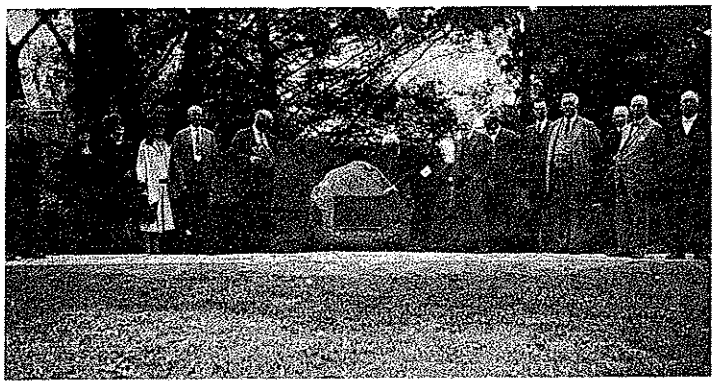
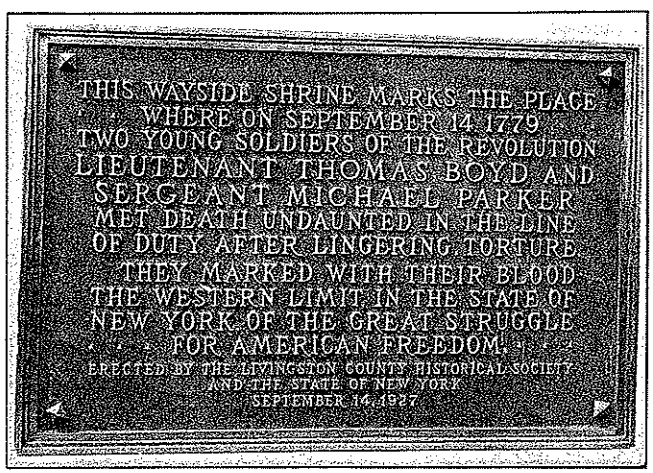


Scene at placing of bronze tablet in memory of Boyd and Parker, September 14, 1927. Hon. Lockwood R. Doty fastening the tablet to a granite boulder in the presence of prominent members of the Livingston County Historical Society.



The Tablet.

DEDICATION EXERCISES

Introductory

By Mr. John T. Fetherston, President of the Livingston County Historical Society and Chairman of the Dedication Exercises:

This is certainly a wonderful day, and our exercises are only ten minutes behind schedule. It is appropriate, customary, and most desirable that our memorial celebration should open with prayer. We have therefore invited the Rev. M. C. Wall, of Avon, to deliver the Invocation.

By Reverend Father Wall:

We pray Thee, O God of might, wisdom, and justice, through whom authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment decreed, assist with Thy Holy Spirit of counsel and fortitude, the President of these United States, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness, and be eminently useful to Thy people over whom he presides, by encouraging due respect for virtue and religion; by a faithful execution of the laws in justice and mercy.

Let the light of Thy Divine wisdom direct the deliberations of Congress and shine forth in all the proceedings and laws framed for our rule and government; so that they may tend to the preservation of peace, the promotion of national happiness, the increase of industry, sobriety, and useful knowledge, and may perpetuate to us the blessings of equal liberty.

We recommend likewise to Thy unbounded mercy all here assembled in this patriotic event, all our brethren and fellow citizens, throughout the United States, that they may be blessed in the knowledge, and sanctified in the observance, of Thy most holy law; that they may be preserved in union, and in that peace which the world cannot give; and after enjoying the blessings of this, be admitted to those which are eternal. Amen.

By MR. FETHERSTON: Those who have received copies of the program will observe that the next item calls for an expression by the audience—two verses of "America." It was stated that Johnston's Pipe Band would lead the singing. The Band has left Rochester, but it has not yet arrived. The program was printed without consulting the esteemed leader of that famous organization, Mr. John White Johnston, who wrote, after receiving a copy of the program, that Scottish bagpipes were so limited in their range of notes that it would be impossible to do justice to the melody. Thus we live and learn. I never suspected that bagpipes had any limitations whatever, but we must accept Mr. Johnston's expert advice on that point. So in place of the bagpipes, the Mount Morris Band will lead in the singing. This is a chance for all present to rise. Let everyone sing "America" as it should be sung.

