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Nineteenth Publication

of the

Oswego County Historical Society



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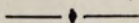
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“Lest We Forget”

ELIZABETH MARY SIMPSON

The Oswego County Historical Society is pleased to recognize the many contributions of Miss Elizabeth Mary Simpson to the historical profession.

Daughter of Richard Thomas Simpson and Mary Eliza Wheeler Simpson, and a descendant of pioneers who migrated to the Town of Mexico from Massachusetts, she attended successively district school 8 and Mexico Academy, Houghton Seminary and Vassar College, where she received an A.B. degree. Her scholarship led to her election to Phi Beta Kappa in the initial group to be so honored in a woman's college.

She entered upon a teaching career at Southampton, L. I. High School, where she instructed in Greek and Latin. Five years later, she accepted an instructorship in Greek and Latin at the Emma Willard School for Girls at Troy, N. Y., where she served for thirty years, most of them as Head of the Classical Department.

Retiring from teaching, she returned to her home in Mexico, where she entered upon a second career as local historian. She became the Town and Village Historian of Mexico in 1940, and continues in this capacity. After extensive research she published in 1949 **Mexico Mother of Towns**. It was favorably received, and has been referred to as a model for local history. It contains the most definitive study of George Scriba and the Scriba Tract. She also presented numerous papers to the Society, which have been recorded in the **Yearbook**. Subjects include: Abolitionists of Oswego County, Scriba's Dream of a Lake Ontario Metropolis, Early Visitors to Oswego, George Wheeler's Journey to Mexico, N. Y., the Comte de Volney and Francis Lewis, Prisoner of War and Signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Through the quality of her work and assistance given to others, she has stimulated an interest in history and strengthened the Society in the Mexico area. She also assisted in the research preceding the restoration of Fort Ontario. At the state level, she has been active in the New York State Historical Association at Coopersown.

In between times she traveled widely in the United States and Europe, returning from a trip to the latter in 1955.

In recognition of these unusual contributions to the history of Oswego County and the furtherance of the work of the Society, the Board of Managers dedicates this volume of the **Yearbook**.

Two Expeditions to Fort Ontario In 1783; Colonel Willett, for War; Captain Thompson, for Peace

(Presented by Mr. Anthony Slosek, January 17, 1956)

"Such was the gloomy end of an enterprise, which, at ten o'clock at night, presented so fair a prospect of success."

Toward the end of 1780 Colonel Marinus Willett was ordered to take command of all levies, militia, and state troops, that might be raised to protect the north-west frontiers of the State of New York, in which command he continued to the end of the war. He established his headquarters at Fort Rensselaer (Fort Plain) where he might defend the inhabitants of that frontier from incursions of Indians and Tories. For two years Colonel Willett campaigned with zeal, diligence and bravery; and succeeded in bringing a feeling of security to the people of the Mohawk Valley.

Toward the end of November 1782 Colonel Willett set out for Albany. He then went to Fishkill for his wife, intending to take her to his quarters with him during the winter. As the headquarters of General Washington were at Newburgh, directly opposite Fishkill Landing, Colonel Willett went to pay his respects to him, and remained to dinner. As soon as dinner was over, he rose to take his leave. The general rose also, and following him out asked him to go to his office. He then inquired as to his success in recruiting, the strength and situation of the regiment; said the clothier-general should have particular orders respecting the

clothing; and mentioned that it would be proper to place no reliance on a speedy peace, but be as well prepared as possible for another campaign. He then inquired of Colonel Willett if he was acquainted with the situation of the enemy's garrison at Oswego, and if he thought it might be surprised by an expedition in the winter. This was the first time that an opening ever presented itself to Colonel Willett of a chance of procuring fame, that his heart beat with joy. The expectation he had entertained of spending the winter in comfortable quarters with his family at Fort Rensselaer was destroyed; but to say anything that might appear to discourage so important a project was not in his nature. The conversation finished by the General desiring him to think of the project and write him his opinion.

In accordance to General Washington's request, Colonel Willett, about a week later, wrote in favor of the enterprise. A correspondence ensued between General Washington and Colonel Willett which follows:

From Fort Rensselaer, December 7, 1782, Colonel Willett wrote:

"Sir: From Albany I wrote to your excellency on the prosecution of the plan proposed by you when I was last at Headquarters. I then promised to endeavor to make further inquiry after my arrival at this place, and although

I have not yet been able to compleat my inquiry so pointedly with out affording room for surmise as to determine on the exact rout which it would be best to ake. I am pretty clear that the march may be accomplished in the way you mentioned by your Excellency. It is true I have found out some obstacles with which I was not before acquainted—such as the uncertainty of sufficient ice in some rivers lying in most direct and easy rout. This is a matter however which I shall be able fully to ascertain in time, and should the ice prove insufficient to enable us to take these routs, other routs may be taken tho attended with some difficulties. Difficulties which are by no means I humbly conceive such as ought to supersede the attempt which I confess I am very desirous of making.

Describes Fort

"I have thought it might not be amiss to give your Excellency some description of the fort which according to the accounts I have fication on the north (sic east) side of the river, consisting of five angles, with a bastion to each angle. The angles are all nearly of a length supposed about 100 yards each. The fasse is about 20 feet wide and nine feet deep. From the bottom of the fasse to the top of the parapet is about 30 feet, except the angle where the sally port is placed at which port it is represented to be not more than 20 feet. And the fasse is not wide as in other ports. It is said the fort is surrounded with a glasis but which does not appear to be protected with any kind of frieze work.

"There is a row of picketts perpendicularly fixed in the center of the fasse, and another row of horizontal ones placed along the wall seven or eight feet above the beam. The gateway is secured by a drawbridge. At the entrance of the gate on one side is the

guard house and on the other side a house for the commandant. Within one of the Bastions is placed the magazine. The other four Bastions and curtains are filled with Barracks. All the buildings are made of logs and are said to be Bum-proof. Three of the angles of the Fort front the lake on the River, and in some parts lay very near to those waters—It is not improbable but the Ditch may be nearly filled with snow, which may in some measure facilitate the business. But be this matter or it may it appear to me that the most familiar way to ascent the wall would be to lay boards from the parapet of the glasis to the top of the picketts which stand in the fasse, on the top of which boards, I humbly conceive the feet of the ladders might stand secure. In this way ladders of about 14 feet long I think would answer. I should suppose six of these ladders would not be too many, and might be easily carried in the slays together with a few boards for the purpose before mentioned. The season in this quarter at present is remarkably open. I have been thinking that about the 12th or 13th of February would be sufficiently early to put the affair in execution, and I would pitch in one of those days on account of benefiting by the moon which will set between three and five o'clock in the morning, so that we may profit by the business just after it has withdrawn its light, at which time it is generally darkest and will be likely to serve us in giving us opportunity of approaching nearer undiscovered.

"All these things, however, and everything else I have said on this subject I do most humbly beg leave to submit to the consideration of your Excellency and only beg leave to assure you that whatever directions your Excellency may think proper to give in this or any other matter no person

will more cheerfully strive to accomplish them."

Washington Answers

On December 18, 1782, from Newburgh, Washington replied:

"Sir: Your letter of the 29th Ultio. from Albany, came safe to my hands. I am glad to find you entered so readily into a measure which appears very practicable in my eyes, providing the Troops for the Enterprise (against Oswego, N. Y.) can be properly accommodated.

I have written again to the Secretary of War respecting clothing for the York State Troops, and desired Colo. Tighman, who left this on Sunday last for Philadelphia to enforce it, not only on him, but on the Clothier General also; that, if it can be had, it may be sent up without delay. From the Deputy Clothier's Store at this place, I could furnish Vests and Wollen hose enough for the State Troops, and Woolen Caps, Socks, and Mitts sufficient for the whole party. Indian Shoes or Mocassins, I must depend upon you to procure; as also the Snow Shoes, of which I do not see the necessity for each mans having a pair; tho some may be indispensably necessary I well remember to have directed (two years ago) a number of Snow Shoes to be made and if I mistake not it was done; but I do not suppose any dependence should be had on them at this time. It may not be amiss, however, to enquire of General Schuyler (to whom I think I wrote on the subject) the Qr. Master, or any other tho may be likely to give information, whether they will aid in being. To provide and carry Scaling Ladders from the Settlement would at once announce this design, and more than probably defeat the Enterprise; at any rate they would be troublesome to transport and must impede the rapidity of your movement, on which everything depends. It ap-

pears to me therefore that the attempt would be improper, and that the difficulty may be surmounted by carrying a few Tools to wit Axes, Saws, Augers and a Gouge with which at a convenient time and place, a sufficient number of Ladders might soon and easily be made.

"The mode you propose for obtaining the Sleighs, and assembling the Troops, I approve of preferably to the Qr. Masters having any agency in the business as I do of the time named for the execution if the clothing can be got to you in season, but having doubts on this head I shall be glad to know of how late a period can be delayed with safety, on account of the ice on Oneida Lake and goodness of the Sleighing. If their is a necessity for a party to precede the Sleighs a day or two, to mark the rout, it ought to consist of picked men of tried fidelity; and even then the chance of discovery is greater than it otherwise would be.

"The strength of your Party should be proportioned to that of the Garrison you attempt, for which reason every possible means should be used to obtain the most accurate account of it. If you have men to set the enemy at defiance, in case of their discovering you previous to the Assault, or miscarriage therein, it is all that is necessary; more than these would render your movements unwieldy and slow; consequently more liable to discovery in your preparation and on the March.

"I should be glad to hear from you again on this head by some safe conveyance; and as matters can be properly prepared for the Enterprise, and nothing more than Know of at this time to hinder it, I will be at Albany when you March, that I may be at hand to remove difficulties if any should occur. With great esteem, etc.

"P.S. It will essentially neces-

sary to fix your eyes upon some one or more persons with the enemies works, and seize them at the moment they are wanted that you may have them as guides."

General Washington wrote to David Brooks from Headquarters, Jan. 18, 1783:

"Sir: It is the Commander in Chief's pleasure that you issue 500 woolen caps, 500 socks and 500 pair of mitts to Capt. Ten Eyck, paymaster of Col. Wilett's regiment, for the use of that and Col. Olney's regiment; also such other articles that you may have in store, which are wanted by sd Regts; the same to be delivered on account, and proper vouchers Recd. for the whole, when the clothing is issued to them which is daily expected from Philadelphia."

To Lieutenant Colonel Marinus Willet from Headquarters, Newburgh, Jan. 20, 1783, General Washington wrote:

"Sir: Your paymaster will inform you that besides the usual proportion of clothing, a number of articles have been issued ostensibly for the use of Olney's and your regiment; but in reality, they are designed only for the object you have in contemplation; unless it is attempted, I would not have any of the woolen socks, caps, or mitts distributed among the troops. I have ordered them all therefore to be addressed to you and to await your orders."

General Washington to Lieutenant Colonel Marinus Willett, Newburgh, Jan. 22, 1783:

"Sir: On the 20th by your paymaster, I informed you that besides the usual proportion of clothing I had sent to your orders woolen caps, socks and mitts for the intended enterprise, to be made use of or not according to the circumstance. I have also written to Mr. (William) Duer who is now at Albany to lay in a month's provisions for a hundred men at each of the Posts of Forts Rensselaer and Herkimer. And till further orders have placed the

Rhode Island Regiment under your direction.

"For the reasons you assign, I approve of the time proposed for the attack and suppose it will be necessary for you to begin your march for Fort Herkimer at the time you mentioned, viz. on the 8th or 9th of next month. If the sleighing should be good, and business does not prevent it, I will endeavor to be at that place, or Fort Rensselaer, by that time; but of this you will take no notice to anybody nor suffer it to have any influence on your preparations or conduct before or at the time as many things may intervene to detain me.

"All that remains to be done is now with you to do, and as the matter is between ourselves and you have better information of the situation of the enemy and difficulty in getting at them; I have only to request this to act from your best judgement under a firm persuasion that the enterprise in contemplation was even better known than it is no imputation could fall on your for having laid it aside if the difficulties in the way, or want of information should be greater than appeared at first view. Let me hear from you and if possible by the third or 4th of next month.

Colonel Willett from Fort Rensselaer 28th January 1783:

"Sir: Last evening I received two letters from your excellency dated the 20th & 22 of this instant. I am told the clothing is arrived at Albany so that my apprehensions on the clothing score are removed. I have heard a pair of moccasins prepared and expect to have a sufficient quantity for the whole party ready in time as well as 50 or 60 pair of snowshoes, which is the total of snow shoes I mean to provide. The expence of the snowshoes is not worth mentioning. The whole cost will be about one dozen small Beafhides. By calculations I have made as far as we have got in the business of Moccasin Making, they will cost

a little more than half dozen per pair. For these I must request your excellency when the accounts are properly made and that directions may be given for the payment — They can be charged to the Troops who received them in lieu of as many pair of common shoes as the sum they cost would purchase. Unless in the finish of the buiness it may be thought eligible to make a present of 'em to the troops—I shall attend carefully to your excellencies directions respecting the woolen socks, mitt, & caps.

"Things are so advanced & in such a way in this quarter that I purpose to set out for Albany tomorrow. Some little previous preparations will detain me at that place perhaps, one day. On the first of February I mean to be at Saratoga to make what preparations may be necessary at that place. And shall ride something farther up the same river than that place in order that if from any measure proper to be taken any early surmises should be formed they may to be decoyed that way. On the fourth I intend to be again at Albany. On that day I shall expect the return of the bearer of this letter at that place as I think if he meets with no accident he will arrive at headquarters on the first.

"Anny rout I shall prepair rolls of the names of such persons from whom I purpose to procure sleighs, and shall endeavor to fix matters so as that the troops may be suddenly embarked in sleighs.

"Those of late only rest in different places contiguous to such parts of the Mohawk river as lay within the county of Albany. On the fifth or sixth of the month, and the year, take troops in different places along the river in this county the sixth or seventh, so as to have the whole detachment at Fort Herkemer the seventh or eighth, ready to com-

mence their march from that place the day following. This is the disposition which I have formed in my own mind, and which have thought proper to communicate to your excellency, should any instructions be necessary previous to the troops being embarked in sleighs, or any alteration of my designs subsequent to that events taking place be conceived proper by your Excellency an opportunity to direct measures for that purpose will offer by the bearer this—I flatter myself after the measures which your excellency, should have taken with the contractors no impediment will arise respecting provisions. It may not be amiss for me to acquaint your excellency, that I have not yet been furnished with the new system for Spring provisions. Hitherto we have received every thing in the old way except the articles of whiskey which as I understand is no part of the present rations. The troops have not been suffered to receive it. The consequence is that the troops or aid have no kind of liquor and I am rightly informed have no prospect of ever receiving any in this quarter, as it is said to be at the option of the contractor either to give rum or to pay the troops $2\frac{1}{2}$ per gill for it a price much lower than rum can profitably be afforded at after it becomes transported into the country. Hence it cannot be supposed that the contractor will furnish rum as part of the ration in these interior parts. I could wish however that on particular occasions such as the present there might be some rum provided. I have though proper to just mention this matter to your Excellency, if anything could be done in it perhaps it might be of some use.

"As we have no surgeon to our state troops at present and an indifferent mate who is entirely

unprovided with instruments medicine or bandages, I shall if these wants can be supplied from Col. Olneys Regt. have 'em supplied from there. If not I shall endeavour to get them furnished from the Hospital at Albany, yet I confess I have doubts of a proper supply from that quarter on account of the hardness of the axes, drawn for the use of our state troops, who by that means are difficulted in furnishing themselves with fyre wood, I have made several pressing applications to the quarter master at Albany for a supply of axes, for vain, he always sends me word he has none; Hence I am inclined to think I shall have difficulty in procuring a sufficient number for the intended enterprise. I mention things not as obstacles that may prevent the execution of the design, but as inconveniences that I could wish might be removed—and perhaps a light sleigh load of good axes with some bandages instruments & c^t might be forwarded from below should we succeed in the attack it will not be amiss to have a few artillery men with us unless therefore I receive directions to the contrary I shall take five or six artillery men with me.

"I think of nothing more necessary to mention to your Excellency. If the design is not carried completely into execution, it will be on account of difficulties truly Insurmountable none of which appear at present. Should your Excellency according to your intimation be able to pay this place a cent at the time inteded for the troops to begin this month it will afford peculiar satisfaction, and without doubt the means of improving the order of every person concerned in the business. But whether this will or will not take place I shall be glad to receive in time particular orders reporting the design of the expedition, and the measures to be taken in case of success — yet

unless some countermanding or altering directions arrive I shall proceed as exact as possible agreeable to the system unfolded in this letter. Nor shall anything thats in the power of an arm afford to accomplish in order fully and finally to terminate the business as far as my health strength and the powers of my mind can perform, be wanting to finish the Enterprise with advantage and glory."

From General Washington TO
LIEUTENANT COLONEL MAR-
INUS WILLETT, Newburgh,
February 2, 1783:

"Sir: Your letters of the 28th Ultio, from Fort Rensselaer, and 30th from Albany both came to my hands last night.

"One hundred and fifty blankets (all that are in the clothiers store at this place) and 25 axes are now packing to be sent to you; and the Qr. Master General will endeavor, if possible, to have them at Albany on the 4th; from whence you must take measures to get them to Fort Herkimer in time. If any of Olney's Men (On the enterprise you are going) should be in greater need than yours, they must be supplied out of this parcel, that the whole may be as comfortable as it is in my power to make them.

"I do not send medicines, bandages and instruments because it would take some time procure them, and not a moment is to be lost in dispatching the Sleighs with the blankets, that they may arrive in time; and because (tho' I wish you not to be unprovided) it is to be remembered, and I wish to impress it upon you, that, if you do not succeed by surprise the attempt will be unwarrantable. The wounds received in the former, more than probable, will be trifling.

"From having recourse to the Almanack I am led to wish that the night for the attack may not be delayed beyond 12th Instt.; as

I find that the setting of the moon (even at that time) approaches so near day light, that the intervening space is short; and consequently must be very critical; as accidents unforeseen, and consequently unprovided for, may embarrass your movements towards the works and retard the Attack of them beyond the hour designed, to the entire disappointment of the plan. Let me Caution you therefore against being to exact in your allowance of time for your last movement; reflect that you can always waste time, but never recover it. Halts, or slow Marching will accomplish the first, but nothing can effect the latter, consequently in such an Enterprise as yours want of time will be a certain defeat.

"Let your disposition be such, that in any circumstances your retreat to your sleigh, and afterwards with them, may be secure.

"If success should crown you, let your first object be to secure your Prisoners, whom you will treat with lenity and kindness; suffering no insult or abuse to be offered to them with impunity. Your next object must be to destroy the Works, Vessels (if any should be found there) and everything else that cannot be brought away. Such Works as cannot be consumed by Fire, nor easily razed by the labor of the Soldiers, must be, if practicable, blown up. In a word they are to be effectually demolished, if it is within the Compass of your power to do it.

"Whatever is found in, or about the Works belonging to the Enemy, and is agreeable to the Rule and Customs of war, humanity, and generosity, shall be given to the Party as the reward of the Gallantry and fatigue; to be distributed in proportion to the pay; the drivers of Sleighs, if Countrymen, should receive a part as an extra encouragement for their services.

"Make me the earliest report if successful from the Scene of Action, at any rate on your re-

turn of your progress, and the Issue of the Expedition. The inclosed letter will show you what I have done in respecting Spirits and Subsistence for your Officers.

"Seal it before delivery, and make your own arrangements with the Contractor. I begin to doubt the practicability of my being up. My sentiments however you are possessed of, as well as all the aid I can give. Your own judgment must govern where my instructions are deficient. I heartily wish you honor and success, and am etc."

William M. Willett, in his "Narrative of Military Actions of Colonel Marinus Willett taken Chiefly From His Own Manuscript Prepared By His Son" stated that the troops (470 men) assembled at Fort Herkimer on the Mohawk on Feb. 8, crossed the ice of Oneida Lake, the same night in some 120 sleighs till they reached Fort Brewerton. There they left their sleighs under a guard. At about 2 p. m. they arrived at Oswego Falls, now Fulton. At this place they went into the woods and made eight ladders. Their prospects were as promising as they could wish. All the necessary preparations for entering the enemy's works were completed; and every officer was made acquainted with the particular part he was to perform.

It was scarcely 10 o'clock at night when the troops reached a point of land about four miles from the fort. Here, on account of the weakness of the ice, they were obliged to take to the land; and in doing this they had to ascend an eminence which caused some difficulty in getting up the ladders.

Guides Lose Way

Colonel Willett had procured a young Oneida Indian, called Captain John, and two other Indians, as guides. Not a thought entered his mind of the least danger of losing their way, as they were then four miles from the fort and

there were still four hours to elapse before moon set, which was the time fixed upon entering the fort. Colonel Willett's attention was constantly engaged in encouraging the men whose business it was to carry the ladders; a labor, which from the inclemency of the season, the depth of the snow, and the difficulties of the woods, was a very arduous one. His attention thus occupied, and not having the least apprehension that his guides would lose their way, two hours passed without discovering an opening through the woods which he had been for some time expecting. This circumstance led him to hasten to the front of the line of march where he was informed that the Indian pilot had not been seen for some time, though they were pursuing his tracks as fast as they could. Colonel Willett immediately set out to follow his tracks himself, with as quick a step as possible, and in about half an hour overtook him.

He found him standing still, apparently lost and frightened. They had by this time got into a swamp and some of the men had their feet frozen fast in sunken holes. In this deplorable situation, ignorant where they were, the hope of taking the fort by surprise vanished. The orders of General Washington were peremptory; that, if they failed in surprising the fort, the attempt would be unwarrantable. All then that was left for the troops to do was to retrace their steps.

On Oak Hill

At daybreak the attackers found themselves on a hill overlooking the fort. It seems that they assembled on the crest of Oak Hill. While the officers were conferring on a course of action, five British soldiers carrying axes, presumably to gather firewood, were seen approaching in the direction of the hill. A sudden rush captured two British soldiers but

three escaped to the fort to give warning. Soon the Americans heard drums beating a call to arms and saw soldiers shoveling snow away from the guns on the fort.

Leaving their scaling ladders near the hill, the troops made an about face and trudged back to the sleighs at Brewerton and on to Fort Herkimer. Many of them suffered much from the cold; three were frozen to death, 130 frost-bitten and some so badly as to require constant assistance to get them along. Two men, Henry Blackmer and Joseph Perrigo, who afterward both settled on the west side of Oswego above the falls, were badly frozen on this expedition. Such was the gloomy end of an enterprise, which, at 10 o'clock at night, presented so fair a prospect of success.

Colonel Willett expressed his chagrin to Washington: "I can't avoid feeling great regret at the disappointment whilst I reflect with gratitude at the honor conferred on me by your Excellency in affording me an opportunity of achieving so much at so small a risk. I pretend not to say that the work has been performed as well as it might have been done, perhaps I have been deficient in points of discernment. But I am sure I have not been so in points of integrity & exertions. These have been stretched to the utmost. Yet I have unfortunately failed. Failed at a time when I looked on the prize just ready to be received, which was truly the case from ten o'clock to one o'clock in the night of the twelfth instant. With everything ready to make the attack we was just within view of the fort undiscovered. Whilst every breast was filled with ardor & the most animated determination. But lost it in this strange & unaccountable manner that I have before related."

On February 26, 1783 General Washington informed the Presi-

dent of Congress of Colonel Willett's unsuccessful expedition:

"I am sorry to have to acquaint your Excellency, for the information of Congress that a project which I had formed for attacking the Enemies post at Oswego, as soon as the Sleigh should be good enough, and the Ice of the Oneida Lake should have acquired sufficient thickness to admit the passage of the Detachment, has miscarried. The report of Colo. Willett, to whom I had entrusted the Command of the Party (Consisting of a part of the Rhode Island Regt. and the State Troops of New York, in all about 500 men) will assign reasons for the disappointing.

"Altho the Expedition has not been attended with success, the officers and Soldiers employed in it, are entitled to great credit for the Spirit, Activity, and Patience exhibited by them in the course of the attempt, and I am certain nothing that depended upon Colonel Willett to give efficacy to it was wanting."

Consoles Willett

General Washington with great magnanimity consoled the dejected Willett in a letter, March 5, 1783, which terminated their correspondence on the subject:

"I have been favored with your letter of the 19th of Feb. announcing the failure of your attempt against Oswego.

"Unfortunate as the Circumstance is, I am happy in the persuasion that in Imputation or reflection you Justly reach your Character, and that you are enabled to derive much consolation from the animated zeal, fortitude, and activity of Officers and Soldiers who accompanied You. The failure, it seems, must be adapted to some of those unaccountable evidences, which are not within the Control of human Means and which, tho' they often occur in Military Life, yet require not only the fortitude of the Soldier, but the calm reflection of the Philosopher, to bear.

