupied by Governor General of Canada 1841-1844, later the private residence of H.

W. Richardson; St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Andrew's Church, St. Paul's Church; Residence of Lieut. Governor J. G. Simcoe in 1792; Tete-du-Pont Barracks, Royal Military College, Fort Henry, St. George's Cathedral. After tea at St. George's Parish House and an organ recital in the Cathedral, the visitors returned to their steamer and to Oswego.

The minutes of the State Association record concerning the Kingston trip: "It was the unanimous opinion of the returning pilgrims that never had they been better taken care of and more delightfully entertained than at old Kingston. Every arrangement was perfect in every detail and it is safe to say that our first session in Canada will be a bright spot in the records of our Association."

At the close of the Oswego meeting a special minute was adopted expressing the thanks of the Association to the officers and members of the Kingston Historical Society "for their cordial co-operation in promoting the success of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of this Association and for the hospitality so freely and generously shown our members while its guests in the City of Kingston." The resolution also acknowledged indebtedness to persons named in the resolution for "special courtesies."

Final Session Addresses

Addresses given at the Thursday sessions of the Association at Oswego included: "Pontiac and Sir William Johnson" by James T. Clark of Oswego Historical Society; "The Cornbury Legend" by Dr. Charles Worthen Spencer, assistant professor of History and Politics at Princeton University; "Defenses of Oswego" by Major W. H. Bertsch, U. S. A., commanding Fort Ontario at Oswego; "Two Typical United Empire Loyalists and Their Share in Moulding Early Canadian Life", Miss Agnes Maule Machar, Vice-president of Kingston Historical

Society, Kingston, Ontario; "The Loyalist Migration, Overland" by William Stewart Wallace, Oxon lecturer in History in McMaster University, Toronto; President's Address; "Evolution of History", by Grenville M. Ingalsbe, Hudson Falls; "The Bay of Quinte Settlements during the War of 1812", by Clarence M. Warner, president of Lennox and Addington Historical Society, Napanee, Ont.; "How the State and the Historical Association may be of Mutual Assistance", by James A. Holden, Glens Falls, State Historian. Irving Bacheller was to have read a paper on "Settlement of the St. Lawrence Valley", but was prevented by illness from being present.

During the concluding afternoon of the sessions, the visitors were taken on an automobile ride to points of interest in Oswego. The following resolution of appreciation was adopted by the State Association at its closing session:

Visitors Express Appreciation

"The time to say farewell to this famous old historic city upon Ontario's shores is at hand, and not much remains but to say the last words before this, the fifteenth annual meeting of the New York State Historical Association, passes into history as one of the things that have been.

"As each year comes and our meetings take shape and are held, we who have been of them from the beginning realize that, while alike in essentials, each one differs in particulars.

"Some have been distinguished by a preponderance of learning or historical research, others by social events, others by scenic and travel accessories, but the meeting at Oswego must always be remembered by our members for the pleasant and agreeable blending of these qualities, in one harmonious and desirable whole.

"In accordance with our annual custom, it is therefore Resolved, That, at this time, we who are

here assembled extend as an association our sincerest thanks to Oswego and its citizens for their many courtesies, their generous and exceptional attendance at our meetings, and their many kindnesses to the strangers within their historic walls.

"To the Oswego Historical Society and its members; to the General Committee for the perfection of their work, which has smoothed the portage paths of our meetings to the haven of complete success; to the committees on entertainment, excursion, local points of interest, historical exhibit and reception, we extend numberless thanks. To the ladies of the D. A. R., who have done much to encourage us and to add to the completeness of our program, we extend a special measure of praise and thanks.

"To the pastor and congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, to the Fortnightly Club, to the civic officers of Oswego and to one and all who have made this meeting one that will long linger in the memory of those of us fortunate enough to be here, thanks and again thanks.

"We came to Oswego as strangers, we leave it with regret that the session is over and that the city's hospitality and kindness can be so inadequately rewarded.

"As a slight expression of our gratitude and appreciation of what has been done for us here, be it further Resolved, That this minute be entered on our records and that copies thereof be furnished to the press."

Join State Society

Among the more than 80 new members of the State Historical Association who were admitted at the Oswego meeting were: Mrs. David B. Page; Misses Cynthia Beadle, Mary Hodges Clark, Lydia Ellen Phoenix, Jane L. Spencer, all of Oswego; Miss Alice A. Schenck, of Fulton; and Messrs. James T. Clark, Francis E. Cullen, Frederick O. Clarke, Col. John T. Mott, John Post

Miller, Louis Cass Rowe, all of Oswego; Rev Samuel E. Brown of Pulaski; Mr. and Mrs. William Pierson Judson of Broadalbin, formerly of Oswego.

Dr. James G. Riggs of Oswego was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Association before the fifteenth annual meeting was held here, and he extended the invitation to the Association to come here acting as the representative of the Oswego Historical Society. Dr. Riggs served for many years afterwards as a trustee of the State Association of which he was eventually chosen president, an office that he graced for several years. Many members of our society today continue to hold membership in the State Association.

The Oswego Medal

Theodore Irwin, Sr., a charter member of Oswego Historical Society in which he held various offices and of which he finally became president, was widely known as a collector of rare books for his private library. His books included a Guttenberg Bible, one of the rarest of books, and many other less notable volumes. When in later years a part of his books were sold, it is said, although not confirmed, that the late J. P. Morgan paid a sum as large as \$500,000 for only a portion of the library that Mr. Irwin in his life time had accumulated. But Mr. Irwin also collected other items than rare books and particularly, those which had historic interest. It is due to his possession of this pendant, that Oswego County Historical Society today has the Louis XV medal, better known locally as "the Oswego Medal" one of its most prized possessions, and so far as is now known the only one of the limited few which Louis caused to be struck off that is extant.

Medal's Cost Exaggerated

Instead of paying for the acquisition of this medal a fabulous sum which many local folk ac-

cepted upon rumor as truth, Mr. Irwin paid but \$30.88 for the medal in 1894, including the commission of the dealer who procured it for him in France. But the price which was paid for the medal was very low for a medal so rare, and if it were to be offered for sale today, it would doubtless bring many times that sum. For the fame of the "Oswego Medal" today is much more wide-spread in the United States than it was when Mr. Irwin bought it.

Our knowledge of the purchase price for the medal paid by Mr. Irwin comes to us through the possession by the Historical Society of the original correspondence which Mr. Irwin had with Edward Frossard in 1894, dealer in coins, medals and antiquities of 108 East Fourteenth Street, New York City, concerning the purchase of the medal. When in November 1913 Theodore Irwin, Jr., son of the original purchaser of the medal, decided to present it to the Oswego Historical Society as a memorial to his father in recognition of the latter's long and active interest in the society, he accompanied the medal with the copies of the original correspondence in regards to its purchase that passed between the elder Irwin and Frossard. From that correspondence is taken the following:

Frossard To Irwin

New York City,
Dec. 17, 1894.

My dear Sir:

I have received the **Oswego Medal** in fine condition, but before sending it desire to know if price will be satisfactory.

I am charged

| | | |
|------------------------|-----|---------------|
| | R M | 115 |
| Plus ins, reg. & post. | | 2 |
| | R M | 117 |
| or | | |
| | | \$28.08 |
| Commission 10% | | 2.80 |
| | | <hr/> \$30.88 |

Kindly let me know by return mail.

P. S. Mail so I can send you the piece at once. If not taken piece has to be returned immediately.

Very resp. yours,
EDWARD FROSSARD

In sending in his remittance for the medal Mr. Irwin apparently enclosed with his check the foregoing letter which he had received from Frossard under date of December 17, 1894, as that letter now bears the further notation at its bottom.

Paid. Thanks.

ED FROSSARD
Glad to know you were pleased.
ED F.

Frossard To Irwin

New York City,
Dec. 26, 1894.

Theodore Irwin, Esq.

My dear Sir:

I enclose form of guarantee; you can insert date which I forget at this moment. The condition of medal is all that can be desired, in fact much finer than generally found. The surface will keep its present color, a hard dull lustre forever or at least as long as not rubbed, cleaned in acid or otherwise damaged—I am glad you decided to take it; you have what we call an interesting assemisnatical monumeal (according to the French) of very important general and especially local history.

Very resp. yours,
ED FROSSARD

P. S. The medal as far as I know has never been reproduced, copied, electrotyped. So far as the photographing is concerned I think I have one of them in a plate of the Malo E. Hart Col. sold by me about 8 years ago.

ED F.

The letter appearing just above bears at the bottom a copy of Frossard's guarantee. The enclosure to Theodore Irwin in his letter of December 26 set forth just above also bears date of De-

cember 26, 1894 and reads as follows:

I hereby guarantee the medal of Louis XV of France struck in the year 1757 to be a genuine original model usually denominated the Oswego Medal, struck in silver and that its condition is very fine with brilliant lustrous surface.

ED FROSSARD
Mr. Theodore Irwin

There appears upon the reverse side of the letter of December 26 a translation of the words which appear upon the face of the Oswego Medal which follows:

"The citadel of David carried by assault and leveled with the ground.

"Wessel on the Rhine

"Oswego, N. America

"Port Mahan, Isle of Minorca

"St. Davids, Hindustan"

All the aforementioned places were scenes of French military successes over the English in 1756. Collectively the areas of their battles pretty well extend around the world. Of all the victories recorded on the medal, it is said that Louis XV regarded that at Oswego as of the greatest importance, believing at the time, apparently that the Oswego victory assured France of dominating the greater proportion of the North American continent for all time. Within four years time, however, the end of the French power in Canada was to come through the victories of Gen. Jeffrey Amherst's Oswego-based army in 1760.

Society Expresses Thanks

Although the presentation of the "Oswego Medal" to the Historical Society took place in November 1913, and a resolution of appreciation was adopted at that time, it was not until March 24, 1914, that the engrossed copy of the resolution which it had been directed that the officers should send to Dr. Theodore Irwin, donor of the medal to the society, was finally dispatched. Doubtless a contributing factor

in the delay resulted from the time required for engrossing the resolution. At the time Dr. Irwin was temporarily residing in Pasadena, Cal., where the copy of the engrossed resolution, signed by John D. Higgins, as president of the society, and by the late Norman L. Bates of Oswego as secretary, was sent him reading as follows:

**Extract from the Minutes of
Oswego Historical Society
November 1913**

The Oswego Historical Society has received through Theodore Irwin, M. D., from the singularly interesting collection of his honored father, the late Theodore Irwin, Esq., (an original member of this society and active promoter of its purposes), valuable relics of historic Oswego, to wit:

The so-called "Oswego Medal", struck by King Louis, the fifteenth commemorating great victories of France in 1756, the most important of which was believed to be Oswego, captured from the English by the Marquis de Montcalm.

Five framed photographic copies of Letters and Orders, written by General George Washington, relating to the attempt to capture Fort Ontario from the English during the War of the Revolution, (which relics formed a most attractive part of the exhibit at the recent annual meeting in Oswego of the New York State Historical Society, October, 1913), and this society having a highly appreciative sense of the generosity and thoughtfulness manifested in these gifts it is hereby

Resolved—that the articles so presented are accepted with gratitude and with the assurance to Dr. Irwin that they will be carefully preserved both as valuable historical objects, and, in remembrance of the renowned Collector.

Resolved—that this action be made a part of the records of this Society and that a copy be trans-

mitted to Dr. Irwin.

JOHN D. HIGGINS,
President.

NORMAN L. BATES,
Secretary.

Inactive Interlude

Between 1915 and 1923 there came a period of comparative inactivity on the part of the members of the Historical Society. This seems to have been attributable to several causes including deaths and the removal from Oswego of some of the more earnest and energetic of the early members of the society. William Pierson Judson who had been largely responsible for bringing the society into existence and who as its first president served for several years, had removed to Albany upon receiving a state appointment as deputy state engineer. After he retired from the state position, he made his residence at Broodalbin and had not resumed his residence in Oswego in 1924 when the Historical Society began to take on new life once more. George Tisdale Clark, Theodore Irwin, Sr., Dr. Edwin Austin Sheldon, Bradley B. Burt, Robert Downey I and others of the early members had died, and the new members who had been admitted did not, or were not in a position to, carry on the affairs of the society with the same zeal as that with which they were formerly administered. Nevertheless annual meetings of the society for the election of officers continued to be held at the Fortnightly Club, and there were occasional speakers, principally local men, who appeared there to talk to the members on matters historical.

John D. Higgins, an incorporator of the society, who had been elected its president in 1914, was appointed about 1918 by Governor Alfred E. Smith as a member of the Industrial Board of the New York State Labor Department for a six year term. Mr. Higgins's duties in his new position kept him away from Oswego

much of the time, and the society was deprived of the leadership which undoubtedly he would have exerted had he been spending any considerable part of his time in Oswego. By the time he retired from state office, Mr. Higgins had made plans for the future which were to lead to concentration of his energies elsewhere than in Oswego, and he never resumed permanently his residence here. He is now a resident of New Canaan, Conn., where he is a member of the law firm of Higgins & Hawthorne, still mentally vigorous and professionally active despite his advancing years.

New Life Came In 1924

As a consequence of discussions among the members of the society late in 1923, and of further interest manifested in the revitalizing of the society on the part of others who were desirous of becoming members of the society there was held at the Fortnightly Club in January of 1924 a meeting from the minutes of which the following excerpts are taken as they were set down by Miss Harriet E. Stevens, who was elected corresponding secretary of the society at this meeting, thereby attaining the distinction of being the first woman to be elected as an officer of the Oswego Historical Society:

"Twenty eight years ago, in 1896, a society was formed in this vicinity known as 'The Oswego County Historical Society.' The aim of this organization was to interest our residents in the 100th anniversary of the evacuation of Fort Ontario, and to fittingly celebrate that event during the summer. How well they accomplished this aim probably everyone here remembers and how when it was all over we patted ourselves on the back and said 'We did it that time'.

"Without the incentive of such a society, without the energy and push which it furnished, we feel pretty sure things would have not gone so well. Any organization is

a strong factor in obtaining results. Now as we are approaching the time for another celebration of another marked date in our history—the 200th anniversary of activity of white men at Oswego—the thoughts of all interested turn again to this society and an effort is being made to call it out of the obscurity into which it had fallen and get it at work again on another great big celebration.

"Consequently this informal meeting of all the former members and any one else interested along this line is being held.

"Judge L. C. Rowe, vice-president of the society, was present and opened the meeting. He stated the object of the meeting and called for an expression of opinion. As all present were unanimous in their desire to revive the society, he 'stepped on the gas' and immediately the society lived.

"Judge Rowe stated that Mr. John D. Higgins, president of the society, had resigned because he was no longer a resident of Oswego, but that before doing so he had appointed as a nominating committee to recommend new officers Messrs L. C. Rowe, E. B. Mott and F. W. Barnes.

New Officers Chosen

"Following the report of the nominating committee as made through Judge Rowe the following officers were elected: President, Dr. James G. Riggs; Vice-president, Frederick A. Emerick; Recording Secretary, Charles S. Wright; Corresponding Secretary, Miss Harriet E. Stevens; Curator, Elliott B. Mott; Trustees, John Post Miller, Frederick W. Barnes and Mrs. Frederick Leighton.

"At the conclusion of the business meeting a most interesting talk on 'old Oswego' was given by Mr. Barnes and original stories on the same topic were read by their author, Miss Lida S. Penfield. A vote of thanks was given Miss Penfield and Mr. Barnes."

President Riggs was empower-

ed to name a Committee of Thirty to consider the needs and work of the society and to report back its recommendations."

Charles S. Wright who had been elected recording secretary at the reorganization meeting died soon thereafter, and Miss Stevens, the corresponding secretary, took over, at the request of the society, the duties that had been intended to be performed by Mr. Wright.

Committee Of 30 Named

At the meeting of the society held at the Fortnightly Club in the following March, it was decided to arrange for a pageant which the society should sponsor in the summer of 1925, on a basis of county-wide participation by communities. Incidents related to the local history of the several county localities were discussed as suggestions about which episodes of the pageant might be written.

President Riggs announced at the meeting of the society held upon April 2, 1924, at the offices of the Oswego Chamber of Commerce in the Hotel Pontiac that he had appointed the Committee of Thirty authorized at the January meeting as follows:

Mrs. James M. Carey, Miss Anna Post, Miss Mary McCarthy, Miss Lida Penfield and Messers F. W. Barnes, George W. Bush, P. W. Cullinan, James P. Doyle, Dr. R. H. Gesner, D. P. Morehouse, Jr., John S. Parsons, T. P. Kingsford, John Post Miller, Harry J. Cooper, Robert A. Downey II, David Fitzgibbons, Thomas J. Hayes, John M. Gill, Elisha B. Powell, William Pierson Judson and E. M. Waterbury.

Judge Rowe reported for the Committee on Constitution and By-Laws that no essential changes were needed to meet new conditions confronting the society. The committee, however, recommended a reduction from two dollars a year to one dollar in the amount of the annual dues and the reduction of dues for life

membership from \$50 to \$20, that no initiation fee be charged, that the requirement providing for the posting of names of applicants for membership for a period of 30 days before their names could be voted upon be eliminated and that both men and women be made eligible for election to membership. The financial year of the society was recommended to run from May 1 to May 1. The suggestion was also made that vice-presidents of the society be named to represent various communities in the county from which the society should draw substantial membership.

