1951

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of the

Oswego
County Historical Society

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM FOR 1952

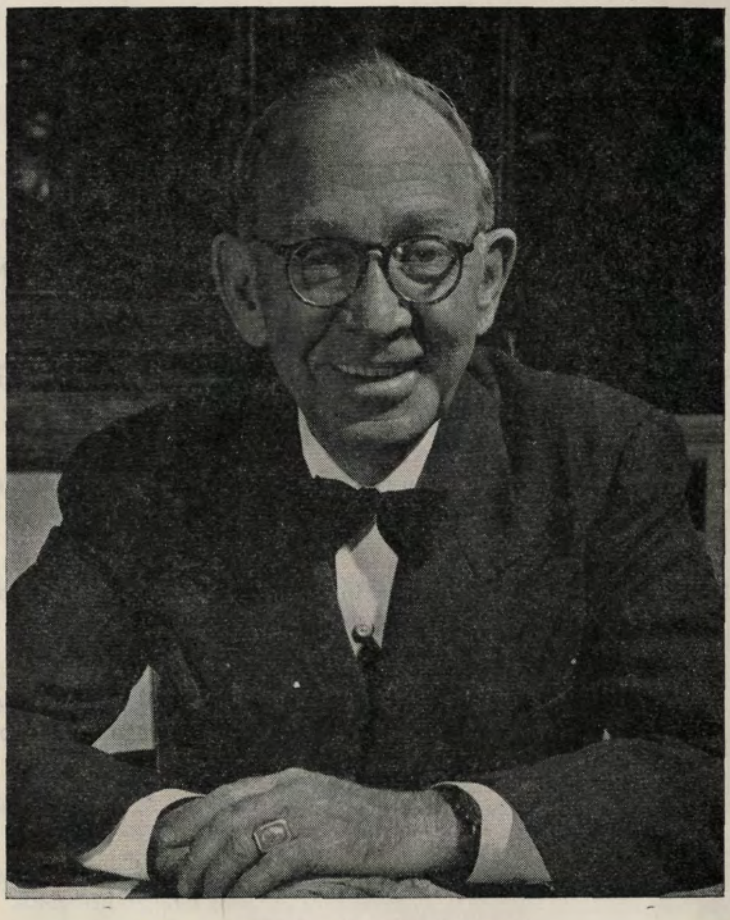
January 8—"The Business Activities of Gerrit Smith," Dr. C. M. Snyder, State College, Oswego.

February 19—"Jerome Increase Case and the Farm Machinery Industry in Oswego County," Mrs. Nell W. DeLong.

March 18—"The Willett Family in the Oswego Valley," Rodney Johnson, State College, Oswego.

April 15—"Politics and Campaigns in the 1840's," Charles DeGroat, Graduate Student, Columbia University.

May 20—"Old Homes of Fulton," Mrs. Frank Elliott and Mr. Grove A. Gilbert, Members Board of Managers, Oswego Co. Historical Society.



JAMES MORELAND

"Lest We Forget"

James Moreland

JAMES Moreland, member of the Board of Managers of the Oswego County Historical Society, and professor of English and director of public relations at the Oswego State University Teachers College, died unexpectedly on May 27, 1951. His undergraduate collegiate training was received at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky. It was here that he began his professional college work as Executive Secretary and Registrar, a position he held for eight years. He was awarded the M.A. degree at the University of Maine, at which institution he served a period of six years as professor of journalism. Work leading to the doctorate was pursued at the University of Pennsylvania.

For the past fifteen years he was a dynamic member of the faculty of the local college and an enthusiastic citizen of his adopted community—Oswego. Always in the forefront of progressive movements leading to improvement in both town and college, "Jimmy"—as he was affectionately known by students and citizens—made his personality felt. Loved by his students and held in high esteem by his fellow citizens, he gave generously of his time and talents to make his community a better place in which to live.

Among the many community activities with which James Moreland actively identified himself, was the Oswego County Historical Society. As a member of its Board of Managers for a long period, he helped in the development of the Society from a purely local to a countywide organization. He did much to interest citizens generally in the work of the Society, and played a conspicuous part in securing financial support from the County Board of Supervisors to help sustain the larger undertaking subsequent to the acquisition of Headquarters House by the Society.

An entertaining speaker always, Mr. Moreland on several occasions addressed the Society. During the Oswego Centennial celebration in 1948, he was one of the editors who helped put together the official centennial booklet.

As a writer he distinguished himself in his work with newspapers and magazines. The New England Quarterly published his History of the Theatre in Maine. One of the outstanding contributions to the literature of the Empire State was a Bibliography of New York State Literature which Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York State Historian, had urged him to publish. At the time of his sudden death, he was in the process of gathering folklore of New York State with the idea of publication. His library on history, literature, and the drama was the most extensive of any in this part of the State.

One of Mr. Moreland's last public appearances was in connection with the Historical Society, when he and Mrs. Moreland joined with the other officers of the Society in entertaining the members of the Oswego County Board of Supervisors and their wives. On that occasion Mrs. Moreland presided at the tea table while "Jimmy" gave of himself in explaining the various exhibits in the Headquarters House museum collection to the guests of honor.

In recognition of James Moreland's outstanding service to this Society and his scholarly contributions to the causes of local history, the Board of Managers of the Oswego County Historical Society appreciatively dedicates this volume to his memory.

Necrology

MRS. FREDA VAN DOREN
Phoenix, N. Y., Dec. 1950

HARRY WAUGH
Fulton, N. Y., Jan. 1951

HARRY DRAKE
Elmira, N. Y., Feb. 1951

MISS ALECIA JOYCE
Oswego, N. Y., Feb. 1951

MRS. FRANK METCALF
Oswego, N. Y., Mar. 1951

THOMAS L. McKAY
Oswego, N. Y., Mar. 1951

WINFIELD BOGARDUS
Fulton, N. Y., Apr. 1951

MRS. CHARLES GOODE
Pulaski, N. Y., Apr. 1951

JAMES MORELAND
Oswego, N. Y., May 1951

LOUIS N. BRENNER
Oswego, N. Y., June 1951

MISS OLIVE PAGE
Oswego, N. Y., June 1951

JAMES C. FEENEY
Mexico, N. Y., July 1951

CLAYTON WINN
Bernards Bay, N. Y., July 1951

MISS FLORENCE E. THOMPSON
Oswego, N. Y., Aug. 1951

FREDERICK W. BARNES
Oswego, N. Y., Sept. 1951

MRS. D. P. MOREHOUSE, Jr.
Oswego, N. Y., Nov. 1951

T. Kingsford and Son and the Oswego Starch Factory

(Paper Given Before the Oswego County Historical Society by Dr. Charles Wells, Oswego State University Teachers College on January 9, 1951)

At rare intervals in the ever-moving course of events which constitute general human progress, there occurs a discovery or invention that marks an epoch and revolutionizes some phase of human existence. The discovery of a practical process for removing starch from American Maize or Indian Corn was just such a milestone in the march of human events; it revolutionized an industry, it improved and reduced the price of an article of universal consumption, and it proved a boon to humanity by providing one of the best and most wholesome of foods.

The story of starch is also the story of T. Kingsford & Son and the Oswego Starch Factory since it was Thomas Kingsford who in 1841-42 discovered the process for successfully manufacturing laundry and food starch from ripe Indian corn. His invention had a profound influence on the industrial history of Oswego County as well as the nation, and has had an important effect on the economic life of countless men, women and children during the past one hundred years. Thousands of people have found pleasant employment in an industry first developed in Oswego, and millions of people throughout the world have benefitted by addition of an inexpensive, nutritious item of food to their diets.

The presence of starch in wheat, rye, barley, oats, buckwheat, rice, corn, beans, potatoes and other plants had long been recognized, but production of usable starch was an extremely difficult and expensive process. As manufacture of cotton goods increased there was a great demand for laundry starch, and experimenters turned their attention toward a cheaper and better method of production. For many years the principal source of the article had been wheat or potatoes, though the quality of the product was quite inferior.

Early Processes

The older processes of starch manufacture had consisted of steeping grain in water until it was soft, after which it was passed through a malt-mill, or between rollers, and again mixed with water. Fermentation then set in, forming a lactic and acetic acid which liberated the starch granules. These were collected by repeated washings and precipitations, the process continuing for several days. Thorough washing removed the soluble matter, and the starch left behind was dried and prepared for market. The corn gluten, at that time a waste product, putrefied during the process and gave off a foul odor which was very unpleasant for the workmen and residents of the neighborhood. Since this gluten was never perfectly removed from the finished starch, it caused endless annoyance to a laundress when it came in contact with her hot irons. It was by these, or still more crude and costly methods, that nearly all starch had been produced at the time Thomas Kingsford became interested in the problem.

Thomas Kingsford, now known as the inventor of a process for extracting starch from Indian corn, was born in Kent, England, in 1799. According to tradition,

the family name originated during the reign of King John, that monarch having been carried across a stream on the back of a subject who was ever afterwards designated as "King's-ford."

Young Thomas went to work as a baker in London at the age of seventeen, and five years later found employment in a chemical works where he developed a remarkable genius for chemical research. On January 6, 1818, he married Ann Thomson, a native of the maritime borough of Deal. Overtaken by financial reverses, he was forced to return to his home in Canterbury; later he moved to Headcorn, Kent, where he conducted a private school for six or seven years.

Kingsford Joins Colgate

Leaving the school in charge of his wife, Thomas Kingsford came to the United States in December 1831, bringing with him good character, resolute purpose, strong common sense, and considerable knowledge of practical chemistry which he had learned in the British chemical works. In 1832, he went to work at the William Colgate and Company starch factory in Harsimus, Bergen County, New Jersey, and in 1833, his family joined him in this country.

The Colgate firm was one of the largest in the United States, but their product was an inferior article produced mainly from potatoes. Mr. Kingsford foresaw the prospect of improving starch production. He noticed the quantity and quality of American Maize or Indian Corn, which contains 55 per cent starch, and suggested to his employers the possibility of extracting a better commercial starch from it. The Colgates thought that the prospect of success was doubtful, and since they were already making money with their potato starch, they saw no need for taking up a visionary project.

But Thomas Kingsford was a man of perseverance, self-reliance, and faith in his idea. In the year 1841, at the Colgate factory and in his own home, he began a series of experiments to test his theory. He first soaked a quantity of corn meal and washed it through a fine sieve, hoping to secure starch; but it remained corn meal. He soaked shell corn in lye to soften the grain, and reduced the kernals to pulp with a mortar and pestle. This done, he tried unsuccessfully to wash out the starch. He made many other vain attempts with various machines and acid solutions.

First Starch From Corn

One day he tried a solution of wood ash lye added to a corn mixture, but again he failed to produce starch. Without yielding to discouragement, he treated another mixture with a solution of lime, still without success. Throwing this mixture into the same pail which held the lot treated earlier with lye solution, he prepared to try still another method. On emptying the pail a few days afterwards he found a quantity of pure white starch thoroughly separated. A popular legend now current in Oswego credits his wife with discovery of the process, but all information available in print gives Mr. Kingsford sole credit for the discovery which came as a result of his tireless efforts. He had at last clearly demonstrated that starch could be produced from ripe Indian corn. Continuing his work he rapidly perfected the process he had discovered accidentally, and by 1842 he succeeded in preparing a quantity sufficient to market.

The superiority of the new starch was acknowledged by the trade generally, and so great was the demand from manufacturers of textile goods for the new and better product that Mr. Kingsford decided to engage in manufacture on his own account. In 1846, he and his son, Thomson Kingsford, who had aided in many of the early experiments, organized the firm of "T. Kingsford & Son." A small factory was built and put into operation at Bergen, New Jersey, but within a year the

building proved to be too small for the rapidly expanding business. After looking around for a suitable location, Mr. Kingsford decided to move the plant to Oswego where adequate water-power, a pure water supply, and good shipping facilities were available. A stock company with capital of $50,000 furnished by a group of Auburn, New York, businessmen, was formed in 1848 under a corporate name of "The Oswego Starch Factory, T. Kingsford and Son, manufacturers."

Factory Built In Oswego

A factory was built on the western bank of the Oswego river, just south of Erie street, and starch production was started with a small force of sixty-five workmen. During the first year of operation 1,327,128 pounds of the new starch were produced by the Oswego plant. Such scrupulous care was taken that every pound of starch should meet the highest standards of quality that its reputation spread rapidly, and during the ensuing five years the average production exceeded 3,000,000 pounds annually. As production increased new and better machinery was required, and larger buildings were needed to house the operations. Since many of the starch-making devices formerly used were not adequate or sufficient, Mr. Kingsford and his son Thomson invented and developed much of the machinery required to meet the rapidly increasing demand for the new product.

In 1850 Mr. Kingsford became convinced that by following processes somewhat different from those employed in making laundry starch, a food substance might also be produced from Indian corn. He immediately began a series of experiments which resulted in the discovery of a commodity now known as corn starch. As a new food, corn starch was quickly accepted and consumption soon spread to every civilized country in the world.

During the five year period, 1854 to 1859, the annual output of the Oswego Starch Factory averaged about 7,000,000 pounds. From the modest factory built in 1848, in which sixty-five men were employed, the buildings were enlarged until they covered an area of twenty acres and housed a total of 700 workmen. In the Civil War period, when all industries were expanding rapidly, starch production amounted to more than 10,000,000 pounds annually. After that time the yearly production increased steadily to about 21,500,000 pounds. The total amount produced by the Oswego factory from 1849 to 1876, inclusive, was 247,833,073 pounds.

The exact processes used in the plant were a closely guarded secret by Mr. Kingsford and his son, but in general it resembled techniques used by most starch factories of that period. Ripe Indian corn was first soaked in large, flat-bottomed tanks, and then ground in a mill. The pulp was passed through fine sieves and washed repeatedly to remove insoluble portions of the kernels. The residue was allowed to stand in large wooden vats containing an alkali solution until quantities of starch settled. Repeated treatments followed by washing in pure water and drying in a kiln finally produced a clear starch suitable for marketing.

Cattle Food By-Product

A semi-fluid waste product left after removal of the starch was sold as "starch feed" to farmers who hauled it away in wooden tank wagons. The foul odor given off by the putrefaction of the gluten could be detected for miles away when the wind was in the right direction, and the starch feed that often dripped onto the city streets from leaking tanks did nothing to improve the pleasant scent of Oswego. Complaints from citizens were a common occurrance, but since sale of the evil-smelling liquid was an additional source of income, nothing much was done to improve the

situation. An amusing anecdote is told concerning Mr. Luther Wright, president of an Oswego bank and a stockholder in the Kingsford company. One day an outraged citizen asked Mr. Wright to assist in correcting the public nuisance, but Mr. Wright replied that he did "not smell an unpleasant odor, only dividends."

For grinding the vast quantity of corn required in the manufacturing operation the factory contained twenty-four pairs of burr stones and six pairs of heavy iron rollers; five miles of shafting, connected by 2,499 gear wheels and 3,000 pulleys; 690 sieves for straining the starch; forty-three miles of steam pipes for drying the starch and for heating the buildings; fourteen water turbines with an aggregate of 1,220 horse power; and ten steam engines of 845 horse power, making a total of 2,065 horsepower; fourteen large steam boilers; and thirty-two machines capable of weighing and packing more than 96,000 packages a day. Pumps with a capacity of 4,000,000 gallons a day forced pure water and starch in solution through more than ten miles of pipe and equipment in the preparation of the product.

Subsidiary Plants Erected

As an accessory to the starch plant, an extensive box factory and planing mill was established in 1851. Packing and boxing the starch required 5,000,000 feet of lumber, and 350 tons of paper and pasteboard annually. First quality white pine lumber, brought by boat from Canada, was used to make extra fine wooden boxes with the name "Kingsford's Oswego Starch" stamped on the outside to identify the contents. These sturdy boxes were very popular with children for building playhouses and toy carts, and many a child throughout the world found pleasure playing with empty boxes assembled by the Oswego Box Factory. Extra boxes and packages produced in the box shop were often sold to other factories as an additional source of revenue.

The Kingsford Foundry and Machine Works was established in 1864 to care for repairs to machinery in the Starch Factory and to build water wheels and boom excavators. Later, the Machine Works began to manufacture stationary, portable and marine engines and boilers; steam pumps and hoisting machines; shafting hangars, pulleys and mill gearing; and car wheels and railroad castings. This enterprise proved to be an important part of the Kingsford's industrial development, and continued in successful operation for many years. The manufacture of all types of boilers, including the large water tube boilers, was discontinued as recently as 1930, and since that time, the company has confined its efforts to building a superior type of centrifugal pump.

Other Business Interests

As the starch factory became established as a successful business, the Kingsfords, father and son, engaged in other activities. As early as 1856, Mr. Kingsford and four others established the Marine Bank of Oswego, with Elias Root as president, Thomas Kingsford as vice-president, and John R. Noyes, cashier. In 1864, Mr. Kingsford, in company with the same men, organized the First National Bank with a capital of $100,000, later increased to $250,000, and served as its first president. The following year the Marine Bank was re-organized as the National Marine Bank with Thomson Kingsford, who had been a director of the bank, taking the place of his father as vice-president.

In 1868, Mr. Kingsford and his son united with several other citizens in building the Oswego Water Works which proved to be of great benefit to the people of the community.

Father and son were also ardent Baptists, and soon after moving to Oswego joined the

First Baptist Church located on the east side of the river. Increase of population on the opposite side of the river led to the organization in 1852 of the West Baptist Church by forty-five members of the First Baptist Church who were released by the Reverend Mr. Isaac Butterfield for that purpose. Mr. Kingsford took an active interest in the new church, became its first treasurer, and subsequently one of its leading deacons.

Lincoln Presidential Elector

Mr. Kingsford did not enter political life, though he heartily supported the principles of the Republican party, and gave his support to the Civil War measures of the Federal administration. In 1864, he had been one of the presidential electors to cast the New York State vote in favor of Lincoln.

Thomas Kingsford was a man who clearly recognized the truth that a business to be successful must be a system of mutual services. Workmen were treated with fairness and good will, their interests were consulted, their opinions and suggestions sought, their pleasure and comfort made a matter of thoughtful consideration. Such treatment on the part of the employer resulted in cordial relations between Mr. Kingsford and his employees. Strikes and labor strife were unknown, and the utmost quiet, regularity, and kindly feeling prevailed throughout the entire organization. At his death on November 28, 1869, he was universally mourned by the people of Oswego, and he left an example of success attained by singleness of aim, well directed effort and undeviating rectitude.

Son Carries On Business

Mr. Thomson Kingsford, who assumed the management of the Oswego Starch Factory following the death of his father, was born at Headcorn, England, April 4, 1828. After the family moved to America in 1833, young Thomson attended school in Harsimus, New Jersey, and at the age of fourteen became an apprentice machinist and draughtsman. During the first year of his apprenticeship, he constructed a perfect steam engine of six horse power which was later used by his father to provide power in the early manufacture of starch. At eighteen, the young man was awarded a diploma for excellence in draughting by the American Institute.

In 1846, the senior Kingsford took his son into partnership, and together they continued the research and experimentation that eventually lead to the establishment of the Oswego Starch Factory. Much of the growth and prosperity of the business came as a result of the energy, mechanical skill, and inventive genius of the son. In his constant study to improve the methods of starch making he originated many new manufacturing processes, and invented many new labor-saving devices and machinery for expediting production. Models of his inventions submitted to the Patent Office at Washington illustrate his mechanical ingenuity and skill as a draughtsman. For twenty years the business life of father and son were interwoven, and the efforts of one supplemented those of the other.

As the years of the father increased, the duties of management devolved more and more upon the son. At the death of his father in 1869, Thomson Kingsford was the only member of the firm to know the secret of the process and thus he became the sole manager of one of the largest manufacturing concerns in the country. The sixty-five workmen of 1848 had been increased more than tenfold; the original capital investment of $50,000 had been increased to $500,000; and the size of the plant enlarged tremendously.

Imposing Statistics

Under the direction of the son the Starch Factory continued to prosper. From 1876 on, the cap-

acity of the works amounted to about thirty-five tons a day, or more than 21,000,000 pounds annually, by far the largest amount of starch ever produced by any factory in the world up to that time. The number of employees at times exceeded 1,000 men and women. By 1880, the factory, storehouses, machine-shop, box-factory, carpenter-shop, and other buildings occupied an area 1245 feet along the river and extended back 200 feet. A lumber yard and warehouses were located nearby on adjoining sites. Most of the buildings were constructed of substantial stone, brick and iron; some of the units were seven stories high. To protect the huge plant from an ever-present threat of fire, the factory employees were organized into a well-trained fire department, equipped with 4,000 feet of leather hose, three hose carriages, and a hook and ladder. This organization was so efficient that the factory never had a serious fire until some years later, after the fire department had been disbanded by new owners as an economy measure. For the social life of the volunteer fire fighters, a Firemen's Hall was set aside in one of the buildings and pleasantly furnished by the management.

World-Wide Distribution

"Kingsford's Oswego Starch" was distributed throughout the world, and the city of Oswego became known as the center of the industry. Four leading brands were manufactured and packaged under the trade names of "Silver Gloss," "Pure," "Oswego Corn Starch," and "Laundro," a new type of cold water starch. To expedite distribution warehouses were maintained in New York, Chicago, St. Louis, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Baltimore, London and Edinburgh. In maintaining the reputation and sale of the several kinds of starch made by them, against an active and aggressive competition, the watchword of T. Kingsford & Son was always Purity. The company spared no labor or expense to maintain and to improve the quality; samples of the current product were tested daily in the factory laboratory, and if not fully up to required standards, the output for the day was condemned.

The superiority of Kingsford starch was acclaimed on scores of occasions by leading authorities, as well as by consumers. Whenever the Oswego product was placed in competition with other starch, it never failed to receive the highest awards. Beginning with the great London Exhibition of 1851; and continuing with the Philadelphia Centennial in 1876, and the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893, Kingsford starch received medals of excellence. At the World's Fair in Paris in 1867, a Jury of Nations awarded it the Prize Medal in testimony of the highest grade of merit.

These awards were later confirmed by two distinguished analytical chemists, who, after testing the starch, issued certificates of merit. Dr. Stevenson Macadam, Lecturer on Chemistry, University of Edinburg, reported, "I have made a careful chemical analysis of Kingsford's Oswego Prepared Corn, and find such to be of the purest and best description, and when prepared according to the directions to be an excellent article of diet. It is fully equal in chemical and feeding properties to the best Arrow-Root."

Dr. Arthur Hassall of the Analytical Sanitary Institution, London, also reported, "I have subjected to microscopical examination and chemical analysis a sample of Kingsford's Oswego Prepared Corn, and find it consists entirely of the starch portion, in the form of innumerable granules of the grain of Indian Corn, free from the oil, gum, and nitrogenous products contained in the whole grain. That it has been very carefully prepared is shown by its color and by the absence of cellulose and albuminous compounds. It may be remarked of

this preparation that it is carefully prepared, very pure and that taken in the manner recommended it constitutes a valuable article of diet."

Advertising Plays Part

To advertise edible corn starch, the Oswego Starch Factory issued in 1876, a small booklet listing various testimonials and awards received by the product, and containing recipes and "directions for preparing Kingsford's Oswego Corn Starch, a new article of food, which is adapated alike to the taste of the epicure and the wants of the invalid." Among the recipes given were "English Blanc Mange," "Delmonica Pudding," "Saratoga Pudding," and "Oswego Pudding." For the pleasure of present day epicures the directions for "Oswego Pudding" are given here: "One quart of milk, three tablespoonsful of corn starch, four eggs. Beat the yolks, and mix them with a little of the milk and flour; sweeten and flavor with vanilla. Scald the milk, and add the other ingredients, boil three minutes; pour into a dish, and set away to cool. Beat the whites with four teaspoonfuls of sugar. Cover the pudding with a layer of currant jelly, and spread the beaten whites over the top."

"Our Picture Book," containing a wealth of pictures, stories and poems of interest to children, was published in 1881 by T. Kingsford & Son as another form of advertising. The inside front cover carried a full page advertisement of Kingsford's Pure and Silver Gloss Starch, and of Oswego Corn Starch "preferable to Bermuda Arrow-Root." The inside back cover showed letters testifying to the purity of the product. Many of the story illustrations also contained discreet advertisements of the product, as for example, a picture of a small boy intent on raiding the top shelf of a cupboard was shown standing on an empty box labelled "Kingsford's Oswego Corn Starch." The back cover of the book carried a full page color illustration of a package of Silver Gloss Starch.

New Uses Developed

New uses for starch were constantly being discovered, and the Oswego factory was kept increasingly busy supplying the demand. The product came to be employed not merely for food, laundry and textile manufacture, but for confectionery, pastry, paint, chewing gum, ice cream, sausage, adhesives, beverages, and many other items. Mr. Kingsford and his associates did much to further the use and development of various products containing starch made in Oswego.

Thomson Kingsford's ability as a financier and manager was widely recognized, and he was appointed to many positions of trust and importance. He was a trustee of Colgate University and of Wells College; a member of the first local board of the Oswego State Normal and Training school; and a trustee of the Gerrit Smith Library. He was also a director of the National Marine Bank; a participant in organizing the First National Bank; a director of the Oswego Gas Light Company; and one of the founders of the Home for the Homeless, a local charity organized in 1879. Like his father, he was an influential member of the Republican party and a delegate at several party conventions.

Mr. Kingsford was always concerned with the welfare and happiness of his employees. During slack seasons when production was ahead of sales, he used factory workers for landscaping his farm and factory grounds instead of discharging them. A grove of black walnut trees was planted on the 600 acre farm south of Oswego by factory workers when the plant was closed for an extended period. The men had a great respect for him, and often turned to him for advice on their business affairs.

Retail Store Operated

For many years the Oswego

Starch Factory operated a general merchandise store, under the name of the Kingsford Family Supply Store, in one of the company buildings located at West First and Erie Streets. A large stock of goods included food, work clothes, furniture, carpeting, dishes, and all other items needed by workingmen and their families. Customers were not restricted, however, to Kingsford employees, and business was accepted from the entire community. Under the direction of Manager Walter Pulver the store used the most up to date merchandising methods, sold at reasonable prices, provided free delivery service, and carried on a huge annual volume of business. Part of the wages to factory workers were paid in a special script redeemable at the Family store, but the script was never popular with the workmen or their wives because it limited much of their buying to one store. Many local merchants accepted the script at face value in payment for goods purchased, and then redeemed the script by purchasing some of their own household supplies from the Kingsford Family Store. Since the goods were of high quality and prices reasonable, many merchants regularly traded at the company store instead of patronizing their fellow shopkeepers. Because of this competition with city stores the company store was also unpopular with the local Business Men's Association, and no one was especially unhappy when the Family Supply Store finally ceased operation.

Kingsford Band Earned Fame

Of particular interest to the social and cultural life of the community was the famous Kingsford Military Band organized from the ranks of the factory workers and directed by Frank Schilling, a talented Oswego musician and owner of a local music store. An early photograph shows 32 musicians and the director, but some Oswegonians today estimate that at times the band may have included as many as 75 capable performers. It was commonly believed that any stranger seeking a job in the Kingsford plant would be quickly employed if he was able to play a band instrument. Whether this legend is true or not, the fact remains that the Kingsford Band was an exceptionally fine organization and extremely popular throughout Oswego County. It presented free concerts in the city parks during the summer months, and in the old Armory during the winter; it accompanied the Kingsford Firemen whenever they paraded on special patriotic occasions; and it made many concert tours into the area surrounding Oswego.

Kingsford Marriages

Thomson Kingsford had united in marriage with Virginia J. Pettibone, daughter of Augustus and Mary Pettibone of Oswego, on July 1, 1851. Two children were born to them, Thomas Pettibone Kingsford, born December 24, 1858; and a daughter, Virginia M. Kingsford, who later became the wife of John D. Higgins, a trustee of the Starch Factory and later a mayor of Oswego and for a decade president of the Oswego Historical Society of which he was a founding member.

Young Thomas Pettibone Kingsford attended public school in Oswego, and entered Madison (now Colgate) University in 1876. Completing his studies in the spring of 1880, at the age of twenty-one, he immediately entered the firm as a business associate of his father. Once again there was a son as junior partner in the firm of T. Kingsford & Son which had been established many years earlier by his grandfather.

On February 7, 1882, the young man was married to Jennie E. Schuyler of Little Falls, Herkimer County, New York. Their children, Mr. Thomson Kingsford II, and Mrs. Katherine Hall, wife of Willard J. Hall, a former Oswego mayor, still reside in Oswego.

In June of 1894, Thomas P. Kingsford was elected to the office of vice-president of the Oswego Starch Factory. Other officers at the time were: Thomson Kingsford, president; Alonzo G. Beardsley, secretary and treasurer; Theodore M. Pomeroy, Henry A. Morgan, William P. Beardsley, John D. Higgins, Byron DeWitt, and John H. McCullum, directors. Like his father before him, Thomson Kingsford gradually turned more and more of the business responsibility over to his son, and the business continued to flourish under the joint direction of father and son.

Success Brought Competition

The great success of the Oswego Starch Factory very naturally lead to competition from other manufacturers. The Duryea Starch Company had been established at Glen Cove, Long Island, as early as 1856 by Wright Duryea, who had acquired his knowledge of starch production while working for the Kingsfords in Oswego. By 1870 there were in the United States 195 different starch factories, employing over 2,000 persons and with an annual output valued at $6,000,000. Of this amount, however, the local plant produced more than one-third.

With so many different starch manufacturers the industry was highly competitive, and some unscrupulous distributors often resorted to sharp practices such as price cutting and rebates on sales that threatened the economic life of the entire business. To bring some semblance of order out of this chaos, most of the independent companies combined in 1891 to form the National Starch Manufacturing Company. Thomson Kingsford, however, did not approve of the aims or methods of the organization and refused to affiliate with the new group.

United Starch Company

To meet the intense competition of the National Starch Company, or the "Starch Trust" as it was called, Mr. Kingsford and his son helped to organize a rival combination a few years later. An amalgamation of all the starch concerns not in the Trust was formed in New York during September of 1899, under the name of the United Starch Company. It was a six million dollar corporation composed of the Oswego Starch Company, the American Glucose Company of Buffalo, the Argo Manufacturing Company of Nebraska City, Nebraska, and the Sioux City Starch Works owned by the Duryea Company. The Oswego company transferred to the United Starch Company certain of the realty holdings of the factory for a cash sum reported by the "Palladium" to have amounted to $100,000. In addition, stockholders in the former company each received one share of six per cent preferred and two shares of common stock in the new organization, and were officially represented in its management. Thomas P. Kingsford was named president, and John D. Higgins was elected secretary and treasurer. Hiram Duryea of New York served as vice-president. With the sale of the Oswego Starch Factory to the new company, Thomson Kingsford, who was then seventy-one years old, retired from active participation in business affairs.

Outwardly the new organization had little effect on the local plant which continued operating much the same as before. Shortly after the new company was formed, however, the factory shut down for seasonal repairs, and rumors began to spread that it would be closed permanently. On December 14, 1899, the Syracuse "Post-Standard" reported:

"Men employed at the Oswego Starch Factory, with the exception of a few carpenters doing some repair work, were laid off last night.

"The people of the city have had a feeling ever since the local factory was absorbed by the United Starch Company that the plant would not run as heretofore

when under the direct charge of Thomson Kingsford.

"It is said that the United Starch Company will run its plant at Buffalo to supply trade in the East.

"Officials of the Starch Company have stated publicly that the Oswego factory would be run to its fullest capacity, but it has not been in operation for three months."

Thomas P. Kingsford officially denied the story emphatically saying that only a few men employed in the packing room had been laid off. "Every summer," he said, "we close down for repairs for a period of time varying with the number of orders on hand and the amount of repairing to be done. This year we closed down for three months, but the work is not yet completed."

False Rumors Denied

Discussing the affairs of the United Starch Company, and the Oswego factory in particular, Mr. Kingsford told a "Palladium" reporter, "The Oswego factory is not shut down permanently, and every pound of starch sold in the country with the name T. Kingsford & Son on the package, be it corn starch for culinary use or Silver Gloss starch for the laundry, will be made in the Oswego plant."

The same item in the "Palladium", December 16, 1899, expressed a fine tribute to the local factory and its management:

"The Oswego Starch Factory has been one of the greatest of Oswego's industries. It has given steady employment to hundreds of men for years. Under the management of Mr. Thomson Kingsford there was no lost time. He was a great builder. When the factory shut down the employees were set to work outside, building. The hundreds of homes, pleasant, comfortable homes in the Fifth and Seventh Wards, owned by employees of the factory, stand as a monument to Thomson Kingsford, to say nothing of the still greater monument in the persons of two generations of young people, well dressed and well educated, who have gone forth to make their way in the world. The employment in the factory made the homes and the well being of the young people possible. They can all testify to the great benefits the people have derived from the Oswego Starch Factory and Thomson Kingsford, who has retired from active management."

This splendid tribute accurately summed up the high regard the people of Oswego held for Mr. Kingsford. At the time of his death less than a year later, on September 7, 1900, at the age of 72 years, he was mourned by all citizens of Oswego as a public spirited member of the community, a great manufacturer, a financier of ability, a kind employer, and a generous philanthropist.

Late in 1899, the "Palladium" carried a sensational dispatch to the effect that Charles R. Flint, a director of the new United Starch Company, had obtained control of the stock of the rival National Starch Company. Mr. Flint was at that time a recognized expert in making gigantic combinations of capital. He had been responsible for the Biscuit Trust, the Chewing Gum Trust, and for several other smaller concerns. The report, therefore, caused considerable discussion and speculation in Oswego, and the only inference that could be drawn from Mr. Flint's purchase was that a combination of the two so-called trusts was to be evolved. Thomas P. Kingsford, president of the United Starch Company declared that he knew nothing definite about the matter, and discussion continued unabated in the public press.

Mergers Discussed

The middle of February 1900, newspapers in New York City announced that the starchmakers were making an effort to combine the National and United Starch

Companies into one organization with a capital stock of $25,000,000. On March 15, 1900, the New York Commercial and Financial World reported plans for an even larger consolidation to include both sugar and starch companies.

Employees of the Oswego Starch Factory first learned of the impending change in control on July 31st, when workmen in the box factory and the lumber yard were called into the company office at noon and paid off for the time they had worked that day, and then rehired in the name of the National Starch Company.

Confirmation of the new organization was finally published in the local press on August 6, 1900. According to the "Palladium" of that day, "The combination of the United Starch Company, and the United States Glucose Company with the National Starch Company into the "Starch Trust" has been incorporated under the laws of New Jersey, with an authorized capital of $13,500,000, with $6,500,000 in common and preferred stock, and $4,000,000 in bonds already issued." William F. Piel, formerly head of the National Starch Company, was named president of the new company; with Thomas P. Kingsford, first vice-president; and John D. Higgins, secretary and treasurer. Thomas P. Kingsford, Thomson Kingsford and John D. Higgins were also members of the board of directors. Oswego real estate owned by the United Starch Company, including the box factory, Family Supply Store, lumber yards and docks in the First and Fifth wards, was transferred to the National Company. Value of the property, as represented by revenue stamps attached to the deed, amounted to $75,000.

Starch Trust Results

Commenting on the new gigantic starch trust, the "New York Commercial and Financial World" said, "There is not the least doubt but this consolidation will prove to be an excellent thing for all concerned—that is to say, for the manufacturers, for the jobbers and dealers, and for the consumers. By reason of the various economies of both production and distribution which are possible to one great company but not to several competing concerns, it will be possible to give better value for the money, and in this connection it may be said that there does not seem to be any intention to advance prices."

But there were some who did not agree with the point of view that the new trust was in the public interest. It was election year and William Jennings Bryan was again running for President of the United States on the Democratic ticket against the Republican candidate, McKinley. "Trust-busting" was an important part of Bryan's platform, and in most of his campaign speeches he lashed out vigorously against the new starch trust. The "Buffalo Courrier" of September 28, 1900, carried an item of great interest in Oswego:

Bryan On the Starch Trust

"In a speech given in Nebraska City, home of the Argo Starch Company, a member of the new National Starch Company, Mr. Bryan pointed out in emphatic language that the starch workers were now completely at the mercy of the trust officers. On this point, he said:

"Charles R. Flint of Boston is one of the directors of the new starch company, and a year ago he made a speech in which he summed up the advantages of the trusts.

"One advantage was that the least productive plants could be closed down and the work done at the more productive plants. The people of your town already have seen a distillery closed down by the whiskey trust. What is to prevent the Argo Company from being closed down by the starch trust?

"When all the factories belong to one corporation the closing down of one factory does not

bring loss to the corporation because the work can be carried on somewhere else; but the Argo Company could not close down without serious loss; therefore, the chances are greater in favor of the local factory being closed down under a trust than under independent management.

"Mr. Flint also suggested as another advantage that in case of local fires or strikes the work could be done elsewhere without loss. When the Argo company became a member of the National Starch Company the employees have no way of protecting themselves because the work here can be suspended while the employees are starved into submission."

This section of Mr. Bryan's speech was widely circulated and caused considerable discussion in Oswego, since his remarks were applicable locally.

A huge crowd assembled in East Park to hear Mr. Bryan when he spoke in Oswego on October 18, 1900. A few excerpts from his speech as printed in the "Palladium" next day are of interest as they touch upon the trust issue:

Bryan's Oswego Speech

"The Republican party has allowed the trusts to grow. More have been organized in the last three and a half years than in all the previous history of the country, and today the Republican party has no plan for the overthrow of the Trusts.

"Mr. Hanna says there are no trusts! (Laughter from the audience). Do you believe that the Republican party is going to get its campaign fund from trusts and then exterminate them? It would not kill the hen that laid the golden egg; the Republican party would not even kill a hen that laid a silver egg, if it was sure to get the egg. (Cheers)

"Mr. Hanna has given us three defenses against the Trusts: first, he says there are no Trusts; second, Trusts are good; and third, if they are bad the Republican party will take care of them! (Laughter) It's like the man who borrowed the kettle and ruined it. He denied he borrowed it; he denied he ever injured it; and then claimed it was in good condition when he took it home.

"You can tell better than I whether the trusts have added to the number of employees in this town alone. I am informed that there are now less employed in your factory than used to be. I am glad to find out the facts here so I can tell my Republican friends in Nebraska. In Nebraska City they had a Republican mass meeting in which were adopted resolutions denouncing trusts."

Mr. Bryan then went on to discuss the Anti-Trust law on the statute, and with many effective illustrations condemned the growth of trusts in America.

Trust Issue Repudiated

Next day the Republican "Oswego Daily Times" printed a three column story in which Mr. Thomas P. Kingsford made a statement to correct false impressions created by Bryan's speech. Mr. Kingsford said the factory had been shut down partly by reason of repairs and water out of the mill-race, and that the starch factory would, in all probability, unless the business prosperity of the country received a set back, employ as many if not more men than it had in recent years. He also pointed out that the Foundry and Machine Works, which had no connection with the starch plant, was running full time, and that starch factory workers, who were idle because of the shut down, would be employed in building a new machine shop to replace one recently destroyed by fire.

That the starch trust was a definite political issue was indicated by a large front page story in the "Oswego Daily Times," November 3, 1900. A few days earlier Oswego's Democratic Mayor A. M. Hall had sent a telegram to the "Omaha World-

Herald" in which he agreed with Mr. Bryan's idea that the starch trust would close the local plant. In his telegram Mr. Hall said: "The factory formerly employed from 500 to 700 men. It is closed, only a dozen caretakers being employed, and it is not believed here that operations will be resumed as long as the trust controls it. A. M. Hall, Mayor of Oswego."

To this alarming statement, Mr. Kingsford replied in a telegram to the starch workers of Nebraska City, Nebraska: "The dispatch from A. M. Hall, Democratic Mayor of Oswego and Editor of a Democratic newspaper, to the Omaha "World-Herald" is unwarranted by the facts in his possession. Our factory management is as it has always been. The works are temporarily closed for repairs to machinery. We are now purchasing corn and will open November 15, when we shall employ fully as many men as heretofore. Notwithstanding the statements of our Democratic Mayor, who is fully informed of their falsity, Oswego will continue to be known as 'the starch city of the world.' (signed) T. P. Kingsford, president Oswego Starch Factory."

The political campaign became more bitter as it progressed, and the issue of trusts continued to be important. Letters, statements, denials, and news items concerning the starch trust appeared in great numbers as the campaign reached the climax. Shortly before the election the "Daily Times" summed up the attitude of many Oswegonians when it stated editorially, "A vote for Bryan is a vote to approve of his venomous attack on the Oswego Starch Factory. For an Oswego Starch employee to vote for Bryan is to vote himself out of work."

On election day, Oswego was bubbling over with excitement and enthusiasm. As early as five o'clock in the afternoon crowds began to gather around the two newspaper offices eager to learn the result of the great contest. Much to the distress of local Republican leaders, Bryan carried the city of Oswego with 2808 votes to 2364 for McKinley. The Fifth ward, where most of the starch workers lived, gave Bryan 467 to 219 for McKinley; the Seventh ward went to McKinley by a scant three votes, he having received 205 votes to 202 for Bryan. The Third, Fourth and Sixth wards went to McKinley by a narrow majority. Oswego County gave McKinley a plurality of 4663 votes. When the final result was announced the townspeople formed in line, and with the Kingsford band at its head, paraded the streets for about an hour and serenaded the "Daily Times" as spokesman for the victorious Republican party.

Promises Made Good

After the announcement of McKinley's certain victory was flashed on the outdoor screen, another announcement was made that the Oswego Starch Factory would reopen November 15th as Mr. Kingsford had promised. This news was greeted with hearty applause since it meant Oswego's leading industry would resume operations and that the long period of prosperity would continue. Four hundred men returned to work on November 15th; and by mid-January of 1901, the factory was at full production, operating both day and night.

Business conditions under the McKinley administration, however, continued to be uncertain, and on May 9, 1901, President Piel, of the National Starch Company, announced from New York that all of the company's factories would shut down as soon as the supply of corn then on hand was consumed. The high price of corn caused by George H. Phillip's "corner" in the Chicago market was given as the immediate reason for the shutdown. Oswego was severely affected by the unexpected turn of events; production was curtailed, men were laid off, and by September the

immense warehouse, covering the entire length of Niagara, between First and Second streets, was almost empty as shipments of starch depleted the stock. Fortunately the condition was only temporarily, and later in the year normal production was resumed.