"I cannot omit expressing to

you the high Sense I entertained of your perservering Exertions and Zeal on your Expedition; and begging you to accept my warm Thanks on the occasion; and that you will be pleased to communicate my Gratitude to the Officers and men under your command for their share they have taken in the service."

Jeptha R. Simms, in his "Frontiersmen of New York," (1883), Vol. II, p. 645 differs with the Willett version as to the probable success of storming Fort Ontario. Simms is quoting the following:

"Said Moses Nelson, an American prisoner there (at Oswego) in the spring of 1782, when the enemy set about rebuilding Fort Oswego (Ontario), three officers, Captain Nellis, Lieutenant James Hare, and Ensign Robert Neillis a son of the captain and all of the forester service had charge of the Indians there employed (These Tory Nellises may have been of the Palatine Nellis Family.) Nelson and two other lads, also prisoners, accompanied this party which was conveyed in a sloop, as waiters. About 100 persons were employed in building this fortress, which occupied most of the season. The winter following, Nelson remained at this fort and was in it when Colonel Willett advanced with a body of troops, February 9, 1783, with the intention of taking it by surprise. The enterprise is said to have been abortive in consequence of Colonel Willett's guide, who was an Oneida Indian, having lost his way in the night when within a few miles of the fort. The men were illy provided for their return—certain victory having been anticipated—and their sufferings were in consequence, very severe. This enterprise was undertaken agreeable to the orders of General Washington; but it certainly added no laurels to the chaplet of the brave Willett.

Two of Willett's men, badly frozen, entered the fort in the morning surrendering them-

selves prisoners, from whom the garrison learned the object of the enterprise. The ladders prepared by Willett to scale the walls were left on his return, and a party of British soldiers went and brought them in. Said the American prisoner, Nelson, the longest of them, when placed against the walls inside the pickets, reached only about two-thirds of the way to the top. The post was strongly garrisoned and it was the opinion of Nelson that the accident or treachery which misled the troops was most providential, tending to save Colonel Willett from defeat and most of his men from certain death.

"After the above was first published, I learned from John Root of Canajoharie, who was a private soldier in that enterprise under Willett, that so certain did the latter feel of a success, that a scant quantity of provisions were taken along. While on the way out, several dogs with the army were killed to prevent betraying their position, which the

famished troops were glad on their homeward march to dig out of the snow and eat.

Colonel Willett's expedition gave Fort Ontario the distinction as the last hostile movement of American troops against the British in the Revolution. During his march to Oswego, Congress received news of the signing of the provisional articles of peace. Shortly after Colonel Willett's return to Fort Rensselaer, he went to Albany (in April) where he heard the peace proclaimed by the town clerk at the city hall to the rejoicing inhabitants. He dispatched messengers to Major Andrew Fink, commander in Willett's absence, who in turn sent Captain Alexander Thompson under a flag of truce to Major Ross at Oswego. Captain Thompson kept a record of this trip from Fort Rensselaer (Fort Plain) to Oswego and this journal is found in Jephtha Simms', "The Frontiersmen of New York," (1883), Vol. II.

PART II

In July, 1880, Rev. Dr. Denis Wortman placed in Simms hands a Journal of Captain Alexander Thompson, an officer in the American artillery service, which Journal belongs to the family of Thomas T. Buckley, of Brooklyn, N. Y. Mrs. Buckley was a sister of Rev. Dr. Alexander R. Thompson, the third of the name. The Journal, consisting of 50 well written pages has the following heading:

"Journal of a tour from the American Garrison at Fort Rensselaer (Fort Plain) in Canajoharie on the Mohawk River, to the British Garrison of Oswego, as a Flag, to Announce a Cessation of Hostilities on the frontiers of New York, commenced

Friday, April 18, 1783." Simms has summarized Captain Thompson's Journal as follows:

"On the first of January of this year (1783), Capt. Thompson, as his journal shows, was appointed to the artillery command of several posts of the Mohawk valley, which he names as follows: Fort Rensselaer, Fort Plank, Fort Herkimer, and Fort Dayton.

Fort Rensselaer—another name for Fort Plain being, as he says, the headquarters for the river forts, he thought proper to have his own quarters near those of the commanding officer (Col. Willett), so as to furnish from his own company detachments as required.

"On the 17th of April—only a

little over two months after Col. Willett's attempt to surprise Fort Oswego—an express arrived at Fort Plain from Washington's headquarters to have an officer sent from whence with a flag to Oswego to announce to that garrison (from whence many of the Indians depredators came) a general cessation of hostilities and an impending peace.

"Major Andrew Fink, then in command at Fort Plain (under Col. Willett,) committed this important and hazardous mission to Capt. Thompson. His companions were to be four, a bombardier of his own company, a sergeant of Willett's militia, and a Stockbridge Indian, and his guide and interpreter were to join him at Fort Herkimer. All things were to be ready for an early start on the morning of the 18th, but, when the nature of his mission became known along the valley, many having lost friends whose fate was unknown, desired a chance to send letters by the flag-bearer and the start was thus delayed until 11 o'clock, at which hour numerous packets and letters were collected to be sent to friends in Canada. To some inquirers he said on his return, his mission proved to be one of joy, to others one of sadness, as well of mysteries had not been lifted.

"A flag of truce having been made by securing a white cloth to the head of a spontoon (a short spear much used on this frontier,) to be borne by the sergeant, he left the fort with the flag man in front of him and the artilleryman and the Indian in his rear. He started with a pack horse which he discretely left at Fort Herkimer. The novelty of his mission drew a great crowd together and he was accompanied several miles by a cavalcade of officers, soldiers, and citizens. He went up the river road on the south side of the Mohawk and spoke of passing Fort Windecker (near Minerville) and the Canajoharie or

upper Mohawk castle (now Danube, where Mohawk's church still stands,) arriving at Mr. Schuyler's house at the foot of Fall Hill about 3 p. m., where he and his party were presented an excellent dinner. Leaving Schuyler's at 4 o'clock he passed over Fall Hill and arrived at Fort Herkimer at sunset. At this garrison, Capt. Thompson found David Schuyler, a brother of the man he had lived with, became his guide and interpreter. Eight days' rations were put into knapsacks, and one short musket was concealed in a blanket, with which to kill game, if by any means their provisions failed. On Saturday morning, April 19, in a snow storm, this party of five set out on their wilderness journey, still on the south side of the Mohawk.

They met several hunting parties and made their first halt opposite "Thompson's place, above New Germantown," now in the town of Schuyler, Herkimer County.

A few miles above they fell in with a party of 10 families of Indians on a hunting excursion and learned how forest children lived. Here his men, instructed by their Indian companion, soon erected a wigwam for the night in the following manner: Two stakes, with crotches at the upper end, were set upright about 10 feet apart, upon which they placed a pole. Then they covered the sides with bark resting the top against the pole with the bottom on the ground, so as to leave a space about 12 feet wide. The gables were also covered with bark; a fire was made in the middle of the structure, and a small hole left in the top for the smoke to pass out, and when some hemlock boughs had been cut for their beds, the wigwam was completed. Such a structure the Indians would construct in an incredibly short space of time, where bark was handily obtained. In such

rude huts, many a hunter or weary traveler has found a good night's rest.

"The next morning the journey was resumed on the Fort Stanwix road, and at 10 o'clock we passed the ruins of Old Fort Schuyler of the French war (now Utica). On Capt. Thompson's arrival at the "Seekaquate" creek (Sadaquada or Saquoit creek), which enters the Mohawk at Whitestown, he found the bridge gone. Soon after passing this stream, he said, he ascended "Ariska" (Oriskany) Hill," which he observed, "was usually allowed to be the highest piece of ground from Schenectady to Fort Stanwix." Says the journal: "I went over the ground where Gen. Herkimer fought Sir John Johnson; this is allowed to be one of the most desperate engagements that has ever been fought by the militia. I saw a vast number of human skulls and bones scattered through the woods." This was nearly five and a half years after the battle. He halted to view the ruins of Fort Stanwix (Fort Schuyler) and those of St. Leger's works while besieging the fort and passing along the site of Fort Bull, on Wood creek, at the end of a mile and a half, he encamped for the night, erecting the usual Indian wigwam. The night was one of terror, as the howling of wolves and other animals prevented much sleep, but, keeping up their fires, the beasts were kept at bay.

"Monday morning, on arriving at Canada creek, a tributary of Wood Creek, two trees were felled to bridge the stream. A mile and a half below he left the creek and ascended Pine Ridge, where he discovered in his path a human foot print made by a shoe, which indicated a white wearer. On arriving at Fish creek he halted to fish but with poor success. He had proposed to cross the creek and pursue his way to Oswego on the north side of

Oneida Lake, striking Oswego river near the falls, but, learning, from his Indian (who had recently been a scout to the Three Rivers) that he had seen three flat-bottomed boats with oars, and as the ice had recently left the lakes and thinking they might still be there, he changed his course for Wood creek, and striking it at a well known place, called "The Scow," he sent the Indian and sergeant to search for the boats and to return the same evening. The three remaining at "The Scow" were soon searching for material for a cabin, but neither bark nor hemlock could be found and as it was fast growing dark, they collected what logs and wood they could to keep up a good fire which was started. At 8 o'clock it began to rain terribly and in two or three hours the fire was put out. As the boat seekers did not come back that night it became one of great anxiety and discontent. "The men returned after daylight and reported a serviceable boat without oars, which they had launched and towed around the edge of the lake and left it at the royal blockhouse, known as Fort Royal, at the mouth of Wood Creek, no time was lost in reaching the boat, which was found to leak badly. They calked it as best they could with an old rope. From a board oars were soon made, a pole raised and blankets substituted for sails with bark halliards. Having everything aboard, they moved into Oneida lake (20 miles long) with a favorable but light wind. It was deemed prudent to run across the lake to Nine Mile Point, on the north shore, but before reaching it two men were kept constantly bailing. The boat was again repaired and put afloat, sailing from point to point. As night approached the crew landed half way down the lake, where they improvised a cabin with a good fire to dry their clothes. The night was a

pleasant but the howling of wild beasts again terrified them.

"On Wednesday, the 23rd (April), a beautiful day, the party were early on the move, and from the middle of the lake, Capt. Thompson said he could see both ends of it, and enjoyed one of the most beautiful views imaginable. There were several islands on the western side of the lake covered with lofty timber, while back of the Oneida castles the elevated ground made a beautiful prospect. After about eight miles sail, he heard a gun, evidently fired by an enemy, but, to avoid observation he sailed along the shore until he was opposite "Six Mile Islands," as the two largest islands in the lake, lying side by side, are called. He went ashore, where a fire was kindled and a good dinner enjoyed, after again he dropped down the lake, passed Fort Brewerton, and entered the Oneida River. Here he found a rapid current in his favor and the river, the most serpentine of any stream he had ever been on, abounding at that season with immense numbers of wild fowl, especially of ducks of many varieties. He saw many flocks of geese, but he would not allow the old musket to be fired, lest a lurking scout might be attracted to his position. He continued his course down the river, sometimes on the Onondaga side, and at others on the Oswego side.

"About two miles from Three Rivers (nearly 20 miles from Oneida Lake), he discovered a party of Indians, in three canoes, coming up the river near the same shore. On seeing his boat they gave a yell and paddled to the opposite shore; they landed, drew their canoes out of the water, ascended the bank and took to trees (not having presumably made out the flag of truce). When the flag was opposite, they hailed in Indian and in English, which last was answered. When assur-

ed that the captain had a flag of truce, the Canadians asked him to come ashore. Four Indians then came out from behind trees and beckoned him to land. He did so and was conducted into the woods. His man also landed and the Indians drew his boat well on the shore. He was brought into the presence of two white men and an old Indian, who were seated on the ground. One of them told Capt. Thompson his name was Hare, a lieutenant of Butler's Rangers, and that he had just started on an enterprise to the neighborhood of Fort Plain. Capt. Thompson assured the lieutenant that all hostilities had ceased on the warpath and that his mission was convey such intelligence to the commanding officer at Oswego. When assured that all Americans had been called in, after several consultations, the war party (consisting of one other white man and eight Indians—all being painted alike) concluded to take Thompson to the fort, saying, if the measure proved a finesse, they had him sure. He was conducted back to his boat, to the great relief of his friends who were exercised by thoughts of treachery, and with a canoe on each side of the boat and one behind it, the flotilla passed down the river, Lieutenant Hare taking a seat with Capt. Thompson in his boat. The party glided down past the three rivers (the junction of the Oneida and the Seneca rivers with the Oswego) about three miles below which they landed and encamped for the night, constructing two cabins, one of which Lieut. Hare, Capt. Thompson and two Indians occupied, the remainder of both parties using the other.

"Early Thursday morning Lieut. Hare sent one of his canoes to Oswego to inform the commander of the approaching flag, and soon after sunrise they all embarked down the rapids which increased

as they approached the falls (of the Oswego). On arriving there they drew the boats around the carrying place, and safely passing the rifts below, they stopped within a mile of Lake Ontario where they were hailed by a sentinel on shore to await orders from the commandant of the fort (Major Ross).

Blindfolded

Thompson was conducted blindfolded into the fort, hearing the drawbridge over the trench let down, the chains of which made a remarkable clattering. In the fort his blindfold was removed and he delivered his message to Major Ross, who received him very courteously, the latter inviting him to sit down to a dinner of cold ham, fowl, wine, etc., while the Major looked over the papers. Major Ross had, within a fortnight, received orders from Governor Haldimand of Canada to strengthen his fortification for American invasion and was greatly surprised at the news Thompson had brought. However, Ross pledged his honor that all his scouts would be called in at once and ordered the sloop Caldwell (mounting 14 guns) to Fort Niagara to spread the news of the Armistice. The curtains, which had been put up at the windows looking out on Lake Ontario were now drawn and Major Ross asked his guest to look out and see the Caldwell departing on her errand of peace. The view from the window opening out upon the wide sunlit waters of the lake was a delightful one. Ross regretted that he could not conduct the American about the British works. The matter of American prisoners in Canada was brought up and Major Ross said information about them would be forthcoming as soon as possible, in the meantime receiving a list of all prisoners of war. He said it was im-

possible for any officer to control the savages when on excursions and he really believed that many cruel depredations were committed by them on the frontiers which were known only to the Indians. He had exerted himself to prevent the murdering of the prisoners and said, "but the utmost effort could not prevent them from taking the scalps of the killed." The major said that he was very happy that such an unnatural war was ended, adding however, that war created the soldier's harvest." Ross was much upset to learn that the entire state of New York, including the cities of Oswego and Fort Niagara, were to be ceded to the United States in the treaty of peace then under consideration.

Captain Thompson was introduced to a number of British officers and treated with great courtesy, having however a verbal tilt with Captain Crawford of Johnston's Greens (who invaded the Mohawk in 1778). Says the Journal: "This person comes under this despicable character of a loyal subject. He appeared to be really ignorant of the cause that he fought for, and had the wickedness to observe that he would have made more money in the British service in the war than he would have made in the American service in 100 years." Captain Thompson replied that American officers fought for principle, not for money."

Major Ross wished to send Thompson up the Oswego river and through Oneida Lake to Wood Creek in his own barge, but the American captain said that he desired to return by land on the west side of Oswego to see the country, and politely refused the offer. The Indians at Oswego had heard a rumor that "all their lands were to be taken from them and that they were to be driven to where the sun went down." They were said to have threatened the life of the passen-

ger and were in an ugly mood. Captain Thompson was given a list of the valley American prisoners then in Canada that evening. The patriot captain, for his own and his comrades' safety, deemed it best to depart at once, and thanking Major Ross for his courteous treatment, he was again blindfolded and led outside the fort down to his companions at the river edge at 11 o'clock on Sunday evening, April 27. He took back with him a 14-year-old American boy who had been captured near Fort Stanwix. Here the journal ends. Major Ross had promise to send a detachment of British troops back with the American party over the most dangerous part of their journey and it is probable he did so. The patriots, retracing their former steps, arrived at Fort Plain once more, having completed satisfactorily their important mission.

Appendix I

Major Alexander Thompson's letter to his brother:

Fort Rensselaer on
Mohawk River,
February 24, 1783

Dear Brother:

... On the morning of the 8th instant, just before the sable curtain was drawn, I left this fort with a detachment of four hundred troops in one hundred and twenty sleighs, on an expedition against Oswego—a British garrison, about one hundred and eighty miles northwest from this place, which we intended to surprise. We passed by old Fort Stanwix and arrived at the Oneida Lake the evening of the twelfth, and for fear of being discovered we crossed the same night on the ice which is about thirty miles over. We left our sleighs at the lake and marched along the Oneida river for Oswego. After we got below Oswego Falls we took the ice, but were frequently obliged to take the land for fear of being discovered by the enemies, Indians that were out on hunting parties.

We found but one track during the march, which was of one Indian that had killed a deer a little in front of us. He left the skin on the snow which was warm when we came to the spot. When we got within nine miles of the enemy we halted and made ladders to execute our business.

We carried them with us, and when within three miles of the garrison our guide took a circuit in the woods with an intention, he said, of advancing on the works on the lake side. We were led over hills and through the swamps to a considerable distance from our object, until the day began to break, which advanced so fast as to make it impossible to arrive at the works before broad daylight. Our guide confessed he was lost, and the glorious pursuit was given over—the orders we had from the commander-in-chief were positive, that if we did not attack before day to return. Col. Willet was under the necessity of ordering us to right about. You may be assured we were sensibly mortified at the disappointment to be within three miles of the important object, entirely undiscovered, and then to be led a more tedious way by an Indian. On our return we immediately took to the ice because the marching was better. I am fully persuaded the enemy were not apprised of our approach. When we got within two miles of Oswego Falls on our return we discovered a party of Indians on the other shore. Three of them came to us, supposing we were their own troops going down the country to commit depredations. When they found they were among other troops they were a good deal alarmed. We told them we intended to surprise the garrison, but losing our way, we were on our return, that we did not want to hurt them, that they were at liberty—which last expression altered their countenance much. They left us with a seeming satisfaction, and I believe this treatment has prevented their harass-

ing our rear, which we momentarily expected. The garrison consisted of three hundred regular troops and two hundred Indians. The snow was very deep, and we found much difficulty tracking roads. We had for two days a most severe storm, and the whole of the time exceeding, cold weather. We had three men perish before we could make fire for fear of being discovered when advancing. We had one hundred and thirty bit with the frost, some very dangerously. I am myself one of the unfortunate number, but by frequent application I have made, my feet are much better and I flatter myself will soon be well.

Your affectionate,
A. Thompson

Appendix II

OLD SWAGO

(A few stanzas of a ballad (sung to music) based on Willett's expedition).

Come all you valiant heroes,
Unto my song attend!
And unto you I will relate
The lines that I have penned.

Concerning of a sad distress
Which late we did receive,
A marching to Old Swago,
Our country to relieve.

The drums did beat so merrily,
The fifes did play so free
Commanded by John Holden,
Old Swago for to see.

And then spoke our Colonel,
And unto us did say:
"I'll place you in front, boys,
All for the bloody fray."

Then up spoke our officers,
With courage stout and bold:
Be of good cheer, my brave boys,
We're not born to be controlled.

Then set out their work to storm,
And boldly marching on,
Were guided by an Indian—
Some called him Captain John.

O'er hills and dales we marched
Until the break of day;
But little did we think or know
That we were led astray.

Then our provisions being out,
Then back we did return;
It was enough to make even
A Pharoah's heart to mourn.

For the terrible sufferings
Which to our band befell;
No pen can e'er describe them
No tongue can ever tell.

Some of our men were frozen,
And left upon the snow;
And others they were starving,
As onward we did go.

For in the piercing cold,
Our feet and hands did freeze
While endeavoring to make a fire
From branches of the trees.

As to that treacherous Indian,
The cause of all our woe;
We put a bullet through his head
And left him on the snow.

But now we are returning,
Unto our own abode;
Here's a health unto Old Swag'r,
That dark and dismal road.

Now to conclude my ditty,
The lines which I have penned;
Huzza! Huzza! America!
The war is at an end.

(The End)

★ ★ ★

The Olivers and the Civil War; The Impact of the War Upon an Oswego Family

(Presented by Dr. Charles M. Snyder, February 21, 1956)

On June 3, 1833, a young Scottish couple, Robert Oliver and Margaret Sangster, became man and wife in their native Edinburgh. A week later they boarded the good ship Diligence of Leith, and sailed for America. There was a tradition of gentility among the Olivers, but in 1833 Scotland was a poor country, and young people were migrating to England, Canada and the United States in search of greater opportunities. And so it was with Robert and Margaret Oliver.

A half-century later at the request of their children and grandchildren, Margaret Oliver recalled this trip to America; and our Historical society is fortunate to have a copy of it. She remembered that the ship was a small brig, "very much in size of the schooners which sail on our lower lakes . . . she had a small cabin in which was stowed away ten of us." Enroute, they were storm-ridden and then becalmed "for days together." She recalled the small birds which alighted on the vessel; the glow of the phosphorus in the ship's wake at night, and the schools of whales; also a near collision with an ocean liner on a dark night.

Eleven weeks after their embarkation they arrived in Montreal, where they spent the winter, planning to continue westward to Cincinnati in the spring. Robert was a butcher by trade, and

Cincinnati was the foremost meat-packing center in America. Meanwhile, they journeyed up the St. Lawrence and across Lake Ontario to the town of Sterling, N. Y., twelve miles west of Oswego, to visit Robert's uncle. After spending the summer there, they decided to make their home in Oswego. The opening of the Oswego and the Welland canals had stimulated business; furthermore they were expecting the arrival of their first child. Robert opened a meat market, and later added vegetables and other stores. In time he entered the wholesale trade, supplying the numerous ships in the harbor.

Robert and Margaret Oliver were blessed with eleven children; and their growing family must have used every corner of their spacious home, which still stands facing West Park on the northwest corner of West Fourth and Seneca Sts.

The Olivers were active in community affairs. They were ardent Presbyterians, and Mrs. Oliver was one of the charter members of the Board of Directors of the Home for the Homeless. Robert Oliver was an alderman in the first Common Council of the City of Oswego, and a Republican in politics. He was a charter member of the "Old Oswego Guards" organized in 1838. He attained the rank of major, a title which clung to him, and one which he

seems to have accepted with pride. His military activities inspired an interest, also, among his sons, as we shall see.

Military Tradition

The War Between the States cut across the lives of the Oliver family much as it did thousands of other American families. If there was a difference, it was one of degree. There were four sons of military age, and there was a military tradition.

At the advent of hostilities Robert, Jr., aged 24, the eldest living son, was operating a wholesale meat and provision business similar to that of his father. Just a few months before Lincoln's inaugural, he had married Pattie Danforth Wood.

John W., the second son, had taken up farming a short distance west of the city.

Joseph B., aged 21, and James M., just 19, like so many younger brothers of that era, had "gone west," Joe to Milwaukee and Jim to Cleveland, where they were getting started in the mercantile business after an informal apprenticeship in their father's store. The other children had not stirred from the nest. They were Jane Anne (Jenny), later Mrs. Parker O. Wright, seventeen; Francis (Frank) fifteen, later a photographer in Oswego; Thomas (Tom) eleven; Edwin (Eddy) eight, and Albert, five. One son and one daughter had died during childhood.

We think of our forefathers as men of peace, who left their ploughs at the call of their country. However, this impression tends to overlook another American tradition, that is, the pride in a local regiment of the militia. As Jefferson expressed it, "A well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them."

I think it is safe to say that

no family in Oswego, a community with a garrisoned post, Fort Ontario, and a long military history, took a greater pride in the militia than the Olivers. Robert's membership in the Oswego Guards has already been noted, and the sons successively joined that body, and excelled in riding, shooting and fencing. They relished the drill and the parade, and the many activities making up a soldier's life.

President Lincoln's call for volunteers on April 15, 1861 elicited an immediate response in Oswego. A meeting was called to raise a regiment of volunteers, and recruiting began at once to the accompaniment of martial music, banners, parades and patriotic fervor. Just ten days later Company (A) left for Elmira, where so many others were later to rendezvous. At its head was Captain J. Daniel O'Brien, the first officer to be commissioned in the state under the President's initial call. Other companies followed shortly, and at Elmira on the 17th of May, the regiment was mustered into the United States service for two years as the 24th Infantry, N. Y. Volunteers.

Commanding the regiment was Colonel Timothy Sullivan. Other regimental officers included Lt. Col. Samuel R. Beardsley, Major Jonathan Tarbell; Surgeon J. B. Murdoch, M.D.; Ass't. Surgeon Lawrence Reynolds, M.D.; Quartermaster Charles T. Richardson; Chaplain, Rev. Mr. Mason Gallagher, rector of the Church of the Evangelists (Protestant Episcopal). The adjutant was Lieutenant Robert Oliver, Jr., whose enthusiasm for his new uniform was mingled with misgivings over his unexpected separation from his wife and business.