Then followed the singing of two verses of "America."

By MR. FETHERSTON: As President of the Livingston County Historical Society, I bid you welcome to our exercises. This is undoubtedly a great event in the history of this section of the Empire State. From Livingston and adjoining counties we are assembled to memorialize a famed dramatic event in the early history of the Genesee Country and to dedicate to the service of the public this Wayside Shrine where two young soldiers of the Revolution died after unspeakable, lingering torture.

A short explanation of the events leading up to this celebration seems desirable at this time. As you are all aware, the Livingston County Historical Society is responsible for the organization and management of this event, backed by the united public sentiment of residents in this beautiful Valley and assisted by various patriotic organizations all actively interested in promoting devotion to American ideals and American customs. The people of the State of New York recently approved a united demand for marking historic places and the Legislature has appropriated moneys to assist local organizations in perpetuating the instructive stories of war and heroism.

About one year ago, a plan was advanced and advocated by our leading local historian and distinguished jurist, the Hon. Lockwood R. Doty, to cover three projects: first, the preservation of the relics in the Log Cabin at Geneseo; second, the introduction of local history into the schools; third the reclamation of the place where Boyd and Parker were buried, involving the purchase of the land and turning that place into a Wayside Shrine. That this project was timely is fully evidenced to-day; it needs no argument. The Society expected and hoped to secure $2,500 by small public subscriptions for the improvement of the land, the erection of a small log cabin and the general expenses of this celebration. The budget has been nearly $1,300 oversubscribed—which expresses by concrete evidence public approval of the project.

Judge Doty's plan to purchase the land and erect a boulder with suitable tablet to the memory of Boyd and Parker was approved by the Council of the Society. The land was purchased and donated by a distinguished son of Livingston County, a man of international fame—Hon. James W. Gerard, who unfortunately cannot be here with us since he is at present in Europe.

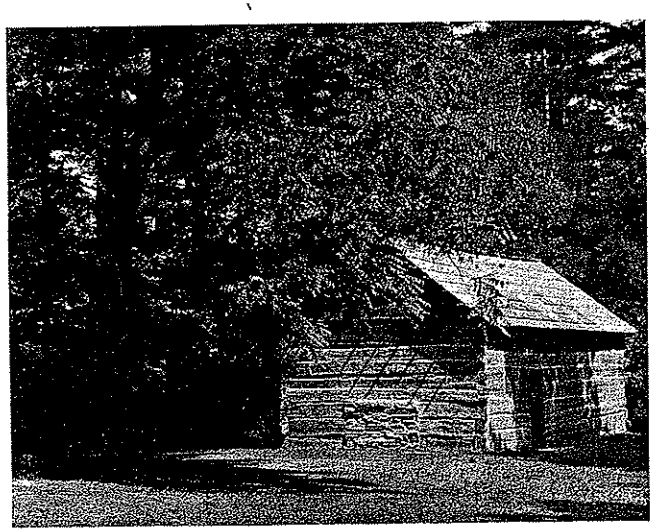
The popularity of the whole project is evidenced beyond question by the large gathering here present and by the enthusiastic devotion of all those members of the Society whose names are too numerous to mention, but whose whole-hearted support and activities have resulted in this wonderful outpouring of patriotic American citizens.

For many many long years the project to reclaim the burial mound of Boyd and Parker and preserve the celebrated Torture Tree was discussed after the first memorial celebration when the remains of the heroes were removed to Rochester in 1841, but it remained for you good people to actually carry out the plan for the benefit of present and future generations.

It amounts to much more than a mere passing whim or gesture to preserve historic places and perpetuate the dramatic events of the past—if history teaches anything, it glorifies patriotism, love of country, devotion to the flag,

and to the ideals of American liberty, justice and self-sacrifice that this nation might live and grow, higher and better in the eyes of its own citizens and of the world at large. The Historical Society exists for public service and its contribution to the people of Livingston County lies before your eyes—the undisturbed burial mound now marked by an enduring boulder with bronze tablet, soon to be unveiled, the celebrated Torture Tree two hundred years old, and the acre Plot, grassed and reclaimed from weeds and decay.