Corn Products Refining Co.

Formation of the Corn Products Refining Company during February 1902, was another event which had far-reaching effects on the future of the Oswego Starch Factory. Organized by the banking-house of J. P. Morgan and Company under the laws of New Jersey, and capitalized for $80,000,000, the new combination controlled a majority of the stock of the National Starch Company, the Glucose Sugar Refining Company, and the Illinois Sugar Refining Company. It was generally understood that John D. and William Rockefeller, Marshall Field and Norman B. Ream had joined with J. P. Morgan in financing the new trust. In reporting the event the St. Louis "Grocer and General Merchant" said that as a result of the merger "it is expected that much of the expensive price cutting will be done away with entirely."

Thomas P. Kingsford, who had been named first vice-president of the National Starch Company, and John D. Higgins, secretary-treasurer of the same company, retired from their respective positions when the Corn Products Company was organized. Both Mr. Kingsford and Mr. Higgins, however, continued to hold large stock interests in the new organization.

Office Moved To Chicago

To centralize administration of their vast holdings, the Corn Products Company removed the business office of the Oswego Starch Factory to Chicago in May 1902, and gave notice to the local office workers that their services would not be required after the first of June. Those retired after many years of faithful service were W. P. Beardsley, treasurer; Jesse D. Sprague, cashier; Paul C. M. Tribe, chief bookkeeper; Stephen G. Howe, confidential clerk; William V. Burr, bookkeeper; Fred A. Adkins, bookkeeper; and B. W. Burleigh, private secretary. Mr. Burleigh continued in his position with Mr. Kingsford, who was then devoting his entire attention to the machine shop and foundry. Since the office workers were all prominent Oswegonians, a brief note concerning each of them may be of interest.

Mr. Sprague was the oldest office employee in point of service, having been appointed cashier on February 1, 1871. For a year he was cashier in the machine shop, then went into the factory office, where he remained for over thirty years.

Mr. Howe, next in length of service, had entered employment at the Starch Factory on June 1, 1873. After six years of travel for the concern, he was appointed confidential clerk by Mr. Thomson Kingsford and had held the position uninterruptedly until Mr. Kingsford's death.

Paul C. M. Tribe came to the Oswego factory from England in 1875 at the request of Thomson Kingsford, and served as chief bookkeeper for more than twenty-five years. During these many years in Oswego, Mr. Tribe retained his British citizenship, and following his release by the Corn Products Company he returned to England with his family. His many friends urged him to remain in Oswego, but Mr. Tribe decided that he preferred to return to the land of his birth. His son, Paul C. E. Tribe, studied medicine in London and later became a distinguished English physician.

Fred A. Adkins and William V. Burr, bookkeepers, had been members of the office staff for a number of years.

W. P. Beardsley had succeeded his father as treasurer of the Oswego Starch Factory in the fall of 1900, after the factory had pass-

ed into the control of the United Starch Company. He had moved to Oswego from his home in Auburn at the time he took over the position.

W. A. McCarthy, who for twenty years had been travelling salesman for the Oswego Starch Factory with a territory throughout Pennsylvania and as far west as Cleveland, was also released. In 1907, Mr. McCarthy sued the Corn Products Company for seven months salary due him.

Old Employes Retained

The factory continued under the supervision of A. P. Murdoch, who had started work with the plant in 1893, and since 1895 had had charge of operations under the direction of the Kingsfords.

Also retained by the new management were Charles A. Bentley, shipping clerk, and John W. Hutchinson, bookkeeper. Mr. Bentley had held his position for more than ten years, and Mr. Hutchinson had been a bookkeeper at the Kingsford Family Supply Store before joining the office staff at the factory. Mr. Bentley later became financial agent and continued with the firm until his retirement in March 1904.

Denied Rumored Removal

Removal of the business office to Chicago gave rise to rumors that the factory would also be moved. These rumors became so persistent that a representative of the "Oswego Times" called on President Conrad H. Matthiessen of the Corn Products Company at his home in Chicago to ascertain the correctness of the report. Mr. Matthiessen denied in the most positive terms that the Kingsford plant would be taken from Oswego. His statement, printed in extra large type on the front page of the "Oswego Times", May 13, 1902, said: "There is absolutely no truth in the story whatever. There is no intention of making such a change and I am at a loss to know how such a rumor started. You may say the report is utterly without foundation."

Fears were dispelled later that year when officials of the Corn Products Company announced their intention of making the Oswego Starch Factory their principal plant. Duryea's Starch Factory at Glen Cove, Long Island, was closed in July 1902, and the entire oil extracting machinery from the abandoned plant was moved to Oswego. With the new machinery it was possible to produce edible oil from the germ of the corn. Previously, the oil had been allowed to flow into the river and frequently covered the surface of the water with an oily film. Chemists had recently discovered that this corn oil was suitable for manufacture of oleomargarine, mayonnaise, salad oil, cooking compounds, and soap, and that the corn cake residue left after extracting the oil was an excellent cattle food. Thus the company was able to reap a profit from by-products which had formerly been a complete loss.

New Products

Besides extracting oil and corn cake, the new machinery also furnished a method for drying the semi-liquid "starch feed" in such a way as to eliminate the objectionable odor and to permit the by product to be packed dry in one hundred pound bags for easy distribution. The starch feed had usually been dumped into the river during summer months when cattle were turned out to graze, but with the new drying process it could be stored for winter sale.

On September 6, 1902, the "Palladium" announced the sensational news that the Oswego plant was using Duryea labels on all packages of starch instead of the Kingsford label. The news item explained: "Since the Corn Products Company obtained control, the Kingsford labels have been laid away and the starch is sent out under the Duryea name. It is the opinion of some of the employees that the Kingsford labels will not be used again and that within a few years the people of

the civilized world will have forgotten that there was such a brand of starch."

The rival newspaper, the "Daily Times," was quick to print an indignant denial from A. P. Murdoch, plant superintendent: "The Duryea factory has been closed up and orders for Duryea starch are being received here. Instead of closing down we are making Duryea starch to supply customers and also labeling it as such. We have a considerable stock of Kingsford's starch on hand. Just as soon as our stock of Kingsford starch becomes small enough to warrant it we will resume making the local brand. Instead of making only Kingsford starch and closing the factory two or three months in the year, we are making both Kingsford and Duryea." Both brands were manufactured in the Oswego plant for many years. Some sceptics believed that the same starch was packed into boxes with different brand labels, but this point was never verified.

Women Workers Strike

Labor trouble, which had been unknown under the Kingsford management, flared up in September 1902, when girls and women in the packing department objected to a reduction in wages and went on strike. The workers had received five cents per hundred pounds for packing starch regardless of the size of the boxes. The company wanted to make the rate four cents but the women declined to accept. A compromise was finally reached whereby the employees accepted four cents a hundred pounds for one pound packages, and 4½ cents a hundred for the one-half pound.

November brought more labor dispute when the employees formed a union and made a request for an increase of one dollar a week in wages. At that time the men were receiving from eight to nine dollars a week, but because of the increased cost of living they believed themselves entitled to ten dollars a week. The "Palladium" quoted an unnamed company official as saying:

"The men now receive from eight to nine dollars per week, and that is as much as most laboring men get elsewhere. Besides, many of the men are advanced in years and unable to do other work than that to which they have been accustomed for years. The Oswego factory has got along without unionism thus far, and I think it is a bad time to start the thing now."

Four days later word came from the Chicago office of the Corn Products Company refusing to grant the increase in wages, and objecting to a union in the plant. The message indicated that the company was willing to deal fairly and justly with its employees, and any application for an increase of wages from the men, as individuals, would be received and properly considered, but it would accept no application from the union. The workers threatened to strike, but there is no record that they did actually walk out.

Production Peak Rises

Production at the Oswego factory reached a high point during June of 1903. Demand for starch and corn products was so great that the big plant operated day and night and Sundays to catch up with a backlog of orders. The Corn Products Company advertised extensively with pictures and announcements in all of the leading newspapers, magazines and periodicals of the nation. The Oswego Starch Factory developed into one of the largest and most important industries in Oswego, and continued to grow under the new management. The old fear that the works would be shut down and the product made some other place did not materialize. It had long been the custom to shut down during the summer months for the purpose of disposing of stock which had been made during the winter. The store-

houses used to be filled with starch, but now they were empty and orders still poured in. Never in the history of Oswego had there beeen a greater demand for all kinds of labor. In the building trades it was almost impossible for contractors to secure men, and in other areas work was so plentiful that the remand exceeded the supply. In fact the demand for workmen was so great that the wage scale increased considerably. Superintendent Griffin, in charge of the D. L. & W. coal trestle, offered steady work at two dollars a day to men who would shovel coal.

Solid Trains Of Starch

To further stimulate sale of starch, the Corn Products Company tried a unique method of advertising. Thirty freight carloads, containing one million pounds of starch and twenty-five thousand sample packages, were shipped by special train across the country to the west coast. Each car carried a banner, 34 feet long and 3 feet wide, bearing the name of the person to whom the starch was consigned, and long banners extending from one end of the train to the other bore the inscription "Kingsford's Famous Corn Starch." The train travelled by day only and made stops at Syracuse, Cortland, Binghamton, Elmira, Corning, Buffalo, and other cities on the way west to deliver the cargo in Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, Peoria, Denver, Ogden, San Francisco, and Portland, Oregon. At each stop, sample packages, exact imitations of the pound package, were distributed by a representative of the company. Officials of the company were so pleased with the venture that they repeated it at least three more times; one trainload of 25 cars went to New York City, another to New England, and a third repeated the trip west.

Fire Destroys Factory

The great Oswego Starch Factory which had been built and in operation for fifty-six years was completely destroyed by fire the evening of February 10, 1904. Fire started in the sieve-room adjoining the chemical-room of factory number one, at about four o'clock in the afternoon. Several men were engaged in covering electric wires with asphalt, and in some manner the tank of material caught fire. Water was turned on the fire, but the substance burned the more fiercely and soon the woodwork was on fire. It burned so rapidly that the men in the scraping-room found the passage to the outside blocked with suffocating smoke and flame, and were obliged to make their way from the factory out upon the ice that covered the river.

A general alarm was sounded, but it was not until the fire had been going for some time that the Oswego fire department reached the scene. By then clouds of smoke were pouring from the windows on the river side of the factory, and tongues of flame were shooting up from the building. Since there was no way to fight the fire from the river side, the firemen were forced to take leads of hose through dark and smoky passageways known only to those familiar with the structure. This situation made it doubly difficult for the small force of local fire fighters, and the blaze soon gained considerable headway.

Fire Engines Used

Two small steam fire engines poured water from hydrants into the burning buildings, but without apparent effect. Not until after five o'clock did the big Button steamer, the heaviest in the Fire Department, go into operation at a hydrant near Niagara street. Two leads of hose were carried up to the roof of the old brown stone starch feed building and from there two strong streams of water were poured into the fire. For a time the progress of the flames appeared to be checked, but the fire soon spread into an

adjoining building and the firemen were forced to retreat. The weather was bitterly cold, and a thick coating of ice which formed over the roofs made the firemen's work extremely hazardous.

At six o'clock Fire Chief Blackburn telephoned Syracuse for aid. The reply was prompt and Syracuse fire apparatus was loaded on a freight train for shipment to Oswego. About 6:45 in the evening, Chief Blackburn decided it would be impossible to use more men or equipment and withdrew his request to Syracuse. In the meantime, however, Chief Waugh, of the Fulton Fire Department, loaded 30 men and several pieces of equipment onto an Ontario and Western train and came to Oswego. They arrived about eight o'clock and relieved the local firemen who were nearly exhausted from their four hours of work in the cold.

In spite of the combined fire departments there was no staying the spread of the flames that rapidly consumed everything within reach. Next morning only gaunt, blackened walls and smoking ruins remained to mark the mammoth stone and brick buildings that had lined the river from Erie street south to Murray street. All that remained was a granary containing 6,000 bushels of corn in storage, and a portion of the drying kilns. Officials of the company listed the loss at $750,000, of which only $350,000 was covered by insurance.

Fireman Killed

Fireman John W. Dougherty died as a result of a fall from the icy roof of a building, and Fireman John Dempsey was severely injured after a fall from a ladder. To offer some financial assistance to the widow and six children of Fireman Dougherty, the Oswego newspapers and business men immediately organized a relief fund. Citizens responded generously, contributions of various amounts poured into the newspaper offices; Father Barry gave a travel lecture at Priory Hall, the Richardson Theatre gave a benefit moving picture show, and the Forty-Eighth Separate Company presented an entertainment at the Armory, the proceeds of these public events going into the Dougherty Fund. From these various sources the Fund Committee, composed of R. G. Blackburn, Francis D. Culkin, Clark Morrison and Albert H. Mowry, received a total of $2,347.84 which was turned over to the widow.

Destruction of the huge starch factory was a severe loss to Oswego, and speculation started at once as to whether or not the Corn Products Company would rebuild the plant or abandon the site. Dr. T. B. Wagner, General Superintendent of the company, indicated various reasons why the factory might not be left in Oswego. He pointed out that Oswego was too far away from the corn belt and that freight rates made starch manufacture in the east more costly than in the mid-west. The "Daily Times" quoted Dr. Wagner as saying: "Your city has a wide reputation as a starch town, but if this plant was located at some point near where corn is grown the profit would be greater. As it is now we have a double freight haul. In the first place we have to ship corn East and after it is made into starch ship it back west again. Of course Oswego has advantages and in the end it may be decided to remain here. I cannot say the outlook is discouraging for the location of the plant here but at the same time it is not over encouraging."

Citizens Promise Aid

From the tone of Dr. Wagner's remarks it was evident that the Business Men's Association needed to do something at once in an effort to keep the factory in Oswego. The organization passed a resolution pledging "support in any way possible to make the rebuilding of the plant in Oswego a financial success." A small committee composed of Colonel John T. Mott, James D. Henderson, Charles A. Tanner, Charles H.

Bond, and Robert A. Downey was appointed to confer with Corn Products officials in New York. Since Mr. C. H. Mathiessen, president of the company, was in Chicago at the time, the delegation did not go to New York City, instead they forwarded a copy of the resolution to the main office.

A few days after local organizations had made urgent appeals to have the starch factory rebuilt, the "Wall Street Journal" printed an encouraging item that "the Corn Products Company will rebuild the starch plant at Oswego, N. Y., which was recently destroyed by fire." No official information was forthcoming until later but a spirit of optimism swept through the city.

Late in March 1904, the citizens of Oswego were asked to make certain concessions in order to insure reduced freight rates for the new starch factory. An official of the company announced that the plant would be rebuilt if the city agreed to permit the railroad to lay a side track south along First street from Utica street to the factory. To install the new track it was necessary to move the street car tracks farther east, and Manager Arnold of the Oswego Traction Company agreed to make the change. The Oswego Common Council approved of the new tracks, the New York Central Railroad made some unannounced freight rate adjustments, and the Corn Products Company proceeded with plans for the new factory.

Plant Rebuilt

Work on the new building started late in April 1904, and was completed in mid-October. In referring to the size of the new plant, Dr. Wagner indicated that the factory would be the largest in the world, capable of grinding 6,000 bushels of corn a day as compared with 2,000 to 3,000 bushels a day in the old mill. Shortly before the new plant opened, A. P. Murdoch, superintendent, resigned and his place was taken by A. W. Lenders, formerly head of a Chicago plant. W. H. Bullock, master mechanic, was also released, and his place taken by A. B. Stewart of Chicago. Production started in November and reached capacity by the end of December.

Fire Destroys New Plant

Less than two months after the new factory opened, it was again destroyed by fire. Shortly after noon on Friday, January 13, 1905, fire broke out in the packing building located on the bank of the Varick Canal. No one seemed to know how the blaze started except that an explosion occurred. Most probable cause was spontaneous combustion of fine dry starch dust accumulated in one of the old units not destroyed in the previous conflagration. One employee said there were two explosions, one after the other, and two minutes later the entire building was a mass of flames. One hundred and fifty men and girls employed in the packing room rushed out of the building to escape; many of them suffered severe burns and other injuries.

Chief R. G. Blackburn and the fire department worked vainly to confine the blaze to the old building, but in less than two hours the new four story building at the foot of Niagara Street was on fire. This was the section in which corn oil was manufactured and once ignited was impossible to extinguish. By 3 o'clock the oil building was demolished, and the dry starch building with its new, modern equipment was burning fiercely. The new structure was almost completely destroyed, and loss was estimated at several hundred thousand dollars. Injured men and women were cared for in the factory office by Drs. Stockwell, Irwin, and Ringland.

Thus, for the second time in less than twelve months, the Oswego Starch Factory was again a smoking ruin. This second fire was not as disastrous as the February before, but it was bad enough to force the plant to close until units could be rebuilt. And

once again, four to five hundred workers were thrown out of employment.

Production Resumed In 1906

Mr. Lenders, plant superintendent, returned to his Chicago office, and speculation started again concerning the possible fate of the local industry, especially when newspapers announced that the company had offered, through its local real estate agent, Louis C. Rowe, to sell several pieces of valuable property, including the lumber yard facing Kingsford Park. Not until June did the company announce an intention to rebuild, and work did not actually commence until August of that year. Construction progressed slowly and more than a year was required to complete the task. Production was resumed in September of 1906, over a year and a half after the second disastrous fire.

The new buildings were as nearly fireproof as possible; and because of the constant threat of fire, the new plant was equipped with the latest automatic sprinkling devices. As an added precaution, the company exercised greater care in keeping the interior of the buildings free from the explosive dry starch dust.

The new plant was the largest and most efficient starch factory in the world, and within a short time was operating at full capacity with 400 to 500 people employed.

Third Fire

On July 1, 1907, a heavy explosion in the dust room of the factory wrecked a portion of the building and started a fire, which at first appeared serious enough to destroy the structure for a third time. Cause of the explosion was unknown, but it was believed to have been due to spontaneous combustion. The blast knocked walls out of alignment and wrecked the roof, but fire damage was kept at a minimum by the efficient sprinkler system. Intense heat from the flames started the sprinklers automatically, and before firemen could reach their stations, a vast quantity of water had been poured onto the blaze and the fire extinguished. The loss by water amounted to more than by fire. Several young women in the packing department fainted when they heard the explosion but no one was hurt despite the fact that a four inch brick wall was blown out as if it were a house of cards. During the brief fire, and all through the evening, many tragic rumors were afloat. It was a common report that a dozen or more workmen had either been blown to pieces or were pinned in the wreckage. All reports were entirely untrue; the only possible injury came when the several young ladies fainted.

Another Explosion

A few months later, September 27, 1907, the sprinkler system again proved its worth in saving the factory from destruction. Shortly after seven o'clock in the morning an explosion in one of the towers over the drying-room blew out the windows and demolished one side of the building. Flames immediately burst out high into the air, but again the sprinklers with a combined force of one thousand gallons of water a minute soon had the blaze extinguished. By the time the city fire department arrived the fire had been completely smothered.

It was about this time that the volunteer fire department was reorganized at the factory. In the old days the Kingsford Fire Department was known throughout the country for its efficiency, equipment and smartly-uniformed fire fighters. When the Corn Products Company gained control of the Oswego works they discontinued the fire department in keeping with their retrenchment policy, and during the next several years lost about a half million dollars in three fires. After the automatic sprinklers were installed and the fire company re-

organized, the factory did not again suffer a serious fire loss.

Murdoch Company Formed

The great Corn Products Company controlled the major portion of the starch industry in the United States, though occasionally an independent manufacturer would appear to challenge the mighty corporation. One such independent started production in Oswego, but his operations were short lived. In 1905, A. P. Murdoch, former superintendent of the Oswego Starch Factory, organized a small company under the name of the Maize Products Company and manufactured a product known as "Murdoch's Oswego Corn Starch." The Starch Trust brought suit on grounds of infringment of their copyrighted name "Oswego Corn Starch," and of illegal use of a yellow wrapper similar to the famous Kingsford wrapper. The Murdoch firm contended that Oswego was a geographical name and simply designated the place of manufacture, and that it was a common practice of the trade to pack corn starch in yellow covers. Mr. Murdoch had as proof a number of packages containing different brands, all in yellow wrappers. The plaintiffs obtained an injunction prohibiting sale of the new Oswego product. Final outcome of the case was never reported in the newspapers, but not long afterwards the independent project was abandoned as unsuccessful.

Kingsford Protected Oswego

The Oswego Starch Factory continued in production, though its operations fluctuated more markedly than in the earlier days when the Kingsfords were in control. Shut-downs and lay-offs while orders were being accumulated were frequent, and many people wondered why the Corn Products Company continued to operate the eastern plant. The answer came unexpectedly when the "Palladium", July 26, 1910, disclosed to the public for the first time that the articles of sale to the United Starch Company stipulated that Kingsford's starch should always be produced in Oswego. The item stated:

"That the manufacture of Kingsford's Oswego Starch will be preserved to the city of Oswego for all time developed today when it was learned that the late Thomson Kingsford at the time when his concern was merged into the United Starch Company in 1900, insisted upon the insertion in the articles of the merger a provision to the effect that Kingsford starch could be manufactured nowhere else than in the city of Oswego. The provision has been kept through all subsequent changes in the management of the company.

"All during his active business career in Oswego, Mr. Kingsford bent every energy toward the uplifting of the city and the advancement of its interests, and his providing for retention of his big factory in this city is but another evidence of his regard for Oswego.

"The value of Mr. Kingsford's action to the citizens of this city is apparent. At any time a change in the means of transportation or the source of raw materials and the ease with which they can be obtained may force the company to transfer its plant. Having factories in many parts of the United States, the company would find little difficulty in doing this were it not for the provision which preserves to Oswego its industry."

Federal Action Cost Industry

But Fate, in the guise of the Federal government, was about to change these well-laid plans; and Oswego was eventually to lose the starch factory. The United States Department of Justice decided that the Corn Products Company, controlling so large a per cent of the starch output of the country, had reached a point where it should be classified as a trust. The government proceeded against the company under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, and informed the company that if it would consent

to close one of its plants and order directing this procedure further action against the corporation would not be taken. Company officials considered the situation and decided to act in accordance with the government suggestion.

As the Oswego plant was farthest from the corn belt of the midwest which furnished most of the corn used in manufacturing operations, the government and the company decided that the local factory should be the one to close. Public announcement of this important decision was made early in 1922, and orders were soon issued that operations should be tapered off gradually. Over nine hundred workers were employed when the order came to close. Cuts were made in the working force with regularity, and in a few months manufacturing ceased entirely in 1923. A few employees were retained while buildings were being dismantled and the machinery salvaged. After two or three years only the watchman remained. Gilbert S. Graves, the last plant superintendent, continued as manager in charge of the company's affairs in Oswego. Eventually he removed to Buffalo where he died a few years ago.

Huge Investment Lost

The Corn Products Company continued to pay taxes on the buildings for a number of years, and then to save tax money began to raze some of the older units of the plant. Later the entire factory, said to have represented an investment of $6,000,000, was offered for sale. It was finally sold for a small fraction of that amount to a firm which planned to develop a rock-pulverizing plant, though the project never materialized.

After a time, taxes were no longer paid on the property and the County of Oswego offered the remaining buildings for tax sale. There were no buyers and the buildings became a menace to public safety. During the depression years of the 1930s, some of the buildings were demolished to provide employment for many Oswego citizens then out of work and on relief. Most of the buildings between First Street and the river were razed, but the structures west of First Street were allowed to remain. Some of these were later sold to the Oswego Soy Products Company which used them for storage and manufacturing until they were destroyed by fire the night of December 11, 1942. A few of the old buildings still stand; some of them belong to Oswego County and some to the Kingsford estate.

Today all that remains of the Oswego Starch Factory is the Kingsford Foundry and Machine Works which has been operated continuously since 1864 in the manufacture of all types of boilers, engines, pumps and other types of machinery in the well equipped plant located on West First Street just north of Erie Street. The business is headed today by Thomson Kingsford II, a great grandson of the Thomas Kingsford who was the first to develop a process for extracting starch from Indian corn.

THE TOWN OF SCRIBA - - -

Its History and Folklore

(Paper Given Before Oswego County Historical Society at Oswego Mar. 20, 1951 by Miss Blanche Krul)

The name Scriba was conferred by the Legislature in honor of George Scriba, the patentee. It is in the northwestern part of the county, immediately east of the Oswego River, and is bounded by Lake Ontario on the north, by New Haven and Volney on the east, by Volney on the south, and on the west by the Oswego River, the city of Oswego and Lake Ontario. Scriba was formed from Volney in April, 1811, and contains an area of 25,031 acres. From it was taken in 1848 all that part of the city of Oswego east of the Oswego River. This township comprises all of the original survey township, Number 18, or Oswego, lying north of the base line of Scriba's patents, and a part of Number 17, or Fredericksburg, which is situated south of that line.

Today Scriba, which is locally known as Scriba Corners or Scriba Center, is situated on the old plank road about four miles east of Oswego, near the center of the town. Around Scriba are the rural hamlets of North Scriba, South Scriba, Lansing, and Lycoming, whose post office and store have been in the Coe family from the time of its first establishment to the present day.

The land surface is rolling, being broken into ridges which extend north and south, and which attain an elevation of from one hundred to one hundred eighty feet above the lake. The land is well drained by Nine Mile, Stone, and Wine Creeks which flow northwardly into the lake. The soil has both sand and gravelly loam content which is supplied in places with considerable stone. This soil is only moderately fertile, but it is well adapted to all types of agriculture, particularly to the raising of fruits. Strawberries and other fruits are now extensively grown. Recently dairying has developed into an important industry and is carried on quite extensively.

Once Heavily Wooded

At one time the town was covered with forests of maple, beech, hemlock, and cedar. Sawmills flourished, but in time disappeared. The last two which were abandoned were the Copleland and the T. H. Leverton mills which were located on the North Road within six miles east of Oswego.

The first highway in the town was laid out as early as 1812. This was the Old State Road which became later the Plank Road, and is now called the East Oneida Road or Route 104. The Rome and Oswego plank road which passed through Scriba was completed in the spring of 1848. For several years it was the scene of constant activity.

The New York and Oswego Midland Railroad which traversed the western part of Scriba was finished in 1869. It maintained a freight and passenger station at Lycoming.

First Town Meeting

Later some of the land of the original Scriba patent became the property of John B. Church, General Alexander Hamilton, and John Lawrence. Every encouragement within the power of the pro-

prietors was given to promote immigration and the rapid development of this section. Land was sold for two dollars per acre, on indefinite time, and lots for church buildings and sites for mills were donated for the purposes named. The early settlers were mainly from Herkimer County in this state with a sprinkling of the plain Puritan elements of New England.

The first town meeting was held at the home of Hiel Stone in 1812. Resolutions were adopted specifying that a lawful fence shall be four and one half feet high, and well wrought from bottom to top; that any land holder permitting Canadian thistles to stand, "after three days notice is given by any person" shall be liable to a fine of five dollars and costs, and that every wolf caught and killed "by any inhabitant of the town" shall be subject to a bounty of ten dollars.

First Settler In 1798

The first permanent white settler in Scriba, outside of the military post at Oswego, was Henry Everts, who located with his family in the southwestern part of the town near the river, in 1798. "Here he felled the first tree cut by a white man, and while it was falling, although he was entirely alone, with no white person within several miles, he took off his hat, swung it around his head, and made the forest ring with his cheers. It is said of him that, having no seed with which to start a meadow, he went farther down the stream, cut up sods from some grassy spots there, and transplanted them to his own land." Henry Everts' son, Henry, Jr., was the first white child born in Scriba. A few years later the Everts family moved to the town of Oswego.

Among the first settlers of this area were Asabel Bush and Samuel Tiffany who came from the East in 1801 by ox-sled and settled near the Everts' family. Each year from there on many new settlers came. Some paid as much as three dollars and seventy-five cents per acre for their land. In 1820 the town of Scriba contained 741 inhabitants.

First School House

The first school house was built near Scriba Corners in 1807. Mr. Edgecomb, the first teacher, lived in the building with his wife and two children. This was a story and a half log structure which answered the purpose until the spring of 1809, when a new and larger house was erected north of Scriba Corners. For many years this was the only school building in town. In 1860 the town had sixteen school districts in which 1,293 children were taught. Some of these schools have been closed but their original names still exist.

Heavy Civil War Enlistments

During the Civil War the town of Scriba contributed more than 250 citizens to the Union Army and Navy. No part of the county responded more promptly and none of the volunteers served with greater fidelity.

Religious services in Scriba began during the first decade of the 19th century with occasional meetings at private houses. The first religious organization was established on January 7, 1828. when the "Free Communion Baptist Church of North Scriba" was formed with seven members. This society was dissolved in 1831 and the present First Free Baptist Church of North Scriba was legally organized. In 1848 their first house of worship, a plain wooden structure, thirty-two feet by forty-four feet, was erected on the site of the present building. The last named edifice was built in 1875 with a parsonage adjacent to it.

Scriba's Churches

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Scriba Corners was erected about 1854. This was due to the effort of William Kilburn. Reverend Burris Holmes commenced a series of revivals in 1841 which resulted in the organization by

him of the present society. It originally consisted of seven members holding their meetings in the school house.

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Lansing forms a part of the Scriba charge. It was built in 1873.

In 1874 the Methodist Protestant Church of North Scriba (Lycoming) was built.

The First Baptist Church of Scriba Corners was built in 1887.

Story Of William Burt

The actual story of Mr. William Burt was written by his son, Wayland, in 1930 in his own writing. Miss Burt gave me permission to use any material he had available.

William Burt and Catherine Robinson were married in Warwick, Orange County, New York, in October 1793. This Catherine Robinson was said to have come from Long Island to Warwick by horseback for this marriage. That wasn't too unusual in those days.

Sometime after that the family bought a farm in Cayuga County and lived there until 1804. There William became acquainted with Hiel Stone. Sometime in the year 1804 the two families decided to move to Oswego. They sold their Cayuga holdings. One day they loaded all their furniture and children on a Durham boat and started for Oswego by way of the Seneca River. There were five children in each of the families. They drove their cattle along the bank of the river. When they came to the falls of Oswego River, they unloaded their goods and carried them around the falls. They arrived in Oswego safely. It was then only a settlement with a few log houses and Fort Ontario. These two families stayed two years at Fort Ontario until the men could make homes for their families.

Followed Blazed Trail

The two men, William Burt and Hiel Stone, went out to Scriba guided by marked trees. Each bought a tract of land one mile square. Each proceeded to clear land for a house. After William Burt finished his house, he moved his family to the log house in the town of Scriba. The log house stood where the R. J. Wilcox property now is located. Hiel Stone built a log tavern where the Grange Hall now stands. Later he built the first frame tavern on the Log Tavern site. One of his descendents ran the tavern until about 1860 and then gave up the business.

When William Burt's family out-grew the first house, he built a second house where his boys slept. The wolves would come out of the woods and howl around the house at night.

Capture Of Fort Ontario

During the War of 1812 with England, the British attacked and captured Fort Ontario. The settlers thought the British would send raiders into the country and gather up everything they could find. So William Burt took everything that could be moved, his children and cattle back into the forest and waited for developments. The British didn't come, but embarked in their boats after destroying the fort, and returned to Canada. Mr. Burt's uncle, John Burt, and some other boys went to the fort and saw the ruins. The unburied dead were still there, and some of the wounded. They brought home with them cannon balls as souveniers.

Years later a smooth gentleman called on John Burt and said he was entitled to a pension for services in that engagement at Fort Ontario. He denied that he was in that battle, but the man gave him $30.00 for his land claim. He went away with a contract for 160 acres of land signed by John Burt in his pocket.

An Early "Hanging"

Other families moved into the town. A family headed by Solomon Mattison bought a tract of land and built a house where

Howard Whitlock now lives. He had several children. The families got together as often as they could. A mile through the woods didn't mean anything to young people in those days. One day the Mattison boys came to visit the Burt boys. Like boys today, they were full of pranks. They had heard of people being hung, so they proposed to play hanging. They decided Hiram Mattison should be the victim. They reached the second story of the house by using a ladder. They fastened a rope to one of the rungs of the ladder and the other end of the rope around Hiram Mattison's neck. They thought the rope was long enough so his feet would hit the ground but it wasn't. When he jumped, his feet didn't touch the ground. He didn't get hurt very much, but that incident ended their visits for some time.

After William Burt's visit to Warwick, he built in 1820 the old Burt homestead, now standing on the Brazeau estate. (Location from Ward Dubois farm, 4 miles east of Oswego on left side of road). He was always interested in the welfare of the town and was Justice of Peace for many years. New settlers came every year. His land advanced in value so he sold his farm for a good amount. He and his wife were among the original members of the First Baptist Church of Oswego. They contributed to and supported it as long as they lived.

Clearing The Land

After William Burt's death his widow, Catherine, lived there for quite a while. After her death the homestead went to her son, also William Burt, for caring for her during her declining years. She was buried in the old Burt Cemetery which was done away with in later years, the bodies being moved to the newer cemetery. Harvey Burt was born in 1808. He was the father of Wayland Burt. He, too, was born in a log house and was made to work as soon as he was big enough. There was much to be done in the wilderness. The land had to be cleared of trees. The trees were felled in great windrows. After they had lain a short time, a fire was started at night, because they thought a fire would burn better at night. After the fire had been burning for sometime, perhaps for days, they would go and roll the smouldering logs together. This would start the fires going in parts of the wood that hadn't been burned until they were entirely burned up. It meant hard work, but they were used to that. That was the only way to get rid of the timber, for everybody had timber so there was no market for it.

Threw Teacher In Creek

Harvey Burt attended the old Scriba school. The desks and seats were made of pine planks. School was held only during the winter months. There were ten or fifteen boys from this school who sailed the lakes in summer and went to school winters. They were rather rough, but Mr. Fish, their teacher got along with them. For some reason or other Mr. Fish couldn't teach one fall so they hired some one else. The big boys didn't like this teacher, so it wasn't too long before the boys picked him up, threw him in the creek and locked the school. The trustees hired a young man, Mr. Gray. The boys sized him up the first day of school. There was no more trouble while Mr. Gray was there.

Harvey's brothers, John, William, and Calvin Burt, were farmers. Daniel and James Burt were carpenters. Harvey Burt decided to be a blacksmith. When he was eighteen years old, he went to "Little Hole," in the town of New Haven to learn his trade. After three years, around 1820, he returned to Scriba and operated a wagon and blacksmith shop. He later purchased a strip of land from his father. On this land he built his house and in July 1834, was married to Lena Ann Wilber. She was at that time living with her cousin, Benjamin Wilber, who married Lucy Mattison, an old

friend of Harvey Burt, father of Wayland Burt.

Wagon And Sleigh Shop

About 1840 Daniel Burt, a brother of Harvey Burt, decided to move to Oswego. He cut his carpenter shop into two parts. He sold a part to his brother Harvey who moved it across the road for a wagon shop. Here he hired a man, Albert Himes by name, to make wagons and sleighs. This shop became a great meeting place for young as well as older people.

One boy, James Batchelor, was there so much he made a nuisance of himself. Harvey had a man working for him by name of Welch, who made up his mind to play a trick on Batchelor. He knew what time the boy would come and where he always stood in his bare feet. In those days the wheels were held on the axles by a linch fin. The axles were wood and a share of iron was fitted into the axle. Welch forged a fin and threw it on the floor. Just then young Batchelor came in, put his bare foot on the hot iron, and burned a hole in his foot the shape of a fin. The scar was on his foot as long as he lived. Everyone thought he wouldn't come back again, but he was back in the afternoon.

Welch was in the habit of having a glass of beer each afternoon at the tavern. When he was out, some of the men urged Batchelor to heat a pair of tongs red hot, put them on the anvil so Welch would take them in his hands and burn him. The boy wouldn't do it.

The Wide Awakes

During the unrest before the Civil War the days of "the Black Republicans" as the Democrats called the Republicans, the times were very exciting. The ministers prayed for freeing the slaves. John Burt, a Democrat, could give his reasons for being a Democrat and could hold his side in an argument. Everything quieted down when Lincoln was nominated. A company of men was formed who called themselves "Wide Awakes." They wore oil cloth capes, hats, and carried oil cloth torches. They marched up and down the streets two or three times a week and took part in campaign street parades in Oswego, Fulton and elsewhere. Isaac Parkhurst was captain. After Lincoln was elected, they disbanded.

There were many of these parades at that time of all types. Some would last all day consisting of all kinds of vehicles, but mostly lumber wagons. Some wagons had barrel racks and were loaded with men. Harvey Burt was in the parade too. They marched at night carrying torches. His grandmother awakened him at night to see the men going home with lighted torches. It was quite an event with the wagons rumbling by. Soon after this the Civil War opened.

When Abraham Lincoln delivered his inaugural address, Harvey Burt was taking "New York Tribune" published by Horace Greeley. The address was published in that paper. After supper he asked Mr. Baker, the teacher of their school who boarded with them during winter months to read the address to him in a private room. Children were kept out so there wouldn't be any disturbance.

The Burt family had a fine horse that people wanted to hire but were refused. So one day a man came and wanted to hire a horse to cultivate corn and hired Wayland Burt to ride the horse. Wayland was but seven years old then. The horse was high-strung and couldn't be handled very well. This man hitched the horse into the cultivator and started across the field with the horse on a run. Wayland couldn't hold the horse as necessary for this type of work. The man went across once trying to keep up but then gave it up as a bad job. He sent Wayland home without pay.

The Toll-Gate War

From Oswego to Rome a company had built a plank road with toll gates every few miles. The

company had two stage coaches. One proceeded each way in the morning and one each way in the afternoon. After the Rome and Oswego railroad was built in 1865, the stagecoach operations were discontinued but tolls continued to be charged those who used the plank roads. The company didn't keep the road in repair and soon the planks were wearing out. The company repaired broken sections of road with stones which made the roads all the rougher. Every rig that traveled the road had to pay a five cent toll each way. People complained, but the company paid no attention.v People began to drive around without paying the toll gate that stood near Derousie's blacksmith shop which stood west of Wine Creek. About 1866 the company moved the toll house west of George Kocher's property. Then there was no chance to go around it.

After the Civil War broke out a number of soldiers were induced to wreck the old toll gate building. Many grownups as well as children went to see the performance. Eight or ten soldiers in uniform demolished the building which was never rebuilt. No authority could touch a man in uniform, but suits were commenced against some that were looking on. Among those were John Burt, B. C. Turner, and others, but the company couldn't bring any charge against them. This brought an end to the plank road.

Teachers' Salaries

There were about great numbers of pigeons, about the size of doves of today, flying each year from the west and going in an easterly direction. Hunters were out with shot guns killing many of them. People thought they were going to the Adirondacks to nest and after the young were grown would return about August. William Burt used to bag as many as 13 from one shot of his gun. After four or five years in which they were very plentiful around 1870, few were seen. They either were shot or disease reduced their number. Some years they nested in woods. There were so many at times, they bent the limbs of trees. One could take a pole and bring down as many as he wanted after they had gone to roost.

William Burt's sister, Kate, was a school teacher at the age of fifteen. She taught school in Lake View District for $1.50 a week and board. The following year she accepted a position in the Rhodes District for $2.50 a week. It was a custom for teachers to board with families nearby to their teaching places during bad weather.

Dan Rice's Circus

Going to a circus was quite an event in those days. Preparations were made weeks before the arrival of a circus. Uncle John took all his grand children, Wayland, Maria, and William, with a fine horse and carriage, to Dan Rice's Circus. Aunt Marie and Uncle John took the back seat. They hadn't gone far before Aunt Marie said, "My land, John, I have forgotten my false teeth." Nothing would do but William had to go back and get the teeth. Everyone thought the circus was grand but Uncle John.

In those days circuses traveled over land in wagons. Many times children got up early to see the elephants go by. Circuses always watered their horses at the pump in front of the tavern in Scriba. The men found something stronger than water to drink. The boys always got a thrill seeing the circuses go by.

Flours Ground Near Home

Most everyone always raised wheat for flour. Many times six or eight bushels of wheat, three or four bushels of corn, and five or six bushels of buckwheat was taken to the mill to be ground into flour and meal. In the fall when the weather was cold or in early winter three or four pigs were butchered by each family. The neighbors would have a killing bee. They would have one butcher and the others as helpers

dressing the pigs. When night came there would be eight or ten pigs hanging. By dark they were all in cellars ready to be cut into hams, pork, and sausage. Families had a meat-block made from a log about two feet in diameter, setting on legs. Sausage meat was put on this block and chopped fine with a hatchet. When the sausage grinder came, the block was used for other purposes.

Letter Of 1849

Troy Lakes, July 20, 1849

Dear Sister,

I seat myself to answer your long looked for letter received last Sunday the 15th. It contained news indeed! Oh, how anxiously I looked for that letter for I was in hopes it would contain the news that I was to see my dear sister Ann in Wisconsin before the summer faded into autumn. But alas! the expectations of the wicked vanish for she is about taking upon herself those vows which death alone can cancel and gives no encouragement that she will visit us this summer. Yet, I cannot help hoping that Mr. Harvey Burt, my future brother will be so exceedingly kind and obliging as to favor us with a visit this summer. I know nothing of his situation whether favorable or unfavorable to such a visit so I shall not urge the matter but will only say that there is nothing which could give us more pleasure than a visit from you. It seems as though I should fly when I think what is going on in Oswego and I here going humdrum round of teaching "the young idea how to short"! A wedding "in the family" and I myself not present! The thought is rather shocking. Oh, if I was only with you! I expect I should shock you all by my writings and extravagant mints, for I am just the great overgrown awkward thing. I always was and do not like the restraints of fashionable life very much. I greatly prefer a quiet chat with a few confidential friends to the glow a fashionable party and I presume you think the same but I should like to know what this learned disertation has to do with the wedding in question. I am sure I can't tell you.