"Bob," as he will be called hereafter to avoid confusion with his father, had qualities which were to make him an able soldier. He accepted responsibilities and performed the duties of his rank con-

scientiously. Possessed with an abundance of nervous energy he drove himself at a pace too strenuous for his rather delicate physical constitution; and, possibly as a result, suffered from a chronic digestive disorder, which repeatedly left him debilitated and miserable. Though absorbed in his new life, he never for a moment forgot his responsibilities at home. Concern for Pattie's health and his business obligations, and those of his father, filled many of his letters, and runs through his diary. Sometimes critical of his fellow officers when they failed to measure up to his high standards, he was nevertheless popular among a small circle of friends, and among the men in the ranks. Fond of a good time, the pleasure frequently dimmed as introspection and fatigue set in.

The last-minute press of details gave Bob insufficient time to secure a horse, an obligation which officers met out of their own pockets. However, his friends came to the rescue. They solicited funds after his departure for Elmira, and purchased "Dick," of whom more will be said later, and delivered him in Elmira (3).

March Through Baltimore

The regiment moved south to Washington, by way of Harrisburg, Pa., and Baltimore, Md.

While their camp was just outside of Washington, the regiment was quickly given a taste of the realities of war. The atmosphere was charged with expectancy. Regiments were arriving and departing daily, destinations unknown; dysentery ran through the camp, and sentries were posted at the wells to prevent them from being poisoned. For several weeks they divided their time between drill and camp construction, but then they were rushed to the front to cover the retreat from Bull Run. On the day following that debacle, with no

equipment but blankets and two days' rations, they moved into advanced positions, and remained there for three weeks. Fortunately, the enemy did not follow up their victory, and the 24th was given the much needed time to whip raw recruits into a fighting unit.

Through the late summer and autumn the regiment erected Camp Upton near Arlington, and did their share of picket duty. The latter took them to stations a few miles south of the Capital where they could observe Confederate troops at drill and on parade. There were occasional skirmishes between pickets, but no large-scale operations.

Their proximity to Washington helped to provide diversion from the routine of camp life. When duties were not too pressing they could visit the public buildings, attend the theatre, play billiards, and perhaps remain overnight to enjoy the comforts of a hotel. On one trip Bob attended the President's levee. In his diary he noted that he had observed more diamonds there than he had ever seen before in his life. Unfortunately, he did not elaborate.

Oswegonians Visit

Bob's letters and diary reveal a stream of visitors from Oswego scarcely credible to a generation which remembers the difficulties incumbent upon travel during World War II. Visitors received a warm welcome, and celebrations sometimes continued into the night. To mention one such happy occasion: Bob returned from a holiday in Washington to find O. H. Hastings and wife, and J. E. Lyon and family in camp. "They stayed all night; we had a splendid time playing euchre [and drinking] hot whiskey. The band serenaded them. In fact it was the pleasantest evening ever in this camp. (4)

Among the wide-eyed Oswego arrivals was Robert Oliver, Sr.

Timing his visit so that he might see both Bob and Joe (the latter having reached Washington a few days before as a member of the Fifth Wisconsin Volunteers). he entered into camp life with a zest which would have exhausted men many years his junior. He took his turn at target practice and made a commendable showing; and when a courier reported that the "Rebels" were firing on Union pickets, he strapped a revolver to his side, jumped on a horse, and galloped off with the major to investigate. He must have been disappointed to find that the enemy had withdrawn. A day later he thrilled to see President Lincoln and General McClellan review some twelve thousand troops (5). During quieter moments he slept on a board in Joe's tent, ate army rations and swapped military yarns with the "boys." Unfortunately, there is no record of the subsequent reports of his trip in his store or at home, but it can be assumed that they would have filled many pages.

Bob fell into the swing of things and adjusted himself to the life of a soldier. In October he noted that he was getting fat, and weighed 130 pounds, more than he had weighed when he left home; and well above a low of 98 pounds several months earlier. He also took pride in his regiment, and was pleased at his own progress. "They think a great deal of the little adjutant at Headquarters," he noted.

In December Major Tarbell of the 24th Regiment was appointed to a Lt. Colonelcy in another regiment, and the officers scrambled to fill his billet and the captaincy it would open. Promotions originated at the Headquarters of the New York State Militia in Albany, so that the successful candidate was apt to be the one who could exert the greatest pressure there. Bob's approach was to get recommendations signed by leading citizens of Oswego, and he

listed the following as desirable: DeWitt C. Littlejohn, Henry Fitzhugh, Henry M. Ames, Elias Root, Luther Wright, James Platt, John W. Judson and Joel B. Penfield, a quite adequate "Who's Who" for Oswego at that time. His father obtained the recommendations and carried them to Albany in person; a routine he repeated on several subsequent occasions. In this instance he failed, but he was not found lacking when opportunity knocked again.

Mostly Picket Duty

During the winter of 1861-1862 military operations were limited to picket duty. Even drill was curtailed due to the sea of mud which covered the ground. The men of the 24th, meanwhile, made themselves as comfortable as their limited resources permitted. Camp life was now more monotonous than it had been in the fall, and sometimes it was downright disagreeable. For Bob, there was one evening when everything went wrong. In a note to Pattie he lamented, "Bad luck seems to be my misfortune tonight, and consequently I am not in the best of humor. The smoke of my stove instead of passing off by the proper channel comes out of the stove door, and my tent is so full of smoke I can hardly breathe. A few minutes ago my candle went out, and after hunting about in the dark spilling a plate of applesauce, I found a candle, but had no match, and in finding that spilled the ink. Besides all that the mail has just arrived, and no letter from home. . . . Added to all of this it is raining hard, and tomorrow morning at 8 o'clock I have to go in command of the brigade on picket for two days. Now do you blame me for feeling cross and ugly; and so I won't write any more. (P.S.) I have to go out in the rain to get some ink to direct this, and of course my boots are off. Everything is wrong end up, and I had better go to bed or I shall fall down and step on my-

self. (P.S. 2) It will be a wonder if I don't burn myself with the sealing wax." One gets the impression that at the close he was beginning to enjoy his misery; perhaps the pleasure derived from thinking of Pattie was triumphing over his many obstacles!]

By early March rumors of advance filled the air, and the camp took on a hustle and bustle. Even the mud began to dry. On March 18 they broke camp and marched toward Alexandria, presumably to board transports for McClellan's Peninsular campaign. But enroute orders were received to halt and make camp. It proved to be an opportunity for the three brothers, Bob, Joe and John to visit one another.⁷ (See Part III.)

The 24th Regiment did not embark; instead it was attached to McDowell's Corps for operations between Washington and Richmond, and in emergency, for the defense of the former.

Spring Campaign

The spring campaign was initiated on April 4 when the 24th Regiment with another regiment of infantry and two of cavalry under Brig. General Augur moved across the old battlefield at Manassas. They encountered rain, which became so heavy that they made camp and protected themselves as well as they could. The driest spot to be found was inside their shelter tents, which were pieces of cloth, two feet by six, buttoned together. Two men might get under one if they left their legs protruding outside. It was too wet to light fires, and they subsisted for several days on little more than "hard-tack." On the fourth morning Bob was awakened by a round of cheers, and assumed that McClellan had gained a victory on the Peninsula. Investigation, however, showed that it was simply that the sun had broken through the clouds.

The march southward was resumed with the pickets occasionally skirmishing with the enemy.

On April 17 the regiment camped on an estate with a fine southern residence, and Col. Sullivan and Bob decided to accept the un-offered hospitality of the owners for a good night's rest. The occupants, who proved to be a widow and three children, were "frightened to death. They had an idea we would rob and destroy them and all their property. They seemed surprised to find gentlemen in the Yankee Army." Their "southern comfort" came to a sudden end. They had scarcely nestled down upon a rug when the alarm sounded. It proved to be a mistake, their pickets having fired on their own messenger, but by the time the confusion had cleared the night had waned.

Continuing to press southward they skirmished with retreating Confederates, and in several days reached Falmouth, though not in time to prevent the enemy from burning the bridge across the Rappahannock, which they had hoped to use to enter Fredericksburg on the other side. Thirty-four miles in twenty hours had not been fast enough!

The troops rested here (Bob slept for 18 hours) and awaited reinforcements. "I was all right only my poor horse who had only one feed of corn in two days; but the little fellow feels first rate." (10) While they waited slaves in the vicinity flocked into camp until every man in the regiment had a "contraband" or a valet. As for Fredericksburg, from their vantage point across the river, it appeared deserted. However, on Sunday morning the sound of church bells indicated that life continued there despite the proximity of the Yankees (11).

During the next few weeks reinforcements poured in, and General McDowell, in command of the Washington defenses, set up headquarters there. Boatmen and carpenters were at work building pontoons to span the river, and on May 20 the bridge was in place. Three days later the growing

army was reviewed by President Lincoln and Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton; and then on May 25, the anticipated advance toward Richmond got underway.

The next day it stopped, and amidst a flurry of rumors the army did an about face, and began a forced march northward toward Catlet's Station, the nearest railhead connecting the tide-water region with the Shenandoah Valley to the west. The elusive "Stonewall" Jackson had unexpectedly moved up the Valley and now threatened Washington. McDowell's plans to support McClellan thus went into the wastebasket.

Reaching Catlet's Station on the third day, they boarded the "cars" and proceeded toward the Blue Ridge. The men rode in open cars in the rain. Approaching Front Royal in the Shenandoah Valley the train collided with another, but the Oswego boys escaped serious injuries. Arriving at Front Royal, after a delay of several hours, they were hastily dispatched to Strasburg, but a short distance from their objective the locomotive lurched to a halt. The bridge across the Shenandoah River had been burned; In a letter to Pattie, Robert related this episode concisely. "We left our camp south of Fredericksburg last Thursday. Marched to Catlet's Station (40 miles). Took cars to Manassas Junction; from there to Front Royal, and started to Strasburg, but the railroad bridge over the Shenandoah River was burned, which stopped us.

Many Misfortunes

We had all kinds of mishaps; came near going off the railroad bridge which was burned and the track greased. Found the road obstructed in a number of places, and did run off the track after all. None of our regiment got hurt, but 46 of our brigade got killed and wounded. They belong-

ed to the Berdan sharp shooters.

If the railroad bridge had not been burnt, we would have been in a nice little fight at Strasburg, but we are destined not to be in a fight. I was 80 odd hours on the cars with only a few hard bread to eat, and took cold by falling in the canal; so I don't feel very well." (12)

Having failed to reach the Shenandoah front on time, they returned to the tide-water, and reached their previous camp site near Fredericksburg after a grueling march. Feverish and exhausted, Bob's sagging spirits quickly rebounded. Fourteen letters awaited his perusal.

While Bob's brothers were seeing action on the Peninsula he had to search out activities to avoid boredom. On a Sunday he rode with Dr. Murdoch and a war correspondent from the New York Herald to Fredericksburg to attend church. "There were 50 ladies and one gentleman present, and a great portion were in mourning. Was almost insulted by some of the ladies." Bob's sense of chivalry, however, overcame any reservations about southern hospitality. "I feel sorry for the poor women, alone and unprotected," he noted; "although they are rebels, they should be protected from the violence of rude and brutal soldiers." (13)

Perhaps Bob's most pleasant pastime during these weeks was fencing. He discovered that a private of Italian lineage in a nearby regiment was a "splendid swordsman," and he arranged to meet him in a series of matches. He enjoyed it thoroughly, and burst with pride to think that he was "rather too much for him." (14).

During their inactivity at Fal-mouth the command of the brigade passed from General Augur to General Hatch, a former Oswegonian, and the 24th regiment became the senior unit in the First Brigade and First Corps.

On August 5th the regiment in company with others moved north and west under General Pope, who had been brought out of the West to replace the discredited McClellan; and during the weeks which followed they were kept on the move almost continuously as "Stonewall" Jackson again harassed the bewildered Federal command. It was soon a nightmare. In two days the regiment covered 52 miles, scarcely stopping to eat or rest. During this time they suffered a few casualties but did not face a frontal assault. Then on August 28 at Gainesville, a short distance from Manassas, they had their real baptism of fire, lasting about two hours. At 2:00 the next morning they retreated to Manassas, leaving their wounded on the field. Later that day, in what has been termed the Second Battle of Bull Run, Doubleday's Brigade broke and ran through Hatch's Brigade, and the latter was swept back with it. Bob found time for a hurried entry in his diary. "Awful turn of affairs. My clothes torn by balls. Col. Beardsly wounded. Our loss probably 60 killed and wounded . . . Lost our colors . . . I rallied brigade and brought them to camp . . . Major Barney is killed . . . Col. Sullivan drunk . . . nothing left of our brave regiment; poor Barney . . . Brought what men I could find in, and camped at Centerville (several miles north of Manassas)," And a few days later, "Fell back to Fairfax: we have only 116 men for duty in the regiment . . . raining awful . . . stood up all night . . . Am nearly given out. Capt. O'Brien commanding regiment; our loss 293 killed and wounded and missing. . . . Dr. Murdoch gave me a pass to Washington for medical treatment."

Two days later Bob was home in Oswego on a week's furlough. A more rapid transformation from despair to bliss can hardly

be imagined. "Happy, happy Sunday evening . . . The happiness almost painful . . . The band serenaded me . . . commenced telling stories about me and others. . . . unnecessary to write down the last week's proceedings; they will never be forgotten should I live 100 years. God bless her and bring me safe home," he confided in his diary.

Meanwhile the 24th Regiment, or what was left of it after subtracting 237 in killed, wounded and missing (the official figure) after only several days' rest, was hurried northward to intercept Lee's daring advance into Maryland and at South Mountain and Antietam, the regiment again faced a withering enemy fire. In these engagements they lost 45 more in killed and wounded.

Heavy Losses

The rapid movements of the army delayed Bob's return for a few days, and when he arrived he viewed a sorry spectacle. Riding around the battle field at Antietam in search of his regiment, he saw thousands of dead and dying. "I never knew the horrors of war till now. It is past description." When he reached his regiment he found scarcely 20 men fit for duty, and the gallant Captain O'Brien, who later gave his name to a Grand Army of the Republic post in Oswego, lay wounded with a leg amputated. On October 3 President Lincoln and General McClellan, (again in command) reviewed the army. "They gave a sharp look at our poor brigade. Our regiment had only 86 rifles; that was all we could raise."

With the ranks depleted promotions were in order, and the officers busied themselves obtaining recommendations. Bob was hopeful of receiving temporary command of the regiment with the rank of major, and left no stone unturned to obtain it. But he was embarrassed to find himself

in competition with Captain O'Brien, who was ambitious to advance in the service despite his disability. Bob signed a recommendation for O'Brien, and awaited the outcome with some trepidation. And when it was reported that Bob was to be the new major and not O'Brien or the other captains in the regiment the atmosphere of the camp grew cold. Bob, it might be noted was thus "jumping" several of his superiors by advancing from adjutant to major. "I went and saw O'Brien," he advised, "and he acted a little disappointed. I told him I would not accept. He said I was very foolish; that I ought to accept. He was very friendly, but somewhat disappointed; left him good friends. The (other) officers are feeling sore. They use me very politely.

A few days after assuming command, Bob recorded a state of mind which commanders on land and sea have felt, I am sure, through the ages, "I am lonesome; have no associates." Bob's promotion appears to have been popular with the men in the ranks, however, and the officers became more cordial as the initial disappointment wore off.

On the 26th of October the army broke camp and marched southward, recrossing the Potomac near Harpers Ferry. It was not an auspicious start for the men of the 24th Regiment. "It seems too bad to march this little regiment into Virginia again; we have only 132 men fit for duty, and they are suffering for clothes, shoes, blankets, and twenty have no arms. It would make your heart ache to see the poor fellows at night laying alongside a fire without blankets, overcoats or tents. I give them my overcoat every night; that is all I can do for them." Morale was low; both officers and men were absent without leave, and the officers were putting one another on report for irregularities.

On November 10 the army stood on review to take farewell of McClellan, who was again removed from command for his failure to follow Lee more closely after his retreat from Maryland. "Poor fellow, my heart aches for him. Our main prop is gone now. I am willing to give up," was Eob's tribute to the colorful leader.

Continuing to edge southward under General A. E. Burnside the army reached Falmouth, their old camp-ground across the Rappahannock from Fredericksburg, on December 9. Here Burnside committed one of the costliest blunders of the war. With the Confederate army in an almost impregnable position on the wooded heights just beyond Fredericksburg, he made a frontal assault, sending charge after charge against the deadly Confederate musketry and artillery. When they retired at night-fall the field was strewn with their dead. Northern morale hit a new low; perhaps the lowest of the war.

The role of the 24th Regiment will be told briefly. On Thursday, Dec. 11 Union artillery threw a heavy cannonade against Fredericksburg and the heights beyond. Before sundown the troops began crossing the river on pontoon bridges. Bringing up the rear, the regiment crossed over the following afternoon, and lay that night upon their arms. The next day they went out as skirmishers, and while the action was exhausting, there were few casualties. On the following day the armies awaited the other's move, and there was little firing. On Monday evening the regiment was sent forward to support a battery, one company excepted, which went on picket duty. "I was sent for," Bob wrote, "and ordered to have my regiment fall back to where the brigade was. There I learned for the first time that we were to retreat, and my

company was to be left out front to be either taken prisoners or killed. You can't imagine the feelings I had to thus leave my friends and comrades to the mercies of the enemy, for I was sure they would be taken; but I could not help it, and with an aching heart I left them. They did not know anything about it or that the army was going to retreat. Well we got safely across the river, and Lt. Hill of our regiment, who is acting adjutant, was detailed to go and call in the pickets after the whole army had got safely across! He gave me all his money and a letter to his mother, and with a 'God bless you, Major' left me to do his duty; and well did he do it, for all the pickets got safely across the river without losing a man. I was never so thankful to get out of any battle I was in as this one."

The above account, written several days after the battle, with a flair for the dramatic, contrasts sharply with the hurried entries in his diary. Noting that they had retreated at double quick for two miles and had crossed the river safely, he went on "I nearly gave out, but for a little whiskey I should . . . I am sick and perfectly demoralized; never was so sick of the war. Think the rebels have earned their independence . . . Oh I am home-sick, 5 months from today [my enlistment expires] . . . All down on Burnside . . . rumored that Seward has resigned and little Mc(Clellan) is coming back. He is the only man that can fetch this army up."

After the battle the army marched northward, and several days later pitched camp at Belle Plain on the Potomac.

As they settled down for another winter in camp Bob's thoughts turned more and more toward home. On Christmas he visited Joe, camped nearby, and learned that he had sent in his resignation. Their conversation

continued into the wee hours, was of their future; where should they begin, how how? Joe was thinking of returning to the West, but Bob thought only of home in Oswego, and he resolved that it was his last Christmas away from his loved ones.

His war fatigue seems to have been shared by his comrades. When one of the men in the regiment was courtmartialled for desertion, he noted, "Pretty hard to punish one and not the others who were equally guilty."²⁴

New Year's Day was filled with diversions: a shooting match with Joe, Doc Murdoch, Than (Nathaniel Wright) and Captain Carvy for a \$50 purse. The Doctor won. Bob purchased a pint of whiskey for \$3.00, and they had hot toddy. But a few days later he was counting the days until May 17. One entry in his diary reads, "9,590,400 seconds more to stay in the service."²⁵ And Joe's retirement and return to Oswego at this time added to his blues. The resignation of Colonel Sullivan of the 24th Regiment set up another scramble for promotions, but otherwise spirits lagged.

Mud March

Then on January 20 Burnside interrupted their short-lived winter encampment with a march toward the Rappahannock, an expedition which was dubbed appropriately the "mud march." Roads were a morass, and the rain fell teadily. By the second day "artillery, baggage, wagons and everything was stuck fast. . . . I am awful sick, nearly fell from my horse with cramps. Would go to the rear if we was (sic) not going to fight, but will keep up as long as I can sit on a horse."²⁶ Two days later the whole expedition was called off, and the army sloshed back to their old camp.

Again the routine was picket duty and a growing number of court martials for desertion and drunkenness. Nearby in the 4th brigade Bob saw "five men have

their heads shaved and drummed out of the service. I would prefer to be shot," he mused.²⁷ Some regiments received furloughs, but the under-manned 24th obtained very few. At length when a Captain Phillips was successful, he went home, then remained Away With Out Leave. Other leaves awaited his forced return and court martial.²⁸

On February 23 Bob received official notification of his promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, a testimonial to his hard-working father at Albany as well as his own conscientious service. Bob was quite naturally proud of his achievement. "That is doing pretty well I think," he confided to Pattie. "Came in as a Lieutenant and in less than two years get promoted to a Lt. Colonelcy. I am satisfied now. I flatter, and am vain enough to think that I have got but my just deserts. But I may be mistaken and ought not to be the judge."²⁹

In March Bob was flattered to be chosen with 50 of the regiment to participate with 250 picked men in a secret mission into enemy territory. They took passage late in the afternoon on several river boats down the Potomac. At daylight they entered an inlet and marched to Heathsville. They took the town and a few prisoners, and camped in the woods nearby. The next morning they sent out foragers who rounded up horses, mules, grain, confederate mail and mail carriers. But by this time the secret mission was losing its appeal. "Don't like such stealing expeditions," Bob noted, but he used the opportunity to trade a pony (not Dick) for a blooded Virginia horse. On their return, when they put in at the St. Mary's River on the Maryland shore to patch their leaking vessel, a crowd of contrabands climbed aboard, and Bob was delegated to return them. "It was lucky for us, as the Gunboat had orders to arrest us for taking them," he recorded.³⁰ The party was back

safely at Belle Plain the following day. There proved to be one bit of unfinished business. Bob received an order to return his blooded horse. Someone had informed the colonel, who had not approved.

On March 17 with Captain Phillips back in camp under guard, Bob and several other officers obtained leaves of absence for 10 days. Appended was an admonition that failure to return on schedule would automatically cost their commissions. Bob hastened home, and again rejoiced in the midst of his family. He returned on time, though a derailed freight delayed him a few hours and left him apprehensive.

Lincoln Reviews Army

With the coming of April the roads were again dry, and new campaigns were in preparation. On April 9 President Lincoln and the new commander, General Joseph Hooker, reviewed the army. But there was little enthusiasm among the regiment. Some of the men anticipated that the expiration of their service would fall on the second anniversary of their actual enlistments, and they objected angrily when a ruling came from the War Department that the date would be that of their muster into the United States Army on May 17. "Oh, how the men are blowing," Bob noted, "Am fearful there will be a large row." (31)

And when orders were issued to have two days' cooked rations in haversacks and be ready to move at a moment's notice, there was an uproar. Men were drinking heavily, and Bob feared that if the marching orders came, he would be compelled to make a batch of arrests. Fortunately, the order was not given. Morale improved, and Bob breathed more easily.

But when a similar situation occurred a week later another "row" broke out among the men

in Company A, whose two year enlistments were to expire on April 24, just several days away. When the 24th dawned Bob anxiously awaited the outcome, and he was overjoyed to observe that they went on doing their duties "like men." Receipt of a telegram that they would be mustered out at Elmira on May 17 helped to ease the tension.

However, when marching orders came on the morning of the 27th, Company A balked. "Company A handed in a petition refusing to march. I don't know what will happen to them," Bob despaired.³² As the time for falling in approached nerves were taut, and at the zero hour they reached the breaking point. When the order to march was given, twelve of the company stood fast. They were thereupon taken to the front of the brigade and "two regiments drawn up in line with loaded guns. Gen'l. Wadsworth told them they must immediately return and take their arms or be shot on the spot. They preferred the former, and all returned to duty."³³ Thus the crisis passed.

During the next week the men of the 24th Regiment had little time to fret over their release. They moved with the army into the Fredericksburg area and took part in the Battle of Chancellorsville. Not being among the brigades under General Howard, they were spared "Stonewall" Jackson's spectacular strike, which made possible another major victory for Lee, and another humiliating defeat for the Union. The regiment did picket duty, but otherwise took no active part in the six day engagement.

At its close, they marched north to Aquia Creek on the Potomac, and on May 12 at 9 p. m. took ship-board for Washington, which they reached early the next morning. A day later, they entrained for Baltimore, where one poor soldier, who had lived through two years of war, lost his life when he fell under the cars. (Robert McKinsey, Co. F)

The next day they arrived in Elmira with the "men feeling like colts." Several days later Bob met Pattie at Jefferson (Watkins Glen) at the head of Seneca Lake. On the 23d they turned in their arms. Bob's company came to his hotel and gave him three cheers, "which cost me 3 dollars for whiskey."³⁴ And on May 29 the regiment, to be remembered as a unit of the "Iron Brigade" was mustered out of the United States service. "The long looked for event has at last arrived, and I am once more a free man," Bob mused; and then the final entry in his diary, "Got my pay."

