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ego County Historical Society

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of
The Oswego County Historical Society

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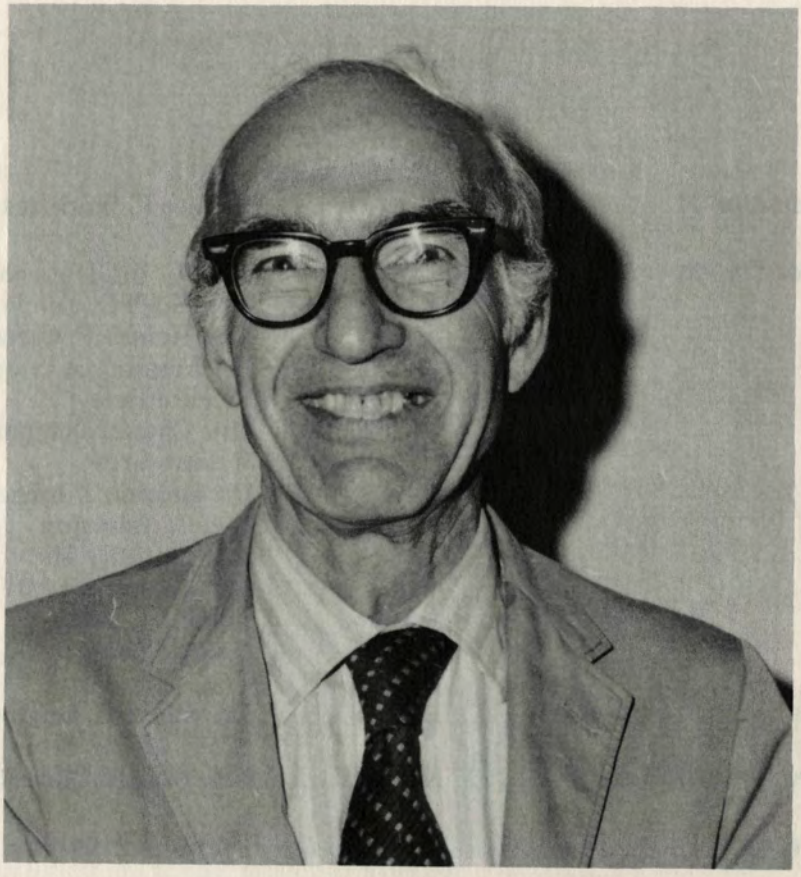

Charles McCool Snyder

Dedication

Every so often time matches men and places in such a way that we all become the beneficiaries of the harmonious results. Such was the case in the match of Oswego County and Charles McCool Snyder.

A native Pennsylvanian, Dr. Snyder took his degree at Bucknell and the University of Pennsylvania and produced from his dissertation the much acclaimed study, *The Jacksonian Heritage in Pennsylvania.*

After serving with the Navy during World War II, Dr. Snyder came to Oswego to join the faculty of the State University College at Oswego. There he has been a highly respected member of the history department and has served as its chairman.

Dr. Snyder's association with the Oswego County Historical Society began over twenty years ago and during that time he has served the Society in many capacities including program chairman, yearbook editor, member of the Board of Managers and President. In many of the Society's activities he has been joined by his gracious wife, Mary.

Dr. Snyder's love for research has been especially beneficial to Oswego County. His digging has resulted in the broadening of knowledge of our area and in the accumulation at the Society and the University of manuscript collections and objects which are particularly valuable to further study.

As a teacher Dr. Snyder has encouraged the writing and publishing of local and regional history. He has led the way with the publication of *Dr. Mary Walker, The Little Lady In Pants* and *Oswego From Buckskin to Bustles.*

It would be impossible to list all the many things which Dr. Snyder has helped bring about. His never-failing support has been felt by all of us who care about our heritage. His reasoned good humor has helped us over many rough roads. For all of these things the Board of Managers dedicates this edition of the Journal to Dr. Charles McCool Snyder.

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President's Message

The year 1971 was a truly significant point in the life of the Oswego County Historical Society. It marked the 75th anniversary—the "Diamond Jubilee," if you will—of the Society's founding and incorporation in 1896. Life and institutions within Oswego County have changed markedly since William McKinley's first election to the Presidency of the United States; nonetheless, the vantage point of three-quarters of a century provided a firm basis from which to view the myriad accomplishments of the past and to honor symbolically many of the people who through the years have advanced the Society in the cause of conserving and interpreting Oswego County's rich heritage.

William P. Judson, Theodore Irwin, Sr., Carrington MacFarlane, John D. Higgins, James Riggs, Frederick W. Barnes, Edwin M. Waterbury, Ralph M. Faust, W. Seward Salisbury, Charles M. Snyder, Alfred G. Tucker, H. Fred Bartle, Dorothy Mott, John C. Birdlebough, and Anthony M. Slosek each have taken their turn in the leadership of this Society—efforts cited during the banquet held on September 28 with the presence of over one hundred members and friends of the Society as well as by the presentation of an honorary membership card at that time to Fred P. Wright, a former secretary and long-time supporter of the organization.

We also marked the 175th anniversary of the British withdrawal from Fort Ontario and the establishment of United States sovereignty in the Great Lakes region as well as of the beginning of permanent civil settlement at the mouth of the Oswego River; however, we found our thoughts turned to the future by a stimulating address, reprinted in this volume, from Frederick L. Rath, Jr., vice-director of the New York State Historical Association at Cooperstown.

Observance of the anniversaries and accomplishments of the past was an opportunity for renewal and further progress. With your president representing the Society and serving on the Steering Committee, meetings in Utica and Syracuse resulted in establishment of the Regional Conference of Historical Agencies which received a grant of $20,000 from the New York State Council on the Arts and is now seeking to improve communication and exchange of thoughts, techniques, and expertise among historical groups in a 22-county upstate area.

Internally the Society continued to grow with an infusion of new members and the improvement of staff services including research and collections management activities. Miss Marjorie Allen resigned as museum registrar and was replaced by Mrs. Joan A. Workmaster. A routine research inquiry led to full identification of a particularly important group of manuscripts, the Laurence Papers donated to the Society some years ago by George D. McWhorter, which deal with the Revolutionary period as well as later Oswego County land holdings—of special interest, for example, are original petitions for the removal of British troops from New York City signed by many members of the Sons of Liberty. The Society received the donation of a number of important materials, including documents and objects from the Christ Church cornerstones, and a concentrated effort was begun to identify and preserve items in the weapons collection with the help of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Beyer.

The sudden destruction of Christ Church in Oswego led to a renewed public interest in preservation of important historic structures and by the year's end the Society was cooperating with the Oswego City Library Board toward saving the Gerrit Smith Library building, one of two Oswego County structures on the National Register of Historic Places.

The outstanding series of monthly program meetings was so well attended as to exceed the seating capacity of our facilities repeatedly and was climaxed by a Christmas open house amidst the Victorian settings of the Richardson-Bates House and period holiday decorations arranged by the Oswego Garden Club and our staff.

At the year's end the Oswego County Board of Supervisors and other sources of support combined to assure sufficient funding for 1972 to permit the Society to recruit a professional director by the end of the next fiscal year—a most important step forward in providing for continuity in the operation of the Society's program, assuring the orderly development of new services to the people of the County, and extending awareness of Oswego County's common heritage to each city and town.

Today the Oswego County Historical Society stands aware of the significance of the past, responsive to the needs of the present, and sensitive to the opportunities of the future.

Respectfully submitted,

WALLACE F. WORKMASTER
President

Blow The Man Down

By Sanford Sternlicht

It must be remembered that the chief characteristic of navigation in the age of sail was its uncertainty. It was impossible to arrange a sailing time accurately in advance and sailors had to await a favorable wind in order to clear port, the delay sometimes running into weeks. The length of a voyage and the date of arrival were even harder to forecast. A crossing from Western Europe to the West Indies could take from 35 to 60 days and even more. Toulon to Gibraltar could be made in three or four days with a fair wind; it could also take three weeks. The calms encountered in certain regions endured for weeks on end and could slow a ship's passage considerably. In storms ships were often blown completely off course.

Thus seamen had little control over when they sailed, or where they made landfall. Winds and currents dictated the actual maritime routes from which it was difficult and even dangerous to stray. To sail from Europe to the West Indies and back, it was necessary to make an almost complete circuit of the North Atlantic. Outward bound, the ships had to find the trade winds in the vicinity of the Azores; returning, they hugged the American coast sometimes as far north as Newfoundland in order to pick up the prevailing west winds towards Europe. Also, navigation had to be strictly governed by the calendar. To be avoided at all costs were the severe gales that raged in various regions during certain seasons as, for example, round Cape Horn from May to June.

In the age of sail some voyages were practically impossible. For instance, the Benguela Current which flows up the west coast of Africa made it easy to sail from the Cape to Gabon, but in the opposite direction, an immense detour had to be made as far as the coasts of South America. It was an easy run from Guiana to Martinique and thence to Santo Domingo, but a reciprocal course was almost out of the question. In order to cross the Pacific Ocean from the Far East to America, ships had first to sail nearly as far north as the Aleutian Islands. Last but not least, charts were still lamentably inaccurate, leading to grievous miscalculations. The British Admiralty had really only begun its magnificent hydrographic effort.

Of just two things could a man-of-war's man be sure when he boarded the frigate in which he had enlisted: he was going to be crowded and, before the cruise was over, he would probably be bored. While officers and weather were unpredictable and the cruise might be packed with high adventure or so uneventful that when he looked back there was scarely a day that differed from the one that had preceded it and the one that followed, the routine of his waking hours would follow a pattern varied only by coming to anchor, getting under way, or actual contact with an enemy. Otherwise, the days of his life rolled on like the interminable waves: each one like the last or until, one day, almost suddenly, he awoke old and dry and there were no more watches left.

The Boatswain and his mates would rouse him out at dawn, if the ship was in port, or in time to get on deck before his watch began if at sea, and at 6 bells in the second dogwatch each evening he would have to sling his hammock on a berth deck where the overhead was so low that it was impossible to stand upright and the space allotted each man measured only 22 inches wide by 8 feet long.

On coming aboard his new ship the old-timer would be likely to find a number of former shipmates who would try to outdo one another in helping him to get settled. One might take his seabag to the bagroom, another would sling a clean hammock for him or stow it in the netting, while a third would escort him to berth deck and introduce him to his new messmates. The raw recruit or apprentice seaman, not having had the advantage of the modern "boot" training, would find himself a veritable "wanderer in a foreign land, ignorant alike of the language or manners of the inhabitants, bashful of obtruding his notice upon anyone, fearing a rebuke, and becoming inadvertently the butt of every shallow-pated, self-sufficient ignoramus who chose to level his insults upon him."

One "Foretopman," recalling his own introduction to the Navy, wrote, "as I daily beheld the entrance of your *saplings,* aspirants for naval enterprise, I felt pity for their inexperience and loneliness, and bearing in mind how I myself was situated in a former similar occasion, I cultivated the acquaintance of each, putting them on their guard against deception of every sort, and rendering them those little favors which I myself, at the time above adverted to, stood so much in need of."

Before he had learned his way around his new ship the recruit would be introduced to the daily routine. As soon as the crew was initially assembled the First Lieutenant or Executive Officer, as he was later to be called, organized the men into two watches–starboard and larboard or port watches–and designated those who were to be forecastlemen, foretopmen, maintopmen, mizzentopmen, and afterguards. The four on, eight off of today's Navy or Merchant Marine would have seemed very soft indeed to a *Constellation* salt.

The duties of each group were well defined. The forecastlemen

worked from the foremast forward, the foretopmen aloft and on the port side from the foremast to the mainmast, and the maintopmen aloft and on the starboard side from the foremast to the mainmast. The mizzentopmen carried out the work aloft and on the port side from the mainmast aft, while the afterguards were responsible for the starboard side aft. So well were these limits of a man's duties understood that a foretopman would look with contempt on a midshipman who directed him to "squilgee down" in the starboard gangway and would call one of the maintopmen to look after his own part of the ship. Competition among the various divisions was fierce.

Petty officers would be selected to fill the posts of the master-at-arms, who served as the chief of police and had charge of the berth-deck, two ship's corporals or mast-at-arms' mates, four coxswains, two captains of the forecastle, two captains of each of the tops—fore, main, and mizzen, two captains of the afterguards, two boatswain's mates, one gunner's mate, four quarter gunners, and so on down the list until all the rates had been filled. Privileges and extra pay came with petty officership. Strength, experience, and a clean record were the criteria for promotion.

The "station bill" would then be made out and each man required to learn his station for every evolution by noting his hammock number and referring to the bill which was nailed up in a prominent place for ready inspection. By this means he would learn the exact part of the ship to which he must go on the double when the order was given for "getting under weigh," bringing ship to anchor," "tacking ship," "wearing ship," "loosing and furling," "reefing topsails," "in and out of boats," "up and down topgallant and royal yards" and many other tactics required in working a ship under sail.

Stations at "quarters" were similarly assigned so that each hand knew where he was to report when the ship was cleared for action. Six or more men were assigned to each gun and the guns grouped in divisions, each of which was placed in charge of a commissioned officer. A powder division, which was usually headed by the Second Lieutenant who was also the Navigator, was assigned the duty of passing the ammunition from the magazine to the gunners on the gun and spar decks.

At sea the men were exercised at "great guns" daily. Each gun crew had to train until it worked in unison, quickly, carefully, and with disdain for the flaming death that leaped towards them from beyond the slender wooden bulwarks and the thin hammock mattings that were the only protection against round shot, canister, and grape. The cast iron guns, named for the weight of the round shot they fired, were mounted on wooden-wheeled trucks, secured to the bulwark by the train tackle, outhaul tackle, and breeching for recoil retention and return to battery. When cleared for action the gun ports would be opened and the gun hauled inboard. The gun captain

would place a wire in the touchhole of the barrel; a man then would thrust the wool bag of powder called the cartridge in the muzzle, another placed a wad, and the rammer with the butt of his rod out through the gun port rammed it until the captain was able to feel the charge against his wire. Next the shot was placed in the muzzle and rammed home. The gunner then poked a small hole in the cartridge with the wire, and poured some powder into the touchhole to make a train. In his left hand he held a burning match, which when the muzzle was outhauled beyond the bulwark and pointed by the quoin, he would touch to the touchhole. The powder train would flash, the charge explode, the gun leap dangerously back, and the shot fly over a thousand yards, if a 24 pounder.

With the gun checked by the breeching line and held by the train tackle, the gunner would squelch sparks in the touchhole with his thumb, while the barrel was swabbed with a wet sheepskin sponge on a rod to insure that no sparks remained within. Then the process was repeated and the gun made ready to fire once more. A gun crew was expected to complete the entire evolution in less than one minute. Furthermore each man had to learn all the other positions in case one or more of his mates was killed or wounded.

If the recruit was a husky lad and looked as though he could pull a strong oar he might be assigned to one of the boat crews. In choosing men for this duty the First Lieutenant, who wanted the best men available, was likely to be confronted by a complaint from one of the "captains" that too many men had been taken from his part of the ship and that he was left shorthanded to carry out his work.

The 24 hours of the day were divided into five 4-hour watches the names of which have varied with the years, and two 2-hour dogwatches that fell between 4 P.M. and 8 P.M. Sometime in the distant past the dogwatches had been established to make the number of watches uneven so that the men would not have to stand the same watches day after day.

At dawn the Boatswain piped "All hammocks up" which was answered by his mates' "Rise and shine." At the cry the hammocks were emptied, taken from their hooks, and lashed up in double time. None of the crew wanted to be the "last man out" as the master's mates' ability to find such unpleasant penalties as scouring the gallery smokestack with brick dust and rags was well known. Within a matter of minutes there was a rush for the ladders leading to the spar deck nettings where the hammock rolls were stowed for the day and thus the berth deck which was also the gun deck was cleared.

"D'ye hear, there, get your holystones and sand!" was the next command and the men collected around the forehatch where buckets, holystones, squilgees and brooms were passed up from below. The holystones were so named because men worked the decks on their knees when holystoning. Water was drawn from over the side in

buckets or a hose attached to handy billy pumps in the fore and main channels. The deck was then wetted down and scoured with the holystones while the Officer-of-the-Deck and the First Lieutenant watched with keen eyes to see that no corner was missed and that the work continued until the deck was literally spotless. The guns were cast loose and run in and out to enable some of the men to drag the heavy holystones back and forth over the deck where they had been secured while others, on hands and knees, scoured the "hard to get at" places with the smaller stones called "prayer books." The paint work was scrubbed with sand and canvas and the task finally completed with a second washing down of the deck and the stowing of the cleaning gear.

If the ship was at anchor "a hand from each part of the ship" was called away to board the catamarans alongside and scrub the sides of the hull and copper sheathing above the waterline with brooms, brushes, sand, and canvas. These men were called side cleaners.

Seven bells (7:30 A.M.) was the signal for the men to wash and clean up before hurrying on deck where the Master-at-arms, rattan cane in hand, was waiting to hurry the laggards along. "Come, toe the line!" was ordered and the sections fell in for inspection. Each man was carefully scrutinized by the Master-at-arms and his name was called out to the Officer-of-the-Deck, who nodded his approval, as he passed muster. When all had been passed the formation was dismissed.

At five minutes before 8 A.M. the Officer-of-the-Deck reported 8 bells to the Captain, who might direct that the topgallant and royals be crossed or the sails set, if the ship was in port. If the yards were to be crossed all hands were called, the yards sent up, and at the third roll of the drum, the yards were swung across, the ensign raised to the peak, the commission pennant changed from the short pennant flown at night to the 40 foot long "whip," the bell struck 8 times, the band played and the day officially began. The men could have had two to three hours of work before this moment.

The cooks appeared from the galley, their arms laden with pots of tea and scouse, breakfast was piped, and the drum rolled to announce the morning issue of grog, which was traditionally passed forward at breakfast, backward at dinner, and forward again at the evening meal. As each man received his "tot" he carried it to the space on deck, hatch or mess chest allotted his mess, the red tarpauline mess cloth was laid and on it was spread the mess gear of wooden or pewter plates and bone handled cutlery for the first meal of the day.

The week's menu was fixed by the same Act of Congress in 1794 that authorized the construction of the *Constellation* and was varied only on special occasions.

Sunday – 1½ pounds beef, 1 pound bread, ½ pint rice, ½ pint spirits

Monday – 1 pound pork, 1 pound bread, ½ pint peas, 4 ounce cheese, ½ pint spirits

Tuesday – 1½ pounds beef, 1 pound bread, 1 pound potatoes, ½ pint spirits

Wednesday – 1 pound bread, 2 ounces butter, ½ pint spirits or in lieu–½ pint rice, 4 ounces cheese, 6 ounces molasses

Thursday – 1 pound pork, 1 pound bread, ½ pint peas, ½ pint spirits

Friday – 1 pound bread, 1 pound potatoes, 1 pound salt fish, 2 ounces butter or 1 gill of oil, ½ pint spirits

Saturday – 1 pound pork, 1 pound bread, ½ pint peas, 4 ounces cheese, ½ pint spirits

This table of allowances provided for the substitution of one quart beer for one half pint of spirits but did not specify whether the choice was made by the seaman or the purser. The menu was changed in 1801 to the following schedule:

Sunday – 1¼ pounds beef, 14 ounces bread, ½ pound flour, ¼ pound suet, ½ pint spirits

Monday – 1 pound pork, 14 ounces bread, ½ pint peas, 1/3 pint spirits

Tuesday – 1¼ pounds beef, 14 ounces bread, 2 ounces cheese, ½ pint spirits

Wednesday – 1 pound pork, 14 ounces bread, ½ pint rice, ½ pint spirits

Thursday – 1¼ pounds beef, 14 ounces bread, ½ pound flour, ¼ pound suet, ½ pint spirits

Friday – 14 ounces bread, ½ pint rice, 4 ounces cheese, 2 ounces butter, ½ pint spirits

Saturday – 1 pound pork, 14 ounces bread, ½ pint peas, ½ pint vinegar, ½ pint spirits

Though not well cooked with only a single galley stove for the use of the entire crew, and sometimes in a spoiled condition after weeks at sea in tropical waters, nevertheless the rations were hearty. American vessels, unlike their British or French counterparts, were know as "feeders."