A Sisterly Letter

I really think that I shall step off myself some of these days just to keep company with my sisters. Just think of it how I should feel to be the only "Nip Wilber" left. The trouble is who shall I have. I am afraid since my name has gone forth a little tinged with blue that all the sensible gents will be afraid of me for you know all wise ones and "the blues". I have been looking forward to happy old maid hood spent with you. But now, well I guess I can get married if I want to very much. You did not write half enough about him. What business is he in? Is he a farmer? I hope so. I like a farmer's mind. I don't say love them. But if I ever love anybody, I am resolved he shall be a farmer. I think the life of an intelligent farmer might be one of the happiest in the world, what do you say?

You will not doubt when I write that you have my best wishes for your future happiness. It is as you say a rather trying place, but I have no fears but that you will get along as well as anyone can in such a situation.

Ma and Laura say they give their free and cordial consent provided you will visit us soon. Laura adds, you know just how much we want to see you for your heart will tell you.

I want to visit New York very much, but shall not be able to this season. Ma says she'd like to visit you but does not know whether she can. We expect John R. here after harvest, then I suppose Ma will go with him again. I wish we were all rich but I grieve we shall never any of us be troubled with much of the root of all evil.

I am teaching this summer, but I do not mean to teach school all my days. It keeps some of my feeling in a perpetual turmoil. I

suppose you know I practice sometimes. There is precious little of use practical connected with school teaching. I suppose I should not complain.

I have written you a strange letter. If it be that the knot should not be tied before you receive this, don't show it to your intended lest he should disown you for your sister's sake. Write immediately will you not? We shall be very anxious to hear from you.

Your sister,

Elizabeth

Letters in those days were looked forward to more than they are today. Communities were sparsely settled, travel was poor, mail was delivered to post office stations once or twice a week, so it really was quite an event to get one or two letters a year from one's distant relatives. Most all of the letters I looked over that Miss Burt has, have been of same length folded in form of an envelope and sealed with sealing wax. Before postage stamps were used postage was marked in ink in the upper right hand corner.

The Underground Railroad

The Abolitionists, as believers in freedom for the slaves then held in Southern states were termed, contrived to aid the escape of Negroes who fled from their owners, and from the Southern states, north to the Canadian boundary. Sympathizers with the movement maintained stations on what was termed as "the underground railway". Slaves were moved after nightfall, along deserted highways, concealed in daylight hours and passed along until they reached the border and were enabled to reach Canada. A leader in the movement was Gerrit Smith of Peterboro, New York, but owner of much business and water front property in Oswego and the donor of the Oswego Public Library. He financed John Brown in his raid at Harper's Ferry, and also financed many operations of the underground railway, to which Mr. Clarke refers in his accounts. Mr. Sidney Clarke's father was one of the pioneer settlers of Oswego.

Mr. and Mrs. Sidney and Olive (Jackson) Clarke lived on a farm once owned by their grandfather, Dr. Deodatus Clarke, who in 1806 purchased from the government 260 acres of land, made a clearing in the virgin forest and built a double log house. This house stood on the north side of what is now "the state road", formerly the "plank road", two miles east of the river and about 100 yards west of the present Scriba boundary line. The house was torn down in 1863, but the site is still recognizable by an excavation that marks the location of the cellar. The old well is still intact and a stone enclosure a little to the north protects the graves of members of the Clarke family.

The "Underground Railway" as is generally known, was an apt designation of the systematic aid given by anti-slavery sympathizers to escaping slaves. Prior to the passage in 1850 of the Fugitive Slave Law, which declared the aiding or sheltering of such fugitives a crime, secret measures were not necessary so that operations so characterized all occurred during the decade that followed the adoption of this measure.

The modus of this organization was the hiding of fugitive slaves during the day and passing them from one station to another during the hours of darkness until they reached Canada and freedom. Mr. Clarke's father and uncle conducted the northern terminus of these clandestine operations. The fugitives most often came to us from the station at Phoenix, although a few were relayed at Fulton, all having found refuge in Syracuse. Others came up via Elmira and Auburn and were sheltered at Sterling before reaching Oswego.

Upon arrival at Mr. Clarke's uncle's house they were hurried out to the farm and hidden in or about the barns until an oppor-

tunity could be found for passing them on. The great majority were sent across Lake Ontario to Canada on sailing vessels from Oswego, but some few continued on to Sackett's Harbor or points further north.

Ship captains cooperated in the matter. They took refugees across without pay and only a small sum was ever charged, often a dollar for one or two persons. Arrangements had to be made beforehand, however, and the movements of the Negroes conducted under cover of darkness, as agents of the slave-holders were numerous and active.

As to the number of "passengers" that patronized the U. R. R. no record was kept. Mr. Clarke's father stated so, but mother said the total number entertained at the Clarke farm was over 125. They came singly, in pairs and groups and occasionally an entire family. One group consisted of a man, wife and three children who were guests of the hay mow when a messenger arrived in great haste to warn father that he was under suspicion. The fugitives were hastily transferred to the woods that then existed some 200 yards to the north and soon afterward a buggy drove up bringing a southern emissary and a constable. They searched but couldn't find anything.

On another occasion officers arrived and made a hurried search of the place but failed to locate a darky, who, upon seeing them drive in, hid himself by burrowing into the hay mow.

The Jerry Escape

The Jerry escape achieved nationwide notoriety. Jerry was an intelligent slave who could read and write. He planned to organize a mass escape but failed due to punishment. He fell into the wrong group.

The news of Jerry's escape was telegraphed everywhere. After being concealed elsewhere for a time, he arrived at the Clarke farm on a dark night in custody of a trusty servant in the Clarke uncle's employ and remained hidden there for four days, awaiting a favorable chance to pass him on. On the fourth day Mr. Clarke found a vessel tied up on the west side of the Oswego River near where the enormous lumber yards used to be, that was to sail that night, and made arrangements with the captain to carry Jerry across to Canada.

After dark Mr. Clarke accompanied the fugitive to the point where the houses of the city proper then commenced, near the corner of East Tenth and Oneida Streets, and started ahead bearing a heavy hickory cane, whose iron ferule made a resonant whack on the sidewalk and enabled the Negro to follow at a discreet distance. Northward on Tenth to Bridge Street, thence straight down the latter and across the river to Water Street, which was traversed to a point near the vessel's side, where the famous fugitive was stowed away, provided with food and a small sum of money. In due time a few neatly written lines were received from some point in Canada, reporting his safe arrival.

Mrs. Clarke told of an escaped slave who knocked at the gate one night. Mr. Clarke went out and asked him in but he kept back at a safe distance and, in spite of every protestation that he was among friends and sympathizers, refused to enter, saying that he had twice been betrayed and taken back to slavery and that he would never again trust himself within reach of anyone. Placing food and drink on the fence, Mr. Clarke and Mrs. Clarke retired a distance and saw him take it and vanish in the darkness.

Stations On The Underground

B. F. Mattison of Clinton, Iowa, son of a neighbor who lived in East Scriba and had been a boyhood playmate and later volunteer comrade in the Civil War with Mr. Clarke's brother, Charles, told what occurred in the early fifties.

The two who were playing "hide and seek" around the barn. Mattison entered it to hide and found himself in the midst of a family of four Negroes. Emerging breathless and frightened, he told Charles of his discovery but brother refused to enthuse saying "Oh, don't mind a few niggers. They are coming and going all the time but you keep your mouth shut about it."

The first corner house on the right as one goes east on the Oneida Street State road beyond the Oswego city line was once owned by Thomas Robinson, a free colored man, who provided an "underground" shelter for slaves. This house was later sold to George Dick who resided there many years. After his death my brother, John Krul, purchased it and now lives there. I have read that it too sheltered many escaping slaves, for it is diagnonallly across the highway from the Dr. Clarke farm and from "the Counterfeit house."

Another station may be found on the Hall Road. The large brick house which is now in possession of Fred Bond, earlier known as the Bennett house and once used by the former owner, Jesse Bennett, was used to aid fugitive slaves. The cupola on the farm house formed an excellent look-out from which this "station-master" could watch for federal agents.

The only animus Mr. and Mrs. Clarke ever had in their anti-slavery labors was their convictions of right and wrong. They received no money whatever. In fact they were hostilized in business and ridiculed publicly and privately for their acts of kindness to the fleeing slaves. During the functioning of the "U. R. R." they were subjected to a considerable expense and loss of time to feed and secure passage for the fugitives.

Ballad Of Scriba

This verse had to do with the election of Lincoln and originated with the Scriba Club, and was composed by its secretary "J. H. M." This article appeared in the issue of the Oswego "Commercial Times" for November 9, 1860:

The Scriba Fight

Oh have you heard of the little fight
We had in Scriba Town,
How the Locos charged us right and left,
And how we mowed 'em down.

Chorus:

Well we did you know,
Well we did you know,
W-e-l-l w-e d-i-d you know.

As uncle Abe was at the head,
We carried out our plan,
By giving him a few more votes
Than any other man.

Well we did, etc.

The Locos came with all their force,
And spread their falsehoods wide,
And said they'd beat our Little John;
But bless me how they lied!

Well they did, etc.

You see how much they hurt him with
A thousand lies or more—
Last year we got one-twenty-eight,
And this, one-seventy-four.

Well he did, etc.

They worked so hard to do him wrong
And get him in a fix
That the Wide Awakes, to do him right
Just gained him "forty-six."

Well we did, etc.
Our Governor is an honest man.
On "State" he takes the lead,
So we put him through with Little John,
And only two a-head.

Well we did, etc.

And when the Traitors cause was tried
We had not a word to say,
But every Wide Awake reached out
And tolled the bell for Gray.

Well we did, etc.

The Scriba club were calm and stern,
Tho not one word was said:
But all their votes come down like rocks
On his devoted head.

Well they did, etc.

But Powers and Burch two warriors brave
In freedom's cause they say,
To show freeman how free they were,
They threw their votes away.

Well they did, etc.

And now we've told you how the war
Was waged on freedom's side,
So we'll tell you of the wounded

How the little Giants died.

Well we will, etc.

You see the Squatter fused with
Well they did, etc.
Bell,
And in the mud they wallow,
But when they fused with Breckinridge
They melted down like tallow.

You know the Scriba Wide Awakes
Had freedom for their cry,
And with their torches, caps and capes,
They kept their powder dry.

Well they did, etc.

Askew was there, and Wales and all
The cheating fusion clan;
But you see the fusion powder, how
It flashes in the pan.

Well it does, etc.

And Billy Wales, the man that and
gets
The Custom Houses pop,
He looks right down his nose to think
How soon he'd loose the top.

Well he does, etc.

They that set traps sometimes get caught—
That's everybody's lot—
They set the Squatter Sovereign's trap,
And so they had to squat.

Well they did, etc.

When whipped they never stopped to see
How many votes they have,
But left the Scriba Wide Awakes
To dig the Squatter's grave.

Well they did, etc.

And now Old Abe is President
Of these United States,
He'll drive the thieves from Washington,
And fasten up the gates.

Well he will, etc.

Russell Turner

One of the pioneer families of Scriba was Russell Turner who was born in 1811, died in 1909. He lived on the farm of his father, Joseph Turner, on the North Road, just East of the Oswego city line, with Lake Ontario as a background.

At the time of his birth the country was practically a wilderness. The ox-cart was the only vehicle in use and blazed trails served as highways. He assisted his father in clearing the virgin forest with axe and saw and cut away timber, burned out stumps, picked up the stones, and cleared out the underbrush in order to get a place to raise grain and potatoes. The forest was the home of the red deer, bears were as plentiful as rabbits are now and the cry of the wild cats and bark of

the timber wolves were heard almost every night.

Witnessed Many Changes

Mr. Turner, as a grown up man, was a successful farmer and a large cattle buyer. He gave up his daily farm duties in his ninetieth year. He experienced the old days when the loghouse was the standard farmhouse, and big fireplace in which crackling logs gave off heat and light to the immates while the boys studied their lessons and the mother's spinning wheel was busy in weaving yarn for the homespuns that went to keep the family in warm clothing. He also was fortunate in seeing a change from the old to the new ways of living.

It was during his youth that the Fulton theory of steam for navigation purposes was developed. He experienced the coming of the first steam railroad into Oswego County, development of the telegraph, telephone, phonograph, electric light, automobile, and saw the old corduroy roads give way to the new town state highways of Scriba.

The Tinsmith Farmer's Three Sons

With head erect and lips compressed,
He throws his hammer by,
The purpose of his manly breast
Is now to do or die.
He seeks the camp; "Put down my name,
My boys will mind the shop,
If my Country needs my heart's best blood
I'll sell it drop for drop.

"And here comes now my oldest boy.
My son, what would you do?"
"Father, my brothers will drive the trade,
I'm going to fight with you."
"Well, put him down, he's a noble boy.
I've two that are younger still,
They'll drive the plow on the flushing farm
And work with a right good will.

"My God! and here comes one of them.
My son, you must not go!"
"Father where the country needs us all,
I can neither plow nor sow."
Well, thank God, there is one left yet;
He will plow and sow what he can,
But he is only a boy and can never do
The work of a full grown man.

With a proud, full heart the tinsmith turned
And walked to the other side,
For he felt a weakness, he almost scorned,
And a tear he fain would hide.
They told him that his youngest son
Was putting his name on the roll.
"It must not be," says the brave old man,
"No, no, he's the light of my soul."

"But the lad came up with beaming eyes,
Which bore neither fear nor cares.
"Father, mother says, 'Go, my boy,
And we'll let out the farm on shares.' "
And now we will march to the tented fields
And when the wild battle shall come
We will strike a full blow for the Stars and Stripes
For God, our country and home.

Mrs. David M. Dean
Scriba, N. Y.

Clipping from Palladium-Times.

The Early Baptists Of Scriba

At a very early date, a Baptist church organization existed in the town of Scriba. It was in existence as late as 1824 until a Baptist church had been organized in Oswego in 1828.

Elder Smith of New Haven, was their first minister. About 1824-6, the church had a settled pastor,

Elder Scranton, who lived in a log house, where Irving Stone's house now stands. Besides preaching he maintained a small school at his home.

The church didn't own a place of worship, but worshipped wherever convenient. For a time services were held in Major Hiel Stone's barn, across the road from his brick house which stood about where the present Baptist church stands. When the brick schoolhouse had been built at Scriba Corners to stand on the low land, a little to the south of the old burying ground immediately in front of the residence of Julius Churchill, services were held there. The brick for the schoolhouse was made by some of the Stone family, from a clay-pit on what is now the property of Charles Knight, and burnt in a kiln. The Baptists also held meetings in a schoolhouse that stood on the Middle road near where it is crossed by the road running from the "Corners".

After Elder Scranton left, the church had preaching only whenever a preacher could be found, so religion matters reached a very low state and the church became well nigh extinct.

Some members of this church were: Major Hiel Stone, born 1766, grandfather of second Hiel Stone, who gave the town land for a burying ground, now known as Scriba Hill Cemetery. The Stone, Burt, Parkhurst, Reed and other families with their children held a revival meeting about 1829-30 and were successful. Again the Baptists of Scriba renewed their religious interests and later built a church.

Married

In New Haven, New York, July 23, by Rev. O. B. Coit, D. D., Mr. Grant R. Stone and Miss May Wilcox, both of Scriba, New York.

Changed Into A Stone!

'Twas years ago, when first we learned,
That a woman, the wife of Lot,
Into a chunk of salt was turned;
But now, dear reader, we have got
Another wonder to declare—
It MAY be that you'll GRANT it none
A Scriba lady, young and fair,
Has been transformed into a Stone!

Article obtained from The "Scriba Stars And Stripes", a paper written and published monthly in the interests of the Scriba Baptist Church by Rev. Thomas Broxholm, at Scriba, Oswego County, New York.

Terms: 10 cents a year for subscribers in town Subscribers by mail 25 cents.

Born 1896

In Scriba, April 4, to Mr. and Mrs. Orson Murphy, a daughter.

A Little, New Potato

Irish Murphies in price are down
Some ten cents a bushel selling;
But over north in Scriba town,
Farmers have been lately telling
Of a little, new potato—
Of a Murphy raised over there—
Worth a thousand dollars or two,
So Orson and his wife declare!

In Fulton, April 8, to Mr. and Mrs. D. D. Stone of Scriba, a son.

Married 1895

At the Baptist Parsonage, Scriba, New York, September 29, by Rev. Thomas Broxholm, Boyd L. Fredenburg and Rose M. Barlow, both of Scriba.

Buoyed up with a true lover's courage,
He went to the Garden of Marriage,
Seeking a flower his life to compose—
Contented he was with picking a Rose!

To Mr. and Mrs. A. Whittemore on the Fiftieth Anniversary of their Marriage.
by Rev. Thomas Broxholm.

Cemeteries Of Scriba

When I first thought of getting

epitaphs from old gravestones of old uncared for cemeteries, I shuddered. I certainly was very cautious going through Mattison cemetery, my first and nearest adventure. What a creepy feeling came over me as I waded through tall grass, vines, briars, bushes, poison ivy, and sunken graves. This feeling disappeared upon finding my first epitaph.

I ventured through seven cemeteries and found it very interesting in spite of getting poison ivy on my legs and hands. The cemeteries I wandered through were Mattison, Kingdom, Hall, Scriba Hill, Sweet, Whittemore, and North Scriba. Of these, North Scriba cemetery is the largest and best kept up of all.

As far as I can make out from different interviews, these cemeteries started as family plots. It was customary to bury bodies of the deceased members in some plot of the farm they owned. Sometime after that a law was passed forbidding family plot burials. When this went into effect some of the richer farmers donated land for their family burials and public.

Threat To Old Cemetery

Mrs. Walter White of Scriba told me Solomon Mattison who owned a very large tract of land in Scriba set aside enough land on his farm for all his family burials and the public. All of Mr. Mattison's sons, who were nine in number, had the same middle initial, namely G for Galusha. This cemetery is very small, still in use, but was never incorporated. That means that anyone buying land around it can buy the cemetery as part of the land and destroy it.This cemetery is about a mile east on Oneida Street Road or Route 104 on right side of road.

All these cemeteries were named after the person who donated the burial ground. In most cases they were large and rich land owners.

Tomb Stone Cutters 100 Yrs.

Mr. Fred Spink told me an interesting account of his father being a tombstone cutter, himself as long as he was able, and now his son Fred Spink Junior has taken over. This trade has been practiced over a hundred years in his family. He didn't remember of engraving epitaphs but once in his day. They certainly date back for over a hundred years. He recited an interesting epitaph he once engraved on some tombstone he couldn't remember where, which it:

"Stop youthful friend.
As you pass by,
As you are now.
So once was I.
As I am now.
So you must be.
Prepare for death,
And follow me."

It was of interest to me to find that Whittemore Cemetery belongs to Scriba and Volney. The gate at the entrance marks the dividing line, one half to Scriba and the other half to Volney. I also noticed some of these old gravestones had been reinforced with cement and iron braces.

When I asked Mr. Spencer McCaw about going through the Kingdom Cemetery for epitaphs, he said these were some comical ones. We hurried through pastures and fences on our adventure. We found many epitaphs, but were discouraged in not finding the particular ones he mentioned. We came back and inquired again. He said that he saw one three years ago and heard the other mentioned by one of his neighbors which I think are quite humorous.

Here lies my wife Elizabeth Kent
She kicked up her heels
And away she went.

He took the old mare out to drink
She kicked and killed him
Quicker than a wink.

Mattison Cemetery

George B.
Son of E. G. and A. M. Mattison
Lost on the Schooner Mollison October 25, 1873
in 31st year of his life.
We shall know each other there.

Dr. H. N. Mattison
Born May 7, 1814
Died October 18, 1873.

William G. Himes
21 Battery
N. Y. Artillery
Died December 27, 1866
Age 58 years.

Sweet Cemetery

Doctor Benjamin Coe
Died June 29, 1821—Aged 41 years.
Endeared with a healing heart
A philosophic mind and a devotion
To the duties of his profession
He has bowed in the midst
Of his days to the mandate unto dust.

Whittemore Cemetery

Nathan Tanner
Died April 19, 1844—Aged 45 years.
Friend this clay must be your bed
In spite of all your lovers
The tall the wise the reverend head
Must lay as one of ours

House Sleigh

Many years ago there lived in Scriba an old man, Isaac Smart. He was peculiar in many ways, yet quite mechanical. Because his farm was small, he had time to help large farm owners plant and harvest crops and gather apples in the fall of the year. No doubt he received pay in some way. He got around with his rack wagon nicely during the warm weather, but when cold weather set in he couldn't keep warm and complained

He proceeded to build a sleigh and on this sleigh he built a peculiar square house. In this house he placed a joker stove in the center with a chimney stack running through the roof. It sure did look odd. Wherever he went in cold weather, he fired the stove in this sleigh and rode about very comfortably. The colder the days the greater streams of smoke were streaming out this smoke stack. He drew everyone's attention in the neighborhood with his invention. Many boys of school age teased for rides which he gladly offered. At one time he took two violinists from his neighborhood and went to Orwell in this sleigh. Here they played, sang songs and amused the folks with his house sleigh.

Mrs. Jennie Rose of Lycoming gave me this story as she remembered it. Mr. Baker, her son-in-law, confirmed the fact that this wagon existed long after Mr. Smart's death.

Counterfeit House

The last house on the left inside the Oswego city line going east on the Oneida Street State Road is "the counterfeit house" now owned by Mr. Thomas Prettie, Sr. It was occupied by the Ingersoll family who with others of the neighborhood reportedly made counterfeit money. No one seemed to know much about this family and they seldom came in contact with nearby neighbors. What people of the community were involved in it, I haven't been able to find out.

This Ingersoll household consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Ingersoll, the latter a very old sickly lady, their daughter Ida about twelve years of age, and two sons older than Ida. This "money" was all "made" into silver coins. The boys helped their father with a few unidentified farmers of the neighborhood. They operated this illegal business in a secret way, so no one but the immediate family knew about it and those connected with that business. Upstairs in the house seemed to be a favorable location for this business. "Money" being in great demand was made at night with the house all lighted, and no curtains for concealment, so no one would be suspicious of wrong doing. There is a spot on the floor in one of the rooms where a certain acid was spilled in the coinage process that has been preserved to this day.

Ida Ingersoll, their only daughter and youngest child, was a grand girl. Everyone liked her.

She was very fond of going to Mrs. George Kocher's house and playing there. Mrs. Kocher then was a bit older than Ida and thought a great deal of her.

The peculiar part of this matter was that the Ingersoll children played with everyone at different neighbors' houses but never invited friends into their home. In fact Ida's father wanted her to stay with Kochers. Their children no doubt were coached to keep this matter a secret.

It so happened one time two or three men came to this house to purchase as much as they could of this counterfeit money. The deal was made. They stayed and watched the making of it, made a reasonable deal and then revealed their authority as secret service men. They seized all the "money" that was available and arrested the counterfeiters. The Ingersolls were sentenced severely and sent to Auburn prison. They couldn't take this old lady, so a constable was ordered to stay with her until a home was secured for her. Ida, home was secured for her. Ida, being too young for a prison sentence, was sent away to some distant relative of hers far away. No one ever heard of the family after that.

Neighbors went to this house afterwards, but not before any one was arrested. This house remained vacant for some time and was said to have been "haunted".

Mrs. George Kocher, our next door neighbor, now in her middle eighties, gave me this information.

Captain Louis Turner

Captain Turner, an old time sea captain, lived on Hurricane Hill, Scriba, now property of Mr. Elmo Seeley. He was grandfather of Mrs. Lizzie Seeley, mother of Amos. Captain Turner adopted Henry Comstock who later was professor of Cornell University for many years.

He spent his youth traveling the seas, but old age forced him to live at home. He and his wife, Polly, lived in a little house screened by a tangled mass of raspberry bushes, alders, and wild grapevines.

He had a husky voice and often used profane sea language. Polly would have liked to sit up nights to darn his stockings by light of a kerosene lamp, but the captain tolerated no lights in his house at night. He liked to go to bed early. So when twilight had almost passed away and darkness was about to fall, he would call:

"Polly! Strip your canvas and heave to till morning!"

The Captain once attended a revival meeting at the Baptist Church at Scriba Corners, became interested in religion, decided to join the church and was going to be baptized. To him baptism was as strange a ceremony as a bath in a tub. The place selected for the event was a creek and in front of the little old schoolhouse at Scriba Corners. This creek was dammed up for the immersion. A multitute of farmers had assembled there to witness the baptism of this wicked old man who, when his ship had struggled against storms, had cursed all the powers of heaven and earth.

When Captain Turner saw the dirty water into which he was to be plunged, he bellowed:

Objected To Baptismal Mudhole

"Parson! Take me out to the lake where the water is clean! I won't be baptized in any damned mudhole!"

So there was an exodus of the multitude of people along the dusty roads in a long procession of bony horses drawing in rickety wagons, the whiskered farmers and their wives and children to the cool, clear waters of Lake Ontario, three miles distant. When the shore of the lake was reached, the Captain stripped to his baptismal robe, consisting of a nightshirt, was led by the parson through the chilly water until a high rock was reached. There the Captain perched and waited impatiently while the parson spoke at length upon the propriety of baptizing the sinner in the very waters which he had

cursed. Before he was fully emersed he said to Parson Tuttle:

"Here is where I committed all my sins!

"Here they will all be washed away!"

As he finished the last word, he jumped into the lake and was then fully baptized.

This is a true story for two people gave me practically the same version.

Doctor Perkin's Corn Salve

Many years ago farmers looked forward to Doctor Perkin's visit through Kingdom Road. He was a corn doctor and carried a black box. Everyone liked him for he was jolly, sang, and told many stories. He would put on glasses and pare Grandpa's corns and would look at Grandma's feet, but she had to suffer the disappointment of never being able to raise any corns.

Grandpa's corns were taken care of as long as Doc came around with corn-salve. One year he came no more. No one knew what happened. Grandpa's corns got worse and grew big. He tried salve, plasters, soaked his feet in a pail of hot water repeatedly, and pared the corns with a razor, but there was a hard corn on his little toe which could not be cured. So one day Grandpa put his foot on a chopping block near the woodpile and cut off his toe with an axe.

Dingle Hole Pranksters

Harvey Dubois and Al Crooks in their younger days were outstanding pranksters of South Scriba, nicknamed "Dingle Hole".

Al called himself "Champion Charcoal Burner". He was an uncle of George Crooks now residing in this town.

Harvey, was a barrel maker at one time and lived in the house now occupied by Lyman Dubois.

One Fourth of July, Al and Harvey held a rope across Pecks Mill Pond and dared Professor Davis to walk it. He did and when he was halfway across they let the rope go two or three times and Davis fell in. The boys rescued Davis to safety. They urged him to cross again but he wouldn't take any chances. They coaxed and coaxed Davis. He finally consented. As he was walking this tight rope and was half way across again the boys let go. Professor Davis fell into the pond and again was rescued to safety.

Al mortified his sisters, for he went to church services, to study deviltry. No one knew what he would do from one minute to the next.

Mr. Macel Simons gave me this verbal information!

Scriba Grange Organization

Scriba Grange was organized February 10, 1874. They started with thirteen charter members, now having one hundred seventy-four members. Records have been kept from the beginning to the present day.

The first meeting was held in a schoolhouse on the opposite side of the present Scriba Corner's School. Meetings were conducted by candlelight and improper heating facilities. Here all types of topics were discussed, such as astronomy, temperance, etc. The grangers at that time obtained discounts from merchants of Oswego by having a trade card to show they were members of a grange. Complaints about hard times and lack of money were discussed. One dollar wouldn't buy half as much as fifty years ago.

All types of social gatherings, feasts, and programs were promoted.

Seven years after their organizing they rented an organ from Mt. Pleasant, that was the first music in this grange.

In 1876 a janitor was paid twenty-five cents a night, but this was considered too much. They hired a janitor for eighteen cents a night. The hall had to be lighted, well heated, and the janitor was to furnish fuel and lights.

On about 1889 coal was worth $3.75 a ton.

On the twenty-fourth anniversary of the organization of the

Grange in 1898 an oyster dinner was served to 160 people. A bill of $14.40 was presented for 10 gallons of oysters, crackers, coffee, and sugar. This included a dishpan, teakettle, and few dippers for the kitchen.

The grangers purchased a hall in 1899. In that year they had a maple sugar feast and paid $1.67 for 1-¾ gallon of syrup and 1½ pounds of butter.

Farmers were buying corn for $5.00 a ton from Illinois to plant or for stock.

In 1900 Maurice Lamb received $1.00 for an hour's entertainment. People came from all sections of Scriba to enjoy his music.

The grangers have been instrumental in bringing about many improvements in the community.

Mrs. George Bacon gave me this information from record books.

Poplar Tree

A true story told by Mrs. Jennie Rose.

My great grandmother, Mrs. Rebecca Prosser, went by horseback on some errand to a neighbor who lived a great distance from their farm. She had to go through very thick woods. She cut a poplar sprout for a whip to spur her horse along. When she returned, she stuck this whip into the ground by the side of their log cabin. The children noticed the whip and asked:

"Mother, why did you place this whip in such a place?"

"It will be handy to use."

She never used it. It grew into a very large tree and lived over a hundred years, little thinking that it would shelter many generations of her descendants under its branches.

When this tree was cut down not too many years ago because of age and danger to the people, the stump measured seven feet in diameter.

Toll Gate Houses

There were a number of toll gate houses from Oswego to Scriba Corners in the days of the plank road, now called the state road. The first of these was located on the Peckham place, now occupied by Mrs. H. W. Bales, the second where Mr. Joseph Derousie lives, one at Scriba Corners, now replaced by the Grange Hall, and one at Burts where the present parsonage is located. The toll gate tavern located at Scriba Corners seemed the most important for each teamster stopped there to water his horses, for there was a constant supply of water.

Turning off north at Scriba Corners as far as the residence of Elmo Seeley was a blazed trail. Too there was a tavern operated by Joel Hubbard. Perry Worden was a mail carrier in that vicinity. He traveled about on horseback carrying mail and large sums of money without any loss.

Joseph Worden lived in what is now the corner house on Scriba Hill. One never saw him at church unless they had music at their services. He was a strict Methodist. On Sunday he dressed, sat in a chair before services, went to listen to the music if provided, on his return from church he sat in a chair the rest of the day. That made him hate church.

These toll gate taverns took care of mail, freight, and accommodated travelers. When the railroad came through, horse drawn wagons and use of the plank road lessened.

The plank road was owned in sections by companies. They charged a toll for reimbursement. It really became a money making proposition, for they charged toll but neglected to repair the road. These companies took planking from one side to repair the other and had gravel road on the side where planks were removed.

One of the earliest stores of Scriba Corners was kept by Major Hiel Stone in the location which is now a feed store owned by A. Barlow. From the beginning of its settlement it served the community as a gathering place. Farmers would get together around the cracker barrel and

talk over their ideas. They called these gatherings the "Spit and Whittle Club." Among their subjects was the plank road and other grievances.

Captain B. C. Turner, a retired sea captain, lived directly across from this store. He had a fine strong team of horses and decided with others to eliminate a toll. They arranged to meet at night at a certain hour at the toll gate house that stood where Mr. Joseph Derousie now lives. Capt. Turner put a chain around this house, hooked it unto his team, and pulled the toll gate house off its foundation. That was the end of that toll house. Soon the Oswego Company gave up tolls and later the state highway was built.

Mr. DeLancey gave me this verbal information.

Apple Orchards

Around 1870 practically every farmer in Scriba set out an apple orchard. This planting idea lasted about five years; then it ceased. When these trees were full grown, bore fruits, a great apple industry developed in this section.

In the vicinity of Scriba Corners there were some seven apple driers, three or four cider mills, and two or three barrel factories which gave employment from fall through winter to 200 or 300 people.

Some of these apples were packed into barrels, taken to Oswego, and shipped. Some farmers would pack as many as a thousand barrels of apples a day. Simeone Coe, grandfather of Mrs. Jennie Rose, operated a barrel factory. He sold barrels to farmers of Scriba and would take barrels on a rack wagon to the city of Oswego everyday. Leading men of Scriba Corners operating apple driers were: Dr. A. C. Taylor, Joseph H. Worden, B. C. Turner, Wayland H. Burt, Alexander Whittemore, and Hart and Baker, a company affair.

All paring machines were turned by hand, which consisted of a single fork machine later replaced by a triple fork machine which made the work easier and faster. Thirty bushels of apples pared by one man was considered a day's work. Triple forked machine peeled and cored the apples at the same time. The peel was left on one table and the core fell in one pile on the floor below the machine. Two women sat at the table, trimmed spots and specks. From there the apples went into a slicer, were slicked into rings, and were dumped into big trays, and put into a drying tower. After they had been dried, they were put into smaller containers in a bleaching tower. They were bleached there with burning sulphur, packed into fifty pound boxes, and sold to markets.

Poor grade of apples were made into chopped stock and sold to mince meat factories. Peelings and cores were used in making apple jelly. Pumice was used in making champagne.

Mr. DeLancey gave me this verbal information.

Early History Of The Town Of Scriba

Early pioneers of Scriba and other sections of this country came with bare hands and wrested from the wilderness a livelihood for themselves and their large families.

Job Lawton's father, of Knickerbocker stock, was born in Fairfield, Herkimer County, New York, in 1795. When he was about 17 years of age he entered the war of 1812 and was sent with an advance squad to clear a passage through the forests from Rome to Sacketts Harbor for an easier movement of the army to be stationed later. This squad of boys was to clear a portion of the presumably "old state road" running through the town of Redfield.

Job married Lydia West of Fairfield and "went west" as this area was then called, built a log cabin on or near what is now called the Townline road between towns of Scriba and New Haven, Oswego County. That cabin, as has been told, stood on the exact

location of the house later known as the Sam Sherman house.

Mrs. Lawton spun and wove all the woolen clothing for the family besides sewing it. For their summer clothing the family would buy unbleached cotton cloth by the bolt and make clothing for the whole family. For the boys, shirts and pants and for the girls dresses, aprons, and under things. They were all dyed with hemlock or butternut bark. If they chanced to get them on before they were dyed, the children felt "all dressed up."

Prior to about 1834 the only means pioneers had of obtaining fire or light was either through striking it by flint or by preserving fire in their fireplace by packing coals in ashes. If by any chance the fire went out, someone had to go to the nearest neighbor and borrow some fire, in which case should the neighbor live some distance away, would not be a very pleasant trip, especially on a zero morning.

About 1849 when the Baptist Church at North Scriba was finished, Mrs. Lawton who was tied at home with small children, would take her own quilted petticoat, double the belt together and pin it around her oldest daughter's neck for a cloak. She then with a sunbonnet on her head, or a homemade quilted hood if the weather demanded it, would take her shoes in her hand with her homemade knited stockings, carried them till she was nearly there, put them on and remove them after services were over and went home barefooted.

The majority of the boys in those days did their skating with bare feet. Shoes or boots were too hard to get and too expensive to skate in, and real skates were unheard of. The boys also knitted their own socks and mittens from yarn. Mrs. Lawton spun after carding wool by hand.

Naval Activities During Montcalm's Capture of Oswego

(Paper Given Before the Oswego County Historical Society by Mr. Edwin M. Waterbury, Past President, on April 17, 1951.)

England and France were still officially at peace in the "Old World" when General Braddock, then recently appointed commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America, met in council at Alexandria, Virginia, in April, 1755, the governors of several of the English colonies, who in most instances were also captains-general of their respective colonies as well, including Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts. The council determined that while General Braddock should proceed early that summer towards Fort Duquesne on the site of the present city of Pittsburg, Pa., William Johnson, now appointed a major-general of New York Militia, should proceed from his home at Johnson Hall against the French forts at Ticonderoga and Crown Point. Simultaneously, General Shirley was to proceed to Oswego and establish a base for projected English attacks planned for that same season against Fort Niagara and Fort Frontenac at Kingston, Canada. To Shirley was also entrusted the task of establishing a Royal Dock-yard at Oswego where would be constructed the first English warships to appear upon the Great Lakes and the first British warships that would sail upon a fresh water sea anywhere in the world.

Oswego Threatened French

Shirley saw Oswego as a dagger pointed at the heart of the French line of communications between Quebec and Montreal in the East and Fort Niagara and the other French forts and trading posts to the West, and extending southward clear to the French province of Louisiana. He persuaded the council of the immediate importance of strengthening and holding Fort Oswego for the British. The task of accomplishing this was assigned to him. The further plan was that Braddock should take Fort Duquesne and then advance northward taking the intervening French forts in his path as he proceeded, and at Fort Niagara join Shirley who would have besieged that fort in the interim. After Fort Niagara's expected fall, a force would be sent from Oswego to take Fort Frontenac at Kingston. The French communications between the east and the west would then be cut. Thereafter, the French western posts were expected to fall easily to the English as they would be cut off both from supplies and reenforcements.

Shirley returned northwards at the conclusion of the council and immediately began at Albany and Schenectady organizing his forces to concentrate at Oswego for the contemplated attack on Fort Niagara. Appeals for militia to be furnished Shirley for the attempt were made and answered by colonial troops from North Carolina, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York and elsewhere. Shirley appealed to General William Johnson to raise as large a party of Six Nations Indians as he could to accompany Shirley's army to Oswego and proceed thence against Fort Niagara.

Construct Fort Ontario

While the English regulars who comprised the Fort Oswego garri-

son at that time and the first militia units to arrive at Oswego were waiting for Shirley's arrival there, at Shirley's direction they were set at work strengthening Fort Oswego and on the construction of a new fort to be erected on the East side of the Oswego river near its mouth. This was located on a steep-sided bluff overlooking both Lake Ontario and the Oswego river, the latter, however, still being called at that time the "Onondaga river" by which name it was yet to be known for nearly half a century. When this fort was completed it was to be known as Fort Ontario. The new fort was about 800 feet in circumference, star-shaped, with its outer walls of matched logs strongly supported, being 14 feet high. It was surrounded by a moat or ditch. Its sally-port was at the West, facing the river. Inside its walls were log barracks, square in form, and built to shelter 300 men and officers.

Bradstreet Given Command

Lieutenant Governor DeLancey placed in command of Fort Oswego early in 1755, Captain John Bradstreet, a New Englander who had had much active military experience in the colonies. Bradstreet, a career man in the English army, was from that time forward for the five succeeding years, to have a prominent place in the military and naval activities centering at Oswego. In 1758, he was to come to Oswego in command of an army of regulars and provincials moving to lay siege to Fort Frontenac (Kingston, Ontario) an expedition which he brought to an early and successful termination when that fort surrendered after only a few hours of bombardment, together with the ships of the French fleet then at Frontenac, and an enormous quantity of military supplies.

Bradstreet made a record for himself not previously equaled and probably never surpassed in the rapidity with which he moved his command through the Wood Creek "bottleneck" enroute to Oswego from Schenectady early in the spring of 1755. The Wood Creek "Carrying Place" which receives its name from the fact that it was at this point where the Mohawk river was abandoned as a water highway on the route from Albany and Schenectady to Oswego and admittance to the waters of Lake Oneida sought through the medium of Wood Creek, a shallow and meandering stream often encumbered by fallen trees and other obstacles which seriously delayed batteauxmen, traders, and armies seeking to pass the point enroute to or from Oswego. Frequently, several days were required for even a small army to transport its boats and supplies across the carry to reach Oneida Lake.

Bradstreet's Record Portage

Bradstreet required only three hour's time to pass this point in 1755 while moving to assume command at Oswego. Of this exploit, Governor DeLancey in a letter written by the governor to British War Secretary Robinson under date of August 7, 1755, said: "I must do him the justice to say that no man ever made more dispatch to get to his command than he (Bradstreet) did, having in three hour's time passed the great "Carrying Place" between the Mohawk's river and Wood Creek with his company, provisions, battoes, and baggage, which is a less time than what the traders generally take with a single battoe when they hasten to the Mart at Oswego."

Shirley sent ahead of him to Oswego naval architects, officers and ship carpenters, to establish the first Royal Dock-yard of the British on the Great Lakes. The dockyard was located on "the hook" of land that jutted out into the river from its west bank near its mouth, close to Fort Oswego. Here the construction of the war sloops "Oswego" and "Ontario" and two small schoon-

ers, the "Alert" and the "George" was well underway when Shirley finally arrived at Oswego in August.

First Ships Are Built

The four English warships built at Oswego during the summer of 1755 were designed by Commodore Augustus Keppel, son of the second Earl of Pembroke. To Captain John Bradstreet, former Massachusetts whaleman and now an officer in the Provincial army, had been entrusted the direction of the ship construction at Oswego in its early stages. Bradstreet recorded that in June he had only 15 carpenters available for the work. One of these, he says, was "a lad and another was lame, all lyable to accidents and the whole number small to go with such work."

Bradstreet wrote General Shirley in June of 1755: "I hope the new galley you now order to be built and the schooners may answer your purpose, but I think it my duty to inform you I am fearful they will not; for they are so full built that they will not sail (but) before the wind, and this lake (Ontario) is like the ocean where there is strong gails and great seas with few harbours."

Ship Carpenters From Boston

The "Ontario" of 60-tons burthen had a 40-foot keel and was equipped with 10 carriage guns and other smaller cannon. The ship carpenters who worked upon her had been brought by Bradstreet to Oswego for the purpose from shipyards in Boston, Mass., and its immediate vicinity. Besides sails she was equipped with long sweeps which could be used for rowing her, if necessary. The "Ontario" was launched on June 28, at Oswego, the first English ship, built either for peace or war service, to appear upon the Great Lakes.

The second ship to be launched at the Oswego dockyard was the deckless schooner the "Alert" which entered the water while the "Oswego" sloop was still on the stocks. She was at once placed in service as a scout-ship patrolling the area off Oswego on the watch for enemy ships or a possible landing party. Another deckless schooner was completed that same summer and was given the name of "George" in honor of the ruling king of Great Britain. The "Oswego" was launched on July 10. She was made the flagship of Commodore Broadley's fleet.

French Encamp Nearby

The "Pennsylvania Gazette" of July 31, 1755, contained the following letter or dispatch from Oswego, which, although unsigned, was probably written by Bradstreet himself:

"Oswego, July 9, 1755—I found the sloop Oswego in great forwardness, and shall turn her off the stocks tomorrow—I sent Mr. Dean out in a small schooner upon hearing they (French and Indians) were nigh us, who soon discovered them encamped within eight miles of this place; but as there was little wind he could not venture nigh enough to form any judgment of their numbers. I sent him out the next morning in the same boat, but they had left their encampment in the night, which makes me conclude they are gone to Niagara. It was very unlucky that one of the sloops was not ready; if she had been I think they might have been stopped."