The 24th Regiment Comes Home

While the boys of the 24th Regiment were going through the mustering-out progress at Elmira, admiring home-folk were eagerly preparing for their return to Oswego. The City Council voted \$300 for the festivities, and a citizens' committee prepared a monstrous demonstration. Meanwhile eyes were glued to the columns of the local papers for word of their departure from Elmira.

On Monday afternoon, June 1, the Daily Times announced that they would entrain the following morning and arrive during the afternoon. The news set the entire community in motion, and by the following noon Oswego was decked in bunting and its streets overflowing with spectators. At 3 o'clock the City Hall bell began to ring, acknowledging the receipt of a telegram that the troops had left Syracuse and were on the last lap. The church bells relayed the word to the adjacent countryside.

The throng converged upon the railroad station at West First and Utica streets to get the first glimpse of the "remnant of Oswego County's first offering in the War of Freedom." During the long wait the Mechanics' Sax Horn and the Union bands filled the air with patriotic medleys. Then about 5:00 a prolonged blast from the locomotive's whistle an-

nounced its approach. Cheer followed cheer as the train stopped and the men poured out to greet relatives and friends. After some delay the men were gotten into their places, and the parade began. Leading off was the Mechanics' Sax Horn band; then in order, the 48th Regiment of Oswego Guards, the Union band, veterans of the 24th Regiment with Col. Beardsley, Lt. Col. Oliver, Major Richards, Adjutant Hill, Quartermaster Richardson and Surgeon Murdoch mounted and leading the way. Behind the marchers in carriages came the disabled and wounded and the Clergy of Oswego; next, the fire department, and finally, Oswego citizens in carriages. The regimental colors with Bull Run, South Mountain, Antietam and Fredericksburg inscribed, drew universal attention.

The parade crossed the lower bridge, circled and returned to the west side, halting in West Park, where appropriate ceremonies were performed. Mr. William Lewis, esq., presided, and the Rev. Mr. L. M. S. Haynes of the First Baptist Church offered the prayer, which included a condemnation of Copperheadism. The Hon. D. G. Fort, a former mayor, then delivered the address. At its conclusion Col. Beardsley, Capt. J. D. O'Brien, Col. Sullivan, a former commandant of the regiment, and Adjutant Hill responded briefly for the regiment. And finally, the Marshall for the affair, none other than Robert Oliver, Sr., invited the boys to a banquet awaiting them at Doolittle Hall.

The latter, served by the "generous hearted ladies of Oswego," was sumptuous, and entertainment was furnished by a traveling troupe of musicians. At its conclusion the "Boys in Blue" went to their respective homes for additional celebrations appropriate for heroes.

A final sidelight. Due to the intensity of the political controversy raging at that moment, the

committee had announced that partisanship would have no place in the activities. But knowing "Little Mac's" popularity among the soldiers, and not wishing to lose an opportunity to make political capital, Democratic partisans of McClellan for the presidency displayed a large picture of him along the line of march. If the Times, a Republican paper, can be offered as testimony, the strategem failed dismally, as the troops passed by in silence.

After the War

Back in Oswego Bob entered actively into the life of the community. He resumed his business, reared a family of three children, and at the war's close accepted a commission in a newly organized troop of cavalry. He was occasionally stricken with the maladies which had haunted him through the war, but his energy was unabated. On March 15, 1871, he went to Syracuse for a fencing contest with an old friend. En route home on the train he was taken violently ill, and died two days later at the age of 34. The attending physician, his old comrade in arms, Dr. Murdoch, attributed his death to a chronic ulcer.

By happenstance, on the night of his death his military company had met to elect him its commanding officer, and the installation officer from Syracuse was on hand for the ceremony.

The funeral was imposing. Three companies of the 24th Regiment commanded by Col. Sullivan preceded the hearse, and "Dick," war-horse of the deceased, fully caparisoned, followed. Next came the remaining companies of the 24th, and behind them the second battalion of cavalry and staff. Then, in turn, marched the several Masonic bodies of the City and the Knights Templar, and finally, relatives and friends in carriages. In the words of the Times, "The demonstration was one of the largest ever witnessed in Oswego, and was a fitting

tribute to the esteem and regard in which the late Col. Robert Oliver was held."

Joseph B. Oliver

The outbreak of the war found Joseph B. Oliver, of "Joe", aged 21, second of the family to enter service, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His life to that point can be told briefly. His youth was not unlike that of Bob. He too learned the mysteries of butchering and provisioning in his father's establishment and reveled in the military lore of the community. Small, wiry and athletic, he also excelled in riding, shooting and fencing, and saw nothing but glamor in the routine of the camp.

Here similarities cease, however. His personality contrasted sharply with Bob's. Whereas the former was introspective, Joe was a born extrovert, and whereas the former tended to worry, fret and take himself seriously, the latter was carefree and easygoing. He overflowed with an infectious good will, made friends easily and seemed to thrive on activity. His letters are a delight to read. Finding a story in the most mundane, only time limited the number and length of the missives flowing from his pen.

Joe assumed the responsibilities of manhood in the spring of 1860 when he took passage on a lake boat for Milwaukee, where he found employment with a George Colver, an acquaintance of his father, who operated a wholesale produce house near the water front. He found the work strenuous, the hours long and the compensation scarcely sufficient to meet his expenses. Business was dull, and he chafed at the limited opportunities for advancement.

After work and on Sundays, however, he entered into the social life of his adopted city, and soon found a circle of friends.

³⁵ He also continued to take an active interest in the affairs of his family in Oswego. He for-

warded merchandise to his father when he found "bargains," and wrote voluminous letters to his numerous kin filled with good-natured advice on such timely topics as the harmful effects of alcohol, proper suitors for a sister and precautions to be observed in accepting a boarder.

When Lincoln called for volunteers Joe was tempted to answer the call at once. But he hesitated, when it was rumored that the company being organized would not receive men under five feet eight inches in height. By the time he learned that the report was false, the company was filled and he cast about to find a commission in a new company. "However, I will take a private's berth cheerfully," he wrote, "yet something higher would please me better. It's an imperative duty which we owe to our country and our God. Much as I abhor Civil War I think it every man's duty to fight for the country of his nativity....insult upon insult has been received by us at the hands of an unfeeling rebellious party of men and the stars and stripes have been struck to slaveholders, which is enough to fire every true and patriotic heart..... Tomorrow I will join a Zouave company which is starting, and let it not be said that an Oliver ever shrunk back when his country needed his services. I for one will not." ³⁶

Organize Zouaves

It took Joe and his associates less than two weeks to organize a company of Zouaves, procure what passed for uniforms and begin a routine of drill. "Our company is composed of as good men as can be found in any city in the country, the average height about 5 ft. 9 in. (His stature appears to have bothered him occasionally), stout and athletic, and very quick and as determined a set of men as you would wish to see; some of them from the first families here and spoiling for a fight.

We have attained a degree of proficiency not to be excelled by any company in the state, and would willingly compete with any company in the United States (except Chicago Zouaves) and have only been organized two weeks last night.

Every evening our armory is filled with ladies and gentlemen. Tuesday evening our company had the pleasure of drilling before his excellency, Gov. Randall, and was complimented quite highly by him. The same evening a gentleman brought in a splendid bouquet and said it was for the best drilled man in the company; but our captain thought best with the vote of the company to give it to Gov. Randall, and the presentation was made, and he replied in a very appropriate manner." 37

The Zouaves discovered that organizing and equipping a company was less difficult than attaching it to a regiment, and having it mustered into the service. To further their cause at Madison, where the legislature was about to convene in special session, Captain Hibbard in uniform and Joe, garbed as a private, hurried to the capitol. Their reception was more auspicious than they could have dreamed. "We had quite a pleasant time," he wrote, "at the request of the Governor and members [we] went through our drill, which pleased them very much, and at their request we will go in company to Madison..... just to show them our drill." 38

The appearance of Captain Hibbard and Joe before the legislature, it turned out, was scarcely a pre-requisite to acceptance in the army, since the surplus dwindled rapidly and quotas were soon hard to fill. However, it served to enhance Joe's prestige in the company, and when the organization was completed he was no longer a private but a first lieutenant. Knowing something of Joe's spirit

it can be assumed that he was a dashing officer. A contemporary observation of an officer of his rank in his regiment, but otherwise unidentified must surely have been no other. "Not satisfied with the movements prescribed by Hardee's Tactics, our officers exercised us in drills and company formations purely ornamental and unprecedented. Our first lieutenant ordered every movement.... to be done 'with a snap.' And while he remained with us—about two years—he was known as 'Snap.' He was a praiseworthy man and brave."

The Zouaves were sworn into the service of the state on June 10 and attached to the Fifth Regiment, Wisconsin Active Militia. They stepped up the pace of their training and completed their uniforms. Then, while waiting impatiently for orders, they were unexpectedly pressed into service in Milwaukee to quell rioters who swarmed the streets in protest against the closure of the banks, the failure of one having precipitated runs upon the others. The Zouaves dispersed the throng at the point of the bayonet, but the atmosphere remained tense, and they continued on duty for more than 72 hours. In the initial melee Joe struck an armed assailant with his sword cutting a gash in his neck. He was at once the hero of the hour—among certain elements at least—and citizens shouted "bully for Oliver," and the Milwaukee papers gave the incident conspicuous notice.

The tension felt by the inexperienced Zouaves is evident in one of Joe's letters, dashed off at the height of the excitement. "General King," he observed "was here a few minutes ago and said there were from 500 to 1000 men armed with all kinds of weapons coming in from the country, and some are already in the limits of the city to make an attack on our company of

Zouaves, and defeat us, and break open the banks again. Let them come, 100 brave men are waiting and spoiling to give them a dose which will throw them into disorder and then rout them at the point of the bayonet."³⁹

For a full week rioters roamed the streets unmolested. One band actually threatened the Zouaves and marched to their quarters in the upper story of a large pork-packing establishment. But they did not attack, and quiet was gradually restored. It was a real test of the discipline and morale of the infant company.

A few days later they entrained for Madison where they went into quarters at Camp Randall. Here on July 13 they were sworn into the United States Army as Company B, 5th Wisconsin Volunteers for a term of two years.

Commanding the regiment was Colonel Amasa Cobb who had resigned the speakership of the Wisconsin assembly to serve his country in the field. Several weeks later they departed on the "cars" for Washington which they reached on August 8. (40)

Visits Brother

One of Joe's first acts there was to visit his brother Bob and the 24th Regiment, New York Volunteers from Oswego, encamped at Arlington Heights. Exchanging experiences with his old friends was almost as much pleasure for the young lieutenant as a trip to Oswego. He also wrote hurriedly to his father urging him to come to Washington while he and Bob were in the neighborhood.

Mr. Oliver needed no second invitation, and arrived in the capital as fast as return mail. Joe met his father and drove to Arlington in a cab where they visited Bob and the Oswego boys. Later they drove to Arlington House, formerly the home of General Robert E. Lee. The next day Mr. Oliver participated with the 5th Wisconsin

Regiment in rifle practice, and during off-duty hours father and son filled the air with tales of their respective military experiences. It was a joyous occasion for both. 41.

Shortly thereafter Joe got his first glimpse of President Lincoln. "I saw . . . 'Old Abe' yesterday," he noted, "reviewing some troops right in front of the White House, and I stood expecting to see him come out. Finally I asked a man of the house when he would be out. He said he was out pointing his finger to a tall, lank, green looking man with some old gray clothes on and a black plug hat. I was never more astonished in my life." 42.

Three weeks after their arrival in Washington the regiment was taking its turn on the picket line just south of Arlington. This duty was apt to grow monotonous, but they occasionally sighted enemy pickets and exchanged shots with them. Overhead La Mountain assisted in spotting Confederate movements from his new fangled balloon. 43

For Joe the highlight of these early weeks near Washington was a "commando" raid behind Confederate lines, where an informant told them there was a headquarters for some artillery and several hundred cavalry. The operation consisting of three companies was commanded by Captain Hibbard, while Joe directed Company A, Captain Burns, Company C, and Captain Bugh, Company G. By a circuitous march of about 14 miles they reached a point some three miles inside the Confederate pickets without detection. When scouts reported a concentration of cavalry ahead, Joe was ordered to take 50 men and move to a position beyond them to prevent their retreat. Before reaching their objective, however, they came upon two cavalymen and a Negro carrying hay from a barn. They beat a hasty retreat and escaped the shots from Joe's riflemen. The firing in turn, gave the alarm to

the larger body of cavalymen, who took off in haste before the main body under Hibbard had made contact with them. Joe's men intercepted several and wounded three, two of whom escaped, but the third fell from his horse. Joe made him a prisoner and took his sword and revolver. At dusk the party returned from their 20 mile excursion with a booty of two horses, one saddle and bridle, one prisoner, a sword and revolver. It was hardly a significant blow for the Union, but the prisoner was the first to be taken by the division, and the incident was a stimulant to the regiment's morale. Next day President Lincoln and General McClellan rode into their headquarters, and complimented them. 44.

Morale High

The morale of the 5th Wisconsin Regiment remained high, if Joe's feelings can be accepted as typical. They chafed at delays in a forward movement, wearied from the steady succession of drills, and disliked the alerts which took them from their blankets into the frosty night, but they assumed that their regiment was the finest in their division, and even in the service. Captivated by the dashing and demonstrative McClellan, they applauded the resignation of General Winfield Scott as general-in-chief, and the elevation of "Little Mac" in his place. 45

Even drill might lift one's spirits if carried on in the grand manner. In one of these the infantry was tested before a cavalry charge.

"Down thundered six squadrons of cavalry, but the infantry soon formed themselves into a hollow square ready to receive the charge. It was a magnificent affair, 600 horsemen riding down like lightening, and screaming and hollering like so many demons, but those squares never flinched a particle. On they came every moment increasing

their speed, each vying with another to see who would be there first; 600 sabers glistening and prepared to strike, and still the infantry remained immovable. When the bugle sounded the halt, cheer after cheer rent the air in praise of the infantry, who manifested so little concern for the flying multitude who threatened to destroy them. Soon the whole division was on the move, between 1600 and 1700 infantry and 24 pieces of artillery and a regiment of cavalry. It was a glorious sight; all the bands of music playing, which made the men step lightly. 'On right into line' came the order, and each company turned to the right and dressed rapidly into line; 'fire by company, commence firing' were rapidly given, and each company as it came into line obeyed the order, and for one hour firing was incessant: then firing by battalions, and fire by wing, and fire by file, followed in rapid succession by each company. It seemed as if the firing would never cease. It was really exciting. Clouds of smoke soon settled around us, and (as) they continued firing (it) reminded one of an exciting battle. About 16,000 infantry formed quickly in line, and fired five rounds apiece. Soon clouds of smoke arose and showed to our gaze all the infantry in one line which reached at least a mile and a half. We are the enemy and they are ours." (46) Drill has seldom been described with greater pride or eloquence.

While the "Boys in Blue" were close to the hearts of wives and parents every day of the year, they were probably missed most of all on the holidays when families habitually gathered together. During the days just after Thanksgiving in November 1861 Joe's family bombarded him with questions concerning his celebration of the event, and he at length gratified their wishes with one of his best letters, It is both a col-

orful picture of the day in camp and a revealing insight into Joe's personality.

"At reveille," he wrote, "I arose cold and shivering from my bedI broke the ice in the pail and took a good wash in the cold water, which is quite refreshing, and my toilet was soon made. After drinking a cup of good coffee and eating some bread, I sallied forth to see what was going on." But failing to find a single idea among his fellow officers, he returned to his tent and "conned over 'Tom Berbe' by Charles Lever," which "convulsed" him with laughter.

"Dinner hour came and the time-honored custom of eating turkey was dispensed with as no 'turks' were to be found within our lines. The feathered tribe of that name may consider themselves fortunate that Providence or some unseen hand removed them from the front of the Grand Army of the Potomac, for it's no telling how terrible they would have been cut up by vigorous 'sorties' of the Federal Army. Fresh beef took the place of turkey, and out dessert consisted of potatoes instead of mince pie.

"Afternoon was spent about as profitably as the morning and wound up with dress parade. Tea was dispensed with, as we were all preparing for a Thanksgiving supper given by Capt. Hibbard of Co. B at a house about a mile to the rear of our camp.

After giving an extra tuck to our toilet, about 20 officers wended their way to the appointed place. You may ask, what was the extra tuck to our toilet made for? Simply enough answered too—fair ladies was the cause; and let me here assure you, such articles as these incased in crinoline will make the hearts of all the officers in the regiment go, 'pitty pat' like a dead lamb's tail.

"Without anything of importance happening, all arrived safe and sound at the appointed place, minus the glassy polish the Con-

traband [Negro] took so much pains to put on, and in its stead a thick coat of mud was found. This could be easily apologized for to the fair ones already mentioned, as no horses were to be had for our transportation. After each one paying his respects to the ladies we were ushered into the dining room, and the sight of the tables would have tempted the appetite of an epicure. Conspicuous to the scene was a large turkey, while around this was found all the delicacies of the season: Chickens, ducks, tongues, roast beef and all the substantials of life; cakes frosted, bon-bons, candies, nuts and so forth, stood out in bold relief inviting you to partake. Nor was the invitation slighted. Each one went in on his own hook, and the table showed plainly what sad havoc we were making. Such a state of things could not last long, and there is an end to all things; so it was to our eating. Dishes were cleaned off and champagne was brought on. The health of our hosts was drunk, 'To McClellan, our gallant leader,' 'to the sweethearts left behind,' 'to our army, the pride of our country,' and various others too numerous to mention, and winding up with a bumper to the day we celebrate."

Singing came next on the program: 'Home Sweet Home,' 'My Mother Dear,' 'Benny Havens Oh,' 'Coming Through the Rye,' 'Star Spangled Banner,' and many others I've forgotten were discoursed excellently.

At a late hour we started for home, or rather our camp, some considerably elated with champagne. And their articulations were often times interrupted by a 'hic' and various gestures not natural to a sober man (so that) someone would go into the mud inwardly cursing the sacred soil of Virginia. To cut my narrative short, we all arrived at our quarters after spending a happy

Thanksgiving night. This is probably different from the way you spent your time, but every one to his own liking, as the 'Old woman said when she kissed the cow.' "47

Surely the celebration must have been a tonic for war nerves in camp; and at home, Joe's report must have enthralled young and old alike.

In contrast to the festivities on Thanksgiving Joe's only comment on Christmas was that it was "very lonesome and dreary for me."

But New Year's was another day for celebration. "Our 'Chateau' was open," Joe wrote, "and we received calls all day; and our table was spread bountifully. A huge cake attracted much attention, while all the other delicacies were put on; and the day passed very pleasantly. The afternoon was spent in watching the sports of the day, such as climbing the greasy pole, catching a greased pig, jumping, running, and so on. (There were) prizes for each as high as \$25.00. Men were detailed from each company in the brigade (to compete in the contests)."48

As autumn shaded into winter there was little evidence that the enthusiasm of the 5th Wisconsin Regiment was cooling with the weather. Instead there was a growing restiveness at the delay in ordering "on to Richmond." But impatience to be on the move did not deter them from doing first things first; that is, to line their tents to make their quarters more liveable. In this respect the officers had decided advantages over the men in the ranks. They were free to improvise, and they had more dollars to spend.

While Joe's quarters were not necessarily typical, they furnish the reader with an impression of what a lieutenant might provide.

"You would laugh to walk into the 'Chateau de Oliver' and see how comfortable I am," he not-

ed. "I've a good log house over my head. . . . It is 12 by 14 feet inside and 8 feet high, covered by what is called in Wisconsin, shacks, or more properly speaking, long shingles. You step inside, you pass a good sized door, and the first sight which greets the eye is the neatness of everything. The window (is framed) by a nice, white-fringed curtain, which stands out in bold relief by the side of the walls which are hung with calico purchased in Washington. A nice cot covered with a good straw tick over which is spread several large warm blankets; some nice made pine sticks on the wall hold our uniforms, while on the gable end displayed in military style hangs a pair of foils, our swords, revolvers and some spare guns put up in artistic style, which gives it the appearance of a hunter's lodge. A good sized stove throws out sufficient heat to warm this paragon of a shanty. Talk about your nice marble residences, you think not half as much of them as the poor soldiers do of their log cabins in which they sit cold nights and crack all sorts of jokes, while others talk of home and its many comforts." 49 The letter attests to Joe's resourcefulness and adaptability. The comforts described there are rather surprising when it is noted that the regiment was expecting orders to advance at any moment; orders, which would have required him to leave most of these furnishings behind.

During January 1862 Joe wrote a letter to the Milwaukee SENTINEL under the pseudonym, "Jake." "Jake", is seemed, was a private in the ranks with a penchant for human interest stories. He was impatient for action and thrilled to the beat of the drum. He merged his personality with the aspirations of the regiment, and had no doubts but that the Wisconsin 5th was the smartest in the service. In other

words, "Jake" was Joe without braid. The letter was repeated and soon became a serial, and "Jake" something of a celebrity, as readers speculated upon his identity. The SENTINEL was soon referring to him as their regular correspondent. Joe also sent occasional letters to the Oswego TIMES, but objected to his father when he handed his personal letters to the editor.

While Joe noted with a trace of self-satisfaction that he was writing letters to some twenty persons, he did not regard it as a one-way street. He anticipated speedy replies, for his attention to army life did not dull his abiding interest in his home. Scattered through his letters are numerous references to his younger brothers and sister and a fond older brother's solicitude for them. When Tom, aged 12, e. g. disregarded Webster's approved spelling, Joe called his attention to the importance of keeping the dictionary at his elbow; and when the former showed a marked improvement, Joe was lavish with his praise.

Joe was also deeply interested in the social relations of his family. He advised his sister Jennie upon her associations with young men, and his brother Tom, upon his relations with young ladies. 50

Joe also took a fraternal interest in financial matters of the family. He sent sums to his brother Jim, who was getting started in business in Chicago (having gone there from Cleveland) and mailed infrequent surpluses to his father for investment in Oswego.

After five months of expectation and disappointment at the failure to take the offensive, the long awaited orders arrived. On Sunday morning, March 23, the regiment marched to Alexandria, four miles distant, boarded the steamers Canonicus and Argo, and sailed down the Potomac with the Army of the Potomac. It

was a stirring scene, with bands playing lively airs and thousands of spectators cheering from the shore. Early next morning they passed Mt. Vernon, "the last resting place of Washington. It was a relief to know that the place was not held by the rebels. Deep and keen were our emotions while this place was in sight." At five P. M. they entered Chesapeake Bay, where Joe on top-side scanned the blue waters and the wooded shores beyond with one eye and followed the movement of his hand across his letter pad with the other. When the regimental surgeon interrupted to inquire what he could find to write about, Joe for a brief moment was dumbfounded and without words. "Queer question," he mused in his letter. "This, when we are ploughing our way through one of the finest bays in the world interspersed with all the beauties of nature." 51.

At dawn next morning they dropped anchor in Hampton Roads off Fortress Monroe among the ships blockading the Merrimack, and close-by the Monitor. All eyes turned toward this curious craft which two weeks before had turned back the Confederate iron-clad in a battle to be remembered as one of our most glorious naval triumphs. Reactions among the men were not unlike those of the press. They described it as a "bump on a log," and "ink bottle on a turtle's back" and a "Yankee cheese on a log." A few hours later the ships docked at Hampton and the troops disembarked and encamped a short distance from Newport News. Released from duty they roamed the shore picking up oysters and gathering souvenirs from the wrecks of the Cumberland and the Congress, victims of the Merrimack, whose hulks still held the bodies of several hundred seamen. 52

On April 4 the regiment moved into a line of troops extending from the James to the York

ivers. Attached to Franklin's Corps, Smith's Division, Hancock's Brigade and McClellan's Army of the Potomac, they entered upon the Peninsular Campaign, with their objective, Richmond, forty miles away.

Eve of Great Battle

For the moment, at least, it was all that Joe had been waiting for. "We are on the eve of one of the greatest battles that has ever been fought on the American Continent, and those who survive should feel proud of being in this battle."⁵³ He was scarcely posted among the skirmishers when General Hancock ordered him with a patrol of four to reconnoiter one of the forts along the Confederate line. Crawling in the rain among the trees they advanced to a point about 300 yards from the fort, where they were fired upon, but dodged safely behind the trees. After replying in kind, they returned and related their observations. General Hancock judged Joe's information of sufficient value to have it relayed to General McClellan in person. At the latter's headquarters. "After a good handshake," Joe answered the commanding general's questions, and sketched a map of the fort and its approaches. In his description of the incident to his father, Joe added, "He (McClellan) looks as young as ever, and I am still confident he is the man in the right place." In the general discussion which followed General Hancock noted that they were drawing the same lines as the French and American troops had taken at the Battle of Yorktown where Cornwallis surrendered. He thought it would be a singular coincidence if this war were ended here by McClellan. It was a forecast Joe was already echoing; the next few days or weeks, he believed, would see the decisive battle of the war.⁵⁴

Through the next four weeks

activity was limited to skirmishes between pickets as both contestants dug in for protection. Pickets were so close that they exchanged news at night by calling back and forth. On one occasion pickets of the Wisconsin 5th enjoyed a concert by a Confederate band, featuring "Dixie" and other Southern favorites. On another day under a flag of truce they exchanged the bodies of those who had fallen behind the other's lines.