Approve Pageant Proposal

It was decided at this meeting to invite co-operation in the pageant being planned for July 1925 of both the city and county governments. Appointment was authorized of a committee to enlist the interest of the Oswego Chamber of Commerce in the plans for the pageant, and possibly for the inclusion of the pageant's presentation as a part of a program for an "Old Home Week" observance. The executive committee was authorized to appoint such committees as might be determined necessary for the development of the pageant plan.

At the May 18th meeting of the society held at the Fortnightly Club in 1925 President Riggs announced the appointment of the following committee to have the pageant directly in charge: Miss Adaline Hinckley, Miss Lida S. Penfield and F. W. Barnes. He also stated that the pageant, the lines for which were written by Mrs. John G. Wickser of Buffalo, and parts in the pageant assigned to various interested communities in the county which were making their own costumes and defraying their own costs, would be arranged to take place on the Fort Ontario parade ground on the afternoon of July 4th.

The president also announced that the Oswego Chamber of Commerce had appointed as a

committee to render aid in the production of the pageant and its financing as follows: Robert F. Burnett, J. H. Hourigan, Gilbert S. Graves and Harry S. Rauch. (This committee sold advertising space in the official program of the pageant sufficient to yield funds which alone would meet the estimated cost of production of the pageant. It had been arranged that any fund realized from the pageant larger than the amount necessary to make it self-sustaining, should be bestowed by the Historical Society upon some worthy local charitable institution.)

The following were designated a committee to extend invitations to non-residents, or former residents of Oswego, to be present for the pageant's presentation: Mrs. Ruth W. J. Mott, John M. Gill, Mayor M. P. Neal, Col. George A. Herbst, commandant of Fort Ontario, Col. John T. Mott and Judge Francis D. Culkin. Finance Chairman R. F. Burnett reported that eight Oswego organizations had already pledged \$50.00 each toward the cost of the production of the pageant, but the chief source of revenue from the event, it was determined, should come through the sale of "tags" to persons attending the pageant which would set forth that the wearer had voluntarily contributed a sum, determined as to amount by himself, towards the cost of the pageant production. Such various other matters related to the pageant as parking space for the automobiles of the persons who were to attend, means of advertising the pageant, and prizes for an "Ode to Oswego" to be written by a student in one of the county's high schools and submitted in competition were also discussed.

Earned \$1,500 For Hospital

No further entries concerning the affairs of the pageant or the activities of the Historical Society in connection therewith, or any other activities of the society

were thereafter recorded in its minute book until the minutes of a meeting of the society held at the Hotel Pontiac on April 26, 1926, which was also its annual meeting, are recorded. Then Treasurer Louis C. Rowe of the society reported that "the Society had met all bills contracted for the pageant held July 5, 1925, and donated a surplus of \$1,509.91 from the pageant funds to the Oswego Hospital".

In the absence of any account of the pageant in the society's own records, we must turn to the columns of the Palladium-Times of July 6, 1925, for a contemporary account of the event. The pageant had been planned for the Fort Ontario parade ground for the afternoon of Saturday, July 4, but torrential rains which fell throughout the morning of that date caused President Riggs of the Society to announce at noon on Saturday that the pageant had been postponed until Sunday afternoon at the same hour. Said the "Palladium-Times":

PAGEANT DEPICTED EARLY SCENES OF HISTORIC OSWEGO

Greatest Crowd Gathered In City In Many Years Saw Event Held Yesterday Afternoon After Rain Caused Its Post- ponement Saturday

(Palladium-Times, Monday, July 6, 1925)

Amid a setting of natural beauty the story of Oswego's origin, development and progress through the ages was depicted before 15,000 people at Fort Ontario, Sunday afternoon. Considered as a spectacle, it was the most pretentious and colorful event ever given here. With the vast parade ground at the military reservation as the amphitheater the production was given on a scale that would have been impossible in a building, no matter how spacious.

On every side the event was acclaimed a fitting narrative of

Oswego's history and a representative celebration of the 200th anniversary of its settlement. The fact that the pageant was postponed from Saturday, Fourth of July, the original date, because of unpropitious weather, had the effect, apparently only of whetting popular interest in the display. It was a unique event in the experience of most Oswegonians and will be cherished for many years. There were some delays, but these were only incidental and could hardly have been avoided. When it is realized that nearly 500 people, practically all without previous experience in all fresco performances, took part, the smoothness of presentation and accuracy of depiction was extraordinary.

The crowd came early by automobile and on foot and after filling the grandstand seats and camping on the terraced slope on the north side of the field in front of the officers' quarters and fringing the South side, overflowed on the parade ground itself. However, the great plain, free of obstruction, left ample space for the presentation. A background of green trees furnished a screen along the east side of the grounds. The Officers' Club and other adjacent post buildings were used for dressing rooms.

Trumpets Announce Opening

A trumpet blast announced the opening of the pageant, and the Rev. T. F. Howard took his place at the megaphone to announce the episodes in prologue form written by Mrs. Josephine Wilhelm Wickser, author of the pageant, and who personally directed its presentation from the sidelines.

From behind the natural proscenium, Miss Louise Cays, as the Spirit of the Glacier, garbed in purple and with flowing blue scarf appeared on the greensward and with rhythmic, graceful movement led the glacial spirits, impersonated by Normal and High

school girls, in a symbolic representation of the action of the glaciers in forming the configuration of the present Great Lakes. The advent of the Sun Goddess, Miss Ethel Dailey, in streaming tresses and a gleaming golden robe, followed by raindrops and sunbeams, dispelled the spirits of the glacier and were followed by the flowers and birds, all in appropriate garb. These parts were taken by school children from Mexico and Minetto.

The Original Inhabitants

Next came the Indians, the aboriginal inhabitants, of the region, advancing cautiously and furtively as, though guarding against the beasts of the forests. Setting up their camp, the braves and squaws all garbed historically, were apprised by an Indian runner of the coming of the great white-robed Hiawatha, preceded by canoe bearers. He invoked his power to free the corn from blight, and the Indians broke into the corn dance to express their delight. In the following episode Sieur de Champlain (Byron S. Seamans, editor of the "Pulaski Democrat") and his retainers, the first white men to set foot on the soil of Oswego in 1615, came on the scene and were greeted by the Indians in kindly fashion. They exchanged gifts of a chain and beaver skin before Champlain continued on his journey.

Hardly had they gone when again the camp was stirred as the runner announced that the "black robes" were at hand. Father Simon LeMoyne and his companion in priestly garb came to instruct the natives in the Christian faith. Charles E. Riley as Father LeMoyne sang an *Ave Maria* and blessed the kneeling Indians.

Becomes Trading Post

Emerging from the chrysalis of an Indian camp, the site of Oswego was next shown as a trading post, where came Febure de la Barre, French governor of Canada, seated in chair of state,

backgrounded with royal purple and surrounded by soldiers. Dr. Charles W. Richards, of Phoenix, portrayed the governor. To the commands of De la Barre that the Indians have no further traffic with the English, Chief Garangula (Frank Riley) in eloquent and defiant gesture declared the natives independent of combination and the governor left the field. Sir William Johnson, the English governor (Brinsley Sheridan) then came with the olive branch and sought friendship with the Indians. The red-coated retinue fraternized with the tribesmen while Pontiac, their chief, (Victor Zaia) smoked the pipe of peace with Sir William, who later presented the chiefs with medals. In an interlude the characters of J. Fenimore Cooper's "Pathfinder" came to life and passed across the great stage.

Oswego As A Village

The signing of the treaty of peace at Paris, wherein Benjamin Franklin (George W. Bush) proved his foresightedness by securing the territory of the Great Lakes for the infant nation, was a picturesque episode. But the part that aroused most interest and provided the touch of humor that made everyone smile happily, was the depiction of village life at the opening of the Oswego canal and founding of the village of Oswego in 1828. Applause and laughter greeted the arrival of the villagers, wearing the grotesque garb of the period, stovepipe hats and stocks for the men, and the bombazine and hoop-skirts and poke bonnets by the women. Two baby carriages were trundled in to give the family a home atmosphere. The village band preceded by the village fathers, newly elected, and by Alvin Bronson (Frank P. Wagg), first president of the village, all decked out in conventional garb, and looking very magisterial and important. A "money musk" dance to the music of a fiddle was stepped by the grown-ups while the children played with toy balloons.

An interlude showing a garden party at the Schroepel mansion, town of Schroepel, was next shown, with gracious hostess and her little daughter receiving the quaintly garbed women. A violin solo and dance were given by the guests.

An Imposing Final Picture

The final episode was worth waiting for. It depicted the 13 States headed by New York, greeting Columbia (Mrs. A. D. McIntyre) proudly bearing aloft the Star Spangled Banner, and Uncle Sam (Frank O'Brien, a High school student) in the conventional dress of the American national paterfamilias. As the various groups from foreign lands appeared the great audience rose in enthusiasm and cheered as dressed in national costume and preceded by national standards the companies came on the parade ground, and saluted the American flag. Later the entire company, led by Mrs. McIntyre, sang "America," while the assemblage uncovered. Finally came "Miss Oswego" (Miss Sally McGrath) in shimmering white gown and flowing cloak, bearing the seal of Oswego and accompanied by the gifts of the city, represented by young women in suitable costume and bearing symbolic gifts. In might and splendid climax came the parade about the grounds, with Miss Oswego, Columbia and their escorts in the van, followed by Columbia's numerous family, native and adopted, and then all the characters in the impressive epic of Oswego's greatness. This evoked a demonstration that surpassed all the others.

No Confusion

Most of the crowd stayed to the end of the spectacle, and when it closed there was little confusion and disorder as the throng spread out over the grassy plain. The best of order was preserved by the military police and

the soldier guards. Motion pictures and stills of the pageant were taken during the display.

Several thousand cars were parked at the Ninth street entrance and were controlled by military traffic officers. Hundreds of cars were also parked outside the entrances, and the city police directed traffic at the exits.

A Few Complexions Spoiled

Although the sun was hot Lake Ontario furnished its customary tempering breeze. The girls suffered sun burns and some may develop a crop of freckles, but outside of that there were no casualties. The M. P.'s reported several cases of wandering children but restorations were made eventually and the human tangle straightened out. The presentation occupied more than two hours.

The music was furnished by the New York Central and Knights of Pythias bands under the direction of John Phillips and Charles E. Harris, respectively. Miss Genevieve Walter was at the piano during the dance of the flacial spirits.

Mrs. Wickser, the author and director of the pageant, was warmly congratulated on the success of the spectacle. She was ably assisted by Miss Lida Penfield, who wrote the foreword; Dr. James G. Riggs, Col. G. A. Herbst, Miss Adelaide Hinckley and Frederick W. Barnes. The souvenir program was of great assistance in following the sequence of the episodic development. It was printed by the Palladium-Times commercial press.

Tags were sold by the ladies of the Eastern Star.

A further minute in the secretary's account of the Historical Society's meeting of April 26, 1926 said concerning the pageant: "Miss Lida S. Penfield gave a glowing account of how the pageant was carried on and complimented every one but herself on its wonderful success." As a mat-

ter of record it should be set down here that Dr. Penfield, as we know her today, was in a very large measure responsible for the finished production of the pageant. As the time approached for its production, President Riggs of the Society was called away from Oswego, and to Miss Penfield fell the task, by his arrangement, of catching up all the loose ends revealed by rehearsals and uniting them, and seeing that every detail of the production that was foreseeable was carefully planned and carried through. Miss Penfield executed magnificently all the tasks assigned to her care.

Society Places Markers

It was in 1926 that the Historical Society began arranging for bronze markers to be placed at various historic locations in Oswego County, acting under an appropriation passed by the State Legislature for this purpose, to be expended through the State Department of Education. A few markers were placed at that time as the result of the society's co-operation and interest, but that the task remains far from complete is evidenced by the fact that the Board of Managers of the Society in 1942 prepared and filed with Dr. Arthur Pound, then New York State Historian, a list of 200 additional markers that desirably should yet be placed in Oswego County, the list having been prepared at the request of Dr. Pound as a part of the Post War program for the Society which the State might provide funds to aid in carrying out. (During the war no markers could be placed as metals were not available for casting them.)

Markers were placed in 1926 or soon thereafter on the site of the first school house in Oswego which also served as an early church, court house and town hall, the Pontiac marker, the McWhorter House and many others. It was as a result of this movement sponsored by the Historical

Society that in the next succeeding year Col. Hanford E. MacNider, Assistant Secretary of War and former National Commander of the American Legion, and Dr. A. C. Flick, New York State Historian, came to Oswego on July 9, 1927 for the unveiling of tablets commemorating New York's part in the American Revolution and were the principal speakers on that occasion when the St. Leger Tablet which now stands on the lawn of the Federal Building at Oswego was unveiled under the direction of Oswego Historical Society to commemorate the fact that St. Leger's expedition into the Mohawk Valley as an integral part of the Burgoyne Campaign was based on Oswego. The unveiling ceremony was carried out by detachments of the Oswego units of the National Guard and the Naval Militia.

Place Pontiac Tablet

Earlier on the same occasion the members of Fort Ontario Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, carried out the unveiling of the Pontiac Tablet which now stands near the Pontiac Hotel to commemorate the visit of Pontiac, chief of the Ottawas, to Oswego in 1766 to meet Sir William Johnson and a group of British army officers with whom Pontiac consummated a treaty under the terms of which thereafter the Indians who had formerly adhered to the French power in America, agreed to recognize the British power as supreme, an agreement that Pontiac never thereafter violated.

In the absence of an adequate account in the society's records of the unveiling of the Pontiac and St. Leger tablets in the presence of a distinguished company, we must turn to the columns of the "Palladium-Times" of July 9, 1927 for a more complete account of that event of state-wide significance:

UNVEIL BOULDERS TO COMMEMORATE HISTORIC EVENTS

Col. Hanford MacNider Principal Speaker At Ceremony

(Palladium-Times, July 9, 1927)

Significant and memorable occurrences in the history of America were commemorated with fitting ceremonies at Oswego, Saturday afternoon. Two tablets were unveiled at West First and Oneida streets, one commemorating the Burgoyne campaign, marking the spot from which Col. Barry St. Leger, British commander, departed from Oswego, for the purpose of joining with Burgoyne in the campaign to control New York state, and the other the place where the great Indian chieftain Pontiac, met Sir William Johnson, and negotiated a treaty of peace.

Honored by the presence of Col. Hanford MacNider, Assistant Secretary of War; Dr. Alexander C. Flick, State Historian, and several other state, county and city officials, an audience of several hundred gathered on the lawns and portico of the Pontiac Hotel and in the streets to witness the ceremonies. The exercises were held at the northwest corner of the portico and the voices of the speakers were broadcast to the crowd through the microphone. The hotel facade was adorned by decorations of blue and white and the American flag.

The two boulders, the Burgoyne campaign marker on the Post Office lawn, and the Pontiac stone on the Pontiac lawn were draped in American flags, and marked by a flag on a staff. At the appointed time the flags were removed revealing the bronze tablets with suitable inscriptions of commemoration.

The exercises marking the St. Leger episode were conducted under the direction of the Oswego Historical Society, with Dr.

James G. Riggs, presiding. The commemoration of the Pontiac and Johnson meeting was conducted by Fort Oswego Chapter, D. A. R., at which Mrs. James G. Riggs, regent, presided.

The army and naval services represented by Sergeant Fred Gray, Company D, 108th N. Y. Infantry, and Machinists Mate, 1st class, Thomas F. Dewine, U. S. N. R., removed the flag from the St. Leger tablet. Mrs. H. Roe Nesbitt and Miss Esther McCarthy of Fort Oswego chapter, unveiled the Pontiac boulder and tablet.

Company D, commanded by Captain P. H. Feeney attended the ceremonies, and music was furnished by the New York Central band.

Mayor Conway Speaks

Opening the exercises Mayor Daniel H. Conway briefly stated the object of the celebrations, stating they marked historic events in the history of the country. He welcomed Col. MacNider, whom, he said, came in the 1927 fashion by plane, and introduced Dr. James G. Riggs in suitable words.

Dr. Riggs accepted the honor and presented Rev. T. F. Howard, pastor of St. Paul's church, who delivered an invocation for Divine grace on national and state officials, the people of the United States, and on the occasion.

Dr. Riggs recited briefly the significant incidents in the celebration of the sesqui-centennial of the Burgoyne expedition of which the unveiling of the St. Leger table was a part, and the purposes of these commemorative exercises, first an appreciation by all Americans of the hardships and dangers of the pioneers and patriots in founding the Republic, and the second, to communicate to our newer citizens the importance of these events in the founding of the nation of which they have good fortune to be citizens.

Scouts bearing a message were despatched approaching by Dr.