The unnamed "little schooner" was either the "George", christened in honor of George II, the reigning monarch, or the "Alert" whose name was appropriate to its patrol tasks. There were two of these small craft, each of 20 tons burthen, about the size of a modern motor pleasure cruiser, included in the Oswego fleet. "Mr. Dean" was a lieutenant of the Royal Navy sent up from New York to take command of the "Oswego" when Commodore Housman Broadley

should choose what rig she should have and complete her.

General Shirley had ordered that the "Ontario" should be given a sloop rig. She performed so well after this change that it was decided to refit the "Oswego" and make a sloop out of her as well, but this work was not carried out until later in the year.

Pouchot's Account

Capitaine Francois de Pouchot of the Regiment de Bearn, commander of French Fort Niagara, thus described the first British naval establishment of 1755:

"The first English schooner on Lake Ontario was launched this summer. She had a 40-foot keel, mounted 14 swivel guns and was made to row when necessary. The fleet fitted out by the English at Oswego in 1755 consisted of a decked sloop of eight 4-pounders and thirty swivels, a decked schooner of eight 4-pounders and 28 swivels, and an undecked schooner of 14 swivels and 14 oars, and another of 12 swivels and 14 oars. All of these were unrigged and laid up early in the fall."

Swivel guns looked like fire hose nozzles, and were set in forks or iron crotches that fitted into sockets along the rail of a vessel. They were easily removed; could shoot in any direction. "Pouchot was probably misinformed about the number of swivels", says C. H. J. Snider of Toronto writing in the "Toronto Telegram" in 1951 of the first British fleet on Lake Ontario. "As the decked vessels were only 55 feet over all, there would hardly be room for so many as 28 or 30 swivels on the rail, and no need for the carriage guns which were their armament. These vessels actually never had more than five guns and as many swivels apiece. Everything at Oswego was in short supply."

Shirley's Arrival Delayed

Shirley's arrival at Oswego had been delayed for several weeks beyond his earlier anticipated date by a series of unexpected happenings which caused him several times to delay his departure from Schenectady for Oswego. A principal cause of his delay had been the fact that General Johnson had not procured the escort of Six Nations Indian "braves" which Shirley had asked him to procure to guide Shirley through out a terrain which was entirely new to him as well as to those he commanded.

Relations between the two generals became strained during the correspondence that passed between them on the subject, and this was later to develop on Johnson's part into a movement to bring about the enforced retirement of Shirley from his command. Another cause of the delay had been the tardiness of some of the colonies in providing men and equipment which had been requested from them to support Shirley's expedition.

Shirley Loses Two Sons

Shirley was at Fort Williams at the Wood Creek "carrying place" enroute to Oswego, when dispatches reached him announcing Braddock's defeat by the French in the Battle of Monongahela while Braddock was advancing against Fort Duquesne. Braddock was reported killed along with Shirley's eldest son, William Shirley, Jr., who had been Braddock's confidential clerk. Shirley's second son, John, who was accompanying him to Oswego, was to die at the Fort Oswego Hospital the next winter, during epidemics of scurvy and fever which swept through the Oswego garrison simultaneously with the development of an acute shortage of food which caused the deaths of hundreds of men at Fort Oswego during that winter.

General Shirley arrived at Oswego August 17, 1755, after following the usual water route from Schenectady. He was accompanied by the regiment named after him and also by the regiment named

after Sir William Pepperell, some independent companies, artillerymen and a few Indians, the whole force numbering about 1500 men who were to be added to the Oswego garrison until the move against Ft. Niagara should be inaugurated. Colonel Peter Schuyler with his New Jersey regiment had reached Oswego before Shirley's arrival. Colonel Mercer, a British artillery officer, was not to arrive with the artillery until August 31. Although Shirley's and Pepperell's regiments were enrolled as British regulars, they had been raised in America and their personnel was largely American. They had, however, seen activity in the Louisburg campaign of the preceding year and they were not raw recruits.

It had been decided on September 21, that Shirley with 600 men should sail September 26 against Fort Niagara on board of "Ontario". The artillery and ordnance stores were also to be put aboard the "Ontario". The "Oswego" was to be loaded with a part of the provisions, but no accommodations for additional men would then remain. That would mean that at least 400 men would have to be transported in batteaux many of which were not fit for the service, but, fate was to intervene and the expedition planned for that season into the preparations for which there had been expended so much planning, effort and money, was not to move.

Shirley's Army Boards Ship

Shirley ordered his army aboard ship September 26, ready to proceed against Fort Niagara. Before the ships could set sail, however, a storm arose on Lake Ontario that was so severe and so long continued that the army could neither proceed nor return ashore for 13 days during which period the men had a miserable time in their crowded quarters on board ship as the light craft were battered about by the mighty waves of the lake. Many were rendered severely ill by seasickness.

When the storm abated the army disembarked and returned to shore. Soon afterwards, the Indian allies left Oswego, explaining that the season was now too far advanced for making an attack on Fort Nigara. Shirley called a council of war which recommended that the expedition be abandoned because of the lateness of the season, but that it should be resumed the next year, more ships for the fleet to be built at Oswego in the interim.

French Ruled Lake In 1755

The work of building the English fleet had proceeded slowly that summer of 1755. Peter Williamson, who was here with Shirley, reported that when the bellows for the forge of the blacksmith shop at the shipyard gave out, all work upon the making of nails and iron work needed for the ships' construction stopped. Williamson further recorded that French ships were constantly passing Oswego that summer between Forts Frontenac and Niagara without any efforts being made by the French to conceal their movements as they knew that the English were powerless to attack them.

"The reason our forces could not attack," Williamson recorded. "was because the French were four miles in the offing on board large vessels in which 12 soldiers could stand to fire without being overset while our batteaux in which we must have attacked them were so small they could contain only six men each and so ticklish that the inadvertent motion of one man would have overset them."

Shirley Made Commander

When he reached Albany in November of 1755, Shirley learned for the first time that he had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the English forces in North America as the successor to General Braddock. Soon after he had learned of Braddock's death, Shirley had claimed to have succeeded to the command

by designation of General Braddock at the Alexandria Council, but Sir William Johnson refused to accept Shirley's claim and asserted his own. In consequence Johnson had given Shirley little co-operation in the latter's efforts to prepare his army for attacking Fort Niagara in the summer just closed.

Shirley called a Council of Provincial Governors in New York in December at which he urged that 5,000 men be raised, trained and sent to Oswego in the early spring to aid in the capture of Fort Niagara and in a projected later advance from Oswego down the St. Lawrence against Montreal and Quebec. Although by the time spring arrived, Shirley was to have been relieved of his command as the result of the machinations of General Johnson, Governor DeLancey and others urging that action upon the British War Department, Shirley's plans for that season were adopted by his successors, but they were not carried to success for reasons we shall soon see.

Hundreds Died Of Scurvy

Left in command at Oswego during the ensuing winter of 1755-1756, Colonel Mercer pressed forward as rapidly as possible the construction work on Fort Ontario and on Fort George, a second new fort which had been started in mid-summer. This stood on the hillside west of Fort Oswego and distant from that fort by over half a mile. Its site is partially included in the Montcalm Park of today. Mercer's entire force was to pass through a severe ordeal in the coming winter. Provisions adequate for the number of men at the fort, working hard each day in the open air, amidst low temperatures, failed. Hundreds of men fell ill of the scurvy or fever and died. The 350 men who survived suffered such severe hardships that they were little better than living skeletons when spring finally came. With it came supplies of sorely needed food, medicines, and other supplies and re-enforcements.

Shirley Shortened Carry

James Fairservice was placed in command at Schenectady of a company of carpenters and laborers by General Shirley early in 1756, and ordered "to proceed to the clearing and mending the passage between Schenectady and Oswego, and to mend the falls, rifts, shoals and carrying places between the same." Shirley wrote under date of March 17, 1756, from Boston to Colonel John Bradstreet concerning Fairservice: "You are from time to time to give the said James Fairservice (sic) such further instructions and directions as you shall find necessary for carrying into execution the instructions I have given him, a copy of which is herewith, and the said James Fairservice and his company are hereby required to obey such orders and directions, as they shall receive from you for doing the same, or any further service you shall think necessary, when that is completed."

After Abercromby had succeeded Shirley, the latter wrote him from Albany under date of June 27, advising him of the work accomplished by Fairservice and his men as follows:

"In order to clear the obstructions as much as might be in the navigation to Oswego through the Mohawk and other rivers, and particularly the Wood Creek, and to shorten the Oneida Carrying Place (which has been represented to me, accordingly reduced from eight to one mile, besides clearing the Wood Creek, etc., of some obstructions), I caused to be enlisted likewise early this Spring a working party, consisting of 80 men under direction of one James Fairservice."

Royal Dockyard Established

The Royal Dockyard at Oswego had been established under General Shirley's orders in the early summer of 1755 upon the hook-

shaped spit of land which at that time jutted out from the west bank of the Oswego river, near its mouth and in close proximity to the eastern wall of Fort Oswego. This "hook" is clearly set forth on early maps. The seal of our Historical Society depicts Old Fort Ontario as it appeared in 1755, with the dockyard structures appearing on the nearby spit where ships under construction are shown in the stocks with ship-carpenters brought from several points along the Massachusetts coast, and from Rhode Island and New York, at work upon them.

During the 19th century, a canal connecting the inside curve of the "hook" with the waters of Lake Ontario was constructed, this canal, in effect, creating an island out of the "hook". The canal was used by both departing and arriving small craft and canal boats. Later the canal was abandoned and the passage which had been established in its construction was gradually widened until the former "hook" became a true island although not created by nature as such. (This island was removed in the fall of 1930 from the river after the New York State grain elevator had been built.)

Hospital Built

Sometime before Montcalm's invading army arrived at Oswego, and probably in the year 1755, a hospital had been built along the west river shore a short distance south of the "hook". This was intended to care for sick or wounded members of the fort's garrisons. It also cared for wounded "lumber-jacks" and ship carpenters in 1756 who had been victims of attacks, frequently made in the early summer of that year, upon these men as they were at work in the woods or in the dockyard, by sniping bands of Indians and Canadians sent out by the French from Fort Niagara and from DeVilliers's camp at Sackett's Harbor to harass the work of constructing the British ships at Oswego and the other men at work on the completion of the two new forts that were going up in Oswego in that year.

A blacksmith shop with forge for making nails and iron work needed in ship construction was also erected near the "hook" along with other buildings required for storing lumber, hardware, and guns for the ships. These included a guard-house which adjoined the hospital and a new wharf along the water front near the "hook".

For safety's sake, the ship carpenters slept within the barracks of Fort Oswego. Many of them were shot and either killed or wounded in broad daylight by DeVilliers's Indians. In view of their lurking about in the woods nearby it would have been suicidal for the carpenters to attempt to sleep in structures outside the fort at night.

More Ships Built

The "Oswego" became Commodore Housman Broadley's flagship in 1755. In addition to the other ships mentioned as having been built at Oswego that summer another small schooner similar to the "Alert" was completed in 1756. It was named the "Lively". All schooners were equipped for possible operation as row-galleys, although they also carried sails.

The sloops "Oswego" and "Ontario" each were equipped with 10 guns. The schooners were equipped with 10 swivels each. The ships built in early part of 1756 were the brigantine "London" and the sloop "Mohawk" and the "Snow", (the "Halifax") not completed, which was the largest of the British ships constructed at Oswego. The "brig" was designed to carry a crew of 25 men with officers, gunners, a surgeon and others added to bring her total manpower up to 37. A second "brig" had originally been authorized, but the order was cancelled before work had been started upon her and directions were

given for building a "Snow" to replace her.

Difficulties Encountered

Endless difficulties were encountered in connection with the building of the ships, which had to be overcome. There was a constant scarcity of nails. The single forge could not turn them out fast enough to keep up with their use even though the blacksmiths worked day and night. When the forge failed all work stopped. There was a scarcity of manpower. Shirley reported that it was not to be had at Oswego for the wages of three pounds, 10 shillings per month the King offered, as much high wages were paid by the fur traders who hired help at Oswego. Supplies were held up endlessly at the Oneida "carrying place."

The "Ontario" had been launched August 24, 1755, as a schooner. No sooner was she launched, however, than General Shirley decided that she should be altered into a sloop. The change-over was completed so that the "Ontario" was again soon in commission. Broadley then reported on September 9: "She sails extremely well, and is in every respect a much better vessel than the schooner I command" (the "Oswego"). After consultations between Shirley and Broadley it was determined that the "Oswego" should also be rebuilt as a sloop by the ship carpenters already at Oswego as soon as the contemplated movement of the troops to Fort Niagara had been accomplished and the "Oswego" should have returned to her home base. However, Broadley put to sea again, October 2, after the projected expedition against Fort Niagara had been abandoned, with the "Ontario", the "Oswego" and a "schooner". Thereupon Broadley reported by letter of October 20, 1755, to Vice-Admiral Edward Boscawen at New York that "the weather was continuing so bad," and "the time for my men to be discharged being so nigh out" that he was unrigging the "Oswego" for the winter, but that he would keep the "Ontario" in commission for some longer time to meet any emergency that might come up. He also advised Boscawen that he was leaving Captain Laforey in charge of naval affairs t Oswego for the winter while, he, Broadley, would descend to New York to procure stores and seamen for the vessels at Oswego that would be ready the coming year.

Manning For Ships

The ships to be built in 1756 were originally planned to include two brigantines to carry crews of 25 men. They were to be of shallow draft as "there is but between seven and eight feet of water in the summer and fall of the year at the entrance of Oswego Harbour". The two larger ships were new ones were named the "London" and the "Halifax", and the sloop, the "Mohawk". Each was to have three commanders and two senior officers, two lieutenants, and one senior, one ammunition gunner and boatswain, a carpenter, a carpenter's mate, a midshipman, a quartermaster, and 24 seamen and a surgeon; one combination steward and clerk, a total of 36 men for each ship. Shirley changed his plan after the keel for the "London", the first brig, had been laid and decided to replace the second brig with another and larger type of ship known as "The Snow" because of her type of construction. The "snow" was to carry 18 six-pounder guns.

The "Mohawk" was to have had officers; one mate, one mid-shipman, one boatswain and gunner in one; one carpenter, one surgeon, one combination steward and clerk and 17 able seamen or 26 in all. She was built as a sloop.

The specifications for the new ships were reported by Commadore Broadley to Richard Spry, Secretary of the British Admiralty. The brigantine "London" was to be 60 feet straight rabbet; with a beam of 21 feet and a hold of

7-foot depth. The "Mohawk" was to be 45 feet long; streight rabbet; with an 18-foot beam and 7-foot depth hold.

The snow, the "Halifax's", deck length was 80 feet, 6 inches; her beam 22 feet; length of keel for tonnage, 66 feet, 10¼ inches. Her hold depth was 8 feet, 7 inches. Her fore-castle would have a clearance of 4 feet, 11 inches. Her burthen was 173 tons.

Batteauxmen Equipped To Fight

During the winter of 1755-1756 Shirley sent ship carpenters to Oswego in February to start construction of the three new British men-of-war which it had been determined should be built for service on the lake that season. They were to bear 12-pound, 16-pound and 18-pound guns respectively. He had also caused to be built at Schenectady, hundreds of batteaux to transport supplies and troops to Oswego in the spring. The batteauxmen were organized into companies of 50 men each and equipped so that they could fight, if they were attacked or their services as soldiers were needed. Colonel John Bradstreet had been designated to command them.

Commodore Housman Broadley left New York City March 20, 1756, with a sufficient number of seamen to man the ships already completed at Oswego. He stopped in Albany, to buy supplies for his Oswego ships until April 8. He then moved on to Schenectady to pick up the naval stores which he had purchased in Albany and had had sent there. He left soon afterwards for Oswego taking along the supplies intended for that part of the British fleet which had already been completed, but he could not get a sufficient number of batteaux to transport any part of the equipment he had purchased for the new ships then building at Oswego. This was because of the great need for boats to carry back food for the starving garrison at Oswego and the many recruits recently sent there. Proceeding carefully because of the danger of possible attack by hostile Indians, and his progress encumbered and retarded by the great number of boats and men accompanying him, Broadley's party did not reach Oswego until May 13. By putting out guards at the carrying places, he managed to escape any attack while enroute.

Supplies Lacking

Back at Oswego on May 28, 1756, and again on board his flagship the "Oswego", Commodore Broadley, evidently a bit put out by the tardiness of British officers in getting to him pretty much everything he had requested and needed to complete the equipping of the Oswego fleet, replied somewhat petulantly to a letter from Cleveland as follows: "I received your letter dated October 2, at Albany, on way back with an order to be particularly careful! about the goodness and prices of slops supplied to the sloop under my command which I shall take particular care whenever we are supplyed with any to obey." In the 18th century seaman's parlance "slops" were defined as "a seaman's outfit."

Having decided to add a false keel to the "Oswego", Broadley had the ship "heaved down" on her side to permit the ship carpenters to start this work. Captain LaForey had already heaved down the "Ontario" for caulking. Broadley also started men at work simultaneously fitting out the two small schooners. He advised the Admiralty under date of May 30, that he would put to sea to carry out his orders as soon as these tasks were completed.

Ship Carpenters Attacked

In the same letter, Broadley reported that the keel of the new brig the "London" had been laid, and that the keels for the other ships would be laid "in a day or two so that they will all be on the stocks together." He offered as explanation as to why work on

the new ships was not further advanced the destruction of Fort Bull, "for the builders and carpenters did not proceed any further than Fort Williams (at the Oneida Carrying Place) until we arrived there with the escort that came with us. There was some carpenters sent up in the winter, but as there was continually scalping parties about this place, they did very little. There were, the day before I got here, eight of them scalped and four carried off prisoners. The day after I got here, Lieutenant Blair and a party of 25 men that were sent to protect the batteaux coming down here was attacked about a mile from this place. Blair and two of his men were killed. We killed, it is imagined, five or six, two of which we gott. The others were carried off."

General Shirley sent from Albany in June to Oswego, 35 more seamen than were necessary to provide the complements of the "Oswego" and the "Ontario". These extra men Broadley assigned to duty on the two schooners until the other vessels on the stocks should be launched.

Broadley Sails Forth

Commodore Broadley put to sea for the first time in 1756 on June 5 when he went out with the "Ontario" sloop and the "Alert", one of the schooners. They sailed 40 leagues to the westward searching both the south and north shores of Lake Ontario in an effort to locate harbours that in an emergency would accommodate ships of the British fleet "without finding any that had sufficient depth of water even for the small schooner." However, Broadley reported: "There is very good anchoring on both sides of the lake in many places close to the shore.

"As we proceeded to the westward we found the current set to the eastward about one mile an hour and as we have very seldom anything but westerly winds, (this) makes it very difficult getting to the westward.

"I returned here on June 17, and shall sail again today (June 19) if the wind permits. The naval provisions is not yet come."

Work On Ships Lagged

Meanwhile all was not progressing satisfactorily with the construction of the new warships at Oswego. February 26, there had arrived there 40 ship carpenters from New York ready to start work on the new ships. This was not possible, however, as there were not enough men in the garrison physically strong enough to do guard duty to protect the carpenters from the shots of unfriendly Indians while they were at work in the woods. Also there were no provisions at hand with which they could be fed, although the carpenters' contract called for them to be fed.

Captain John Vickers of Shirley's (50th) regiment who was present during Montcalm's siege at Oswego reported later to the Earl of Loudon, British Commander in North America: "When I left Oswego in the spring of 1756 the garrison were pretty healthy, as it consisted mostly of recruits just come out, the men that composed the garrison in the winter being mostly dead." During the winter of 1755-1756 the garrison had suffered terribly from scurvy and insufficient food.

With the arrival of summer, the British military authorities had sent further re-enforcements to Oswego, including the celebrated engineer, Patrick McKellar, who, however, played no such part in the defense of Oswego as an inaccurate and absurd account of his alleged defense of Oswego, published in a reference work might lead one to believe.

McKellar wrote Montressor soon after his arrival at Oswego: "I intended according to his Excellency's orders to have set about repairing the most material and least costly of these defects (of

the Oswego forts) immediately after my arrival and spoke to Colonel Mercer, the commanding officer, upon that head who immediately consulted some of the principal officers. And it was agreed that as they were under no apprehensions of a siege, the work of the shipping was the most requisite to be forwarded, and that as the weakness and sickness of the garrison would not admit of them giving a sufficient number of men even for that service, the other work must be postponed until the hurry of that business should be got over." Evidently, the English officers in command at Oswego were well aware of the importance of naval control of Lake Ontario to the welfare of Oswego!

Lake's First Naval Battle

The first naval battle to take place on the Great Lakes took place off Oswego June 27, 1756, between three ships of Commodore Broadley's fleet and four warships of the French fleet. The honors of the occasion, such as they were, went to the French who captured one of the smallest and slowest ships of the British fleet, the schooner "Alert", while the two larger ships escaped to safety in Oswego harbor when the French ships gave up the pursuit.

Commodore Broadley on board the "Ontario", Captain LaForey, commanding the "Oswego", the sloops built at Oswego during the preceding summer, and Lieutenant Jasper Farmer, commander of the schooner "Alert" were cruising in Lake Ontario about 35 miles northwest of Oswego at 3:30 o'clock in the morning of June 27, sailing Southeast in the direction of Oswego, when a lookout discovered two French ships at the Northwest. Upon this, Broadley "wore and stood towards them" in the "Ontario", as he later reported to the British Admiralty. "They", continued Broadley's report, "at the same time coming down large upon us. At 4 o'clock, I saw two more sail likewise bearing down upon us. At 4:30, the two headmost being about two-thirds of a mile upon my weather bow, hall'd their wind and tack'd, clew'd their main topsails up and laid them aback. One of them hoisted a white flag at his fore topmost head, and fired two guns. The other two ships were coming down to them.

"At this time, we, plainly discovered one of them to have seven guns of a side. The other appeared to be about the same size. We saw plainly that she had eight guns mounted with ports for more but could not distinguish if there was guns mounted in them. They both appeared to be quite new.

Decide Against Battle

"At this time, I brought to and desired Captain LaForey to come on board me. Upon consulting with him and our officers, it was unanimously agreed that as they (the French) were so much superior to us it would be very imprudent to come to action with them, the whole strength of our vessels being four 4-pounders, 1 three-pounder, and ten swivels each, with the small schooner with six swivels. We with the party that we had from the garrison of Oswego had 45 men each, the small schooner 14.

"On this we bore away to the southeast, and they after us. As I found we sailed better than the small schooner, I ordered her to bear away more to the Eastward which she did for some time and then hall'd up to the Northwestward upon which the sternmost one of the French vessels gave her chase and very soon another of them stood to the Northward. The two largest followed us until near eight o'clock, one headmost of them firing several chace guns, some of the shott going over us. The headmost of them at this time wore under Captain LaForey's stern and discharged her broadside. They then stood to the

Northeast after the other two. At noon we lost sight of them. They were all four of them schooners. I can form no judgment of the strength of the two sternmost of them, they coming down end upon us, but take them to be the two vessels that they have had for some time upon the lake.

"I came in here (Oswego) last night, and the builders informed me the new sloop (the "Mohawk") will be ready to launch in four days (July 2) and the brig in eight days. I have set all the seamen to get everything ready to get them out with the utmost expedition, and hope by the time we get them rigged, the guns and sails will come up. The brig has eight ports of a side and the sloop 6."

Forts Divert Supplies

On July 7, Broadley asked for 30 more seamen to man the new ships. He also suggested that he should receive authorization to construct a new schooner to replace the "Alert" which the French had captured. The new schooner when built was named the "Lively".

He further commented: "I have great reason to believe from information I have received that many stores designed for use of the Navy have been stopped at the carrying place, for the use of the forts built and a-building there."

On July 15, Broadley recorded: "The brig ("London") and the sloop ("Mohawk") are now rigged and their sails bent, but there is still some carpenters' and smiths' work to be done on board them." "The 'Snow' will be launched in three or four days," he continued, "but there is great lack of rigging although I have endeavored to provide some.

"I shall go to sea with three of the vessels," Broadley added. He did not have guns for more.

French Ships Appear

Broadley's letter datelined Oswego, July 2, 1756, and directed to his superior, states:

"I informed you in my last of the 28th of June, of our meeting with the French on the lake the day before, since which there are batteaus arrived with sails, and six 6-pounders and 10 4-pounders and 14 swivels. The brig, and the sloop will be launched tomorrow, which I shall fit out with all possible dispatch, and distribute the cannon that is come up between them until ye others come up.

"Three of the French vessels appeared off this place in the evening of the 28th. One of them chased one of the small schooners that was out for intelligence, within three or four miles of the harbour; the other small schooner (the 'Alert') I am afraid they have taken, as I have heard nothing of her, since the day we fell in with the French vessels."

Shirley Sought To Help

General Shirley tried to expedite the dispatching of the seriously needed naval supplies from Albany to Oswego, but delay after delay occurred. The carrying place near Fort Williams at Oneida Lake was proving a bottle-neck which slowed down the arrival of needed guns, ammunition, rope, sails, etc. Commodore Broadley reported on July 2: "Captain Bradstreet has arrived from Albany with a convoy," but that no guns for the new vessels were included.

"The brig ("London") will answer very well, but the "Snow" ("Halifax") will not," Broadley added. "Nor are there either guns for her, or sails, or a sail-maker to make them of the brig's sails." The running rigging for the 'new ships' has in great measure been made use of for painters for whale boats or battoes. But one small anchor and two cables (are) here yet." He added that Bradstreet had sent word to Schenectady for the missing guns and stores. The guns needed were six 6-pounders, four 10-pounders and 14 swivels and double-headed shot.

Commodore Broadley records that on July 3, he had launched

at the Oswego dockyard, the new sloop "Mohawk" and the brig, "London", but that he was unable to go to sea with these ships until July 29. He then assumed command himself of the "London" and assigned Lieutenant William Bedlow to command the "Mohawk". Simultaneously, Lieutenant Deane was ordered to take command of the "Ontario" and Captain LaForey of the "Oswego." In order to present as impressive a front to the enemy as possible, Broadley transferred to the "London" the former crew of the "Oswego" and some of the Oswego's guns. Some of the "Ontario's" crew and guns were then assigned to the "Oswego."

Bradstreet Defeats Indians

In the meantime Colonel John Bradstreet had started back to Albany July 3, after having reached Oswego two days earlier with 600 boats loaded with cannon, food and other supplies for the British garrisons and the ship carpenters, when he was attacked six miles up the Oswego river by DeVilliers leading a large detachment of French Canadians and Indians. Ordering his boatmen to beach their boats on the west bank of the river, Bradstreet landed on a small island in the river, (now known as "Battle Island") with Lieutenant Philip Schuyler and a dozen men. After he had beaten off a larger party of Indians who waded into the river in an attempt to dislodge them, Bradstreet and his men swam the river to join his boatmen. As he had observed a large French force crossing from the East to the West side of the river a mile upstream, Bradstreet led his boatmen along the West river bank to that point and finally engaged DeVillier's men who had taken up position in a swamp along the Lake Neahtawanta outlet near the point where it enters the Oswego river.

Bradstreet there personally led his men in a charge into the pine tree swamp which then existed at that point, driving the French and Indians from it in such a panic that they threw away blankets, arms and other equipment as they fled to recross the river. Bradstreet's loss was 40 killed and 24 wounded. A French account of this battle reported that the French had killed 450 of the English and taken 40 prisoners. This account also reported the French loss as six men killed and two wounded. The French also claimed this battle as a French victory.

DeCombles Reports On Oswego

Rigaud De Vaudreuil, French commander at Three Rivers, a brother of Marquis de Vaudreuil, governor of New France, succeeded DeVilliers in command of the marauding Canadians and Indians at Sackett's Harbor on July 15, less than two weeks after this battle. Montcalm having decided to yield to governor's urging that Oswego be attacked as its capture would be of great importance to the French, DeCombles, a French engineer, was ordered from Fort Frontenac with four piquets of French regulars and a detachment of Canadians and Indians to reconnoitre the English forts at Oswego, ascertain their strength, and the degree of preparedness of the English fleet, the quantities of supplies and munitions and the morale of the Oswego garrisons. Their report made to Montcalm on their return convinced him that the time was opportune for an attack.

To mask the French plan to attack Oswego, Montcalm left Montreal with DeLevis for Fort Carillon where the French were erecting a new fort. He remained there as he recorded in his diary "only long enough to make necessary arrangements" and to "put the English on the wrong scent". Montcalm then returned to Montreal on July 19. Two days later he left Montreal for Fort Frontenac where he arrived July 29. Six days later he left with the first division of his army for Sackett's Harbour which became the rendezvous for the French troops that

were to take part in the siege of Oswego. Montcalm arrived there August 6, and his second division on August 8. With the latter came the Canadian militia and 80 batteaux of artillery including the heavy cannon which the French had captured from Braddock at Monongahela the year before.

Major Battle Impends

The army which Montcalm was leading against Oswego was the largest that had been assembled in North America up to that time, Governor Vaudreuil placing its size as "slightly in excess of 4,000 men." The siege was to bring on the first land battles in America since the declaration of the new war three months earlier. It was to prove the most important battle yet fought between the English and French for the control of North America.

Montcalm's army moved only at night to avoid detection as the commander wished, if possible, to surprise the Oswego garrison. The vanguard, under Rigaud DeVaudreuil, made up of Canadians and Indians, arrived in Oswego before midnight on August 10. At 3 o'clock the next morning DeCombles, the French engineer, became the first victim of the siege when he was shot by a French Indian who had mistaken him in the darkness for an English officer.

The wounded officer was carried to his tent where he soon died. DeCombles had been returning to the French camp after reconnoitering the terrain about Fort Ontario to determine the location for two trenches which he proposed to construct the next day along two of the sides of that fort. Captain Pouchot, French commander at Fort Niagara, with Desandrouins, another French engineer, took over the engineering plans for the remainder of the five-day siege.

Montcalm's main army had encamped about two miles east of Fort Ontario, alongside Wine Creek which flows into Baldwin's Bay, hidden from view from the Oswego forts by high bluffs which line the lake shore near that point. On one of these bluffs located in what is now St. Paul's cemetery, a battery was set up by the French during the night of August 10, its guns being in position to cover the unloading of the French transports and the ships bringing the supplies for Montcalm's army, and the artillery which was to arrive the next day. Later this battery was strengthened by the placing of additional guns as these arrived.

The Siege Opens

Early in the morning of August 11, the Canadians and Indians, who, under General Rigaud DeVaudreuil, were encamped astride Sweet Water Creek which now moves underground between the St. Regis Paper Company's machine shop division and the Taggart Bag Plant, to discharge into Lake Ontario, opened fire on Fort Ontario with small arms from tree tops and from behind bushes which covered a heights of land that then existed near the fort. The fort's defenders replied both with rifle fire and cannon shot, the cannonading continuing throughout the day.

The French Canadians and Indians worked throughout that night digging a trench which ran 600 feet from the proximity of the southeast corner of the fort to the brink of the steep bluff overlooking the lake directly north of the fort. This parallel was about 500 feet from the fort's moat or ditch. Foundations for battery emplacements were provided in the trench next day. A second trench running at right angles, roughly, to the first trench westwardly to the top of the embankment overlooking the Oswego river, was built the second night. Through this latter trench the French soldiers carried in their arms, the heavy cannon which were to constitute the battery which would turn its fire against Fort Oswego on the morning of August 14.

Delay by the British army and navy high commands in dispatching a sufficient number of cannon

for the seven-ship English navy now completed at Oswego, seamen to sail them and trained officers to command them, was to prove disasterous to the British defense of Oswego. Because of these delays, Admiral Housman Broadley, with a fleet only partially armed and manned, had been forced to put to sea on July 30 on a trial run for his fleet only a few days before Montcalm's army began moving along Lake Ontario's shore from Fort Frontenac to Sackett's Harbor. With his available cannon redistributed among his ships to make all the ships appear to the enemy as formidable as possible but with only enough guns aboard to equip properly a fleet of two thirds its size, and with officers who were inexperienced and had been promoted from the ranks of the crew by Broadley when trained officers had failed to arrive at Oswego, the English naval commander was placed at a decided disadvantage. There was not even a sufficient number of experienced seamen available to man all the ships properly.

When on the next day during a high wind storm on the lake, Broadley was out with his fleet looking for the French ships, the "Ontario" sprung its boom, and the brig "London" had her gaff carried away so that the fleet was forced to return to Oswego for repairs. On August 2, the fleet was at sea again when it was discovered that the cartridges stored on the brig by reason of their having been placed in a magazine —built of damp green lumber— were mildewed. When Broadley tried to re-enter Oswego harbor on August 5, with his fleet to effect changes that would properly protect the powder, the brig "London" ran aground inside the harbor where a storm was raging.

Upon this decision being reached, Broadley ordered Captain LaForey to return to port with the two sloops with which he was patrolling outside the harbor that day. The ships came in and at 3 p. m., were placed in the river with the other ships of the fleet in line, broadsides towards the enemy, and everything made ready for the fleet to protect the Fort Ontario garrison as it left by the French, the withdrawing troops crossed the river to Fort Oswego in safety without loss of a single man.

Montcalm Occupies Ft. Ontario

Before withdrawing from Fort Ontario during that afternoon of August 13 the English garrison had lost but three men killed during the French attacks. They spiked the cannon they had abandoned. The powder they could not carry away, they threw in the fort well. Only a wounded man too ill to be moved fell into the hands of the French.

The French discovered the evacuation and moved into the fort within an hour after the English left. Montcalm established his headquarters there. During the night, they unspiked the eight cannon abandoned in the fort by the withdrawing English and moved them to the battery erected that night in front of the fort on the crest of the embankment overlooking the river and commanding Fort Oswego. It was from this location that Montcalm's artillerymen were to open fire upon Forts Oswego and George early the next morning.

Naval Officers Confer

In the meantime as a stiff westerly wind had blown up on Lake Ontario the evening of the 13th, there was no possibility that evening for the English fleet to get out of the river to sea where it might be used next day against the enemy and would be able to escape, if worse came to worst. At this time, Broadley and LaForey asked Mercer to call the ships' officers into consultation as to the plight in which the naval ships found themselves. Mercer called the conference. It had been agreed that after the evacuation of Fort Ontario had been accom-

plished that Mercer would assign a party of soldiers from the garrison to strengthen the ships' crews and increase their firepower. If the military situation became hopeless, it was agreed, that the ships should escape to the lake as Broadley desired to do. Broadley asked, however, what was to be done if the ships could not get out because of weather conditions—whether the vessels should not be destroyed? Mercer replied that it would be time enough to do that when the English should be compelled to abandon Old Fort Oswego. Mercer, at the same time, told Broadley that he had good reason to expect the arrival speedily of reenforcements from Schenectady.

Storm Held Ships In Port

As a matter of fact, General Webb with two regiments was at that time at the Oneida Carrying place enroute to Oswego, but he was ignorant that Oswego had already been attacked and was in danger. Mercer did not know either, that the couriers he had dispatched from Oswego at night two days earlier to Webb to inform him of the situation had been captured by Montcalm's Indians sent out to prevent messengers getting away, so that no word had reached Webb of Mercer's danger.

Broadley ordered all his men aboard ship late in the afternoon of August 13, and that everything be gotten in readiness for sailing that night. The wind continued unabated, however, until nearly daylight the next morning, when, according to Broadley's official report later filed with the British Admiralty, "it came about for a short time, but (there was) so little of it, and so great a swell upon the bar (at the river's mouth) that it was impossible to get out." Broadley went then to Mercer to report that his fleet could not leave port. He was still there in conference when the French batteries, thrown up near Fort Ontario during the night, opened fire on Fort Oswego at day-break August 14.

Fleet Bottled Up

Broadley's entire fleet was bottled up inside the Oswego River, when General Rigaud de Vaudreuil, the brother of the Governor of New France, led his command in three parallel columns upstream along the East side of the Oswego river about 7 o'clock that morning. Broadley from the deck of the "London" saw the French marching upstream in a broad-sweep, and again as they began fording the Oswego river a mile above the forts at its mouth. There were rifts and shallow water in the river at that point so that the French could wade the stream. Broadley ordered the commander of the sliip "Mohawk", his ship lying in the river nearest to the fording place, to turn his ship broadside across the stream and to open fire upon the French as they struggled in the water. The "Mohawk's" cannon shot fell short of their targets, however, and the firing was soon suspended.

Broadley was preparing to defend his ships against an expected assault by the now nearly victorious French so long and as effectively as he could, and then to set fire to them to prevent their falling into the hands of the French when he was summoned to attend a Council of War called by Lieut. Col. John Littlehales who had just succeeded to the British command, Colonel Mercer having been killed. At this council the determination was reached that the English forts and the fleet should be surrendered to Montcalm to avoid needless bloodshed as the defeat of the greatly out-numbered English seemed certain eventually owning to the failure of the expected re-enforcements to arrive.

The brig was so badly damaged that it had to be heaved down on its side after its guns and ballast had been removed, so that repairs to her bottom could be effected. This was on August 9. That night

was to witness the arrival of Montcalm's advance guard at Oswego.

Fleet's Unpreparedness Costly

Had the English fleet, properly manned and supplied, been abroad during the period of August 4-8, when Montcalm was moving his army and its supplies by batteaux from Fort Frontenac to Sackett's Harbor, it would in all probability have headed off the French moving to attack Oswego, possibly have sunk their ships, caused them to turn back, or at least have compelled them to move to Oswego in a damaged condition, and beaten them off there when they moved in to unload their heavy cannon without which a successful siege would probably not have been possible.

When the French arrived at Baldwin's Bay, two miles east of Fort Ontario at night on August 9-10, Broadley was still giving attention to the repair of the damaged "London". While his fleet was yet partially out of commission Broadley sent out patrol ships daily to move East and West of Oswego to watch for enemy ships. At noon on August 11, while one of the patrol ships was reconnoitering the shore line east of Oswego, it first signaled the presence of the enemy and then returned to report that there was a large army encamped at and near Baldwin's Bay, and that the French already had a battery in place on the steep bluff facing the lake, near that bay in a position where it could protect French ships moving up to discharge cannon, shot powder, supplies and men for the Oswego siege. The battery was placed on the bluff that is today included within St. Paul's cemetery.

Ships' Fire Ineffective

On the following day, Broadley sent the "Ontario" and the new "Mohawk", two of his sloops, to shell the French camp and prevent, if possible, their boats from landing cannon and supplies. The British ships were fired upon and struck with shot from the French shore battery before they could get in close enough to the shore to permit their cannon shot to reach the battery or the French ships. When the English ships were within range of the shore battery, its elevation above the lake was such that the ships' cannon-shot passed harmlessly above the French cannon and over the heads of the French batterymen. The French ships unloading in the bay were out of range owing to the shallow water off shore. After firing a number of shots which failed to reach their targets, the English ships withdrew and returned to the Oswego harbor. When the shot fired by the French battery were recovered from the side of the "Ontario", they were found to bear the arrow mark which was the distinguishing characteristic of King George's ownership. This circumstance resulted in the identification of the French battery cannon as the guns and cannon ball which the French had captured from Braddock at Monongahela the preceding year. Captain LaForey's "Ontario" had been hit three times by the arrow-marked cannon ball.

When Broadley would have put out August 12 with his fleet to attack the French carrying along some soldiers of the garrison to add rifle fire to the power of his attack, he was ordered by Col. James F. Mercer, commander of the forts, to remain ashore pending the outcome of a Council of War on the following day to determine the form of cooperative action the navy fleet should take in connection with the defence strategy of the garrison. His presence at the council was "absolutely necessary," Mercer told Broadley.

War Council Held

Early the next morning Broadley attended the war council at Fort Oswego at which was presented a letter from Captain Barford, then in command of Fort Ontario, enclosing the minutes of a Council of War held by the of-

ficers of that fort the evening before. That council had agreed that the time was at hand when Fort Ontario should be abandoned as the enemy's parallels and earth works were very near the fort. It was argued that if abandonment of Fort Ontario was delayed until the French had their batteries completed, that opportunity for a successful withdrawal would be lost as the French would then be between Fort Ontario and the route its garrison must follow to reach boats that could transfer them across the Oswego river to Fort Oswego. When it was agreed that Fort Ontario could not hold out for any considerable period against the heavy cannon which the French had mounted in the batteries on platforms erected in the parallels, and were mounting in trenches along the bluff overlooking the Oswego river and commanding Fort Oswego, it was determined by the Ft. Oswego War Council that Fort Ontario's garrison should evacuate that fort that afternoon and join the garrison at Fort Oswego.

Fort Ontario Evacuated

When Commander Broadley raised at the war council the question, how his ships could be of most use to the garrison, the council went on record that the brig "London" should not leave port that day to bombard the enemy's forces and camp and that Broadley should order back into port his ships then on patrol duty off Oswego that the crews on all of his ships might be distributed among the forts to strengthen their several garrisons. The presence of the sailors would also be needed, it was argued, to cover the contemplated withdrawal of the garrison that afternoon from Fort Ontario.

Terrific cannonading from Fort Oswego directed against the new French batteries now in front of Fort Ontario was continuing. The English cannon fire was proving very devastating in the French trenches which had been expected to shelter the batteries and batterymen. The French fire on the other hand was creating havoc among the English soldiers in the entrenched works of the British located outside Fort Oswego's closure. In the rear of this fort walled enclosure. In the rear of this fort there were no defensive works and the defenders were completely exposed above their shoe-tops to French fire. Captain Hind of the English artillery was killed early in the day. Nine privates and an unidentified English engineer were soon wounded.

Rigaud Sheltered By Woods

Rigaud's division had turned North on reaching the West bank of the river on a road running close to the river bank. He advanced along this until he found opportunity to enter the dense woods on the west side of the river at a point about opposite the foot of West Seneca street of today. There he took up a position with his men where they could harrass the communications between Fort Oswego and Fort George and at the same time easily direct their rifle fire against the unlucky members of the Fort Oswego garrison who momentarily exposed themselves to view. From the activity being exhibited by the men at Fort George, Rigaud conjectured that a movement of some kind was being about to be made there. Rigaud's men, however, did not leave the shelter of the woods at any time or expose themselves to direct fire from the British forts. His men used only small arms and no cannon in engaging the English.