Then on May 5 in the Battle of Williamsburg the regiment faced a frontal assault which cost them more than ninety in killed and wounded. In action at extremely close quarters they performed gallantly, shooting down four successive color bearers and capturing the battle flag of the 5th North Carolina Regiment. Their own colors were also brought down, but quickly restored.

Two days later McClellan appeared before the regiment to congratulate them upon their bravery. Joe's record of the General's remarks reads:

"My lads: I have come to thank you for your gallant conduct the other day. You have gained honor for your country, yourselves, your state and the army to which you belong. Through you we won the day and Williamsburg shall be inscribed upon your banner. I cannot thank you enough for what you have done. I trust in you for the future and know you will sustain the reputation you have won for yourselves. By your actions and superior discipline you have gained a reputation that shall be known throughout the Army of the Potomac. Your Country owes you its grateful thanks—As for myself I can never thank you enough."

Surely the colorful and dynamic commander was an expert in public relations. And how did the men respond? "You should

have seen the faces of those brave boys, when he had concluded," Joe exalted, "They would have stormed the very devil and brought him off prisoner. Our whole brigade cheered us, and three times three cheers were given for General McClellan."55

During the days which followed the regiment edged slowly up the peninsula at the extreme right of the line and close against the York River. As they approached Richmond they paralleled the Chickahominy. Joe anticipated a decisive battle, and his enthusiasm continued unabated. However, on May 26 when less than ten miles from Richmond, he expressed the belief that they were outnumbered, and that they were looking to McDowell [who was moving southward from Washington toward Richmond] for assistance. "But we have superior arms," he noted, and the prestige of arms are in our favor; the present army under General McClellan has never suffered a defeat except perhaps a few regiments who were defeated at Bull Run." But two weeks later Joe was convinced that McClellan could not undertake a general engagement until reinforced. Politics, he believed, was interfering with the crushing of the rebellion.56

The Wisconsin 5th missed a major engagement at Seven Pines (Fair Oaks) on May 31-June 1, which was fought by the left flank. In this battle, it might be noted, General Joseph E. Johnston, commanding general of the Southern Army was seriously wounded. He was succeeded by General Robert E. Lee. In this action, also, Lt. John W. Oliver, Joe's brother, a member of the 81st New York Volunteers, was wounded.

Bands Strike Up

The sagging spirits of the regiment were lifted on the first of

the "Seven Days" Battle by McClellan's telegraph that he had whipped the enemy commanded in person by General Lee, and that he was in pursuit of him, McClellan, commanding in person. Bands, which had been silent for three weeks, struck up their liveliest airs.57

But during the next six days the Army of the Potomac retreated down the Peninsula fighting four major battles and stopping only when its flank again touched the James and York rivers. The 5th Wisconsin figured only in the rear-guard action, but it was a strenuous and fatiguing experience. "I thought that I had seen hard life before," Joe wrote, "but the past week puts it all in the shade. You must know I was very hungry when I ate raw fat salt pork and hard bread, but I was fortunate to fare so well." His confidence in ultimate victory and in McClellan remained unshaken despite adversity. "General McClellan has made the finest retreat on record and in the face of a greatly superior force. . . . No army ever worshiped a commander more than do the Army of the Potomac." The failure to provide him with more men, he believed, had denied him the opportunity to enter the Confederate citadel. "I for one am proud to say 'belong to the Army of the Potomac!' It is the finest army the world ever saw and cost the government an immense amount of money, and to be sacrificed to a host of traitors, double our numbers, was a shame."58

At muster a few days later, on the first anniversary of their service in the United States Army, Joe observed that of the "102 gay and dashing Zouaves who left with elastic steps and hearts . . . but 59 are here to answer to their names. Some are under the ground, others are lingering in hospitals . . . while

others are here and there. And I am sorry to say a few should be here who are now at home in Wisconsin receiving the congratulations of friends when they little deserve them. Others are spending or at least killing time in a Richmond prison.

When we left Milwaukee a little more than a year ago, no notice of our departure was given, but a large concourse of friends were there to bid us bye

The best blood of our land is redding the land and running in streams, a sacrifice to a wicked rebellion. We cannot turn back, and 'Forward' is the word, but more men are needed, and every true patriot should come forward and bear arms against the enemies of our country."59

It was an eloquent plea, and is scarcely a place for the reader to stop. Unfortunately, the letters end here, and the remainder of the story must be based on a few shreds of evidence.

The popular McClellan was removed from the command for his failure to take Richmond, and the virtually untried and vain-glorious General Pope was put in his place. The Army of the Potomac was brought back to Washington, where McClellan's Corps, including the Wisconsin 5th, served as a reserve, while other units, among them the Oswego regiment, the 24th N. Y. V., moved into the front line. While the latter engaged in the Second Battle of Bull Run, McClellan's divisions remained idle at Aquia, giving credence to rumors that General Pope wished to win a victory without help from McClellan. Unfortunately for the Union, and Pope's personal ambitions, as noted above, the battle was a decisive defeat.

It can be assumed that Joe chafed at inactivity and lost interest. Or perhaps his anxiety to get started in business was decisive. In any event after six

months of inactivity he resigned his commission and went to Chicago to join Jim in business there.

A last reference to Joe is contained in a letter from his father to his brother Bob. He reported that Joe had the war fever again. "He would rather be in the army than in Chicago. O, what a fool he must be. But if he is determined to go back, I shall not try to stop him, but I should like very much if he would give the business this summer a trial, if it is only for the sake of James. They both say their chances are good; now if they would only stick together for awhile it would give James a chance to do something, as Joseph has the funds and Jas. has none.

"Mother wrote Joseph today advising him not to go into the army." 60

We do not have Joe's answer, but know that he left Chicago after a time and returned to Milwaukee, where he had entered his service. There he married Mary Crocker and reared five children. He entered business, and was very successful. Unlike his brothers Bob and John, he lived into middle life.

John W. Oliver

John W., third of the Olivers to serve his country in the Civil War, volunteered in the fall of 1861 and on September 19, 1861 received a commission as first lieutenant in Company H of the 81st Regiment, New York State Volunteers, which was recruited in Oswego County. Like his brother Bob he had been active in the local militia. Twenty-three years of age, he was married and engaged in farming. His wife was the former Andelucia (Nellie) C. Robinson of Oswego, and their home was situated about one mile west of the present city limits of Oswego on the north side of route N. Y. 104 in what is now termed Fruit Valley.

John's response to the war was not unlike that of Bob. He undertook the defense of his coun-

try promptly, but a large share of his heart remained at home. Similiar to Bob, also, his constitution was delicate, and he struggled through the months of his brief military tenure while weakened by a congestion and soreness of his throat and chest, which twice required treatment in military hospitals.

In appearance he was dark haired, brown eyed and slender. He was serious minded and practical, and showed little of the zest for adventure so striking in Joe.

Organization of the 81st Regiment was begun late in August after the debacle at Bull Run. Public meetings were accompanied by recruiting, and by the end of the year the work was completed. In addition to Oswego there were companies from Gilbertsville, Fulton, Hannibal, Oswego Town, Hastings and Syracuse, and the billets were finally filled with additional enlistees from Oneida County.

At the head of the regiment was Colonel Edwin Rose, a graduate of West Point. When his health failed, he was succeeded by Lt. Col. Jacob J. DeForest.

Encamped in Albany

The regiment left Oswego on the "cars" on January 20, 1862, and encamped for a few weeks in Albany at Camp Rathburn. A few of the boys had over-indulged in alcoholic beverages before leaving Fort Ontario; otherwise the trip to Albany was uneventful. At Camp Rathburn they were drilled and acquainted with the rigors of camp life. They found the food below expectations and soon longed for the rations served at Fort Ontario. Some of the boys were ready to "lift the tables" but learning that the 78th Regiment had previously tried it and had been forced to pay for the damage and spend a week in confinement on bread and water, they abandoned the scheme.

Within several weeks of their arrival at Albany John was in the hospital. Fortunately, he responded to the ministrations of the ladies of Albany and was able to leave camp with the regiment. From Camp Rathburn they proceeded to Camp Washington on Staten Island, where they resumed their training.

The camp was situated on a hill side, where they could see New York City, Brooklyn, Jersey City, The Narrows, and the vessels entering the harbor. Some of the ships, John noted were "most as large as you see come into Oswego." (Perhaps there was a bit of local pride here!) They were scarcely in their quarters "the horriblemst old shanties that you ever saw without a stove or a spear of straw", when the worst storm in years struck the area, and they huddled in the cold for several days until the weather moderated.

The regiment left New York for Washington on March 5 with John again ailing, but able to follow in several days. They were attached to Dutton's Brigade and Casey's Division, and quartered about three miles from the capital on Kalarama Heights, Meridian Hill, which overlooked the city and the Potomac. Amidst a flurry of rumors that they were about to embark via ship-board for "God only knows where," they resumed their military routine.

Despite a busy schedule, however, John managed to borrow the Lt. Colonel's horse from the Major for an afternoon, and go off in search of his brothers, Bob and Joe. He crossed the river and headed for Camp Upton, Bob's headquarters. He found the 24th regiment in the process of breaking camp, presumably to take transports to Alexandria. He met Bob, who prevailed upon him to march with them and visit en-route. It turned out to be a good suggestion, for after a short hike the order was countermanded,

and they halted and pitched tents for the night. John had supper with old Oswego friends, ("Jeff Davis and Jim Raulston got up a tip-top supper.") and then joined them in front of Bob's tent, where they smoked and listened to the regimental band. He remained overnight and on the following day he and Bob set off in quest of Joe, and, after covering numerous camps over a ten mile area, they found him "fat and ragged," and quartered in the woods, where his regiment was also preparing to sail. It was a joyous reunion. John reported that Joe was well and happy, while the latter wrote that "Robert and John came flying into our camp on their steeds. They are both looking well, and was surprised to find John looking so well, as I had anticipated him looking somewhat emaciated from your last letter." After several brief hours John and Bob started back despite Joe's repeated requests that they remain for the night. When they arrived at Bob's camp John heard a rumor that his regiment had been ordered to march to Alexandria to the transports that afternoon. Needless to say he spurred campward at a furious clip. Fortunately, the order had been changed.⁶³

Organize Band

During his absence (the half-day had stretched to a day and a half) the officers had purchased some seventeen silver instruments from another regiment, and they were in the process of organizing a band. The cost, which was \$650, would seem almost prohibitive to officers whose pay was often in arrears. John was enthusiastic, noting that it made them all feel better, and that there was nothing like a band in a regiment. He also approved of the new rubber blankets being distributed, one to each man.⁶⁴

On March 28 they boarded transports and headed down river with the Army of the Potomac.

If John was enthralled with the sights as Joe had been, he left no record of it, but in a note a few days later he reported that they were encamped two miles from Newport News. Like Joe he went to the water's edge and viewed the wrecks of the Cumberland and the Congress, victims of the Merrimack. He was enthusiastic for the impending campaign and bragged, "We are preparing to have a ball at Richmond on April 15. . . . I am full of fight. . . . Poor Bob, he is left in the wet. . . . I guess the people of the City of Oswego begin to think there is such a regiment as the 81st. We get along in the regiment very well since Col. Rose got back. He is a gentleman and an officer." Reflecting his interest in gardening John enclosed samples of the vegetation in the Fortress Monroe area: Peach blossoms, shoots of grass, a pea sprout and a dandelion bloom.⁶⁵

But a week later he was in the hospital suffering from severe pains in his chest, vomiting and fever. He was separated from his regiment which was moving up the Peninsula.

He was not too sick, a few days later, however, to enjoy a renewal of the duel between the Monitor and the Merrimack for the control of Hampton Roads. The Merrimack fired several blasts at vessels in the Federal squadron, the last of which appeared to explode as it left the cannon. The iron-clad, thereupon, withdrew, and the action ceased.

John remained in the hospital for three weeks. His condition slowly improved, but his throat continued to be inflamed. He was weary and disgusted, noting that he had not been in good health since leaving home, and that he hadn't missed a single hospital enroute.⁶⁶ However, he was discharged on May 1, and at once set out to join his regiment.

After an uncomfortable ride over improvised corduroy roads

he found it drawn up in the battle line. The rattle of musketry sounded nearby, and shells occasionally exploded in their vicinity. Wounded and sick were streaming past their camp.

He had barely arrived when Joe turned up for a short visit. To the latter John appeared miserable indeed. "He is not fit for the army - and I shall advise him to resign immediately," he confided to his parents.⁶⁷

Hated Land-Mines

But John's spirits were again rising. When Union men fell victims of land mines or "grass-hoppers" set by the Confederates, he was indignant. I hate them more and more every day, and especially since they planted those shells in the ground. I could dress one of them and put his call on as I would a lamb with good heart. They are the gallows looking thieves I ever saw. They can't look you straight in the face.

We will see a fight soon ... I don't care where ... There are about three hundred wounded in our camp and about two hundred prisoners; they are as saucy and impudent as if they were at large. If I had the doing with them I would massacre every soul of them. Blast their buttons ⁶⁸

On May 11 John was again left behind in charge of the camp when the regiment advanced. He was suffering with rheumatism, and his feet and ankles were swollen and painful. The camp was in Williamsburg, the old colonial capital of Virginia, which John reported to be about the size of Fulton. There were a number of "Secesh" there, "The women are very saucy and the negroes are happy."

A week later he was again with his regiment feeling much better and gaining weight. He joked about their hard fare, and looked forward to camping in Richmond, where he expected to feast.

For his father he noted that he would be on the look-out for trophies. ⁶⁹

Near Objective

The 81st Regiment accompanied the Army of the Potomac as it moved forward on the Peninsula, and on May 28 John noted that they were in a swamp but six miles from their objective. They could hear the cars and whistles there. Three days later in the same vicinity he referred to their location as "Camp Starvation near Richmond." Once again, he was despondent over his health. "Here a man has either got to be well or dead; they don't recognize anything else ... I am sorry to say that there are men in this regiment that make it their business to slur and criticize and talk about each other for no other purpose than to ruin their reputation and make hard feelings ... If a man is sick and not able to do duty, they say he smells powder and is a coward. Since I joined the regiment I have done all my duty, and at times when I thought I would die. Today I feel as if I could not breathe another breath, I have such a cold. I presume it is worse today on account of the weather. I only wish that I was well or out of it, or be somewhere that I could take care of myself for a few days. I would come out all right. Here we are up to our ankles in mud and nothing much to eat." ⁷⁰

At this point John's letters end, and the remainder can be sketched only briefly. On May 31 the regiment underwent its baptism of fire. While in an open field on the left flank of Casey's Division they were caught in the path of a major Confederate thrust. Lt. Col. DeForest, commanding the regiment was seriously wounded, and Major McAmbley and Captain Kingman were killed. In all 37 lost their lives and 83 fell wounded. Among the latter was

John W. Oliver, who was struck on his left forearm. He was taken to the rear and thence to a military hospital at Baltimore, where he convalesced. The arm healed and he received a pass to go home while awaiting orders. At New York City he met his wife and mother, who had come to join him, and after a few days of visiting there, or as John expressed it, "putting on the scholips and stile," they returned to Oswego. 71 On September 12, 1862 he was discharged from the army, having been declared unfit for duty by a medical examining board.

John and his wife subsequently reared seven children. But ill health continued to dog his steps. Hoping to find a more healthful climate he traveled extensively, received is a regular built Forti- and finally stopped to rest in Denver, Colorado. Here he died on April 8, 1878 at the age of 39.

Dick, The Horse

A word about "Dick" the faithful horse, last mentioned for his conspicuous place in Bob Oliver's funeral. He not only survived two years of war, but outlived his master. On his deathbed Bob asked his father to look after him, and probably no horse ever received more tender care. In the years which followed, the old horse bearing the aging Robert, Sr., headed fourth of July parades and was known by hundreds of Oswegonians. Not a blooded horse, his arched neck and natural poise gave him a majestic bearing. At last on January 26, 1885, while Mr. and Mrs. Oliver were in Milwaukee visiting Joe and his family, the old horse died. He was thirty-three years old. A hoof, the saddle he wore through the war, and a picture are possessions of this society.

A final word about Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr. Mr. Oliver retired from his business in 1872, but was a familiar figure in

Oswego for another twenty years. His youthful vigor continued until his last illness. As the writer of his obituary in the Oswego Times observed, except for his white hair and beard, he looked like a man in his fifties. His death at 80 ended a marriage of 59 years. Mrs. Oliver lived for another six years, then joined her husband in her 88th year.

1. Oswego Directory, 1859.
2. Robert to his Father, July 6, 1861.
3. Robert to his Father, July 12, 1861.
4. Diary of Robert Oliver, Jan. 16, 1862.
5. Joseph B. Oliver to his Mother, Aug. 24, 1861.
6. Robert to his Mother, Oct. 4, 1861.
7. Robert to his Father, Dec. 24, 1861.
8. Robert to Pattie, Feb. 12, 1862.
9. Robert to Pattie, April 20, 1862.
10. Robert to Pattie, April 20, 1862.
11. Diary of Robert Oliver, April 21, 23, 1862.
12. Robert to Pattie, June 4, 1862.
13. Diary of Robert Oliver, July 13, 22, 1862.
14. Diary of Robert Oliver, July 26, 1862.
15. Diary of Robert Oliver, Sept. 2, 3; Aug. 30, 1862.
16. Diary of Robert Oliver, Sept. 5-11, 1862.
17. Diary of Robert Oliver, Sept. 17, 20, 1862.
18. Diary of Robert Oliver, Oct. 3, 1862.
19. Diary of Robert Oliver, Oct. 13-17, 1862.
20. Robert Oliver to Pattie, Oct. 29, 1862.
21. Diary of Robert Oliver, Nov. 10, 1862.
22. Robert Oliver to Pattie, Dec. 18, 1862.
23. Diary of Robert Oliver, Dec. 15, 16, 18, 21, 1862.
24. Diary of Robert Oliver, Dec. 25, 1862.
25. Diary of Robert Oliver, Jan. 26, 1863.
26. Diary of Robert Oliver, Jan. 21, 1863.
27. Diary of Robert Oliver, Feb. 21, 1863.
28. Diary of Robert Oliver, March 12, 16, 1863.
29. Robert Oliver to Pattie, Feb. 9, 1863.
30. Diary of Robert Oliver, March 6, 1863.
31. Diary of Robert Oliver, April 12, 1863.

32. Diary of Robert Oliver, April 24, 1863.
33. Robert Oliver to Pattie, May 1, 1863; Diary, April 28, 1863.
34. Diary of Robert Oliver, May 15, 23, 1863.
35. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., Oct. 22, 1860.
36. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., April 22, 1861.
37. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., May 9, 1861.
38. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., May 19, 1861.
39. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, June 26, 1861. E. R. Jones, Four Years in the Army of The Potomac, London, (n.d.)
40. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., Aug. 2, 1861.
41. Joseph B. Oliver to Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., Aug. 24, 1861.
42. Joseph B. Oliver to Francis W. Oliver, Aug. 31, 1861.
43. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., Sept. 8, 1861.
44. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., Sept. 11, 1861.
45. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., Oct. 16, 1861.
46. Joseph B. Oliver to Jane Oliver, Nov. 15, 1861.
47. Joseph B. Oliver to Francis W. Oliver, Dec. 8, 1861.
48. Joseph B. Oliver to Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., Jan. 4, 1862.
49. Joseph B. Oliver to Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., Dec. 23, 1861.
50. Joseph B. Oliver to Thomas B. Oliver, Feb. 16, 1862.
51. Joseph B. Oliver to Mr. Robert Oliver, Sr., March 24-25, 1862.
52. Joseph B. Oliver to Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., April 1, 1862; Milwaukee Sentinel, March 31, 1862.
53. Joseph B. Oliver to Mr. Robert Oliver, Sr., Apr. 8, 1862.
54. Joseph B. Oliver to Mr. Robert Oliver, Sr., April 8, 1862.
55. Joseph B. Oliver to Mr. Robert Oliver, Sr., May 8, 11, 1862.
56. Joseph B. Oliver to Mr. Robert Oliver, Sr., June 8, 1862.
57. Joseph B. Oliver to Mr. Robert Oliver, Sr., June 27, 1862.
58. Joseph B. Oliver to Mr. Robert Oliver, Sr., July 4, 1862.
59. Joseph B. Oliver to Mr. Robert Oliver, Sr., July 13, 1862.
60. Robert Oliver, Sr. to Robert Oliver, Jr., April 26, 1863.
61. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., Jan. 23, 1862.
62. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., March 1, 1862.
63. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., March 20, 1862.
64. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., March 20, 1862.
65. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., April 4, 1862.
66. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., April 10, 20, 1862.
67. Joseph B. Oliver to Robert Oliver, Sr., May 3, 1862.
68. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., May 7, 1862.
69. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., May 17, 1862.
70. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., May 31, 1862.
71. John W. Oliver to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver, Sr., Aug. 26, 1862.



The Port of Oswego — Today and Tomorrow

(Presented by Arthur Mengel, March 20, 1956)

(For background material, see Dr. O'Connor's article on The History of
The Port of Oswego — Yearbook, 1942)

History is properly a record of present and past activity. To the extent this paper dwells on the present, it deals with history. To the extent it projects the future, it departs from true history.

Oswego is basically a maritime city. Its past importance in the economy of this country has derived from its strategic location on both Lake Ontario and the New York State Barge Canal System. Its future success will undoubtedly come from the same direction. That we are today a maritime city is proven by the fact that the city's largest taxpayer, and the city's largest employer are both located here for the cheap water transportation available.

Oswego's economic significance in the recent past has reflected the relative importance of Lake Ontario. This great inland sea stands on the eastern edge of the industrial complex of North America. Four great commodities have fostered this industrial empire: iron ore, stone, coal and grain. Lake Ontario and Oswego have played a very minor role in the water movement of these cargoes.

Waterborne commerce for the Port of Oswego during navigation season 1955 consisted of about three and one quarter million tons. In 1928 it was 393,312 tons. It is significant that even during the last great economic depression, tonnages handled in the harbor continued to increase. The Port is definitely on the rise.

Let us analyse those developments of the past decade which

seem to offer so much promise to this port's future.

1. The federal project to improve canal navigation between the Hudson River and Lake Ontario.

2. The development of the Labrador iron ore reserve.

3. The creation of the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.

4. The deepening of the Welland Canal and the channels between the Great Lakes to seaway depth.

Federal Project For Improvement of The New York State Barge Canal

The present project provides for lowering of lock sills from 12 to 13 feet, and deepening of the channel prism to 14 feet. It further provides for minimum overhead clearance of 20 feet as compared to the present clearance of 15 feet. The project encompasses that part of the canal from Waterford to Oswego. It does not include the section from Three Rivers Point to Buffalo. This improvement will increase the amount of cargo which can be transported in a single barge. The extended overhead clearances will make possible the handling of light and bulky commodities such as logs and automobiles. This project will enhance and emphasize Oswego's position as the logical outlet to the Great Lakes and will decrease Buffalo's historical advantage in this respect.

The Development of the Labrador Iron Ore Reserve

The last great war saw a rapid depletion of the high grade iron ore reserves of Michigan and

Minnesota. The end of hostilities signalled the start of a mad race by the major steel companies to discover and develop new ore beds. Major reserves were found in Liberia, Venezuela, Mexico and finally Labrador. The Canadian interests, in need of development capital, sold a large share in their reserve to American steel interests. Transportation from mine to furnace became of paramount importance. As a result the steel companies used their influence to secure deepening of the St. Lawrence River. It was this influence plus the pressure of Canadian maritime interests that was responsible for the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The Creation of the St. Lawrence Seaway Corporation

The act creating the Seaway Corporation was approved May 13, 1954. The plan approved was the least of three proposed. One contemplated a 35 foot channel; another, 30. The bill as passed authorized a 27 foot channel. This is inadequate according to today's maritime standards what with the eastern ports deepening to 35 and 40 feet. However, it is a decided improvement over the present 14 foot channel. Even though special class vessels must be designed for this service, one fact is significant. Lake Ontario and therefore Oswego are once again on the main line of the Great Lakes trade routes. No longer will Lake Ontario play its minor role in the economic history of the lakes.