Riggs, and he took from the boys' hands, a scroll which he handed to Col. George A. Herbst, and which the latter read as a message telling of the departure from Carleton Island of Gen. Barry St. Leger and his force of British and their intent of proceeding to Fort Stanwix, near Rome. This message was passed on after being read by Col. Herbst to two other Boy Scouts who stood to attention, with instructions that they deliver it to the commander at Fort Stanwix.

A solo, *The Americans Come*, was superbly sung by Elmer Hintz, Miss Marion Angel accompanying on the piano. The song's title furnished the text for Dr. Riggs' introduction of Col. MacNider, who served overseas and is past national commander of the American Legion.

Col. MacNider Speaker

"If Safety First had been the motto of the colonists in 1776 and thereabouts," Col. MacNider said, "this celebration might have been very different indeed. St. Leger's army might never have met defeat, and might have joined Burgoyne as was planned. Then the Revolutionary War would have had a different outcome, and the American public might never have been born. It is hard for Americans of the present day, citizens of this great nation with its opportunities, its comforts and protection to visualize those pioneer conditions. Besides the constant warfare with the elements, protection of their homes from the assaults of the Indian foes, these pioneers were confronted by combat with one of the most powerful nations of the earth, with a sea power and land forces superior in arms and numbers. Our forefathers were ill-equipped for the struggle in resources and arms, and it took sublime courage to face these formidable obstacles. But by their courage and skill supported by a spirit of patriotism that made them un-

conquerable these men, endangering their own lives and possessions, not only wrested victory from defeat, but founded a new order of civilization, a new brand of citizenship, unknown to the world of that time, and destined to give to the defense of liberty throughout the world a new strength. The holy fire which animated them swept these inexperienced men and inspired them with a lofty spirit that made liberty possible and founded the new nation now grown great among all the peoples of the world."

Col. MacNider said that we of today may well ask ourselves if we are inspired by the same spirit that fired the ragged Continentals, and if we are adding to the trust, which they safeguarded with such fidelity and integrity. "Are we," he said, "making this nation of ours, a cleaner, finer and better America for the coming generations? The name of American is deserved by no man who is not giving more to America than he receives." With this thought eloquently and forcefully expressed Col. MacNider concluded his address amidst a burst of applause.

Dr. Riggs thanked the speaker for his inspiring message and asked that he convey from the Mayor of Oswego to the Mayor of Chicago whither he was bound by airplane that Oswego had this day fittingly commemorated a part of the Burgoyne campaign. Col. MacNider, accepted the commission, and with hurried handshakes for the chairman, Mayor and other officials left the platform under escort of American Legion officials, and members, Col. Herbst and Major C. S. Martin. He was driven at once to the flying field to resume his flight westward.

State Historial Talks

Dr. A. C. Flick, the next speaker, quoted from Macaulay, the historian, that "any people which does not revere the worthy deeds of their ancestors will not pro-

duce anything worthy of remembrance by their descendants." The speaker reviewed at some detail the Burgoyne campaign, which had for its object the subjugation of New York, the richest of the colonies, from which it was hoped that the revolution would be crushed. This plan was conceived in London and comprised four major movements, of which the march of St. Leger from Montreal to Carleton Island, to Oswego, and thence by the Oswego and Oneida Lake to Fort Stanwix, the capture of which was to be followed by the conquering of the Mohawk Valley, and a triumphal entry into Albany, and union there with Burgoyne and the other expeditions. Dr. Flick said that Oswego was a frontier outpost.

Dr. Flick also gave a rescription of the defects of the other movements in the Burgoyne campaign and said it was the turning point of the Revolution. With its collapse the prestige of the colonists was assured. Loans of money from Holland and other nation, and of ships, men and arms from France followed in such volume as to make the success of the Revolution assured.

The speaker said that the unveiling today was the second of 15 similar ceremonies in New York state scheduled for this year in observance of the sesqui-centennial of the Burgoyne campaign. The first was held July 4, at Crown Point on Lake Champlain, with an attendance of 12,000. He congratulated the Oswego Historical association of which Dr. Riggs is president, the D. A. R., and the citizens of Oswego on the installation of boulders and tablets and the day's the ceremonies.

Local Historian's Paper

Dr. Riggs introduced Miss Harriet E. Stevens, city historian and D. A. R. chapter historian, who read an address describing the historical event commemorated by the Pontiac tablet. Miss Stevens concluded her address by stating

that the treaty negotiated here was held sacred by the Indians and British as long as their right to make such a treaty held on this continent.

"Our Fort Ontario was the last point evacuated* by the British after the close of the Revolution, being held for thirteen years, because as the key to the whole territory, they doubtless hoped some time to regain possession of it," continued Miss Stevens.

"Oswego still stands as from the first at the 'meeting of the waters,' looking hopefully for growth and prosperity through the advancement that shall come through the development of those same waters—the Oswego River and Lake Ontario.

"Today, Fort Oswego Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the State of New York dedicate this boulder, found in this vicinity, and the bronze tablet on it, to the memory of the Great Chief, Pontiac, who here signed a treaty which eventually made possible this State, this Nation and our present civilization."

"No resistance was expected here by St. Leger and none was given. But," Miss Stevens pointed out, "we Americans owe a debt of gratitude to Silas Towne, the intrepid scout, who spied on St. Leger, and sent warning of his approach so that the forces at Fort Stanwix were informed of his numbers and able to meet him effectively when St. Leger's army arrived before Stanwix after having moved from Oswego up the Oswego River and through Oneida Lake."

Miss Stevens' fine address held the interest of the audience throughout. It was followed by the rendition of "Wish Blossom" by Mrs. Eloise Perry Brown, with Miss Susie Hart accompanying on the piano.

The final ceremony, the unveil-

ing of the Pontiac boulder followed, and the ceremonies concluded with the Star Spangled Banner, rendered by the New York Central Band, the audience standing.

Every detail of the ceremonies was carried out properly and with due regard for the significance of the historical events celebrated. Boy Scouts were effective in seating the audience and in other ways. Many visitors from many parts of the county attended.

Earlier on the same day that the St. Leger and Pontiac tablets were unveiled the dedication of another tablet and boulder had taken place at Montcalm Park under the joint sponsorship of the Oswego Historical Society, Fort Oswego Chapter of the D. A. R., and the State of New York. The text on this tablet reads as follows:

State of New York
Montcalm Park

This land was a part of the site of
Fort George
1755-1850

Fort Oswego Chapter, Daughters
of American Revolution Per-
petual Guardians From
1913

The boulders supporting the St. Leger, Pontiac and Fort George tablets are of reddish granite. They were found on the property of Dr. Richard K. Piez, at the time a member of the faculty of the Oswego State Normal School, whose estate on Dolliver Hill lay in close proximity to the present Oswego State Teachers' College. Stones of this type, while frequently found in Canada, are rarely found in the Oswego area.

At its September 1927 meeting, the Historical Society gave further attention to the matter of the desirability of providing additional markers throughout Oswego County to identify the places of historic interest for visitors and oncoming generations. (This meeting was otherwise notable for the fact that it was the first of the historical society to be held at Tanner Memorial, as the

* Fort Ontario was among the last of the border forts to be yielded by the British into the control of the United States but it was not the last one.

society had hitherto since the date of its foundation usually met either at the Fortnightly Club, or during the 1920s at the Hotel Pontiac.) Suggestions were made for tablets to be placed near the mouth of the Salmon River to mark the approximate location in which Champlain's boats landed in what is now known as Oswego County in 1615; at Oswego marking the point of departure of General Amherst with his army against Montreal in 1760, and at other locations were discussed. Unfortunately to date neither of these markers has been provided, but both are included in the society's program for the placing of markers in the near future.

Sought Name Change

Pulaski Chamber of Commerce at that time upon receiving a visit from a delegation of Historical Society members voted enthusiastically to join with the society in the erection of the Champlain marker, and in providing a suitable program to accompany its unveiling. The chamber, however, asked the assistance of the Historical Society in persuading the State Park Commission to change the name of the new state park near Selkirk Beach then being created from "Selkirk State Park" which the state had used up to that time, and which local public sentiment felt was inappropriate, to "Pulaski State Park" which met with popular approval. The matter of placing a marker at the point evidently was lost sight of in the midst of the controversy that subsequently arose regarding the selection of the most appropriate name for the new park. The park commissioners remained adamant in their decision against the strength of local feeling, and the park is in consequence is still known today as "Selkirk Shores State Park", although a special committee of the Historical Society worked zealously with the Pulaski group in an effort to bring about another determination.

Permanent Home Promised

From the fall of 1927 onwards down until the present time Tanner Memorial in Oswego has been the headquarters of the Oswego County Historical Society through the generous action on the part of the members of Ft. Oswego Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, in inviting the Historical Society to share with it the quarters in the Tanner Memorial which belong to the D. A. R. In recognition of this courtesy the Historical Society makes an annual contribution to the D. A. R. funds each year, but the amount is not proportionate to the space occupied by the Historical Society in the building nor the use that the latter puts the meeting room in the Memorial. Three large rooms and the hall on the second floor of the Memorial building house the Historical Society's collection of relics, manuscripts, books and memorabilia. Three other rooms in the Memorial are also used to store property of the Historical Society at present, and many other articles are stored on the premises of the late Daniel A. Williams, who served the society for many years as a member of its Board of Managers.

However, in time the headquarters and possessions of the Historical Society will be more spaciouly housed and more properly provided for under a single roof, the society has reason to believe as a public spirited citizen, long interested in the society and its work, and in the city of Oswego, has advised the Society's officers informally that he is providing in his will a substantial building, well located, for the use of the society as its permanent home.

February 22, 1932, Oswego County Historical Society joined with Fort Oswego Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, in arranging a program for the suitable observance of the 200th anniversary of the birth of George Washington as a part of a nation-wide movement in which

the nation's capital, Congress, the Army and Navy and patriotic societies throughout the nation joined. The Oswego committee in charge was headed by Dr. James G. Riggs, president of the Historical Society. From the "Oswego Palladium-Times" of February 23, 1932 we learn the details of the Oswego observance as follows:

WASHINGTON BI - CENTENNIAL

Eloquent Tribute To Nation's Founder By Francis E. Cullen Was Followed By Grand March With Participants In Colonial Costumes

(Palladium-Times, Feb. 23, 1932)

Colonial pageantry, richly colored and patriotic in spirit, was presented at the State Armory Monday night in celebration of the Washington bi-centennial. It was Oswego's tribute to the first and greatest of Americans. A vast audience was stirred to almost continuous applause at the amazing, almost breath-taking beauty of the spectacle. The picture was one that impressed by its variety of costume and color, and the precision with which the program was carried out.

Exercises marking the occasion were brief and fitting, with Francis E. Cullen's tribute to Washington a gem of eloquence.

Impressive Setting

Setting of the function was impressive. The great drill hall was decorated with flags, and bleachers were built up on the East and West sides as well as on the North and South. Every bit of seating capacity was taken in bleachers and in galleries, and hundreds stood at vantage points around the floor. Spectators enjoyed the affair as much as participants and dancers.

Musically, the pageant was exceptional. The celebrated 28th U. S. Infantry Band, one of the finest in the army, played marches and selections, the Oswego Civic Orchestra, Oswego Normal Or-

chestra and Oswego High school orchestra contributed, and musicians of the 28th Infantry formed an orchestra for dancing. A broadcast of the dance music was made over WSYR.

Opening the program with suitable patriotic selections by the army band, the first picture was a pantomime "The Spirit of '76" in which Morris Henning, Robert Schuler and Jack Bareham participated. It was presented while the Star Spangled Banner was rendered.

To the stirring strains of "Hail to the Chief," George and Martha Washington and retinue entered and took their assigned places at a decorated hut on the East side of the armory. The Colonial atmosphere was perfectly expressed in the next number, "Minuets," participated in by young women students of the Oswego Normal. Some impersonated young gallants, wearing black Colonial attire, with white stocks, hose and buckle shoes. The quaint beauty of the old-time dance was never better shown than by those graceful and charming young women. They were generously applauded.

Orchestra selections by the musicians of the Civic, Normal and High orchestras served as preludes to the speaking exercises, with Mayor John F. Otis introducing Mr. Cullen.

Oswego Linked To Washington

How Oswego, the "little city we hold so dear," is linked with the victories and successes of Washington was recalled by Mr. Cullen in his address, following his introduction by Mayor Otis. He referred to the (Jay) treaty of 1796 as one of Washington's last great acts, freeing Oswego and surrounding territory from British rule long after the Revolution had been won.

Although Washington might well have spent his 67 years as a Virginia planter in peaceful quiet, yet today, Mr. Cullen said, the plaudits of the civilized world are

laid at his feet in ceremonies by the Congress, the army and navy and the people of this country as well as citizens of France, England and others. Radio today actually resounded Lexington's "shot around the world."

"We, too, in Oswego gather now to lay our wreath on the tomb of Washington," he said. He spoke first of Washington as a soldier, saying he led a small force against the greatest military power in the world, through Valley Forge to Yorktown, Oswego played her part in this contest.

"At Mexico Point," Mr. Cullen said, "lies Silas Town, great Washington spy." His life recalled how St. Leger started from Oswego up the Oswego river, over Oneida lake and Wood Creek to the Mohawk valley to meet Burgoyne and proceed down the Hudson to New York. But for St. Leger's defeat at Oriskany, however, there might not have been Yorktown.

"We have a history inscribed in our hearts," the speaker said, further recalling the Indian trails and Montcalm's conquests in this part of the country.

"Until (July 15) 1796 we did not get actual freedom from the British domain. Today we share all splendor of that accomplishment."

"I have spoken of Washington as a great military leader. As first president, he showed himself to be a great, kindly man, guiding the infant republic through the harsh seas. There was often need of compromise in the 13 separate states, which he proved himself great enough to master."

The speaker pictured Washington in a third role as Constitution maker.

"Perhaps his greatest contribution was the harmony he brought to the making of the Constitution. He commanded respect through the deeds he had already done and stilled the frequent turmoils."

But not alone as a soldier,

president and chairman of the constitutional convention did Mr. Cullen praise the man. He revered his great character. Washington put the American people back of the Constitution and made it a success.

"We gather not for the glorification of Washington," the speaker declared, "his glory is secure. The reason Congress has decreed this nation-wide celebration is to instill in the present generation anew the principles of the founder of this republic. It is to tell once more the character of Washington."

"Once more the happiness and prosperity of 120 million people shall be returned through the principles of government laid down by Washington. One hundred and two hundred years from now we will still be celebrating him. The Washington shaft at the capital will still be standing and the Star Spangled Banner will be flying over this nation."

Grand March Crowning Spectacle

As the band played formation was made in the hallways and ante-rooms for the crowning spectacle of the evening—the grand march. Entrance of the marchers was signalized by music from the band. Leading the procession were Lieut. John J. Baker, garbed as a trapper in coonskin hat and leather suit, who acted as grand marshal, and Miss Nancy Poore of Fort Ontario. She wore a Colonial doll costume of brocade silk, with gold-embroidered banding, the bodice finished in touches of yellow. A string of flash lights was hidden in the fold of the wide flowing skirt, creating a striking effect. George and Martha Washington and their aides followed, and then groups in varied costumes, some as colonial dames, others as maids and swain in the dress of the Revolutionary period, followed by national groups of children, identified by their costumes. As the 200 or more participants assembled on the floor

the beauty of the picture was rewarded by continued cheering. The dancers were first received by George and Martha Washington. Moving about in a restricted space because of the large crowd, the figures were performed with precision, but with grace of motion and loveliness of color. Applause came almost spontaneously. The march was made to the accompaniment of martial music by the band.

Brilliant Spectacle

In the maze of evolutions made by the animated lines of marchers, not a misstep occurred. Every time that lines reformed partner met partner exactly as planned. The march was probably the most brilliant indoor spectacle ever seen in Oswego.

The formation of the march was as follows:

Grand marshal.

George Washington and Mrs. Washington.

Aides.

General C. D. Roberts and Mrs. Roberts, followed by officers and ladies from Fort Ontario.

Members of Bicentennial Committee.

Patriotic Organizations in Chronological Order.

Fraternal organizations.

Humane and Benevolent organizations.

National groups.

Business and miscellaneous associations.

Citizens in Colonial costumes.

The brilliant array of gorgeous Colonial costumes gave a touch of exquisite beauty to the colorful affair. The brocade, patches and powdered wig atmosphere of George Washington's last birthday ball in 1798 was revived by the guests who represented the distinguished personages of history and who appeared as charming as the hosts and hostesses of colonial days. There were among others the dignified, gracious George Washington and Martha Washington, John Hancock, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jef-

erson, Alexander Hamilton and Mrs. Hamilton, James and Dolly Madison. Coiffures were elaborate to say the least and the gowns sedate and alluring in colonial flowered patterns, chintz, celanese taffeta, organdie in paniered design, polonaise offsetting long flowing skirts, all ornamented with dainty frills and touches of passementerie corded puffings and quaint fishus, and in striking contrast one to another.

Impersonate Distinguished Folk

The spectacle unfolded with the entrance of George and Martha Washington, who were impersonated by Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Waterbury.