Colonel Mercer Killed

At 8 o'clock in the morning, Colonel Mercer, ranking commander of the British Oswego forces, was killed when a mortar exploded in front of Fort Oswego as he was engaged in encouraging his men in the defensive works about that fort. Others who stood near him were killed or wounded. Upon Colonel Mercer's death, the

command passed to Lieut.-Col. Littlehales. One of the latter's first orders was for the 500 men stationed at Fort George under Col. Peter Schuyler to withdraw from that fort and join the main force at Fort Oswego .The withdrawal was effected but with losses as the English were subjected to both rifle fire from Rigaud's men and cannon fire from the French batteries near Fort Ontario during the withdrawal.

The cannon of Fort Oswego had continued throughout the morning to keep up so vigorous and effective a fire upon the French batteries that the French, it was learned after the surrender, had begun to wonder how long they could maintain themselves in their new positions under it with men falling dead and wounded with every round from the English guns.

English Fire Effective

Ignorant of the telling-work being done by his own guns, at 6 o'clock in the morning of Saturday, August 14, Montcalm recorded in his diary, that he had "nine cannon then trained on Fort Oswego." His journal records further: "At that time, the English were maintaining a more brisk fire than our own."

Montcalm had 32 pieces of heavy artillery with him at Oswego, largely 12 and 18 pounders although there were several large brass mortars and hoyets which included some of Braddock's cannon. Among Montcalm's artillery that swung into early action was a fascine battery of five pieces made up of cannon left in Fort Ontario by the British. This was located just before the gate or sally-port of the fort which at that time was located on the west side of the fort overlooking both the Oswego river and Lake Ontario.

Surrender Was Unexpected

When the cannonading had opened, Montcalm was not expecting surrender on the part of the English on that day. He sent during that morning, the Bearn Regiment (Irish brigade) to "the anchorage ground" west of the river's mouth with three pieces of artillery. They had orders to land on the night of August 14, above Fort George, the move being intended to be masked from the English by the concealment the nearby woods afforded. The night landing was not carried out, however, as there was no necessity for it, when the English surrendered at noon on that same day.

After four hours of continuous cannonading that morning, upon Colonel Schuyler's arrival at Fort Oswego from Fort George, Colonel Littlehales called at once a Council of War of the field officers and the captains of the entire British force. The consensus of opinion developed at the council was that the situation was hopeless, that there was no chance left that relief forces could be gotten through to Oswego in time to be effective and that only a needless and purposeless loss of life would result if the fighting were permitted to continue. Accordingly, Littlehales issued an order for the English to cease firing.

Thereupon, Lieutenant Montcreif of Shirley's regiment and Lieutenant Cook of Pepperell's regiment, with a sergeant and drummer leading, left the works of Fort Oswego carrying a white flag. They first approached General Rigaud in the woods on the west side of the river, who sent them to Montcalm's headquarters at Fort Ontario where he said Montcalm would be awaiting them. The flag bearers retraced their steps and made a fresh start crossing the Oswego river over the bar at its mouth.

Montcalm's Comments

How needless the decision reached by the British Council of War was at the time it was reached, is indicated by an entry made in Montcalm's diary to the effect that the British had had the bet-

ter part of the cannon-interchange up to that time. He continued "The celerity of our operations in a soil which they considered impracticable, the erection of our batteries completed with so much rapidity, the idea these works gave them of the number of the French troops, the movement of the corps detached from the other side of the river, the cries of the savages, the death of Colonel Mercer—doubtless determined the besieged to a step which we had not dared to expect so soon."

Montcalm dictated surrender terms which were accepted and signed by Col. Littlehales, the British flag was lowered over the forts and replaced by the French.

Montcalm named Bourlamaque commander of Forts Oswego and George, to take possession of them with two companies of grenadiers and the picquets from the trenches. The new commander was directed to destroy the English forts and to remove the artillery, munitions of war, and the provisions found there.

Montcalm's Report

"There were, on our side only about 30 men killed or wounded," says Montcalm's Journal. "On that of the English about 150," he continues, "including several soldiers who wishing to escape across the woods fell into the hands of the Indians. The number of prisoners were nearly 1,700 men*; to wit two regiments, arrived from Old England and who were at the battle of Fontenoy, a detachment of Schuyler's regiment, militia of the country, about 80 officers, among whom were two artillery, two engineers, and 12 navy officers. We captured also 7 vessels of war; one of 18 guns, one of 14, one of 10 and one of 8; three mounted with patereros, 200 barges or batteaux, 8 pieces of bronze cannon, 48 of iron, 14 mortars, 5 howitzers, 47 patereros, a quantity of bullets, bombs, balls, powder, and a considerable pile of provisions."

On the 21st of August the forts all having been demolished, the ships of the fleet burned except for those saved to be used as transports, the prisoners, the artillery, and supplies being removed, the French army reembarked and repaired in three divisions to the Bay of Niaroure (Sacketts Harbor) whence the several corps proceeded to their respective destinations, the savages having with Montcalm's permission, departed successively after the siege.

Huge Munitions Seizures

"So much munitions of war and provisions found at Chouaguen, the fleet which secured the command on Lake Ontario to the English, the additional reinforcements they expected from day to day—all announced designs on their part against the French posts, Frontenac and Niagara, the execution of which was calculated on this Autumn and the danger of which the colony, very fortunately had not to incur." Thus Montcalm had advised his official superiors following the siege.

The Abbe Picquet came to Oswego from La Presentation (Ogdensburgh) shortly after Montcalm's departure to plant a cross on Montcalm's battlefield on which was affixed: "In hoc signe Vincent." Alongside o fthe cross he caused a pole to be erected with the arms of the French King and this inscription: "Manibus date lilia plenis".

Most of the prisoners of war taken at Oswego, including the nearly 200 navy officers and seamen, were soon thereafter sent by ships from Montreal to France where they were held until exchanged or their release at the termination of the war. Among them was Francis Lewis of New York City who later was to be-

* The Paris documents report 82 women and girls were taken prisoners at Oswego. Of these many were officers' wives, and three or four were wives of mechanics or soldiers.

come a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Blames Shirley's Successors

In a paper read before the Royal Society of Canada in 1914 by W. Lawson Grant on "The Capture of Oswego in 1756," the author places the blame for the fall of the English forts at Oswego upon the failure of General William Shirley's three successors in the British high command in the summer of 1756 to realize the importance to the successful defense of Oswego of prompt action on their part in equipping and manning of the British fleet that had already been completed at Oswego in accordance with plans and preparations that had been made by Shirley in 1755 and advanced in 1756 to the point where they were about ready for execution, when Shirley was abruptly replaced by a series of British officers, each recently arrived in North America and ignorant of conditions and of the needs of Oswego's defence.

"The English had knowledge of the concentration of French troops at Fort Frontenac (Kingston) and of the existence of the French camp under Captain DeVilliers at Niaroure Bay (Sackett's Harbor) weeks in advance of Montcalm's arrival before Oswego," Grant continues. "Colonel Mercer had written to General Shirley at Albany on July 22, that he had learned through an Indian prisoner that the French 'design to attack us the next moon.' "

Advised Of French Plans

Col. Mercer had also told Shirley that he had learned from the Indians and his own scouts of the presence of the French army under Captain DeVilliers at Niaroure Bay (Sackett's Harbor). Throughout that spring and summer, DeVilliers's raiding parties frequently harassed the Oswego forts. Mercer added that he was doing all that he could "to place Oswego in a state of defence, giving out stores and rum taken, even against orders, from the stores of traders, and without compensation to them." Mercer concludes: "The 'Snow' is launched, a fine vessel, and had we sailors, guns, and rigging, I am in great hopes we might command the lake."

The English ships sent out of Oswego Harbor on August 11, to harass the French camps and if possible to prevent landing of the artillery, were driven off by the fire of the small French fleet and the shore battery. "Why," asks Grant, "had athese vessels not reconnoitred the camp at Frontenac and Niaroure Bay and brought word of the propositions? Why had they not pounded to pieces the light batteaux as they scattered along the coast?

"The more we read of the French advance, the more we see that Montcalm was extremely apprehensive. In his orders he gives the most minute instructions on what is to be done with the batteaux and the land force should a sail appear, and the signals which are to be made by the French fleet whenever they came into touch with their own forces or with the enemy.

"Reading the siege with this in mind, it becomes evident that Oswego was lost not only owing to the superior generalling of Montcalm and the superior spirit and gallantry of his troops, but owing to the loss of Fort Ontario," comments Grant. "The men might have been marched through the woods, but without naval supremacy, the heavy guns which were essential to success, could not have been transported. As Captain Vickers had said: 'Fort Ontario could be taken with small arms only by 10.000 men.' "

Shirley Saw Need

Shirley, who commanded the English forces in North America early in 1756 saw the importance to the English of their gaining and keeping control of Lake Ontario. At a Council of War at Oswego, September 18, 1755, the matter had been discussed as to whether it would not be advisable

for the English to prepare materials at Oswego the ensuing winter, and, build as soon as possible, one or more vessels of a larger size than any already built, and also two more row-gallies and 100 good whale boats. The council immediately agreed that "the building of the vessels proposed by his excellency is highly necessary!"

At another Council of War held in New York City, December 13, 1755, Shirley pointed out that "while the French were in possession of Fort Frontenac and the harbor there with a free passage into Lake Ontario, together with their harbor at Toronto, they will have it in their power to build and maintain vessels of fire upon the lake, which, unless His Majesty shall keep up at least an equal force there, may not only greatly damage any fort which should be erected at the north end of the pass at Niagara, but endanger the loss of Oswego itself to the French, which would inevitably be attended with the defection of the several castles of the Indians of the Six Nations to the French interest in a short time, and with the loss of that whole country as far as Schenectady."

New York Council's Support

Shirley advised the council that word had arrived that the French were building at Cadarque that winter of 1755-1756 at least, three large vessels which together with and those already built, would be found superior to those built by the English at Oswego the preceeding summer. He asked the advice of the council as to whether more English ships should be built upon the lake, and if so, how many vessels it is necessary to have built to gain custody of the lake?

The council gave it as their own unanimous opinion:

"1st—That it is most absolutely necessary at all events to secure the navigation of Lake Ontario, and from the intelligence the general has already received of vessels building by the enemy at Fort Frontenac, that at least three vessels be built immediately at Oswego, of as large a size and force as the depth of the water at the entrance of the harbor of Oswego will permit, and that on any future intelligence of enemy's increasing their naval force, that the general should build such and so many more vessels as he finds necessary for securing the mas-

Shirley had informed Fox under date of May 7, 1756, that Captain Housman Broadley, the commanding officer of the vessels built at Oswego the preceeding year, had gone from New York to Oswego "with a sufficient number of sailors to fit them out as soon as possible; also that 100 ship-carpenters had gone to Oswego to build three new ships, 30 of which have been at work on them about five months and the stores for them scattered all along the way to Oswego."

The carpenters were also to build 250 whale-boats, each of which would carry 16 men, for navigation of the lake during the new season which Shirley expected to utilize to take Fort Niagara and also, if possible, Fort Frontenac at Kingston.

Ship Completion Stressed

When the carpenters arrived at Oswego early in the Spring of that year, however, they could not work regularly as there were no guards to protect them from unfriendly Indians while they were at work, and no food for them to consume, although it was a part of their contract that food should be provided.

Colonel Mercer consulted his officers, however, and as they agreed Oswego was not likely to undergo a siege in that year, that the work of completion of the ships and equipping them was the most requisite to be provided, it was determined that other work (such as completing Fort George) should be postponed until the work on the ships had been accomplished.

Shirley at Albany during the summer of 1756 endeavored to

hurry forward the supplies needed for completing and equipping the new ships at Oswego but one delay after another ensued especially at the bottle-neck at the "carrying place" at the head of Oneida Lake. Colonel Bradstreet left Schenectady in June with a convoy carrying supplies to Oswego, but there were no cannon among them, not even for the "Snow", the largest and last of the ships under construction at Oswego. There were no nuts available at Oswego. The rigging ropes had beeen used to make anchor ropes for the whale-boats. The blacksmiths with only one forge had to work night and day to supply wires and other ironwork needed for the ships.

Shirley Superceded

Meanwhile Shirley had been succeeded in command of the land forces of the English on the Continent of North America, by Webb, who gave way soon to Abercromby, who a few weeks later handed over the command to the Earl of Loudon. Each commander seemingly spent his time not in providing the badly needed men and supplies for Oswego, but in explaining what he had done and why, to his successor. The result was that neither the sailors needed to operate the ships, the cannon to arm them, nor the rigging to equip them, nor the officers to command them reached Oswego which fell largely in consequence of these circumstances.

Shirley, after the fall, pleaded with Lord Barrington at the English war offices for an investigation to place the responsibility for Oswego's fall. As his whole defense, when the probe was finally arranged, indicates, he knew where the blame lay. His principal argument was that had the ample naval supplies which he had provided been rushed to Oswego, the ships could have been gotten ready in time to head off Montcalm's attack and render Oswego unassailable. The blame for this sitaution, Shirley placed on Webb because of his slowness at the Carrying Place when he was advancing with reenforcements and supplies for Oswego. Webb does not seem to have prepared or left any answering document.

Webb, learning at Wood Creek through fleeing survivors of the fall of Oswego, turned his men about and hurried back to Schenectady not even approaching Oswego to familiarize himself with conditions there which became the subject of many wild rumors following the departure of the French.

Shirley Fixes Blame

In a letter to Fox written September 16, 1756, Shirley says: "At the time of the French attack on Oswego, it was deprived of the naval armament necessary for its protection by Captain Bradstreet's being left with the battoes and battoemen at Schenectady from the 11th of July to the 12th of August; for if the 20 pieces of cannon, which lay at the Carrying Place, and the battoemen had been at Oswego by the 1st of August, which would have been the case, had it not been for that delay, our naval force might have been upon the lake, and prevented the embarkation, of at least the landing, of the French with their cannon and stores near Oswego whereas for want of their 20 pieces of cannon two of our best vessels were without any, consequently could not appear in the lake, and without their assistance and that of our whaleboats and battoemen, or at least such a part of them as was necessary for manning the whaleboats, our other vessels were not strong enough for the enemy!"

Governor Morris' Views

Under date of October 8, 1756, Robert Hunter Morris, who had then just retired from the governorship of Pennsylvania, wrote from Philadelphia, to Governor Horatio Sharpe of Maryland a letter from which the following is quoted: "All designs of acting offensively seem to be laid aside for

this year, and I do not know that we shall have as many men next summer as we had this, unless the New England governments are better pleased than I imagine they have had any reason of late to be. The loss of Oswego I esteem a very fatal blow to the British interest on this continent, and must be owing to the alteration made in the Plan of Operations settled at New York which with great submission to better judgments, I think could not be changed but for the worse. I find the New York scheme is to lay blame of that affair upon General Shirley, but how just their censures are the following facts will show:

General Webb arrived at New York June 7th.

Gen'l Abercromby arrived June 15th.

Both arrived at Albany June 25th.

"On the 26th of June, General Shirley acquainted General Abercromby of the state of Oswego and advised sending two battalions there.

"Bradstreet returned to Albany from Oswego on the 12th of July having thrown into Oswego six month's provisions for 5,000 men, and a great quantity of ammunition and naval stores, and defeated a party of French and Indians on his way back; and on the same 13th of July informed General Abercromby that he had intelligence from his prisoners, that a French army was in motion and designed to attack Oswego; whereupon the 44th Regiment was ordered to hold itself in readiness to march to Oswego.

Lord Loudoun arrived at New York July 23.

He arrived at Albany July 29.

"On the 12th of August the 44th Regiment moved towards Burnet's field, with a number of battoe-men who had remained idle at Schenectady from the 11th of July and on the 19th of August, General Webb then at Burnet's field, received the news of Oswego's being taken, upon which he marched to the Oneida's carrying place and ordered the Wood Creek to be filled with trees, which was accordingly very effectually stopped.

"I mention these facts that you might be satisfied of the truth with respect to that important loss."

Benjamin Franklin's view as to the responsibility for the loss of Oswego was equally favorable to Shirley.

Factors Contributory To Fall

Aside from the failure of the British high command to act promptly and efficiently during the summer of 1756 in getting the necessary equipment, armament and manpower to Oswego to place the British fleet in a position to act effectively in warding off Montcalm's expected attack upon the Oswego forts, the following additional factors contributed in some degree to the fall of Oswego forts:

The three successive shifts in the command of the British forces in North America made during that summer which tended to slow-down, even paralyze, effective and necessary action to meet the emergency.

The tardiness with which reenforcements were sent forward to the Oswego garrisons even weeks after it became known that the French planned to attack Oswego that summer. Webb's relief force never even reached Oswego!

The fact that the British engineers who designed the Oswego forts and their defences had believed that it would be impossible for an enemy to get heavy cannon through the wilderness that then surrounded Oswego for use in attacking the Oswego forts with the result that the forts' works were built only sufficiently strong to resist four-pound cannon balls whereas through the use of boats and the waters of Lake Ontario, the French had been able to bring into action 12-pound cannon and even larger cannon, against those forts.

Poor leadership on the part of the commanders of the English

forts which resulted in the concentration of all the defending forces towards the end of the siege in Fort Oswego thereby placing the French in a position to occupy Forts Ontario and George both of which commanded Fort Oswego which stood on lower and exposed ground. Fort Oswego had no defensive works on its northern and eastern sides as Fort Ontario had been erected to provide defense for it in these directions, and yet Colonel Mercer had seen fit to give it up without any properly sustained effort having been made to defend it. After Mercer's death, Colonel Littlehales who succeeded to the command, had repeated Mercer's mistake by calling into Fort Oswego the British troops which yet held Fort George. The British were now concentrated in a single position surrounded on all sides by an enemy who could now center all his efforts and his superiority in manpower of nearly three-to-one, upon a single target.

The disorganization of the British command which followed Mercer's sudden removal, the belief that the relief force could not get through in time to be of effective help, and the realization that the defenders were far outnumbered by the attacking army —a concept which Montcalm had sought to emphasize through the tactics which he adopted by deploying spectacularly Rigaud's attacking force in three columns, and by further movements, effected by his troops in plain view of the English garrisons, his swift erection of his batteries, and the simultaneous presence of French troops in so many parts of the far-flung battle area which covered an area of three miles along the lake and river fronts on that morning of August 14.

Alvin Bronson, A First Citizen of Oswego

(Paper Given Before the Oswego County Historical Society by Mr. F. Hosmer Culkin of the Oswego County Bar Association on May 15, 1951.)

Alvin Bronson came to Oswego in 1810 when it was a small hamlet of not more than 300 persons, known only for its strategical military importance. For the next fifty years he was unquestionably the dominant personality of the community.

On his death at the advanced age of ninety-eight years, a memorial resolution was passed by the Oswego Board of Trade, of which he had been one of the founders and the first president. This resolution stated in part: "In the life just closed there was much to arrest our attention, much to engage our thoughts. Integrity, benevolence, strong intellectuality, unbending purpose, serenity of temper, were among its chiefest characteristics".

I believe that a study of Bronson's life proves this to have been an accurate and just description of the man.

Early Years

Alvin Bronson was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, on May 19th, 1783, the second son of Josiah and Tabitta Tuttle Bronson. His father apparently was a farmer, and in his early years, he tells us in a short autobiography he wrote in 1858, that he worked on the farm during spring and summer months and went to school during the winter. This was, of course, the usual practice for farm boys in rural America during colonial and early times. At the age of 13 he spent 12 months in the family of a Captain Isaac Bronson, being employed as a shop or errand boy in a small country store. It was his first contact with the world of commerce, and, from that time, with virtually no interruptions, he spent the next 62 years in commercial pursuits. However, he did have enough spare time as a boy to become interested in a small juvenile library which was available to him, and he tells us that, as a result of this contact with literature, he contracted a fondness for reading which remained with him for the rest of his life.

Federalist In Politics

His political thinking during his early years was influenced by Captain Bronson, who was a vigorous Federalist or supporter of the Washington and Adams administrations. Bronson himself was a Federalist during his early years, as we shall later see.

The next two or three years were spent clerking in a store owned by a Mr. Terrell in Salem, Connecticut. Bronson's education was completed when he attended for a quarter the select school of one, Esquire Morris of Litchfield South Farms, Connecticut, which was followed by a year studying with his clergyman, Rev. Ira Hart. Following this period, like so many other of our early leaders, he taught for a period of three months in a small district school at Woodbridge, Connecticut.

But apparently the desire to reenter the world of trade was still with him, for, at the age of 18, he accepted a clerkship in a store in New Haven, where he remained for 18 months. Following this period, he and a friend, Joseph Clark, formed a connection with the firm of W. Isaac and Kneeland Townsend, Merchant Tailors, and Gilette & Townsend, West India shippers, and went into business in Long Wharf in New Haven. This connection with the

Townsends, which was formed about 1801 or 1802, continued for about twenty years, and into his early period in Oswego.

Clark and Bronson's handling of their portion of this business was so prosperous that, in three or four years, they refused to continue on the original basis, and they apparently severed the connection, at least on its former basis.

Ship Wrecked Off Hatteras

The two young men, together with Gilette and Townsend, then entered into a new venture. In connection with the new business, Bronson went to Charleston, South Carolina, with a schooner "Antelope" owned by Gilette and Townsend. While on the way, the schooner ran into a three-day gale and was wrecked between Cape Fear and Cape Hatteras. The resourceful Bronson then purchased from the underwriters the salvage of this vessel, together with three others that were wrecked in the same storm, and built a brig and schooner on the Carolina coast. These vessels were designed to be used in the West India trade. The schooner made several voyages but the brig never was able to venture forth due to the embargo imposed by President Jefferson at that time in an effort to keep American shipping free from the involvements of the European war between Great Britain and France.

Later, when the embargo was repealed, Bronson's schooner was captured by the French, a fact which Bronson learned when he was in the West Indies as supercargo on another vessel. The confused state of world affairs at that time is revealed by the fact that, after the French had condemned Bronson's schooner, and had sold it because it had been bound for a British port, the ship was later captured by the British and condemned and sold for having been to a French port.

By this time Bronson was 27 years old and his shrewd handling of business affairs had so impressed Jacob Townsend, one of the partners in Gilette & Townsend, that Townsend proposed that he and Bronson unite in attempting to exploit the coasting trade on the Great Lakes. They both apparently assumed that shipping on the Great Lakes would be free from the aggravating obstacles imposed on commerce on the Atlantic by the orders in council of Great Britain and the Berlin and Milan decrees of Napoleon.

Comes To Oswego

Therefore in 1810 Bronson, together with Sheldon Thomson, a shipmaster, and a group of ships' carpenters, proceeded to Oswego Falls on the Oswego River. In a speech made on February 24th, 1852, on the occasion of a presentation of a silver service to the Rev. R. W. Condit, D. D., pastor of the Oswego First Presbyterian Church, Bronson describes his arrial at Oswego as follows:

"The road by which I approached the lake, at the breaking up of winter, was so impracticable that I was compelled to abandon it for an Indian canoe at Three River Point, and allow my ship carpenters to lead my pack horses to the Falls. I had been accustomed to the rude Atlantic, with a good ship under me, but here was a novelty; I found myself in a cockle shell, deeply laden with iron and carpenters' tools, plunging down the rapids of the Oswego river upon a winter flood, with a strip of birch bark only between me and strangulation. I appealed to John, my Indian conductor, for his opinion of the safety of our voyage, who replied somewhat slyly, there was not much danger, though if he touched a rock he might lose the iron and the Yankee; but my aboriginal navigator, with his cool head, quick eye, and strong arm, soon restored me to confidence and ease."

Builds Schooner At Fulton

At Oswego Falls, from the virgin timber, they cut the frame for a schooner of 100 odd tons on the

site of the present city of Fulton. After the construction of the schooner, later christened the "Charles and Ann", was well on its way, Bronson made his first visit to Oswego, then, as he tells us in the above speech "a hamlet of perhaps a dozen humble structures, a part of them the primitive log house". Bronson was not the first person to conduct a forwarding business in Oswego. At that time there were at least two other men, Matthew McNair and Archibald Fairfield, who owned schooners and apparently carried on a forwarding business in Oswego. However, in a very short time Townsend, Bronson & Company had established itself as by far the largest shipper or forwarder of goods on Lakes Erie and Ontario.

The Townsend-Bronson enterprise was apparently greatly expedited by the fact that they were operating in conjunction with General and Judge Porter and Major Barton who had a lease on the portage around Niagara Falls. This was of course some 20 years prior to the building of the Welland Canal. As a result, they were able to carry their commerce into Lake Erie, and possibly into the upper lakes, although I have found no statement to that effect.

Establishes Oswego Store

They also were successful due to the fact that the partnership had a joint capital of some $14,000.00, and with these funds quickly built two vessels, and established stores at Oswego and Lewiston. The Oswego store and warehouse was built on what is now the north-east corner of West First and Cayuga Streets. Bronson continued all of his operations in Oswego from that locality for the rest of his life.

Captain Thomson, the shipmaster who had come up with Bronson, left for Lewiston soon after their arrival in Oswego, and established a store at that place.

The trade of Oswego in those years before the war of 1812 consisted mainly of the shipments of salt from the area of what is now known as Syracuse and what articles could be brought up from the coast. They also carried some settlers to the areas further west and, on the return voyage, carried back to Oswego principally furs and some other products of the frontier.

War Of 1812

But this prosperous enterprise did not continue long without the interruption of war. On June 18, 1812, its patience exhausted by the depredations on American shipping in the Atlantic, Congress declared war on Great Britain. While troubles which had beset commerce on the seaboard, and from which Bronson had endeavored to escape in 1810 had not affected commerce on the Great Lakes, that area was immediately plunged into the rigors and vicissitudes of armed conflict. The Fort at Oswego which had been allowed to fall into decay after its surrender by the British in 1796, was re-garrisoned and there were all sorts of plans for strengthening the defences of our northern frontier both by fortresses and by the building of warships on the lakes.

All of the available shipping on the lakes apparently was purchased by the government, including Townsend & Bronson's schooner, the "Charles and Ann". Her name was changed to the "Governor Tompkins" and she was converted into a ship of war. Bronson himself offered his services to the Government, although he was at that time a Federalist, and, in fact, not too sympathetic with the war. This led some persons in the little village to object to giving him any position of responsibility. He however was finally appointed Military Storekeeper for Oswego, and later became Naal Storekeeper, positions which he held for the duration of the war. Matthew McNair, the other prominent forwarder of Oswego, was appointed Commissary of Subsistence.

For the first two years of the conflict there was no direct attack on the little port of Oswego, and the war in the Lake Ontario area was one mainly of attrition, consisting principally of attacks on enemy shipping by both sides. For instance, in November 1812, the schooner "Julia", formerly owned by McNair, and the "Governor Tompkins", engaged the land batteries at Kingston and, following that, the two above named schooners and another chased the British ship "Simcoe" of twelve guns on a reef of rocks, and so riddled her with shot that, when this vessel finally returned to Kingston, she sank in the harbor. From that time until ice closed in the port of Kingston, the "Tompkins" and three other gunboats blocked that port. Bronson himself described the war on the lakes as one of shipbuilders. When the British had more ships afloat, they dominated the lakes. When the Americans would catch up with them, they in turn would be able to sweep the enemy from the lakes.

In the meantime Bronson was busily engaged in caring for the stores which were shipped to Oswego by way of the Mohawk River and Oneida Lake. These supplies were principally to be used for the building of the frigate "Superior" at Sackett's Harbor. In the spring of 1814 a large number of guns and naval stores had been brought to Oswego Falls where they were held awaiting shipment to Sackett's Harbor. There was also a large amount of stores at Oswego in Bronson's custody. The British apparently learned of this concentration of materials in the Oswego area and determined to attack the port of Oswego.

British Capture Ft. Ontario

The District Quartermaster, in anticipation of an attack on Oswego, directed Bronson to stop all supplies coming down the Oswego River at Oswego Falls, and also to send all that he had on hand in Oswego to Fort Niagara or Sackett's Harbor, and to conceal the rest. Bronson carried out these orders, and apparently was able to despatch a considerable amount of material by lake to the forts at Niagara and Sackett's Harbor, and also to conceal most of the rest of it in the woods around Oswego, prior to the British attack. The British fleet of eight men of war and several gunboats and smaller craft, in all 11 ships, carrying some 222 guns and 1,000 soldiers, under Admiral Sir James Lucas Yeo, and Lt.-General George Gordon Drummond, arrived off Oswego on May 5th, 1814. After an unsuccessful attack on May 5, the British captured Fort Ontario on May 6, as Colonel Mitchell, the Post Commander, expeditiously withdrew his small garrison into the interior in order to protect the stores at Oswego Falls.

When Bronson, who was standing on the west bank of the river, saw that Fort Ontario had fallen, he scuttled his schooner, the "Syren" which was loaded with stores. He also was fired at himself by British soldiers, who were at that time on the east side of the river, one bullet missing him by two feet and hitting the end of his warehouse. The redcoats were apparently firing at the warehouse because the laborers employed by Bronson were seen to be destroying what few supplies were still stored there. Despite this, Bronson continued this operation. The British troops together with Admiral Yeo and General Drummond soon came ashore and stopped any further activity on the part of the Americans. They immediately commenced a thorough search for the supplies which were supposed to be so plentifully present, but all they could find were 1,200 barrels of hard bread, some whiskey, and a few other provisions.

Yeo Threatens Bronson

The failure to find the unlimited booty which he had anticipated would result from the capture of Oswego, made Admiral

Yeo, famous in the British Navy for a villianous temper, very angry. He accosted Bronson whom he saw on the dock and asked him to provide a pilot to guide the British ships, which were being loaded, out of the river. Bronson stated that, as a result of the attack, there were no pilots now present in Oswego. Later the Admiral learned that Bronson was the Military and Naval Storekeeper. He sent for Bronson and the following conversation ensued.

"You are the public storekeeper here?"

"Yes sir".

"Now sir, I want you to tell me all about the public stores; what have been sent to Sackett's Harbor and Niagara, if any; what have been detained at posts in the rear; and what, if any, are concealed in the vicinity. If you will give me full and correct information on these points, you can remain here. If not, you will be taken a prisoner to Quebec".

"Well, Sir James, my books and papers have been sent away for safety. I do not think I could give you this information if I would, and I am sure it would be inconsistent with my duty for me to do so if I could".

"I have nothing to do with your duty. All I have to say is—if you give me the information I want correctly—you can stay. If not, you go to Quebec".

"Very well, sir", replied the faithful storekeeper, "that settles it. I will go to Quebec".

Bronson then asked leave to get his trunk or some clothes but when he arrived at his room, he found, as he later expressed it, "Jack Tar had been ahead of me, and neither clothes nor books were to be found".

He was taken aboard the "Prince Regent", one of the British ships, and that night, while on board the ship, Major General Sir George Drummond went after him in the following manner:

"So you are the public storekeeper, are you? You are a pretty damned son of a ..... ! You said there were no stores concealed, and now we have found cannon sunk at your own wharf".

"I did not say so, Sir George", replied Bronson. "I said that my books and papers were gone, which was true, and that it would not be proper for me to give any information concerning the stores even if I could".

At this reply, the general glared at him and then shouted "Damn you. You ought to be strung up to the yard arm".

Oswegonians Made Prisoners

Four other Oswegonians were taken captive by the British Fleet when they left Oswego that evening. They were Abram D. Hugunin, William Squires (both volunteer riflemen), Eli Stevens, and Carlos Colton, a lad fourteen years of age, who was Bronson's clerk. Young Colton was not taken aboard the "Prince Regent", the vessel on which Bronson was held captive. After leaving Oswego the British told him that Bronson had related to them in great detail where the stores were hidden. The lad, who apparently knew his master well, replied "I don't believe a word of it", and refused to reveal any of the vitally important information.

On May 7, the fleet sailed back to Kingston. Colonel Harvey of the British Army, who apparently was bred in its better tradition. apologized to Bronson before he went ashore, for the conduct of Sir James Yeo and Sir George Drummond.

After landing at Kingston, Bronson was kept in the guardhouse for a day or so. He, however, had a friend in the town who supplied him with money for his needs and apparently he was given the freedom of the town. When the British fleet set forth again to blockade Sackett's Harbour for two weeks, the prisoners were kept on shipboard. Finally they were dismissed one at a time and sent home. Bronson was released on the representation of Commodore Chauncey, who was in

command of American Naval operations on the Lake, that he was only a merchant in charge of public property. Upon his release he asked the British if they would let him take with him the chair in which he had been hoisted aboard the "Prince Regent". This request was granted, and he returned to Oswego with the chair. He used the chair for the rest of his life, and it is now in the possession of the Oswego Historical Society.

Helped Lay Out Falls

This incident apparently brought to a close Bronson's active participation in the war. In 1824 the Federal Government finally paid Bronson $3,000.00 for the loss of his schooner, the "Syren" and any of his supplies which were on board at the time she was scuttled. In 1815 Bronson, along with two other gentlemen, was appointed a Commissioner to lay out lots at Oswego Falls for the future village.

With the end of hostilities the firm of Townsend, Bronson & Co. re-entered the forwarding business with all of the vigor and zest that its junior partner always seems to have possessed. In 1815 he married Mary O'Connor, daughter of Captain Edward O'Connor of Oswego. Captain O'Connor had been an officer in the Revolution. He was among the troops commanded by Col. Marinus Willett in the abortive effort to capture Fort Ontario in 1783. He had returned to Oswego as a schoolmaster in 1796, and was one of the very first settlers in the little town. One of his other daughters married John Haines Lord, first publisher of the "Oswego Palladium". Mr. and Mrs. Bronson had three children, Ellen, Edwin Townsend, and Cecelia. Edwin died in 1880, approximately a year prior to his father's death. Cecelia married John L. McWhorter, son of George H. McWhorter, Collector of the Port of Oswego, and one of the most prominent early citizens of the village. Ellen, his only survivor at the time of his death, married Leander Babcock, a prominent Oswego attorney around the middle of the 19th century and also a member of Congress.

Political And Public Life

Bronson was a political figure of considerable importance in the 20-year period following the war of 1812. In so far as I have been able to determine, the first public office to which he was elected was that of Commissioner of Common Schools. He was elected to that post at the first Town Meeting of the Town of Oswego which was held at the schoolhouse in Oswego village on May 5, 1818.

It must be remembered that at this time the County of Oswego was but newly formed, having been created by act of the legislature in 1816. The area surrounding Oswego had sent no representatives to the State Legislature prior to this time, and it was not until 1819 when Colonel Theophilus S. Morgan of Oswego was elected to the Assembly that Oswego County as such had any representation in the State law making body. Colonel Morgan, incidentally, subsequently was a partner of Bronson in the construction and operation of the first sizeable flour mill in Oswego. Representation in the State Legislature was particularly important to the people of Oswego County at this time due to the fact that the burning issue of the day in the Oswego River Valley was the proposed route of the Erie Canal.

Urged Oswego Route

The Oswegonians contended that the canal should be built so as to have its western terminus at Oswego. Their argument was that "The Oswego Route" was the natural route, and that the canal should run substantially as the improved portion thereof now runs between Albany and Oswego. There was no question but that, prior to the construction of the Erie Canal, the main water route west was up the Mohawk River

from Albany to a short canal built by the Inland Lock Navigation Company across the former portage between the Mohawk and Wood Creek, thence down Wood Creek to Oneida Lake, and so on to Oswego. The Inland Lock Navigation Company had also made improvements in the Mohawk, Oneida, Seneca and Oswego Rivers. Commerce along the canal was carried by the traditional Durham boats, which had been used since the days of the French and Indian war.

Fight Made For Canal

Therefore it was with considerable misgiving and consternation that the people of Oswego learned in 1817 that the Legislature had authorized the condemnation of the Inland Lock Navigation Co.'s property and its purchase by the State for $300,000.00, and also of the legislation authorizing the construction of the Erie Canal. In fact indignation reigned rampant in Oswego for several years on this issue. Even after it had been definitely decided that the canal would proceed direct to Lake Erie, responsible citizens in Oswego, led by Bronson, who was apparently the main driving force behind the movement, exerted every influence to have the construction of the canal stop at the Seneca River and continue down the Oswego River to Lake Ontario.

We are told that the early issues of the "Palladium", which, unfortunately, during the time that this paper was being prepared, were unavailable, are filled with articles stating Oswego's position on this issue. Most of these articles were written by Bronson. It was stated that it took six days to go from Salina to Buffalo by way of Oswego, and that it was estimated that it would take eight days to go between the two points by way of the proposed canal. In 1820, Daniel Tompkins, who was opposed to the construction of the Erie Canal, polled 455 votes in Oswego County in the general election against 311 for Governor Dewitt Clinton, who was probably its leading proponent. Nevertheless Governor Clinton was reelected and by 1825 the Erie Canal had been completed.

Bronson Fought On

Oswego then turned its attention to the construction of a branch of the Erie Canal down the Oswego River. Bronson also was the leader in this fight, and, through his efforts, which included numerous trips to Albany, the 1820 legislature authorized the expenditure of $25,000.00 for improvements to navigation on the Oswego River. Due to later deelopments, this money was never expended.

In 1822 Bronson, without his own knowledge, was nominated for a two-year term as member of the State Senate from the Fifth Senatorial District, campaigned as a Bucktail, or anti-Clinton Republican, and was elected at the November election. Apparently, between 1812, when he was accused of being a Federalist by those who did not wish to have him appointed to be storekeeper, and 1822, he had a change of political heart. Perhaps that was in part induced by the fact that by 1822 the Federalist Party had practically gone out of existence in the United States, and we were in the midst of the so-called "era of good feeling" during which the Democratic-Republicans, the party of Jefferson, were the sole political party in the nation.

Canal Survey Authorized

As would be expected, Bronson's main interest while a member of the Senate in 1823 and 1824 was in the promotion of the Oswego Canal project. I have not seen all the speeches or papers which he composed on this subject, but, judging from the materials which he produced at a later period, they were no doubt well reasoned, thorough, and yet embellished with a certain vigor and force so necessary in papers of this sort. In 1823 the legislature, at the be-

hest of Senator Bronson, passed an Act which directed the Canal Commissioners to make a survey of the Oswego River from the head of the falls to Oswego, and to report on the same with probable expense of building the canal from Salina to Lake Ontario, to the next session of the legislature. The expense of this survey was paid out of the $25,000 which had been previously appropriated for improvements on the Oswego River.

On November 20, 1824, barely six weeks before Bronson's term as Senator expired, an Act was passed authorizing the construction of a canal from Salina to Oswego. Construction of the canal was commenced in 1826 and it was completed in 1828 at a cost of $525,115.00.

Buffalo Attacks Law

Even after the various Acts authorizing first the construction and then the appropriation of money for the canal were passed by the legislature, its future was not certain. Buffalo reared its ugly head, and, for certainly not the last time in history, attempted to thwart a public works project for the benefit of Oswego. An assemblyman from Buffalo introduced a bill in 1825 to repeal the law authorizing the Oswego Canal. Bronson was of course at that time out of office, but the people still expected him to take care of their interests at the State capitol. He mounted his horse and started for Albany. On entering the State Capitol building, the first man he met was the notorious Aaron Burr, former Vice-President of the United States. At that time Burr was an old man ekeing out a moderate existence as an attorney. He had known Bronson when he had argued cases before the old Court of Errors, on which at that time members of the State Senate sat as judges, and he greeted Bronson with "Ah".

"Ah, so you have come to look after your canal, have you?"

Bronson replied: "Yes sir, that is my main object".

"Well now, Mr. Bronson, I am disposed to be on your side; I am in favor of the Oswego Canal too."

"Well, Colonel", said Bronson, "I believe all sensible men are on our side".

"Ah, my young friend", replied the cynical veteran of many intrigues, "if you have none but the sensible men there is a vast majority against you".

Canal Construction Started

Whether with the aid of the sensible or the senseless, and, without doubt, due principally to the energetic efforts of Bronson, the resolution sponsored by the Buffalo assemblyman was defeated, and the construction of the canal commenced on July 4, 1826.

Although he quite obviously was an astute politician and gave evidence in his handling of the Oswego Canal matter before the legislature of being what is now known as an accomplished "log roller," Bronson was far from a conformist on the major political issues of the day. Throughout his entire career as a public official, Bronson time and again showed a sturdy independence and a willingness to differ from what might have been the politic view, when he felt that that view was wrong. There are two outstanding examples of this during his first term in the State Senate.

One was on the issue of the tariff. At that time when American industries were in their infancy, the popular view throughout large sections of the country, and particularly in New York State, which was becoming industrialized, was that a protective tariff should be set up to enable American industry to become established. This was, of course, the traditional Hamiltonian view, and it was later developed and espoused by such leaders as Henry Clay. Bronson throughout his entire life was unalterably opposed to a protective tariff, and long after he had retired from public

life he exerted all of the influence of his great knowledge of public affairs and of his ever ready pen to promote the principles of free trade. During his first term as State Senator, a resolution requesting Congress to adopt such a tariff, had overwhelmingly passed the assembly. The Chairman of the Committee to whom it was referred requested Senator Bronson to write a report on this legislation. The report condemned the principles of a protective tariff, but, although well received, was not popular. When the bill came before the legislature, only Bronson and three other senators voted in favor of the report of the committee.

Bronson's Political Attitudes

There can be little doubt but that Bronson's view on the protective tariff were influenced largely by the type of business in which he was engaged, that of shipping, but it is also pertinent to note in this connection that he was not reluctant to take a position which, from a purely political point of view, was definitely not to his advantage.

In 1824 Bronson again became involved in a very heated controversy in which he again espoused the unpopular side of a great issue. Under the election law at this time, presidential electors were chosen by vote of the State legislature, which, for the purpose of choosing such electors, met in joint session. It will be recalled that the campaign of 1824 was a particularly vigorous one and was very closely fought. At one time or another such eminent men as Andrew Jackson, Wm. H. Crawford, John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay were advanced as candidates for the presidency. Before the smoke had cleared away the election was finally thrown into the House of Representatives and John Quincy Adams was elected to the Presidency.