Formation of the seaway corporation did not solve all the lakes' problems. On the contrary, it created a host of new issues concerning this, the nation's new seacoast. The act dealt only with the American portion of the project. The Canadians established the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority of Canada. To a great degree, the two authorities are working independently. In some areas, however, their actions must be harmonized. This is particularly

true with regard to tolls which are not yet determined.

Our act requires that revenue bonds be sold to finance the activities of the corporation. These bonds are to mature in fifty years. The revenue is to be generated through tolls. The formula for the determination of these tolls is provided in considerable detail. The pertinent fact remains, however, that if the tonnage moving through the seaway is the initial years of its existence is lower than anticipated, the tolls must be increased. Such an increase could inhibit the movement of freight. It is quite likely if this happens that congress will prolong the amortization period or otherwise further subsidize the project.

The Deepening of the Welland Canal and the Channels Between The Great Lakes To Seaway Depth

The seaway depth of 27 feet is now authorized only to Lake Ontario. The Canadian government is this winter deepening the channel of the Welland Canal from 25 to 27 feet. The congress in session has before it a bill to deepen the channels between Lake Erie and Lake Huron and between Lake Huron and Lake Superior to seaway depth. This project is of intense interest to Oswego for two reasons: first, the new class of domestic lake vessels is constructed to operate in deep channels; and second, the more ports available for handling deep draught ocean vessels, the greater the frequency of service available to the Port of Oswego.

The Port of Oswego

We have studied the environment in which the port exists. What must the port do to receive the maximum impact from the proposed developments?

The new seaway offers us an economical water route direct to all the ports of the world. Deepening of the channels to the west promises a return of domestic

package freight service between all ports in the Great Lakes watershed. Improvement of the canal offers better transport to the great ports of the eastern seaboard, particularly the Port of New York.

The city has retained the professional engineering firm of Fay, Spofford and Thorndike to evaluate the commerce which is available for movement through the port, to determine the type of industry which could best locate in the port area, and to design the facilities which will be necessary for the maintenance of this commerce and industry.

To implement the recommendations of the professional engineers, the Oswego Port Authority was formed last July. Now the term 'Port Authority' as used generally embraces almost any type of commission entrusted by some governmental agency to administer the affairs of a port. In New York State, an 'Authority' is a governmental corporation without taxing power. A Port Authority operates in a very narrow band of economic practicability, and usually deals with projects that evolve heavy developmental costs. If a quick or reasonable return could be expected from warehouses or wharfs, private capital would build them. At the same time, if a public project presents no prospect of ever becoming self-supporting, it is one for the general taxpayers.

The Port Authority is responsible for all the harbor facilities within the harbor line established by the Corps of Engineers. Beyond the harbor line, improvement and maintenance is a function of the

federal government. Harbor facilities as used here embraces channels, docks, warehouses and all the detail of Port Administration.

Upon completion of the seaway, the port should have one medium sized facility available to handle ocean, lake and canal traffic. This same facility should be capable of handling a reasonable amount of bulk cargo. The ocean freight will be generated in the rich Central New York industrial area extending from Utica to Rochester. Lake cargo freight will originate in the New England-Middle Atlantic region.

Transshipping will attract industry. The seaway will enable this industry to assemble raw materials economically from the far corners of the world. Oswego's position as a distribution center should enable the same industry to transport its outbound products with ease and economy. Harborside land is available here, land which is not available at Buffalo, Cleveland and many of the other Great Lakes ports. Our position on the 'ore route' from Labrador to Lake Erie encourages us to believe that a major steel plant can be induced to locate here.

The future promises well for Oswego. To a great degree, our success will depend upon our own efforts. Cargo must be solicited, facilities provided and our position as an interior port protected. These problems are not peculiar to Oswego. They exist in the same degree for every other port on the lakes. We stand on the threshold of a new era. The cost is great but the stakes are high. Our people are confident that the Seaway will usher in a new period of growth and prosperity.

History of the Oswego City Library

(Presented by Mr. Johnson Cooper, April 17, 1956)

CHAPTER 1

Organization and Building the Library

The Oswego City Library was organized by Gerritt Smith, Abolitionist, Philanthropist, Temperance Advocate, Businessman, etc., who had considerable properties in Oswego. On July 17th 1853 Gerritt Smith wrote a letter to eight prominent residents of Oswego in which he notified them that he had for some time contemplated the establishment of a library in Oswego. He named them as his trustees and they duly became the first Board of Trustees of the Oswego City Library. The gentlemen so chosen were: Alvin Bronson, James Platt, George H. McWhorter, Henry Fitzhugh, Edwin W. Clarke, John B. Edwards, James Brown and Dewitt C. Littlejohn.

Mr. Smith appropriated to this endeavor the sum of \$25,000 dollars, which was to be drawn in five installments to be paid between March 1st 1854 and December 1st 1854. It was Smith's plan as laid down in the letter that the trustees should purchase a lot — on the East side of the river — and build a library for about \$15,000, thus leaving a balance of \$10,000 which could be used for the purchase of books. The total amount finally donated by Gerritt Smith proved to be \$30,000 rather than the originally intended \$25,000, the last allotment being paid in the form of a \$4,000. mortgage. In his original letter to the trustees, Smith had recommended to them that they take the necessary legal steps to

properly maintain his and the public's interest in the library about to be founded.

Two specific stipulations were made in the letter to Bronson and his associates and both of these were of course carried out. Because most of Gerritt Smith's property lay on the East side of the river, and further because this section had recently suffered considerable damage in a serious fire, he made it incumbent upon the trustees to locate the library about to be built on the East side of the Oswego River. It is doubtful if this would cause difficulty in case a new library were to be built on the West side under the same corporate Board of Trustees. The second stipulation was that the privileges and benefits of the library should be always as acceptable to the one as to the other, and that no person on account of their race, complexion, or condition should be shut out of the privileges and benefits, or in any way curtailed of them. This of course is in line with his abolitionist sentiments.

The maintenance of Gerritt Smith's and the public's rights in the Oswego City Library were carried out when the New York State legislature passed a bill at its Seventy-Seventh Session on April 15th, 1854, Chapter 266. This is called "An Act to Incorporate the Oswego City Library." Not only does the act empower the trustees to receive from Gerritt Smith the sum of \$25,000.00, but

it also established their right to take and hold any additional donations, grants, devises or bequests of real or personal property which might be made in further support of the library. Several have been received under this clause.

It will be recalled that one of the eight trustees to whom Smith wrote was John B. Edwards. Mr. Edwards had been Gerritt Smith's agent in Oswego and was handling his various properties here at the time the new library was established. Edwards was now told by Smith that the \$25,000.00 was to be secured by him—Edwards—from his collections in Oswego, and apparently Edwards was somewhat perturbed by this news, for on January 7th, 1854 he wrote to Smith, in Peterboro, as follows:

"So you think you will have to depend on me to pay the \$25,000. for the library. I can probably do a considerable of it, but I do not see how I can all — in addition to the about \$7,000. that we shall yet have to spend on the Great Property (Oswego Pier & Dock Co.)"

That his query was not without foundation is indicated in a further communication to Smith on Feb. 4th:

"Will try to meet first payment on library — shall probably need to borrow some money of L. Wright's Bank to enable me to meet it."

And still later the same month: Edwards is without funds for the library payment and requests Smith to send him a signed blank endorsement so he can get funds at L. Wright's Bank for three months. Finally on February 25th Edwards has made out a note for \$5,000. and is waiting for Smith's note. He needed it by March 3rd in order to pay for the lot purchased by the board from Cheney Ames and for which several of them gave their note. He also indicated they were about to draw up plans for the library building. On March 2nd he was still waiting for the note.

That collection of money promised by Gerritt Smith was not the only difficulty which developed is further indicated by a letter from John B. Edwards to Smith on April 13th, 1854 in which he states:

"Have taken no definite action on building. Trustees met but found difference of opinion. Some wish to erect a building for library alone on east end of the lot to cost about \$10,000.00: The others prefer a building on West end to cost about \$15,000. and to have stairs and the library in the second story and enter the library both from 1st and second streets, the entrance on second could be without going up stairs, or but a few steps up. I prefer the latter."

"Thought best not to start too soon in season, as there is so much building — so many large buildings — to be completed early in season that materials and labor are scarce and dear. Will not need second \$5,000 for some time."

Smith wrote back approving the delay. It was not until March 26, 1855 that the library trustees met and adopted the plan of a Mr. Rose, of Syracuse, for the building. By November of 1855 Edwards had spent \$11,082.10 towards the completion of the library and by the summer of 1856, 15,000.00, and was now in the process of digging up \$5,000. for books and \$2,000. for unpaid debts. At the close of 1856 Edwards had spent \$23,000. Letters passing between Smith and Edwards indicate that an additional \$1,000. for books and the \$4,000.00 mortgage bond, which made up the final payments, were made in 1862 and 1868 respectively. Thus was the Oswego City Library financed.

In the meantime, the building committee — James Palitt, James Brown and John B. Edwards were negotiating with architects and contractors concerning the actual library building. On May 26, 1855 the committee closed a bargain with Hughs and Rhodes, Architects, of Syracuse for the erection

of a library building at a cost of \$12,000.00. The inside of the basement and a lecture room were to be left unfinished and the job was to be completed by June 1st, 1856.

The library trustees met in February 1856 and decided to have "young George McWhorter" prepare a program of books for the library to be submitted to the trustees and yourself" — Smith, that is. Smith had stipulated in the original agreement that "no book unfriendly to truth and purity, may ever find its way into the library." Alvin Bronson in a letter to Smith on March 5th, 1856 asked Smith for suggestions on books indicating that he valued his opinion higher than any of the trustees — "McWhorter excepted". By the end of July McWhorter had returned to Oswego with his catalog of proposed book purchases and in September of 1856 the books began to arrive. The first invoice for books for the Oswego City Library was for \$1169.31.

It is not known the exact day on which the library opened, but the Oswego Democratic Times of July 14, 1857 contained a notice that the Gerritt Smith Library was open to the public under the auspices of Chester Hull, esquire, Librarian. It indicated the library contained 8000 volumes at that time, and "an apartment exclusively for ladies has been very tastefully fitted with sofas, etc., and both sexes can enjoy the ad-

vantages of the library, without intrusion upon each other." Apparently to read together in the same room would cause unfortunate distractions.

A summarization of the donations made to the library by Gerritt Smith would indicate they totaled \$30,000.00 of which \$24,000.00 was used to purchase a lot, construct a building and purchase books. It was soon recognized by the trustees that this did not establish the library on a firm financial foundation even for 1856 and they were within a year seeking assistance from the city of Oswego. The city agreed to make an annual appropriation of \$700.00, which was later raised to \$750.00 and this appropriation has continued ever since, with the exception of a ten year period during the depression of the 1930s. It was then cut to a low of \$350.00, but during World War II, was returned to the original sum of \$750.00 where it rests today. This agreement with the city of Oswego had been preceded by correspondence between Alvin Bronson and Smith in October of 1856. In this letter Bronson says "I am disposed to insist that the city shall pay the current expenses of the library and to withhold its use, till the authorities make such provision. It is manifestly proper and right that the city should protect and care for this liberal donation to the city."

CHAPTER 2

Early History

The first librarian to be appointed was one Chester Hull. Mr. Hull served from 1857 until 1859 when he resigned. Hull was followed by Joseph Bloomfield who served as librarian from 1859 until about 1862 when he was dismissed on the advice of Gerritt Smith and John B. Edwards. Edwards in a

communication to Smith says "My opinion is that we will have to get one (a better librarian) or the usefulness of the library is about worn out." Smith in the meantime had made his next to last donation of \$1000.00 for books. He notes that he mentioned some books specifically and thinks

it would be well if he specified more of them. At any rate Mr. Bloomfield was dismissed and replaced by Orba Leonard who served until 1871. Benjamin Stocks succeeded Leonard and served until 1887 to be himself succeeded by Robert S. Kelsey. Mr. Kelsey, Sr., served until his death in 1890 and was succeeded by his son Robert S. Kelsey, Jr. "Bob" Kelsey as so many knew him served as librarian from 1890 until 1931 when he died. By this time the reorganization — to be explained later — had taken place and under the new arrangement the Board of Education hired the library staff. There has been only one librarian serving since that change was made, Miss Juanita Kersey, who came to Oswego to be its librarian in November of 1926.

But to retrogress for a moment. It will be recalled that the Board of Trustees, having expended its endowment, were to all intents and purposes without enough funds to meet the current expenses of the library, to say nothing of purchasing new books. They had under Bronson's leadership first secured the annual appropriation from the city of Oswego, but this in itself still was not enough. As a partial solution they accepted the verbal offer of the Board of Education of the city of Oswego. This offer is reported to Mr. Geo. C. McWhorter in his early history of the library as follows:

"The Board of Education, having no adequate place to put its books shall place them in the Oswego City Library building. The Trustees of the Library shall afford sufficient and convenient room for the same. The Board of Education shall elect the Librarian of the Oswego City Library, Librarian of the Board of Education and he shall perform the duties of both offices. The Board of Education shall pay the Librarian aforesaid \$350.00 per annum and furnish the Library with fuel and gas."

Whether this doubled the librar-

ian's salary I am unable to determine, for earlier records indicate that is the same salary the Board of Trustees had been paying. Whatever the case, this did relieve the Board of Trustees of part of their dilemma, though the financial problem has never been completely relieved and at times became critical, to the point that the library was not really serving the purpose for which it was established.

Of the original trustees, the first to die was James Brown, in 1857. Hamilton Murray was elected to fill the vacancy and this broke the arrangement Smith had made, that the trustees be equally divided between the East and West sides of the Oswego River, while the Library would always remain on the East side.

George H. McWhorter, the father of George C., died in 1862 and George C. McWhorter was elected to fill the vacancy left by his father, though some of the Board thought him too "exclusive." The equal division between East and West was restored when Henry Fitzhugh removed from the city in 1865 and his place taken by Theodore Irwin.

Hamilton Murray died in 1866 and Gilbert Mollison was elected to fill that vacancy. One year later, Mr. Thomson Kingsford was elected to fill the vacancy left when Dewitt C. Littlejohn left Oswego to live in Buffalo. James Platt died in 1870 and was replaced by Dewitt C. Littlejohn. Ten years passed before the next vacancy occurred, this due to the resignation of Edwin W. Clarke. Frederick O. Clarke replaced Edwin and shortly thereafter became the Secretary of the Board, thus making for the destruction of the early records which were destroyed in a fire in Clarke's office in 1892.

Alvin Bronson, who had been the original President of the Board, died in 1881 and was succeeded by Charles Rhodes who himself was deceased in 1891 and succeeded by Leonard Ames. Thus

by 1892, when the first history was written, of the original trustees only John B. Edwards and Dewitt C. Littlejohn were still on the Board, and Littlejohn had left it for four years from 1867 to 1871. Edwards died in 1895 and Littlejohn in 1892 shortly after the history was completed.

A report of the library made in the Oswego paper of June 2nd 1885, is of interest in indicating the affairs of the library at that time. This was the annual report of the librarian, Benjamin Stocks.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF OSWEGO CITY LIBRARY

"Gentlemen — Since the 31st of May, 1884, the number of books read from your library is 6,761, as per accompanying account. There are now on your shelves, and in circulation 11,557 volumes of books, bound and unbound, viz: 8,634 volumes in alcoves 1@18. In the northeast room, received from Washington 1,637 volumes congressional public documents. In the southeast alcove, received from Albany, New York state legislature 921 volumes public documents, 51 volumes patent office reports, bound, and 13 years and 5 months (say 24 volumes) unbound of same work, 52 volumes of laws of New York State, and 238 volumes, being duplicate documents of the same state, making a total of 11,557 volumes, bound and unbound, besides a number of publishers catalogues, pamphlets, etc, etc, which are not counted, probably amounting to 50 volumes if bound together. The number of readers in the library is small at this season of the year, being principally students of the Normal and other public schools.

The building of the library is in good condition. The furniture needs a little repairing — some chairs reseating, the tables, etc, recovering, at the expense of a few dollars. It would be advise-

able to have a case, or stand, made for the three books presented by Mr. Mott, as they are very heavy and would receive damage if lifting much while under examination and reading. The donations to the library during the year have been unusually large, and in some cases of great value. In addition to the customary donations of public documents, which we have received from Judge Mason, Hon. H. W. Nutting, (who has contributed very liberally) Hon. D. C. Littlejohn, Hon Henry C. Howe, and others, whose names are in accompanying list, we have received from Mr. Mott, of this city, three large handsomely bound volumes, entitled "Public Service of the State of New York", copiously illustrated. It is a very valuable work, with which the public have become so well acquainted since it has been in the library that a further description of it is unnecessary. Mr. Gilbert Mollison, one of trustees, has donated to the library a valuable work entitled, "Stormcuth's English Dictionary" just published by Harpers. It is a work of high standing in its class.

Mr. Theodore Irwin, another of the trustees, has also given to the library 161 volumes of the "United Service Journal and Magazine" (naval and military) handsomely bound, from 1829-1883. It is a standard work and is considered an authority on the subject of which it treats, and you will probably see fit to continue to work up to present date. We are informed by the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institute (**it should be "Institution"**) that a set of 25 volumes of the "Diplomatic Review will be presented to the library on the terms named in their letter, which is presented herewith. We have also the promise of a full supply of the "Congressional Globe and Record" to complete our set. It will take about 120 volumes to do this.

At no former period of our library's history has a more fa-

vorable report been made as to its future prospects. The readers are increasing in numbers, and are of a more promising class than have hitherto given us their attendance. The enquiry is for a better and more advanced description of books. The various societies for reading, clubs, etc, etc. have excited an improved taste in the reading public, which promises to be permanent, as the books in your library are well calculated to satisfy such a want, and to increase the movement in that direction.

Respectfully submitted,
Benj. Stocks,
Librarian.

Oswego City Library
June 2nd, 1885.

LIST OF DONORS 1884-5

Thomas S. Mott, Theodore Irwin, Gilbert Mollison, Bronson Babcock, John L. McWhorter, Geo. C. McWhorter, William Cartwright, Hon. D. C. Littlejohn, Hon. Newton W. Nutting, H. C. Howe, Fulton, The Secy. of the Treasury, Hon. William Lawrence, first comptroller the Smithsonian Institute, per S. F. Baird, Secy, Washington, Henry Holmose, Librarian, New York State Library, A. B. Watkins, assistant secretary, Regents of the University, Albany, the Librarian of the Maimonides Society, New York, William Sims, secretary of State Agricultural Board, Topeka, Kansas, George C. Barnum, secretary, Buffalo Historical Society, Scribner & Lovells and George Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York City.

When Mr. Geo. C. McWhorter, the President of the Board of Trustees made his report on the early history of the Oswego City Library, in 1892, he indicated that there were a total of 9211 catalogued and 3718 uncatalogued volumes in the institution.

In 1904 the Board of Trustees of the Oswego City Library voted

to hire Miss I. S. Burns, "an expert librarian from Jamestown, New York" to make the first professional catalog of the library. This was completed in the summer of 1905 and was paid for by Mr. Thomson Kingsford. From this time on it is noted that the yearly reports to the Board of Trustees indicates library "circulation", whereas prior to that time it merely indicated "books read". It may, then be of some interest to explain at this point the early rules under which the library operated.

In the first place there was unlimited circulation on books belonging to the Board of Education Library — from 12 years of age or older; books of the Gerritt Smith Library could be withdrawn from the building for circulation by all those who held permits. Permits were limited to all pastors and their families — and a glance at the old records would indicate some of these were inveterate readers —, the members of the Board of Trustees of the Oswego City Library and their families and finally each member of the Board was permitted to issue two permits each, for a total of 16 in this category. Other than this, use of the Gerritt Smith Library (Oswego City Library) was restricted to reading within the library itself. Octavius Frothingham, in his book on the "Life of Gerrit Smith" says of the Oswego Library which Smith endowed, "The free library at Oswego, an admirable institution, comprising about six thousand wisely selected volumes, with less trash than any public collection of books we ever saw, owes its existence to his endowment of \$30,000.00 in 1853. Judicious management, secondly by the liberality of the city, makes this library a minister to the higher intellectual culture." It is not certain that the members of the Board of Trustees felt quite so strongly that in the last analysis this was in all ways a "liberal" appropriation.

CHAPTER 3

History of the Reorganization of 1923 and Subsequent

In the period from 1905 to 1916 the library continued to operate on the basis of the catalog of Miss Burns. Very few meetings of the board were held and it is noticed that the question of financing the operation of the Oswego City Library was gradually becoming more critical. By 1913, for example, the balance in the treasury was reduced to \$359.79 and the board anticipated a request to the city to increase their yearly appropriation. Apparently this was never carried out. Then too, a number of letters were sent out to citizens of the community asking their assistance in refinancing the institution, but again this apparently was unsuccessful.

It was during this period also that the Doctor Carrington MacFarlane collection of books was given to the library. Dr. MacFarlane died in 1914 and the will having been probated the collection was received by the library about one year later.

No minutes appear in the record from November of 1916 until July 2nd, 1923 and apparently no meetings of the board were held during this seven year interval. At any rate, affairs at the library were not in the best of shape. There was certainly a question as to whether the library would continue to operate. It is possible that had it not been for the fact that the Board of Education volumes were situated in the Oswego City Library building, it would have been forced to close its doors.

Mr. Frederick Leighton, the Secretary of the Oswego Board of Education, then entered the picture with a proposal for reorganizing the affairs of the Oswego

City Library. It will be recalled that the Board of Education had been making use of the facilities since the year the library opened in 1856. At almost the same time, Mr. Harry C. Mizen became a member of the Board of Trustees of the Oswego City Library, and its Secretary. It is the opinion of this writer that this combination of fortunate circumstances is what saved the library from extinction.

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Library on July 2nd, 1923, Mr. Leighton being present, the reorganization plan was discussed. The board voted to accept the plan. Mr. Kingsford, President and Mr. Mizen, Secretary of the Board of Trustees were authorized to sign the Agreement between the Oswego City Library and the Board of Education under which the library has been operating ever since.

Due to depletion by death and resignation, the Board of Trustees was now reduced to three members; Mr. Thomas P. Kingsford, Hon. Luther W. Mott and Mr. Robert A. Downey. Mr. H. C. Mizen was elected to the board on July 2nd at the meeting noted above, and Miss Lida S. Penfield, Miss Anna W. Post, Mr. M. T. Crimmins, and Dr. James G. Riggs were elected at a meeting in Mr. Mizen's office on September 13th, 1923.

In the meantime Mr. Watson, a representative of the New York Library Extension Bureau of the State University of New York, had been sent to Oswego to make a thorough study of conditions at the Oswego City Library now operating under its new agreement with the Board of Education of the city of Oswego. His report

was received and reviewed at a special meeting of the board held at the library on October 12th, 1923. The completed Watson Report will accompany this historical record in order that it may become a part of the records of the Oswego County Historical Society. The writer will quote certain excerpts of this report below, which are of special interest at this juncture. At this same meeting, Mr. H. C. Mizen was requested to make a report rendering an opinion as to the right of the corporation,

"(a) to expend a so-called foundation or endowment fund for alterations and improvements of the library building."

"(b) to mingle the books of the library with books owned by the Department of Education of the City of Oswego."

"(c) to withdraw from the Library and destroy worthless and worn-out books."

"(d) to place in the Library generally books and publications which have been donated with the understanding that they were to be kept as individual collections and used for reference purposes only."

"(e) to transfer to the City of Oswego as a municipal corporation, all the property of the corporation."

These two reports, the Watson Report and the Mizen Report of 1923 are probably the two most significant reports dealing with the Oswego City Library since its establishment in 1853-54. Both should become an integral part of the records of the Society for future reference.

Following are certain excerpts from both of these reports:

The Watson Report

"Oswego is a city whose population has remained more or less stationary during the past 25 yrs. . . . and it would appear that any plans for the reorganization and development of its library fa-

cilities may safely be based on a population of approximately 25,000."

"It is well within the facts to say that in no city in the state maintaining a free library are the facilities so totally inadequate, and it is equally true that there are communities of less than 1,000 population better provided with library facilities. The real ground of hope in connection with the situation lies in the contract recently executed by the trustees . . . and the Board of Education. . . ."

"... at the present time it can not be considered logical for the purpose (the location). It seems decidedly out of the way of the main thoroughfares; more than half of the stores and factories, the public buildings, the hotels and the principal educational institutions are all on the other side of the river, making that the logical place for the public library."

"... The present building is totally unfit for the purposes of a modern library in a community of 25,000 people . . ."

"It is not surprising that the citizens of Oswego are not attracted to a library which can not be made comfortably warm in cold weather and which has such an air of decay. . . ."