While breakfast was being eaten the Boatswain's pipe might again sound the call for attention and the uniform of the day announced. If it was other than the workaday clothes usually worn, sea bags were broken out, the proper clothing chosen and donned, and the bags retied and restowed in their proper places.

In the meantime the Surgeon's Mate made his morning visit to the sick bay to examine and treat those on the binnacle list and to check up on the attentiveness of the loblolly boys. One of the boys was assigned the duty of making the rounds of the decks ringing a bell to announce sick call; the dressing board was brought up, and the invalids collected on the half deck for the Surgeon's attention.

A full hour was usually allotted for each meal and as soon as

breakfast was finished and the mess cloths rolled up and stowed in the niches between the deck beams and ledges, a crowd collected around the galley where smoking was solely permitted and where the contents of the latest newspapers to come aboard, politics, the ship's movements, and the current scuttlebutt were discussed.

When 2 bells (9 A.M.) in the forenoon watch were struck the Boatswain's pipe announced the end of the breakfast hour and the Master's Mate shouted the order "All hands on deck!" At this signal the sweepers turned to and each man cleaned the area assigned to him at the beginning of the cruise and which was his responsibility until it ended. At the sound of the drum beat to quarters each man hurried to take his battle station for the Lieutenant's inspection which might be followed by an exercise at the guns, boats, yards and sails, manual of arms, or broadsword drill. Small arms and cutlasses were stowed in the armory and broken out when needed, under the supervision of the Master-of-arms.

After quarters, the real work of the day began: the carpenter, the sailmaker, the cooper and their mates, working on the larboard side of the gun deck, resumed the jobs "secured" when the previous day's work ended. The marines busied themselves with drills and putting their accoutrements in order, and the midshipmen and apprentice boys retired to the screened off areas on the starboard side of the gun deck where their instructors endeavored to teach them the rudiments of their professions. Abreast the forehatch the boatswain's and the sailmaker's mates busied themselves with awl and end repairing fenders, oars, pumps, boots and shoes while the tailors, with cabbage, shears and thread, carried on their trade in another part of the deck.

On Thursday mornings the men scrubbed their hammocks and on Fridays they were given the opportunity to wash their own clothes. Water was drawn from over the side, buckets of sand brought from ballast below, and those who were lucky enough to possess a bit of soap took care that it did not disappear when their backs were turned. Brushes made with coir, the prepared fiber of the husks of coconuts used in the manufacture of cordage and mattings, were highly valued and in great demand as they scrubbed the canvas clean with a minimum of effort, but their use was forbidden on many ships because of the havoc they wrought on the fabrics to which they were applied. In practice they were widely used, forbidden or not.

After the 9 o'clock inspection on Wednesday and Saturdays, one of the mess cooks, who had been designated the official ship's barber, set up his chair on the gun deck and announced himself ready to serve those of the crew who needed a shave or a haircut. Whether the quality of his work left something to be desired or whether it was the fashion of the day, some grew beards and left their locks untrimmed.

In the meantime the cooks on the berth deck were busy arranging their mess chests for the Master-at-arm's inspection, when every pot

and pan must "in fancy row upon the chest-lid of the bag-rack show." Every spit box had to be in line with its staves scraped clean and its hoops polished—and woe betide the one whose kits were not spotless.

And so the forenoon hours were passed. At 7 bells (11:30 A.M.) all work ceased, sweepers were again piped, and a "clean sweep down fore and aft" ordered. When the sun had reached its meridian the Officer-of-the-Deck reported to the Captain that noon had arrived and was told to "Make it so." Eight bells were struck and the Boatswain and his mates piped the call for grog and dinner.

By 1 bell (12:30 P.M.) in the afternoon watch dinner was over and the smokers had repaired to the galley to resume the debates started at breakfast. At 2 bells the Boatswain again piped "All hands"—some to work and some to have the next two hours for their own pursuits. Those who were standing the watch below devoted their time to overhauling their sea bags, reading, working on hobbies or fancy rope work, ship models, or scrimshaw or caulking off between the guns. The apprentice boys, released from their morning's classroom work, took the occasion to blow off steam by skylarking on the forecastle while the less serious-minded oldsters whose presence was not required on deck, disappeared below, certain of finding a dice game in some out-of-the-way corner considered safe from the prying eyes of the Master-at-arms and his mates.

At 8 bells (4 P.M.) the Boatswain piped the order to "Clear the decks!" At this order the industrious members of the crew "secured" for the day, the gamblers halted their play, the skylarking apprentice boys stopped their gambols, and the day's work came to an end. During a wartime cruise, however, most afternoons were spent at the guns and in a chase men might stand twelve to fourteen hours at the ready or in action.

Supper was piped and quickly finished during the first dogwatch. In good weather the entire crew, from the old salt nearing seventy winters to the apprentice boy of twelve, gathered on the spar deck where in fair weather they could watch the setting sun and enjoy the evening breeze. In the larboard gangway near the foremast's fife rail a group gathered to hear a bearded veteran spin a yarn; farther forward a checker game was in progress. Aft of the foremast a group was heatedly discussing the latest intelligence from the last newspaper that has been brought aboard. The end of the second dogwatch was signaled by the Boatswain's piping "Stand by your hammocks" and the lazying crowd dispersed, each man to take up his position in line abreast the hammock netting in which his hammock has been stowed for the day.

At the commands "Lay up!" and "Uncover!" the men detailed as hammock stowers swung themselves up on the nettings and threw back the cloths; "Pipe down!" was followed by the cries of the stowers calling out the number of each hammock removed, the odd numbers belonging to the starboard watch and the even numbers to the port watch. As his number was called each man stepped forward to catch

his hammock, carry it below and sling it in its appointed place. The oldsters soon retired to escape the noisy din and uproar that was likely to ensue when the younger tars collected between the guns and with accordian, banjo, song, and tall tales passed the time until tattoo.

Just before 8 bells (8 P.M.) the First Lieutenant made his evening rounds of the ship, reported everything secure to the Captain, and the first watch was set as the bell struck the hour. The sunset gun was fired, the colors hauled down, and the short commission pennant broken out as the long "whip" came down.

At 8:45 the fifes and drums struck up one of the popular tunes of the day and the concert was continued until 9 o'clock when tattoo sounded and the Officer-of-the-Deck gave the order "Roll off!" At the third roll of the drum the bell struck the hour, the Boatswain's pipes shrilled "Pipe down!" and all those not on watch turned in. The seamen who had to remain on deck sought a soft plank on which they could stretch out and only the lookouts, the men at the wheel, and the sentries walking their posts remained alert as silence enveloped the ship, a silence broken only by the soft slapping of water along the sides, the creak of the lines and blocks in the rigging, and the half-hourly reports of the lookouts to the Officer-of-the-Deck.

Sunday's routine differed from weekdays in that only the necessary work of operating the ship was carried out. After a special cleaning from the spar to the lower decks, the crew donned its best uniforms and repaired to the area about the mainmast where church services were conducted. After the services were over the Captain stepped forward, read the Articles of War, and each man passed around the capstan to undergo the Captain's critical scrutiny of his cleanliness and general bearing. This ordeal having been completed, the formation was dismissed and the men were free to lounge about the deck until the issuing of the pre-dinner grog ration was announced and the noon meal piped. On Sunday afternoon, with the exception of those required to work the ship, the members of the ship's company were free to do as they pleased. Those who could read often broke out their Bibles and it was not unusual for an older sailor to teach a ship's boy to read with the Bible as his only textbook.

In those days before travelling U.S.O. shows, movies, and organized recreation on board ship, sailors were left to their own resources to find diversions with which to combat the inevitable boredom of a long cruise. Some crews took up a collection after getting under weigh and, at the first port of call, purchased the supplies necessary to stage theatricals. Aspiring Thespians were never lacking and after sufficient time had elasped to sew the costumes, prepare the stage settings, and rehearse the players, the production would be presented from a stage set up by enclosing the quarterdeck from the mainmast with sails. The officers, their chairs carried out from their mess, would enjoy the performances from a vantage point but never participate in them. A ship's library was usually maintained in the fore-passage and the collection of the works of the popular authors and poets of

the day enjoyed a wide circulation.

The Boatswain's announcement that an auction was to be held marked another red-letter day and when the Purser's steward came on deck bearing an assortment of abandoned or lost bags and hammocks that were to be sold all other diversions were forgotten. The appearance of the Master-at-arms, who acted as auctioneer, was the signal for a crowd to collect and when silence had been obtained the contents of the bags were displayed and knocked down to the highest bidder. The fact that the article of clothing that he had bought proved to be too large or too small for his personal use or that it was beyond repair did not lessen the sailor's enjoyment of his purchase as it could always be traded off to a shipmate for some other coveted article and he had succeeded in "killing" another hour of monotony.

The lot of a commissioned officer in a frigate was only a shade better than that of the enlisted men and, while the latter might consider the living conditions in officer's country the height of luxury compared to his own, the same elements of crowding, monotony, and lack of privacy were to be found in the wareroom as in the forward part of the ship.

The average roster of officers in the *Constellation* numbered six or seven commissioned officers who lived, messed, and entertained their guests in a compartment less than 20 feet wide by 30 feet long. On reporting aboard each officer was assessed a predetermined sum for the purchase of crockery, table linen, and flatware for the ward-room mess and his mess bill for the ensuing month was collected. If the mess decided to lay in a supply of wine and spirits an additional sum was assessed. The government furnished only servants, lights, and the fuel for keeping the wardroom warm.

A caterer, traditionally the purser but later the paymaster, was elected and put in charge of the menus and business affairs of the mess. According to naval regulations each officer received one ration of food worth 25 cents and one ration of spirits worth 5 cents which were usually commuted and received in cash. The caterer of the mess was permitted to draw double the amount of the ration of any article allowed from the ship's stores, provided the men were not thereby deprived, by paying cash when received.

A "lunch" was served at 8 A.M., a "regular meat breakfast" at 11 A.M., and a course dinner that was followed by wines and cigars at 5 P.M. Seating at the wardroom table was strictly according to protocol with the First Lieutenant at the head and forward end of the table and the caterer at the foot. The ship's lieutenants and master were ranged according to rank on the starboard side while the other commissioned officers, surgeon, chaplain, marine captain and lieutenants occupied the port side of the table. A midshipman was usually invited to share the evening meal with his superiors and even the Captain, who had a private mess, might occasionally condescend to accept an invitation to dine with his officers.

Four officers were usually on deck during each watch with the

senior lieutenant acting as Officer-of-the-Deck and in charge of the operation of the ship during the four hours that he had the "duty." The newly fledged midshipman soon learned that the weather side of the quarterdeck, when the ship was at sea, and the starboard side at anchor were to be kept clear for the exclusive use of the Captain and the Officer-of-the-Deck and that the latter always relinquished it when the former appeared.

When their presence was not required on deck the officers spent most of their off duty hours in the wardroom or trying to sleep or study in the box-like staterooms. Games of checkers, chess, or backgammon were usually in progress and few cruises were completed without a budding musician, bent on mastering one of the wood or stringed instruments, turning up to torture the ears of the other men in the room until the Master-at-arms' discreet knock on the door at 10 P.M. and his announcement that "lights and fires on board are extinguished" ended the games and practicing.

A day on the Yankee Racehorse thus came to a close.

Recollections Of Dr. Ralph W. Swetman

Written by Beulah Counts Rudolph and Presented by Esther Hibbard and Beulah Counts Rudolph

These recollections of Ralph Waldo Swetman cover the period from 1933 until his death in 1957, with emphasis on the years of his administration in Oswego, 1933-47, and also include a brief resume of his life and career before 1933. The material was gathered from the archives of the College, newspaper articles, interviews and correspondence with former staff members, and personal recollections of the author, who was on the college staff for more than thirty years.

Ralph Waldo Swetman was born November 10, 1886, on a farm near Camden, New York, only child of parents of modest means. He graduated from Camden High School and spent a year at Colgate Academy before he was old enough to enter Hamilton College. He was graduated from Hamilton in 1907 with a Phi Beta Kappa key and letters in football and basketball.

His professional career began with a principalship in New York Mills, followed by one at Groton, and another at Palmyra where he met and married Alice Pierson. They left Palmyra for Teachers College, Columbia University, where he took his Master's degree.

From here he went to the State Normal School at Ellensburg, Washington, as Director of Training. One year later he entered the U.S. Army. On his return to Ellensburg, he became Director of Extension Service, a position which took him to all parts of the state. In 1921 he was elected first president of the newly-formed Washington State Education Association. As an officer of the Association he became involved in the first School Equalization campaign in the state. On discovering that he was embarrassing the administration of the Normal School, he resigned his position as he felt he could not give up a cause he so wholeheartedly believed in. Later he was hired by the campaign which was successful in bringing equalization to Washington State schools.

With this job completed, he went to Stanford University to work for the doctorate as a teaching fellow with Dr. Elwood P. Cubberly. From Stanford he went to the presidency of Humboldt State College at Arcata, California, in 1924. In 1930 he moved to the presidency of State Teachers College, Tempe, Arizona, where he stayed until 1933.

The early years at Oswego were full of great stress and strain. Dr. Swetman was appointed to make an historically important but run-down normal school into a college. At his inauguration Dr. Graves, Commissioner of Education, challenged him to the task of preparing the Normal School for the transition to teachers college status. To do this he had to take drastic measures; overhaul the curriculum, reorganize the administration, upgrade the faculty, modernize the philosophy, raise standards for student selection, and improve the physical plant. Since he was a man of action and integrity, he lost no time in making his plans known to all concerned with the result of bitter criticism from every side within and without the college.

His attitude toward criticism is best shown by an incident recounted by a former student, Dr. Robert Helsby, when he was in Oswego a few weeks ago to address the Chamber of Commerce dinner.

In his senior year Bob was elected Editor of the Oswegonian, student newspaper. He, like a new broom, swept away much of the old format and made changes in the paper. On publication of the first issue, the roof fell in on him. He said, "Complaints came in from all over the campus, but particularly from the fraternities and sororities. This was my first experience with such criticism and I headed for Dr. Swetman's office with the idea of resigning. After I entered, I spent the first five minutes telling him that I was not going to be subjected to such abuse, I did not ask for the job, I did not get paid for the job, and I was not going to have my work unappreciated in this fashion." Dr. Swetman listened to Bob's catharsis, then stood up to his full six feet six and asked Bob to sit down and relax while he gave him a half-hour lecture on the responsibilities of leadership, making these points: The only way to avoid criticism in this world is to do nothing, and even if one chooses to do nothing, he can still be criticized; there is only one way to win, and that is to plow ahead and do the best you can, to accept criticism for its face value, to sort and sift it, to utilize the good and sluff off the bad.

Change and crisis were to be the watchwords of the whole Swetman administration. Criticism was his constant companion but he never let it deter him from the struggle toward his goals.

There was progress. In 1936 he could list these achievements: reorganizing the Campus School, establishing a four-year Industrial Arts course, creating a Rural Education Department, setting up a nursery school, founding a Reading Clinic, starting a Children's

Library, improving buildings and grounds, constructing two athletic fields, upgrading faculty preparation. 1935 marked the beginning of the campaign for college status and the degree-granting privilege.

My personal recollections of Dr. Swetman began in August 1937. I was leaving Kansas City for a vacation in New York when I was paged at Union Station with a message to call Oswego from Chicago. In Chicago I called a long-time Kansas City friend who was then Dr. Swetman's Secretary. She had decided to get married, had suggested me to Dr. Swetman as her successor, and Dr. Swetman was interested in seeing me. Since he was coming to Chicago that night, could I wait there or meet him en route. I was stopping in Detroit for a few days, so arrangements were made for me to meet him there next morning at Michigan Central Station.

I came away from the hour interview with three impressions which influenced my subsequent decision to come to Oswego, though twenty-four hours before this I had not the slightest inkling that I would be interested in leaving my position in the Curriculum Department of the Kansas City Public Schools. I had met a very dynamic personality, had been given a vision of great things which were going to happen in Oswego, and had been challenged with the possibilities of joining the team which would make the vision a reality. In this brief talk I had felt his intensity, idealism, and integrity, characteristics I was to find confirmed in the association which began in 1937 when I came as his Secretary, lasted through the years after I became Assistant College and Campus School Librarian and continued as a family friend until his death in 1957.

When I came to Oswego Dr. Swetman knew that I was interested in teaching and that my tenure as secretary would depend upon improvement of the teaching situation as the country recovered from the depression. Oswego proved to be such a challenge that I turned down a teaching position offered in 1938, but did not give up the idea of teaching eventually. After I had been here for five years as his secretary and knew Dr. Swetman was planning an early retirement, I began to think about going back to teaching, but didn't want to leave Oswego. Then in 1942 the State Department made plans to create and Assistant College Librarian position for the Children's Library. I got the idea that this would permit me to combine my wish to teach, my love of books and reading, and use my experience from the Kansas City Public Schools Curriculum Library, and stay at Oswego too. I asked Dr. Swetman if I had the proper qualifications whether I could apply for the position. He had always encouraged staff members who had ambitions, and he did the same for me. I used my accumulated leave and vacation time for two summers to complete a graduate library degree from the University of Southern California and went to the library in 1944. Esther Hibbard, who had been my substitute during the leave, became Dr. Swetman's secretary at that time and was with him until his retirement.

The list of achievements from 1936 to 1947 is long and laid the foundations on which the present college rests. The campaign for college status and degree-granting privilege was suspended from 1936 to 1939 until the regents's Inquiry into Education was completed. The Inquiry did recommend these two things, but it was not until 1942 that they became law. Some progress was made in the interim. In 1938 the Regents made all courses four years and in 1939 granted the degree to Industrial Arts graduates. Full college status and the Elementary Education degree privilege came with the 1942 Teachers College Bill.

Simply listing these events now seems academic but only those who were on the scene can appreciate the struggle. As Dr. Salisbury said, the Swetman administration was in an "economy of scarcity" as contrasted with the present "economy of affluence." Every nickel had to be fought for. There was money only for barest necessities, as for instance, fuel. Only the parts of buildings which were to be used on weekends were heated. The staff all remember the "blue Mondays" when all wore coats and boots most of the day in winter. Mrs. Margaret Chistian said one of her most vivid memories was Dr. Swetman sitting at his desk with fur hat, overcoat and overshoes on, wrapped in an Indian blanket. Dr. Swetman frequently had to use his own money to keep creditors pacified until state funds would come through for needed supplies.

When it came to bucking the bureauracy in Albany, Ralph Swetman was fearless and tenacious. He would not take "no" for an answer. After each defeat, he gathered up the pieces, worked out another strategy, and started over. Three times the Legislature passed the Teachers College bill and three times it was vetoed by the Governor as the result of the liberal arts college lobby pressure. When the victory finally came in 1942, Mr. Harold B. Johnson, President of the Board of Visitors and Editor and Publisher of the *Watertown Times* wrote, "Of course, we all wanted to do what we could, but you were the galvanizing force. It was a hard battle and a victory very much worthwhile."