In 1824, just prior to the election, a bill was introduced in the legislature which would require that presidential electors be chosen by popular vote as they are today. As can well be imagined, the public overwhelmingly demanded that this legislation be passed and it went through the assembly with an overwhelming majority. Seventeen senators, including Bronson, banded together and determined that it would not be passed. Their argument was that such legislation should not be passed during the heat of a political campaign when it might definitely work to the advantage of one candidate or another.

The "Infamous Seventeen"

The senators were able to defeat this bill by a vote of 17 to 14. They were immediately branded through the length and breadth of the State of New York as "the infamous seventeen". Handbills were distributed throughout the state with a picture of a coffin printed on them and under the coffin were listed the names of the seventeen senators. The heavens were called down to witness the infamy of these traitors to the cause of popular government. Every one of the seventeen senators was defeated for reelection when his term expired. However, several of them staged political comebacks in later years, including Bronson himself, who served a subsequent term in the State Senate, and Silas Wright who later became respectively Comptroller, Governor, and United States Senator.

First Village President

Bronson was out of public office until 1828 when he was elected the first President of the Village of Oswego which had been previously incorporated by act of the legislature earlier that year.

In 1829 he was the Republican candidate for State Senator from the Fifth District, and was elected in the election of that year. His prestige in the State Senate must have been somewhat considerable because he served as chairman of the important Finance Committee in the Senate throughout his four-

year term, 1830-1833. As Chairman of the Finance Committee he was the author of seeral exhaustive reports on vital matters of fiscal policy which were before the Senate during that period. They all were published in full in the "Oswego Palladium" which was the Republican organ at that time. Mr. Bronson was quite obviously regarded by the "Palladium" as someone of whom Oswego should be proud. From references to the "Oswego Free Press" which appeared frequently in the "Oswego Palladium," one can feel fairly confident that the activities of Senator Bronson, as well as those of other members of what the opposition in those times referred to as "the Albany Regency" were not so highly regarded.

The subjects of some of the reports which Senator Bronson submitted to his fellow senators during those years included such items as reduction of the maximum rate of interest from 7 per cent to either 6 per cent or 5½ per cent, and advocacy of a bill to impose a property tax of one mill per dollar on all property owned within the State.

Bronson Conservative Thinker

Bronson's essentially conservative thinking is revealed in his report on the usury legislation. It was his feeling that the maximum rate of interest should not be reduced to 6 per cent for the following reasons: **First:** That such a reduction would keep foreign and eastern capital from investing their funds in the undeveloped areas of the State. **Second:** That a preservation of the 7 per cent rate would work for the prosperity of the State in that such capital would be encouraged to place its funds in the backward and frontier areas, and **Lastly:** That government by legislation should not place too many restrictions on the conduct of business and trade. There can be little doubt but that the last of the reasons was the one which probably weighed most heavily with him.

Bronson unquestionably believed that Government should only concern itself with the world of business and trade in such matters as the construction of public works which were of such great magnitude that private capital could not build or maintain them. However, when the Government went further than building canals, it was interfering in areas into which it should not enter. For instance in the debate on the provisions of the charter to be granted to the Dutchess County railroad, Bronson strenuously objected to that portion of the proposed charter which reserved to the state the right to take back the railroad property during the period between ten and fifteen years after issuance of the charter. He stated that it was not fair to the stockholders of the railroad to deprive them of their profit. He further argued that the State should not become a proprietor of railroads. No evil would arise from a large profit and a reservation of this right would depress private enterprise. He vehemently asserted that the State could not manage a railroad as well as private enterprise could. However, on this motion, he was defeated by a vote of 14 to 7.

Opposed Mismanagement

In the report to the Senate recommending the enactment of a tax of one mill on every dollar of property owned within the State, Bronson took a firm position against relying on the tolls received from the canals, and income from other public works or enterprises operated by the State, to support the State Government. He stated in so many words that it is a maxim that government management and mismanagement are synonymous terms. In commenting upon the evils resulting from what some now refer to as the "governmental bureaucracy", he stated that "Money is spent by ..... an agent very far removed from a very careless principal". He went on to say that if the government should undertake

to cultivate a farm that it might dignify it by referring to it as a "combined effort to develop the resources of the State, concentrating the wisdom of the nation to promote agriculture etc., but, despite all this, we would still have simple farming of the most thriftless kind". Bronson concluded this exposition of what the typical nineteenth century business man thought on these matters by stating that "Canals are made for commerce and not commerce for canals. The state should not exact any more revenue than was barely necessary to operate the canals in order that all might be able to use them at the smallest possible expense". These statements indicate that some of the sentiments which are expressed by present day Republican orators are not being said for the first time.

Like so many other positions that Bronson took during his years as a member of the legislature, this was not the generally accepted view. His proposal was not enacted into law, and, in fact, was opposed by the contemporary Governor, and tolls on the canals were kept at a rate sufficiently high to contribute a considerable amount to the general fund of the State of New York.

Bronson's views on free trade were expressed frequently on the floor of the Senate during his second term as a member of that body, as they had been during his prior stay in Albany. He also, despite the fact he was regarded as a Jacksonian Republican, voted against a bill in the Senate which requested Congress not to renew the charter of the United States Bank. This was of course one of Andrew Jackson's favorite projects, but from our study of Bronson, the merchant and trader, it is easy to understand his position with regard to this issue. In this vote he was joined by only three or four other senators, including William H. Seward of Auburn.

West Point Visitor

Bronson was not a candidate for re-election in 1833, and, with the expiration of his second term in the State Senate, he closed his public life, with the exception of an appointment in 1834 to the Board of Visitors of the Military Academy at West Point. He never again held public office, and, as he tells us in his autobiography, from that time on he occupied himself almost exclusively with matters of business and trade.

A study of the political battles and feuds which took place in Oswego County during the time that Bronson was actively engaged in politics, would prove to be a fascinating one, but it is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it might be noted that during Bronson's second term in the State Senate, the Anti-Masonic crusade swept across the State of New York. The Anti-Masons strongly opposed the State administration of which Bronson was nominally at least a supporter. Bronson himself apparently did not become embroiled in this controversy. However, we are advised by the violently Republican "Palladium" that Mr. Bronson was not a Mason and was unsympathetic to some of the principles of Masonry. However, we are told that he did not begrudge any man the right to become a Mason and that he would staunchly fight to defend the principles of Republicanism as represented by the State Administration of Governor Throop.

A Political Leader

Bronson was obviously one of the political leaders of Oswego County during this period. The other leader was Judge Joel Turrill, who, at that time, was a member of the Assembly, later became a member of Congress, Surrogate, and some years later United States Consul to Hawaii. The battles with the opposition, whether it called itself Anti-Masonic or by any other name, were extremely violent. Bronson's name apparently did not become involved therein to too great an extent, as far as we can determine from the issues of the "Pallad-

ium". However in the campaign of 1831 he became involved in a quasi-political controversy arising out of the manner in which the stock in the Oswego Bank was issued. This will be discussed later in connection with the founding of that bank.

Throughout his long career, Bronson engaged in many activities for the benefit of the community. It is true that in some of these, personal gain may have been an impelling force in creating his interest, and they may be regarded as part of his business life. Nevertheless in the formation of such corporations as the Oswego Bank, Northwestern Insurance Co., Oswego-Syracuse Railroad Co., and many others, we may be fairly certain that he also considered the interests and development of Oswego as one of the reasons why he supported them.

Commercial Activities

We have seen that, during Bronson's service in the legislature, he was vitally interested in the development of the Oswego Canal, and in any legislation which he felt would benefit the port of Oswego. After his retirement from public life in 1833, he continued his interest and he was concerned with it until his death. In the editions of the Oswego newspapers we find occasional letters describing the importance of the Oswego Canal and we probably can be fairly sure that Bronson was the author of some of these. It was the custom of those times to sign all letters with such appellations as "Old Merchant" or "Friend of Oswego". As a result it is difficult to determine with certainty the authorship of the letters.

In 1841 Bronson presided over a meeting of the citizens which was held in that year, and which protested against the action of the Commissioner of Canals in not opening the Oswego Canal until the Erie Canal from Three Rivers to Buffalo was free of ice, even though the Oswego Canal was open for navigation, and again in 1845 Bronson went to Albany with a group of other gentlemen to protest against a proposed bill before the legislature which would have harmed Oswego's advantage in water transportation over Buffalo by making the canal tolls from Buffalo to Albany the same as from Oswego to New York.

Worked For Welland Canal

Bronson also was vitally interested in the development of the Welland Canal. Prior to the opening of that waterway in 1830, Lake Ontario was substantially isolated from the Upper Lakes. All goods which were shipped to the Upper Lakes of course had to be carried by portage around Niagara Falls. Therefore the opening of the canal in 1830 was greeted with great rejoicing in the Village of Oswego. The schooner "Erie", the first ship to go through the Welland Canal, arrived in Oswego in August 1830. In honor of the arrival of the "Erie", and also of the opening of the great waterway to the upper lakes, the citizens of Oswego held a banquet at the Welland House. All of the prominent citizens of the village, including the Village President Theophilus S. Morgan, George H. McWhorter, Collector of the Port, and Henry Fitzhugh, prominent miller and forwarder, were present. The "Palladium" tells us that great good humor and temperance prevailed. However, the paper then goes on to state that 14 toasts were drunk to various subjects worthy of the gathering's attention and approval. Bronson was called upon to toast the schooner "Erie", and he responded with the following graceful remarks: "The schooner 'Erie', like the dove from the ark, a messenger on the winds, but, unlike the dove, she proclaims the waters are flowing, not ebbing".

The forwarding firms of Bronson & Marshall, and later Bronson & Crocker, were always the first to be advised of the opening

of the Erie Canal during the spring season of the year.

Favored Niagara Canal

However the citizens of Oswego did not feel that the Welland Canal was the complete answer to their problem of direct water connection with the upper lakes. In the late 1830s and early 1840s, there was considerable agitation for the construction of a canal between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario on the American side of Niagara Falls. Bronson was also actively interested in this project, and in 1839 he helped prepare the resolution passed by a meeting held in April of that year, which protested against the action of the Whig controlled legislature in defeating a bill which would have requested the federal government to construct such a canal. Again we find occasional letters in the local paper extolling the virtues of the proposed Niagara route and further castigating the Whigs who were in power in Albany during tthe late 1830s and early 1840s, for their failure to construct this waterway. The citizens of Oswego also made numerous memorials and petitions to the State and National Legislatures for the construction of this canal, and Bronson was undoubtedly connected with these efforts, all of which of course proved unsuccessful, as the canal was never constructed.

Bronson also was vitally interested in the legislation regarding debenture or drawback of tariff charges. This movement which originated in Oswego, and in which Bronson was definitely one of the leaders, proposed that tariffs collected on goods shipped into the United States at the port of entry and later shipped to Canada and New Mexico should be refunded to the foreign exporters. It is obvious why this proposition was favorable to the Port of Oswego. It permitted foreign shippers with goods destined for Canada to ship them to North America by way of New York State, and then through the Erie and Oswego Canals to Lake Ontario, and thence to Canadian ports, without having to pay any customs. This legislation was enacted by Congress in the 1840s.

Favored Reciprocity With Canada

We have seen that Bronson was a vigorous opponent of the protective tariff, and therefore a firm believer in Free Trade. It also was of vital interest to the village and city of Oswego during the years at the middle of the 19th century, when Oswego's wealth was based largely on commerce. Bronson probably devoted more time during his whole life to expounding the virtues of free trade than to any other public movement in which he was interested. He again wrote reams of letters, memorials, protests and petitions. In 1864, when he was 81 years of age, he assured John B. Edwards, Oswego agent for Gerritt Smith's interests, that he would prepare a pamphlet justifying and defending the reciprocity treaty which then existed between Great Britain and the United States. This treaty represented the successful culmination of Bronson's efforts to remove the damaging effects of the tariff upon Oswego's commerce.

First Bank President

In 1852 Gerritt Smith, a fervent abolitionist running as an Independent, was elected to Congress in the Oswego-Madison district despite the fact that both Democrat and Whig candidates opposed him in the election. His election was generally attributed to the fact that he was a strong advocate of a reciprocity treaty between Great Britain and the United States, such as was passed in 1854. This treaty continued until 1866, and its revocation in that year was a very damaging blow to Oswego's commerce.

Trade Board Founder

In 1848 Bronson was a founder and first president of the Oswego Board of Trade, the forerunner of the present Chamber of Commerce. He remained active on the Board of Trade for several years

and was re-elected president in 1857. His second term as president of the Board of Trade was one of the last public activities of his career. The Oswego Board of Trade was founded to promote the commercial interests of the City of Oswego, and to set up standards of fair business dealing among mercantile interests. In addition to Bronson, the other original officers of this organization were: Vice-President George Seeley. Directors: James Platt (first Mayor of the City), Sylvester Doolittle, J. B. Penfield, Moses Merrick, Lemuel B. Crocker (Bronson's partner), William Lewis, Jr., and Myron Pardee.

Aided Oswego's Development

Bronson also was interested in various corporations and businesses other than shipping and forwarding, which were of great significance in the development of Oswego.

For some years prior to 1830, the citizens of the rapidly growing village of Oswego had been agitating for the formation of a local bank in order to more efficiently handle their financial transactions. At least one petition had been made to the legislature for the chartering of a bank in Oswego prior to 1831. On December 30th, 1830, a notice appeared in the "Oswego Palladium" to the effect that an application would be made to the legislature for the incorporation of a bank to be known as the Oswego Bank. On March 11th of that year Senator Bronson spoke in favor of the bill to incorporate and issue a charter to the Oswego Bank, and this bill was passed on that date by a vote of 24 to 1. Authorized capital of this bank was to be $200,000.00. Notices subsequently appeared in the paper stating that subscriptions of stock would be received at the Welland House on June 15th, 1831, by the commissioners appointed for that purpose. The Commissioners were Stephen Warren, George McWhorter, and Edwin Bronson. $1,498,000 was subscribed, which represented an over-subscription of some $150,000. This was an indication of the confidence which Oswego people and others interested in Oswego had in the community at that time. On July 13, 1831, Bronson was elected a director of the bank at the first meeting of stockholders. On the same date at the first meeting of directors he was elected first president of the bank. He remained as president of this bank until about 1838 and a director for some years thereafter.

The Oswego Bank continued in operation until March 20th, 1843, and for some seven or eight years it was the only bank in the city of Oswego. The Bank apparently was a prosperous one for several years, as dividends in the sum of 10 per cent per annum were paid regularly up until the panic of 1837. However, the bank fell into bad times during the panic due mainly to the fact that it had apparently loaned money to clients who had over-invested in land in Oswego County, and it subsequently closed its doors and was liquidated as of March 20th, 1843.

Bank Set-up Criticized

Apparently not all citizens of Oswego were satisfied with the set up of the new bank. On July 27th, 1831, a letter appeared in the "Palladium" which asserted that only a favored few had been allowed to purchase the stock of the bank. The letter further stated that an application should be made to the legislature for the formation of a Millers', Merchants', Manufacturers' and Mechanics' Bank, in order that those groups in Oswego County might be represented. The letter seemed to infer that the political leaders of Oswego County, who at that time were Joel Turrill and Bronson, had kept control of the bank among their friends, and had shut out all outsiders. This letter provoked a vehement reply denying all of the charges contained in it. The letter of reply was most likely written by Bron-

son himself. This was followed by an article in the "Free Press", the opposition organ, which consisted of a vehement attack on Bronson personally, charging him with being a Federalist of light blue stamp, and a member of the "infamous seventeen", to whom reference has previously been made. In various letters which he wrote during the two or three week period in which this controversy raged, Bronson showed himself to be clearly a master of political vituperation. It is interesting to note that Gerritt Smith appears to have been one of the persons who were discontented with the manner in which the stock of the Oswego Bank was issued.

The Oswego Canal Company which was formed about 1823 was another of the corporations in which Bronson was interested. In so far as I can determine from the sources examined, Bronson was president of this corporation from that time down until at least 1859 when his name still appeared as president in an issue of the Oswego Directory. This corporation operated a hydraulic canal on the west side of the Oswego River. It was originally formed with a view to possibly improving the navigational phases of the Oswego River, and when the State built the Oswego Canal it turned its efforts to the development of hydraulic power.

Bronson also was a director of the Oswego Bridge Co., which was formed about 1821, and which in 1822 built a bridge twenty-two feet wide over the Oswego River on the site of the present Lower Bridge. This was the first bridge to be built over the Oswego River and it was operated by the corporation until 1855 when the charter expired, apparently much to the relief of the citizens of that time, because by 1855 the bridge had long since become inadequate to handle the traffic over it. The public also objected to the charge of tolls for the use of the bridge, a practice which had been carried on by the corporation since its inception. A new bridge was constructed around 1855 by a public corporation, and after that time tolls were no longer charged for crossing the river. We learn from a letter from John B. Edwards to Gerritt Smith written in 1849 that Bronson was opposed to the construction of a bridge which would permit the passage of railroad trains over it toll free. Edwards states that this is entirely contrary to Bronson's "usual liberal views".

Bronson was also a director and incorporator of the Northwestern Insurance Co., which was formed in 1832 after several unsuccessful attempts to raise sufficient money by public subscription. This insurance company continued in business for many years and Bronson remained as a director for some years following the incorporation. This company insured against various marine risks and also against fire risks, and apparently was quite substantial organization around the middle of the century. Theophilus S. Morgan, Bronson's partner in the milling business, was the first president of the Northwestern Insurance Co.

Railroad

With the advent of rail transportation, Bronson and other prominent men of Oswego became very eager to provide such service to Oswego County. On April 29th, 1839, the legislature granted a charter to a corporation to be known as the Oswego and Syracuse Railroad Co. Bronson was one of the original commissioners for the subscription of stock. Financial conditions in Oswego at that time were not too good, and the commissioners were not able to obtain a sufficient subscription of stock to commence operations. As a result, in mid-December 1840, a meeting was held at Market Hall in Oswego, with George H. McWhorter as Chairman, and Henry Fitzhugh as Secretary. Bronson presented to this meeting a detailed report as to

the prospects of the railroad. In this report he estimated its probable cost at $400,000.00. He stated that it would be thirty-five miles long and that it would cost approximately $9,000.00 per mile to construct the railroad, making the cost of construction $315,000.00. Other costs, including construction of terminals and purchase of trains and other equipment made up the balance of the $400,000.00. He estimated that the profit from the first year's operation, exclusive of freight, would be $10,000.00. Despite this very optimistic report, the money was not forthcoming. Another public meeting was held on March 17th, 1841, and when, following that, no further money was available, the project was dropped until 1845.

In 1845 new commissioners, including Bronson, were appointed, and a vigorous effort was made to get the project under way. Bronson's efforts on behalf of the railroad were criticized by some people who apparently thought that he was not vigorous enough in his efforts to solicit stock on behalf of the railroad, even though John B. Edwards in a letter to Gerritt Smith in 1845 states that Bronson had recently travelled to Albany, New York, and Boston, on behalf of the railroad. Edwards further told Smith that he did not agree with those who felt that Bronson lacked energy in pushing the project, and he says that Bronson was undoubtedly the man to handle it and that he was doing a good job. In any event, Bronson was elected first President of the Corporation when it was formally organized in May 1846. However, sufficient funds to construct the railroad had still not been raised at the time the corporation was organized. The other officers at the time of the original organization were Luther Wright, Treasurer, and Jesse Bennett, Sylvester Doolittle, and O. C. Osborne, Executive Committee.

The charter of the corporation was about to expire when on March 16th, 1847, all of the stock finally was subscribed, due substantially to the efforts of Jacob Richardson. Richardson had gone to New York just prior to this time, and had been able to raise the money just in the nick of time, otherwise the corporation would have gone out of existence.

As a result of the entry of new interests into the setup of the corporation, new officers were elected in 1847. Bronson was not one of the new officers. Evidently he remained a shareholder because there is on exhibit in the museum of the Oswego Historical Society a pass on this railroad which entitles Mr. Bronson and lady to travel thereon.

Bronson in later years also became involved in the promotion of other railroads. In his letters to Gerritt Smith, Edwards refers to Bronson's strenuous endorsement of the Syracuse & Susquehanna Railroad in 1851, and he says that Bronson was attempting to solicit $100,000.00 in stock in the City of Oswego for this railroad, which apparently was to run into Oswego from Pennsylvania. Bronson also provoked Edwards' wrath by his indifference to the Syracuse and Binghamton Railroad, which was to run down the east side of the Oswego River, and in which Smith and Edwards were particularly interested because of the fact that Smith's investments in Oswego were on the east side of the river. Bronson being a west sider, apparently was not able to work up any enthusiasm on behalf of this railroad, and Smith states that D. C. Littlejohn who was one of the leading proponents of this project was worth many Bronsons.

Education, Religious And Social Interests

Bronson's interests were not confined solely to the commercial, business and political fields. He apparently was also quite a cultured gentleman. His writings are interspersed with classical and

biblical allusions in the approved manner of his day and he also found time to exert his efforts towards upholding the educational level of the community. About 1829 or 1830, just after the incorporation of the Village of Oswego, several of the leading citizens determined that Oswego should have an academy. A board of trustees was created to run the school and Bronson was named its first president. This institution was a private school. A building was put up in 1831 on what later was the site of the old Oswego High School on West Third Street, across from the park, but it was never occupied by the school. For the first twenty years of its operation the academy met in a house on West Fourth Street. The acedemy remained in existence until 1853 when the re-organization of the whole public school system by Edwin Sheldon brought an end to this institution, due to the fact that the new system provided for a free public high school.

Bronson also allowed his name to be used along with those of several other distinguished gentlemen of the community, both lay and clerical, in an endorsement of the Misses Robinsons' boarding school for young ladies. This school, the syllabus of which appears to be quite ambitious, was located on West Second Street, one door from Seneca Street. It would seem that Bronson, who had two daughters, probably sent them to this institution. This school was in operation around 1840.

The esteem in which Bronson was held by his contemporaries is borne out by the fact that, when Gerritt Smith in 1853 wished to found the Oswego City Library, he named Bronson first among the men he wished to serve on his board of trustees. The others were: James Platt, George H. McWhorter, Henry Fitzhugh, Edwin W. Clarke, John Platt, John B. Edwards, James Brown, and DeWitt C. Littlejohn. Bronson was named the first president of the board and served in that capacity from 1854 until 1873, when he retired due to his extreme age, which at that time was 90. He however remained on the board until his death in 1881.

Bronson was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Oswego. Although his name does not appear as one of the founders of this church when it was organized in 1817, he was evidently one of the more active members of the congregation. In introducing Bronson on the occasion of the donation of the silver service to Dr. Condit, Judge William F. Allen referred to him as one of the leading lay members of the congregation, and one whose sound business advice had helped them through many a storm. Bronson, in his introduction of Dr. Condit affirmed his strong religious belief and also incidentally stated he believed that the pastor of a church should remain with his flock for at least twenty years. Dr. Condit certainly was a good example of Bronson's thinking on this matter for he was at the First Presbyterian Church for over 45 years.

Bronson's interests also extended into the fields of agriculture and horticulture. In 1840 Oswego County Agricultural Society was founded. The purpose of this organization was to promote and advance agriculture and domestic manufacture, and to conduct an annual fair in the County. The initiation fee was $1.00 and the annual dues were also $1.00. Bronson was present at the organization meeting of this society. At the second annual meeting of the Society held in April 1841, Bronson was chosen President, and, in that capacity, signed an exhaustive report of the second annual fair of the society, which was held on October 6th, 1841, at Oswego. The report lists the premiums awarded and praises the general excellence of the exhibits.

Bronson also apparently was interested in growing flowers and vegetables himself, for we find

that he was an active member of the Oswego Horticultural Society which was founded in 1848. Dr. Lida Penfield has given me a program for the three 1851 exhibitions of this Society, which were held at the City Hall on July 2nd, September 11th and October 20th of that year. From this we learn that Bronson must have had a practical knowledge in this field, as he is listed as one of the judges in the fruit section of this show. Bronson also was president of this organization in the year 1850.

It will be seen from the above that Bronson was, to put it mildly, a man of manifold sides. All of the activities set forth in this chapter were carried on at the same time that Bronson was operating and conducting the largest forwarding and shipping business on the Great Lakes.

However, it should be noted that, so far as two of the raging controversies of the day were concerned, Bronson seems to have been silent. We find no reference to his having participated in any of the anti-slavery movements which were so prevalent in this section of the country during the 1840s and 1850s. It would be my opinion that Bronson was undoubtedly opposed to the abolitionist movement. We also find no reference to his participation in the temperance movement which was also quite powerful at this time, if the reports of meetings of temperance societies contained in the newspapers are any evidence.

His innate conservatism is further evidenced by the fact that when, in December 1838, a mass meeting was held to denounce the men who had become involved in the so-called Patriots' War, and to commend the federal officials who had attempted to discourage it, Bronson was named chairman of the meeting, and assisted in preparing the report and memorial to Congress asking for the continuance of neutrality legislation.

The forwarding and shipping business was unquestionably the main interest of Bronson's life, and, as has been previously stated, a good many of his opinions on the great questions of the day stemmed from his interests in connection with that business.

Commercial Activities Dominant

In 1815, following the conclusion of the war of 1812, the firm of Townsend, Bronson & Co., continued its business operations. The partners at that time were Jacob Townsend, who was a resident of Connecticut, Bronson, and Sheldon Thomson, the shipmaster whom Bronson had brought up to Oswego with him when he came in 1810. It will be recalled that Thomson in the early years operated the firm's outlet and store at Lewiston on the Niagara River. Title to the land sold to the firm was taken in the name of these three partners.

As before the war, the main product shipped west was salt, which came from Salina Point or Syracuse down the Oswego River, and was thence shipped to the various points on Lake Ontario. The sale business remained the main item of the forwarding business through practically all of Bronson's career. In addition to shipping salt and other products of the eastern seaboard to the west and receiving in turn furs and other raw products from the west, the firm of Townsend & Bronson until 1820 operated a store in their warehouse at the foot of West Cayuga Street. In this store were sold various necessities of life in the small frontier village of Oswego. On January 20, 1820, Townsend, Bronson & Co. announced that they had discontinued the sale of goods, and requested their debtors to settle up with them. It can be fairly presumed from this announcement that the shipping and forwarding business had become so prosperous that the store was interfering with the efficiency of the main operation carried on by the firm. From that time until his retirement from active business in 1858, in so far as trade was concerned,

Bronson was solely engaged in the shipping and forwarding business.

Unfortunately we do not have sources available to tell us how many ships were owned by the Townsend, Bronson firm during these years. In view of the fact that they had two schooners as early as 1812, there can be little doubt but that probably more were constructed to carry on the ever expanding and prospering business. It should also be remembered that in 1817 with the arrival of the steamboat "Ontario" in Oswego from Sackett's Harbor, steam entered into the transportation picture on Lake Ontario. and no doubt the Townsend, Bronson company availed themselves of the use of this ship and the others which followed it, in shipping goods to the west and to other points on the Lake.

In 1822 Townsend, Bronson & Co. dissolved, and, according to Johnson's History of Oswego County, the firm of A. Bronson & Co. was formed in its place. There is no information available as to the reason for this dissolution.

New Partners

By 1830 the firm of Bronson, Marshall & Co. was in existence. This firm consisted of Bronson, Lemuel B. Crocker, who was to be Bronson's partner for the rest of his active business career, and one Josiah T. Marshall. Mr. Crocker was authorized to collect the debts of this firm which formally went out of business on December 1st, 1831.

The notice in the "Palladium" advised the public that the firm would be continued as Bronson, Crocker & Co., and as such it did continue until it was dissolved in 1858 upon Bronson's retirement from active business. Various sources frequently referred to Bronson, Crocker & Co. as the largest forwarding house on the Great Lakes. Their business extended as far west as Chicago and at one time they owned as many as 12 vessels. The business of this firm was in fact so prosperous that, when the panic of 1837 hit Oswego, they were the only firm in the forwarding business to survive. Oswego was, in fact, particularly devastated in a financial way by that economic catastrophe. This was due mainly to the fact that it was an expanding and rapidly growing community, and, as in such communities, all values, and particularly those of land, had expanded during the boom far beyond their true value.

However, Bronson, Crocker & Co. did survive and they continued to ship to the rapidly expanding west the products carried over the Erie and Oswego Canals to the Port of Oswego, and in 1841 they were in a position to take advantage of one of the most revolutionary developments in the history of maritime transportation, the advent of the screw propeller steamship.

Advent Of "Vandalia"

For many years prior to 1840, John Ericson, a Swedish inventor, had been working on developing a new method of propelling steamboats. Prior to this time they had been driven solely by paddle wheels. The huge paddle wheels attached to the sides of the early steamships on Lake Ontario made their beam so great that they were unable to pass through the locks on the Welland Canal and therefore were confined to Lake Ontario. As a result only sailing ships could run from Oswego to the Upper Lakes.

Captain James Van Cleve who had been in command of the steamship "United States" during the famous incident in the St. Lawrence River in the Patriots' War, known in history as "the Battle of Wind Mill Point", had heard of Ericcson's researches in propellers. In 1840 he went to New York and saw Ericcson who had come over from Sweden and was at that time engaged in building a propeller ship for ocean travel. Van Cleve, after discussing the matter with Ericcson, soon saw that these ships would be a great boon to commerce on the Great Lakes in that they could be

built of a beam narrow enough to pass through the Welland Canal. Ericcson gave Captain Van Cleve a license to build this type of vessel on the Great Lakes. Van Cleve thereupon entered into a joint enterprise with Sylvester Doolittle, a well known shipbuilder of Oswego, Bronson & Crocker, and Rufus Hawkins, a lake captain, to build a screw propellertye steamship at Oswego. This ship, the "Vandalia" was constructed and the engine installed therein was built from designs by Ericcson himself. The ship was launched in the fall of 1841, and in November of that year sailed to St. Catherine's, Ontario. Upon its return to Oswego, glowing reports filled the Oswego "Palladium" of the success of the venture. History has confirmed the "Palladium's" forecast as to the success of this type of vessel. It is also of considerable interest to note that the "Vandalia" was the first propeller driven steamship in the history of lake navigation. It also should be noted that Ericcson, some 20 years later, designed and built the famous battleship "Monitor", an event which during the Civil War revolutionized naval construction.

The only disadvantage the propeller-type ship had as contrasted with the traditional paddle wheel type, was in speed. The screw ships were somewhat slower, and had to resort to sail at every opportunity. Their top speed with sail on was approximately eight miles per hour.

In 1842 the "Vandalia" commenced trips to the Upper Lakes. Bronson & Crocker and Doolittle Mills & Co. handled the booking of space for both freight and passengers on these trips. Advertisements which appeared in the newspaper notifying the public as to the various trips of the "Vandalia" between Oswego and Chicago were signed by Bronson & Crocker and S. Doolittle as proprietors.

More Propellers Built

In 1842 Sylvester Doolittle in his shipyard constructed the propeller ships "Chicago" and "Oswego". In 1843 he constructed the "New York", in 1844 the "Racine", and in 1845 the "Syracuse". Bronson & Crocker were associated with him in the construction of these ships, Captain Van Cleve having withdrawn from the enterprise in 1842. The main portion of the capital for the construction of these ships was put up by Doolittle, with the rest being contributed by Bronson & Crocker, and, as we have said, the operation and booking of the ships was handled by Bronson & Crocker and by Doolittle & Mills.

As can be seen from the number of ships constructed, the propeller type steamboat proved an immediate success. The ships were constructed to carry both passengers and freight. Staterooms were provided for the first class passengers and there was a steerage section in which the immigrants from Europe travelled to the Middle West. The advertisements state that there was storage for 75 passengers on each ship, with each passenger supplied with a good comfortable berth between decks, which "avoids the necessity of carrying any in the hold". The ships ran every day but Sunday between Oswego and Chicago, with stops at Detroit, Milwaukee, Racine, Southport and other intermediate points. The cabin fare to Detroit was $7.50 per passenger with "found" and $5.00 without "found",—"found" referring to meals. The steerage fare to Chicago was $4.00. The cabin passenger fare to Chicago with "found" was $14.00, without "found" $10.00. Freight was carried by bulk barrel, a barrel being a unit of space. The charge for one barrel from Oswego to Detroit was 62 cents and to Chicago $1.00.

Thousands of immigrants and other people made their way to the west on these ships and for many years it was definitely one of the most popular ways of travel to the middle west from the eastern seaboard, particularly for those who desired low cost

transportation. It also was one of the most prosperous periods in the history of Bronson & Crocker.

Bronson & Crocker did not confine their interest in steamboats to the so-called propellers. In the "Palladium" of April 8, 1840, we find a notice to the effect that the "splendid first class steamboats "United States", "Great Britain" and "St. Lawrence" will run a daily line from Oswego to Lewiston. The "ad" further pointed out that passengers leaving Syracuse in the morning by packet or stage, would pass down the valleys of the Seneca and Oswego Rivers, through delightful scenery and arrive in Oswego in season for a steamer bound for Lewiston at 4 p. m. Arrive at Lewiston next morning where railroad cars would be in waiting to convey travellers to Buffalo via Niagara Falls without delay, thereby saving time, money and fatigue of overland route from Syracuse to Buffalo. The reverse trip could also be made via steamer, leaving Lewiston every afternoon. It further recites that the proprietors of this line were Bronson & Crocker, John Hamilton and Henry Fitzhugh.

In 1842 the so-called Lake Ontario route was still in existence with some new steamers, "The Lady of the Lake" and the "St. Lawrence", which would leave Oswego at 9 a. m., Rochester 4 p. m., and reach Lewiston next morning, with similar trips on return from Buffalo. It also was pointed out that these ships would permit one leaving Oswego in the morning to be in Buffalo in time the following morning to catch a steamer going west on Lake Erie. Bronson & Crocker and Henry Fitzhugh were the proprietors of this line which also ran other steam vessels from Ogdensburg and packets from Utica. This latter line received a bit of free publicity from the "Palladium" on July 1, 1842, which stated that passengers riding on the first trip of the "Lady of the Lake" to Lewiston "deem it due to the travelling public as well as to the enterprising proprietors of the Lake Ontario Steam and Canal Boat Co. to advertise to the public the superior speed, comfort and elegance of this new beautiful model boat". Lake Ontario Steam & Canal Boat Line continued for many years.

As had been heretofore stated, Bronson withdrew from the shipping and forwarding business in 1858 upon the dissolution of the firm of Bronson and Crocker.

Bronson As A Land Owner

Bronson, like most men of his day, also was a considerable owner of land in Oswego County, particularly in the City of Oswego, the village of Fulton and in the towns adjoining those communities. He first became an owner of land in Oswego in 1815 when he, Jacob Townsend and Sheldon Thomson purchased land on West First Street in Oswego, on a portion of which his warehouse stood. From that time on for a period of at least 20 years, Bronson purchased a tremendous amount of real property. It is proper to presume that most of this was purchased for speculative purposes. Between 1826 and the time of his death, the records of the County Clerk's office show that Bronson conveyed at least 250 parcels of real property, most of it being in the City of Oswego and the Town of Scriba.

He purchased the land on which his home stood at the southeast corner of West Fifth and Cayuga Streets about 1828. Tradition has it that he erected a cottage on this property and that he and Mrs. Bronson resided in that cottage until about 1836 when they erected the large stone residence that stands there at the present time. The stone for this home was probably cut from the limestone quarries which were located east of Oswego, and which provided the material for so many of Oswego's buildings of that era.

Reminiscences Of Old Home

Dr. Lida Penfield informs me

that, in her recollection, which runs back to about 1880, there was a wooden building to the west of the stone residence. This was of course later torn down or moved away. She also recollects that a dancing academy was conducted in this wooden building. It is probable that this was the cottage which Bronson had originally built on this site. It is definitely known that this cottage building was moved away from the original site and at present stands on the southeast corner of West Eighth and Cayuga Streets. Dr. Penfield also recalls that in the rear of the Bronson homestead at the point on West Fifth about where the Hobbie and Savas residences are located today, there was a large barn built out of the same stone as the house. In her recollection this barn was later used as a kind of livery stable. It was obviously the old barn and carriage house of the Bronson estate.

Bronson Pioneer Miller

Bronson also will go down in the history of Oswego as one of the owners of the first large flour mill in Oswego, the forerunner of what in the middle and later years of the nineteenth century proved to be Oswego's most important industry. In 1820 Bronson and Theophilus S. Morgan, his political associate, and apparently his close friend, erected a flour mill on the east side of the Oswego River north of the lower bridge. Prior to that time there had been no large flour mills in Oswego, and flour had either been imported into Oswego or individuals had milled their own flour from the wheat. The mill consisted of five runs of stone. The quality of the product turned out by this mill was at first poor, but it was considered a marvelous institution by the natives of Oswego. Later it was greatly improved and came to be considered one of the best flour mills in the United States. The mill ground grain grown in Oswego County as this was before the days when western wheat was shipped into Oswego. It was the sole enterprise of its type until about 1830 when the milling development in Oswego on a large scale commenced. Bronson & Morgan's mill was burned in the great fire which swept the east side in 1835, and, so far as can be determined, they did not resume this operation or rebuild their mill.

Declining Years

After his retirement from active business in 1858, Bronson apparently devoted his efforts to managing the real estate he owned at that time, and in handling other affairs that might have arisen from his past enterprises. Until at least 1859 he continued as president of the Oswego Canal Co., which supplied waterpower to Oswego mills. He was president of the board of trustees of the Gerrit Smith Library until 1873. No great public occasions were held in Oswego without this distinguished old gentleman being called upon for a few words either of reminiscence or of advice for the future. At a dinner held in 1864 Bronson was called upon to give a toast to Commerce in Oswego. He responded by stating that it was such a broad subject that he would have to have some time to prepare a history of that subject. Unfortunately, if such a history was prepared, it is not available at this time. Mrs. Bronson died in 1870, and that no doubt made the declining years a little more difficult.

In 1878 he was interviewed at his home by a reporter from the "Palladium", who in his article described Bronson as follows: "Although he has entered his 96th year he is hale and hearty with little or no apparent weakening of intellectual powers. On the whole we regard him as one of the most remarkably well preserved gentlemen with whom we have ever met."

Financial Problems

However, with advancing years, apparently the financial resources

of Mr. Bronson declined. In 1876 he found it necessary to place a $2,800 mortgage on his home. No doubt his somewhat straightened financial condition was due largely to the fact that he had lived for over 20 years beyond the time of his retirement from business, and he presumably during these years was living on his capital. It must also be remembered that, at the time Bronson & Crocker were dissolved in 1858, a nation-wide financial depression was prevalent which left its mark on Oswego.

In any event, after his death we find that in the petition for issuance of letters of administration to his daughter, Ellen, widow of Leander Babcock, she recited that his personal property was worth less than $100.

Death Came In 1881

Bronson retained his vigor up until a period of some two months prior to his death in April 1881. He was active enough in November 1880 to cast a vote for General Hancock, Democratic candidate for President, who, incidentally, also was a vehement opponent of the protective tariff. However, during the winter, a decline set in and he finally died on April 2, 1881. Resolutions were passed by practically every substantial group in the community from the Common Council down, deploring his death, and reciting at great length his great services to Oswego. Following a simple funeral he was buried in Riverside Cemetery on April 6, 1881, in a plot opposite his wife and his son, Edwin, who had died about a year earlier. The grave overlooks the little pond in the cemetery and is located within a few feet of those of some his well known contemporaries such as George H. McWhorter, D. C. Littlejohn, and John Haines Lord.

Acknowledgement

Due to the haste in which this paper was written, time was not taken to give proper credit for the sources of the facts contained therein. Without the help of the persons mentioned below, this paper could not have been completed in any form. However, these persons should not be charged with any of its numerous failings.

Dr. Lida Penfield was helpful in providing information as to the appearance of the old Bronson homestead about the time of his death, and for furnishing documents concerning his life, which have been turned over to the Historical Society.

Mr. Ralph Faust for very freely offering his advice and counsel in the preparation of this paper, and particularly in connection with Bronson's part in the forming of the Oswego Academy.

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Miss Juanita Kersey for her very kind assistance in making available the very many source materials in Oswego Library, and for obtaining information from the State Library at Albany.

The following is a partial list of the sources consulted:

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Oswego "Daily Palladium" (various issues) 1850-1881.

Oswego City Directories 1854-1866.

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Edition of Oswego "Palladium-Times" celebrating the Centennial of the incorporation of the City of Oswego, published in August 1948.

Historical Tour Covers 150-Mile Swing in County

Pleasant Weather and Many Points of Interest Contribute to Success

Tired, but still enthusiastic, participants in the 1951 "pilgrimage" of Oswego County Historical Society to 15 points of historic interest in and near Oswego County terminated an itinerary of more than 150 miles at the Sheldon Hall dormitory of Oswego State Teachers' College just before 7 o'clock Wednesday evening, and proceeded to widely separated homes throughout the county. The end of the journey came nearly two hours behind schedule due to delays encountered enroute, but more than 50 of the 150 "pilgrims" who had participated in the run throughout the day remained with the party until the end.

The journey had been started at Mexico Academy and Central school soon after 9 o'clock Wednesday morning under threatening clouds and with an early morning August chill in the atmosphere. But as the day advanced the sun broke forth and temperature and wind conditions became ideal for the day. At successive stops, throughout the day, numbers of new "pilgrims" attached themselves to the party as the motorcade moved onwards. At several of the points where 10 or 15 minute stops were made while a member of the society spoke upon the historic significance of the location, residents of the community joined the "pilgrims" to share with them in the local program. This was notably true of the stop at Redfield where sons and grandsons of families who settled in the town more than a century ago were among the audience. One of these was Charles Grant whose parents settled in Redfield in 1835. Mr. Grant, a former "canaler" on the Oswego and Erie canals, later returned to his native place and accepted employment as a "lumber-jack" in the Redfield woods. He is now living there in retirement and is spending happily his advanced years. When he was only nine years old, he left Redfield and came to Oswego and accepted employment as a cabin-boy and mule driver on the canal.