Mrs. Waterbury was the charming Martha in a quaint gown of pink taffeta, designed in long flowing skirt with cross lacings of ribbon and box rushings adorning the skirt. A gleaming tracery of embroidery was used in trimming the bodice. She carried a dainty white lace fan. Mr. Waterbury wore the uniform of a Revolutionary general, the waist coat of blue velvet, being embellished with old gold. Their aides and ladies in waiting were Mrs. Leroy Nichols, wife of Captain Nichols, of Fort Ontario, gowned in pink and white, the bodice adorned with lace fishu, the panniered skirt long and full: Mrs. A. W. Stewart, wife of Lieutenant Stewart, who wore a lovely gown of pale blue taffeta with an off-the shoulder decolletage and wide bertha, and Lieutenant Hardick and Lieutenant Stewart who were in officers uniform.

Others in picturesque costumes were Mrs. John J. Fulmer, of Fort Ontario, in flowered taffeta trimmed with silver bandings, Mrs. Charles D. Roberts in lavender with wide lace bertha; Mrs. James A. Poore in a striking frock of black and white designed in hoop skirt fashion Mrs. Harry S. Wilbur wore an apricot taffeta bouffant gown with tiers of tiny ruffles, and Mrs. Henry Welshaar was in a chic pink lace with touches of green.

Mrs. David R. Nimocks wore a demure costume of black chiffon with draped skirt artistically finished in pleatings and ruffles. One of the striking gowns was that of Mrs. Frederic Conde, a period gown of rich black taffeta, the skirt touching the floor and banded with black velvet ribbons, the bodice touched with white.

Mrs. Luther W. Mott, chairman of the committee on costumes, wore a period gown of colonial blue taffeta, the full skirt being gathered to a tight bodice which had a bertha of cream lace. The skirt was finished with inserts of tiny black ribbon velvet. Other fashionably attired colonial dames were from Court Oswego, Catholic Daughters of America, the Daughters of Union Veterans, the Auxiliary of Sons of Veterans and other patriotic societies.

National Groups Participate

Music for the minuets of colonial times was furnished by the Normal School orchestra. The young people participating included Misses Florence Edmonds, Dorothy Anderson, Bernice Durefey, Nedra Farrell, Helen Tucker, Louise Angel, Helen Pelusso, Hattie Jerritt, Mary Clancy, Anne Dwyer, Dora Jones, Ruth Jacqueline, Louise David, Betty Becker, Lena Smith, Helen Fallon, Winifred Judd, Frances Leadley, Mary Lynch, Torminilla Penna, Edeltrude Smith, Grace Stowell, Virginia Burke, Mary Berileman, Margaret Keyes, Mary Phelps, Vera McCombie, Mary Morrow, Edith Roden, Ruth Thomas, Wilhelmena Berben.

National groups participating in the grand march, represented Germany, France, Ireland, Poland and Italy, all in the colorful costumes of their country.

Ending of the march was marked by the band swinging into a lively dance number of the present time, while the marchers stepped around the floor.

The colonial ball was also a colorful affair, with costumed

men and women dotting the floor and furnishing contrast to the modern dress of many dancers.

Great credit was given Dr. James G. Riggs, president of Oswego Historical Society, chairman of the committee, which arranged the celebration. Dr. Riggs was compelled to leave before the affair was over to take a night train for Washington where he will attend the annual meeting of the National Education Association and speak at an Oswego Normal school alumni breakfast.

The celebration was a success financially, it was said today. While tickets were priced at a low figure, expenses were held to a minimum. A detailed report will be presented later by the committee and any surplus will go to the city work relief fund.

Through the years 1931-1934 the Historical Society's meetings continued, but on no fixed schedule. Meetings were called by President Riggs when an occasion or opportunity seemed to make one desirable. Papers continued to be prepared and presented before the society by both county residents and visitors. In the meantime the society's facilities for protecting and displaying the many historical articles that were beginning to come into its possession through gifts, were being improved. Handsome mahogany and glass display cases were purchased along with plate glass show cases for this purpose. A large safe was purchased and installed at Tanner Memorial for protecting against fire some of the more valuable of the society's possessions which were not already being protected at the Oswego City Savings Bank under the care of Curator Elliott B. Mott.

Death of President Riggs

February 20, 1935 Dr. James G. Riggs, president of Oswego Historical Society since 1924, during a part of which time he also served as president of the New

York State Historical Association, died unexpectedly at his home in Oswego. He had been ill only a few hours. Throughout the period of his residence in Oswego of more than 25 years during a large part of which time he was principal of the Oswego State Normal school, Dr. Riggs had been vigilantly active in the cause of local, regional and New York State History. It was largely through his influence that the Oswego Society was successful in bringing about the holding of the annual meeting of the New York State Historical Association in Oswego in 1913. Later he led the movement which resulted in 1924 in the resuscitation of the Oswego Historical Society seemingly at the time moribund. Under his leadership as the president of the society from 1924 until his death, many of the activities which reflected much credit upon the local society were undertaken and successfully carried through. His active mind conceived the Pageant of Oswego which in 1925 commemorated the completion of two centuries of activity by the whites at Oswego, the placing of local historical markers throughout the county, the celebration of the bi-centennial of George Washington's birth and many other events undertaken and sponsored in whole or in part by Oswego Historical Society. Realizing that he was stronger in the conception of ideas than in their detailed execution, he was often satisfied to outline the scope and the objectives of a program and some of the means by which he thought they might be best attained, and then to entrust to others in whose ability he had faith the execution of the details. If his administration of the affairs of our society had any weakness it lay in the direction of the absence from its policies of definite schedules of meetings for the society which most similar societies have found of considerable importance in arousing and maintaining interest in the so-

ciety's work on the part of its membership.

That Oswego Historical Society owes to Dr. Riggs's guidance a greater debt than it can ever repay may be gleaned from the simple statement which appeared in the society's year book for the year 1939 which was dedicated to his memory: "To the Memory of Dr. James G. Riggs Whose Efforts Were Largely Responsible for Keeping Alive for a Period of Almost a Quarter of a Century the Oswego Historical Society, this Volume is Appreciatively Dedicated."

Reorganization of 1937

Throughout the remainder of the year 1935 following Dr. Rigg's lamented death and the greater part of the next succeeding year, the Historical Society was inactive. No successor to Dr. Riggs as president of the society was immediately chosen, but Frederick W. Barnes, senior vice president continued as head of the society performing in the interim such presidential duties as it was necessary to undertake. The remaining officers of the society continued to hold over until their successors were elected. However, late in the year 1936 Fred P. Wright, the Recording Secretary of the Society, and Vice-President Barnes after consulting together, and consulting with other members of the society, reached the conclusion that the time was ripe for the resumption of regular meetings on the part of the society and its concentration upon building a wider field for usefulness to the general community. Accordingly the gentlemen just named issued a call jointly for a meeting of the membership of the Society to be held at Tanner Memorial January 20, 1937. At this meeting, at which Vice-President Barnes presided, he spoke most feelingly of the character and of the work of the late Dr. J. G. Riggs as president of the society and reviewed some of the acts of Dr. Riggs for which Oswego Histor-

ical Society would always remain in his debt. Ralph M. Faust gave a paper on "Early Patents Granted by the Land Commissioners of New York in Territory Later Embraced in Oswego County."

New Officers Chosen

Upon the recommendation of the nominating committee as presented through its chairman, John S. Parsons, the following officers were elected to serve for one year: President, Edwin M. Waterbury; vice-presidents, Ralph M. Faust, Frederick W. Barnes; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Emma B. Rowe; Recording Secretary, Fred P. Wright; Treasurer, Miss Gertrude A. Shepherd, Curator, Elliott B. Mott; Members of the Board of Managers, John S. Parsons, Mrs. James G. Riggs, Mrs. Frederick Leighton, Daniel A. Williams, Harold A. Hubbard.

The new president was given authority to appoint a special committee of the members "to consider and recommend to the society the best procedure to expand this society into a society county-wide in scope and also to consider whether or not the (corporate) name of the society should be changed. It was tentatively suggested that the society should arrange for four stated meetings a year with perhaps one other summer meeting at some historic spot or in the nature of a picnic." The president was also authorized to appoint a committee on membership.

Gifts For Civil War Room

During 1937 the society received from the New York State Armory at Oswego a gift of the Civil War collection of swords, cutlasses, muskets, battle flags and other relics of that war to be added to the society's collection. Earlier the Fulton Post of the G. A. R. had presented its Civil War collection to the society for permanent preservation. Since that time many additional contributions have been received

from private sources so that a Civil War room would seem to be suggested for the society's permanent home when this shall become a reality. The City of Oswego also presented to the society in this same year the collection of portraits of early Oswego village and city officials which had graced the City Hall for many years.

The first year of revived activity of the Historical Society saw the membership rise from the 32 who renewed their memberships at the first meeting held in 1937 to 104 at the end of that year. By November 1939 the membership roll had increased to 200. At the time of the annual meeting of the society in January 1942 the membership had risen to 292. Soon thereafter it passed the 300 mark where it has since continuously remained in spite of inroads made by deaths, removals, and circumstances attendant upon the wartime period. The Society's membership of 325 at present is the highest in its history.

Johnson Bicentennial Observed

The Sir William Johnson Bicentennial Celebration was participated in by Oswego Historical Society as a feature of the general celebration of the birth of England's distinguished Indian commissioner by Mohawk Valley and other historical societies and associations of New York State and Canada. Oswego county's observance took the form a pageant presented on the evenings of May 25-26 at the Kingsford Park school auditorium before large and appreciative audiences. The lines of the pageant, written by Ralph M. Faust, a vice president of the Historical Society, dealt with the incidents which connect Sir William Johnson's name inseparably with Oswego. Here he first appeared as a participant in the fur trade with the Indians, but soon he held a contract with the Colony of New York for supplying provisions for Fort Oswego, and later for Fort

Ontario. Here he came with Prideaux at the head of the successful expedition against Fort Niagara, surrendered by the French in 1759. Here he conferred in councils with the Indians and notably in 1766* when he met Pontiac, chief of the Ottawas, accompanied by his sub-chiefs, on the west bank of the Oswego River and entered into a treaty under which the Indians, who had previously adhered to the French cause in America, agreed to recognize the English power as supreme in America.

The pageant was colorfully and beautifully costumed. The souvenir program of the event, issued by the Historical Society, bore on its front page the reproduction of a drawing, especially prepared for that purpose by George Grey, the distinguished mural artist who was made an honorary member of the society in recognition of his work in local history while he spent several months in Oswego engaged in the execution of commissions. The committee which was named to supervise for the Historical Society the production of the pageant had the following membership: Ralph M. Faust, chairman; Miss Frieda Schuelke, Miss Lida Penfield, Miss Ruth A. Raby, Miss Hilda Guy, Frederick W. Barnes and Dr. Richard K. Piez. Actors in the pageant were principally members of the student body of the Kingsford Park school.

Care For Dr. Walker's Grave

Early in 1939 the society brought about an arrangement whereby members of Elmina Spencer Tent No. 50 of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, agreed henceforth to see that care is given annually to the grave in Rural Home

* In this same year Johnson conferred at Fort Ontario with Major Robert Rogers here at the head of his famous "Rangers" on his way to Mackinac to enforce for the British government new regulations governing the activities of British traders dealing with the Indians.

Cemetery, Oswego Town, of Dr. Mary Walker of Oswego, one of the feminine heroines of the Civil War who served as a surgeon in that war, who was confined for a period of four months to a Confederate prison following her capture. Her services were commended by two presidents, by Congress and the Secretary of War. Dr. Walker later became nationally famous as a leader in various feminists movements, several of which attained in modern times their early goals.

In June of the same year our society acted as host to the Central New York Local Historians' at a meeting held at the Mexico Central school with our president presiding, Ralph M. Faust of our society and Hugh M. Flick, custodian of State Public Records of Albany being among the speakers of the occasion. Joseph M. Bonner of Pulaski, a member of our society who was also president of the Central New York group, died May 27, a few days before the meeting at Mexico.

Year Books Since 1939

Since 1905 the Society had issued no publications other than programs, a membership roster and similar minor publications. However, early in 1939 the Board of Managers recommended to the Society with approval that authorization be given for the printing at the close of the year of the text of the papers read before the members of the society in that calendar year together with the list of officers and committees serving the society for the year and a necrology, the book to be presented without additional charge to all members of the society in good standing at the next succeeding annual meeting. The membership voted approval of the plan which, with some slight changes, has since continued to be followed, a year book having been issued every year since that time in the month of January and distributed to the membership.

Members, now, however, pay 25 cents additional to go towards the cost of printing the book and distributing it to the members.

In February 1939, a revised and complete roster of the active members of the society, together with their addresses was printed and distributed to the members free of charge. It also contained a copy of the constitution and by-laws and was identified as "The Second Publication of the Oswego Historical Society." The latter designation was a misnomer, however, as it ignored the second and third publications made in 1901 and 1905 by William Pierson Judson under the seal of the society. The roster was actually the fourth and not the second formal publication of the society.

Unrealized Hopes

High hopes were raised in the breasts of members of the official family of the society late in December 1942 when the society received a letter from the Division of Archives and History of the State of New York inviting it to prepare and approve a schedule of objectives for accomplishment by our Society in the post-war period for possible inclusion, in whole or in part, in New York State's Postwar Planning Program with the possibility that state aid might later be rendered available by the Legislature for the accomplishment of some of the more desirable and feasible objectives proposed by local societies. Request was made that several copies of the draft of the society's proposals be prepared and filed in Albany by January 1, 1943. Officers and board members met at 3 o'clock in the afternoon of December 31, and remained in session several hours considering and approving various programs to be set up in the document proposed to be filed on the following day. Previously a questionnaire had been sent out to more than 100 members of the society asking them to make recommendations as to objectives

they thought should be included in the proposed program. When the officers had departed, the Society's president worked all night typing and filling in the forms provided by the State that the documents might be filed on time. It included recommendations for the placing of nearly 200 additional markers at historic locations in the county, the photographing of more than 100 buildings or homes of historic significance, plans for the possible purchase of the Old Market and its restoration to its original state and permanent preservation as a community and historic center; for the possible and alternative purchase and restoration of the Old First Presbyterian church for a similar purpose and a number of other special objectives, such as the restoration and future care of neglected cemeteries in which pioneer residents of the county are interred and other similar matters. While no action was finally taken upon the programs filed by our own or any of the other historical societies of the state, our society had the satisfaction of hearing from a high state authority that it had filed the best and most comprehensive program of any that was filed with the state in response to the invitation that had been extended generally to all local historical societies in the state.

World's Fair Exhibit

The Society collaborated in 1939 in arranging for Oswego County's representation in the New York State Building at the "World's Fair" held on Long Island in that year. A feature of the mural exhibit which principally represented Oswego county at the fair was a replica of the Oswego Medal struck off by Louis XV of France in commemoration of the French victory at Oswego under Montcalm in 1756. Captain Christian Hildebrand, then stationed at Fort Ontario, a member of the society, took a most active part in arranging for

the Oswego County exhibit in the State Building.

A "pilgrimage" to locations in the county of historic interest was made by members of the Oswego County Historical Society on Saturday, September 14, 1940, the event being the first of the kind ever to be sponsored by the society. Nearly 200 members of the society and their guests participated, starting from old Fort Ontario's parade ground at 9 o'clock in the morning. Stops were made en route at Battle Island, Fulton (to inspect the locations where the Upper and Lower Landings were located in the days of river traffic, and the site of Fort Bradstreet), the Hinmanville Lock, the best preserved of the original locks of the Oswego Canal, Phoenix where an historical exhibit had been arranged in the Sweet Memorial Buildings by George Chesbro and others for our inspection, then on for a delightful visit to the Schroepel Mansion where Miss Schroepel, a granddaughter of George Schroepel who built the mansion, and her brother were our hosts. At Fort Brewerton J. E. Milton guided the party around the earthworks, and related the history of the fort most interestingly.

Pilgrimage in 1940

A stop was made at 1 o'clock at "Kempwick," the present home of Mr. and Mrs. Clark E. Jackson which was built in the 1790s by Adrian Vandercamp. Vandercamp, the progenitor of this family in the United States, was one of the prominent men of New York State in his period. A picnic dinner was enjoyed in a grove opposite the Jackson home which is in close proximity to Oneida Lake.

In the afternoon stops were made at the George Scriba Mansion at Constantia and at the quaint, old Episcopal Church in that place in the church yard of which George Scriba is buried. At Central Square the party in-

spected the route of the first plank road to be built in the United States, and then moved on to Colosse to visit the Baptist Church at that place, erected in 1823, the oldest church building yet standing in Oswego County, and to French Street to inspect the interior of St. Ann's Church, erected in 1840 by immigrants from France, and one of the most interesting churches in the county where the final stop of the day was made.

Another "pilgrimage" was planned for 1941 to points of interest in the Northeastern portion of the county, but it had to be abandoned because of restrictions on travel which were imposed as World War II approached.