If the hearty old Torture Tree could speak, out of the past would come a story of this Valley which would thrill with pride, perhaps with horror, but undoubtedly with intense interest, you here gathered to assist in our ceremonies. A distinguished scientist, historian, and a descendant of the famous Seneca Indians is with us to-day to aid in making our celebration memorable in the annals of our County and it is with great pleasure that we welcome Dr. Arthur C. Parker, Director of the Municipal Museum in Rochester, and member of the Council of the Livingston County Historical Society.



Council House of the Seneca Indians, preserved in Letchworth State Park.

THE SENECA INDIANS

By Arthur C. Parker

MR. CHAIRMAN, members of the Livingston County Historical Society, and fellow citizens: When one fixes his gaze on this placid Valley, on its alluring hills and its pleasant waters, the general atmosphere is one which little reminds us that this region was once the scene of international strife, once the scene of intertribal warfare, and that this was the arena in which the destiny of nations was threshed out through the grim medium of arms. Peace reigns here now, and no suggestion of conflict remains.

We are the heirs of a great history. The smiling fields and the evidences of prosperity which we see and enjoy here grew out of conflict—and to-day we are here assembled to consider one of the dramatic episodes that occurred during the last great struggle in the Genesee Valley.

This region was not always the property and homeland of our immediate predecessors, the Seneca Indians. Other Indians had lived here before them. Perhaps first it was the homeland of the Algonquins. All the notched arrow-points picked up in this Valley are the arrow-points of the predecessors of the Senecas, and most of the triangular arrow-points are those of their conquerors, the early Seneca people.

The Senecas were a division of the Iroquois stock. Coming up the Ohio River and pushing onward they finally made themselves masters of the highlands and the hills of western New York, from which they were named "People of the Hills." The name Nunda means "hill" in the Seneca language. On Canandaigua (Ka-nun-da-gua) Lake, for example, we have Nunda-waga (the great hill) which also refers to the designatory name of these people.

After the Senecas had fixed themselves a little to the east of the Genesee they found that there was a finer area in the Genesee Valley. Thus they gradually pushed westward to

the banks of this (Genesee) River, but it was the later conflict of the Revolution which actually pushed them far west of the Genesee and gave them fixed settlements there. Many of them before that had lived in Ontario County and as far eastward as the present site of Geneva, where Kanadesega, one of their principal towns, was situated. However, I don't intend to speak in detail of the history of these people. I wish to speak more particularly of some of the bequests the Indian people have left to the present people of western New York.

These red aborigines, whom we are wont to regard mostly as unorganized savages, were in reality a people organized in the highest sense—in a social organization and in a definite political organization; in fact having one of the finest political organizations devised by stone-age man.

The founder of the nation was Hiawatha who was the peerless Indian leader in his day. His people had wonderful ideals with respect to all things they encountered in nature. The Seneca child never picked the first flower, but the fourth—in order that even the flowers might have a chance to live. The most ardent hunter always asked the pardon of the animal he killed, and spoke to its spirit, telling why he was compelled to kill it, and offered incense for the soul of the animal. This was their method of practicing conservation, and it was an effective form of preserving the animals of the wilds. Our flower pickers and pot hunters might well observe these customs now.

In addition, they have given us our romantic background. What would the Genesee Country be, without those stories of Red Jacket, the tales of Squawkie Hill, the gauntlet run by Horatio Jones, and the capture of Jasper Parrish? It is a picturesque background for our own history, and a background upon which our forefathers projected a great struggle of the Revolution during Sullivan's campaign.

More than this, our most beautiful and most euphonious names are Indian in origin. Genesee, that "beautiful Valley," Canandaigua, Canaseraga, Tuscarora, Ontario, and many others too numerous to mention at this time. The most distinctive names of towns and villages of western

New York were given to us by the red pioneers who lived here before the white man came.