Robert Kirsch of the *Los Angeles Times* said, "Biography is necessarily a mosaic, for the total living evocation of a man is composed of hundreds of impressions for he was a complex personality and a paradoxial human being." It is difficult to organize these impressions into a pattern, but the titles of some of his famous speeches express much of the philosophy which guided his life and provide started points for exploring his character and personality. "Builders Use Positives,": "Send Me Teachers to Match My Children," and "Freedom and Responsibility: Siamese Twins" were three of his best remembered.

The positive attitude permeated his professional life, his relationships with and his personal life. In professional life, his complete dedication to the task he had accepted was the quality staff members were first aware of. Mr. Hauler's comment was, "Work was his motto–

7 days—warm or cold." Dr. Salisbury listed "Dedication" as the word best describing the man. Dr. Pitluga said, "He was dedicated to the college." Another staff member said, "Whatever his staff gave, he always gave more and expected nothing from them that he was not willing to do himself." Mac Howland says, "One vivid memory I have of Dr. Swetman, and one which most people do not realize, is the many Sundays he spent in his unheated office with a blanket around his shoulders working to get Oswego State accepted as a university."

This dedication extended far beyond the countless hours he was on the job. Even when away from his desk, his mind was always ranging ahead on anticipated problems. During the war when enrollments were declining, he feared the loss of the hand-picked and capable faculty he had assembled. The State never gave much support to recruiting as the normal schools and teachers colleges were on strict quotas and didn't have too much trouble filling these in ordinary times. He reasoned that an intensive recruiting campaign for students might save faculty positions. Since the faculty would benefit from this as much as the college and the State would not provide funds, why not ask the faculty to assess themselves to send a team of recruiters into the field? This he did and the faculty responded affirmatively. The spark plugs in this work were Jimmy Moreland, Golden Romney, and Arthur Hauler with others called in to help from time to time. They did bring in the students and kept the Oswego faculty intact for the post war development.

Many former faculty members mentioned Dr. Swetman's boldest adventure in keeping his staff intact: Bringing of the Air Corps Cadet unit to Oswego in 1943 when enrollments hit rock bottom. In doing this, he deliberately bypassed the red tape in Albany, went to Washington and brought back a contract for the unit. This put him into difficulties with Albany until they realized he had found a gold mine to save his staff. To make changes by the deadlines on starting the program he advanced eight to ten thousand dollars of his own borrowed money. He challenged the faculty and they responded to staff the unit. Dr. Charles Wells, Chairman of the English Department, recalled that he taught Physics at seven o'clock in the morning along with other unlikelies such as Jay D. Rudolph, Head of Printing Department, Dr. Donald Snygg, Chairman of Psychology Department, with intensive tutoring by Dr. Charles B. Yager, Chairman of Science; Dr. Lloyd Sunderman, Chairman of Music Department, taught Meteorology: Dr. Aulus W. Saunders, Chairman of Art Department, Geography, and so on. Fourteen members of the staff participated in the teaching of the 808 cadets who placed in the upper twenty per cent of cadets from all units in the nation. Oswego lost no positions.

While Dr. Swetman was not involved in the actual teaching of cadets, he had his hands full seeing that housekeeping and feeding chores were up to military standards demanded by the white-gloved,

nit-picking commanding officer. One morning Dr. Swetman came in much later than usual with the explanation that he had to get a little sleep and let his dishpan hands recover. It seems the officer attributed some illness among the cadets to improper dishwashing, and threatened to pull the cadets out. Dr. Swetman enlisted the help of Mrs. Jessie Rudolph, a neighbor and a former cafeteria manager, and several of the maintenance staff, and spent nearly all night at the Cadet Mess experimenting with water temperatures and methods of dishwashing which would satisfy the officer.

Another crisis which came in 1942 tested his dedication and principles, the threat from Albany to remove the Elementary Education Division from Oswego and merge the Industrial Arts Divisions of Oswego and Buffalo at Oswego. The panic button was pushed when someone in Albany alerted Dr. Swetman as to what was in the wind before the formal notification of the hearing came. Mr. Hauler put it this way, "He believed so strongly in the total program of teacher preparation for elementary, secondary, and special subjects that he had to fight this proposal." He immediately called a full staff meeting to mobilize all the energy and talent of members, to marshall all resources, and to strategy. Within four or five days faculty researched facts, wrote papers, made charts, edited and printed a 43-page, "Summary and Digest." Dr. Swetman set off for the Albany arguments, a box of pamphlets and the best wishes of the entire staff. In a later report at faculty meeting one committee member said that every time a new argument was advanced or question asked, Dr. Swetman would dig into his briefcase or thumb through the pamphlet and have the answer ready. The Regents had never expected such a defense. Another faculty member present said, "The Regents never had a chance." The college was left intact.

This all-consuming dedication to the college finally took its toll of his physical health and Dr. Swetman was retired on disability in 1947. Even in a crisis such as this, he chose to look on the positives. He left with the firm conviction that most of the pioneer work was over and the college was on firm ground and was on the eve of a great period of development. He never ceased to be interested in this development and rejoiced in the progress others made. Alice said in her article on his retirement, "Oswego's fortunes, good or bad, as long as life shall last, are ours."

While dedication was the driving force in Dr. Swetman's struggle for the college he envisioned, he always had his feet firmly planted on the ground in that every move must be based on facts and sound reasoning. This zeal for research extended into every phase of his professional life. He made voluminous notes on all possibilities, gathered information to cover all contingencies and learned all the facts he could about a situation before he took action. That he didn't always succeed is illustrated by this instance.

Long before Albany had any idea of expansion of the campus at Oswego, he had visions of what could be done and felt the need for

more land. About 1938 or 1939, some land just north of the old campus was listed in a tax sale. Immediately I was dispatched to the County Building to make an abstract of the landowners and prices paid for this land to be sure it was free and clear. He set up his arguments and armed with his facts went to Albany, sure that he could convince the powers there to buy the land. He made the rounds but was met with the answer, "What do you want with more land? You have more at Oswego now than you can use or keep up?" He was very disappointed that he had not been able to get his vision across to them. The State paid rather dearly a decade later for their inertia and lack of foresight.

This thoroughness in getting information evidently started in his early life and certainly continued until the end. He really did his homework for any undertaking he became involved in. Dr. Rupert Stroud related one personal incident which points this up. Rupert and his wife Maxine were planning a bicycle trip to the Camden area. Dr. Swetman heard of this and called Rupert to his home for a conference. Rupert reported, "He showed me maps and explained exactly where each hill and brook lay, and though the trip wasn't more than a hundred miles all told, it was the best-planned trip we ever took." Dr. Swetman had grown up in this area but had not lived there for more than thirty years.

Dr. Swetman frequently affirmed his belief in democracy and the democratic process, but often his procedures were anything but democractic. His intense dedication and desire to accomplish things, his command of facts, and his strong feeling about what he believed to be right many times made him think he had been democratic when in reality he had simply sold his own sincerity to the faculty and they had been loyal enough to do the thing he wanted or he had worn them down and they gave him the majority he wanted to stop the meeting.

Dr. Donald Tower recalled the faculty meeting where the question of smoking in the buildings was being discussed. Dr. Swetman wanted the faculty to "voluntarily" give up smoking in the buildings and he submitted a mighty array of arguments. "Finally, after the dinner hour was long past, they voted and settled the matter as he wished it—and he genuinely believed that he had won the battle through reason!"

Another matter dear to his heart was faculty membership in professional organizations. This was part of his idea of responsibility since the professional organizations had given great help in the change from normal schools to teachers colleges and in upgrading faculty salaries. He was proud of the one hundred per cent faculty membership in the New York State Teachers Association for many years and set out in 1941 to get the same for the National Education Association. All his persuasive powers were used but the vote was short of the desired goal. He brought up more arguments to convince the standouts. Finally he accepted the vote, but was disappointed.

When some of the faculty went to see him later and told him he had been unfair in trying to change their votes, He admitted he had been, which takes a big man. In his zeal to get their full cooperation, it probably did not occur to him at the time that he was being undemocratic.

A similar effort was expended on getting the faculty to support the Oswego Community Chest. While he didn't always get a hundred per cent vote, the faculty did go along with the majority wishes and contributed a percentage of their salaries, which was determined by a faculty committee, to this community project during the years of his administration. To him this was part of being a citizen of the community, assuming individual responsibility.

While he was criticized for some of his steamroller tactics, there was general agreement among faculty members that he did practice democracy in many other ways. There was communication at regular faculty meetings, which everyone was expected to attend and no one wanted to miss. Differences of opinion were heard and debated. Dr. Wells put it his way, "We all knew what was happening and had a feeling of participation in decision-making."

Much of his seeming blindness to the conflict between his ideals and his performance may have stemmed from his equally strong belief that in a democracy all must abide by the majority decision. He wanted this majority to be as large as possible to ensure unity, for to him unity was a most important element for growth of the college. In trying to attain this unity, he probably pushed his own views too far, but the unanimous testimony views. Mr. Hauler stated, "He was a man in a million who could look you in the eye and say, 'I appreciate your discussion and disagreement' and mean it. I know this first-hand because he and I had *some* battles." Dr. Pitluga said, "Faculty could argue with him as a peer." Dr. Gordon Wilber noted, "....one could be sure of impartial consideration of any views presented."

While there may have been murmuring at some of the undemocratic procedures, no one could have been a better practitioner of the aspect of democracy stated by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Democracy is based upon the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people." His every action with faculty, students, and staff proclaimed this. He was constantly looking for staff members with the potential of growth and development, then he gave them incentives, encouraged and inspired them to ever greater achievements—challenged them with seemingly impossible tasks. His expectations usually bore fruit. As a result of this positive attitude in human relations, every person interviewed or corresponded with mentioned his fairness, integrity, or trust in people.

Mrs. Mary Kennessey, who was associated with Dr. Swetman for all the years of his administration, said, "He was always fair. He had someone with him when discussing grades with students. He was very fair in scholarship meeting and bent over backward to help

students and to give them every opportunity." He always had time to see students, to listen to them, and to make them feel he cared.

Dr. Robert Helsby told of an incident when he was a student at Oswego, which showed the understanding of Dr. Swetman and the strong bond of respect and affection which existed between the students and the president. Just a day or two before the Christmas holidays, a group of highspirited IA fellows in Mr. Schneider's woodworking class acquired kazoos. About half an hour before the end of the class period, they suddenly got into formation and played Christmas carols for their instructor, then marched out of the shop and into Mr. Hauler's office for a repeat performance. These two had gone so well that they decided to go to Sheldon and serenade Dr. Swetman. They marched into his office unannounced and played their concert. He welcomed them, smiled, listened attentively, thanked them, wished them "Merry Christmas" and they went on their way to the Library, where Caroline Habner met them and put a quick end to the tour.

To have the kind of *esprit de corps* essential to the harmonious working of his staff, Dr. Swetman felt that small differences between members of the staff should be resolved before they became big ones. It was his custom to call in warring staff members to try to get them to state differences, face up to problems, and work out solutions. I vividly recall one such conference when I was Children's Librarian. I was working two-thirds time in College Library and one-third in Children's Library. The College Librarian was making life miserable for me. I didn't say anything to anyone, but had made up my mind that I would resign if the situation continued. Evidently she had been complaining to Dr. Swetman about me. One day both of us were summoned to his office and asked to state our difficulties, a procedure which evidently was great surprise to her. I was glad as this was my first real insight into what the problem was, as she had refused to sit down and talk with me. After the presentations he asked each of us to think it over and suggest what each could do to resolve it. Since I had worked for him so many years, I knew that he wanted absolute honesty from each of us. With the understanding gained from presentation of charges against me, I suggested several things which I could do to ease the situation. When Dr. Swetman asked her for suggestions, she insisted she had done nothing to precipitate the situation and the only solution was dismissal of Beulah Counts. I resolved to resign before this could take place. I heard nothing, so wrote my resignation, as the woman became ever more abusive. On the day that I handed it to Dr. Swetman, he read it and tore it up, saying this wasn't necessary as the College Librarian had resigned. I found out later that he had called the woman in several times and tried to reason with her about a solution, but to no avail. His only comment to me that day was that a person who did not *make* mistakes or refused to see his own mistakes had no place on the Oswego faculty. On that day I came to full appreciation of

his fairness and integrity.

A part of his success in human relations was the implicit trust in people and this trust was seldom misplaced. When it did happen, he could be a stern judge. One incident I remember happened the second year I was here. He discovered that the cafeteria manager had misused the income and not paid bills to local merchants. He could have dismissed the person and the matter since it was private concession and the normal school was not actually responsibile, but he reacted in typical Swetman fashion by calling a conference of creditors to tell them what the situation was and to work out a solution. He told them they were at fault for letting the debts pile up without notifying him and that he was at fault for being too trusting. All obligations were compiled and he supervised the cafeteria finances until the debts were liquidated, then the food service was reorganized and put under a faculty management committee.

Mildred Watts, a former secretary, expresses the attitude of most staff members in her statement, "One could go in being very angry and talk to Dr. Swetman. He would listen and you always felt better when you came out as he had convinced you that you were wrong or he had agreed with you. There was no half way for him." All felt they had freedom to go to him with grievances, he would listen, and be fair in his judgement. He appreciated each staff member and once said to Malcolm Howland, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, "Mac, there is only one fault I have to find with your work and that is when I tell you about something I want done you do it so fast I don't have a chance to change my mind."

Another example of his sensitivity to human needs was the case of a campus school teacher in financial difficulties as the result of a late-in-life pregnancy and a non-working husband. He presented this to the faculty as a matter of family concern and asked their help in meeting the crisis. Dr. Swetman led with his own generous contribution and many other followed his example, knowing they probably would never be repaid.

This same trust and loyalty which Dr. Swetman felt toward the faculty and students was returned in kind. One occasion when this was apparent was the auditorium fire in 1941. Dr. Swetman had had some heart difficulty and was somewhat restricted in his activities at the time. The fire happened on a Saturday night, January 18. A nearby resident had called my home when the fire was first discovered. It happened that I was having a dinner party at my home and Dr. Donald M. Tower, Director of Training, was there. We rushed out to the Normal School and arrived with the firemen. Immediately I asked whether Dr. Swetman should be called when I found he was not at the fire. Dr. Tower and some of the other administrators felt it would be too much excitment for him, so Dr. Swetman slept through the event. By the time the fire was out Dr. Romney had recruited a group of students to help get the water out of the gymnasium which was under the auditorium as the State had just in-

stalled a new hardwood floor which had been fought for since 1936. Other faculty pitched in that night to salvage what could be saved. Early next morning Dr. Tower went to Shady Shore and told Dr. Swetman about the fire. He immediately started making plans to carry on. Faculty and students rallied round and all day Sunday worked to get windows boarded up, debris removed to make it safe for people to come into the building. Since the State never carries insurance on anything, there was no question of Dr. Swetman's authority to take these measures to carry on. The spirit of the whole faculty, student body, staff members was a tribute to the leadership of Dr. Swetman. Everyone worked at removing grime, cleaning up fallen plaster, and restoring the school as much as possible without any murmur.

The high point demonstrating his success in human relations was for me the Industrial Arts degree celebration in Albany on October 12, 1939, at the Tenth Annual Conference of the Association of Teachers College and Normal School Faculities. Dr. Swetman was sure the Regents would make the announcement at the dinner. He urged as many faculty as could to attend this event at the Hotel Ten Eyck and the reception by the Regents in Chancellor Hall, not only to let the powers-to-be know Oswego was on the map but also to reinforce the battle that was then being waged for a change in status from normal school to teachers college. His parting words were, "Wear your best and let the Regents know you are from Oswego." Such was the affection and family feeling that nearly all staff members attended, joined in the rejoicing and made themselves known to the dignitaries. One regent was heard to remark as Oswego people kept coming through the reception line, "Isn't there anyone here except Oswego?" By mutual consent the Oswego group gathered in the taproom of the DeWitt Clinton to have their own private celebration. Dr. Swetman came, sipped one sloe gin fizz, and entered into the spirit of the occasion. When he was ready to leave, the whole group without any prior planning, got up and escorted him to the Hotel Ten Eyck. There they formed two lanes and saluted him as he went into the hotel. Just at the entrance, he turned, grinned, saluted us, bowed, and marched into the hotel looking pleased and happy, but just a little bit embarrassed at so much attention. It was a spontaneous gesture of admiration and appreciation from the faculty to their chief.

The second motto which was a religion to him was, "Send Me Teachers to Match My Children." The first step in implementing this was to build a strong faculty who would train the teachers. He was tireless in his efforts to recruit competent staff members who had potential for development, original thinking, and individuality. The search was major performance: letters to leaders in academic field for suggestions, requests to all important placement bureaus around the country, careful examination and evaluation of all applications, conferences with Oswego staff members on promising

candidates, extensive correspondence with selected candidates, and finally personal and group interviews with two or three leading contenders before the choice was made. One of his favorite questions was, "What are your aspirations?" and this was not a rhetorical question. He wanted definite answers. One of my Kansas City Superiors after reading over the list of questions on qualifications Dr. Swetman had sent for the position of Secretary said, "What does he want, a vice president?" He wanted people who would catch fire and give their energy, ideas, and enthusiasm to the building of the faculty and the college he envisioned.

A number of former faculty mentioned these interviews as being probing, honest, and analytical. Dr. Saunders commented that Dr. Swetman put the challenge to him bluntly, "How would you like to help make a normal school into a college?" This was the deciding factor in his acceptance of the position. Dr. McGarvey reported that Dr. Swetman had made no attempt to gloss over the realities of the position at Oswego and his final words had been, "I can't offer you anything but excitement," but he came. Dr. Wilber said, "Of all the leaders with whom I have worked, I think Dr. Swetman was the best judge of character and ability. On the basis of a single interview he seemed to be able to size up an individual as to ability and probable contributions to the college. He rarely made mistakes in matters of this kind."

His success in attracting and developing a superior group of staff members is attested to by the number of Swetman appointees who were called to responsible positions in other institutions of higher education. While he regretted the losses, he felt Oswego had been fortunate to have their talents for a time and rejoiced in their promotions to greater opportunities. Among these were Dr. Donald M. Tower, Dr. Harry Porter, Dr. Thomas R. Miller, Dr. Lucien Kinney, Dr. Guy Wagner, Dr. R. Lee Hornbake, Dr. Robert D. Helsby, Dr. Golden Romney, Dr. Harold Alford, Dr. Paul Kleintjes, Dr. W. Virgil Newtrick.

Dr. Swetman took no less pride in the faculty who stayed to help in the accomplishment of his mission at Oswego. He always encouraged any of his staff who had ambitions and shared in their joy of accomplishment. Dr. Lida S. Penfield's decision to go on for her doctorate when she was only a few years from retirement was an inspiration to him. It was her own idea. He applauded her spirit.

The third slogan, "Freedom and Responsibility: Siamese Twins," was all pervasive in his entire administration. It was his welcoming word for every student and every faculty member, and from time to time he spelled it out in specifics. Housekeeping was one of these perennial specifics. Dr. Wells recalls that he was "quite impatient with housekeeping on the part of his faculty" and I might add on the part of students too. This concern precipitated his famous "Dirty underwear" chapel speech which students of that era never forgot. Dr. Romney had reported obscene writing on some newly-

painted toilet and locker room walls. Robert Helsby as a student remembered it as the most emotional speech he had ever heard Dr. Swetman make. He really let the student know how he felt in down-to-earth terms about their lack of responsibility. He likened their conduct in the writing and littering to someone all dressed up to go out, but wearing dirty, smelly underwear. He apologized for the analogy, but left no doubt of his meaning. The students responded with warmth and applause and the following editorial appeared in the *Oswegonian* of April 5, 1938. "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." "We may believe ourselves Godly, but we are by no means clean. Inspect at any time the front steps of the Main Building and the front entrance of the Industrial Arts Building. In spite of the containers the steps and entrance are just flooded with cigarette butts and burned matches. Add to the above the appearance of the men's shower room and the women's locker room and you have a complete picture of the 'dirty underwear' which we are displaying."