"The collection of books for circulation is totally inadequate for such a city as Oswego. If it seems to serve its purpose it is only because so few people use the library in its present quarters and condition. With so much dead wood on the shelves it is difficult to form any definite idea as to the proportion of books which could reasonably be supposed to be in demand, but it must be very small. This applies to the books of the Oswego City Library and also . . . the Department of Education. There appears to be a preponderance of books on theology and religion."

"A study of the situation at Oswego makes it seem advisable to suggest two plans of procedure, the first based upon a develop-

ment of the library really adequate for such a city; the second based upon the immediate and pressing needs of the community."

"If a new building were to be erected it would be better to place it in closer proximity to the other public buildings in the city." (Watson recommended the West side of the river).

"The present building was erected long before any fixed principles of library construction had been established or any very careful thought given to library plans. . . . and a library can not be expected to offer modern facilities and service in a building not adapted for present day conditions. . . . it could never be made into a modern library building such as should be found in a city of the size and character of Oswego. What is needed is an entirely new building constructed in accordance with modern ideas to meet present day needs. Such a building would be a real ornament and advertisement to the city and could be erected for approximately \$100,000 to \$125,000.00."

"With such a library it would of course be necessary to have a substantial appropriation for its maintenance. . . . after careful study, the American Library Association placed itself on record as believing that one dollar per capita is a reasonable minimum annual revenue for a library in a community desiring to maintain a good modern public library system, and if Oswego were to meet that standard nearly \$24,000.00 would be available."

Watson then went on to discuss the actual immediate needs in order to build up the collection of books and periodicals to the point where it would serve a community such as Oswego. Apparently, from what he says, no child under 12 was permitted the use of the library and of this he was particularly critical.

Mr. Mizen, in answering the legal questions involved carefully

reviewed the original purpose under which the Oswego City Library was established and wrote a brief history of the library itself. Before finally coming to the point of specific answers to the questions he made the following revealing statements which clearly indicate conditions in the library at this time (1923).

"As far as the records disclose, no books have been purchased by the Trustees for some years, the annual income of the Library being insufficient to operate it, only by the practice of the most rigid economy."

"From time to time the Department of Education has placed in the Library numerous publications and books. They have been kept separate from the books of the corporation and are known as the Library of the Department of Education. This Department has also from time to time contributed funds to maintain and operate the Library."

"Originally, the Library was a live, going institution and undoubtedly served the purpose for which it was created, but during later years, particularly the last decade, by reason of lack of funds and increased costs, the building has fallen into bad state of affairs and the circulation has dropped off to little or nothing, the net result being that the library as an institution, has almost ceased to function. It is perhaps not too much to say that today it is no more than a Library in name only. At least this was true until the Department of Education recently came to the rescue."

Mr. Mizen concluded that 1) the Trustees did have the power to expend the endowment funds (the last \$4,000. Smith donation, that is) for alterations and repairs, and moreover that they were duty bound to do so; 2) they did have the power to mingle the books of the Oswego City and Board of Education Library; 3) they did have the right to dispose of books and other property no longer deemed of present value;

4) the Trustees could place in the Library books and publications which were donated with the understanding they would be used for individual collections and reference only; and 5) the Trustees did, in his opinion, have the legal right to transfer the property to the City of Oswego, under all reasonable conditions, which the Trustees, the State, the City and the Board of Education might establish.

In March of 1925, a committee representing the Council of Women's Clubs in Oswego and consisting of Mrs. Frederick Leighton, Mrs. Chetney and Mrs. Fitzgibbons, met with the Trustees and Mr. Frederick Leighton to consider a plan of these organizations to erect a modern library to be known as the Memorial Library and dedicated to the memory of the soldiers and sailors of Oswego City. No further discussion on this subject ever again appears in the minutes of the Board of Trustees, although a committee was appointed at that time to consider the matter.

Relative to the change in relationship between the Oswego City Library and the Oswego City Board of Education the evidence became almost immediately apparent that it was a move in the right direction. 1) Over \$7500.00 was expended in 1927 and 1928 to place the building in as good condition as was possible; 2) the circulation quadrupled within six years, from 22,585 in 1924 to 109,689 in 1930; 3) Miss Juanita Kersey was hired by the Board of Education as the Librarian; and 4) in 1928 the Children's Room in the Library basement was established. In 1930 the Dr. Ranier Fund was turned over to the Library to be used for the good of the Children's Room. It should be noted that part of the improvements were made possible by a donation made to the Library by the will of Mrs. Charles A. Tanner in the amount of \$2000.00. A similar sum was

donated to the Library by the will of Mr. Fred Barnes in 1952.

Nothing further is found relative to any action which might have been taken by the Trustees in connection with Mr. Mizen's report on turning the property over to the City of Oswego until 1933. At that time Mr. Robert A. Downey became President of the Board of Trustees, replacing Mr. Thomson P. Kingsford, and Mr. Mizen wrote a letter to Mr. Downey, which was a followup of his earlier letter on the legal position of the Board of Trustees. The following action was taken by the Board at a meeting of August 30, 1933, in this connection:

The Secretary, Mr. H. C. Mizen, indicated that the plan to ultimately convey the Library property to the city and place it under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education required certain legal work and an attorney should be hired to deal with this matter. The Honorable F. D. Culkin had, by this time been elected to the Board of Trustees, which thus included Dr. James G. Riggs, Miss Anna Post, Miss Lida S. Penfield, Mr. M. T. Crimmins, Mr. R. A. Downey, Hon. F. D. Culkin, Mr. T. P. Kingsford, and Mr. H. C. Mizen. The Board appointed Mr. Kirke M. White, with "full power to act in all necessary legal proceedings hereafter to be taken and had for on behalf of the Trustees." The minutes of subsequent meetings do not indicate if Mr. White ever acted in that capacity, but the plan to convey the property to the city and the Board of Education did not take place.

No further records of meetings of the Board until 1936 are available and by that time the balance in the library accounts were down to \$754.54, not counting the Ranier money. By 1940 it was as low as \$500.00. This was the period during which the City of Oswego drastically reduced the annual appropriation which had been almost the sole financial income for

operating the building. Fortunately for the people of Oswego who were using the Library in large numbers, the appropriation was gradually restored to the yearly appropriation of \$750.00, which had been first secured you will recall by Alvin Bronson, the first President of the Board. Also, during this period and the early Post World War II era, the Circulating Library and the State of New York appropriations brought the almost depleted treasury back above the \$2000.00 mark. The total contributed by the State of New York, in the three year period from 1949-1951 amounted to \$1733.90. If it had not been for this sum of money, the Trustees would have been in desperate straits. As it was, by close economies, they have managed to pull through. But as Mr. H. C. Mizen noted two decades previous, no one knew for how long this would be possible under the then operating conditions.

In 1953 the question of vitally needed repairs was the subject of a discussion culminating in the hiring of Granger and Gillespie, Architects of Syracuse, New York. This report was made in June of 1954 at the time of the Annual Meeting which celebrated the Centennial of the Library.

Mr. Hosmer Culkin, Luther Mott, Donald Snygg and Mrs. Robert Allison had by this point been added to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Johnson Cooper, now President, Mr. Clarence Leighton, and Mrs. Thomas McGough, now the Secretary, were elected in August of 1954 to bring the Board up to its authorized strength of 8 members. They, along with Mr. H. C. Mizen, who has been a member of the Board since 1923, constitute the current membership on the Trustees of the Oswego City Library.

The report of Granger and Gillespie, made to the Trustees in June 1954 indicated four alternatives open to them for action:

1) Repair the present building in so far as possible,

2) Remove the roof and upper structure down to the Second Floor and install arched wooden trusses,

3) Purchase a sound structure and remodel, or

4) Build a new, modern, library building.

The estimated cost of each alternative was:

1) \$15 to \$20,000.00 to repair the present structure,

2) \$45 to \$55,000.00 to repair present structure and remove the roof and upper structure down to the second floor,

3) Cost of purchasing and remodeling a sound structure would approximate that of a new building and still not be a modern, up to date library, and

4) Cost of building a new structure, with 10 to 12,000 square footage of space — which would be necessary, at an estimate of \$8 to \$10./sq. ft., would amount to 80 to \$120,000.00.

The Board voted at its September 1954 meeting to authorize the President, Mr. Cooper and Mr. Culkin to consult in Albany with Dr. Brind the State University legal counsel after conferring with the Secretary of the Board of Education, Mr. Charles E. Riley. An exchange of correspondence with Dr. Brind indicated it was unnecessary to meet with him in Albany at this time. He advised the Board of Trustees and through them the Board of Education, that it would in his legal opinion be legal for the Board of Education to construct and operate a library open to the public in the same manner as the present library. Under such an arrangement, the Board of Trustees of the Oswego City Library would cease to function, the Board of Education having taken over its duties. This confirmed what Mr. H. C. Mizen had concluded in his report in 1923 and his letter to Mr. R. A. Downey in 1933.

A meeting was held jointly by the Board of Trustees of the Li-

brary and the Board of Education, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Norman Gover, President of the Board of Educ. in their rooms in the Oswego City Hall in 1955. The financial problems of the Library were discussed thoroughly at this meeting, including the question of the proper method to secure an adequate library structure. The citizens of Oswego had already approved the erection of two new Elementary Schools and it was not felt feasible to make a further request at this time. The Board of Education requested the Trustees to study the problem further and then return to the Board of Education with specific proposals at a later date. They then authorized the Trustees to convert the library coal boiler to gas, the extra space being needed immediately to store library materials. This has now been accomplished.

The future of the Oswego City Library is at present uncertain. The building is admittedly inadequate; it is recognized by all concerned that the Trustees are financially unable to do more than keep the building operating in its present condition, making makeshift repairs as they become crucial. Mr. Frederick Leighton, who made possible the present arrangement between the Trustees and the Board of Education, remembered the Library in his will. He left a legacy of \$30,000.00 for the Oswego City Library, the income of which is available to Mrs. Leighton during her lifetime. In the last analysis, the interest of the citizens of Oswego in securing a library which will, in the words of Mr. Watson, "offer modern facilities and service" and be a "real ornament and advertisement to the city." The city can build and maintain a good modern public library system, which will be a credit to the community and an asset to its people, if the people so desire. It is to be hoped that the City Planning Commission will find a place in its plan for such an institution,

without which no twentieth century community can consider itself a "City of Progress."

The Distribution of Volumes in the Oswego City Library In 1879

Based On Books Drawn In That Year

Fiction	1976
History & Biography	1404
Travels	441
Literature	1547
Science	589
Theology and Philosophy ...	389
Reference	1328
Non-enumerated	1526
Total	9198

This is on a basis of a total of 6500 catalogued volumes exclusive of a large number of volumes presented to the Library by the governments at Washington and Albany.

First official circulation figures following the cataloguing accomplished under the direction of Miss I. S. Burns.

Books Circulated 1905-07 ..	21,270
Average per month	886
New Books Added	131
New cards issued	808
Total borrowers	1,379
Books in Library 1951	37,585
Added during 1951	2,225
Adult circulation	68,259
Juvenile circulation	30,398
Other	2,471
Total	101,128
Highest circulation year	
1935	204,462
An increase from 1928	
(in 1928)	80,311
Circulation 1953	89,724
Circulation 1954	90,985
Circulation 1955	90,448

Agreement Between the Board of Trustees of the Oswego Li- brary and the Board of Education of the City of Oswego

WHEREAS, the Oswego City Library is without sufficient

funds to maintain it in a modern fashion adequate to the demands made upon it, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Education of the city of Oswego, New York, has a large number of books and the facilities and funds necessary to establish a substantial school library, and

WHEREAS, it seems advisable that their several efforts be consolidated as well as may be, to the end that a single, up-to-date library be conducted in the city of Oswego,

IT IS THEREFORE MUTUALLY AGREED between the "Oswego City Library," a body corporate, party of the first part, and the city of Oswego, a municipal corporation acting by and through its Department of Education, party of the second part, as follows, to wit:

1. Second party will place in the Oswego City Library such books, pamphlets, magazines, etc., as from time to time it may deem necessary or proper.

2. Second party shall employ as its own expense a graduate of an approved college with at least one year of technical library training, to be known as the Oswego City School librarian.

3. Second party shall employ and pay a janitor for said library.

4. Second party shall pay the salary, to be fixed by it, of Mr. Kelsey, who shall continue as Librarian of the Oswego City Library.

5. First party agrees that all funds received by it from any sources shall be expended for maintenance or improvement of the library building or for books or equipment and that none thereof shall be used for salaries.

6. Actual charge and control of all books belonging to the Oswego City Library shall remain in its trustees and librarian; likewise, all books, magazines, pamphlets, etc., deposited by second party, shall remain in its actual charge and control.

7. Each party shall make such

rules and regulations touching the cataloguing and drawing of its own books as it may deem necessary.

8. The duties and hours of service of all employees shall be fixed by second party.

9. That before any changes, alterations or additions are made to the library building first party will advise second party of its intentions and receive from it any suggestions or advise it may be able to give.

10. That both parties shall unite in an effort to so improve and maintain this consolidated library that it shall be approved by the Library Extension Division of the University of the State of New York and to that end a survey by said Division shall be had, and in so far as funds will permit, both parties will carry out its recommendations.

11. In all things both parties hereto will so conduct and operate the properties, things, facilities and agencies under their several or joint control that this library be administered and conducted as a single unit, except in so far as it may be necessary to segregate the books of the Oswego City Library to carry out the intention of its founder.

12. This agreement shall run for three years from August 1, 1923.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have set their hands and seals this (second) day of (July) 1923.

LIBRARY SEAL

signature

T. P. KINGSFORD

President of Oswego City Library

signature

H. C. MIZEN

Secretary of Oswego City Library

DEPT. OF EDUC. SEAL

signature

DAVID FITZGIBBONS

President of Department of Education, Oswego, N. Y.

signature

FREDERICK LEIGHTON

Secretary of Department of Education, Oswego, N. Y.

**Letter From Gerritt Smith To
Original Board Containing
the Proposal To Establish
A Library In the City
Of Oswego**

Peterboro, July 17th, 1853

"ALVIN BRONSON" "JAMES
PLATT" "GEORGE H. Mc-
WHORTER" "HENRY FITZ-
HUGH" "EDWIN W. CLARKE"
"JOHN B. EDWARDS"
"JAMES BROWN" AND "DE-
WITT C. LITTLEJOHN"

GENTLEMEN:—

As some of you are aware, I have for years entertained the idea of founding a public library in the City of Oswego. The time has now arrived for me to act upon the idea and I herewith designate the eight gentlemen named above as "Trustees of the Oswego City Library" and hereby request that when a vacancy occurs in the Board either by death or resignation, that such Trusteeship shall be filled by the remaining members of "The Board of Trustees."

I appropriate to this object the sum of twenty five thousand dollars (\$25,000) and I wish you to be at the pains of spending it.

You can draw for it as follows, 1st March 1854, for \$5,000. 1st June 1854, for 5,000. 1st August, 1854 for 5000. 1st October, 1854 for 5,000. 1st December, 1854 for \$5000.

It strikes me that it might be well for you to purchase a lot and erect upon it a building which would serve for other purposes as well as for the library. The lot and building might cost, say fifteen thousand dollars. The balance of the twenty-five thousand you could then expend in books and the rents of that portion of the library not devoted to the library would furnish means for adding books from year to year. But all of this I leave to your better judgement.

As I have always had more to

do with property on the East, than on the West side of the river, and as that part of the City has suffered exceedingly from the late fire, and moreover, as much less has been done for the inhabitants of that part of the City than for the inhabitants on the other side, I enjoin that the Library be on the East side of the river.

My only other injunction is, that the privileges and benefits of the library shall be always as acceptable to the one as the other, and that no person on account of their race, complexion, or condition, shall be shut out of the privileges and benefits, or in any degree curtailed of them.

As to the character of the library, I have only to say that my warm wish is that no book unfriendly to truth and purity may ever find a place in the library.

I leave it to you to take such legal steps as are necessary for the maintenance of my own rights and the rights of the public in respect to the library.

With great regards your friend,

GERRITT SMITH

LAWS OF THE STATE OF NEW
YORK—PASSED AT THE SEV-
ENTY-SEVENTH SESSION
OF THE LEGISLATURE
JAN. 3 - 17 APR., 1854

Chapter 266. An Act To Incorporate the Oswego City Library.

Passed April 15, 1854

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1. Alvin Bronson, James Platt, George H. McWhorter, Henry Fitzhugh, Edwin W. Clarke, John B. Edwards, James Brown and De Will C. Littlejohn, and their successors are hereby created and declared to be a body corporate by the name and style of "The Trustees of the Oswego City Library," by which name they and their successors may sue and be sued, plead and be im-

pleaded, contract and be contracted with, and be known in all courts and places whatever, and may also have a common seal and may change and alter the same at pleasure.

2. The direction and management of the affairs of the said corporation and the control and disposal of its property and funds shall be vested in the said Trustees and their successors. The number of Trustees shall be eight, and they are hereby empowered:

1) To receive from Gerritt Smith, of Peterboro', in the County of Madison, the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars, by him appropriated or proposed to be given to the above named Trustees for the purpose of founding a Public Library in the City of Oswego.

2) To expend a portion of such sum in the purchase of a lot in the City of Oswego, on the East side of the river, and in the erection and maintaining thereon a proper and suitable building or buildings for a Public Library, with such auxiliary erections as to the said Trustees may seem proper and necessary; and to take and hold any additional donations, grants, devises or bequests of real or personal property which may be made in further support of the said Library.

3) To expend a portion of said sum of twenty-five thousand dollars in the purchase of books, maps, charts, philosophical instruments, drawings, paintings, engravings, coins, antiques, casts, statues, furniture and other things appertaining to a Library for general use.

4) To expend or invest the residue of said sum, and all other funds and property which may come into their hands as such Trustees by gift, devise, bequest, otherwise, in maintaining and gradually increasing said Library, and in defraying the necessary expenses of taking care of the Library and other property of the corporation, and providing for

the accomodation of persons consulting or visiting the Library: And in case the funds of the corporation shall at any time exceed the amount which said Trustees shall deem it incumbent upon them to expend for the purposes hereinbefore mentioned, then the said Trustees may expend such surplus in procuring public lectures, to be delivered in connection with the Library, upon useful subjects, of literature, philosophy, science, history, agriculture or the arts, or in promoting in any other mode the objects of the institution as above expressed. The funds of said corporation, at any time not needed for immediate expenditure for these purposes, may be invested by said Trustees in such manner as they may deem proper; and in case they shall invest the same in mortgages on real estate, or recover or hold a lien by judgment on real estate, it shall be lawful for them, in collecting such mortgages or judgments, to become the purchasers of any such real estate, and take, hold and convey the same.

5) To have the safe keeping and sole management of the funds, property and effects of the corporation; also, to make such ordinances and regulations, from time to time, as the Trustees may think proper for the good order and convenience of those who may resort to the Library or use the same, and to make such by-laws as may be necessary and convenient in conducting the business of the corporation; to appoint, direct, control, and at their pleasure remove a superintendent of the Library, and all librarians and other persons necessary to be employed about the same, and in general to have and use all powers and authority necessary for promoting the objects of the institution.

6) The said Library shall be accessible all seasonable hours and times for general use, free of expense to persons resorting thereto, subject only to such control and regulations as the said Trus-

tees may from time to time exercise and establish for general convenience; but the privileges and benefits of the Library shall always be accessible to one sex as the other, and no person shall be shut out from those benefits and privileges, or in any degree curtailed in them, on account of their race, complexion or condition.

3. The title to lot number sixty, in block number one hundred, in the original village of East Oswego, now lying in the Fourth Ward of the City of Oswego, which has been purchased by the before named Trustees for the purposes of said Library, is hereby vested in said corporation; and the said Trustees and their successors shall have power to improve the said lot as a site for a Library building or buildings, and to dispose the same, and procure another site and buildings on the East side of the river in said city, as to them shall seem proper, useful and profitable for the interests of the institution.

4. The said corporation shall be subject to the visitation of any courts, which now are or may be hereafter thereunto empowered, for the purpose of preventing or redressing any mismanagement, waste or breach of trust.

5. The said Trustees shall annually, on the first Tuesday in the month of June, elect one of their number to preside over their board, who shall hold such office for one year, and they may at any time appoint or remove a secretary, and any other officers which their business may require. The acts of a majority of the Trustees at any meeting, duly notified according to the by-laws, shall be valid.

Any vacancies in the number of said trustees, occurring by death, resignation, incapacity or removal from the city, shall be filled by persons appointed by the remaining Trustees, or a majority of them. The Trustees shall not receive any compensation for

their services; but this section shall not be construed to prohibit the board from compensating a secretary, superintendent or librarian for services in those offices respectively, provided such officer shall not be a Trustee.

6. The property of said corporation real and personal, shall be exempt from taxation, in the same manner as other incorporated public libraries of the state.

7. The said Trustees shall, in the month of January in every year, make a report to the legislature, for the year ending on the thirty-first day of December preceding, of the condition of the Library, and of the funds and other property of the corporation, and of its receipts and expenditures during such year.

If any debts of such corporation, lawfully contracted, shall not be paid out of the funds when due, the Trustees shall be individually liable for such funds to the creditors, in such cases and to such extent as they would be if not incorporated.

8. This act shall take effect immediately.

**Resolution Passed On the Death
of Gerritt Smith in 1874,
January**

"RESOLVED:

That we have received with unfeigned sorrow and regret the sad tidings of the death of Gerritt Smith, the founder and Benefactor of this Library, that we hereby record our warm appreciation of the generosity, the love of letters and the sincere regard for the cultivation and the advancement of the Citizens of Oswego which prompted him to create in our midst an institution for the promotion of reading and that we further testify our respect for the memory of Mr. Smith and in common with our fellow citizens mourn his removal by death as a public loss and truly sympathize with his family in their great bereavement."

"RESOLVED:

That a copy of the above resolution be transmitted to Mrs. Smith by the President and that it be published in the papers of our city.

Geo. C. McWhorter Pres.

**Letter From H. C. Mizen, Secy.
To R. A. Downey, President of
the Board of Trustees of
The Oswego City Library**

June 9, 1933

Mr. Robert A. Downey, President
Trustees of the Oswego City Li-
brary

Oswego, New York

Dear Mr. Downey:

The present arrangement with the Board of Education has proved satisfactory. It has given to Oswego a real library. But for the present arrangement we would have had to close the library long ago and wind up its affairs. It is obvious to everyone that it is utterly impossible for this board to continue the library independent of the Board of Education. The only part this board now has or can hereafter have is that of a naked custodian of the building. Even in that limited sphere our funds are inadequate to properly maintain the building and keep it in safe operating condition. The tremendous increase in library service demands enlargements and betterments far beyond the financial possibilities of our board. Our maximum annual income fixed by law (Charter of the City of Oswego) is \$750.00. This year the Common Council reduced this to \$350.00. The cash in our treasury approximates \$3000.00. Substantial repairs to the roof and betterments to the second story should be made at once. The repairs are absolutely necessary to protect the building and keep it safe for occupancy. The betterments are absolutely necessary to proper and successful library operation. What they will cost is highly problematical. Personally my be-

lief is that they will absorb all funds now available and possibly more.

A casual review of the situation reveals beyond question that our board can never resume its former status and operate the library independent of the Board of Education. The most and all that it can be expected to do is to struggle along in the reduced beggarly capacity of custodian of the building. How long it can so continue in that capacity is most uncertain.

I believe that in this situation our board should give immediate serious consideration to the future of the library. I therefore present for consideration of the board as a reasonable proper and legal solution that an arrangement be worked out between this board and the Board of Education looking to the transfer to the latter of the library building. Under the existing facts and conditions confronting this board it is my opinion that this board can properly and legally transfer to the City of Oswego through the medium of the Board of Education the library property. Under its charter this board has authority to dispose of its property. Under the Educational Law the Board of Education has authority to acquire buildings and property for educational purposes which purposes include libraries. When so acquired boards of education have exclusive care and custody of library properties. With the library property so transferred the Board of Education could then legally include in its budget in addition to the cost of operation as at present the cost of necessary repairs and betterments to the building. The library would thus gain a status equal with the public schools and school buildings and have a definite secured future.

I am convinced that all this can be accomplished by negotiation and action directly between this board and the Board of Edu-

cation without legislation and without reference to or participation therein by the Common Council.

Assuming such a plan can be successfully worked out between this board and the Board of Education all of the funds now available properly could and should

be used for repairs and betterments to the building so as to pass it over to the Board of Education in the best operating condition possible.

Yours very truly,
signature

H. C. MIZEN

HCM/B

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The preparation of this report would have been impossible without the assistance of the following acknowledged herewith.