United Nations Week

In 1943 Oswego was chosen by the Office of War Information as "a typical American small city" for the purpose of arranging for an outstanding observance of United Nations Week which opened on June 14, of that year and continued throughout the week. The observances of the week were intended to furnish the background for war propaganda motion picture films which were designed to typify the solidarity of the United Nations in their cause against the common enemy. These films were later exhibited in all United Nations countries throughout the world and to the men in our own armed forces aboard. Oswego, however, was the only city in America where they received a public showing for the reason that the OWI was restricted by law from spending funds in the United States for propaganda purposes. However, an exception was made in the case of Oswego because the cooperation that the Oswego Historical Society had given the Federal representatives who arranged for the observance of the week in Oswego had been given contingently upon an assurance that the films should be

returned to Oswego, when they were completed, that their first showing in this country might take place here. Very strong representations made to OWI through Representative in Congress Hadwen C. Fuller that this pledge should be kept were finally successful in their purpose and the films were at last sent to Oswego in 1944 to be shown here.

The films were exhibited at the Oswego Theater free of charge theoretically that those local folk who had co-operated in their filming might have opportunity to see themselves in motion pictures. Thousands of persons saw the films here. Eventually the Historical Society has reason to believe that it may become the permanent custodian of a set of these films which will have great historic interest with the passage of time. In the arrangements for the observance of the week, the various events, the street decorations and the like the OWI paid all costs, but the Historical Society and the Oswego Chamber of Commerce furnished in collaboration a major portion of background information and co-operation to those in charge of the carrying out of the OWI's plans. Nationals of most of the allied countries were house guests in Oswego homes during United Nations Week. Many social functions, typically American, were arranged in their honor.

Record History of Shelter

When August 1, 1944 there was established at Fort Ontario at Oswego by presidential order issued by Franklin D. Roosevelt, the only Refugee Shelter to be opened in the United States in connection with World War II, the officers of the Oswego Historical society realized that the task of recording and preserving the history of this Shelter, at first planned by the President to be the forerunner of many similar shelters established in the United States if the Oswego experiment worked out well, would fall prin-

cipally upon it. At least as far as the preservation of the local history of the Shelter, this fact was believed to be true. In consequence complete files of the "Fort Ontario Chronicle," the weekly publication put out at the fort in mimeographed form, and edited by the residents of the Shelter, are in the possession of the society.

The minutes of the Oswego Advisory Committee of the Shelter will undoubtedly eventually reach the society's hands as will copies of the correspondence which passed between that committee and the White House and other federal offices and officers at the time the question was being mooted as to the final disposition that was to be made of the members of the Shelter when that should be closed. Reports and correspondence which passed between the local committee and the large national committee, in which many persons of national prominence held membership, organized by Joseph C. Smart, first director of the Shelter, to work for an early determination of the fate of these homeless refugees with an opportunity for those who desired to remain in this country to do so by being admitted as immigrants under national quotas which, in most instances were available to permit their admission to the country as immigrants. A program, suggested by the local committee, and finally carried out by the Nation's representatives permitted most of the refugees cared for at the Shelter to remain in this country.

Newspaper Files Rescued

In 1944 the Historical Society was successful in persuading Mayor John J. Scanlon of Oswego and the Common Council to turn over to the Public Library the bound of files of the old Oswego newspapers that had been accumulating at the City Hall since 1848. Stored in the bell tower of the City Hall they were not read-

ily accessible for consultation, and due to roof leaks, some of them were frequently wetted and were rapidly deteriorating. Added to the files of Oswego papers that the Library already possessed, the new volumes brought the total of those preserved up to 325 volumes. Under an arrangement made through the good offices of the Historical Society between the Library and the "Oswego Palladium - Times" the newspaper is contributing annually new bound files of that newspaper for each succeeding year so that the Library's collection of the files of the Oswego papers will henceforth be kept always current and available for consultations by historians and others.

In addition the Society has been the recipient of the files of the "Phoenix Register" covering a 50-year period. These are at present unbound, but the Society hopes to bind them eventually. The society also owns the complete bound files of the Oswego "Commercial Herald" published between 1837 and 1843.

Manuscripts Preserved

In 1945 Ralph M. Faust, vice-president of the Society and chairman of its program committee for nearly a decade during which he worked assiduously and successfully in providing most interesting and historically meritorious programs for the edification of the members of the society year after year, found it necessary to give up the program chairmanship because of an increased burden of work that he had assumed. He was succeeded by Dr. W. Seward Salisbury who has served most acceptably since that time. Dr. Salisbury's class in Social Studies at the Oswego State Teachers' College has volunteered its services to the society in aid of the work of identification, cataloging and arranging for the display of the society's collection of historical relics. This offer has been accepted by the society.

Papers upon more than 100 phases of local history have been presented before the society in the past decade. The texts of most of these have been preserved in printed form. When one meeting a year proved inadequate to satisfy the desire of the membership for more meetings the number was increased to from 8 to 10 each year with an average of about nine. The year books of the society in the past seven years have contained more than 1500 pages of printed text material. Copies of the year books of the Oswego Historical Society are found in Oswego county libraries, the State library and the libraries of many colleges and universities both within and without the state, and in the libraries of many New York State cities.

Sponsored Marine Exhibit

In September and October 1945 the society sponsored the exhibition at the Oswego State Teachers' College of the Great Lakes Marine Exhibit of the Canada Steamship Lines, Ltd. Nearly 200 large water color, sketches, oil paintings, drawings etc, of ships which had operated on Lake Ontario from the earliest "Griffin" down to modern times were inspected by hundreds of persons who visited the exhibition during the two months in which it was open. The collection, insured for a fabulous sum, had never before been on exhibition in a city as small as Oswego, but at the request of the Historical Society special consideration was given our application for its loan for the reason that the exhibit was one of special interest to Oswego, as many of the famous ships that were represented in the exhibits had been built in Oswego shipyards or had direct connections with Oswego's history.

At the suggestion of the New York State Historical Association Oswego County Historical Society entertained October 20, 1945 a Regional Meeting of the local historical societies in the

Central and Northern New York area, the sessions continuing throughout the day and evening at the Oswego State Teachers' College Auditorium. Several hundred persons from local societies in Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga and Oswego counties attended the sessions. Luncheon and dinner were served in the dining hall of the State College. In the late afternoon the visitors were driven about Oswego to points of historic interest. Stops were made at the more interesting places, and a member of our society gave a brief talk upon the significance of the point in history.

Regional State Meeting

At the morning session the delegates were welcomed to Oswego by Mayor Joseph T. McCaffrey and President Ralph W. Swetman of the State College. Papers were given by Miss Faith Common of Watertown on "Redwood Glass" and by Dr. Donald Snygg of Oswego on "The Significance of the Oswego Movement in Education." At noon the Central New York Association of Local Historians held their annual meeting, with H. C. Durston of Syracuse, president, presiding. In the afternoon, Dr. W. Freeman Galpin of Syracuse University gave a paper on "The Three Smiths of Peterboro" and Miss Janet R. MacFarlane, director of State Historical Association talked on "Museums." Miss Mary E. Cunningham of the State Association, acting editor of "New York History" talked on "The Junior Historians Program." Dr. A. B. Corey, state historian, read a paper prepared by Dr. A. C. Parker, president of the State Historical Association who was prevented by illness from attending.

Dr. T. Wood Clarke of Utica, author of "The Bloody Mohawk" gave a paper at the afternoon session on "The Pre-Revolutionary Clergy of the Mohawk Valley."

In the evening Miss Cunningham read a paper on the theme

"An Oswego Man opens the Door of China," dealing with Willard Straight's activities in the orient and Dr. Harold D. Alford of Oswego gave a paper on "Shipbuilding Days in Oswego."

There were various exhibits of glassware, photographs of famous homes of the North Country and of the Canada Steamship Lines collection of Great Lakes Marines arranged for the interest of those attending.

Preserve County's War Records

During World War II eight members of the society served in the armed forces of the country, and their names were displayed upon our honor roll carried in the publications of the society. They were: Lt. Com. Floyd L. Allen, Fulton, U. S. Navy; Captain Francis L. Carroll, Oswego, U. S. Army Medical Corps; Corporal Phelps Carter, Oswego, U. S. Army; Commodore John M. Gill, Oswego, U. S. Navy; Lieut. Neil T. Hayes of the Supply Corps of the United States Navy; Captain S. S. Ingalls, Fulton, U. S. Army Medical Corps; Lieut. Benjamin J. Racusin, Oswego, U. S. Army; Fred B. Scoville, Oswego, Special Service, U. S. Army; John J. Waterbury, Oswego, A. M. 2-c, U. S. Navy. Fortunately no member of the society lost his life in the war.

Plans were perfected early in the war for the gathering by the society as the war progressed of material that could be used eventually in the writing of a history of the part that Oswego County communities played in the war. These were carried through. A list of the men who had made the "supreme sacrifice" was kept current, documents, clippings, war time "posters," pictures of departing draft contingents were collected and preserved with the result that on May 29, 1946 acting in collaboration with the "Oswego Palladium-Times" that our society was enabled to publish a list of the

Oswego County men who had fallen in the war together with a complete roster of the nearly 8500 men from Oswego County who had served in the war. It is believed that Oswego County was the first county in the United States to complete the preparation of such a list and provide for its publication as a matter of public record. The county's list of war dead prepared under the society's auspices was published before the United States government released its official list of the war dead from Oswego County.

Prominent Visitors Speak

During the first 50 years of its existence many men who have attained distinction in their respective fields, but who also have had a penchant for historical research, have addressed Oswego Historical Society. Among those whose homes have been from without Oswego County who have addressed the society have been: General Horace Porter, President—General of the Sons of the American Revolution; General Nelson A. Miles, commander of the United States army; Franklin D. Roosevelt, while serving as assistant secretary of the United States Navy; Brigadier General John Porter Hatch, President of Aztec Club of New York City; Hon. James A. Holden, New York State Historian; Grenville M. Ingalabe, president of New York State Historical Association; Miss Agnes Maule Machar, Historian of Kingston, Ont.; Hon. Alphonso T. Clearwater; Major W. H. Bertsch, U. S. A.; Dr. Henry William Elson, American Historian and author; William Stewart Wallace, McMaster University, Toronto, Ont.; Moses Coit Tyler LL.D., L. H. D. of Kingston, Ont.; Clarence M. Warner, Napanee, Ont.; Mrs. Willard Augsburg, State Regent, Daughters of the American Revolution; Rev. Dean Starr, President Kingston Historical Society; Mayor T. J. Rigney of Kingston,

Ont.; George A. Plimpton of New York City; Dr. Sherman Williams Vice president New York State Historical Association; Frederic C. Foster, professor of History, St. Lawrence University; Prof. W. L. Grant, of Queens College, Kingston, Ont., in 1913 holder of the only chair of Colonial History in the British Empire outside of Oxford University; Thomas R. Kneil, superintendent of Saratoga Schools; Dr. Charles Worthen Spencer, Asst. Professor of History and Politics at Princeton; Clarence M. Warner, president of Lennox and Addington Historical Society, Napanee, Ont.

Also Dr. Alexander C. Flick, New York State Historian, Mrs. John G. Wickser of Buffalo Historical Society, Hon. William Pierpont White, President Mohawk Valley Historical Society, Edward F. Rouse, director New York State Historical Association, Col. Hanford Mac Nider, Assistant Secretary of War and Past National Commander of the American Legion, Dr. E. A. Bates, director of Indian Extension work at Cornell University, James A. Hamilton, Secretary of State of New York, Harry V. Bush, Mayor of Canajoharie and President of Mohawk Valley Historical Association, Dr. Nelson C. Brown, dean of the Forestry Department of Syracuse University.

Also Hugh Flick, New York State Custodian of Official Records; Dr. E. F. Alexander, director New York State Historical Association at Cooperstown; Dr. Arthur Pound, New York State Historian and author of many historical works; Dr. T. Woods Clarke, author of *The Bloody Mohawk* and of *Emigres in the Wilderness*; Dr. W. F. Gaipin, Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University; Dr. Henry de Forest of New York City; Dr. Clayton Mau of Genesee State Teachers' College, author of *History of Central and Western New York*; Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York State Historian; Dr. Wesley Frost, former United States Am-

bassador to Paraguay, Dr. Arthur C. Parker, President New York State Historical Association; Dr. Avery Skinner, deputy commissioner of Education for the State of New York; Dr. Ralph V. Harlow, professor of American History at Syracuse University, author of the biography of Gertrit Smith; Major Wheeler Chapin Case of the Rochester Historical Society, Harry F. Landon, managing editor of the Watertown Times; Miss Janet R. MacFarlane, Acting Director New York State Historical Association Headquarters House, Miss Mary E. Cunningham, Acting Editor "New York History;" Miss Faith Common, curator Jefferson County Historical Society.

Society's Officers for 50 Years

Members of the society who have served the organization in an official capacity during the past 50 years, the positions which they filled, and for what period of time, so far as these matters can now be established in view of the fact that written records of the society during its early years are missing, have been:

Presidents: William Pierson Judson, 1896-1901; Theodore Irwin, Sr., 1902; William Pierson Judson, 1903-1910; Dr. Carrington MacFarlane, 1911-1912; John D. Higgins, 1913-1923; Dr. James G. Riggs, 1924-1935; Frederick W. Barnes, 1935-1936*; Edwin M. Waterbury, 1937-1947.

Vice presidents: Theodore Irwin, 1896-1900, also 1902-1903; Frederick B. Shepherd, 1904-1907, also 1908-1914; Col. John T. Mott, 1908-1919; Louis C. Rowe, 1923; Frederick A. Emerick, 1924-1927; Frederick W. Barnes, 1927-1947; Ralph M. Faust, 1937-1947; Grove A. Gilbert, 1939-1947; Miss Elizabeth Simpson, 1940-1941; Miss Ruth Thomas, 1942-1947; Merrit A. Switzer, 1941-1947; Clark E. Jackson, 1944-1947.

Corresponding Secretaries:

George Tisdale Clark, 1896-1898; Francis E. Hamilton, 1899-1910; Miss Harriet E. Stevens, 1925-1929; Mrs. Emma B. Rowe, 1937; Mrs. Homan F. Hallock, 1938-1947.

Recording Secretaries: Frederick B. Shepherd, 1896-1910; Elisha B. Powell, 1911-1912; Norman L. Bates, 1913-1922; Charles S. Wright, 1923; Elisha B. Powell, 1924; John M. Gill, 1925; Fred P. Wright, 1926-1940; Thomas A. Cloutier, 1941-1947.

Treasurers: Elliott B. Mott, 1896-1898; Luther W. Mott, Sr., 1899-1911; Edgar P. Johnson, 1912-1913; L. C. Rowe, 1914-1928; Mrs. Emma B. Rowe, 1929-1936; Miss Gertrude A. Shepherd, 1937-1938; Harold S. Hubbard, 1939-1941; Donald S. Gordon, 1942-1944; John H. Hourigan, 1945-1947.

Curators: William Pierson Judson, 1896-1903; E. B. Mott, 1904-1947.

Members of Board of Managers: John C. Churchill, 1896-1899; George C. McWhorter, 1896-1902; Swits Conde, 1896-1900; John Post Miller, 1924-1935; Frederick W. Barnes, 1924-1939; Mrs. Frederick Leighton, 1924-1941; Frederick A. Emerick, 1927-1936; John S. Parsons, 1937-1940; Mrs. James G. Riggs, 1937-1946; Daniel A. Williams, 1937-1945; Harold A. Hubbard, 1937-1940; Miss Anna Post, 1941-1947; Dr. Lida S. Penfield, 1941-1947; Mrs. Frank Elliott, 1941-1947; James Moreland, 1946-1947.

Pageant Unavoidably Postponed

For several years prior to 1946 which was to bring with it the 50th anniversary of the Historical Society and the 150th anniversary of the Evacuation of Fort Ontario by the British, the society had been planning informally on the presentation of an historical pageant in this year commemorative of the latter event, and as a part of a then projected Interstate Celebration of the surrender to the United States of the forts in New York, Ohio and Michigan which were held by the

* Vice president serving as president.

British for 13 years after the close of the Revolutionary War. The event was to have been New York's contribution to the Anthony Wayne Celebration planned for this year by an Interstate Commission of which Dr. L. S. Penfield of Oswego Historical Society had been named as New York State's representative by Dr. Arthur Pound, New York state historian, several years ago, Wayne having completed the arrangements for the transfer of the forts to United State control following the ratification of the Jay Treaty with England. In 1944 the Board of Managers of the Society gave formal approval for the production of the proposed pageant, "conditioned up on the state of the nation then permitting a pageant to be given on the parade ground of Fort Ontario July 15, 1946 commemorative of the 150th anniversary of the delivery of the ancient fortress to the United States by the British garrison." Dr. Penfield was authorized to write the lines of the proposed pageant and to forward otherwise the plans for the observance, with power to name her own assistants.

In the intervening period Dr. Penfield's health had become impaired and her physician recommended that she refrain from attempting to assume obligations calling for sustained and prolonged effort with the result that she

notified the society early in the present year that she would be unable to write the pageant or plan for its production. In February the Board of Managers, after investigating the situation, decided that the plans for the production of the proposed pageant, could not possibly be proceeded with this year, even if some one could be found to write the pageant on short notice. Accordingly the board voted to postpone indefinitely the plan for the pageant in the hope that conditions at some later time would be more propitious for it to be held.