No biographical sketch of Dr. Swetman would be complete without some of the details about his personal qualities–qualities which gave him the touch of individuality that set him apart from the crowd and made him an extraordinary person.

Like most men he hated to buy new clothes and did so only under the continued prodding of his wife. She bought everything for him except suits and hats. When he did decide he needed a new suit, it was a major undertaking as it must be tailor made–he was too tall to wear ready-mades. He researched the swatches of fine tweeds to find the one he thought was right for him as the casual rough textured tweeds were the only materials he felt were right for his tall and spare frame. He was always immaculate in white dress shirts and wore his suit jacket even in the warmest weather. His "Funeral suit" as he called a smooth fabric dark suit was worn only on ceremonial occasions. He disliked changing hats and even with Alice's pointed reminders would wear one that was comfortable until it was shabby and shapeless. One day when he was in Albany at a president's meeting in State Education Building, all hats were left in an anterroom. When the men came out a number of hats had been stolen, but not his. He came back chortling and told the story, saying he now had a perfect argument for Alice. "His was the only hat it was perfectly safe to leave anywhere."

Dr. Swetman did have a sense of humor, but as Dr. Robert Crego said, "It was that twinkling kind of quiet humor which preserved his natural dignity but did not interfere with his appreciation." He enjoyed jokes on himself. Once the students did an assembly program of a take-off of one of his assembly programs. They did a good job of mimicking him. He thoroughly enjoyed it and remarked with a chuckly that "They had his number." an incoming group of new faculty once put on a skit of a Swetman faculty meeting at the fall faculty dinner. I have pictures taken during the dinner of him laughing and appreciating the spoof. His remark when he got up to

respond was that they had stolen his thunder and he now had no secrets.

It was the custom when I came in 1937 to open each faculty meeting with funny stories. Some were very clever. Sometime during the year the men of the faculty thought they would see how far they could go without the boss saying something. The stories became a bit more risque and one day someone told one that really was out of bounds. Dr. Swetman didn't say anything, but that was the end of the storytelling, it had offended his dignity and he felt it was offensive to the women present.

In 1937 the halls of Sheldon were hung with an array of large-as-life, bearded, stern, grim photographs of all the members of the Board of Visitors since the school began. These were irritants to many of the newer faculty. Someone broached the subject of their removal to Dr. Swetman but he didn't give a definite answer. A few faculty interpreted this as permission but were hesitant as to "when" it might be done. Dr. Romney and Dr. Saunders hit upon a scheme for easing the ancestors out. They would take down just a few at a time and put them in the historical storage room in the attic and no one would miss them. Some had been removed with no outcry. One day Dr. Swetman came out of the back door of his office as they were in the act of taking down a few. He had a twinkle in his eye, but they got the idea that perhaps the time wasn't ripe for a complete removal job as he told them, "progress comes in small increments." Eventually all the photographs went into storage.

Another quality which everyone who worked with Dr. Swetman felt was his courtesy. Dr. Tower said in his recollections that "He was a man of true courtesy" and cited this illustration. "Dr. Swetman liked hot weather and over-heated rooms and I liked only cool, fresh breezes. Rather than subject me to discomfort he invariably opened a window or two and sat for an hour or so wrapped in his overcoat when we had conferences." Hilda Guy Bohall, who was the first bookstore manager when college took it over, said Dr. Swetman never asked her to do anything that he didn't preface the request with, "Would you be willing to...." He did not like to keep people waiting, never hurried anyone,in conference was organized and never wasted his own or others time, sure proofs of innate courtesy.

One of the criticisms I heard most from townspeople when I first came to Oswego was that Dr. Swetman was hard and cold—nothing could have been farther from the truth. He was not unaware of this and was concerned that people though him severe and unsympathetic, but he was enough of a realist to know that much of this came from his having to make changes in personnel and in the institution. In this he had had no choice, but one could not make people believe this. He was sensitive to people but at the same time was a shy and modest man. Once he told Marian Angel he found it difficult to relax and feel easy when in a large group of people because he had never been able to carry on "small talk." He loved people and animals.

He had great affection for the members of his faculty and wanted very much to be on a first name basis with them, but as Mr. McGarvey said, "He was so highly respected that few could really call him 'Ralph.' "

One faculty member remarked that he felt Dr. Swetman had no ego. My personal opinion would be closer to the statement Dr. Stroud made, "While he seemed modest in all things, he couldn't have been so sure of himself without a lot of egotism." Perhaps it would be truest to say that he was a man without personal vanity, never seeming to need credit, glory, recognition, praise or flattery to sustain, encourage, or motivate him. Accomplishment of his objective was his satisfaction. Pride never stood in the way of his admitting he had been wrong.

Under all the stony self-sacrifice and single-mindedness of the driving and determined administrator there flowed a deep vein of idealism and romanticism, which manifested itself in his hobbies and recreational pursuits. Whether it was an expression of his love of nature, his old boat, or hymnology, he approached it with the same absorption, zeal and thoroughness typified in his professional life. He could not be idle and his attitude toward idleness can be characterized by the words of a fifteenth century philosopher who said, "If you are idle you might as well be asleep; you are neither wholly alive nor wholly dead." Each hobby or recreational interest became a mind-stretching exercise for him. Alice once wrote when he was confined to bed for a long period that "His mind is full of interesting thoughts which keep his spirits in good shape."

The nature interest I first knew about was a trail along the lake front from Shady Shore to Sunset Point. (along the lake shore west of the president's residence) which he had started in 1936. At that time the summer camp was only a few cabins and a tent area between the Sheldon home and the pine grove which lined the shore. The rest of the area along the lake had grown up in weeds, shrubs, and scrub trees. He could have assigned maintenance men to do this work, but he wanted to develop a trail which would be interesting. For recreation he put on old clothes, took his little chair on wheels, which maintenance men had made for him, and worked on his trail. Mr. Howland said, "He loved the outdoors....and took a lot of pleasure from the woods and the lake...." Although he was susceptible to poison ivy, he patiently set out to eliminate this from the grove with the result that most of the summer months he was treating poison ivy on his arms. This project took several years. When he finally finished the trail he proudly took visitors along the lake via his trail. He walked it himself with the family dog in attendance almost every day. As the camp expanded and cottages were built, much of the trail was lost, but a few sections remain today back of the present buildings.

After he bought the barren strip of seashore land in Florida for his home at Boca Raton he became interested in the study of Florida

flora. Eventually he became an authority on tropical trees, shrubs, and vegetables which would grow near salt water. When I visited Lomita a second time years after, the place was a veritable green garden. At their later home in Coconut Grove he had a specimen of nearly every tropical fruit which would grow in Florida. He knew each tree, shrub or plant by name and as Alice warned, "Will tell you more than you want to know if you ask."

The thirst to know and learn was even present in the time of danger. A hurricane struck Boca Raton in 1947, the first year of his retirement. In a letter to the *Palladium Times* he said, "Imagine being held at a fixed point by responsibility for your material possessions and then being forced to watch a double barrelled gun pointed at you and moving steadily toward you for four days, then turning slightly aside, passing you, standing still and then turning around straight at you and letting you have both barrels right in your face? This the psychological background....It was a great show. Since we had to see it we enjoyed the ringside seat. My regret was that I had to stay quietly inside all the time."

The romantic was exemplified in the love of his old boat. The "Manana" (maybe it will run tomorrow) was an ancient dory converted to a cruiser, which had had a stormy career as a rum runner during prohibition. In spite of his having had a great deal of work done on the boat, it wasn't very seaworthy. He had had an unfortunate trip in the spring of 1937 when he took a group of faculty men to the Thousand Islands, got caught in foul weather, the engine quit and the Coast Guard came to the rescue. From then on he had difficulty getting passengers, but he never lost faith in the boat. In 1939 he decided to take the boat to Florida through the Inland Waterway. He persuaded Dr. Lucien B. Kinney, head of the Mathematics Department and Registrar, to accompany him, his son Bob and Paul Dlientjes, a student on the trip. Paul wrote of the trip, "Dr. Swetman was Captain, Navigator and boathand, engineer, and deck swab I guess, but in reality it was one real happy family." It took a lot of activity to get the boat ready, but finally the day came and a group of us gave them a send-off at the first Canal Lock.

Their plan was to hit New York Harbor during a mid-morning lull, but several groundings and other difficulties delayed them and they arrived at a peak hour of traffic. Dr. Kinney's account of the trip was harrowing. The water was rough, all sorts of big and small boats were coming and going in every direction, the old engine was threatening to quit, and the pumps were working overtime. Through it all Dr. Swetman remained calm and confident, never faltering in his belief that his boat would come through. The trip around Sandy Hook was even more perilous. Paul said, "Even though the boat had been overhauled, in the tough weather on the trio, you could see the bottom of the hull bulge with every wave and the ship wrack as we went into 30 rolls. We finally got back into the Inland Waterway where we learned that four other vessels of our size had capsized

that day on the same route we had sailed. We ran through the entrance to the Inland Waterway on two cylinders with a following wave of seven or eight feet in height like a modern surfer. I don't believe that any of us really realized the perilous situation that we were in and I know for certain that Dr. Swetman, while he may have been concerned, never gave any indication of it and his ready run of chatter and discussion on navigation kept all of us to busy to realize the consequence that could have resulted."

Paul recounts further that after they reached the Waterway, it was necessary to stop for needed repairs to the old engine so a local mechanic was brought in to do the work. In the process the man cut his thumb and needed medical attention. Dr. Swetman was concerned about the time it would take to get the man to a doctor on shore, so he and Dr. Kinney took on the chore of treating and bandaging the thumb. Before the accident Dr. Kinney and Dr. Swetman had been addressing each other as "Doctors." While they were taking care of the man's thumb, he said, "It isn't very often that a man of my status has the opportunity of being worked on by two doctors." It was never revealed to the poor man what kind of doctors they were. As Paul recalls, the finished bandages made it look as if the man had a small football on his thumb. During the first aid, Doctors Kinney and Swetman kept up a lively conversation of medical diagnosis, etc.

They got the boat as far as Moorehead, City, N.C. and ran out of time, so Dr. Swetman made arrangements to have the boat pulled out and put in a small boatyard on Harkers Island with the intention of having it repaired and taken to Florida the following summer. Mrs. Swetman went to North Carolina and brought back the crew. What a crew! None had shaved since leaving Oswego. Their clothes were strictly beatnik, but they were tanned and happy and exhilarated over their adventure.

The next summer when Dr. Swetman went back to get his boat, he discovered that an indigent family of five members had moved into the vessel for a home. Rather than evict them, which he had every right to do, he told them they could use it for a home as long as they desired. Paul said that to him it was just another evidence of the humanity of this man and his concern for his fellowmen.

Another example of the capabilities of the man was his excursion into politics in Boca Raton. He was nominated for mayor of the town. With his usual thoroughness he familiarized himself with local government, ran a rousing campaign, and lost by only a narrow margin. He felt it was good that he had challenged the professional politicians and he was sure his heart would not have been able to take the stress of office holding.

Hymnology was also one of his hobbies. He made a very extensive collection of hymns from early charts to hymns of modern time, analyzed the structure of the music and took great delight in having them played for him and hearing them sung. Dr. Wells told of a dinner

party where he got into a very heated argument with one of the guests over the musical quality of hymns. He was very appreciative of the "Hymn Sing" which Dr. and Mrs. Saunders gave for him on his birthday in 1946. After his retirement when Esther Hibbard went to Florida to help get his Board of Visitors records in order, his great pleasure was to have her play his favorite hymns each evening.

When the children gave the Swetmans a hi-fi for a gift, he spent many hours reading cataloges and information books to make a list of the records for them to buy. It was a most impressive list.

One Christmas Bob and Loretta gave his parents a check to buy a TV set, but Dr. Swetman refused to take it saying he would not give a television house room although Alice said she had been scrounging the neighborhood to watch the $64 Question Program each week. Two years later, daughter Elizabeth and Hugo had a TV installed without asking him. Mrs. Swetman wrote with amusement that he spent a week in front of it even taking his meals there, hearing all the programs, rating, analzying, and comparing them. Then he made up a list of things he felt it was worthwhile to watch and watched them regularly from then on.

There are not many visible memorials for this man who had such a tremendous influence on the college at Oswego and on the people he met—some books in the College Library from the memorial fund contributed by local friends and the Campus School Building which is named for him. What would have been the most spendid memorial, an outstanding portrait of him, given by his former staff members, was viciously destroyed by mindless vandals about 1949. Fortunately, there were pictures taken of the portrait. His greatest memorial is not visible. It is the college for which he laid the foundation. The tributes which came to the family from Washington State to Florida attested to the respect, admiration, and influence of Ralph Swetman in a life spent in the service of education. I think my favorite tribute came in a letter from Dr. Rupert Stroud, "I think he was the closest thing to a great man I have been near enough to observe."

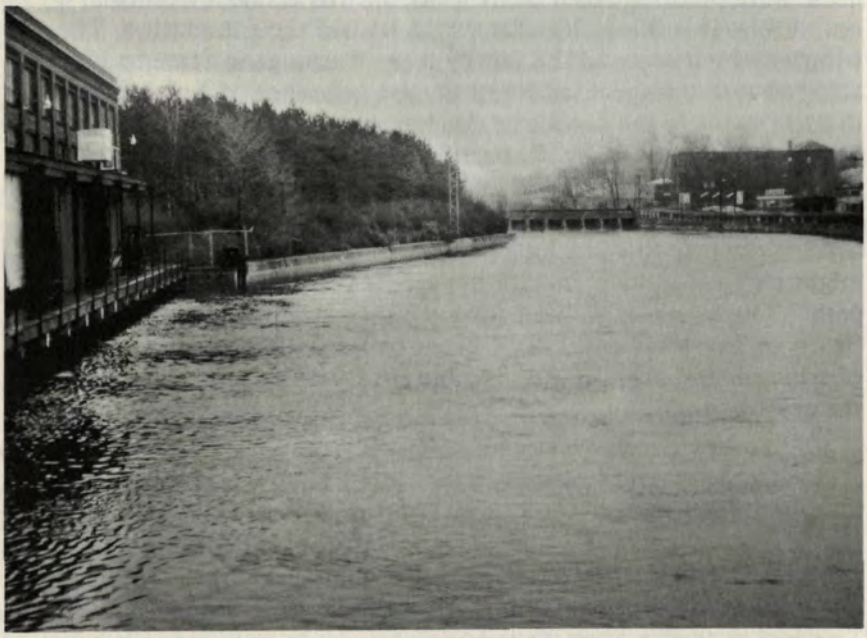
Ralph Swetman died and was buried in Barbados in 1957. Mrs. Swetman wrote this in a letter to me, "He died the way I wish we might all be fortunate enough to—serene and happy and without pain." The hymn he wanted sung at his funeral was, "Oh, That Will Be Glory For Me," and I can't help but think that it was a hymn of triumph and that his indomitable spirit was soon busy exploring the great beyond.

Oswego's Varick Canal --- Past, Present and Future

By Frank Sayer

When Mr. Varick started to build his canal in 1833, the world knew four sources of power–animal, wind, water and the recently discovered steam. In Oswego, water was clearly the most practical, powerful, reliable and available.

"...those who look upon the turbulent river, rushing with rapid pace toward the lake, and affording a water power unsurpassed upon the continent", Crisfield Johnson wrote in 1877, "can see that even the milling business, great as it is cannot occupy a tenth of the power that runs to waste at Oswego". The water power at Oswego was often compared in the 1800's to the power at Lowell and Lawrence, Massachusetts.



The Varick Canal in Oswego as it looks today.

In its natural state the last rapids on the Oswego River was known as the Oswego reef. It fell 14 feet nine inches in a mile and three tenths. James Fennimore Cooper figured it took three minutes to shoot the Oswego reef, or better than 20 miles an hour. The water was fast but the river shallow; so to direct it and control it for manufacturing purposes, in 1823, the Oswego Canal Co. was chartered by the State. Construction was started along the east site of the river in 1826 and completed in 1828.

The East side of the Hydraulic Canal, as it came to be known, started at a point opposite present Ellen St. and ran to East Seneca St. at an elevation of 16 feet and an average width of 40 feet. Water was directed into it by a wing dam built by the State from one of the rifts in the river of the site of the present dam at Ellen St.

This was the first of the two Oswego canals that became a reality —two additional ones planned at the second dam near the present County Jail only turned out to be dreams. For nearly a century the Hydraulic and the Varick Canals were to set the location for most of Oswego's identity and usher in the age of electricity. The Hydraulic Canal in 1828 passed to the control of Gerrit Smith and he continued to own it for most of its productive life.

Building of the dams eventually stopped salmon running up the river. They had been taken in such number that they were shipped and sold commercially.

Even before the Varick Canal was built, there was some use of the river's current on the west side. Jehiel Clark about 1826 purchased the water power on this side. There had been a saw mill built there earlier which provided lumber for the earliest frame houses. This old mill was supplied with water from a raceway running northward about on a line where the Varick Canal was built.

Clark sold his water rights to Abram (Abraham) Varick Jr., who had the canal constructed under the management of Richard L. De Zeng at a cost of $75,000. It was completed in 1834 and ran from the dam at Ellen St. to just south of Utica St. where its surplus waters emptied back into the river. J.C. Iver did the mason work on the canal and also built the Kingsford homestead on the site of present middle school, just north of Utica Street.

The wall between the Canal and the river was ten feet thick at the bottom and about four feet at the top. It was 16 feet high and 3,000 feet long. The canal was 62 feet wide and eight feet deep and had a average fall of 14 feet.

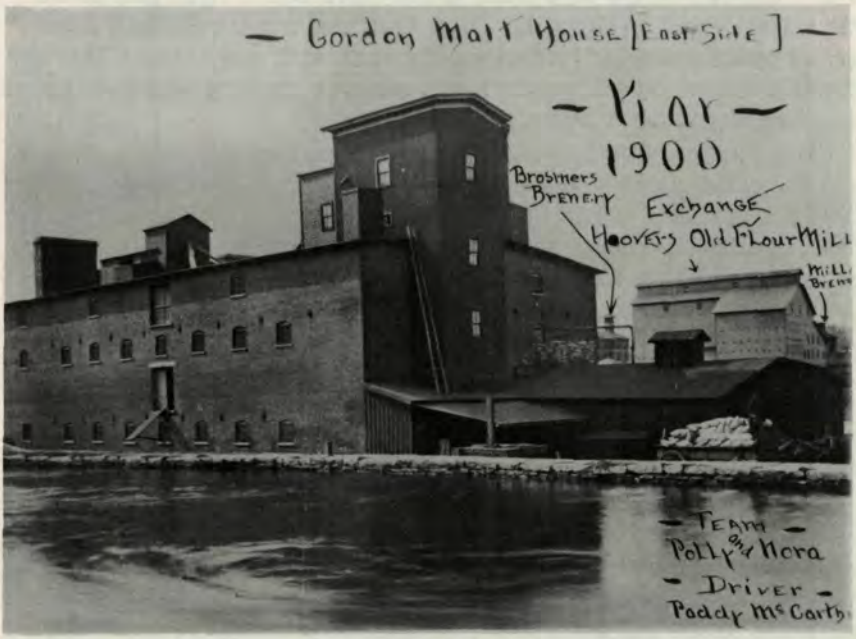
Mr. Varick was a wealthy capitalist who, besides building the canal, owned large tracts of land in the present 5th and 7th wards (the Varick Tract bears his name). He was born in New York City in 1780 and graduated from Columbia College. In 1804 he settled in Utica where he was a land promoter and agent of the Holland Land Co. for the region north of there. His most extensive holdings were in Oswego and included a cotton factory, dry dock and marine railway. Varick moved back to New York City in 1833 and died there in 1842. A

local paper in 1835 reported: "We are gratified to learn that Mr. Varick (who had recently purchased of Benjamin Burt ninty-two acres of land just south of the village for $19,000) has entered into a contract for the erection of a large cotton factory on his canal. They are now also erecting on Mr. Varick's canal a very large planing mill, and a large building for the construction of machinery, all of stone"

On the two hydraulic canals in 1836, there were in active operation six flour mills, two cotton factories, three machine shops, a stone polishing mill, a tobacco factory, three saw mills, three large tanneries, one cedar mill, a foundary, and extensive iron works. The first flour mill on the Varick Canal was built by Mr. Varick in 1834. In 1863, Jenkins, Hover & Co. bought it. Long known as the Hover Mill, it was the first mill at the head of the canal and along with the Stevenson Malt House opposite Murray St. was the last to be torn down in 1927.