1) The History written in 1892 by Mr. George C. McWhorter, then President of the Board of the Oswego City Library and the one recommended to Gerritt Smith by his agent, John B. Edwards, as best qualified to catalogue and purchase the first books for the Oswego City Library. The records having been destroyed in a fire in the office of the Secretary, Mr. F. O. Clarke in 1892, the Board assigned Mr. McWhorter the task of writing a history of the period to that date, which he did apparently from memory.

2) The reports made by Mr. Harry C. Mizen dealing with the Oswego Library reorganization in 1923 and his records as Secretary which are the most complete minutes now extant.

3) To Miss Juanita Kersey, Librarian since November, 1926 and Dr. McCool Snyder, both of whom have provided me with notes — oral and written — relative to the Oswego City Library.

Johnson G. Cooper



Edwin Morey Waterbury

1884 === 1952



President

Oswego County Historical Society

1937 === 1950



DEDICATED TO
EDWIN MOREY WATERBURY
BY HIS FRIENDS
IN APPRECIATION OF HIS
MANY SERVICES FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF LOCAL
HISTORY

E.M. Waterbury Memorial Program,

May 15, 1956

DEDICATED TO
EDWIN MOREY WATERBURY
BY HIS FRIENDS
IN APPRECIATION OF HIS
MANY SERVICES FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF LOCAL
HISTORY

So reads the inscription on a bronze plaque unveiled Tuesday evening in the front hall of the Oswego County Historical Society's Headquarters House in brief but impressive ceremonies to honor the society's outstanding late president who served at the helm for 13 years.

More than 100 members and friends of the Waterbury family joined Mrs. Waterbury and her children for the ceremonies which traced Mr. Waterbury's great work in reactivating the Historical Society and in commencing the present development of historic old Fort Ontario as a state historical site.

A final gift of \$100 from a person desiring to remain anonymous was announced during the proceedings by Thomas A. Cloutier, who told those present that the plaque was the result of voluntary contributions of friends of Mr. Waterbury and that none of the funds of the Historical Society were used to secure it. The plaque

is attached to the east wall of the hall at the foot of the stairway and is lighted by its own individual fixture.

President Alfred G. Tucker and Mr. Cloutier unveiled the plaque with the assistance of the honor guard, President Charles Snygg and Vice-president David Simmons of the Ontario chapter, N. Y. State Junior Historians, as Mrs. Waterbury and her family looked on with other members of the society and friends.

State Historian Dr. Albert B. Corey of Albany paid tribute to the foresight of Mr. Waterbury in seeing potential development of Old Fort Ontario years before it was returned to state ownership by the federal government in 1949. He recalled that his first visit to the fort was back in January, 1945, after speaking the previous night to the local historical society. That night the snow storm was so bad that the taxis stopped running about 7:30 p. m. but the attendance at the meeting was a

capacity crowd despite the storm. During their visit at the fort where the refugees were then living, the two discussed the future possibilities of the historic spot.

In tracing the recent years of old Fort Ontario, Dr Corey told of the work done by Mr. Waterbury in the crucial period after the state took control and started to restore it to its historic importance. Mr. Waterbury served as a local coordinator until his death, playing a big role in the development of the fort. The Palladium-Times was cited for its community leadership in this work by the speaker who said that Mr. Waterbury also saw the need for visitor enjoyment there with the result that now there is a Fort Trading Post (citing that Principal Ralph M. Faust of Oswego High school and Mr. Cloutier are carrying on the work of the post now).

Traces Future Plans

As to future plans for Old Fort Ontario, Dr. Corey said that their problem is "effective interpretation of it to the public." He stressed that it has to be interpreted in terms of "international rivalry" that the fort has always been for defense against a foreign enemy (first the French and then the English, followed by Germans and Japanese in World War 2). It was rebuilt in 1939, he said, and always had been a symbol of international military struggle although in the last war there was little fear for history has proven that an enemy cannot successfully invade the United States via the Oswego and inland route (her communications and supply lines would be cut off too quickly to carry on an attack).

He said that the impact of a fort and a garrison upon the social life, the economy of the area, and its lines of communications were factors facing successful interpretation by those restoring the fort and that Mr. Waterbury's wide knowledge of the Old Fort was not being put into play in the present restoration work at the

museum, officers' quarters and barracks.

In his remarks, Mr. Cloutier traced the period from 1922 when Mr. Waterbury came to Oswego from Corning to assume leadership of The Oswego Times until his death December 30, 1952.

His talk followed the lines of the rather informal program which Mr. Waterbury used to call a "chatty evening" when historical minded persons gathered to take part in friendly and easy discussion of their favorite subjects.

He pointed out that the society's former president in 1925 helped tremendously to stage a pageant at Fort Ontario when \$1,-500 profit was given to the Oswego Hospital. This pageant was on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the arrival of white men in Oswego.

Later he was chairman of a committee to place markers at historic sites in Oswego county in 1926. Six years later he and Mrs. Waterbury impersonated George and Martha Washington at the ball the Historical Society and the DAR held to celebrate Washington's 200th birthday.

Mr. Waterbury became president of the society in 1937 when the organization was reactivated through efforts of Fred Barnes. He stated his aims at that time for the society. They were that it be an active society in which papers were written to preserve historic information and meetings were held at various locations along with summer pilgrimages; that it be a county-wide organization (he saw its members grow from 37 to over 600) with county members represented on its board; and thirdly, that it publish its proceedings each year since 1939.

Mr. Cloutier also reminded those present about the details of the gift of the Headquarters House to the Society by the Bates family (Mrs. John Cowles, Mrs. Calvin Tompkins and Maxwell R. Bates) in December of 1946. He also told how Mr. Waterbury secured financial assistance for the

society from the Oswego County Board of Supervisors in 1950 and the years to follow. He read letters and wires from Mrs. Tomkins and Mrs. Cowles from Rome, Italy, and Minneapolis, Minn., respectively, expressing regrets of being unable to attend the unveiling ceremonies last night.

Near his conclusion Mr. Cloutier, for 26 years a business associate of Mr. Waterbury, told of the American Association of State and Local History giving the local society a citation in 1949 for its achievements in which Mr. Waterbury was instrumental.

On the committee for the plaque besides Mr. Cloutier were Robert L. Allison, Sr., Grove A. Gilbert, Miss Anna Post and Anthony Slosek.

The refreshment committee for last night's meeting included Miss Post, Mrs. F. D. Culkin, Mrs. L. W. Mott, Mrs. Henry Sayward and many other assistants.

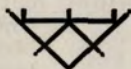
Mrs. Waterbury assisted at the

pouring of the coffee with Mrs. Robert Allison, Sr., at the other end of the table.

Present at the meeting was Supervisor Andrew Michaud of Fulton, a member of the County Board of Supervisors Historical Society committee.

President Tucker presided for the first time since his election and announced that the Headquarters House will be open to the public every Tuesday and Thursday from 2 to 5 during May and June, and Tuesday through Saturday during July and August at the same hours, with Sunday hours being 3 to 5 p. m. during the summer months. Classes may visit the place by appointment with him at other times, he added.

He also told them that tentative plans for a basket picnic sometime in August at Old Fort Ontario was in the making to replace the annual summer historical tour this year.



Folklore of the North Road And Lake Road, Town of Scriba

Presented by Mrs. Lyla Elen, October 16, 1956)

FOREWORD

Stories of people who lived where I lived have always interested me. Their pleasure and work were often in contrast to ours. In the next few pages I have only started to gather bits of history and folklore of the people who once lived on the Lake Road or North Road in Scriba, New York. Occasionally I have drifted farther than these sections as it pertained to a story.

I am grateful to the following people who so kindly listened to my queries and supplied much information. My father, Guy L. Newstead, Walker Rappleye, George Turner, Newton Coe, Frank Kane, Blanche Kane, Gladys Baker, James Enos, William Donahue, Flossie Donahue, Marion Rappleye and Dr. Charles Snyder.

Lake View

At Lake View, a resort well situated on Lake Ontario about six miles east of Oswego, around 1898, a bachelor named Herman Miner, fished and hunted for a living. At one time he had a partner, Andrew Morton, who shared in many of his experiences. A small sailboat and fish nets were their best companions. In midsummer shad and sturgeon were their chief aims. Early risers would see them sail out of Lake View Bay every day the weather permitted headed for their favorite location two miles off Nine

Mile Point. Whatever the catch of sturgeon was, they would always halter and anchor them in the bay in about eight or ten feet of water. Nineteen was the most my father ever saw anchored like this. When enough had been accumulated they would dress and ship them presumably by train to New York City. At the time they had nineteen sturgeon anchored, weighing approximately 125 to 200 pounds apiece, someone stole the largest one. The next day they immediately dressed the remaining fish and shipped them. Needless to say the shipments were smaller and more frequent in the future.

The hotel keeper at Lake View was James Whitford who kept boats for his guests to rent. Often the young boys took the boats out for a look at the sturgeon when the lake was smooth. Mr. Miner used to feed the haltered fish frogs, crabs, and small fish. Mr. Miner lived where the Carkey family now resides on the Lake View Road. After a few years he moved to Michigan in search of bigger game.

Grand Old Army Picnic

My father was reared only a half mile from Lake View so that it was natural for him to play croquet in the field near the hotel and swing in the beautiful, high log swing built for the guests. It's not strange that my father remembers paying guests sending small boys scampering

from the amusement area. Daniel Dubois built the hotel around 1865 and was still operating it in 1890.

Lake View was also the site chosen year after year for the Grand Old Army picnic. A good crowd of four or five hundred people came by horse and buggy and the latter bulging with a bag of hay to feed dobbin at noon. An apple orchard numbering about 300 acres stood east of the present site and was the favorite spot to tether horses, since the hotel barns held only twenty-two horses and cost twenty-five cents. Tables were set all around under the trees and the women proudly unpacked their picnic dinners. The hotel bar room did a thriving business under the direction of five bar tenders until after dinner. About half past one a ball game started on Washington Whitford's farm across the creek west of the hotel. Countless other games were played, too. Swimming was another main attraction especially for those who did not live near the lake.

There was always enough food left for a picnic supper, mainly for the women and children, since the bar room was filled to overflowing for the next few hours. A dance was always held in the dance hall only ten feet away from the hotel. Three steps up and one entered the dance hall, a large square room with a smooth floor. The music was furnished by a fiddler, banjo, piano and sometimes a cornet player. Sometimes the dance would last all night or until a fight broke out.

About forty years ago the hotel at Lake View burned. The property was later purchased and converted into a Methodist Camp Ground. A huge tabernacle was built to hold services in for two weeks in the month of August. Many people erected tents for shelter while attending camp meeting. Eventually many of those same people built cottages which are occupied today. However, within the last decade the Meth-

odist Conference sold the Lake View site to the Ontario Bible Conference who have erected additional buildings and plan to expand.

Lycoming Post Office

The present owner of the only grocery store at Lycoming, Newton M. Coe, related the following history of his family:

John E. Coe and Frances J. Coe, Newton's grandfather and grandmother respectively, started house-keeping after their marriage at a place called the Burg. During the time they spent here John made flour barrels. After that John was called to the Civil War and his wife operated a store at North Scriba in part of an old hotel. The hotel stood next to the present store now located at North Scriba. This hotel had the name of the Soup House. In the meantime, Daniel Slauson built a store at Lycoming which he operated a year and sold to John Coe in 1870. After the railroad was built through this hamlet Mrs. Coe was instrumental in getting the post-office moved here from North Scriba and she named it the Lycoming Post Office.

Their only child, Charles M. Coe, was graduated from the Normal School and taught two years at the Kane District in Scriba. His ambition of becoming a Doctor was realized when he graduated from the Swinburns Medical College at Albany. He practiced here twelve years before he died.

John Coe was killed at the railroad crossing on East Seneca Street, Oswego, long before an overhead crossing was built there. The accident occurred in 1889. His wife continued to run the business alone until her young grandson, Newton, was able to assist her. As Newton grew older he took over the management gradually and finally in 1906 he established a funeral home nearby in addition to running a grocery store and post office. Extra living quarters were built on to the original store

and today it still has the flavor of the old fashioned country store.

Oswego Railroads

Local interest in a railroad from Oswego to Pulaski was created through editorials such as the following in the Oswego Times, April 8, 1863. It reports that \$120,000 was pledged but \$150,000 was needed for the construction of such a project and they still needed \$30,000 more. More business men were urged to subscribe for bonds. At this point competition was felt as Syracuse was planning to join the Rome, Watertown, Ogdensburg Railroad line near Pulaski. Oswego's claim was that of being shorter by 12 miles and cheaper. The total length in all would be 27 miles. The total cost was estimated at \$500,000. Another important point was that the track would run through favorable country.

The next item was found in the Mexico Independent, May 11, 1865. There was a meeting of the stockholders and election of a Board of Directors as follows: Lucius B. Crocker, DeLos DeWolf, John B. Edwards, Samuel B. Johnson, Cheney Ames, Abner C. Mattoon, Leonard Ames, Charles Rhodes, Thomas S. Mott, Maxwell B. Richardson, Theodore Irwin, David H. Cross, James A. Clark. President, Lucius B. Crocker, vice president and treasurer, Delos DeWolf.

The directors were optimistic since the price of iron was going down since the Civil War ended. It had been too high. They were about to close a contract with a foreign house for the rails, and much grading had been completed.

Another item from the Mexico Independent, November 30, 1865: The railroad was completed as far as Mexico (building westward) and running passenger trains. "Brisk movement of the people form quite an animating scene in our usually quiet place."

November 16, 1865—"Race on the Railroad"—Two cars loaded

with iron for Oswego and Rome Railroad arrived at Richland and were switched to their tracks. A locomotive was ready to be attached, but before it was done the cars started down the slope, gathering speed. The engineer aboard the locomotive could not catch them and they passed through Pulaski at a mile a minute. The movement of the locomotive was described as "thundering by, yelling and screeching at every jump." The cars went on to Sand Hill, ten miles west of Richland where they stopped. Fortunately, no train was on the track at the time.

December 14, 1865—the reporter discusses a trip to New Haven where he visited the kitchen serving the workmen on the Oswego-Rome Railroad. Forty-five ravenous men of Irish, French and Kanuck species were eating. After the tables were cleared a train arrived with forty more. Steaks and mutton chops with bread, boiled potatoes, and raw onions were the bill of fare. The quantities of these articles which were mowed away were sufficient to explain to all the grumbling stockholders where their money goes.

December 14, 1865. "Distressing Accident on the Oswego-Rome Railroad." "One killed and eight injured when a work train ran into a herd of cattle. The train was moving slowly. When the train hit the cattle it knocked the cars off the track and ran over William Smith. The eight injured had been stoning the cattle. They jumped from the cars in fright but the cars did not upset and those that remained in the cars were uninjured. Seven or eight of these were Canadians."

Mexico Independent, January 4, 1866. "The First Trains." There was a profusion of omnibuses in the village early Monday, January first, for passengers. Each street seemingly like a coach overflowing. "at a little before 8 o'clock the shrill whistle of the western train was heard echoing over hill and plain as the cars came

thundering in at the depot. The advent of this first regular messenger of civilization into this hitherto unblest region, caused quite an excitement; and when it is remembered that the people have traveled in stage coaches over horrible roads for the last forty years, it will be admitted there was occasion for rejoicing at the first train of cars.

The 11:20 run from Richland Station came up amid great cheering from the crowd assembled at the depot. Over 80 passengers got on at this point for Oswego, filling the cars to their utmost capacity. The cars and engine were magnificent in every respect. All along the route at the different depots and many of the cross roads crowds were assembled and welcomed the train with all sorts of manifestations of joy. At New Haven an aged veteran palsied with the breath of death was drawn down to the track, where he sat, shielded from the rough winds by an umbrella held over him. He desired before he died to see a locomotive draw a load of passengers over the soil of his native town and his friends gratified his dying wish. We are told that as the night train was passing Sand Hill, a stranger who had never seen a railroad, unexpectedly chanced to see the fiery, snorting, screaming, locomotive as it went pulsating by and actually fainted. On being restored and asked what ailed him, he stated that he never saw anything of the kind before, and his first thought was that the monstrous Slave power had somehow got loose and was coming North on a raid. We learn that an excursion car will run over the road at half fare, sometime this month.

The stage coaches have been hauled off and the mails will be carried in buggies until spring, or until the railroad makes a contract with the department."

January 18, 1866—from the Oswego paper. The Oswego and Rome Railroad is beginning to develop a new trade with this city

from Counties of Jefferson, Oneida and St. Lawrence; also from eastern Oswego County. Millers and merchants are for the first time sending flour, grain, feed, etcetera, and will increase. Yesterday five cars loaded with flour left for Boston via Potsdam, Ogdensburg, Lake Champlain, and Vermont Central Railroad.

They are also running two passenger trains each way—Oswego to Richland—daily.

The Oswego and Rome Railroad was completed and put in operation December 1865. It was to be operated by the Rome, Wadertown, and Ogdensburg Railroad. The first train arrived December 30, 1865. The locomotive was the Delos DeWolf and the terminal was on East First Street, Oswego, New York.

On January 16, 1866 the Oswego paper carried a message of high optimism for much trade and travel on the new line.

Lycoming

After the railroad was built, Lycoming reaped many benefits. A depot was built and the hamlet was the center of a good deal of business. It made possible the removal of the post office from North Scriba to Lycoming. Since this locality was famous for its good strawberries, an ice corporation was formed, whereby each member contributed time every winter to help cut ice from the ice pond and fill the ice house located near the depot. During the strawberry season freight cars were packed with enough ice to cool the strawberries until they reached New York City to be sold on the public market. Other fruits and vegetables were also sent, although they did not require use of ice. Apples were shipped in barrels for many years; then bushel crates came on the market and simplified the handling of a good many farm products.

The introduction of Oswego County strawberries on the New York market influenced many commission merchants to make annual visits to this region in the

spring to inspect the crop and to persuade the growers to ship to their particular commission house in New York.

A creamery was also erected at Lycoming utilizing the railroad again to market the milk and milk products.

A brisk feed business and a farm merchandise store were added to the busy life of the hamlet. Coal was shipped from Pennsylvania to Lycoming by the railroad.

The Coon Family

The Coon family have an interesting history which is typical of many of our early settlers. The family's local history started with Spencer and Caleb Carr who were born in Lynden and Norway, New York, respectively, of parents who migrated from Connecticut. The parents of these two boys settled in Scriba on land that is now known as Route 104 where Mahlon Sheffield and Howard Myers now own property.

No children were born to Spencer's marriage but Caleb had five: Edward, Albert, Clarence, Sarah, and Mary Jane. The latter married Francis Coon of North Scriba and they produced six children—Alice, Orlie, Lewis, Annie, Homer and Earl. Homer is still living in this community today.

Homer told me of the story when his grandfather Caleb's family received word that the Indians were coming and how they rushed to the fort at Oswego for protection.

When Caleb first came to Scriba there was no regular path to Oswego. He and his wife would mark trees along the way as they guided their pack horses loaded with bags of wheat to be ground at the mill at Oswego. The land on the east side of the river was low and swampy with no buildings other than the fort. The west side boasted several feed mills and other shops which catered to the farmer's needs.

There is a Carr cemetery on one of these farms and the re-

mains are located on Mahlon Sheffield's farm today. A high wall surrounded the plot which covers about eight square rods. Caleb, his wife, his brother and wife, besides a bachelor uncle are buried there.

A Country Doctor

Doctor Howard LaGrange Wilder was practicing medicine in Lycoming as long ago as 1880 and still maintained an office until the 1920's. He moved here from Camden, New York, and started a practice at twenty-six years of age. His third wife is still living as is a daughter, Inez Broden of Penn Yan, New York.

He was a rough looking character who chewed tobacco and swore profusely which was in sharp contrast to the Arabian pony and elegant carriage that he drove. In later years the pony traded places with an International Harvester run-about, complete with chauffeur, one Howard Leavette. The Doctor never drove the automobile himself.

Besides delivering four or five thousand babies in his life time, he was noted for his success in doctoring the flu. During a severe epidemic he related to one woman that out of seventy two cases he lost only one and that was unnecessary as she did not follow his order to stay in bed.

He resided with his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. James Bell, in a lovely home that is now owned by Carl Dickinson of Lycoming. Many hobbies were his prime interest; perhaps chicken farming one year and vegetable growing the next. He was the proud possessor of a Victor phonograph and hundreds of records. Much of his medicine was made from his herb garden. He boasted that he was unafraid to order double dosages of medicine for his patients. He had little use for hospitals. He never attended church very much.

An Act of Kindness

Courtesy of George V. Turner

A great, great uncle of George, a retired Captain, Lewis Turner,

lived where Elmo Seeley lives now on the Creamery Road that joins Scriba Corners with the North Road. One evening a boy wandered along the road and asked for lodging with the retired Captain. The wish was granted and a friendship grew overnight. The old man liked the boy and honored him by asking him to spend his youth with him. Young Comstock, as he was called, was educated and eventually became a professor at Cornell University. He married and still remains a friend of the Turner family.

A Young Englishman's Dream

A well to do young man, Thomas Askew, came from England and bought about one hundred fifty acres of land on the Middle Road in Scriba. He built a home and married. Their only son died at the age of twenty seven. He was buried under a beloved beech tree some distance back of the house on a hill. Years later the father was buried there, too. Today two tomb stones mark the graves. A descendant who lives nearby, still cares for the graves and has built a fence around them.

Early Settlers On the Lake Road

Frank Kane, a lifelong resident of the Lake Road, told me the story of his grandfather, Patrick Kane, who migrated from Ireland to Canada then to the United States. He bought the present Kane farm in 1850. Since there was no road anywhere he built a log cabin near the lake since they thought the main road would eventually be near the lake. Remains of other cellars along the Lake Road are evidences of the same thinking. Whenever it was necessary for the Kanes to go to Oswego they followed a path of notched out trees.

Mr. Kane also remembers an event that took place on the farm adjacent to him called the Farrel farm. In 1885 a church held a baptism in the lake for about twenty or thirty five people. The minister led them out in water up to

their knees and gently taking hold of their shoulders doused them under the water.

Forgotten Roads

There are two roads in North Scriba that many people have never heard of, one called the Duke Road; the other has no name that I can discover. The Duke Road starts from the North Road approximately one mile west of North Scriba. It runs south and meets Route 104 where George Brown now lives.

The other road started on the Lake View Road between the residences of Ottmer See and George Boardway. It continued on until it met the Lake Road just east of the Walter King farm. This road has not been passable for the last few years.

Saw Mills

There was a saw mill still in use about 1900 at Copeland's Forks where the Lake Road joins the North Road. Leonard Copeland, father of John Copeland, living presently in Oswego, owned it. Behind the saw mill toward the east was a blacksmith shop operated by Joseph Myers. Mr. Copeland did some blacksmith work, too. Turner's Creek furnished water power for the saw mill.

Cheese Factories

There was a large cheese factory on the south west corner site where the Creamery Road (from Scriba Corners) meets the North Road.

On the Donnelley farm where William Donahue now lives at North Scriba, there was a cheese factory, a cider mill, and sorghum factory all located at the northern end of the farm directly across from the home of Gerald Rhinehart.

Apple Dryers

There were apple dryers at Ward See's farm at Lake View, Copeland's Corners (run by Ray-

mond Walker, Senior, and a cider mill, also), Perry Whitney, Leonard Richardson of Lycoming, Albert Simpson at Scriba Corners and a cider mill owned by Joseph Worden where the Scriba Fire Barn is now. Byron Coon operated one at the corner of the Parkhurst Road and Creamery Road. It burned down about 1893.

Pine Tree Creamery

The pine tree Creamery, a farm-

er's cooperative, used to stand where the Scriba Town Garage does now. They made milk sugar that was used to coat pills. Eventually, they sold out to S. S. Brown of New York City.

There was a grocery store run by Caleb Wilcox located on the farm of Joseph Elen. An old coupon valued at ten cents, issued to a Mrs. Gorslin, is the only proof I have ever seen to prove that the store existed.



Neerology

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MR. THOMAS MOWATT
Union, N. J., 1956

MRS. FRANK SMITH
Phoenix, January 13, 1956

MR. LUTHER HARDING
156 West Fourth Street, Oswego, March 13, 1956

MRS. C. HOWARD FOURNIER
123 East Third Street, Oswego, March 12, 1956

MRS. JUSTIN MORRILL
166 East Third Street, Fulton, April 10, 1956

MRS. WILLARD HALL
West Fifth Street Road, Oswego, June 20, 1956

DR. LIDA PENFIELD
74 West Fifth Street, Oswego, July 4, 1956

MRS. MARCUS WADSWORTH
West Fifth Street, Oswego, September 21, 1956

HON. CLAYTON MILLER
Pulaski, N. Y., October 1, 1956

MR. BURT VAN BUREN
234 Oneida Street, Fulton, December 14, 1956

* * *

1 9 5 7

MR. ELLIOT B. MOTT
94 West Fifth Street, Oswego, January 4, 1957