Talks At Mexico

Speaking from the concrete step at the rear of the Mexico Academy, following her presentation to the assemblage by Principal J. C. Birdlebough of the Phoenix High and Central school, who was chairman of the 1951 Tour Committee, Miss Elizabeth Simpson, town historian of Mexico and author of "Mexico, Mother Of Towns", related the story of the founding of Mexico Academy as the result of combining resources of two or more contemporary school districts into the first Union School District in this part of New York State. The first permanent school building stood on the same site as that which was occupied later by the imposing brick school with white columns which many persons still remember. This building when destroyed by fire in 1936 was soon followed by the formation of a central school district by 30 or more smaller districts and erection of the present splendidly appointed school on the site former-

ly occupied by the predecessor schools. For two years during the 1890s the Academy was conducted as a military Academy for boys.

"Jerry's" Hiding Places

Turning to the "Jerry Incident". famed in Central New York in the days when abolition of slavery was a burning question in this region, Miss Simpson said after "Jerry", an escaped slave. had been kidnapped from a Syracuse police station to prevent his being turned over to a slave-owning master who had pursued him there from the South, he was driven in an enclosed carriage, which dashed past without stopping at the tollgate houses on the old Svracuse and Central Square plank road. to the Orson Ames house located in Main street in Mexico. The house still stands across the street from Mexico Academy and is now owned by Mrs. F. L. Kellogg. Jerry spent the night concealed in the barn belonging to this household.

As the Ames house, located on Mexico Main street, was thought to be too centrally located to enable Jerry to escape discovery if he was concealed there for a long period, the next day, Deacon Asa Beebe took Jerry to his home at "Toad Hollow", still within the village, where "Jerry" was concealed for two weeks. He was then taken to the Clark farm. located just inside the Oswego City line on the Oneida Street Road and held there until he could be placed on board a ship in Oswego Harbor which carried Jerry to Canada and to freedom.

No Longer Checkered

Moving through "the dugway" from Maple View to the "Checkerboard House" many members of the party were surprised to find the Syracuse Boys Club housed in such commodious and attractive surroundings. Parties of the boys from this camp moving to fishing grounds, starting out on hikes, and pursuing other forms of recreation were encountered in large numbers over a space of several miles along this highway. The "Checkerboard House" still stands at the junction of the "Dugway" road with the fine, new concrete highway completed into Williamstown last fall, but it is no longer painted like a checkerboard as this old landmark was painted for many years. It is not even tenanted now. Its windows are broken out and the building falling into rapid decay. In olden days it was a tavern or roadside hostelry on a road through a comparative wilderness that was much traveled but where there were few houses to offer shelter to a traveler or landmarks to reassure him that he was on his proper route.

The Great Wall Builder

As they approached the Case farm in Williamstown the pilgrims marveled at industry of Jonathan Case who built the extensive stone walls which line the dirt highway on both its sides. These walls, laid up dry a century ago, and at some points six feet high, or even higher, and others fully that broad are still in a remarkable state of preservation. The outward faces of the walls towards the highway are as smooth and even as if the stone had been ground to a uniform surface. Jonathan Case, who was an uncle of J. I. Case, founder of the great farm machinery company whose factories are located at Racine, Wis., did not start laying these walls until he was 60 years old, but as he lived to be 92 and continued active, he still had opportunity to put in a deal of effort on the walls.

Jonathan's granddaughter, Miss Elena Case, who now lives on the farm, told the historians that so interested did he become in his work on the walls, that he would not return to his house for his dinner so that her grandmother usually packed a lunch for him to carry to the scene of his work. As the Cases had a pet crow who was also fond of food, Jonathan

found upon a number of occasions when he turned to his lunch bag that it was nearly empty as the result of previous visits to it by the crow.

Besides Miss Elena, there are two other members of the pioneer Case family still living in the Williamstown vicinity, Mrs. Patrick Hale of Williamstown and Miss Ida Case, an 86-year old sister of Miss Elena Case who still shares the ancestral home.

J. I. Case was a son of Caleb Case, a pioneer settler in Williamstown. He was only 16 years old when he began to manifest at his father's farm home on Stone Hill an interest in machinery. He attended Mexico Academy in the winter months. He was only 19 years old when he came to Oswego in the early spring of 1842, purchased six traction-machine engines, and with them sailed from Oswego on board the "Vandalia" on the latter's maiden voyage from Oswego to Chicago. The "Vandalia", built at the Doolittle ship yard at the foot of West Cayuga street in Oswego, was the first screw propelled steamer to appear on the Great Lakes and the third propeller built anyhere in the world.

Upon arrival of the steamer in Chicago, young Case sold five of the engines at a sufficient profit so that he could keep the sixth one without direct cost to himself. He took his engine with him into Wisconsin where he settled and eventually began the manufacture of farm machinery on his own account. Both J. II. Case and his son later served as mayors of Racine. According to Miss Elean, J. I. Case never returned to his native town after he departed for the west. He kept in touch with members of his family, however, by letter and never completely lost his affection for the place of his birth.

Relatives of George Scriba

Among the members of the party making the journey was Mrs. Frederick George Scriba, wife of Constantia's postmaster, who is a great-grandson of George Scriba, original owner of a tract of more than 500,000 acres of land embracing most of the area now known as Oswego County, which lies east of the Oswego River. Postmaster and Mrs. F. G. Scriba have a young son who bears the name of George Frederick Scriba. It has been the practice of the Scriba family through several generations to alternate the names Frederick George and George Frederick for the oldest sons in succeeding generations.

Participating in the tour, aside the large parties from Oswego and Fulton, were parties from Phoenix, Hastings, Brewerton, Constantia, Cleveland, Williamstown, Mexico, Pulaski, Oswego Town, Sandy Creek-Lacona, Pennellville, Redfield, Texas and from many smaller places.

Stops were made for inspection of various sites visited at all of the places previously mentioned in the Palladium-Times with exception that the scheduled Port Ontario stop was combined with that at Selkirk Light House, and that for Texas which combined with that at Spy Island, the talks in both instances being expanded to cover both communities. Miss Helen Osborne of Fulton was ill and unable to give the scheduled talk on "Old Churches of Sandy Creek." She arranged for a substitute to speak for her, but the substitute lost her way, so that the stop at Sandy Creek village in the early afternoon was brief.

Everywhere along the route the visitors were received with marked consideration and courtesy. At Selkirk State Park, Mr. Drake offered to provide guides to escort the party members through the camping-site area of the park, but as the pilgrims were already behind schedule the offer could not be accepted.

Deputy Sheriff James Penoyer of Hastings, led the party in a patrol car provided through the courtesy of Sheriff John Mayne.

The Story of Bundyville

(Paper Given Before Oswego County Historical Society at Oswego, Oct .6, 1951 by the Misses Gertrude and Alice Miller, and Mrs. R. D. Cady)

Part I—(By Gertrude E. Miller)

Where is Bundyville? It is on the east bank of the Oswego river between Minetto and Volney. It is where the church stands close to the roadside, and a tall monument can be seen in the cemetery. This monument marks the resting place of the one who gave the land for this church, this cemetery, and a school, and whose name still marks the place. It is an old settlement whose watering trough has only recently disappeared. In this rectangular, spireless church services are held today as they were about 125 years ago, when into this church on the Sabbath went Isaac Bundy, his wife, and their children, filling a bench or two to overflowing with Sarah Lorilla, Sanford Ezekiel, Harvey Alonzo, William Derrick, Mary Adelia, Armina Jane, Clarissa Rosetta, Charles Wallace, and Colonel George. No; not a dozen, just nine with two names each.

What is Bundyville? It is a growing community, alive to modern trends, teaching its children, serving them spiritually through its church and socially, especially by the ladies, carrying on projects for church repairs and maintenance of its cemetery. But Bundyville is more. It is a reminder of a time in history when men's souls were fired by the possibilities of transportation by inland waters to the coast, of a fabulous inland wealth. It is a place of memories, some happy, some of dissappointment when dreams may not have been realized.

Origin Of the Bundys

Who were the Bundys who left their name in this spot? Our nation has listed them among the families who have helped to make America. Helped by spreading into many parts where their qualities of industry, resourcefulness, perservance, fortitude and loyalty have helped. They were first heard of in France in the 11th century, then in England, and in 1643 John Bundy settled in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Later, from this family, branches were sent forth, to Virginia, to the west, and westward through the New England states, until James, the one we are interested in, settled in Walpole, New Hampshire, in 1762. A letter from Walpole Historical Society in 1946, states that the Bundys were very numerous in the early days of that settlement. Where is Walpole or Bellows' Falls, its first name? It is on the east bank of the Connecticut river, and so Bundyville is on the east bank of the Oswego river. Above Walpole are the Bellows' Falls in the river—above Bundyville are the Oswego Falls. Along the Connecticut river a canal was the scene of busy transportation, and along the Oswego river a canal was a possibility in 1810. It has been said that the New Hampshire settlers in moving westward very often indicated their love of their former

home, by finding a site and duplicating as near as possible the set-up of their old home. A letter from the cemetery superintendent in Walpole of 1946, gave the names of the Revolutionary soldiers and family buried on James Bundys' plot, but James, Jr., mentioned by Walpole Historical Society as having lived there is not on his father's plot, for he is buried in Bundyville Fair View grounds.

Bundy Land Purchases

When did the Bundys come to Oswego County? James came in 1810 according to Crisfield Johnson's History of Oswego County. A few years later Elisha settled at Orchard Lock, later Bundy's Crossing. This was a few years after the VanBuren settlement In the land purchase James and Elisha took adjoining lots, in the town of Volney. At the Oswego County Clerk's Office there is a record of deeds of purchase. The records were inscribed with a quill pen. The deeds are separate. A record states: "This indenture was made the 26th of April, 1820, between Mathew McNair and Lydia, his wife, of the town of Oswego, county of Oswego, State of New York, of the first part, and Elisha Bundy of Volney, in the said county, of the second part, in consideration of a sum of money purchased so many acres of land, subdivisions numbers 3 and 4 of lot 12 in township number 17 of Scriba's Patent." The combined acreage of lots 3 and 4 was 103.68 acres. The boundaries began with a distance of links from a certain beech tree, thence north to a beech tree numbered 12, then south to a hemlock, then north to the creek, then south again to an ash tree on the bank, then south to a stake and stone to a sugar maple tree, then back to beginning. This deed was witnessed by Ephriam Reed, who stated that he had given a separate and private examination, apart from her husband, to Lydia, and that the executice gave the deed freely and without any fear, threat, or compulsion of or from her said husband. The deed was allowed to be recorded by James Bell, one of the judges of Oswego County.

Why might James Bundy have come to Volney? In the book, The Town Meeting Country, by Clarence M. Webster, the author describes how a few settlers would take the good land beside a little river or hillside. When more people arrived there was no room for them and they founded another settlement. It was the same with mill sites, there simply wasn't room on this or that stream for more than one industry, so the ambitious man said, "To h—— with it! I'll find some water of my own!" Of course after the French and Indian wars were over there was a general migration inland as greater safety was assured. Also by 1810 the preliminary friction, affecting commerce and culminating in 1812 in war, may have induced James Bundy to search for a new home. Again in 1808 a bill in favor of the Erie Canal was introduced in the New York State Legislature. There was some doubt as to the best route; some advocating the western terminus to be on Lake Ontario, at the mouth of the Oswego river. Knowledge of this bill may have guided our pioneer's footsteps this way.

Journey Made By Water

How was the journey made from the Connecticut river to the Oswego river? The first 25 years of the 19th century found turnpikes in full swing. Roads were constructed westward from Albany. Eastern states were not far behind New York State which in the first 7 years of the 19th century had 88 incorporated road companies with a capital of over

$8,000,000. There were 20 large bridges and 1,000 or more miles of turnpike, either of earth, corduroy, plank or stone.

So James may have come with horses and wagons or even stage coach directly across Vermont to Albany and so on. Or, he might have been interested in the new water modes of travel, that is, canal boats and steam boats. We suspect he was! During the early 19th century transportation by flat boat was made possible on the Connecticut river by three canals, one of which was at Bellows' Falls. In the book, The Great White Hills Of New Hampshire, by Ernest Poole, we read: "As our settlers moved up the rivers inland, the Connecticut and Merrimac became their main highways. Down them on flat boats equipped with sweeps, poles and sails, they carried lumber and farm produce to the coast and brought back iron, salt, molasses and rum. The boats had little cabins and their wild crews, 'The River Gods', thrilled the girls with their ribald songs." So, James may have descended the Connecticut to Saybrook on Long Island Sound, where at that time it was probable he could take a small steamboat to the Hudson River where another steamboat could land him at Albany. From there land travel might conclude his trip.

The First Houses

Now at the journey's end James is in Volney. A log house his probable abode. Two children were born before the land purchase of 1820. But he and his wife had other children with them on their journey. One of these two children was Isaac who came to Orchard Lock with Elisha and lived with him until he started his own home. Other sons of James went west or settled nearby. The children mentioned were Isaac's and their home was built on the river bank two doors north of the church. This was their home around 23 years, 1835-1858. This house became the property of Elisha after Isaac's death in 1857. The original house burned but was rebuilt on the same foundation, but the barn is the same as the one where the children used to swing in the big doors.

A picture is quite clear of the parlor in the children's home. Windows curtained with muslin embroidered with white, the other half white embroidered with red to match. The bay-bed and chest-of-draws all purchased in the far away city of New York. The home, a model of convenience as illustrated by a small, low door behind the stove where one found a supply of wood. No going out in the cold in this house for fuel! Bundyville has a school. Then, in those days when winter came, the children's father collected the school enrollment, and conveyed them to the 'seat-of-learning'. Of course a sizeable contingent went with him from the start.

But this is but one story of Bundyville. An old Volney map on file gives location and names of families in 1867. There were other names — VanValkenburg, Dodge, Surdam and others. These also have a story. New Hampshire folks were alleged to be "the merriest of the Pilgrims." Have we ever heard these expressions:

The cake was done to a turn!
Where's your running mate?
Not enough to shake a stick at!
Uneasy, as a fish out of water.
Extreme anger—"Holy Mackeral!"
"Gosh all fishhooks".

No radios, no television, and yet entertainment was not lacking. Mr. Smith, the host, was a little hard of hearing. He urged his guest to have more johnny-cake.

"I've had a sufficiency"
"You've been a fishing!"

"I've had plenty"
"And you caught twenty."
"I'm quite satisfield"
"And you ate them all fried!"

I saw Esaw kissing Kate
And so you see we all three saw
For I saw Esaw, he saw me
And she saw, I saw, Esaw.

Song:

My grandmother lived on yonder little knowl
A fine old lady, so I've been told;
But she often cautioned me with care,
Of all false young men to beware.

Chorus:

Tim-me I, Tim-me O,
Tim-me umphy, dumphy day
But it's better to be married
Than to die an old maid.
Tim-me I, Tim-me O,
Time-me, umphy, dumphy day
For it's better to be married
Than to die an old maid.

Sources

Mrs. Isaac Bundy's Bible.

Bundyville Cemetery.

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History Of Oswego County—Johnson.

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Great White Hills Of New Hampshire—Poole.

Paths Of Inland Commerce—Hulbert.

Oswego County Clerk's Office.

Chronology

1642—First New England Education Law.

1643—John Bundy came to Plymouth, Mass.

1659—Walpole, N. H. Pop., 4 families.

1749—John Kilburn settled at Bellows' Falls.

1761—First stage coach in New Hampshire.

1762—James Bundy settled in Walpole.

1767—Walpole — 308 inhabitants.

1784—Covered bridge over Bellows' Falls—365 ft. long (Enoch Hale).

1793—First steam boat on Conn. River.

1793—First canal in America—around falls on Conn. River (S. Hadley, Mass.).

1795—John VanBuren settled near Battle Island.

1796—Canal at Turner's Falls on Conn. River.

1803—First suggestions came for Erie Canal.

1810—James Bundy, Jr., settled near Volney.

1806—Town of Volney created from part of Scriba Patent.

1815—Isaac Bundy born.

1816—Erie Canal started.

1820—N. Hamp. Historical Society—one of oldest in U. S. A.

1825—Erie Canal opened.

1857—Isaac Bundy's death.

1858—Isaac Bundy's home passed to Elisha.

1861—Harvey Alonzo Bundy, Co. C, 24th Reg., Oswego Co. Vol., lost life at Bull Run.
Leonard Miller.

1866—Armina Jane Bundy married Leonard Miller.

(Mrs. R. D. Cady is a great granddaughter of Nelson Bundy, Elisha's oldest brother.)

1847—Philo Bundy, a trustee of Village of Oswego.
(Not a close relative.)

1793—Lancaster Turnpike.

1800—Flat boat age.

1807—Clermont trial trip.

PART II—(BY ALICE B. MILLER)

In A Country Churchyard

Lift up the fallen headstone,
And cut away the grass;
Restore the faded lettering
That all may read who pass.
This man, a doughty pioneer,
With record on this stone,
Made history when he came this way
And called this place his home.

His sons and daughters round him lie,
Fair ladies in their time;
Their graves are now in stranger's hands,
Hands just like yours and mine.
But who knows when, from what far state,
Some man of parts may come, to see
If on this stone there's name and date
That he must have for his family tree?

And so we lift the fallen stone
And cut away the grass,
So as we work we are not alone,
For visions come and pass.
Things long forgotten live again:
Color and fragrance, sight and sound,
Each reproduced by a busy brain
As our senses react to the names around.

A name I see that brings to me
The odor of hay on an old barn floor.
A whitened beard in the wind swings free,
As the sunflowers nod by the open door.
A milk pail, yes, that goes with the picture:
This man, you know—he was never a bore.
His face, you see, is a friendly mixture;
But the smile in his eyes is a permanent fixture.

A gentle lady, with face most kind,
Another name now brings to me;
And a fragrance remembered well, I find
Filling the air—Ah! Yes! I see!
Nasturtiums growing in the sun!
She holds some in her hand, and we
Can see in her eyes a sparkle of fun
As she fills a bowl which she proffers me.

And now I ask you, can you recall
The flavor of raspberries by the old stone wall?
The sound of the bees in the hollyhocks?
In the early morning the crowing of cocks?
The quiver of horse flesh beneath your hand?
Then I know you can understand.
This is the story these old stones tell,
That is why we must treasure them well.

For who but we can ever remember
Husking the corn in chill November?
Sleigh bells and sleigh rides in cold December?
Ice skating in January, pussy willows in February,
Wild winds howling around in March,
Showers and flowers in April and May,
June with its roses, July's sunburnt noses,
August, the smell of the new-mown hay—
September the sunshine, October the moonlight,
All these—let's remember—lest we forget.

PART III—(BY MRS. R. D. CADY)

Notes on Life in Bundyville

This hamlet started out as Bundy's Crossing, later called Bundyville, and when there was a railroad station there, the railroad company shortened it to Bundys.

Sayings

There were many sayings current, such as:

"Better to wear out than rust out"

"Waste not, want not"

"Eat such as is set before you"

"Children should be seen and not heard."

Children

The rights of boys and girls were not particularly respected, but it was better than giving them all of the rights and no responsibilities.

The children had responsibilities, chores to do, even the smallest bringing in chips from around the chopping block, the boys keeping the wood box full, the girls feeding the chickens and washing dishes.

There was always water to be carried, weeding to be done, cows to be gone after, stock to be tended. The children liked to ride the horses bareback and take them to the watering trough. Later, there were ponies for the children with two-wheeled carts.

One back breaking job for the children was to pick up stones, load them on stone boats, which were a sort of raft without wheels or runners and drawn either by hand or by horse. These stone boats were also used to "snake wood" out of the wood lots both in summer and winter.

The children were brought up to respect their elders and say, "Yes ma'am, "No ma'am and "Thank you marm." "Mind your manners," was a familiar admonition. They obeyed implicitly and immediately and were well disciplined.

Father met the boys in the woodshed and used a strap vigorously. Sometimes he used the buckle end and welts were raised on the boy's back, but other boys never mentioned it when they went in swimming, for who knew whose turn it might be next?

Chairs were not too plentiful and the children often stood at the table for meals. When there was company, the children ate at the second table.

Education

District school. Next to the minister, the teacher commanded the most respect in the village. The teachers were always men at first, but gradually replaced by women. The teacher "boarded around," sometimes exceptionally pleased with a place, and other times very much discouraged over the way her host and hostess lived.

Until a school house was built, the education was provided by the home. Elisha Bundy gave the land for the school, the church and the cemetery. The first school was located across from the church (present site) and at the South of the lane leading to the (present) cemetery, called "Fairview." This school was later used for a house and the postoffice was established there in the kitchen. Mr. Surdam and his daughter, Delia, in charge, then the office was moved to Charles Decker's store at the corner of the main highway and the road leading to the railroad, then back to the original house with Delia Surdam Boyce as postmistress. The Rural Free Delivery seems to have been in service by 1904 or prior. In the

Conference minutes for the church, the minister is listed on an R. F. D. route in 1905, originally out of Fulton and by 1919 out of Oswego.

The postoffice house burned but was replaced by the present house on the site. Mrs. Boyce who served as postmistress much of the time is buried in the cemetery at Bundyville and lived from 1844 to 1912.

District School

In the original school, there were benches, then later wooden desks nailed to the floor. The teacher's desk was on a raised platform and resembled a pulpit. There were wood fires and it was customary for the teacher to attend to the fire, as well as do the janitor work. Slates were in common use, with no particular regard to sanitary conditions.

A letter dated Nov. 5, 1874, speaks of the new school house built near the railroad and which is still in use.

The teacher assisted with any special days in the church and "drilled the children." On the "Last Day of School" the teacher's desk was removed from the raised platform and the children recited "pieces" from this vantage point.

There were private schools in peoples' houses, where the teacher had a superior education and took day pupils or paying guests. The subjects taught were probably on a high school level, although not a full curriculum. Not many boys attended. The girls were taught music on a reed organ, painting and fine needlework, and crocheting. The girls were all taught at home to knit and sew, as well as do all kinds of cooking and housework.

Falley Seminary and Cazenovia Seminary were receiving students from Bundyville in the seventies. Sarah VanValkenberg wrote to Florence Bundy October 8, 1874 that the midterms in German did not go as well as she expected. Previous letters had been signed "Sadie" but from Cazenovia, they were signed "Sarah."

During the winter, some one usually came to conduct "Singing School" or "Writing School." Practically all of the young people attended these. The fine Spencerian hand written by the older generations testify to the worth of the writing school. The Singing School brought out talent and contributed much to the enjoyment of the youth of the village. The singing gave an inspirational lift to the music in church. Even when the youth took their turn at being "old people" the singing in the "class meetings" at the church showed the influence of the early training, with the booted men from the farms giving forth strongly with the bass notes.

Letters invariably began, "I take my pen in hand," and the girls often wrote entire letters in jingle.

At the close of school in the summer, the teacher and pupils always had a picnic, and the teacher usually gave the pupils her picture.

Religion

Elisha Bundy was born in 1797, and "experienced religion" in 1823. He died in 1873 and the pastor at that time was the Rev. Charles H. Boughton who wrote "lines on his death".

Bundyville was known as the "Volney Charge" and became part of the Onondaga Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, Bundy's Crossing. This Conference was formed in 1838.

Some of the ministers were scholarly, some rugged, some with social graces, others with not so much, some quiet, others the shouting kind, but all with the Spirit. One was plagued with false teeth, which he removed when warmed up to his subject. The fact that the dentures were

laid in sight on the pulpit did not disconcert the congregation.

The men and boys sat on one side of the church, and the women and girls on the other. This continued until the seventies when Jackson Bundy and his little boy crossed to the women's side and sat with his wife and daughter. Others followed until there was no longer a division.

Some of the ministers were musical and wielded a tuning fork, as there was no organ in the church for many years. In the eighteen eighties, Rev. W. H. Tryon wrote the words and music to a song. It was copyrighted in 1888 and published by Gibbons & Stone, 110 East Main St., Rochester, N. Y.:

"Have you heard the glad tidings
From over the river,
From the beautiful city, The
Jerusalem of old?
How Jesus our Savior, Has gone
to the Father,
To prepare a place for us, The
loved of His fold.

"They are building a mansion, In
that beautiful city,
Whose maker and builder, Has
riches untold.
Its walls are immortal, Its foundations eternal,
It belongs to our Father, I'm
one of His fold.

"This beautiful mansion, Not
hand made, but God made,
Is free from the law, It can
never be sold,
And Jesus has canceled , The
debt for His loved ones,
And He gives us an entrance,
I'm one of His fold.

"They say they have called it,
The home of the holy,
A haven of rest, For the sanctified soul,
And Jesus is waiting, Just over
the river,
For the loved of His Father,
Who belong to His fold.

"Come ye that labor, And are
heavy laden,
Come unto Me, and Find rest
to your soul,
Come to this mansion, Prepared
of my Father,
Come unto Me, And enter the
fold."

The Chorus has a lilting melody, that keeps singing in your mind,
"Oh, Jesus our Savior, Our blessed Redeemer,
Our joy and our Comfort, The
Hope of the soul.
He has washed us, and cleansed
us,
And blessed us and loved us,
And He made me His heir,
I'm one of His fold."

Mrs. F. Addie Wagoner, daughter of this minister (Rev. W. H. Tryon), lives in Oswego and has a copy of this music.

The people of the village took their religion seriously. The Bible was read in the homes night and morning, unless they were total unbelievers.

There were mottoes embroidered in wool and framed, such as "God Bless Our Home," but these probably did not come until after the pioneer period.

The Millerites

In 1844 there were Millerites who believed the end of the world would come on a certain day. One of the Bundy sister-in-laws, Saphronia Tiffany (Mrs. Samuel Baldwin), and her little girl dressed in white and waited all day upstairs in a barn door, ready to take off for heaven. The barn was at the foot of Seneca Hill on the river side. Her brother, George Tiffany, was an "unbeliever" and had a motto over his desk, "God Is Nowhere." A child trying to read the motto, broke up the long word and read, "God is Now Here."

People "went to church on Sunday to see the folks" as well

as to get religion. The church was not too warm in winter and they often took foot-warmers

One good deacon is said to have had the habit of taking snuff about half way through the sermon, standing to sniff and snapping the snuff box shut with a loud noise.

The sermons were long, the regular service being followed by a "Class Meeting" in which the members of the congregation related their experiences and asked for prayers. They were with power and the participants went away on a spiritual mountain top.

After two hours or more of church for adults, they had something for children, which was largely memorizing Bible chapters, including the "begat" sections, which while doubtless of interest to historical societies made hard learning for the children. However this training brought up substantial citizens with a knowledge of Scripture texts that in after life would shine out like letters of gold in time of stress. While the children were reciting their memory chapters, the older folks would visit the cemetery and bring flowers in season. They did not need to hurry home to prepare an elaborate Sunday dinner, as food was prepared on Saturday and only necessary work done on the Sabbath.

Camp Meetings. Sometimes noisy as they shouted, but even then not as noisy as a football game. Their religion was surely not a cold, formal type.

River Baptisms Drew Many

Baptisms. They had the usual kind in the church, but baptisms in the Oswego River were not uncommon. Shelters were made in which to dress and every one came from miles around. The service was reverent and dignified: the children quiet and decorus; and there was no running about, playing or whistling, for it was Sunday.

Strict. The preaching was of the fire and brimstone type, so it is fitting that now the village fire siren is in the steeple of the church.

Dancing was frowned upon, but the young folks had singing games, one was a Virginia Reel, and other resembled the caller's tune at square dances. They played these games even at Church Festivals and Donations.

Donations: To support the minister, they had "Donations" where every one brought food, as side pork, spare ribs, apples, horse feed, preserves, pickles, maple syrup, and just about anything a minister and his family could use. These were appraised and credited to his salary.

Sometimes these donations were held at the minister's home, and an unidentified person wrote the following:

"They carried the pie to the parson's house
And scattered his floor with crumbs,
And marked the leaves of his choicest books
With the prints of their greasy thumbs.
Next day, the parson went down on his knees,
Alas, but not to pray:
Oh No! 'twas to wipe the grease and dirt
From the carpet and stairs away."

The "donations" were often held in a neighbor's house, preferably one who had large rooms. The young people usually repaired to a separate room and had kissing games, as well as the singing-dancing games. The older folks indulged as well in kissing games, but as every one was some relation to every one else, it amounted to a family affair.

Plain Clothes For Women

Minister's wives were supposed to dress plainly, without jewelry: not given to frivolity, but some

of them had a keen sense of humor. One of the ministers, Elder DeVol, told this story on himself. Ministers had to do some farming if they survived. In the morning, his wife asked him twice to split some wood, but he was so busy getting to work with a man hired to help him get in his crops, that he did no splitting. They had two children, but much too small to chop wood, so when the hungry men came to dinner, they found a good meal on the stove and in the oven, but no fire. It did not take long to remember the wood, get the potatoes and meat cooked, and the biscut baked.

Water

Water was a problem. Houses were at first located at the mouth of a creek, particularly just south of the church, and one between Bundyville and Minetto at the level. There were springs, but if there were a well, it was dug by shoveling, not by a driller. Wooden eaves troughs on the houses led to rain barrels, and the wooden cisterns came much later.

Sometimes in dry weather, the women would have to go to the creek to wash. They always had large iron kettles for washing hog carcass, so these were brought to the creek, and hanging from a tripod, a fire was built under them for heating the water.

It is said there is an old epitaph in a New York State cemetery:
"Samantha lies beneath the sods
She carried water forty rods."

The women made their own soap to wash clothes and had black iron flats for ironing, which they called sad-irons. The term seems appropriate.

There were watering troughs fed by springs on the farms. These were at first hollowed logs both for the trough and for the conveyors. There were watering troughs by the side of the road. There is still one just north of Bundyville as the hill slopes toward the shore. This is made of concrete, which followed an iron trough, and before that one built of wood.

Lighting

Candles at first and of course they made their own, usually mutton tallow from their own sheep. They lighted the candles from the fireplace. Should the fire go out, it was necessary to go to a neighbor's to borrow hot coals. Later oil lamps came into common use lighted by matches. To conserve matches, paper lighters were rolled, and these would spread out, in a pitcher or vase, large ends up, on the mantle where the lamps were kept. It was quite a task every morning to wash the lamp chimneys and lantern globes, as well as to fill all lamps and lanterns with kerosene.

Fuel

The fuel was wood exclusively. They were particular about the kind of wood. Men cut down the trees and "snaked" them out of the woods, usually in winter, on sleds or stone boats. They cut and sawed the wood and piled it for seasoning. Usually two or more men worked together, sharing the wood.

There were usually two chopping blocks, one outside of the house and the other in the woodshed. There were logs for the fireplace; later chunks for the "chunk stoves" which were supposed to last all night. Later stove lengths for the kitchen fire, small split wood for the quick fires, and whittled curls of wood on the stick itself for kindling fires. These were placed in barrels in the woodshed. It took courage on the below zero mornings to start the fires—no thermostats, no oven controls. The cooks, however, were dextrous in moistening the finger and touching the oven door. The resultant

hiss would denote whether the oven were ready for bread or cake.

The houses were cold in winter. All outside doors were caulked with rags or paper, and all of the windows. The sides of the house were banked with dirt, gravel and straw. Sometimes straw and manure were used. which they claimed gave off heat. It would certainly give off something in the spring.

The bedrooms were cold and no provision was made for heating them, unless a stovepipe happened to pass through.

Before retiring, they ironed the sheets, wrapped the hot flatiron and used it for a foot warmer. Later bottles with hot water were used, and they were literally bottles of hot water. Sometimes the cork came out.

The upstairs rooms were not always finished and there would be cracks so that the snow blew in. The boys usually slept in those rooms. The older a man grew, when he told the story, the larger the cracks and the more snow drifted in on the bed.

Many rooms had alcoves, which were called bed sinks. They were just large enough for a bed and were convenient in cold weather.

Trundle beds were low beds for the children and would slide under the regular bed in the day time. Very convenient when space was at a premium in the log cabin—or to be near a fire.

Weaving

Many homes had looms on which they wove bedspreads and heavy draperies. These were in three colors, blue, pink and yellow.

There were also looms for weaving carpets—mostly from rags sewed in the home and rolled into balls. These rags were dyed. The women knew about dyes from bark and roots and dyed their own clothing as well as material for the carpets. The young men of the time sometimes dyed their moustaches, but this was too often like lipstick in reverse.

The rug pattern was the same for the entire floor, so many rows of yellows, so many blues, s omany blacks, etc.

The floors were cold, as there was no cellar, except the vegetable cellar which was usually under the kitchen and entered through a trap door in the floor. In winter it was not unusual to spread an older rag carpet over the regular one for warmth. The first layer on the floor was straw, which probably brought up the question as to when the straw should be renewed, but the straw vote always ended in a decision for Mother.

There were also hooked and braided rugs of rags which were quite artistic.

Even the lowly corn husk was used for braided mats for the door step, and for covering the soap stones which were used as foot warmers.

They made their own brooms, but of what I do not know. They used barnyard fowl wings for brushing up ashes on the hearth, and the softer feathers tied securely to a stick for a duster.

Clothes

They raised sheep for meat, then carded the wool, did their own spinning. They lined their coats with sheepskin.

If you had a coon skin cap, as most of the men did, first you caught the coon.

Animal skins were used for rugs, mostly from the ones shot by the men folks. Bear rugs were common as the bears frequently came to visit the pig pens. Robes for the sleighs were from various animals, but later all were buffalo robes bought at the store.

Mother was always knitting, stockings and mittens for the family. Women could knit by candle light and practically in the dark. Grandmother sat in the chimney

corner and knitted. The women as well as the men worked from sun-up to sun-down. Unless a person were sick, it was considered a disgrace to sleep in the daytime. Nothing was said about dozing in a chair. They believed "early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." With all of the work, the early pictures of the women show a serenity often lacking in the 20th century.

Mother made Father's suits and of course the hand-me-downs for the boys. After the pioneer days, store cloth was used for the best dresses and suits. They wore black for the death of relatives outside of the close family and by the time a woman was forty, she practically always wore black. If the question came up of wearing a color, the answer would be, "What would folks think? A woman of my age."

Sunbonnets were the customary headdress for the women. These were starched stiffly and the strings tied under the chin. On Sundays, they had straw bonnets in the summer and these were covered with velvet in the winter. They did not have to worry about the style. The little bonnets had strings, often of black velvet, and were quite chic.

Aprons, of course, but special kind for afternoons. The women did not feel dressed up without an apron, and wore them everywhere except to church. There were crocheted trimmings, embroidery and very specially made.

All Wore High Shoes

There were high shoes for every one and made by a itinerant shoemaker. The shoemaker came to the house and stayed until the family was outfitted. Later a village shoemaker lived at the point by Mad Creek where the Kingdom Road and East River Road meet (not far from the Van-Buren homestead.)

The men wore boots, also handmade, fine ones for Sunday, and heavier ones for week days. There were boot jacks to take off the boots. As they were fitted around the ankle they came off hard. Boot jacks were pieces of wood with two prongs in which the booted foot was placed to hold it firm, and then the wearer pulled.

There was no face powder, but the girls put feed in little cloth sacks and a powdery substance could be rubbed on their cheeks.

The men smoothed down their hair with mutton tallow, and later there was a hair oil. Home hair cuts were in order. As the men wore beards, they did not have to shave much.

Cooking

They raised the wheat, took the grist to mill, sometimes as far as Rome, N. Y. At first they made the trip on foot, and later the horse was loaded with the saddle bags, but the driver walked most of the way. There were no bakers, and each householder made a "starter" or borrowed from a neighbor. Rye, brown barley and saffron bread, the latter colored from the stigmas of saffron plant, something like a crocus. Salt rising bread was also greatly enjoyed, but that took quite a long time. Buckwheat pancakes were set each night during the winter, added to each night thereafter during the winter and plate sized pancakes made for breakfast. They were the kind that would "stick to the ribs." There was always plenty of maple syrup as they made that themselves. The maple sugar was used largely for baking. The bread was sliced at the table by the father, and there were no slices left to dry, for father cut only such as they would use.

Coffee was ground at home, and if they did not have coffee, they used chicory roots, which grew as a weed, even as now.

There was also a spice grinder in the home, and of course a nutmeg grater.

Seasonings — They had their

own herb gardens and there was plenty of fennel, mint, sage, dill springs, parsley and celery tops. The herbs included many medicinal herbs, which were dried, placed in cheese cloth bags, or hung on hooks in the herb closet. The closet was equipped with shelves and sometimes draws, and there was always a window. If some one were sick, they were given the proper herb for healing; and if that were not known, well, the herb tea wouldn't hurt.

Shop On Every Farm

Each farm had a shop which was heated with some sort of stove and here the farm tools were made and repair.

Ox yokes were made originally in the cabins, and even now an occasional oxshoe is unearthed when the farmers are plowing in Bundyville.

Yokes to fit over the shoulders of a man were common, and were used principally for carrying a pail of water on each side.

The tools were home-made and as much wood used in their construction as possible.

Grindstones were turned by plenty of ice on the river for their winter meat.

Pipes Followed Tea

Tea—Quite a bit of "yard tea" was used, meaning the herbs grown in the yard. Rose hip tea was a favorite, as well as catnip tea. Whatever the kind of tea, it was saucered, even as George Washington. When the tea was cool enough to please, it was poured back into the cup.

In the afternoon, the ladies of the neighborhood might join in drinking a bowl of tea. These were like small soup bowls without handles. When they had imported tea, it was served in china teapots and poured into cups to match. Even the homes with very few comforts had a tea set, and the pouring of the tea was quite a ceremony.

After the tea drinking, the ladies would light their clay pipes. When that generation grew older, smoking had gone out of fashion, and they would hide their pipes in their apron pockets; then the small children would be set to watch that Grandma didn't get burned.

Flowers — They were fond of flowers and took some inside for the winter months. They grew tomatoes and called them "love apples" but did not eat them.

Butter and Cheese—Clabbered milk was a delicacy, and believe it was the cream which had been set aside to sour before churning. Cottage cheese was made in the kitchen, and very few made the large cheeses to slice.

They churned butter in wooden churns, dashed up an down by hand. The children took turns, and found it an arm aching task.

Materials — There were plenty of eggs, butter, milk and cream for cooking. All cooking was done the hard way, the recipes say "beat with a fork 15 to 20 minutes." No electric mixers.

Pickles—were always on the table, even for breakfast. As they ate a great deal of pork, pickles were an appropriate accompaniment. There were pickled cucumbers, both green and ripe, dill pickles, pickled beets and a mustard pickle as well as picalilly. These were packed in earthen jars with cider vinegar, which they made. Horseradish roots were grated by hand.

A Crock Factory

Fruit was also preserved in eathern crocks. Later a factory for manufacturing earthen crocks and jugs was built on what is now the Plaza gas station in Fulton, N. Y. Dried fruits were common. Apples were cored, pared, sliced and strung on strings through the holes. After drying in the sun and over the fireplaces or stoves, these were put away for dried apple pies and sauce. Dried wild berries, string beans, peas, corn, shell beans all demanded much time and attention from the wo-

men folk, and were stored in the herb closet to be brought out for berry dumplings and other good things in the winter. Pork and beans meant dried string beans boiled with pork, preferably salt pork.

Fresh fruit juices in summer, but none in winter. Even in the eighteen-eighties, children had one orange at Christmas time and did not see another orange until the next Christmas rolled around. (The citrus people had not begun their advertising campaigns). They ate their vitamins.

Apples—There were plenty of apples all winter, although not the varieties in common use today. Greasy pippins, sheep noses, Tallman sweets, and for keeping qualities until Spring, the Ben Davis. Apple sorting was a children's task, and for the men on stormy days.

Storing of Fruits and Vegetables — The vegetables of all kinds were stored in the vegetable cellar, and cabbage stumps were stuck in loose dirt as though they were growing.

There was usually a spring in the cellar to provide moisture for the fruit and vegetables, stored there.

Chickens, Ducks and Geese — Each family raised their own, as well as the feed for them.

Goose For New Year's

New Year's Day was the occasion for a goose for dinner. The geese feathers were preserved for the best feather ticks and pillows. A bride-to-be did all of the work from raising goslings to filling the pillows.

Fish and Meat — There were plenty of fish in the Oswego River and if the supply on hand was overabundant, they were put in salt brine and kept for a while. As the men fished through the ice in winter, there was a good supply.

They butchered their own hogs, using the bleeding method. After the hog was stuck with the knife, it was allowed to run around the door yard until it fell. Some mess! "Squeal like a stuck pig," is an expression dating back to that method. Chickens were killed by chopping off the heads and letting them jump around until they dropped.

Hams and bacon were smoked in small stone smoke houses. Sausages and head cheese were made by the women-folk, and odd pieces were put in the pork barrel with brine.

Meat was packed in the snow during the winter, and there was plenty of ice on the river to cut during the winter.

Every family had a heifer killed for its winter meat.

They had their own sheep, so there was a variety of meat, without the co-operation of the large packing houses. However the whole family worked hard to produce the meat and other food.

When a deer was killed, the families of the neighborhood shared the meat.

Nuts — Walnuts, chestnuts, beechnuts and butternuts, — all free for the gathering, but it meant early rising and plenty of back breaking work. Butternut cakes were really something!

pedaling one foot, and a can of water dripped over the stone when knives or scythes were sharpened.

Joel Bundy First Smith

The village blacksmith was Joel Bundy. As he died in 1845, his equipment must have been crude. He had his own charcoal pit for fuel for the blacksmith shop. This was north of the creek. The blacksmith shop was on the south side of the creek. His house is still standing, although in the wind of November 1950, a tree fell upon it.

Cabinet work such as chairs, tables, footstools, lounges and bers were made by the men of the family and without benefit of an Industrial Arts Course. Some of the early pieces were put to-

gether with wooden pins instead of nails.

The beds were cord beds, that is cords woven back and forth across the bed, instead of the slats that came later.

A straw tick or a corn-husk tick went on first for a mattress, then a feather tick. It was quite a trick to make a bed well, for the straw or husk tick had to be shaken up, then the feather tick shaken and smoothed. After the covers were straightened, the spread was put into place and smoothed with a wooden slat. In after years, yardsticks were used. Woe to the youngster who bounced on that bed!

Utensils

At first most of the utensils were iron. They were used in the fireplaces. Even after stoves were common, the iron cooking dishes were preferred, spiders and skillets, kettles including tea kettle, and pancake griddles.