By 1850 Oswego had 18 mills about equally divided between the two canals. They had a total of 88 runs of stone and a daily capacity of 8,750 barrels of flour. The new city was well on its way toward being a flour milling center–a condition that just about fizzled out in the great fire of 1892. By the 1890's only the Doolittle Mill was operating on the East side and the Cumberland Mill on the Varick Canal. Located just north of the Starch Factory this later mill used the new roller process for grinding flour, and had a daily capacity of 500 barrels.

But during Oswego's flour milling heyday, fortunes were made,



The Gordon Malt House located on the Hydraulic Canal. In the background can be seen Brosemers Brewery, Hoover's Flour Mill and the Millot Brewery all located on the Varick Canal.

the big houses were built along Fifth St., venture capital was available for other businesses and civic leadership was provided. Milling rewards were great and so were the risks. Fire and fluctuating markets could wipe the mill owner out fast.

In 1858 starting at the head of the Varick Canal at Ellen St. and going north the following mills and factories were in operation: Ely and Fitzhugh, the Red Mill, Magnolia Mill, S.R. Beardsley's Premium Mill, the Crescent Mill owned by H.C. Wright, F. Uhlhorn Mill, the Kingsford Starch Factory, Mollison and Hastings' Palmetto Mill, The Atlas Mill of William Saderson and just south of Albany St. the Ontario Mill of L.A.G.B. Grant. By 1867 there were 14 mills and factories on the canal. In this period some changed hands rapidly and there was much realignment of partnerships.

From the time the Kingsford Starch Factory came to Oswego in 1848 because of abundant power and pure water, it was the canal's largest user of water and the city's largest business. Starting near Erie St. the Starch Factory prospered and expanded rapidly across First and west to Second St. and south past Ohio St.

Production eventually reached 21,500,000 pounds yearly and from a start of 65 employees by the 1880's the number was over a thousand. The factories came to cover 12 acres and consumed nearly a million bushels of corn. In 1870 there were 195 starch factories in the U.S. but more than a third of the country's entire production was made in Oswego.

And if you can believe the Kingsford's early advertising, it is no wonder! A sample in 1895: "The superiority of the Kingsford starch

The Oswego Starch Factory was one of the principal users of Varick Canal power. The buildings to the left were built on the canal and housed the starch making process.

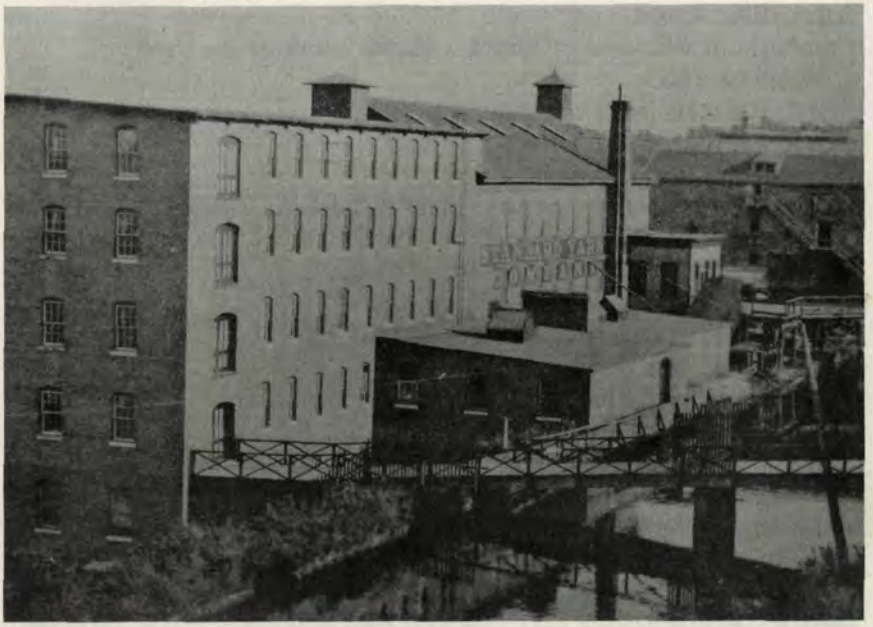
had been testified to on scores of occasions by the highest authorities of the world, as well as by the universal verdict of consumers, while as a food constituent, their corn starch (or prepared corn) has been recommended to the invalid and the delicate by many of the world's most distinguished physicians, while innumerable grateful persons who have benefited by its daily use, have reported their experience to the manufacturers. The grocer who endeavors to sell some other starch, exhausts his praise of it, when he falsely asserts that 'it is as good as Kingsford's! Eminent chemists in Europe and America declare that Kingsford's Oswego Starch has reached 'the acme of excellence'; that 'it is perfectly pure'; that the food starch is 'equally both chemically and dietetically to the finest arrowroot'; that 'it is of great value as an article of diet'. This testimony is accurately quoted and of the very highest character; and it is moreover, supplemented by first awards from boards of judges in all famous expositions of the world, closing with the great Columbian Exposition of 1893, where it came in competition with the best products of England, France, Germany and other countries, with the uniform result– unqualified victory"

There seems no doubt that while Kingsford Starch was not quite a cure–all for every laundry and digestive trouble, it was an excellent product. And it was a real growth company from the start until its sale in 1900. Then it was downhill until the plant here was closed in 1922.

The *Oswego Commercial Times* of Dec. 8, 1864 writes of construction along the Varick in describing the $100,000 building being put up at the Starch Factory: "This building is a model of strength and durability". The article said, "Thomson Kingsford is the architect, and it certainly shows not a little mechanical ability on his part. In making his plans and carrying them out, he has had a capable assistant in Mr. David Davies, who for 10 years past has been employed as a millwright and machinist for the same firm for which he is now working. The building is 130 feet long, 70 feet wide and 82 feet high. It consists of four stories besides the basement. It is built of red sandstone furnished by Sobleski Burt from his quarry. The whole building stands in the river and the foundation is eight feet below its bed. Thirty-six massive iron pillars support the floors and roof, the beams and rafters also being of solid iron. These pillars extend from the bottom to the top of the building. The immense fireproof building, a more extensive work than the Custom House in this city, was commenced on the 20th of August last, and is nearly completed. A few days of fair weather will complete it. Over 4,000 barrels of water lime have been used in its construction. Three hundred men have been at work upon it since it was commenced. The master masons who have had charge of the work are Z.D. Baker, John Ratigan and James Robinson. When we state that all this work has been done since the 20th of August, our readers will understand how the Kingsfords push forward their business; and when we add that

this is only an addition to their previous buildings, they may get some idea of the extent of the Oswego Starch factory".

The same paper tells of a new knitting factory recently built by Carrington and Pardee on the site of the old Washington Mill "destroyed by fire a good many years ago". It was five stories in height, and T. Pitkin was the builder. The business was run by Strong and Hubbell and made "drawers, shirts, coats and hosiery" The paper pointed out that, "Passengers who get off the cars, on glancing up the river, will see a large and handsome stone building in place of the old ruins which long remained an unsightly object". This would appear to be the stone building along the river just south of Albany St. and in the rear of the Firestone Tire Shop and Casteldo Construction Co.



The Standard Yarn Company was located at the northern end of the Varick Canal in the early 1900's.

Fire was a constant danger along the canal. Probably the most spectacular was the half million dollar blaze February 10, 1904 that wiped out nearly all the Starch Factory on the canal side and caused the death of Call Fireman, John W. Dougherty. Starting at four in the afternoon in the sieve room next to the chemical room in Factory NO. 1, the buildings burned all night.

Employees escaped on the river ice as the rapidly spreading flames left no other retreat. The factory fire department tried to fight the fire at first and by the time the City Dept. was called and the big Button steamer was placed at work, it was too late. As the *Palladium* said the next day, the timbers were thoroughly seasoned and when once they started to burn, water had no effect...".

The O and W Railroad brought firemen and spectators from Fulton. Chief R.G. Blackburn decided by 6:45 that there was no need for the Syracuse Dept. to send help although they were already loading equipment on the cars. After that it was just a great show. Farmers drove in through the cold and Oswegonians lined the upper bridge, East and West First and Canal Streets. From Mansville in Jefferson County, Baldwinsville on the south, and Wolcott and Sodus on the west, came inquiries regarding the bright reflection in the sky. By morning all that was left on the river front was the grainery and a portion of the kilms.

SOURCE OF LEASES ON VARICK CANAL 1876

Knitting Factory north of Albany St. (from north to south)
Ontario Mills just south of Albany, L.A.G.B. Grant '54 6 First class runs
Atlas Mills, Ramson and Seeley 1847, 5 First class runs
Cumberland Mills end of Erie St., Hatch and Stevens 1849
L. Babcock 1863
Starch Factory, lease of 1848 200 ft.
Starch Factory, 1852 100 ft.
Kingsford of 1853, 210 ft.
Briggs, Owen and Condee 1853, 100 ft. between Niagara and Ohio
Starch Factory of 1867, 105 ft.
Crescent Mills, H.C. Wright 1848, at Ohio St.
Premium Mills, Beardsley and Bunker 1847
Magnolia Mills, D.D. Bogart 1848 Murray St.
Smyth and Cook 1866
Exchange Mill, C. McCully 1834
Union Mills, Clark and Randall 1848

After years of controversy over the division of water in the Varick Canal and the shares belonging to the east and west side canals from the river, a commission was appointed by the courts on August 21, 1875 to regulate and divide the water. The Honorable Henry A. Foster of Rochester was appointed referee and the following were named commissioners: L.L. Nichols; Wm. P. Judson and S. Ormsby.

Judson's notes of their first meeting five months later on Jan. 25, 1876 gives some indication of how a hydraulic canal was run. "Met and took oath of office. Maps and profiles were produced, showing canal and flumes. Mr. Rhodes (manager of The Hydraulic Canal) told what was desired and what his own ideas were, and showed and explained the data on which decree was based. The decree determines the number of cubic feet per minute that each mill is to have, assuming for each a given head. Our duty is merely to decide on height and length of weirs, and character and arrangement of gates"

"Mr. R. stated that a *run of stone* is taken at 1000 feet per minute at 10 foot head or 20,000 feet at 1 foot head. That this is probably more than needed, especially now that Oswego millers imitate Rochester millers and grind light. That the feet per minute named in decree is quotient of 20,000 by head in feet"

"Among his ideas that he gave were the following: That the gates used at Lawrence, Mass., were the best. That depth on weir ought to be not less than one foot, lest weir should be too long, and not more than one and one-half feet lest too much head should be lost. That lip of weir ought to be of iron. That the wheels in use here only utilize about 50 percent of the theoretical power, that ordinary good wheels will give 66 percent, 80 percent can be got, but at extra expense and wear".

Judson then tells what they did that afternoon: "Went to examine race and mills. Ontario Mill first. Flume extends along front of mill parallel with canal, from its bottom is trunks lead at right angles to flume, about 30 feet toward front of mill, where wheels are placed under the stones. Trunks are 24" square in clear.

"From here went along canal up to dam. About 2½ feet of water over lip of dam. From dam, along First St. to Jenkins Mill. Made here rough gauging of amount of water passing in canal from Magnolia to Premium (mill).

"5 P.M. returned to Rhodes office. On way asked Mr. Nichols and Ormsby if they knew how and what we were to be paid: Both said 'No'."

On Sept. 1, 1876 Judson apparently collected for his services to date $184.00, according to his notes. This represented 25½ days' work at $7.00 a day and $5.50 expenses for a trip to Rochester to study the method of control used there. At this point the job was about half done and serves as an interesting comparison to the cost of consultants today.

By August of 1877 the job was completed and charts for regulating the canal were published in a booklet entitled "Tables Showing the Velocity of Water Passing Through the Head Gates of the Varick Canal When the Head and the Opening of the Gates are Given". There was a lot less trouble with rights after that and Mr. Judson for many years after had charge of enforcing them.

Because the Starch Factory was here not so long ago, people are inclined to remember that and not Oswego's earlier days as a flour milling center. The State census of 1865 lists Oswego County as having 45 grist and flouring mills, all but one run by water power. These mills reported that they employed 205½ men and 44 boys. That year 632,621 barrels of flour were made—the greatest amount made in any County in the State. Erie County was in second place with 617,042 barrels. Monroe County was third, well behind with less than half the production of Erie. The value of flour and meal ground was $5,195,838 in Oswego County, well ahead of the value in Erie County which had $4,792,522. It is safe to say that most of this production was in the City of Oswego along the Varick and Gerrit Smith's canal.

Mr. Varick's heirs sold the canal for much less than it cost to build to Frederick T. Carrington and Myron Pardee in either 1844 or 45. Carrington was the owner of half the canal in 1875 when he died.

It passed through several hands until the water rights were purchased in 1923 by the Northern New York Power. Fred T. Riley was agent for the owners in the early part of this century.

To show at least some sympathy for my audience, the story of the canal in this century will have to be left for another time or person. For nearly all of the first quarter of the Twentieth Century, West First St. along the canal still hummed with activity. From 1,000 to 1,500 Oswegonians found employment but the pattern was changing.

Flour milling had already faded, malt houses and breweries took their places along with the Standard Yarn mill and the rayon factory. One factory made bath tubs, and a mechanical genius at the gear works turned out a complete automobile. Then the Starch Factory closed and water power was not used until the present Varick plant of Niagara Mohawk was built in 1927.

A few years before that Mayor Prouse Neal had a Detroit audience with Henry Ford. Ford talked of coming here under certain conditions and a billboard on W. Second and Bridge proclaimed, "Get Behind Mayor Neal–Get Ford"–"Make our population 30,000".

Come back for the next chapter and find out how Oswego bought the first Edsel. What happened to public power and special low rates for industry, what really moved the Starch Factory out of Oswego and what happened to the Artesian Well in Brosemer Brewery when Perot's Malt house dug their well. How the Canal kept Oswego from feeling the Great Depression until 1932 and permitted Socialist votes to elect a major of our town.

Flow at Low water in river 1970–800 cubic feet per minute.
Flow at High water–3200 cubic feet per minute.

In the foreground the Varick Canal with the old Ontario Mills to the left. This area eventually became the Oswego Rayon Company.

1776 And All That

Frederick L. Rath
Diamond Jubilee Dinner

It was not long after the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776 that John Adams outlined his ideas of a celebration of a day of national independence and in it he included "pomp and parade....shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more."

And the new nation quickly took his advice–except about the date of celebration. Adams felt it should be July 2. But, as you know, he was outvoted.

I can't outline for you what transpired at our first and second national birthday parties, but I can give you some idea of what transpired in one place on our third birthday.

The place is the south end of Lake Otsego (where Cooperstown now stands). The celebrants were the members of Clinton's Brigade, the troops under the command of General James Clinton, awaiting orders to join General John Sullivan for the expedition against the Indians in 1779.

The day, Sunday, July 4, started with an Indian scare at midnight. The sentries fired; the troops were put under arms and were then released to their tents with orders to remain clothed. And there were several more shots before morning, but no Indians were taken.

(All this, by the way, is from some of the fine diaries that outline every day of this 1779 campaign.)

With the break of day Major James Parr, "a man of great courage and boldness, cool and undaunted," who commanded a detachment of Morgan's Partizan Corps, was sent out to try to track the enemy Indians, but with no luck. The only Indians he saw were friendly Oneidas, who were gathering to accompany the expedition.

The Field Officer for the Day was Colonel Lewis Dubois and his Adjutant was Lieutenant Henry Dodge, both of the 5th New York Regiment.

At reveille they issued the General Orders for a necessary prelude to the day's celebration: a fatigue party composed of 2 captains, 4 subalterns, 8 sergeants, 8 corporals, and 200 privates to "assemble in the usual place of Parade in front of the Camp, with Hatchets, or Axes to clear the ground in front of the Bushes, and other inconveniences, which are thereon for the Purpose of parading the Army...." The party was under the command of the famous Lt. Col. Marinus Willett, who in 1758, as a young lieutenant in a colonial regiment, went with Col. Bradstreet, by way of the Mohawk valley, to Oswego and then on to destroy Fort Frontenac. (Gen. Clinton was also in Oswego at that time.)

The General Orders went on to specify that Commanding Officers should inspect all ammunition or procure from the Conductor of Military Stores enough "spoiled or blank cartridges" so that each man in camp would have three.

There was also a special injunction to the men from Clinton in the Orders: "The General expects that the Troops will be as clean as possible, and begs that every officer will exert himself on that subject."

Even better, however, Clinton ordered for all troops in honor of the day a "Jill of Rum per Man, extraordinary," to be picked up at noon.

The day was warm and clear and the camp was busy, receiving and transferring provisions.

At 3:00 o'clock the troops assembled, some 2,000 of them—the 3rd, 4th, 5th New York Regiments, the 4th Pennsylvania, and various smaller units; but not the 6th Massachusetts, which would arrive the next day—with their drums beating and fifes playing.

By 3:30 there was a single line of all troops on the lake bank with 2 pieces of artillery (the only two they had—6 pounders) on the right. The cannon fired 13 times (presumably for the 13 states). Then there were 3 running musket volleys with 3 cheers after each volley, all, a diarist said, "done extraordinarily well and with great exactness."

Then the troops drew up in a circle by columns on a little hill and the Brig. Chaplain, Rev. John Gano (sometimes called "Parson Granoo"), preached a sermon based on Exodus 4:12: "Now therefore go and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." It was termed "an excellent discourse."

The troops were then dismissed.

But the celebration went on. I don't know what the noncoms and enlisted men did, but as a onetime Army sergeant, I am confident that they worked out their own celebration.

I do know that Clinton's sometimes adjutant, a disputatious character named Lt. Col. Pierre Regnier de Roussi, had the officers "to drink Grog with him" at a "large Bowry which he had prepared on the bank of the Lake." They sat on the ground in a large circle and

offered toasts. Erkuries Beatty, a lieutenant in the 4th Pennsylvania and an inveterate diarist, brings the 4th of July 1779 on Lake Otsego to an end with these words: we had "a great Deal of Mirth for two or three hours and then Retired to our tents. The whole Day was Conducted extremely well considering the place."

Only verbally is it easy to jump from 1779 to 1971; but this is not the moment for trying to synopsis our nation's history. So I make the leap with a flip of the tongue.

What I want to do is to look briefly at the Bicentennial picture as it would seem to be today on several levels: national, state, local.

On the national level we have been treated mostly to words, not actions, little detailed planning, and virtually no funding.