In the meantime events, wholly unforeseen in February, have come to pass at Fort Ontario that would have made it next to impossible for a pageant to have been held there this year. In April the War Department announced permanent abandonment of Fort Ontario as a military post after nearly 200 years of continuous use. Many buildings at the fort are in process of being razed, others reconstructed and the parade ground is virtually inaccessible on this anniversary date. This was a contributing factor to the selection of a location other than Fort Ontario for the holding of the exercises commemorating this year the 150th anniversary of the Fort's evacuation by the British.



Society Launches Move to Save Fort Ontario

Board of Managers Authorizes President to Seek Co-Operation of State Historical Association and State Officers in Provision of Permanent State Care For Land Mark

(Palladium-Times Oct. 8, 1946)

Oswego County Historical Society will spearhead a movement, which it will seek to make state-wide, which will have for its objective permanent preservation through state action of Fort Ontario as an historic landmark of great import in the history of the state and nation, officers and members of the Board of Managers of the society constituting its executive committee determined at their October meeting Monday evening. Membership of the society, it is expected, will ratify proposals intended to implement the movement at the first meeting of the society for the fall, scheduled to be held at Pulaski Academy and Central school next Tuesday evening, October 15.

Support of the New York State Historical Association for the movement will be sought at Elmira at the coming week-end when the state group will assemble for its first state-wide meeting to be held since the war. President E. M. Waterbury of the Society will attend the meeting of the Association with hope of bringing about action which will give further impetus to the movement formally launched Monday evening. Resolutions passed by the Board aim at enlisting interest of the Governor, the State Commissioner of Education, the State Historian, leaders of the State Assembly and Senate, the Secretary of War and New York representatives in both houses of Congress. Assemblyman Henry D. Coville of Central Square and Senator Isaac B. Mitchell who represent Oswego County in the state legislature have already given to the society approval of the project, and have

pledged their best efforts at bringing it to fruition.

To Seek Wide Support

In designating personnel of special committees which will be named as need appears to look after various details to be assigned to each in forwarding the movement, the president of the society and the executive committee will be authorized to go outside ranks of the historical society's membership to the end the strongest committees possible may be named without regard to past connection of individuals with the historic society. Aid will also be sought from all the chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution in the county, the Sons of the Revolution, the veterans organizations and their auxiliaries of all wars and all other patriotic societies. The chamber of commerce, the luncheon clubs, legislative bodies of the cities and counties will be invited to throw their efforts back of the movement.

Dr. A. B. Corey, New York State historian, will come to Oswego November 11, to counsel with officers of the Historical Society and committees which it is expected will have been named before that time as to procedures which can be followed to forward the movement with the greatest prospect of success. Dr. Corey is thoroughly familiar with details of the successful movements which have been made from time to time for the preservation through state aid of various historic landmarks, and he will draw upon his experience and upon his knowledge of laws governing such matters in counselling the leaders of the local movement.

Title Reverts to State

The fact the state now holds title to the former Fort Ontario military reservation, it is believed, would simplify considerable procedures that would have to be taken to provide properly for future care of the fort. The state would not have to make any expenditure to acquire the site, and it is free to make such disposition of the area as it may determine best in the interest of the people of the state. It is pointed out the natural surroundings of the fort which stands very close to the point where the Oswego river discharges into Lake Ontario, on a high bluff overlooking both river and lake would afford a highly pleasing background for a park of great natural beauty, when properly landscaped, without detracting in any way from the accomplishment of the primary purpose which the Historical Society has in mind. The society aims at the preservation permanently and intact, of not only the walls of the old fort pierced with embrasures from which formerly projected the muzzles of the heavy artillery with which the fort was at one time equipped and its rifle pits for infantrymen still in an excellent state of preservation, but also the ancient stone barracks included within and without the fort's enclosure, the ancient military cemetery dating back to 1755 and such other vestiges, of the ancient fortifications as exist. The Fort itself is one of the best preserved of the extant 18th century fortresses.

The change in status of Fort Ontario from one of the most ancient of the military posts of the Army to that as the present location of a state housing development has all come about within the present year. When 1946 opened the fort was yet sheltering 1,000 European refugees brought from internment camps in Italy by President Roosevelt's executive order. When arrange-

ments were finally made to permit those of the refugees who desired to remain in this country and become citizens to do so, a commission of army officers was appointed by the Secretary of War to visit the fort to make a study to determine whether it should be retained as a military post for which the country might later have need. The committee reported adversely to the retention of Fort Ontario as a military post, and the fort was promptly declared "surplus" by the Secretary of War. However, in transferring to the United States government in 1838 the military reservation which the government continued to make use of for over 100 years, the state took the precaution to insert a clause that if the property ever ceased to be used for military purposes, that title to it should at once revert to the State of New York. Hence it came about when the state became interested in providing temporary housing for war veterans and their families in June 1946 that it determined to use the permanent buildings on the former fort reservation by converting them into small family units to house the veterans and their families who are about to occupy the first 50 units which have been completed.

Ancient Barracks Rebuilt

In reconstructing the ancient stone barracks within the enclosure of the old fort to provide housing, at the insistence of James Moreland, a member of the Board of Managers of the Historical Society, who, it happened as chairman of Oswego's Industrial Commission named by Mayor J. T. McCaffrey, also conducted negotiations with the state in regard to the locating of the housing units in the former fort buildings, the state architect was scrupulously careful. Mr. Moreland states, not to destroy existing partitions or take other steps that would later pre-

vent the buildings being later returned to their former state with the exception of changes made in the largest of these buildings which in the final days of the fort as a military post had been used as an officers club. There some fireplaces, modernly installed, however, have been removed and scrapped and some partition openings were closed by new construction, but in such a manner as not to prevent their removal in later years and their restoration to their former condition.

Buildings Date Back To 1820

Some of the former stone barrack buildings probably date back to reconstruction of the fort carried out in 1840-1842, while others may date only to the reconstruction again undertaken during the Civil War. The stone ammunition building, inside the old fort's enclosure has not been disturbed in any way nor has the old stone dwelling which stands to the rear of and to the northwest of the former Post Headquarters building which was located in one of the brick buildings provided in the 1905 modernization of the post. The stone dwelling just referred to was built for the occupancy of the keeper of Oswego's first lighthouse during the 1820's. That lighthouse stood within the grounds on the modern fort reservation, on the crest of the bluff overlooking the river and lake, and to the rear of the lighthouse keeper's dwelling.

In connection with the use of former fort buildings for state housing, the City of Oswego has made a contract with the state which runs for five years, during which the city may continue to rent the reconstructed apartments to veterans or others. By reason of this fact, it would probably not be possible for the Historical Society or any other group which might be set up as the result of the movement now getting under way, to gain physical con-

trol of the buildings until the contract expires. However, legislation may be passed next year which will define the state's policy as to the future of the old fort and assure its preservation. Also it is believed that a start towards landscaping the fort grounds could be made, with the cooperation of the City of Oswego, before the contract expires. The large parade ground remains intact and unencumbered with buildings as the result of the work that has been in progress at the fort and it is believed that this could be equipped for play grounds, athletic contests and the like without interfering with the plans being made for restoring and preserving the old fort.

Resolutions Launch Project

At the conclusion of a prolonged discussion by the Historical Society officers last evening, a resolution offered by F. W. Barnes and seconded by Ralph M. Faust was unanimously adopted. In part it follows:

Whereas, Fort Ontario at Oswego has been declared by the Secretary of War after a period of nearly 200 years of continuous use, to be no longer needed by the United States Government for military purposes, and

Whereas, titles to the old fort and to the land about it, including the ancient military cemetery, and the battlefields of 1756 and 1814, and the buildings in and about the fort, under the provisions of the deed by which the fort reservation was originally transferred by the State of New York to the United States government, are about to revert to the State of New York, and

Whereas, since 1755 when the original Fort Ontario was constructed to protect the then Western and Northern frontiers of the British Colonies in America while its guns safe-guarded the construction at the mouth of the Oswego River of the first British men-of-war on the Great Lakes, this ancient stronghold has been

closely identified with the development and history of New York, first as a British Colony, and later as the State of New York, and contributed to the military strength of the United States for a period of 150 years after it passed under the control of the United States government in 1796, figuring in, and rendering important service in connection with the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, the Boxer Rebellion, and World Wars I and II, and

Whereas, Fort Ontario was used as a Recuperation Hospital for the wounded soldiers following World War I, and thereafter as a training center for National Guard anti-aircraft regiments of New York and other states for many years, and

Whereas, at Fort Ontario was maintained during the latter part of World War II the only shelter for European refugees to be maintained in the United States during that war, and

Whereas, old Fort Ontario's history is closely linked with the history of our own county and region from very early days, as well as with that of our state and nation, its construction having antedated the first permanent settlements of white men in what is now our Oswego County, and the entire region today known as Central and Western New York, and its garrisons afforded aid, shelter, and protection to the earliest settlers in these regions, and

Whereas, old Fort Ontario was closely associated with other historic forts which have been preserved for posterity including Fort Brewerton in our own county, Forts Niagara and Ticonderoga in the United States and Forts William Henry and Frontenac in Canada. Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the officers and members of the Board of Managers of the Oswego County Historical Society, in regular ses-

sion assembled, by unanimous vote, go on record as favoring such action and legislation as may be necessary for bringing about, subject to the termination of its temporary use for providing temporary and emergency housing for veterans of World War II, the permanent preservation of the ancient and honorable landmark of Fort Ontario as a public park and permanent memorial of the historic events which have transpired and centered there. And be it further

Resolved, that the officers and members of the Board of Managers of the Oswego County Historical Society request Edwin M. Waterbury, president of the society, to bring to the attention of the New York State Historical Association at its forthcoming annual meeting to be held in the city of Elmira, October 11-13, the aims of the Oswego Historical Society in regard to the preservation of Fort Ontario, and to request the support and cooperation of the State Association for the accomplishments of these aims and in procuring the support for this movement of other organizations, associations and individuals, in furthering the passage of any needed legislation and appropriations. And be it further

Resolved, that the officers and members of the Board of Managers of this Society recommend to the members of the Society at their next succeeding regular meeting to be held in the Village of Pulaski, October 15, 1946, that the Society ratify the actions already taken by their president and their officers and Board of Managers in regard to Fort Ontario, and be it further

Resolved, that the President of this Society be authorized to invite the co-operation with this Society for the accomplishment of the aims set forth herein of neighboring historical and patriotic societies, both within and without Oswego County, Chambers of Commerce, luncheon

clubs, civic bodies, city, county, state and national officials, State Assemblymen and Senators, Representatives in Congress, United States Senators and other groups and individuals whose aid may be desirable or necessary, that the President be authorized to create and appoint such special committees as may within his opinion be necessary or desirable for the accomplishment of the aims herein set forth, defining the duties of such special committees, and not being restricted in the selection of the personnel for such special committees to the membership of the Oswego County Historical Society, but to be authorized to appoint to such committees' membership any residents, or former residents of Oswego County,

or other persons, whose services may be of help for the accomplishment of the undertaking in hand. And be it further

Resolved, that copies of this resolution be brought to the attention of Governor Thomas E. Dewey; to State Commissioner of Education Dr. Francis T. Spaulding; to State Historian Dr. A. B. Corey; to the Secretary of War; to United States Senator James M. Mead; to Representative in Congress Hadwen C. Fuller; to Assemblyman Henry D. Coville; to State Senator Isaac B. Mitchell and to the leaders of the majority and minority parties in each House of the State Legislature, and to such other officials or personages as the Executive Committee or its chairman may direct.



State Association Urges Ft. Ontario Cause

(Text of Resolution Passed at Elmira by New York State Historical Association in
October Read to Oswego County Historical Society Members at Pulaski
Meeting October 15, 1946.)

(Palladium-Times, Oct. 16, 1946)

Announcement was made at the opening meeting of the fall period of the Oswego County Historical Society, held at Pulaski Academy and Central school Tuesday evening, October 15, of receipt of an unrestricted gift of \$100 from Mrs. Bertha S. Williams, widow, and Daniel C. Williams, son, of the late Daniel A. Williams, of Oswego, in carrying out a wish expressed by D. A. Williams, a few days before his death, November 30, 1945, that this action be taken. The late Mr. Williams was one of the most active members of the society during his lifetime, and served for many years as a member of its Board of Managers and in other capacities.

In the letter which accompanied the check Mrs. Williams and Daniel C. Williams said in part: "This is in fulfillment of the desire of the late Daniel A. Williams, expressed to us a few days before he died, that from the funds received by us from his estate an absolute gift in such amount be made to the Society, in whose work he took a deep and loving interest." E. M. Waterbury, president of the society, who made announcement of the gift, was authorized to send an appropriate letter of appreciation to Mrs. Bertha Williams and Daniel C. Williams.

It is probable the Williams gift will be used as nucleus of a permanent endowment fund which the Board of Managers of the society has been planning to inaugurate for some months past. On motion of Dr. Thomas R. Miller of the Oswego State Teachers' College, the society voted to recommend to the board that it consider advisability of

using the Williams gift for that purpose. Dr. Miller's resolution suggested proceeds of the proposed Endowment Fund, "when created," be available for the general purposes of the society, and particularly, for use in connection with the acquisition, repair and maintenance of a permanent home for this society.

Elect New Members

Nineteen persons were elected to membership in the society upon recommendation of the membership committee presented through Grove A. Gilbert of Fulton, membership chairman, as follows: Mrs. Robert J. Beattie, Miss Alice B. Miller, Miss Gertrude E. Miller, Miss Eleanor Williams, Miss Marie Waterbury, Leonard Miller and Frank W. English of Oswego; Mrs. F. W. Manly of Phoenix; Judge and Mrs. Eugene F. Sullivan, Mrs. J. J. Morrill, Miss Martha Baggs, B. C. Van Buren, William S. Hillick, Harry L. Waugh of Fulton; Fred Kent of Hannibal; Mrs. A. J. Ruska of Fulton R. D. 2; Mrs. Kenneth S. Sweany of State College, Ark.; Mrs. Kent W. Bromley of Newbury, Vt.

Members voted on a resolution offered by John H. Hourigan of Oswego to enroll the society in the membership of the Council of Historical Societies of New York State which was formed through the initiative of State Historian Dr. A. B. Corey in connection with the annual meeting of the New York State Historical Association held in Elmira last week. President E. M. Waterbury, who represented the Oswego County Society at the meeting, gave a brief report of the actions taken at the Elmira meeting which would be of especial inter-

est to members of the county society.

The Elmira Resolutions

The text of a resolution requesting action by the State of New York in acquiring for permanent preservation Old Fort Ontario, its military cemetery and adjacent battlefields of 1756 and 1814, as adopted by the New York State Historical Association at its annual meeting in Elmira in October, was read at the meeting as follows:

"Whereas, old Fort Ontario, located in Oswego, New York, at the "pouring out place" of the Oswego river where it empties into Lake Ontario, has passed from the military control of the federal government and has reverted to reservation status under the government of New York State, and

"Whereas, old Fort Ontario has been considered up to this year, the oldest garrisoned fort in the limits of the United States, and

"Whereas, the history and significance of events which took place there are intimately woven into the fabric of a continent taking form through its part in conquest of a wilderness, in the French and Indian war rivalry, in the Revolutionary struggle, in the war of 1812, and

"Whereas, old Fort Ontario continued to forward its military usefulness through its training of American troops through all our war years, including the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the Boxer Rebellion, World War I and World War II, and

"Whereas, Fort Ontario was used as a great base recuperation hospital after World War I, as a training center for our national guard over a long period of time, and as a great Refugee Shelter for a most of Europeans who escaped a tyrannical despot during World War II, and

"Whereas, old Fort Ontario's history is closely linked with other historic forts which have

been preserved for posterity, such as Fort Niagara and Fort Ticonderoga in the United States, and Fort William Henry and Fort Frontenac in Canada, now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that this Association respectfully bring to the attention of the Governor and the Legislature of the State of New York, the urgent and vital need for legislation appropriating adequate monies for the preservation of this ancient and honorable landmark as a public park and permanent memorial to the historic events which transpired there, and be it further

"Resolved, that copies of this resolution be communicated to Governor Thomas E. Dewey, to the Commissioner of Education, Dr. Francis T. Spaulding; to the State Historian, Dr. A. B. Corey; to the appropriate committees of the New York State Assembly and the New York State Senate, and to the leaders of the majority and minority parties in each House."

Members Pledge Support

The meeting adopted unanimously a resolution presented by Merritt A. Switzer of Pulaski, that ratified and approved all steps already taken by the officers and members of the Board of Managers for preservation of the old fort at Oswego and placed the members on record as unanimously approving the movement and the accomplishment of its purposes "through action by the State of New York, or any one of its appropriate agencies, either with or without local collaboration." The resolution, which was seconded by Mrs. Francis D. Culkin of Oswego, Judge Clayton I. Miller of Pulaski and Mrs. Elizabeth Elliott of Fulton, also pledged individual efforts of members to further the purposes set forth in the resolution.