The best cutlery had bone handles, while the everyday knives and forks had wooden handles, which were scoured with wood ashes. Some of the forks were two-tined.

During the Civil War, spoons were made of coin silver.

The dishes were largely Ironstone ware imported from England. There was early American glass which is now a collector's item.

Mustache cups were common, for the men wore the handle bar mustaches, and it was quite a problem to manage them when drinking, from a cup.

Neighbors

Without neighbors, there could not have been so much building. They helped in house raising, barn raising, hog butchering, or whatever large projects was underway.

Harvey Bundy was born in 1820 in a log cabin one of the first at Bundyville (grandfather of Arlo Bundy who is in charge of Riverside Cemetery).

By the time Jackson Bundy was born in 1829, the family had built with the help of neighbors a two-story frame house on what is now the County Jail Farm. The road went a little to the west of the present River Road, but traces of it are still seen (1951) where the cows pasture.

Elisha Bundy, who did the most for Bundyville, built the finest house, a two story frame dwelling two doors north of the church. The original house was burned, but Elisha rebuilt on the same foundation and with minor additions, it still stands today.

The neighobrs had time in those days to spend a day at each other's homes or with some of the relatives, from after milking in the morning until time for the evening milking.

When the moon was full, a neighbor's family often spent an evening at another's house, but the distance was too great for just dropping in.

The evenings at home were lively anyway, as there were so many in the family. James Bundy originally came to Bundyville with his family, and his two sons who remained in Bundyville had 9 and 10 children respectively.

They sat in the evening with a dish of apples, usually eaten with the skins, but sometimes peeled, seeing who could get the largest paring without breaking.

If romantically inclined, they threw the paring over the shoulder to see what letter it formed as it lay on the floor. That would be the initial of the future husband.

The men whittled a great deal more like carving. They watched in the woods for certain branches and crooks, which could be turned into faces for canes. They also whittled and smoothed utility articles like boot jacks, rolling pins and wooden potato mashers.

A dishpan full of poped corn was a usual accompaniment.

Story telling flourished, often of their own pioneer times, of com-

ing upon a panther in a tree, but looking steadily at the beast and backing away safely.

Record Hikes

Of walking to Rome, N. Y., with a bag of grist to be milled, and later to Pompey Hill, (near Syracuse).

Of taking a message to Utica from Fort Ontario in one day walking the entire distance. Even counting two nights and a day as one day, it makes quite a story, but those early settlers were strong.

Of trouble with the British soldiers from Fort Ontario who came foraging, and were sometimes taken by the collar and thrown over the fence.

Nelson Bundy's wife was Elizabeth Tiffany who was one year old when her father Samuel Tiffany came to Scriba in 1801. As Samuel's wife was a bush, she was doubtless sister of Asabel Bush who came at the same time as the Tiffanys. This must have turned the stories to tales of New England.

Another "good deed" of the neighbors was their help in time of sickness. There was no thought or mention of pay, but perhaps they were given spare ribs *.

There was always some one in the neighborhood who could attend to the last sad rites of what was called "laying out the dead." and pennies on the dead man's eyes were a literal fact. An undertaker was often not available.

Entertainment

They were hay rides to neighbors farms or to a hall for dancing.

Quilting bees, where the women quilted and the young people played games.

Corn husking bees, where the people really husked corn and looked for red ears, which if found, entitled the boy to kiss the girl of his choice.

The Almanac was consulted before deciding on a date for an event, as moonlight was necessary with their inadequate lanterns.

Ice cream festivals on the church lawn, where the women boiled the custard for the ice cream and the men froze it in hand operated freezers. The difficulty in keeping ice made the events not too frequent, but in later times there were private icehouses, and sawdust placed between the layers of ice.

During the summer "Reunions," in people's yards, preferably of those who lived on the river bank. Ice cream was the favorite dessert. Sometimes the children in playing about tipped over the freezer and the salt became mixed with the ice cream. The children are said to have been very thirsty after such an episode.

Dancing at Inns — Fiddlers furnished the music, especially at weddings. After the ceremony, the wedding party took a fiddler and went to an Inn, such as the VanBuren homestead, or one near Fulton known as the Van Valkenburgs. The first couple said to have been married in Oswego were Elizabeth Althouse and Peter VanBuren. They were married by a misionary clergyman who came occasionally to conduct religious services. They went to VanValkenburgs and had a dance for their friends. Wedding presents were practically unknown. The granddaughter of this first couple married in Oswego was Cynthia Bundy who was married on April 13, 1853 and she was given a chopping knife the blade being made from an old scythe. This was considered an appropriate gift, especially as it was made by a young man who had learned the blacksmith trade from

*Sickness continued—They did not know about many diseases, the general list being a cold, inflammation of the bowels and consumption, which might be lingering, quick or galloping. Mothers studied the doctor book and the Bible.

her father, Joel Bundy. (David Grommon).

Showers were unheard of except as a donation for some very poor family, or after a fire had destroyed the family's belongings. The regular dances were by no means without their disturbances, as the boys often imbibed too much. There were no automobile acidents, for "Old Nell" could go straight home.

"Molasses Pulls" were favorite pastimes, and most homes had a hook over which to throw the candy and pull it.

Sugaring off in the springtime was interesting especially when they fed some to the dog, and he could not get his jaws apart.

Horse racing on the river ice. As they were direct descendants of Hollanders, they ice skated. They are said to have skated in their bare feet, but any skates they had were home made.

Courting

As there was only one heated room, the young man had to wait until the family retired, and was said to be "sitting up with the girl." That was as conclusive as an engagement. The procedure was doubtless the same as the more modern phrase, "Pitching a little Woo."

The girls were married young, and a girl of eighteen or more was felt to have been "Left on Pa's Hands."

Money

At first there was not much use for money, simply trading what you had for what you didn't have.

Later the women had the butter and egg money, but usually these and other farm products were turned in to the store for groceries and supplies not raised on the farm.

In the fall, when the produce was sold, there was cash for what was needed, and then not much more until the next fall.

As living conditions became more complicated, and the large families divided up the land, some of the farmers turned to canaling in the summer to balance the budget. Some were quite successful in both lines.

By the time the O. & W. railroad went through Bundyville, strawberry picking became quite an occupation. The pickers lived at the farm during the season. They began picking at dawn, picked until noon when the train went through, rested and then were ready to dance most of the night. The boys slept in the barn on the hay.

Another means of earning money was "Hop Picking." The pickers went on the Ontario and Western Railroad to the vicinity of Oneida. They could also travel by the way of Syracuse, but would have to change cars. DeMalina Bundy on October 18, 1874 wrote to Florence Bundy, who was visiting in Syracuse, that she had intended to stop in Syracuse but was so tired out that she came right home. They called the work "Hopping."

Peddlers

Later itinerant peddlers introduced tin dishes, and their wares were often attached to the outside of their covered one-horse carts and clattered as the horse jogged along.

Then pack peddlers walked from farm to farm, were given a meal wherever they happened to be, and stayed all night where dark overtook them. These peddlers carried about everything, needles, pins, dress goods, and it was quite an event to have the contents of his pack spread about with the whole family gathered to inspect.

Itinerant dentists were often found walking through the country. The dental chair was just any household chair and the anesthetic was the person's own grit. When pain killers were introduced, they were not too successful,

but the dentists exhibited at the County Fairs and extracted teeth to demonstrate.

County Fairs

When County Fairs came into being, they were well patronized for just about every body exhibited their products, whether farm produce, elaborately pieced quilts, hand made articles or baked goods.

The whole family went in high democrat wagons which had three seats. They took their lunch and made a complete day from morning milking to evening milking. The advertisers at the fair distributed picture cards, and they were pasted in scrap books and kept indefinitely.

Travel in a more elite manner was in a coach, where the driver sat in the open, while the family sat inside on two seats facing each other. The Littlefields had such a coach.

Later there was the surrey with the fringe on top.

Now life in Bundyville is the same as anywhere else. Telephones, television sets, autos and electrical appliances. Whether better citizens are being raised with more modern improvements and increased opportunities is left for the people a hundred years from now to judge and make a report to the Oswego County Historical Society.

Edwin Bundy, of Hamburg, an official of the Niagara-Mohawk Power Corp., Buffalo, is a lineal descendant of the founder of Bundyville.

Four Civilian Visitors to Early Oswego, 1750-1804

(Paper Given Before Oswego County Historical Society, Nov. 20, 1951 by Miss Elizabeth Simpson of Mexico, Vice-President)

The story of early Oswego, largely concerned, as it is, with the trading-post and the forts, has generally been drawn from the military records. But it must be remembered that numerous civilians, of greater or lesser fame, made their way in the 18th and early 19th centuries to this remote frontier post and left records of their impressions from a different point of view.

In this society's Year Book of 1949, you can find Mr. Waterbury's account of the Oswego visits of the Roosevelts' surveyor, Cockburn, of the Hollander Francis Adrian Van der Kemp, the French agents of the Castorland Company, of Benjamin Wright, George Scriba's surveyor, the Van Valkenburgs of Oswego Falls, the Duke of Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, and of Joshua Stow and his company of surveyors in the years 1791-1796. Later in the same Year Book is to be found the account of the botanist, John Bartram's stay in Oswego in the summer of 1743.

Tonight I want to add the names of four other civilians who visited early Oswego—Pehr (Anglicized Peter) Kalm, distinguished Finnish scientist from Sweden in 1750; Annie MacVicar, a little girl from Scotland during the winter of 1760-61; Henry Glen, United States Congressman from Schenectady in July 1796; and Alexander Wilson, ornithologist and poet from Philadelphia in 1804.

Pehr (Peter) Kalm

In the late 1740's, the Royal Academy of Sciences of Sweden was concerned with an effort to discover and import from other northern countries seeds of useful plants and trees that would flourish under climatic conditions prevailing in Sweden. More food and fodder were needed for folk and cattle; industrial firms were seeking dye stuffs from abroad. There was a desire, too, to find a cold-tolerant mulberry tree to foster an independent silk industry. It was proposed that a naturalist be sent to Siberia, Iceland, or some other northern country to discover and bring back such treasures. At the suggestion of Carl Linne, known to us as Linnaeus, father of plant classification, North America was chosen as the country to be visited and his pupil Pehr Kalm, a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences, was the scholar sent on the long and difficult expedition.

According to one of his modern biographers, Adolph B. Benson, recently of the Department of Scandinavian Languages at Yale, Kalm was preeminently fitted for the appointment, "possessing courage, knowledge, discrimination, traveling experience, strong physique, a kindly and diplomatic personality; a scientist with an alert, open and reasonably suspicious mind, one who could separate the chaff from the wheat in the narratives of the natives and settlers and who possessed an objective, independent judgment, a keen observation and a faculty of scrupulous accuracy in recording his findings", in 1746 a man of 30 years. The Academy could hardly

have failed to make such a paragon its unanimous choice.

Pupil Of Linnaeus

Pehr Kalm was the son of a clergyman from Osterbotten, Finland, but was born in Sweden in 1716 when his family were refugees there during the wars of Charles X. The boy matriculated at 19 as a graduate student in Abo Academy, Finland, then a part of Sweden. He seemed inclined to major in theology; but Bishop Johan Brovellius, who was not only a divine but a naturalist, detected another bent of Pehr's mind and turned him to the natural sciences, gaining for him the friendship of Sten Carl Bjelke who defrayed the young student's expenses on scientific travels in Finland and Sweden.

At Uppsala Kalm became the pupil of Linnaeus and with his teacher traveled through Russia and the Ukraine. Kalm's interest turned especially to medicinal and dye plants and he gathered seeds of such for the Academic garden at Uppsala. In 1745 he was elected to the Royal Academy of Sciences and the next year, without examination, he was granted the title of Docent in Natural History and Economy, i. e. practical husbandry or agriculture. He was made a full professor of this subject at Abo in 1747, the first to occupy that chair. The University almost immediately granted him leave of absence for the American venture.

Kalm Franklin's Friend

With Lars Jungstrom, expert gardener, Kalm left Uppsala "in the name of the Lord right after dinner" on October 5th (old style) 1747 for England via Goteborg and embarked December 11th. Driven on to the shore of Norway by a storm, Kalm spent his time until February 8, 1748 in various studies and investigations but arrived in London on the 17th of February. There he had to wait six months for a ship bound for America. He devoted these months to gaining the acquaintance of prominent Englishmen, acquiring valuable letters of introduction to American scientists, and improving his command of the English language. Finally on August 5th, the two travelers set sail on the "Mary Gally" under command of Captain Lawson and had a pleasant voyage that enabled them to study sea-weeds, fowls, and porpoises and to measure the temperature of sea and air with the newly invented Swedish centigrade thermometer. On September 13, the "Mary Gally" grounded on a sandbar off the Maryland shore; but she was refloated and docked at Philadelphia two days later—a year and ten days after the travelers left Uppsala.

The letters of introduction which Kalm brought with him enabled him to establish friendly relations at once with Benjamin Franklin, John Bartram the botanist, and others who could advise him as to his routes of travel and the habitat of the plants which he was seeking. He devoted the rest of the year 1748 to the collection of seeds in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, especially in the old Swedish settlements, where he met congenial friends and occupied the vacant pulpit of the Swedish church at Raccoon, now Swedenburg, New Jersey.

Oswego Chapter Missing

In the following year, 1749, Kalm traveled up the Hudson and along Lake Champlain into the Province of Quebec, everywhere investigating all phases of life as it was lived in the colonies, everywhere searching for plants suited to Swedish conditions. On this trip he spent some time in Albany and wrote in his diary for June 21, 1749: "I intend to give a more minute account of (Oswego) in my Journal for the year 1750." If

this account was ever written, it must have been reserved for the fourth volume of the Journal which was written but never published and was lost with all other papers of Prof. Kalm in the fire of 1827 at the University of Abo. A few years ago the diary notes for this volume were discovered in the University Library at Helsingfors, Finland. They were published in 1929 and translated and published in this country by Prof. Benson in 1937. Even in this diary the promised minute accounty of Oswego is not to be found.

In view of the loss of all unpublished papers of Prof. Kalm in the 1827 Abo fire, it has been the hope of Dr. Carl Skottsberg, President in 1949-1950 of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences, who selected Pehr Kalm as the subject of his Presidential Dissertation and of a longer Biography, that letters written by Kalm to Bartram or Franklin might have been preserved and could be found even now in this country. But in spite of long and interesting correspondence with most cooperative and helpful authorities, only one such letter has come to light—a rather unimportant communication written in Quebec to Bartram in 1749 and printed in 1849 in Darlington's "Memorials of Bartram and Marshall." I have been assured by both Prof. Benson and Dr. Francis Harper, well-known authority on the Bartrams, that this is, without doubt, the only letter written by Kalm to be found today in the United States.

Locates Prized Manuscript

At the end of my search, I was told by Mr. R. N. Williams 2nd, Director of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, of the existence in the society's files of a sixteen page manuscript in Kalm's own fine script, dated July 1, 1755 in which he made a report to "The Most Reverend Bishop and The Most Excellent Consistory" of the University of Abo on his experiments with plants whose seeds he had collected in North America. Since this report was unknown in Sweden and Finland, a photostatic copy was at once ordered by the Academy of Sciences in Stockholm. But for us it gave no new information about Oswego.

While in Quebec Kalm had planned to travel by way of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario to Forts Frontenac, Oswego, and Niagara, and to Niagara Falls; but the French authorities, although they had offered him every courtesy and opportunity for research in Quebec, refused him a passport to visit French Forts Frontenac and Niagara, because he had entered French territory from an English Colony and would return there. He was, therefore, forced to return to Albany by way of the Champlain valley as he had come. A note in the diary for October 7, 1749, reveals that he did have a passport from Fort St. Frederic at Crown Point; but he made no use of it because he thought it would be impossible to get anyone at Oswego to take him to Niagara.

Kalm's Arrival in Oswego

The trip to Oswego was eventually made in the summer of 1750. Of it Kalm wrote to the Royal Librarian of Stockholm, Carl Christoffer Gjorwell: "Well, after a very difficult and quite adventurous journey on horseback through the territory of the Iroquois I finally arrived on the 13th of August, 1750 (new style) at Fort Oswego belonging to the English, located on the Great Lake Ontario which more resembles a sea than a lake. This lake is situated between the 42nd and 44th degrees north latitude; its length from East to West is about 80 French miles and its breadth is about half that distance. In this lake there are only a few small islands to be found, and these near the shores; there are none farther out. The water is as fresh as spring water, clean,

in some places over sixty fathoms deep. It never freezes over in winter and ice forms only near the shores."

For Oswego itself, we have to depend on occasional notes scattered through the Journal, written before this visit. e.g. "Oswego which is the trading center of the English on Lake Ontario is situated at 44 degrees 47' Lat. according to the observations made by a French engineer." In Albany Kalm wrote: "Many of the merchants in Albany send a clerk or agent to Oswego, an English trading town on Lake Ontario, to which the Indians come with their furs. The merchants from Albany spend the whole summer at Oswego and trade with many tribes of Indians who come with their goods. Many people have assured me that the Indians are frequently cheated in disposing of their goods especially when they are drunk and sometimes they do not get one-half or even one-tenth of the value of their goods. A native who lives to the West of Montreal might travel more than 200 to 300 Swedish miles past the French colonies to Oswego with his fur products there to sell them at a low price, just for the satisfaction of once becoming drunk from rum."

Comments on Oswego Trees

From the Journal we learn a little about the trees growing at Oswego on which we regretted that John Bertram failed to report in his published "Observations." Kalm quotes Bartram as saying that near Oswego he had come upon a mulberry tree and one single specimen of "Arbor tulifera" or Tuliptree which the settlers called "Old Woman's Smock" because the leaves resembled such a garment. These leaves were held to be a remedy for the gout and the roots of the tree were "as efficacious in fever as "Jesuits' bark or chinchona." On September 30, 1748, Kalm had written: "I asked Mr. Bartram whether he had observed that the trees and plants decreased in size in proportion as they were brought farther to the north. Bartram replied that it was true of a plant adapted to a warmer climate, but equally true of one adapted to a colder climate, if moved south." Kalm says that on his own travels he had frequent proof of this. "A sassafras growing in Pennsylvania south of 40 degrees Lat. becomes a pretty tall and thick tree, but is so small at Oswego between 43 degrees and 44 degrees it hardly grows two or four feet high." So too of the Tuliptrees. "In Pennsylvania it grows as high as our tallest oaks and firs and its girth proportional to its height. But about Oswego it is not above twelve feet high and no thicker than a man's arm."

Oswego Toothache Cure

It was at Oswego that Kalm learned from the wife of Captain Lindesey, then English commander at Ft. Oswego, that the chief remedy used by the Iroquois for the toothache caused by hollow teeth. Mrs. Lindesey assured him that she knew from her own experience that the remedy was effectual. "The Indians take the seed capsules of the Virginia Anemone as soon as the seed is ripe and rub them in pieces. It will then be rough and look like cotton. This cotton-like substance is dipped in strong brandy and then put into the aching tooth which commonly ceases to ache soon after. The brandy is biting and the seed of the Anemone ,as most of the seeds of the "Polyandria polygyma" class of plants, are bitter. These, therefore, both together help to assuage the pain."

Kalm Rows to Niagara

On August 17th, after four days in Oswego, Kalm set out on the Lake for Niagara. "From Oswego I made my way along the coasts of this lake in a flat bot-

tomed boat or battoe, as far as Fort Niagara, then belonging to the French, and where I arrived after six days of rowing on August 23rd." After his visit to Niagara Falls, Kalm wrote a description of them for the Royal Library at Stockholm where it is still intact. He also sent a less detailed and less scientific account in English to Benjamin Franklin. Of the latter version Kalm wrote: "In number 1136 of the "Pennsylvania Gazette" for September 20, 1750, Mr. Franklin published under my name my whole article on Niagara Falls, the first description in English of the falls based on first hand information, entitled "A letter from Mr. Kalm, a gentleman of Sweden now on his travels in America, to his friend in Philadelphia, a particular account of the Great Fall of Niagara." This was reprinted in the London "Gentleman's Magazine" of January 1751, 21:15-19 and the next month an engraving of the falls appeared in the same magazine, said to be the first view published after Father Hennepin's of 1697, founded on an actual view. Another reprint of the article was published and bound with Bartram's "Observations" in London in 1751, under the title "A Curious Account of the Cataract of Niagara." The engraving of the falls, now to be found in the 1895 reprint of the "Observations," may seem even more "curious" for it shows hanging from Goat Island down to the foot of the cataract a ladder which had been made of Linden tree bark by Indians, grounded and marooned on the island, in their desperate efforts to escape death by starvation. Unable to breast the swirling waters after they climbed down their ladder, they climbed back in despair but were rescued from the upper end of the island by men from Fort Niagara. Kalm testifies that these Indians were still alive at the time of his visit, twelve years after their ordeal.

In October 1750, Kalm returned to Philadelphia and married Anna Margaretha Sjomar, widow of the late Pastor Sardin of the Swedish church of Raccoon, N. J. whose pulpit he had filled on his earlier visit. On February 13, 1751, the bride and groom sailed for Sweden, Dr. Kalm sadly disappointed because his work was unfinished, nor did he ever realize his hope for a second trip of exploration in North America. They arrived in England on March 23rd and in Stockholm, June the third.

Amazing Breadth of Knowledge

In the years from 1753 to 1761, three years of his "Travels" were published, "En Resa till Norra America," written in somewhat the style of an informal diary. A mere list of a few of the subjects of report and discussion amazes one by the range of Kalm's knowledge and interest. In addition to the shrubs, trees, flowers and seeds, the cereals and medicinal herbs, all of which were primary objects of his search, he wrote of American geography, topography, geology, history, antiquities, even inscriptions in the far West conjectured to refer to travels by shipwrecked forces of Kubla Kahn or followers of the Dalai Lama. He wrote of architecture and building materials, of servants wages, monetary systems, mediums of exchange, of windmills, fortresses, cabbage salad, domestic animals, beaver dams, destructive insects, the changeableness of the climate, the vocal organs of bull frogs, the cry of the whippoorwill, seventeen year locusts, New Jersey mosquitoes, and the bedbug which seems to have been ubiquitous in the Colonies. He was troubled by the carelessness and wastefulness of farmers, deforestation, lack of soil, fish and game conservation, by the poor teeth of the settlers which he attributed to their habit of drinking tea too hot from the cup instead of cooling it in the saucer. There seems to be nothing from fences

and cider presses to word formation in the Algonquin language and Roman Catholicism in Quebec which escaped his observation and investigation. The University-educated Kalm, unlike the the self-educated Bartram, could never be reproached for omitting any detail of interest to his readers. These reports were, and still are, recognized as one of the authoritative sources of information on colonial North America of the eighteenth century. They were translated into English, Dutch, German and French.

American Transplants Survived

Aside from the preparation of his Journal and his "Flora Americae Septentrionalis" for publication with no secretarial assistance, Prof. Kalm worked hard to propagate his American plants; how hard we can learn from the translation of the Pennsylvania manuscript made for us by Mr. Sven Ahman, New York representative of Stockholm's largest daily newspaper, the "Dagens Nyheter." The great scientist was obliged to cope with Abo's lack of an experimental garden, with newly tilled hard clay soil, full of all kinds of weed seeds, inexperienced workmen who couldn't tell a weed from a precious American seedling, short chilly summers, winters "like an terenity" often without a sufficient blanket of snow to protect small and tender plants, inadequate appropriations, and the nagging consciousness of official criticism of the expense involved, in spite of his personal contribution of time, labor, and money. Still he was able to report that seventy-two American varieties of plants were growing and some were proving hardier than the native plants.

In the midst of these labors and annoyances, Dr. Kalm continued to deliver his Academic lectures and presided over 146 disputations, including six American subjects such as the Esquimaux and Dye Plants. He was offered but declined, a professorship in Botany at St. Petersburg and was elected to membership in many national and foreign learned societies. In 1757 he was ordained as a Lutheran clergyman and in 1768 receievd his Doctor's degree in Theology from the University of Lund. In 1775 he was suggested as a candidate for the Bishopric of Abo. He was the first clergyman to receive a decoration from the Crown of Sweden.

This scholar whose life was so rich in scientific endeavor died in 1779 at the age of sixty-three.

Annie MacVicar

Our second visitor, Annie MacVicar, was not yet six years old when she came in the autumn of 1760 to Fort Ontario and it was almost fifty years later before, as Mrs. Grant, she described life at the Oswego post in her book "Memoirs of an American Lady," published in London in 1808.

In the ten years since the visit of Peter Kalm to Fort Oswego, Fort Ontario had been built by the British, destroyed by the French under Montcalm, and rebuilt by the British. In the autumn of 1760 it was garrisoned by the 55th British regiment, commanded by Major (later Colonel) Alexander Duncan of Lundie. The regiment at that time was made up almost entirely of Scots and among the Captains was Duncan MacVicar. He had come to America with his regiment in 1757. His wife and little girl had followed the next year and had been living in Claverack on the Hudson and more recently in Albany under the kindly eye of Madame Schuyler, aunt of General Philip Schuyler and the "American Lady" of Mrs. Grant's later book.

But in October 1760, Capt. MacVicar brought his family to the Fort by the usual water route, "the first females above the very lowest ranks who had ever penetrated so far into this remote wilderness," wrote Mrs. Grant. She devoted three detailed chapters of the "Memoirs" to this journey and the life at the post through the following winter.

The MacVicars' last stop on their boat trip was at Fort Brewerton, then manned by a detachment of the 55th. And there they were caught in an early snowstorm that delayed them for two days.

The next day, their last before arriving at Oswego, was difficult for men had to "go before and break the river ice with paddles all the way."

At Fort Ontario they found very deep snow and, according to Annie's memory, "when once winter set fully in, Oswego became a perfect Siberia cut off even from all intelligence of what was passing in the world." The Fort seemed to the child a large place, built entirely of earth and great logs i.e. the ramparts for the barracks were of wood, cold and comfortless. Surrounding the walls was much fertile ground that had been cleared of timber for the construction of the works.

Duncan's House on Wheels

The Commandant, Major Duncan, "a learned, humane, judicious, humourous but gouty Scot," lived in a house of his own, consisting of two rooms and mounted on wheels for convenience in moving from one part of the reservation to another. One room was a bedroom filled with a great variety of stores and the other a breakfast-parlor and, at the same time, a library with globes, quadrants, mathematical instruments, flutes, dumb-bells, chess boards, and books on military art, ancient and modern history, biography, geography, and mathematics. To keep out the cold, the walls were lined with deer skin, while a huge bear skin served as a carpet.

The canny Scot knew that with his young officers he had a major problem of morale to meet in this isolated, snowbound post. He set about solving it, "showing every hour some proof of his paternal care and kindness," though still an austere parent and rigid disciplinarian. He messed with his youngsters and joined in their pleasures. He had his subtalterns in groups of three or four breakfast with him every day. Once a week he had a supper party for his Captains and once a week they gave a party for him. He turned the young officers loose among his books to read as they chose. After the breakfast parties he questioned them and discussed their studies for a couple of hours. They learned not only to read but to think, to remember, and to converse.

In this way he brought them through the worst of the winter; but when spring delayed it was hard to keep them from plunging into the woods to hunt regardless of unknown morasses, wolves, and hostile Indians. So at the end of February a party of the hardiest young officers were allowed to go on a regular hunting excursion to supplement with fresh game their monotonous rations of salt meat for there were no sheep, cattle, or swine within forty miles to be slaughtered. When the hunters did not return at the end of their five days' leave, cannon were fired at noon and at mid-night to guide them to the Fort if they had lost their bearings. At the end of eight days they came in safe and sound, loaded with venison, wild turkeys, porcupines, and a "prodigious" swan.

Praise For Oswego Summers

Finally "spring returned with its flowers", wrote Annie MacVicar Grant, "and converted our Siberia, frozen and forlorn, into an uncultivated Eden, rich in all the majestic charms of sublime scenery and primeval beauty and fertility. If ever the fond illusions of poets and philosophers—that Atlantis—that new Arcadia —that safe and serene Utopia, where ideal quiet and happiness have so often charmed us in theory—if ever this dream of social bliss in some new planted region is to be realized, this unrivaled scene of grandeur and fertility bids fair to be the place of its abode. Here the climate is serene and equal; the rigorous winters that brace the frame and call forth the powers of mind and body to prepare for its approach are succeeded by a spring so rapid, the exuberance of vernal bloom bursts forth so suddenly after the disappearance of these deep snows which cherish and fructify the earth that the change seems like a magical delusion."

Major Duncan was prepared for the effects of spring when it did come and gave his men no time for gay idleness or wild sports. He kept them busy, clearing the land of stumps left when the trees were felled, spading up the ground, fencing it in and planting peas, beans, and Indian corn. Cabbages, squashes, cucumbers, and even melons, too, grew to enormous size in the virgin soil and in later years were sent to Albany to astonish the MacVicars. When the Major discovered a mulberry, wild plum or cherry tree, well shaped or large, he marked it to be left, as well as some lofty plane trees and chestnuts and many beautiful shrubs peculiar to the country. The gardens finally extended beyond Bridge Street to the South and as far as an alder swamp at East Sixth Street. For the officers' recreation a summer house was built in a tree, a bowling green and a fish pond were developed.

Later, pigs and poultry were procured and fed on the corn crop. Cows were bought and hay cut for fodder. With military supplies of flour, rice, butter, and salt meat, fresh meat from the live stock, vegetables and fruits from their gardens, fish from the lake and river, game from the woods, Annie felt that the troops lived in a kind of rough luxury, and further were enabled to save much of their pay for the Major made them save their uniforms by wearing fatigue dress that he had the tailor make from surplus coats.

The MacVicars returned to Albany in the spring of 1761, Annie regretfully leaving Fort Ontario, her tame partridge and six pigeons. Major Duncan and the 55th were held with the garrison at Fort Ontario until 1765.

Henry Glen

Thirty-five years after Annie said good-bye to Oswego, came the day in July 1796 when the British army said a long farewell to Fort Ontario. On hand to witness the formalities of its transfer to American command was Congressman Henry Glen, a man of fifty-seven, who had come from his home in Schenectady by the same water route as Annie.

James Taylor Dunn, Librarian of the New York State Historical Association, tells us that Henry Glen (1739-1814) was a Schenectady trader and member of the first Committee of Safety of that town. He was a deputy quartermaster during the Revolution in charge of all supplies at Schenectady, Representative in the first three Provincial Congresses, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and member of the Third through the Sixth United States Congresses, 1793-1801. Among Glen's papers now preserved in Fenimore House at Cooperstown is a little hand-stitched notebook of fifteen pages in which Congressman Glen recorded his experiences on his visit to Oswego and the events of July 15, 1796.

Journey To Oswego

It is impossible to say whether the spelling in this diary reflects the results of foreign parentage, lack of education, or prevalent provincial speech. The record reads: "A Captain Bruff Esq. from the State of Marland was appinted by the President of the United States to the Command of 100 men chawsed for the Porpose at west pint to take Command of the Garrisons of oswego and niagera. the other officers of this detachment ware Lieu't John McClellean, Lieut's Rowan and Elmer (the latter being the officer who wrote to George Scriba of the surrender of the Fort). Captain Bruff lift Schonectady on the 23d June 96 of a thursday about 4 o'Clock in the afternoon with about 15 boats and 2 large scows with the Cannon etc. On my 2 days Journey I laid 2d night at the Very pint of Anthoneys noes so Called. The 3d night a mile from the Little falls.——At the

Oswago falls I was oblidged to have Every thing Rid to the Indian field as it was Cannon & Ordinance Stores of expenible nature Should their been any accident happend Goeing down the falls—our collars for the Garrisons had been neglected to been sent on time The commanding Officer had a pair made at F Schuyler Reader then been without any which I was Glad on. But on our arivel at the Indian fields a mile below the falls and 11 miles from oswago——were we all Incamped consisting of soldiers Battosmen etc of about 150 men, I received the coulors from west pint sent on by my son John who is in Schonectady. They came in time though we ware provid'd with others———."

Present At Fort's Transfer

Glen reached Oswego at seven o'clock the morning of July 11th. He resumes his narrative:—"Emmediately whent up to the garison took my son Jacob with me and on approaching near I was mead by a Serjant who Cunducted me as far as the draw Bright ware an other Serjant stayed with me till the one that brought from outside the fort whent & told the Commanding Officer that I was their with my Son. The Serjant Returned and had order to conduct me and my Son to the Officers Room come up the step he lived in the second storey he stood at the upper part of the steps and Received me and my Son in a Very polite Manner. he had sett down to Brackfast and then we ware Requested to sett down to Brackfast which we did. After Brackfast on Going my boat I told him I had Inden to Picht my Tent on the other side of the River on the Side Called old oswago. he told ware Ever I plesed I could pitch. In Going of he told me that he was Sorrow he would not have it in his power to have me and my Son at dinner as all his things ware Packed up. he wish me to Excuse him which I did."

Most of the British troops and all equipment and stores had, in the meantime, been withdrawn. Before ten o'clock the morning of July 15th, Col. Fothergill and Captain Clark, representatives of his British Majesty, with a detachments of only thirty men, surrendered the Fort to the American officers. The diary continues:—"Fix'd two field Pieces and the men Drew the Cannon up to the fort. the party for the Cannon was Command'd by Lieut. McClellain. Capt. Bruff came in the Rear with Lieut Elmer and the Rest of the men. The whole whent in side of the fort ware their is a Large Prade. Lieut. McClellan was then order'd to have the Cannon brought up to the Northwest Corner of the fort on the Ramparts and the Collars of the United States ware Hoisted on the flaag staff which is towards the South East Corner The wind being High made the coullers show well. Then the men ware all in order The Captain ordered Mr. McClellan to begin fireing whilst Captain Bruff Lieut Elmer myself Son Jacob and Mr. Clench* stood on the Parade. their was 15 guns fired and then three Chers Given by all in the Garrison. The number in side I Compute officers, Soldiers Battosmen Spectators in the whole about 130 persons. After the Chears ware Given I step'd up with my Son, Mr. Clench followed and Give Capt Bruff and other officers Joy on the occasion."

On August 5th Capt. Bruff, his Lady, daughter, officers, and men sailed for Fort Niagara and a salute of three guns was fired by the garrison. The Captain's party was followed on the 10th by Henry Glen with three boats—"2 with Serjant and 15 men and my own." He reached Niagara on the

* References to Peter Kalm, Henry Glen and Mr. Clench can be found in John J. Vrooman's historical novel, "Clarissa Putmam of Tribes Hill."

15th and left five days later. He arrived in Schenectady on the first day of September. "After being home about four days I got the fever & kipt him till the latter end of Nov'r. When I went to Congress the fever lift me."

Alexander Wilson

Alexander Wilson was born in Paisley, Renfrewshire, in Western Scotland July 6, 1766, the son of a weaver father who was early involved in semi-smuggling through secret distillation of liquor in his "wee still." Later, however, he was highly respected as a sober, industrious man of strict honesty and superior intelligence. The father died June 5, 1816, aged 88. But the mother, Mary M'Nab, a comely, pious, superior woman from the Hebrides had died when her son was only ten years old.

Although the father desired that the boy should become a physician and his mother had dreamed of him as a parson, Alexander received only a limited education at the Paisley Grammar School, leaving when he was twelve or thirteen. Even so, he was too much absorbed in books to prove himself a reliable cowherd. In 1779 he was bound out as an apprentice to a weaver, William Duncan, husband of his oldest sister. While this seemed like slavery to a 13-year old boy longing for the greenwood, he submitted for three years and for four more years worked as a journeyman weaver.

After these seven years of confining labor, the young man of twenty started on his travels as a pedlar, always turning aside to visit a historic castle or the birthplace of a historic character. He began, too, his career as a writer, composing his "Journal of a Pedlar" and verse as well. Finally his "wanderlust" led him to migrate to America, sailing in mid-May 1794, sleeping on ship deck, and landing at Newcastle, Delaware, two months later. In this country he again worked as a weaver, as a pedlar, and in a copper-plate printing office.

In 1795 he became a teacher in a Seminary, fortunately, for him, located at Kingsessing near Gray's Ferry on the Schuylkill, four miles outside of Philadelphia. We may well say "fortunately for him" for the Bartram home and botanical garden were at Kingsessing and there he made the acquaintance of William Bartram who was not only a botanist like his father, John, but an ornithologist and an artist as well. From this friend Alexander received the inspiration to study the birds of America and at the age of forty to train himself to draw and to color the birds he saw.

First American Ornithologist

For seven years he traveled alone through forests and swamps, perhaps for 15,000 miles, observing, collecting, painting, and describing the native birds. In spite of the fact that no adequate treatise on American ornithology had ever before been produced, Wilson found great difficulty in securing subscribers to his book and when at last a bookseller did print and publish it, Wilson's only remuneration was the payment for the mechanical labor of coloring his own plates. The first volume of his American Ornithology was published in 1808 and by 1813, the year of his death, seven volumes had appeared. Two more volumes were issued by Wilson's friend, George Ord, and the work was continued by Charles Lucien Bonaparte. This monumental work was several times republished and there was also brought out a popular, one volume edition with 103 plates showing from two to seven species of birds on each, "engraved from drawings from nature by Alexander Wilson and Charles Lucien Bonaparte." Its title reads "American Ornithology or the Natural History of the Birds of the United States." These works established Wilson's position as the Father of American Ornithology for Audubon's first

plates were not published until 1827, nineteen years after the first of Wilson's.

Ornithologist Visits Oswego

It was in 1804 that Wilson visited Oswego in the course of a "long circuitous journey through deep snows and almost uninhabited forests, over stupendous mountains and down dangerous rivers, passing over in a course of 1300 miles as great variety of men and modes of living as the same extent of country can exhibit in any part of the United States.——— In this tour I have had every disadvantage of deep roads and rough weather, hurried marches and many other inconveniences to encounter—yet so far am I from being satisfied with what I have seen or discovered or (being) discouraged by the fatigues which every traveler must submit to that I feel more eager than ever to commence some more extensive expedition where scenes and subjects entirely new and generally unknown might reward my curiosity and where perhaps my humble acquisitions might add something to the stores of knowledge.", he wrote to William Bartram on December 15, 1804, when he was "now snug at home." He had returned by way of Albany and reached home Friday, December 7th, traveling 47 miles the last day, after two months' absence. "My boots were now reduced to legs and upper leathers and my pantaloons were in a sad plight; $12 were expended on these two articles."

Wilson's arrival in Oswego on the 28th of October, 1804, had been just about one week after the day on which old Fort Oswego had been finally abandoned. His discription of what he saw there appeared in a long narrative poem, "The Foresters: a Poem descriptive of a Pedestrian Journey to the Falls of Niagara in the Autumn of 1804 by Alexander Wilson, Author of American Ornithology."

"O'er these lone swamps the Muse impatient flies
Where mightier scenes and nobler prospects rise,
Nor stoops, in dull rehearsal, to detail
Each roaring rapid and each adverse gale,
What vagrant tribes, what islands met our view;
How down Oswego's foaming Falls we flew,
Now plunging in, our sinking bark to save;
Now headlong hurried down the outrageous wave,
How through the still clear flood with sounding oars
We swept and hailed with songs the echoing shores.
These had their pleasures and, perhaps, their fears;
But terrors fly when daring courage steers.
A thousand toils, a thousand dangers past,
The long-expected Lake appears at last
Seen through the trees, like ocean's boundless blue.
Huzza! Huzza! Ontario is in view!
With flying hats we hail the glorious spot,
And every care and every fear's forgot.
So, when of old we crossed th' Atlantic waves,
And left a land of despots and of slaves,
With equal joy Columbia's shores we spyed,
And gave our cares and sorrows to the tide.
Here, ere we launch the boundless deep along,
Surrounding scenes demand their share of song.
Mark yon bleak hill, where rolling billows break
Just where the river joins the spacious lake,
High on its brow, deserted and forlorn,
Its bastions levelled and its buildings torn,
Stands Fort Oswego; there all the winds that blow

Howl to the restless surge that groans below;
There the lone sentry walked his round or stood
To view the sea-fowl coursing o'er the flood;
Midst night's deep gloom shrunk at the panther's howl
And heard a foe in every whooping owl.
Blest time for soldiers! times, alas, not near,
When foes like these are all they have to fear;
When man to man will mutual justice yield,
And wolves and panthers only stain the field.
Those straggling huts that on the left appear
Where boats and ships their crowded masts uprear
Where fence, or field ,or cultured garden green,
Or the blessed plough, or spade were never seen,
Is old Oswego; once renowned in trade,
Where numerous tribes their annual visits paid.
From distant wilds, the beaver's rich retreat,
For one whole moon they trudged with weary feet,
Piled their rich furs within the crowded store,
Replaced their packs, and plodded back for more.
But time and war have banished all their trains
And naught but potash, salt, and rum remains.
The boisterous boatman, drunk but twice a day,
Begs of the landlord; but forgets to pay;
Pledges his salt, a cask for every quart,
Pleased thus for poison with his pay to part.
From morn to knight here noise and riot reign,
From night to morn 'tis noise and roar again.

And now we will just put out onto the Lake with Wilson as he starts on his way to visit Niagara Falls:

"Around us now Ontario's ocean lay,
Rough rose its billows, crown'd with foaming spray.
The grim North-east in roaring fury blew
And our frail bark, deep dashing, labored through;
Our blanket-sail and feeble sapling mast
Drank the rough waves, and quiveerd in the blast.
A friendly sloop, for Queenstown harbor bound,
While night's foul hurricanes were gathering round,
Beheld our danger, saw our numbers few,
And from our boat received its willing crew.
Down in the cabin by the uproar driven,
Headless of all the warring winds of heaven,
Sick, groaning, speechless, and unfit to pray,
Our three pale "foresters" inglorious lay;
Groan answered groan; while at each desperate throe
The deep bilge-water churned and roared below.
Sad night of sickness, tumult, fears, and hopes,
Of roaring surges and of rattling ropes,
Heart-rending retchings, tossings to and fro,
And all the horrors land-born lubbers know."

But sea-sickness cannot last forever and is seldom fatal. The next morning broke:

"At length the morn arose, the storm withdrew
And fair the breeze with steady vigor blew."

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