President Nixon long ago stated that the Bicentennial celebration should "forge a new national commitment, a new spirit of '76....which will unite the nation in purpose and dedication to the advancement of human welfare as it moves into its third century." Fine–sounding words–but in truth the President and his office do not seem to be very interested.

Even earlier, on July 4, 1966, the 89th Congress created the ARBC with a mandate to prepare an overall program commemorating the Bicentennial.

Specifically, Congress instructed the Commission to:

Plan, encourage, develop and coordinate observances and activities commemorating the historic events that preceded, and are associated with, the American Revolution.

Give due consideration to related plans and programs developed by State, local, and private groups.

Give special emphasis to the ideas associated with the Revolution–ideas that have vitally influenced the development of the United States, world affairs, and mankind's quest for freedom.

Recommend allocations of financial and administrative responsibility among public and private authorities and organizations.

Submit to the President, not later than July 4, 1970, a comprehensive report incorporating its specific recommendations for the commemoration of the Bicentennial and related events.

That Report offered three guidelines and a goal and announced three themes:

Guidelines

Early in its work, the Commission concluded that some aspects of the Bicentennial should be solemn, some festive, because the 200th birthday of the country should be at once a solemn rededication and a joyous celebration. With this in mind, the Commission adopted three guidelines for the Festival of Freedom.

First, the Bicentennial should be *national in scope.* It should have an appeal which would make every American and all friends of America eager to participate.

Second, while recognizing its obligation to make annual reports to the Congress until 1983, the Commission sees the *Bicentennial Era*

as a period for commemorating events which led to and through the Revolution and to the formal founding of the nation in 1787 with the creation of the Constitution. Thus, the historical period to be celebrated would include the years 1770 to 1787; the focal year would be 1976 and the focal date July 4.

Third, the Bicentennial will be a time for Americans to *review and reaffirm* the basic principles on which the nation was founded. The principles of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" and the concept of man's equality are as valid today, and will be for tomorrow, as they were when the nation was founded. Americans need to be reminded of that validity; perhaps even to discover it.

Goal

The goal for the Festival of Freedom is: To forge a new national commitment, *a new spirit for '76,* a spirit which vitalizes the ideals for which the Revolution was fought; a spirit which will unite the nation in purpose and in dedication to the advancement of human welfare as it moves into its third century.

The Commission sees the Festival of Freedom as embracing three themes. They are:

HERITAGE'76. A nationwide summons to recall our heritage and to place it in its historical perspective. Through HERITAGE '76 programs, all groups within our society are urged to re-examine our origins, our values, and the meaning of America—to take pride in our accomplishments and to dramatize our development.

OPEN HOUSE USA. A nationwide opportunity to program activites and events which will stimulate travel and thus encourage our citizens to expand their knowledge of our country and to extend a particular welcome to visitors.

HORIZONS '76. A nationwide challenge to every American, acting individually or with others, to undertake at least one principal project which manifests the pride, the priorities, and the hopes of his community. The Commission encourages every group, especially our youth and those young in spirit, to pool their resources and their talents in a constructive effort to demonstrate concern for human welfare, happiness, and freedom.

Although many of its explicit recommendations are good ones, the fact remains that the Commission is not being supported either by Congress or the President. As a result, it is still talking into the wind, and valuable, necessary time is being lost.

Moreover, the Commission is caught in the throes of a deadly uncertainty while it waits to see what Philadephia, the designated city, is going to do about its proposed Exposition.

There is little sense in my trying to discuss this faltering, staggering thing, which so many of us feel would be the wrong kind of birthday celebration. We believe whole-heartedly, passionately, that it would be far, far better to have regional, thematic centers, E.g., in New York City, at the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Castle Clinton, Federal Hall, and South Street Seaport the story of immigration, the

catalyst that brought our nation to maturity, could be told.

And so on throughout the nation.

Of somewhat more interest to us is what is developing at the state level.

Although there are still states which have not even set up a commission yet, New York has one—and it is doing its job with dignity and competence; and also with very little money. Led by John H. G. Pell, it includes Mrs. Mary Biondi of Ogdensburg as the only representative of the North Country.

Until 1974 the Commission says it will lay the foundations of public attention, orientation, and education. It has a small staff, a year-old quarterly newsletter; it is conducting regional workshops and forums; it is co-sponsoring a descriptive guide to the New York State Library's Revolutionary period manuscript collection; it is preparing a bibliography on the Revolution in New York; it continues to edit the Philip Schuyler papers; and it has issued Carl Becker's unpublished paper, *The Spirit of '76.* Planned are a film, a History-mobile, a medallion and a program of grants and prizes and possibly a New York State encyclopedia.

It is my own feeling that New York State, like so many others, is holding back to see what the Federal Government is going to do. Nothing so far announced is earth-shaking in concept. And in a time of fiscal stress the State is talking only of stimulating local communities, not of direct assistance.

Which brings us to the local level.

Ideally, perhaps, at the community level we should be thinking as Canada was thinking a few years ago for its Centennial. There the Federal Government and the provincial governments joined on a matching grant basis to make possible substantial local projects of enduring value—a sort of "Happy Birthday to Me" theme. There were nearly 350 commemorative projects and they included libraries, museums, community halls, recreation centers, and swimming polls. Perhaps the most imaginative (and note how it fits one of today's foremost problems) was the sewage system installed with Centennial funds by a Manitoba town. They celebrated, by the way, with a bonfire—of privies.

And this leads me to suggest that only *your* community can or should decide how it is going to celebrate the Centennial.

What must be done is to assess the desires and the needs of the community—or, if you want to put this on an even smaller base, the organization.

I had the pleasure of doing a special Bicentennial study for the Lexington (Mass.) Historical Society. It was easy to ascertain that their special need was restoration work on three major historic properties, each of which took some part in the famous action on April 19, 1775.

What was fascinating was to try to guide their thinking—even to the suggestion that they consider giving some of their most prized battle

memorabilia to the nation (i.e., the National Park Service) as a 200th birthday gift.

There were other suggestions, some of which I mention for their possible applicability to your situation.

—In addition to establishing contact with the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission in Washington, close liaison should be maintained with your State's Bicentennial Commission, of which Dr. L.L. Tucker, the State Historian, is Director.

—The American Association for State and Local History (Dr. William T. Alderson, Director, 1315 Eighth Ave. South, Nashville, Tenn. 37203) with funds provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is directing a study of how local historical societies can initiate programs to commemorate the Bicentennial. The report is to be released in 1972 and will be supplemented by a special study on Bicentennial exhibits.

—It is almost inevitable that the Society will be drawn into discussions of pageantry for the celebration in 1775. There can be dignity, authenticity, scholarship, and merit in dramatic productions. Suggest investigation of Sound and Light presentations (Independence Hall and Boscobel, e.g.) or of commissioning a recognized playwright to do an original historical drama (see *Creating Historical Drama: A Guide for the Community and the Interested Individual* by George McCalmon and Christian Moe, Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965).

—Publication possibilities should also be borne in mind when your manuscript collection is surveyed. Many publishing houses are actively seeking Revolutionary War period material.

—Some societies have developed extra income by leasing reproduction rights to furniture, prints, and textiles.

—Interest in the American Revolution will be heightened with each passing year. The Society may wish to channel that interest in a variety of ways. Consider the possibility of forming a discussion group based on the Civil War Round Table idea. Membership in an American Revolution Round Table ("an educational program of the Lexington Historical Society") could draw upon the entire Boston area for its membership. The Round Table in turn could develop programs for the school children of the area.

And so what I wind up saying now to a community or to a local organization is this:

What is needed is a nourishment of fresh thinking, a concentration on something that will have abiding values for your community, and a recognition that the past serves both as inspiration and warning and is itself a record of human failure as well as human achievement.

Perhaps what is also needed is a new kind of study of the era of the American Revolution, where parallels are drawn between the past and present. That study would take note of our forefathers' love of liberty and their willingness to fight for it, but it would not hide their arbitrary injustice to their neighbors, to the Indians, to the blacks,

and to other ethnic and religious groups. It would recognize the greatness of the leadership that brought forth on this continent a new nation, but denied its benefits to many who did not then fit arbitrary patterns.

What I am saying is that together with the seeds of our greatness sowed in the Revolutionary era there was bad seed that still blossoms today and affects our minds and our attitudes.

Our salvation may lie in having such historical knowledge crystallizing as understanding.

We are hard-pressed today by the many problems we face in the nation, in the state, in our communities. But the time has come for positive action, not negative thinking. As Sir Kenneth Clark pointed out in his splendid series called "Civilization," "we can destroy ourselves by cynicism and disillusion just as effectively as by bombs."

Let me then pose the ultimate question for those who are planning seriously for a 200th birthday celebration: Considering our growth as a nation and our still-unrealized potential; considering our changing new patterns, our rapidly developing humanistic concerns, our educational advances, our struggles toward a new internationalism, is it impossible to believe in the future?

I opened this talk with a description of the celebration at Lake Otsego on July 4, 1779 by Clinton's Brigade. No record remains of the toast drunk there that night at the officers' party.

But there is a record of the toasts offered in 1779 by the officers in General Sullivan's army encamped near Wyoming, Pennsylvania. Here are some of them—and they serve as a lasting reminder of what a nation's birthday party is all about, whether its 3rd or its 200th:

1. To the United States of America. (And I am reminded of the offering of the same toast in the home of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt each year at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve.)
2. To July 4, 1776, the memorable.
3. To General Washington and the army.
4. To the immortal memory of those heroes that have fallen in defense of American liberty.
5. May the husbandman's cottage be blessed with peace, and his fields with plenty.
6. Vigor and virtue to all the sons and daughters of America.
7. May the New World be the last asylum of freedom and the arts.

The last is a good toast on a Diamond Jubilee and so I say to the Oswego County Historical Society: Happy birthday to a fine asylum for freedom and the arts.

Barzillai Pease
Pioneer Navigator on Lake Ontario

Dr. Charles M. Snyder

If the fur trade in the 18th century brought the first stirrings of life to Oswego, it was salt, extracted from the springs along the banks of Onondaga Lake, which gave the community a rebirth just after the close of the American Revolution. Salt, floated down the Oswego River to the lake, was in demand in the infant communities on the shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie and along the Ohio River and its tributaries; and Oswego became a bustling transfer center, with bateaux and keel boats delivering cargoes to its docks and lake schooners picking them up for delivery at Lewiston for portage around Niagara Falls. Obviously, there were opportunities for forwarders, who provided the vessels, docks and warehouses, and for a service corps of seamen, craftsmen and shop keeprs. DeWitt Clinton, a visitor in 1810, who would later gain immortality for his leadership in building the famed Erie Canal, saw a cluster of buildings "Huddled together in a confused manner," and, according to his count, composed of fourteen houses, six log houses, six warehouses and five stores and five wharves covered with barrels of salt at which were four square rigged vessels. "There was a brig on the stocks. There belong here eleven vessels, from eighty-two to fifteen tons, the whole tonnage amounting to 413....In 1807, 17,078 barrels of salt were shipped from this place....Two thirds of the salt that is exported from Oswego is consumed on the Ohio....There is no fur trade."

Unfortunately, there are few other details relative to these early scenes, Oswego's 19th century historians having focused on later developments. We know the names of some of the earlier forwarders and shop keepers, physicians and local office holders–Alvin Bronson and Matthew McNair, Thomas Wentworth and Henry Eagle, the Burts and Hugunins, and Doctors Deodatus Clarke, Benjamin Coe and Walter Colton. But information regarding ships,their characteristics, their courses, schedules, and cargoes, and the men who sailed them is indeed fragmentary. However, the recent discovery of a reminiscence and log of a ship captain during the years immediately following the War of 1812 enables us to fill a bit of the void and give substance to

some of the names which have survived.

Barzillai Pease (to my knowledge not related to the pioneer Pease Family in Oswego Town) was born on July 27, 1773, in Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard, Mass., the son of Barzillai Pease, Sr., a seaman who was prizemaster aboard a privateer in the American Revolution, and Deborah Coffin Pease. When Barzillai was fourteen the family moved to Hudson, N.Y., and at sixteen he signed up for his first voyage aboard a whaler, the *Prudence.* He was still sailing at fifty-three, when the reminiscence ends.

Pease shipped aboard whalers and sealers and occasionally on cargo ships. He was eventually a mate and several times master of a ship. He married and had at least three sons and two daughters, several of whom died in childhood. They lived in Hudson until 1816, when Pease bought a farm at Stamford in Delaware County, N.Y., but he continued to spend many more months on the water than at home. Nothing is known about his schooling, but it is evident from the inaccuracies in his spelling and grammar that he had a limited formal education. It is equally evident that he was intelligent and perceptive.

His rise from deck hand to captain in the rugged school of the merchant marine taught him self-reliance, but it did not leave him unscathed. He looked for the respect associated with his rank, and when he did not get it he winced at the slight. He expected little less than perfection from his employees and his temper was short when they erred. His vessel was scarcely a "happy" one, but he kept it in "ship-shape," and he was a skilled and resourceful navigator. He was not one to turn away from a quarrel, and when he felt wronged he could be implaceable. Yet he made friends and retained many of them, and his employers frequently entrusted him with considerable sums of money.

After years on the high seas he was a pilot for a time for Robert Fulton on the Hudson River, and then in September of 1814 when forty-one, he turned from salt water to fresh water navigation on Lake Ontario; the chance discovery of a position as Commander of troop transports for the American fleet on Lake Ontario providing the opportunity. The War of 1812 was in its third year.

Reporting for duty at Sackets Harbor, he was immediately called upon to transport General Izard's army of 4,000 to the theatre of war along the Niagara River. He collected almost everything which would float and sailed with Commodore Chauncey's fleet to the Genesee River. The English fleet did not contest the movement, and the troops disembarked without incident. Returning with the transports Pease planned to make a stop-over at Oswego, but a heavy sea sweeping across its unprotected harbor led him to divert his course to Sackets. But he would try again.

Pease was not thereafter called upon to mobilize transports. Winter was coming on and he prepared for it by dispatching boats to the inlets for fire-wood, lumber, flour and other necessities. He spent

several months of the winter with his family, but he was back at Sackets early in the spring, where he assisted in demobilization. The war having ended in Sanvory. He transported personnel and munitions from Sackets to various ports on the south shore of Lake Ontario. One expedition took him into the Genesse and Niagara Rivers, where he encountered some of the problems involved in of navigating Lake Ontario and its tributaries: both adverse and "flattering" winds, and narrow river channels and swift currents.

Then on July 6, 1815, aboard the schooner, *Henrietta,* he cast off from the public deck at Sackets Harbor on his first trip to Oswego with a cargo of arms end cartridge boxes and a few passengers. Propelled by a gentle breeze he made the forty-five mile passage in a few hours, crossed the bar at Oswego harbor and warped into Gilbert's Wharf. The next day he hauled the schooner up to Townsend and Bronson's dock, but the pressure of business delayed unloading, and he put in his first Sunday getting acquainted with the crude but dynamic village. On Monday he received Bronson's receipt for 2200 cartridge boxes and 153 boxes of arms. Connecticut-born Alvin Bronson had migrated to Oswego five years earlier after finding the Jeffersonian Embargo ruinous to Atlantic shipping. With Great Lakes' traffic virtually halted by war he served as Military Store Keeper and for a short period was held as a prisoner of war by the British after their assault on Fort Ontario in May of 1814.

On Tuesday, with only a wagon body aboard for delivery to Major Samuel Brown, Deputy Quarter Master General for the Northern Army and brother of General Jacob Brown, Pease sailed north north-east, entered Stony Island Passage two hours later, and tied up at Hookers Wharf in Sackets Harbor.

After several round-trips to Oswego Pease purchased a schooner from the navy at public auction for a sum of $1070. Pausing only to paint out *Rayen* and paint in *George L.*, he continued to carry naval stores to Oswego for delivery to arsenals down-state, returning to Sackets with general merchandise and passengers. One such return crossing included eighty-eight barrels of salt, several barrels of rosin and tar, one pipe of spirits, a stick of logwood, a mattress and trunk for Captain Hubble; also several hogsheads of sugar, a drum of tobacco. two chests of tea, a keg of shrub (lime Water), and a bale of goods, all loaded at McNair's dock. At Wentworth's he added twenty-five barrels of salt and a top-gallant sail which had been fashioned, knotted and rigged on the dock to replace one which had been carried away by the wind. It added up to a "fine freight" and nine passengers.

Pease made no apparent effort to operate on a schedule. Awaiting merchandise he set his men to work painting and caulking, repairing rigging and drying sails. During such a temporary pause he visited the ruins of Fort Ontario; but he offered no details. He sometimes purchased salt at Oswego and delivered it at Sackets as a personal speculation. Generally, business was brisk; he lost a seaman to Bronson, who offered him more money, and another was incapacitated when

his leg was "badly cracked" by an errant salt barrel. Leaving Oswego harbor on one trip he grounded on the bar or "Snake Island Ledge" as he termed it, scarcely eight feet under the water's surface. By transferring cargo however, he got free without damage.

He varied the routine in late September to transport a contingent of troops to the Niagara Frontier, and used the opportunity to view the battle sights of the recent war and see the greatest natural wonder of his age (or possibly of any age), Niagara Falls. Hiring a horse he crossed the river at Lewiston to gaze upon Queensten Heights, one of the war's best remembered battle scenes and he descended a ladder on the Canadian side of the falls to get a close-up of the thundering cataract. Farther upstream he recrossed the river to see the charred ruins at Buffalo and Black Rock, and heading back toward Lewiston he noted that the trees were filled with lead and that Indians were cutting out the shot and selling it. Returning to his ship after a four-day jaunt, he found that his crew had also been "exploring." They had fished up rifles, muskets and cross-cut saw from the turbulent waters of the Niagara River.

An early morning departure from Lewiston and a "flattering" breeze carried the *George L.* to Sackets Harbor in eighteen hours and twelve minutes. It proved to be Pease's last voyage on the schooner, having accepted an offer of $1700, for it from Captain Christian Holmes of Ogdensburg.

He returned to his home at Hudson for the winter, but was back at Sackets in the spring of 1816. He soon repented his sale of the *George L.*, terming it "one of the errors of my life." The cost of ships had advanced sharply, and he could not (or would not) purchase one.

He came job-hunting to Oswego and contracted with Townsend, Bronson, and Company, and McNair and Eagle to sail the schooner *Oswego* and run as a packet from Oswego to the Niagara River. Pease never pauses in his log to describe the ship. It was listed as a twin of the *Niagara*, and Captain Van Cleve in his reminiscences written more than a half-century later equates it at sixty-two tons. Other schooners listed vary from 10 to 80 tons. As the Volkswagon advertisements advise, one must "think small" to get a realistic picture of these vessels. Pease's schooner may have measured a mere 50–60 feet and, if it was typical, was two-masted and square-rigged. That is, the sails were bent to the yards carried athwart the mast and trimmed with braces. These ships were large enough to withstand western gales (with exceptions), yet sleek enough to sail against the currents of the Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers. Holds were shallow enough to permit movement in seven feet of water; beamsbroad enough to stabilize masts and many yards of sail. They were economical to sail–a crew made up of a captain, helmsman steward and (or) cook and several deckhands might suffice on the lake, though help was sometimes needed to moor in the cramped harbors.

Pease's employment extended from May 22 to late December, and during these months he made fifteen round trips of 260 miles to the

Niagara River. Although no two crossings were alike, a typical one might require several days for loading. Starting at McNair's, Pease might warp his ship to Bronson's and Wentworth's docks and less frequently to Phillips', Hugunin's, Burt's or Gilbert's. All of these wharves along the west side of the river below Bridge Street. The east side of the stream remained undeveloped, though a "gut" or channel in high water in or near the present marina was sometimes used as a slip for ship repairs or wintering. No light or other man-made navigational aid broke the natural border of the harbor. In fact, except for the felling of trees and the tiny settlement adjacent to the docks, the site would have looked familiar to Father LeMoyne, who had seen it 150 years before.