Gifts to the society for its collection of relics and memorabilia were reported as follows: From Mrs. Kent W. Bromley of New-

bury, Vt., selected pamphlets, documents and copies of documents and other items of historic interest which had belonged to her father, the late Frederick A. Emerick of Oswego, who was a charter member of Oswego Historical Society; from John D. Higgins of New Canaan, Conn., charter member and former president of the society, membership badge which was presented to him by the society July 15, 1896, upon the organization of the society, this badge being the only one extant so far as the officers of the society have knowledge; from James T. Galloway of Oswego, a medal struck off at the time of the centennial observance of Evacuation Day in Oswego in 1896 and worn by members of the Oswego County G.A.R. posts participating in the parade at that time and by others.

Subsequently, on November 11, Dr. A. B. Corey, State Historian, representing the New York State

Department of Education, addressed a luncheon gathering at the Hotel Pontiac in Oswego that was attended by members of the Board of Managers of the Historical Society and representatives of civic and patriotic societies throughout Oswego County. Dr. Corey told the assemblage that once the State of New York had acquired title to the former Fort Ontario Reservation that the State Department could request transfer to it by the State Land Office of at least a portion of the 68-acre reservation, including the land on which the old fort buildings stand and the surrounding battlefields of 1756 and 1814, for permanent preservation in the interest of the people of the state. He suggested that a regional museum might be established there. Maintenance expenses could be borne by the state. Further action in the matter must await the actual transfer of the former military reservation back to the State of New York.



Twin Shire Days in Oswego County

(Paper Read Before Members of Oswego County Historical Society at Pulaski, October 15, 1946, by Harold S. Sprague of the Faculty of Pulaski Academy and Central School.)

We, who are privileged to live in the United States of America, are the most fortunate people upon the face of the earth. We, who live in Oswego County, have added attractions in the fertility of our soil, the beauty of nature and in the history of achievement of this county. Oswego County is proud of its part in the making of American history and justly so.

I have chosen for this paper, a period of that history covering forty-five years. It is not a period of war and terror but a period of peace and achievement, beginning in 1816 and ending in 1861. It is intended to honor the pioneer, the industrialists and home builders of this region, though I must of necessity restrict this paper to a small part of Oswego County. I would like to review briefly the history of this section antedating 1816.

In 1615 Samuel de Champlain passed through Oswego County and is recorded as the first white man to set foot on its soil. Coming as a soldier in warfare and not on an errand of peace, he made the second step toward the end of France's colonies in America which were even then in their infancy. The first step had been taken near Crown Point on Lake Champlain in 1609 when he had attacked the Iroquois there. The unpleasant relations between the French and Iroquois made it easy for the English to enlist the latter as allies and to use them to harass the French for many years. The French, however, remained for many years the masters of this section and carried on a great fur trade at the mouth of the Oswego River, called by them the "Onontague."

Contest For Fur Trade

After the peace of Utrecht in 1713 the English and Dutch fur traders of Albany and New York gradually worked their way northward and westward to Oswego and a sharp rivalry with the French for the fur trade at Oswego began. The English and Dutch traders soon so outnumbered the French that in 1726 the French withdrew to Niagara and built a fort at that place to serve as a new base of trading operations. In that year there were estimated to have been around three hundred English and Dutch traders at Oswego.

The next year Governor Burnett of the Colony of New York sent a body of men to build a stone trading house or fort at Oswego. A body of soldiers were sent along to defend the fort builders from any interruption of their work by the French. The French estimated that there were about seventy traders' cabins at Oswego at that time. This was the manner of the coming of white men to Oswego and the manner they took to indicate to those who opposed their coming, their determination to remain.

The wars of Europe uniformly had their echoes in America. In 1760 came the final loss of the French possessions in Canada to England when Amherst marched from Fort Ontario at Oswego against Montreal at the head of 12,000 men. The city was surrendered to him without a battle, and with it was yielded all Canada and most of the territory claimed by the French in North America.

The fighting in what we now know as Oswego County had lasting results of a different

nature. It provided a training field for colonial soldiers and officers who were afterward to lead the revolting colonies to victory in the Revolutionary War. Among these were Major Philip Schuyler, Lieutenant Colonel Israel Putnam, Lord Stirling and many others.

Uneasy Years

After the Revolutionary War, the area now embraced within Oswego County came into the possession of the new republic only technically as the British garrison retained control of Fort Ontario until 1796. To the few settlers the years that intervened between 1783 and 1796 were uneasy ones. England had warships on the lake and Canada was full of Tories who had fled there for safety, many of them passing down the Oswego River. These Tories had lost most of their possessions in the states and were resentful. The new nation after 1796 was forced to garrison the Oswego fort and to transport munitions and supplies to Oswego to protect it.

Ships were also necessary to protect that fort and the thriving communities growing up about it. So ships were built at Oswego for that purpose. J. Fenimore Cooper came to Oswego in 1808 to supervise the building of the "Oneida", the first of those ships. Cannon and other supplies for the equipment of this ship were brought down the Oswego River. The building of commercial ships soon brought lumbermen, sawmills and carpenters. In their wake followed more settlers.

At the close of the War of 1812 there was yet but a small settlement at Oswego. Its communications with the rest of the country were entirely by water. That portion of the "water-highway" covered by the Oswego River was interrupted by a "carry" at the falls of that river at what is now

the city of Fulton. Land, in large tracts, was sold to prominent American patriots who resold it to settlers. Alexander Hamilton was such an owner and it is recorded that he asked for a delay in his fatal duel with Aaron Burr that he might have time to arrange his affairs which included the land at Oswego to which he held title.

Oswego County Formed

On March 1, 1816, the New York state legislature authorized the forming of a new county, to be known as Oswego. Oswego being the largest settlement in the county, expected to be chosen as the county seat, but, because of its location at the extreme western edge of the county, the people of the eastern end, with the backing of the Oswego folk, sought and received permission for the county to be divided into two court districts with separate courthouses. The voters were to elect but one sheriff and one county clerk, but the clerk's office was to rotate from one place to the other every third year. As was customary, a commission of three men residing outside the county was designated to name the two sites for the contemplated court houses. Oswego and Pulaski were chosen to share the joint honors and Mexico, which had hoped to be made a county seat, was disappointed.

Historians have sometimes referred to Oswego and Pulaski as demi-shires, since at the outset neither was a full-time county seat, but I believe the name "Twin Shires" describes the situation more accurately.

They were of one birth, of common parentage, and shared the same household. Needless to say, neither place considered itself less than the county seat. Pulaski, the smaller of the two, had the best court house, called the first jury, and was the home of the first sheriff.

At this time Oswego County had a population of between six and seven thousand. All of its villages were small. Oswego had the greatest population, wealth and commerce. For a period of over 35 years, the County Clerk elected moved the records of his office every third year either to Pulaski or Oswego, which ever had acquired the right under the terms of the "gentlemen's agreement" covering this matter was entitled to have the office in the succeeding three years. The arrangement was terminated in the early 1850s when Oswego erected and presented to the county a new County Clerk's office. Thereafter the clerk's office was maintained continuously at Oswego.

Now let us first turn our attention to one of the shire villages. Oswego was beginning to grow. After the building of the Erie Canal, in the early 1820 period, came the Oswego Canal in 1828 which made heavy transportation available to Oswego County folk for the first time. The Welland Canal, opened in 1830, made it possible for ships to sail from the upper Great Lakes to Oswego, and the Oswego and the Erie Canal system connected the Great Lakes with New York City and the ocean.

Canal Aids Oswego

Commerce now became really important in Oswego. Its early shipbuilding was revived, this time for freight carrying. The growth of the embryonic city was rapid. Industries were started to serve the citizens as well as to take advantage of raw materials and the available shipping facilities.

So we come to the Oswego of 1835. The village, incorporated in 1828, now has a population of 3212. It is still nervous about the nearness of Canada and suspects the English as strongly as ever. Some Oswego County folk later

became involved in a Canadian plot to sever Canada from England. It failed but, for a time, the call to arms resounded once again along the border.

The census of 1835 gives the following data in regard to Oswego. Four flour mills turned out 100,000 barrels of flour in 1833. There were in Oswego: one tannery, one morocco leather factory, one cotton factory with 1500 spindles, one machine shop, two saw mills, three cedar mills which turned 5,000,000 feet of Canadian cedar into shingles in 1834, three cabinet shops, three hat factories, one foundry, one stove factory, two wagon shops, two watch makers, eight tailors, six shoe stores which also made shoes, one tobacco factory, one burrstone factory, three tin shops, three printing offices, one upholsterer, nine taverns, three hat stores, three drug stores, one jewelry store, eight lawyers, six physicians, one bank, twenty-eight schooners, two steamboats and three lines of canal boats.

Thirty-Five New Ships

In the following January there were thirty five vessels being built in Oswego. One of its shipbuilding yards came to have the honor of building the "Vandalia," the second propeller ship to be built in the United States and the first to sail the Great Lakes.

In 1839 the following goods were cleared from the port of Oswego: furs and peltries, 54 tons; merchandise, 170 tons; stone, lime and clay, 353 tons; mineral coal, 266 tons; ashes, 9,334 barrels; pork, 2,090 barrels; salt from Liverpool, 157,977 barrels; wheat, 106,209 bushels; clover and grass seed, 283,094 pounds; domestic woolens, 48,257 pounds; cheese, 1,834,355 pounds; butter and lard, 1,013,040 pounds; wool, 80,795 pounds; boards and scantling, 7,751,241 feet. The total amount of salt received in 1839 was 245,030 barrels of which 201,-

672 barrels were sent out of the state and 43,358 to lake ports.

Ships Served Community

As can be seen from the list, the quantity of manufactured goods shipped from Oswego was very small despite the volume of its shipping. The shipping was, to a large extent, the servant of the rural areas. Farm products, handicrafts and raw materials were the main cargoes. The census of 1845 shows a tie-up between the shipping and the surrounding area. The population of the county was 24,098 males and 23,453 females. The county produced fulled cloth manufactured in families, 46,216 yards; flannel and other woolen cloth 69,747 yards; linen, cotton and other thin cloth, 48,378 yards; butter, 1,532,144 pounds; cheese, 933,922 pounds; wool, 76,698 pounds. There were forty-four grist mills, the value of whose raw materials consumed was \$1,547,208.50 and the manufactured value of the products was \$1,677,725. There were 255 saw mills, the value of whose finished product was \$217,558.

Oswego In 1850

This was the Oswego of one hundred years ago. The start it had made was promising. The flour mills continued to grow and the shipping with it. Wheat was shipped to Oswego and flour exported. In 1848 Oswego mills shipped 800,000 barrels of flour. In 1854 there were seventeen flour mills and ten grain elevators at Oswego. Destructive fires and competition from Buffalo finally ended the milling industry in Oswego although it continued to be an active industry well into the 1880s.

In 1849, the year after Oswego became a city, the Kingsford Starch factory was becoming important. In that year, it produced 1,327,128 pounds of starch and in the next five years produced

15,451,404 pounds. In 1850 the population of Oswego city was 12,505. Here were owned one hundred steamers and sailing vessels and the city's river fronts boasted one mile of wharves and docks.

This brings us to the end of the period of the "twin shires". Oswego's industrial achievement was great. It had many men of foresight and ability who led in this period of achievement, by building mills, factories, elevators, shipyards, the east side power (Oswego) canal, the Var-rick power canal, the iron works and many other industrial enterprises. They were willing to gamble their fortunes on Oswego's future and they won.

Pulaski Agricultural Center

Pulaski was destined never to be as large as Oswego. It is true, of course, that some industry did exist here. It has had its grist mills, saw mills, carding and fulling mills, iron works, carriage factories and paper mills, but the tide of immigration that made Oswego a city affected Pulaski but little. It had its hopes of profiting from the growth of Port Ontario and a power canal. But Port Ontario did not develop and Pulaski remained the trading center of an agricultural district.

It has, however, a progressive agricultural district, using the plows made in its own iron works and producing great quantities of grain, cattle and dairy products. It is ironic, by contrast, that the first name given to this section by the French was "La Famine" and that to the mouth of the Salmon river, barely five miles from Pulaski.

In this record of achievement, I should not fail to recount the story of the famous cheese of Colonel Thomas Meacham. Colonel Meacham lived in Sandy Creek not far from the Richland line. Desirous of making the fame of this section widely known, he

made a monstrous cheese, using all the milk from his one hundred and fifty cows for five days. When completed it weighed fourteen hundred pounds. It was placed on a big wagon, drawn by forty-eight gray horses and followed by a group of farmers in holiday attire to Port Ontario from whence it was transported by boat to Oswego and thence down the inland water-ways to Washington where it was presented to President Andrew Jackson. Needless to say, it created considerable comment wherever it was seen and in Washington the entire city was invited to the White House lawn to partake.

This enterprising farmer also sought to improve the products of this section and so built a large Agricultural Hall to be devoted to agricultural and horticultural fairs and lectures on agriculture. It was a large imposing building and it is not to its builders discredit that it was never as extensively used as he had intended.

Schools Established

Pulaski and Oswego both were desirous of providing education for their youth and schools were provided at an early date in each place. Oswego built an academy in 1831 and later in 1853 formed a Board of Education which bought the old academy and re-furnished it as a high school. Only one year later Pulaski built its own academy which was a memorable occasion in its history. This academy was built on a lot of one and three quarter acres near the Salmon river and cost a total of \$8,485. It was a monument to its builders and served long as one of the best academies in the country.

Each community was anxious for the spiritual welfare of its people. Though religious services were held at the homes of individuals, there were no churches at either Oswego or Pulaski at the date of their becoming "The Twin Shires."

This condition did not continue and at the beginning of the 1830 period, churches had sprung up in each village. The First Presbyterian church, Oswego's first church, was founded in 1825. At the end of the period covered by this paper, Oswego had eleven churches. They were: The First Methodist, the Second Methodist, The First Presbyterian, Church of the Evangelists, Christ Church, First Baptist, Second Baptist, St. Paul's Catholic, St. Mary's Catholic, and African Methodist. Pulaski had four churches, The First Congregational, The Methodist Episcopal, Baptist and Episcopal.

Learned Societies

The county had several societies, among them being The Oswego County Medical Society, The Oswego County Agricultural Society, the Oswego County Bible Society, The Oswego Mechanics Association and several secret societies.

Oswego had a large library, made possible by the gift of \$30,000 by Gerrit Smith, the great abolitionist, who directed that it was to be open to any person of whatever color or creed and that no books or papers detrimental to truth or purity should find a place on its shelves.

Oswego and Pulaski had enjoyed a local press for many years. Oswego's first paper, the "Oswego Palladium," was published in 1819. Pulaski's "Banner" was first published in 1830 and though both papers passed through the hands of many publishers and carried different names at various periods, nevertheless, publication of newspapers in the shire towns has been continuous.

Early Builders Built Well

So we come to the end of the period of "the twin shires." Its forty-five years had developed a

pioneer section into one of the busiest and most advanced sections of the state. From a section that had feared an advance of Indians and British in 1814 it had become a populous center of nearly seventy-six thousand persons, secure and prosperous, desirous of bringing freedom to all oppressed and ready to send its sons into strange surroundings to do battle for the Union and right. We know the results of the war of 1861-64 and the monuments proclaim the honor of the men of "the twin shires." Gone was the hollowed stump, the spring pole and the log that had ground the corn. The roadless wilderness was changed to an area well covered by highways. Even the stage coach had been largely superseded by railways.

The county had become of age. The pioneers who had entered this region with all their possessions on an ox-drawn sled had builded well and even the poorest of them deserve credit along with the financiers who came by boat and with money to ride on the wave of progress that came to the county. We of today can well admire their resourcefulness, their ambition and the lasting structural monuments they created, though nearly a century has elapsed since this period. They began the building which has been added to and altered since that date. We have not failed them. Oswego County is still a land of beautiful villages, prosperous farms and cities. We honor its builders!



Early Days in Phoenix and Schroepfel

(Paper Given Before Oswego County Historical Society by George Chesbro, Local Historian of Village of Phoenix at Sweet Memorial Building in Phoenix, November 19, 1946.)

Speaking to members of the Oswego County Historical Society and guests at the Sweet Memorial Building, Phoenix, November 20, 1946, George Chesbro, veteran local historian of Phoenix and the Town of Schroepfel, exhibited numerous scrap books, record books, and historical relics as proof of his industry and his fidelity to his trust. Among the scrap books was a group of four which contained obituary notices, clipped from county newspapers, of more than 2,000 persons whose deaths have occurred since 1926. About 90 per cent of the carefully recorded and indexed obituary notices are those of residents or former residents of Schroepfel Town.

"Fifteen iron markers, each identifying some historic event, have been placed throughout the Town of Schroepfel through efforts of the local Historian," continued Mr. Chesbro. "Frank Decker assisted with preparation of some of the inscriptions which appear upon these markers.

"A granite and bronze marker costing \$300 has been placed on the lawn of the Sweet Memorial Building, sponsored by the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce, which paid one half of the cost of the marker. The chamber also sponsored the formal observance in August, 1933, of its centennial by Schroepfel Town. Whether this celebration was a success or not, we leave decision to you who attended or participated. On the day of the big parade which was a feature of the centennial observances, it was said by the oldest inhabitants of the community the largest number of persons ever to appear in Phoenix at one time thronged village streets that day."