As previously noted the principal commodity awaiting delivery was salt. The largest shipment mentioned by Pease was 200 barrels, 73 and 127. It is possible that the largest sum includes the smaller, in that 108 barrels is the second largest figure cited. On other occasions he loaded 105, 69, 67 and 50 barrels. Miscellaneous items, however, were not insignificant. Flour was frequently listed—the West was not yet feeding itself. One shipment included 20 kegs of nails, another, 130 bars (58 hundredweight) of iron. Mentioned less frequently were hardware, anchors, demijohns (contents, if any, unidentified), kegs of lime juice and barrels of ham, pork, beef, corn, and tobacco; and, of course passengers. Again, he omits any mention of accommodations, but on one occasion he carried 42 military personnel, presumably on deck; but eight or ten was more typical. He often carried cash for the settlement of accounts running into the hundreds of dollars, and he once spelled out the sums to the last coin:

> $40.25 in gold; 27.10 in dollars; 14.50 in half-dollars; 6.00 in quarters; 1.35 in change; .11 in cents; 130.00 in bills (the nature of the letter undefined; there were no banks nearer than Utica).

Beyond the merchandise which he transported for his employers, Pease was permitted to carry goods at the usual freight rate which he bought and sold on his own account, presumably when the ship was otherwise unfilled. He bought as much as 40 barrels of salt and 30 of flour in a consignment, selling to customers at Lewiston, Youngstown and Newark (in upper Canada). Lacking his own warehouse, agents, etc., it was not always profitable; several times in his reminiscence he was reminded of old debts. His personal transactions serve to tin down prices in several instances: for example, he bought flour for $6.67 and sold it for $11, less a shilling per barrel for delivery at Newark. But he received only one-third down, and the remainder remained upaid several years later. He bought salt from Phillips at 20 shillings. Prices were higher in the spring when salt and flour were in short supply.

On return trips from Lewiston Pease carried less merchandise and more ballast. The timber and grain trade from the West had scarcely started. He occasionally lists potash and pearl ash, and when in season

on the Canadian side of the Niagara River, apples, potatoes and peaches; and for his own moss, cherries and bread.

When the ship was loaded, provisioned and properly ballasted, dropped down into the harbor, carefully lining up the passage over the bar. If the prevailing westerly wind was blowing, he edged away from the shore and tacked to the westward, with rare exceptions remaining within sight of the shore. Nine Mile Point (west), Cape Charles (Sodus), Lynnsville, and Pultneyville were checked off as they came abeam; and if no stop were made at the Genesee, Braddock's Point (now in Hamlin Park), Golden Ball Hill, Devil's Nose, Oak Orchard and Eighteen Mile Point followed before Fort Niagara was sighted at the mouth of the Niagara River. If night intervened, Pease edged lakeward and reassessed his position at dawn. At Niagara a south wind would require an anchorage in the harbor. Otherwise, he would enter the river and come to the dock at Youngstown to deliver passengers and sometimes freight. Occasionally, he also had business to transact at Newark across the river. Proceeding upstream for six difficult miles he would anchor or dock at Lewiston, the lower portage for Niagara Falls. Adverse winds however, might necessitate warping or kedging here.

After the cargo was discharged Pease would load merchandise at the Townsend dock, and might pick up passengers at Youngstown. He might negotiate the return in twelve hours, by sunset after an early start or by early morning if the depature were before dark, or again, it might stretch in to several days.

Having generalized on Pease's activities, let us turn to particulars, and glance at his relations with his seamen and employers as he recorded them.

July 8, 1816: Took James Hore before Justice of the Peace for robing (sic) my cabin of two pistols and a dirk, which was proved by a witness....He was found guilty.

July 9: Discharged Hore for reasons not included in these remarks.

July 11: Ready for sea when White absconded; when instead of my employer, Matthew McNair, taking my part, he uphelds the conduct by paying all men that leave me without a discharge, and encourages my being robed.

July 14: (Reflecting upon an incident aboard the *Henrietta,* involving the master and the ship's cook, Pease noted that the latter had said that he would stay aboard if the captain would acknowledge that he told "a g–d damned lie.") "I suppose had Mr. McNair been here he would have said, 'Well done thou good and faithful servant, a good man; toot-toot-toot. Don't leave the vessel nor mind what the captain says,' or 'You have a rite *(sic)* to abuse the captain as much as you please'.

August 5: Shiped *(sic)* White again. He worked til noon. Then left until night. Joseph Howland drunk from 11 til 6 p.m.–½ day.

August 6: Discharged Jos. Howland; had worked 12 days.

August 8: (While spending a second day at rigging, caulking,

parceling cables and boiling oil) William White left suddenly—even left pot of oil he was boiling. But what can I expect more of my men when my owner McNair countenances the conduct from the men, presence of sailors, that he should not wonder if the sailors way-laid me and gave me a beating. Ay (says he further), and if they should do something worse; and all this because I did not meet the approbation of Mr. McNair and eat upon my corned beef which we had done all week. This is the thing, all hot or all cold. We can not keep a variety; it is well known that in warm weather it's hard saving meat. But this was put up in a cold norther and struck through whilst it remained cold. This made me want to save it until I sailed for my passengers, but no, nothing must be as I say. I think the passengers would have fared hard had I not looked out for them myself. This will I leave to any impartial judge that goes as passengers. I mean a gentleman, and not some dirty pack carryer that has affected the name only.

Some of my people had robed Dr. Colton's garden of inons (*sic*), lettis *(sic),* and potatoes. In this case I must give Mr. McNair credit. He did his endeavours to obtain the fact, which was affected *(sic)* and settled to the satisfaction of the Doctor.

What is strange is that I can not please him. I have tried very hard to do it. I shall endeavour to hit upon some way, as I find he never had a man or master (whilst living) that suited him. Captain Hubbel, I have heard say himself, that it was impossible to please his employer; but since his death I have heard Mr. McNair say that Captain Hubbel was the only man that kept a vessel neat. He has a peculiar turn to make no one please him.

Two days later Pease had agreed to haul the schooner into the stream to paint it, but Eagle had held him up, expecting rain. In the meantime, while he was engaged in his cabin, word was brought to him that McNair wished him to cast off. But before he had complied he discovered that the ship was adrift and untied: "And that by the mean, dirty villin *(sic)* McNair. But I forgive him, for he never had any good breeding, although by his industry in carrying pack, he has acquired considerable property."

August 13: Reemployed William White and dismissed John Sherlock (whom he had hired just three days before).

September 6: Got power of attorney for William White to do business for him.

October 8: William Gowing took his leaf *(sic)* without mine.

October 13: Adam Sherline and Jacob Myers broke a chest by letting it fall, and I paid to the passenger for damages two dollars.

October 21: My steward deserted his post. (This occurred just after an unusually rough crossing from the Niagara River.)

November 17: My cook, a poor devil of a cook.

Before writing off Pease as a misanthrope, however, it might be noted that his relations with Henry Eagle and Bronson were friendly; also his relations with other masters seem to have been cordial with

the exception of a Captain Shannon. While berthed at Lewiston Pease recorded in his log, "At sunset (July 14) Captain Shannon arrived and insisted that I should give up my fast (line) he would let it go for me. However, I did not slack, neither did he cast me adrift at this time. This is what I get by striving to perform my trips quick."

That Shannon's behavior was not a typical is suggested by a later entry in Pease's log: "Found that Captain Shannon was committed to goal."

Living aboard the ship when in port Pease had only limited opportunities to get acquainted in Oswego, and his comments on the community and its people were quite limited. On July 5 he noted that Mr. Bronson was "last night blessed with an heiress." (Bronson had married Mary O'Connor, a member of a pioneer family in Oswego, and the daughter would have been Ellen, later to be the wife of Leander Babcock, an Oswego lawyer and Member of Congress.)

On August 6 he wrote, "Mr. McNair raised a large building on East Point of the river for a boat builder's house–65 x 30." (This appears to have been within a small cove behind a sand spit just inside of the west harbor, a favorite ship-building center for many years, and in the vicinity of the State Grain Elevator).

On December 15 he observed: "Mr. Joseph Davis to be marreyed *(sic)* this night." He made no mention of witnessing the nuptials, but the next day added: "All the principal males of note invited to Mr. Davis's wedding dinner, which I myself was one. The night ended in perfect harmony when all retired to his respective home."

On Sunday, December 8, with navigation closed for the winter he observed that he did not attend meeting (church), but in the afternoon had walked out to see Thomas Wentworth (at the southern edge of the village) and afterwards had spent the evening with Judge Sage, the Collector of Customs.

The following day he moved from the frigid ship to room and board with Colonel Eli Parsons, colorful associate of Daniel Shays in the so called "Rebellion" thirty years before.

Pease made few comments about his religion, but he sometimes attended the irregular meetings of the Presbyterians held in a log structure, which was also used for a school and court house.

He attended services in July and August and another in October conducted by the Rev. Mr. John Dunlap, a pioneer preacher in the County. On the 21st of November (it was a Thursday) he witnessed a ceremony which would live for many years in the hearts of local Presbyterians, the organization of an Oswego Presbyterian Society consisting of fifteen women and two men. Preceding the formal organization four of the women were baptised. Pease's only comment: "I attended meeting. Saw four women baptised by sprinkling. So ends the day after attending singing school. "(Singing school was a second service held in the afternoon or evening).

If one were inclined to fault Pease for his neglect of social and civic affairs, credit would have to be given for his attention to

nautical matters. Finding no navigational aids in the Oswego harbor, he erected beacons to mark the channel. But returning from a subsequent trip he discovered that they had been removed; he replaced them, only to have them removed again. He tried a third time, noting on August 13, "Bo't some muslin and made two flyers for land marks to run in by over the bar and put them up on the west fort point with a board and words, 'Land marks for the West Bar, by B.P.' engraved on it." That night he and two others "watched until midnight to make some discoveries if anyone should take them down, but all was peace." This time they seem to have remained unmolested.

One additional observation regarding navigational aids might be of interest to War of 1812 buffs. While awaiting merchandise at Bronson's wharf in early September, members of Pease's crew grappled for cannon balls, presumably dropped into the river when the village was facing the British invasion on May 5, 1814. They fished up 242 from the bottom to use as ballast. A day later Pease continued the cannon ball story: "Took up 107 more shot, which makes in all on board 349, equal to 2094 pounds (or six pounds each).

Sailing on Lake Ontario in 1816 could only be classified as a hazardous occupation. What did a skipper do when caught in a storm beyond clearing the decks, reefing sails, manning pumps, and hoping and praying? Let us turn to several of Pease's more perilous crossings.

> Tuesday, October 15: Fine pleasant weather. At 9 cast off from Lewiston dock with seven passengers and stood down against a headwind. Landed at Youngstown while my vessel lay by; then ran over the bar, wind w.s.w. and light....At 8 calm and sometimes flattering prospects; at midnight a light (wind) came n.e. by n., stood off until 1 A.M. Then on when the wind hauled, so we lau up e.n.e. Steered e. by n. Wind veered round to westward.
>
> Wednesday, October 16: In the morning the wind came off the land. Steered east....Wind came to the Eastward. Stood into Braddock's Bay. Tacked off at 6 in f. jib and top gallant sail and top sail; rainy; wind moderate with smooth sea; at 8 the wind began to haul; at 10 saw the weather wild looking; stood in s.e. by e; at ½ past 11 took main sail and jib in two reefs in main sail, and stoped *(sic)* him in three in the foresail and set him more?....at 1 a.m. set the main sail balanced lay by; at 2 bore away n.e. by n. under the balanced foresail and mainsail; at ½ past off bonnet jib and set him. All this time a severe gale and tremendous sea and no light on board but procured by a piece of fat pork with a stick run through and lit at one end. So ends (the day with) a gale.
>
> Thursday, October 17: At day light very heavy gales and a tremendous sea. Saw Sodus Highland still steering n.e. by n. At sunrise had a very severe squall. Still carrying on. Bore away e.n.e. saw land near Oswego; bore away s.e. by s. Made 9 mile point and

the village of Oswego. Took in the main, steered for the river s. by e. before a bad sea. Run in over the bar, and it breading from shore to shore never struck at all; run in by my own land marks under a balanced foresail and jib. Came to with my best bower (anchor) brought up snug. So ends with a heavy gale all day....

Friday, October 18: Strong gales still, hauled into Mr. Bronson's dock. Landed my cargo to Mr. McNair. Dryed my sails. Learned by one of Captain Sweet's passengers that the *Fair American* had been driven ashore near the Little Salmon River. Captain Snow arrived from Niagara; had lost one of his men; was knocked overboard by the boom; had not boat to save him with.

Saturday, October 19:....my people employed squaring the ratlins; fitted horses (?) to bowsprit. Mr. Eagle doing jobs for the vessel.

Tuesday, October 22: Mr. Bronson went down to Mexico to see the *Fair American* and learn her situation.

Two weeks later on the next eastern crossing Pease came dangerously to making an unscheduled "call" at Mexico Point. Approaching Oswego on Monday, November 4 he noted in his log:

The wind headed and (k)nocked me off my course. Past *(sic)* Oswego at 5 p.m. At 6 tacked s.s.w; soon off s.w., then s.w. by w. Tacked again and plyed *(sic)* under the land in order to land my passengers, but the wind shifted in a squall of wind and rain. Took in all sail and waited until it was over; then set two reef sails; stood off n.w. until 4 a.m., then tacked. Wind came .s. s. e. tacked to s.w.

Tuesday, November 5: At 8 tacked and stood for Oswego. Wind headed and at last favored; fetched in and landed with all my passengers at 11. Returned on board; lay by until the wind came in from the lake; ran in alongside Mr. Eagle's wharf.

On a crossing several weeks later Pease was again in difficulties. Temperatures in 1816 were unusually low and Lake Ontario storms worsened with the advent of fall and winter).

Friday, November 8: Begins strong southerly wind; cast off from Mr. McNair's wharf and run out over the bar with a full freight wind hauled s.w. and so continued to haul and moderate until night when it increased and got west and w.n.w. Balanced the mainsail, doubted the foresail, off bonnet and off jib. At 8 p.m. tacked to the southward; at midnight tacked again. Saw Braddock's point and the Devil's Nose. Stood all night towards Cannady *(sic)* with heavy gale and tremendous sea.

Saturday, November 9: Begins heavy gales and severe cold. The decks and rigging as far as spray flew all ice. At 10 bore away for Preskiel (Presqu'ile). At noon anchored in the roadsted under the Point in 2½ fathoms and tolerable smooth. Went on shore and sounded the bottom. Killed one duck. Went to Mr. Gibson Carenter; took tea there. Returned on board. Went still wast and hard weather; some hail and snow this blow.

Sunday, November 10: Begins small wind and calm. Took our anchor and run out of the harbor and stood on a wind. Wind very flattering. Toward night the wind came n.w. and so hauled n.n.w. until 7, then s.w. until 8, then west until midnight. Saw the land at 8. At midnight up with 18 mile (point). Steered on until 4 a.m., up with Niagara. Run in and wind left me when within half mile of Lewiston.

Monday, November 11: Got up to the wharf and unloaded a part of my cargo. So ends cold, and the land all covered with snow.... Non at Preskiel when I left there.

Returning from a storm-buffeted crossing on December 6 Pease learned that his employers had decided to lay the ship up for the year. He began dismantling. In several days he had stowed the sails and rigging, cleared out the ballast, washed the hold and cleaned the furniture. At week's end he had moored the schooner in the cove and had washed down the deck, cleaned out the cabin and made an inventory. On December 14 he moved his personal effects to Colonel Parsons' rooming house. A day later the *Oswego* and two other schooner were frozen snugly in the cove and a blanket of snow was on the ground. He prepared his final report and McNair accepted it after church on Sunday, December 22.

Bronson proposed that he sail the *Niagara Packet* the following season with an advance in his salary of $10 per month, but he declined. He had purchased a farm at Stamford in Delaware County, N.Y., and his family had moved there during the summer. He planned to give up the roving life and settle down. Then as he packed his gear prior to departure he received a letter with word that his seventeen year old son Hiram was seriously ill.

He borrowed a horse from his friend, Judge Sage, to ride to Oswego Falls. He then hiked to Three Rivers, and the next day continued on foot to Salina and by stage to Utica, where he met a brother-in-law, who drove him to his home. He found his son dead and his hopes of a partnership with him on the farm with him dashed to the ground. He was disconsolate; having lost three sons in a little more than three years.

The following spring he went to Lake Champlain with two brothers-in-law and a map in quest of a lead mine. But after a long search they gave it up, and he moved on to Ogdensburg. Failing to purchase a ship, he came to Oswego and subsequently to Hanford Landing at the mouth of the Genesee River, where he bought a small skiff, which he sailed single-handedly to Niagara. He agreed to deliver it to a purchaser at Utica, and was sailing it easterly on Lake Ontario near Fair Haven when he upset at the mouth of Black Creek in rough water. He saved the boat but lost his wallet with more than one hundred dollars. He eventually reached Oswego, where he was served with a warrant charging him with fraud involving an old account. Bronson came to his assistance, and he was enabled to resume his difficult mission. He portaged his boat around the falls of the Oswego

and finally delivered it in Utica.

Later that summer he turned up in Boston, where a suit over property rights led to his incarceration in jail for sixty-seven days.

In the spring of 1818 he was back at Sackets Harbor, where he contracted to operate the *Ontario,* the first American steamboat on Lake Ontario. One hundred and twenty feet long, with a twenty-four foot beam and two lateral paddle wheels, the *Ontario* had been launched at Sackets Harbor the previous year. He had not assumed his duties, however, when Eri Lusher, one of the owners advised him that he (Lusher) would handle the ship for several runs; that he had advertised to this effect.

Pease accompanied Lusher to Ogdensburg. It was sufficient to convince him that Lusher was incompetent. On the return trip they ran aground at night near Carleton Island despite Pease's frantic efforts to keep the unwiedly craft on course. While hastily retrieving a compass from his own chest-Lusher had failed to provide a binnacle or compass on deck-he fell through a hatch and broke his arm.

Despite his disability he decided to remain on the job, but found it both painful and frustrating. As they prepared to weigh anchor for the Genesee several days later Pease and Lusher disagreed as to the quantity of weed for fuel. When the former ordered an additional supply, Lusher suspended the command. Meanwhile, according to Pease, Lusher ignored protocol-messing (taking his meals) with the crew, and arguing that "There should be liberty and equality wherever he had the management, (that) there had been too much pomposity the season past (meaning Captain Malebe, Francis Mallaby,) whose shoes Lusher was not fit to were *(sic)*; that he would now conduct I such a manner that every piece of canvis *(sic)* should be driven off of the lake as big as his thumb nail, for he had the exclusive right to navigate the waters of the lade by steam, and (that) in three years the freighting would be done by steam boats altogether." If this is a true picture of Lusher's dream, he must have soon been disillusioned.

When all seemed ship-shape, Lusher cast off despite gusty winds and Pease's dissent. They were scarcely beyond Stony Island when the wind became a gale out of the w.n.w. Water gushed into the hold and the passengers' baggage was soon afloat. Lusher's pumps now proved defective. "Although the passengers and crew, who were able, were bailing with buckets, the most assistance was rendered by the carpenters, who were on board not having the deck cabin or ladies' cabin finished. Day came on and (it was) found by the make of the land we could not fetch Genesee....our wood most consumed. My Captain, seasick in his berth, I went to him and told him our situation, and (the) condition of the boat and crew were in. He wanted to know whether she could not fetch Sodus. I told him I feared not. ....What then is to be done?....I answered that had I the command I should put before the wind and run back for Sackets....but this he said she should not do, for said he, Malebe *(sic)* was too much in the habit of running into harbors and inquired whether we could

fetch Oswego." Pease demurred, hoping to avoid its treacherous channel during a storm. But Lusher ignored his advise and ordered her to Oswego.

As they approached the bar Lusher and Pease agreed to an approach—to get a line to a spile (post) just inside the harbor and hold the ship until a second line could be taken to the docks. They reached former, but just as they "got a warp fast to the spile Bishop (a carpenter) told the engineer to back the wheels, which tore up the spile, and we was *(sic)* drifting out again. The wheels was ordered forward, but they struck a log which disenable one of them; all by this time was in confusion. Everyone to command and none to obey. Lusher had lost all authority. We let go our anchor, but she never brought up only by jumps until she struck upon Garrison Point, unhung the rudder and tore away all the counter planks, the sea making a clear breach into us. In this situation I was determined not to sink and be driven to sea where not one sole *(sic)* could have been saved. I ordered the cable cut for our preservation, And she soon was fast on the shore. I now took upon me to order for the best as I saw Lusher knew not what to do. I had a line attached to a plank and thrown overboard, which drove to the shore and was caught by the inhabitance *(sic)*, and by this they drew one end of our cable on shore and made it fast to an apple tree. We now got tacles *(sic)* to it and taking advantage of the sea, hove until we had her completely motionless. "All this time she was as full of water as she could be, the sea breaking into the cabin as before stated and everything alloat in the hold. The passengers, or the most of them, especially the females, were in the greatest distress. The next was to get the passengers on shore. I went to Lusher, whom I found in his shirt sleeves laying across the warm boiler, and asked him if I should get the boat down, and endeavour to land our passengers, but he absolutely refused me to do it, and observed to me, I wish you was as calm and composed as I am. What said I and let the passengers remain here. I left him. It will be asked how a small boat could live. I answer, the boat (ship) lay broadside to the shore and made a lee so that our boat might have landed by a hauling line. We now had nothing to do but study *(sic)* how to get our passengers on shore.

"While I was consulting my reason Mr. McNair, called me to lower my boat down, and the people on the shore would assist in landing them. I returned for answer that I was not the master; that the master had forbid her being lowered down. With that all the bystanders left the beach except one, waving either their hat or hand in token that they took me for master....I now recollected, the wash woman had a large tub. This I strapped, reaving the rope through the ars (?) and rove a rope through a thimble; sent the end on shore; caused it to be made fast to a tree hauled taught (taut) on board; a line to haul the tub from boat to shore, and from shore to boat (breeches busy). The people began now to collect on the shore, seeing we were busy. The first I wanted to go was a large woman. Knowing

delays were dangerous, I leave the rest for my readers to expound. She could not be prevailed upon. To conclude, we sent the husband on shore lashed in the tub with a sheet, and hauled him back safe, which she seeing done, reluctantly, and weeping aloud got into the tub, which she completely filled, although three small girls and boys was sent on shore at a time. In this (way) we landed all without any difficulty until we came to Lusher, who persisted in staying on board, and with considerable difficulty at length prevailed on him to land in the tub. I had intend (ed) to be the last to land, but a man who had showed himself active in assisting the landing of the rest requested me to go in, and let him have that privilege, which I granted him.

"It had now got to be in the evening which was cold, and heavy gale of wind which continued several days. We now all hands went to a public house which was kept by one Moses Stephens (Stevens). As soon as weather would admit we commenced making preparations to get the boat off. In meantime the *Lady of the Lake* came to assist us, and brought with them some troops to assist."

Pease and Lusher continued their quarrel while the ship was undergoing repairs, and according to Pease's version Lusher finally agreed to release him and pay him for his services to date. But Lusher refused to abide by the terms, and Pease went to court to compel him. The case was transferred to Watertown and later to Albany, and Pease eventually lost his suit.

The following spring (1819), Pease agreed to sail the *Genesee Packet* for his old friend Obed Mayo of Ogdensburg, but he broke his leg while logging on his farm and did not undertake his duties until July. The accident left him in poor health, and he suffered from periodic attacks of ague and fever. He credited the skill of Dr. Coe of Oswego and the nursing of Mrs. Edward O'Connor with saving his life, but he continued to suffer through the next winer from "that grievous disorder," the flux. With financial aid from Mayo he was back on the St. Lawrence River early in 1820. Mayo agreed to sell the *Genesee Packet* to him, but he died while Pease was up-lake, and Pease was unable to obtain the necessary credit to purchase it from the executors; and thus he lost it.

Still short of funds in the spring of 1821 he agreed to finish construction on a schooner, the *George,* for a one-half interest in it. After bearing a good share of the costs for sails, rigging, anchors, pitch and tar, etc., he launched it. But it was now fall, and he had to lay it up at Carleton Island in winter quarters. During the winter he and his wife and daughter found lodging in Rochester. In the spring creditors attached the *George,* but he eventually bonded her and operated her in 1822, carrying lumber for transfer to Montreal. But he lost money on an apple and lumber speculation–a plan to raft apples down the St. Lawrence River to Montreal.

After breaking several ribs in an accident during the winter of 1822-23, he returned to Rochester in the spring to find the *George*

under attachment. He cleared it, temporarily, only to have it re-attached at Sackets. This time he lost it, along with his clothes and other personal effects in a chest. While seeking to regain the chest in Rochester he purchased a few barrels of peaches for delivery at Montreal. Transporting them to Ogdensburg aboard the steamer *Ontario* (of recent and vivid memory). (Incidentally, Lusher was still operating it in 1819 the year after the Lusher-Pease feud, but he was no longer the master in 1823.) He borrowed clothes from the widow of Obed Mayo at Ogdensburg and proceeded to Montreal where he obtained a modest profit.

At Montreal he witnessed a most singular happenstance, shared by thousands of Canadians who came from miles around. A forty-two footwhite whale had followed a ship from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the head of navigation at Montreal, "Where she lay for several days before the city performing her gambol to the great delight of the astonished beholders. At times she would run the whole length of the island and back. This would cause all of the carriages in the city to be in use.

Inevitable, and imaginative entrepreneur rigged up a whaling boat and fashioned lances to dispatch the "harmless fish" as Pease characterized it. "When all things had arrived and was ready for the attack, the shores, wharfs, windows of houses, and indeed every conspicuous spot was occupied for the occasion, all and every one was fasened *(sic)* to the monster. He now ran up the river until he came in contact with the rocks, when he tacked back again, always observing never to leave the sight of the view of the place where he saw the steamboat lay in to the shore. After a long (pursuit) he was erected with boards for the occation *(sic)* of exhibiting him."

Returning to Lake Ontario by way of Plattsburgh, Pease finally regained his possessions at Hanford's Landing on the Genesee River, and collecting a horse and saddle on a debt he rode to Hudson by way of Delaware County, where he spent the winter.

The next year (1824) he purchased the *James,* a schooner, at New York and made fishing trips to Martha's Vineyard. In Boston harbor the ship was caught by wind and tide and badly damaged. Again, he was up to his neck in litigation. Agitated by charges of fraud by a creditor, he confided to his diary: "I will not deviate from the truth. Let what will come. I will have this painted in the highest colours; for nothing has been left unsaid by Barton against me....Let him think as he will; let me have my write (right).

Two years later a final entry in his reminiscence indicates that he had sailed to Bermuda and Anguilla seeking sunken treasures. If he had his usual luck, they remained elusive! and if the fifty-three year old veteran of fresh and salt water ever resumed his sage, it has been lost. One can only assume that his remaining years, like the waters of Lake Ontario, were tempestuous to the very end.

FOOTNOTES

1. William W. Campbell, ed., *Life and writings of DeWitt Clinton,* New York, 1849, pp. 77-81.
2. The reminiscence and log of Barzillai Pease, Syracuse University Library. I am indebted to the library for permission to quote from these papers.
3. Historians of the War of 1812 have frequently assumed that General Izard's army marched the more than four hundred miles from Plattsburgh to Niagara through virgin forests, unaware that the Sackets Harbor-Genesee River leg was taken by water.
4. Pease's Journal (no. 14), 48.
5. Pease's leg of the *Oswego,* July 4, 1816.
6. Ibid., December 6, 1816.
7. Ibid., September 5, 1815.
8. Pease's Journal (no. 14), 54-55.
9. Ibid., 56-57.
10. Ibid., 57-59.
11. Ibid., 64
12. Ibid., 69.

Seven Hundred Years On The Beach

Gordon De Angelo, Vicky B. Jayne and Barbara L. Harris

Jayne/LaPoint site (PLI 1-3) is a prehistoric Iroquois fishing camp dating from 100–1450 A.D. located on a beach owned by Mr. Robert LaPoint, immediately south of Selkirk Shores State Park, at an old mouth of Grindstone Creek. The site is bounded on the west by Lake Ontario and slopes gradually upward from the shore toward a ridge approximately six feet above the shore level. There are two beech trees at the southern edge of the site, oak trees, beach grass on the east, and the old mouth of Grindstone Creek with oak trees and beach grass to the north. Originally the camp was further from the shoreline, but over the past seven hundred years the lake has gradually progressed eastward until now the site is only about fifty feet from the water's edge.

While walking north toward Selkirk Shores State Park Joan Jayne, an eighth grade student from Fayetteville, New York, discovered sherds of Indian pottery on September 5, 1970. During this week-end almost fifteen hundred sherds, which were lying on the surface, were collected by Joan and her family.

After returning to Fayetteville, Gordon DeAngelo was called and the pottery was described to him. He agreed to look over the site the following Sunday, September 13, and it was while examining the quantities of pottery still on the surface, together with the literally thousands of net sinkers on the site that the first intrusive burials were discovered. A piece of human jawbone had been uncovered by the strong winds which had been blowing for two weeks. DeAngelo had brought with him Dick Hsu, archaeologist with the National Park Service, and Larry and Cynthia Blakemore, who were

working with Mr. Hsu on the Fort Stanwix, Rome, New York restoration. Barbara Harris had come at the Jayne family's invitation.

After careful probing, it was discovered that there was a second burial about two and one-half feet east of the first burial, both of which were only about six to twelve inches below the surface. Discussion followed and because the feature would be quickly destroyed by the wind erosion and large number of people using the beach, it was decided to excavate. Tie points were driven into three nearby trees, measurements taken in order to precisely locate the burials, and work was begun. This area had been a favorite spot for "rum runners" during prohibition and for this reason LaPoint notified the New York State Police. H.B. Christensen, B.C.I. investigator from the Pulaski station arranged for a press camera to take record photographs.

Intrustive burials from the period 1812-1814.

It first appeared that the burials were male Indians of the historic period. Pewter monogrammed buttons were arranged as on great coats and signs of wood were beneath the skeletons. The buttons were later proven to have been in use during the War of 1812. In addition to the buttons, burial No. 1 also had a leather pouch containing bits of cloth, buttons and a singleblade jackknife in the crook of his right arm.

Detailed drawings and field notes were taken, and although work had begun about 1:30 in the afternoon, it was 9:30 P.M. before the last bone and artifact had been carefully packed away. During this time a cold rain fell and we were very grateful to the residents of Mr. LaPoint's trailer park for the food and hot coffee they had so generously brought to us, and to those who held a plastic cover over the burial site to shield us from the rain, while they stood getting

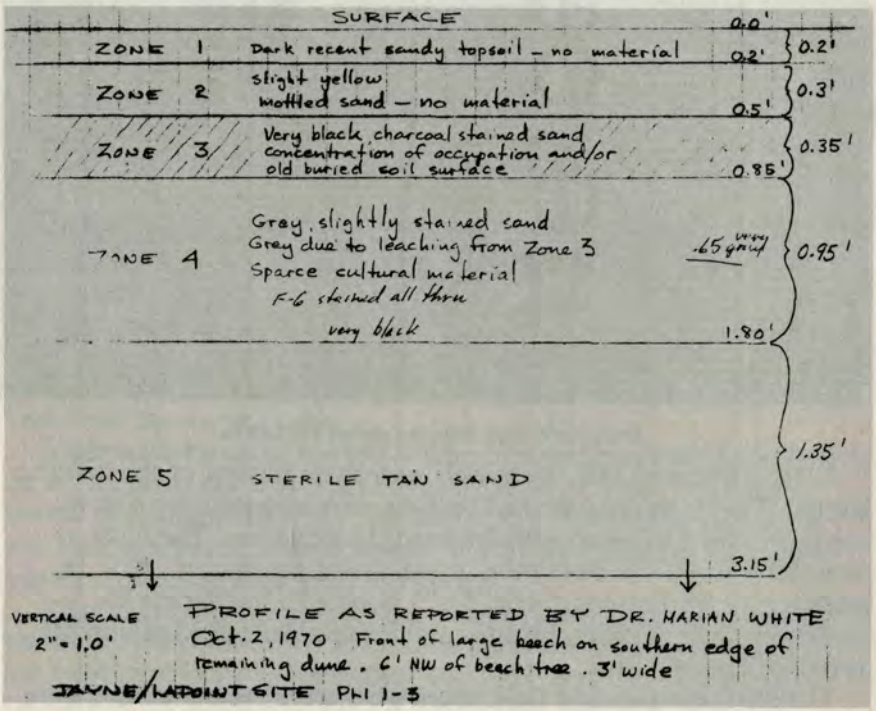
drenched! Before darkness fell LaPoint and his sons rigged up a generator and light so that we could complete the excavation.

After first being taken to a Pulaski funeral home, the bones were sent to Albany and then returned to the Blakemores in Rome. Although a detailed report has not yet been done, it now appears that these may have been white men and not Indians, as originally believed.

The artifacts found with these burials will be on display in Oswego, New York.

During the next week DeAngelo sent location maps and descriptions to Dr. William Ritchie, New York State Archaeologist at Albany, Dr. Marian White, Department of Anthropology, SUNY Buffalo, Charles Hayes, Rochester, and H.B. Christensen, B.C.I. investigator. On October 5 we were notified that the site had been logged and assigned site number PLI 1-3.

Dr. White and Robert Henke, both of SUNY Buffalo, visited the site in October and confirmed the dating of the prehistoric component. They also cut a profile in an area that had been disturbed by "pot hunters."



Much to the delight of the authors, they agreed that the site was definitely worth excavating and the authors in turn conferred with DeAngelo to make plans for the next season's work.

The weekend of May 15, 1971 found the authors, several of the Jayne children, Gordon DeAngelo, Bill Hamm and John Koslowski,

all members of the William F. Beauchamp Archaeological Society, "on site." Bench marks were established, a grid laid out and work begun. Besides large quantities of net sinkers and pottery sherds, flint and two projectile points were found on the surface. Bill Hamm was able to put together about one-fourth of a large pot with collar and rim from the squares he excavated this week end.

During the summer several more projectile points and pieces of flint were found both on the surface and in the excavations. Fish and animal bones, clam shells, various styles of pipes, pipe stems, an effigy from a pipe found by Terry Koslowski, two celts, charred corn and beans are among the artifacts recovered from this site. Mr. Hamm also discovered what is so far the only known bone tool found, an awl. In addition, thousands of pieces of pottery and the ever present net sinkers have been recovered from the site.

Early in the fall Mr. Hsu brought a group of students from his Utica College archaeology course for field practice in mapping, photography, record keeping and excavating. This group also enlarged our original grid and was most helpful.

In October Miss Harris was digging alone and, as usual with most of the most interesting finds, this one occurred late in the day. Another intrusive burial! As it was too late to begin working on this feature, the square was filled in and the next day found the authors and three Jayne children hard at work uncovering a skeleton in flexed position, complete except for the neck and skull, which extended into the adjacent square.

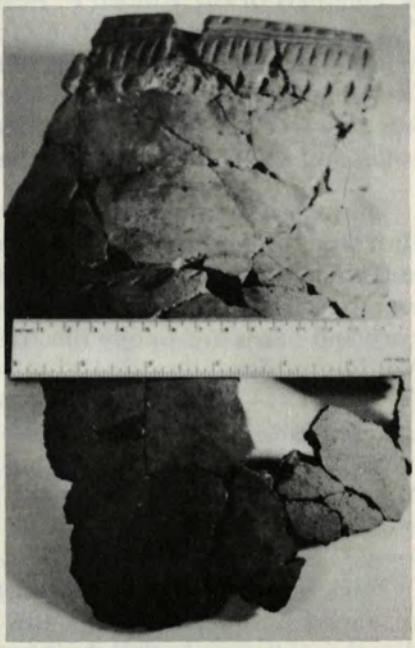
The next week the adjoining square containing the skull was completed. The top of the skull faced toward the north, with the face of the skull facing toward the west. A French trade axe of the type commonly called "squaw axe" was lying across the skull. With the human bones were also many duck vertebrae. Two copper kettles, pieces of a wooden ladle and a wooden effigy were also uncovered with the burial. Because of the shape and condition of the teeth and pelvis, it was tentatively determined that this was a young female Indian. The kettle styles dated the burial as circa 1652 A.D. A study and report will be done on this skeleton.

Although there was obvious contact with the white men as evinced by the axe and kettles, it was unusual that no trade beads were found with this burial.

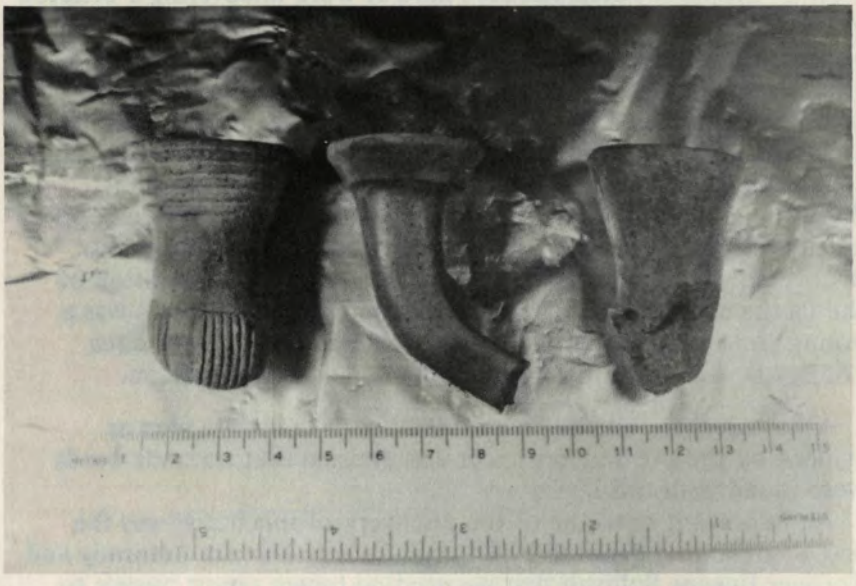
An important outcome of the discovery of this burial was the precedent setting decision by Oswego County District Attorney and Coroner Eugene Sullivan that we need no longer report burials to the New York State Police.

At the time of this writing thirty-two five foot by five foot by three feet deep squares have been excavated. During the 1972 digging season the authors will enlarge the grid to the north and east and it is estimated that approximately the same number of squares will be completed by fall.

Effigy from pipe—about 1450 A.D.



Partially restored pot.



Three pipes.

After completion of the lab work, a detailed site report will be compiled.

The authors feel that this site is of particular importance because very little work has been done on seasonal fishing camps (none in this geographic location) and especially so since the site was in use

over a period of three hundred to three hundred fifty years. We also believe our findings will be helpful in extending knowledge of the culture of the St. Lawrence Iroquois of the late Woodland stage.