Exhibits Rare Books

Another volume in Mr. Chesbro's collection contains a business directory, compiled in 1866, of Phoenix, Roosevelt, Pennellville, Gilbert's Mills and Hinmanville—the four villages that dotted the map of Schroepfel 80 years ago. Another volume was a copy of the first English dictionary to be distributed in the United States. It was printed in England in the year 1788. Another volume, Charles A. Goodrich's "History of the United States of America," published at Hartford, Conn., in 1833, contains in connection with its account of capture of English forts at Oswego in 1756 by the French under Montcalm, a reproduction of a drawing typifying one of the scenes in the battle which preceded the fall of the forts. Mr. Chesbro also exhibited three souvenir medals, rare today, which he picked up at Oswego July 15, 1896, when he attended the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Evacuation of Fort Ontario by the British and has since retained. A volume of newspaper clippings referring to Phoenix's centennial observance has as its frontispiece a letter from Herbert H. Lehman, then governor of the State of New York, congratulating Phoenix upon the occasion being formally observed.

Another scrap book prepared by Mr. Chesbro contains newspaper clippings of events of historic interest, clippings concerning the great fire which visited Phoenix business district in September, 1916, with a loss of more than a million dollars. A collection of railroad time tables made years ago recalls the fact the New York, Ontario & Western railroad and the Phoenix branch

of the New York Central lines then operated daily "four or five passenger trains in each direction each."

Early Phoenix Families

Other items accumulated or acquired by Mr. Chesbro as town historian contain a complete list of the men from Schroepfel Town who served in World War II together with a statement as to the rank of each, which was prepared by the editor of the Phoenix Register; genealogical records of prominent early families which established themselves in Schroepfel, "many of them coming from Oneida and Herkimer counties or from the counties of New England so that they were largely of English descent," as Mr. Chesbro recalled. "Members of the Gilbert, and Mason families were among these. Dr. Mason's line is traced to Samson Mason who served in Oliver Cromwell's army." Other family records in the group are those of the Hawks, Sutton and Burleigh families.

"Of the Scotch families which settled in Schroepfel Town," continued Mr. Chesbro, "I have traced the Leslie, Ross and Gregg families to their immigrant ancestors. William Leslie built the first three-story building in Phoenix. It is now known as the Phoenix House. Leslie also constructed the first water system in Phoenix. It extended from the upper part of the village to the Leslie grocery which stood at the end of the bridge over the Oswego river. The water mains of the system consisted of logs which had been hollowed out at their centers to provide a channel through which the water flowed. In later times the Leslie store became the trolley station in Phoenix in the days when the interurban electric line connected Oswego and Syracuse.

Served in Three Wars

"Artemas Ross, another of the

early Scotch residents, was the first blacksmith in the town and also a first justice of the peace. The Fulton Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution has a number of members who trace ancestry to Samuel Gregg who was of the third generation of that family in this country. Samuel Gregg has the unique military record of having served in three wars—King George's War, the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War.

"Soon after the Oswego Canal was completed in 1828 the so-called 'Mohawk Dutch,' descendants from the Palatines, began to settle in Schroepfel. I have traced the Pickard, Hopper and Moyer families, who were of this stock. Three of the Moyers came—Solomon, ancestor of our genial merchant, David of Sand Ridge and George of Roosevelt.

Pioneer Cemetery

"Now just a few words regarding Pennellville Cemetery. The first plot was deeded by Dr. and Mrs. Pennell to the Pennellville school district under a deed which provided any person residing in the district could have a lot in the cemetery free of charge. The historic Schroepfel-Pennell lot is located in this cemetery. George Casper Schroepfel, the original proprietor of the town, and two of his three children are buried there, but like thousands of other private cemeteries throughout the land no provision was made for the later upkeep of the cemetery. Also no records were made as to the early burials there.

"Today the trustees who have assumed control following organization of a cemetery association, have succeeded in raising \$4,000 of a desired \$5,000 to provide for future care of this cemetery in which so many of the pioneer settlers of Schroepfel Town are buried. The trustees have also prepared and had printed a record book which shows the loca-

tion of each cemetery lot, and of each grave in each lot. A list of the parents buried in the cemetery together with the names and birthdates of their children has also been prepared.

"On the morning of May 6, 1814, Sir James Yeo, admiral of the British Navy, presented some of his calling cards to the then citizens of Oswego. This is one of them. (Here Mr. Chesbro removed from a suit case which contained relics he had brought to the meeting and produced a cannon ball which was picked up on the Fort Ontario battle ground of 1814 at Oswego by a Phoenix militiaman who was present on that occasion and whose action resulted in the ball's preservation.

Indian Relics Found

"We have not the time or the ability to discuss occupants of this locality one thousand years ago, but thinking that some of you present here tonight might like to see some of the implements they used and left here, I have brought along some specimens of the most rare ones found on an Algonkian site consisting of banner or ceremonial stones, an adz, sharpening stone, fire stone used in the starting of fires and a Folsom point. A few years ago when scientists discovered some of these points beneath the bones of a mastodon in one of our western states, the theory that man first put in appearance in the western hemisphere after the mastodon became extinct was exploded.

"In an older Indian camp grounds in Schroepel were found this platform pipe, the boatstone and slate spear heads. Two very rare Indian implements that were found at the Indian burying ground near Oak Orchard on the Oneida River near the site occupied today by the Schroepel mansion, were a double-bitted stone axe and a stone dagger."

Mansion's New Owners

During the informal discussion that followed presentation of the final paper by Thad R. Siver of Phoenix, it was brought out the Schroepel Mansion at Oak Orchard, Town of Schroepel, has recently passed into possession of new owners now in possession, Mr. and Mrs. R. F. O'Hare, formerly of New York City, the property now having passed out of control of the descendants of the Schroepel family after 128 years of continuous possession. Albert Schroepel, a widower, the last member of the family to reside in the mansion left it last August to establish himself in Syracuse at the time when the property was sold to the O'Hares. There are other Schroepel descendants yet living in the town, however, who yet bear the Schroepel name. Mr. and Mrs. O'Hare were present at the Phoenix meeting and were formally presented to the society by Mr. Chesbro. Mr. O'Hare stated it is their intention to restore the Schroepel mansion as nearly as is possible to its early state. With the dwelling they have acquired some of the oil portraits that have long graced the old mansion, including those of Dr. and Mrs. Hinman and Mrs. George Casper Schroepel. Mrs. Hinman was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Casper Schroepel.

Miss Clara Louise Schroepel who shared the mansion in 1940 with her brother, Albert, when members of the Historical Society visited it in connection with a tour of the southern and eastern part of the county to visit points of historical interest, died a few months ago. It was recalled Miss Schroepel proved a very vivacious and interesting hostess on the occasion of the visit of the Historical Society members to the Schroepel mansion.

Early Hinmanville Church

At Hinmanville, Mrs. Mary Mullen and Miss Hawks of Phoe-

nix recalled where Dr. and Mrs. Hinman first lived after their marriage they established an Episcopal church known for many years as St. John's. A rector came in the early days all the way from Utica to hold religious services in this church. With the loss of population which befell this community, located on the banks of the old Oswego Canal, after the removal of Dr. and Mrs. Hinman to Utica, use of the church was gradually abandoned. The building still stands in Hinmanville today, however, and is presently in use as a barn.

There was also a school house erected at Hinmanville through the cooperation of the Hinmans. A cemetery was also created. Among others whose remains were interred therein was Col. James Hinman, a brother of Dr.

Hinman. A granite shaft which marked his grave, was reported to have been plowed under the earth by a farmer tilling land a few years ago so the grave can no longer be identified. It was reported few visible remains of the old cemetery are extant and these are largely screened from view by a tangle of growth.

A vote of thanks was given by the Society to Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Birdlebough of Phoenix who had charge of the local arrangements for last night's meeting of the Society. The speakers of the evening were presented by Grove A. Gilbert of Fulton, vice-president of the society, a lineal descendant of the Gilbert family which settled at Gilbertsville in 1818, being among the first to settle in the Town of Schroepfel.



George Casper Schroepfel, A First Citizen

(Paper Read Before Members of Oswego County Historical Society at Phoenix, November 19, 1946, by Thad R. Siver, Former Supervisor of Town of Schroepfel and Former Chairman of the Oswego County Board of Supervisors.)

In writing a sketch of the history of the Town of Schroepfel, naturally, the name of George Casper Schroepfel (originally pronounced Von Schrow-pell), first comes to mind. Unfortunately, no authentic history has been recorded concerning him but a mantle of legendary romance and tragedy has been thrown about him by time and it has been generally accepted as fact.

Schroepfel was a native of Nuernberg, Germany. During the period of his early life, history tells us the affairs of the governments of Central Europe were in a very unsettled condition. For centuries the ruling classes had held sway with ruthless oppression. By contrast, the new world in America appeared on the political horizon, as a haven of civil and religious liberty with the result thousands of persons representing some of the best blood of Europe emigrated to these shores. Among them was George Casper Schroepfel.

Met On Shipboard

While Schroepfel was on shipboard, on the voyage to America, he met a beautiful young French woman belonging to the nobility, who, like himself, was a political refugee, fleeing from the ravages of the French Revolution. Romance has it, that it was a case of love at first sight between them. In those days of slow sailing ships there was ample time for the ardent courtship which followed to develop. On arrival in New York City they were married, this being about the year 1796.

With his young wife's fortune Mr. Schroepfel embarked in business in New York City in association with George Scriba and

Nicholas Roosevelt who earlier had been partners in the purchase of the large tract of land in Oswego County known as "Scriba's Purchase." In his business venture with Scriba and Roosevelt, Schroepfel was highly successful.

After a lapse of time during which the political affairs of France became more settled, rumor reached the Schroepfels that the French government intended to separate them and to force the young wife to return to France. Upon receiving this news Mr. Schroepfel disposed of his New York City property, changed his name from Von Schroepfel to Schroepfel, as we know it today, and with his family, fled from New York City about the year 1815.

Settles At Oak Orchard

Taking a course northward Schroepfel came up the Hudson and Mohawk rivers to Oneida Lake and finally located at Oak Orchard, on the Oneida River. There, Mr. Schroepfel acquired from George Scriba, one of his former partners, 20,000 acres of land in the area that was then an unbroken wilderness. His purchase comprised a large portion of the area now included in the Town of Schroepfel which was named after Schroepfel, its largest land owner and first settler. At Oak Orchard in 1818, the homestead until recently occupied by the fourth generation of the Schroepfel family was erected. In the next year Mr. Schroepfel built one of the first saw mills to be established in Oswego County at Oak Orchard which was the name given by him to the location where he erected his mansion.

And now grim tragedy appears on the scene. With a ruthlessness which characterized the old world governments of those days, the agents of the French Government, after a relentless search, located the Schroepfels in their woodland home. As fate decreed, there had been some disagreement between husband and wife over religious matters, Mrs. Schroepfel being a Catholic while he was a Protestant by faith. Before their differences could be reconciled Madam Schroepfel departed for her native country, never to return.

Bride Returns To France

There must have been heartaches and bitter tears of sorrow as the years rolled by but as both husband and wife were possessed of positive temperaments neither ever relented. Mrs. Schroepfel is said to have entered a convent in France where she died not many years later of a broken heart. Her husband, equally grieved at the separation from his beloved wife, remained at Oak Orchard to bring up his family, consisting of a son and two daughters, alone. Later he returned to New York City where he died in 1829 and was buried in Trinity church yard. Later his body was exhumed and brought to Pennellville in the Town of Schroepfel where it lies in the cemetery there.

Son Inherits Homestead

George Casper Schroepfel's son, Henry W. Schroepfel, inherited the homestead and the land around it, on which he made extensive improvements, the land cleared being the first cleared land in the Township of Schroepfel. One of George Casper Schroepfel's daughters married Dr. John E. Hinman of Utica. She inherited that portion of the western part of the Town of Schroepfel which bears the name of Hinmanville, the name she as-

signed it in honor of her husband. In later years Dr. and Mrs. Hinman lived in Utica of which city he later became mayor. The other daughter married Dr. Richard Pennell, from whom the village of Pennellville received its name.

Dr. Pennell merits more than a passing notice. Born in England in 1798, he came to America and located in New York City. He became an American citizen in 1828 and he held that honor so highly that a statement concerning it is engraved on his tombstone. In 1833, the year in which Schroepfel Township was organized, Dr. Pennell, through his agent, built a sawmill at Pennellville, which was located on the site of the present mill there and possibly some of the present structure is a part of the original building. Dr. Pennell died at the age of 63 in 1861.

Of these three families, the Schroepfels, the Pennells and the Hinmans, whose lives were so closely identified with the early history of the town, none but the Schroepfel branch has any living descendants. The others have all departed. In the cemetery at Pennellville many of them lie, "sleeping the dreamless sleep in the silent night of eternity."

Schroepfel Town Erected

As previously mentioned, the Town of Schroepfel was erected in the year 1833, the first town meeting being held at the home of James B. Richardson. Some of the officers then elected were: Samuel Merry, supervisor; James B. Richardson, town clerk; and five justices of the peace. Many of the older generation can remember the town elections of former years which were held in the month of March, annually, with road conditions often at their worst, but the voters managed to get to the polls in various ways. Some moved on snowshoes and some on horseback, and

others in sleighloads made up of neighborhood groups. This method of holding Town elections remained until the year 1898, when the time of voting at town elections was changed to the general election day, in November, biennially.

Gilbert's Mills and Phoenix

The little hamlet of Gilbert's Mills, located in the western section of the Township, adjacent to the Town of Volney, seems to have been settled slightly before some of the other town localities, the first settlement there having taken place in the year 1818. Some of the first settlers were Archibald Cook and Andrew and Hiram Gilbert. A grist mill was erected, a store opened and drilling for salt prosecuted. Today these activities have long since ceased and the hamlet, small but still alive, is content to let the world pass by.

The village of Phoenix, the metropolis of the Township, situated about three miles below Three Rivers at the foot of the rifts, was laid out in village plots in 1836, it having received its name in 1828 from Alexander Phoenix, who purchased what is known as the "Phoenix Patent" from George W. Scriba, the original proprietor. The village was incorporated in 1848.

Bear Hunter Paddock

The first white settler was Abram Paddock, who built a log cabin there in 1801. He was known as "Bear Hunter Paddock" because of the fact that he killed so many bears which were numerous then in this locality. Buried for six years in what was then an unbroken wilderness, he was the only white inhabitant of the territory now comprising the Town of Schroepfel. Bands of Oneida and Onondaga Indians were at that period accustomed to move over two trails leading to Three Rivers, thence down

the river to what is now Phoenix, in search of game and fish, this locality then being a great fishing center. The region also abounded in game. In 1822 Simeon Chapin bought the log cabin of Paddock and opened a tavern there. Soon afterwards he built a frame addition, the first in the settlement.

In 1828 Walter Peck built a sawmill and a year later he opened a store in a building located near the site of the present river bridge at Phoenix. Also in 1828 Seth W. Burke established a blacksmith shop, where he made by hand, all the tools and hardware used in the little settlement. This man Burke must have been a man of outstanding ability. He was a skilled mechanic and also a leader in the community. While hammering iron he studied law. Later he removed to California where he rose to eminence and became very wealthy.

Barnes First Manufacturer

The year 1835 marked the coming to the community of Hezekiah Barnes, who purchased the interests of Alexander Phoenix. Mr. Barnes became actively identified with the business life of the little settlement, clearing the land and engaging in manufacturing. The residence which he built by himself soon after his arrival, is still standing and is in excellent state of preservation.* He was one of the founders of the Congregational church of Phoenix, the organization meetings being held in his home.

Wood For Salt Boilers

One of the chief products of the land along the Oneida and Oswego rivers for which a ready market was always available was wood, which was used largely at Salina for the boiling of salt. All

* This residence is now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Birdleough.

through the winter season men with teams drew wood cut during the fall and winter to the river bank to be ready for its removal by boats, at the opening of navigation in the spring. This work was called "wood banking" and many a farm mortgage was paid off from the proceeds of this enterprise.

It seems a pity that no one had any idea of conserving timber in those days, for the use of future generations. The main thought seemed to be to clear the land for cultivation.

Canal Brought New Industry

When the Oswego Canal was finished in 1828 a new industry came into existence at Phoenix, the building of canal boats. At times there was as many as five boat yards doing business here turning out canal craft and Phoenix boats became famous for their great carrying capacity and for their superior workmanship. The largest item of manufac-

ture in Phoenix at the present time is paper, five mills being actively engaged in that business. There is yet available plenty of surplus water power which if put to use would result in the employment of more labor and this would cause the community to grow.

Two Great Fires

Phoenix has been visited by two disastrous fires during the period of its existence extending over a century. The first in 1872 was very destructive. The fire of 1916 which is still fresh in the memory of all the older generation of residents, practically wiped out the entire business section of the village. The staggering effects of this conflagration are still apparent and will be for some years to come.

In this sketch I have touched only a few of the features of the town and village history, for fear of going into details at too great length so that there might be danger of wearying my audience.



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