Most of us have no knowledge of the legendary history—myths and children's stories—which describe all the beautiful places we are familiar with by sight but not by story. This region of Little-Beardstown is the scene of two Indian legends remarkable in quality and of absorbing interest. I cannot pause to tell them, but, oddly enough, one deals with salt—peculiarly appropriate—and tells of a little lad's artifice in making an artifical salt-lick and by this means snaring a deer. Another is the story of Twinkletoes and how the bad spirits were overcome by being converted into puffballs to dry up and be burst into dust by the feet of the hero. This is simply the Seneca way of saying that though evil beset one, courage is able to overcome it, and it will be brought to naught in the end. The aboriginal people have gone, and with them has gone the real mythology of America.[1]

It may be mentioned, however, that some are trying to save these Indian stories. The Bureau of Ethnology and many other institutions are spending time and money to preserve these aboriginal tales.

In a material way, our Senecas have given us a heritage of agriculture. From the time when Sullivan's soldiers came through the Valley, passing near the village of Geneseo, or its site, there were found great cornfields stretching through the Valley, and containing corn with ears sixteen inches in length though some of the soldiers said they were twenty-two inches. We know that sweet corn was discovered by Sullivan's soldiers along the route up from Elmira (then the Seneca village of New Town).

More than this, our method of cultivating corn is the same. The same number of hoeings are employed to-day that the Indians gave it, and the same method of harvesting and way of preserving grain. Our billion-dollar corn crop is a crop the red man made possible through his methods. Much might be said concerning the ideals, achievements

[1]See *Skunny Stories*, by A. C. Parker (George H. Doran Co., New York, 1926, 1928).

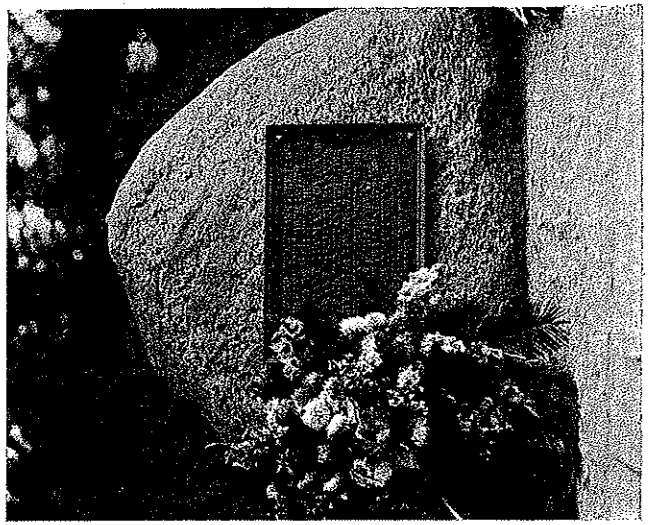
and history of these people. I will only pause to say that there is another side to Indian history scarcely recognized in any textbook of which I know. Originally these people were the loyal friends of Great Britain. It was that loyalty, unquestionably, that saved the continent for our English-speaking people. They were providential friends of our form of civilization, and their course did not alter, while that of the Colonists—for good and sufficient reasons—did. It was not Brant's lack of mercy that caused the torture of Lieutenant Boyd and Sergeant Parker. It was the act of an English Tory in refusing to recognize the clemency and mercy of an Indian that led to the death of the two patriots. It is not of this, however, of which I wish to speak.

What I wish to impress upon you is, that the resistance and opposition of the Indian was one of the greatest things that he contributed to the American nation, for out of this travail came a new consciousness. Our seaboard Colonies were settled by incoherent elements, some emigrated from England, some from Holland, some from Sweden, and some from other European nations. Suppose that in America there had been no resistance and the Colonists coming to the Atlantic seaboard country had made penetration easily. We would then never have had a united America as we have it to-day. America is divided into several distinct areas, each of which is capable of sustaining itself. Florida was in the hands of the Spanish; the Colonies further north were partly in the hands of the English; one was in the hands of the Dutch; the mouth of the Mississippi was in the hands of the French, as well as the Laurentian basin; Swedes were in control in New Jersey; Germans, in Pennsylvania; and other nations would have come in. Had it not been for Indian resistance, hemming the Colonists in from the back country, the opportunity for colonization would have been too enticing to European powers and we would to-day be, as a result, divided into many petty principalities, with allegiance to many European countries. But the resistance of the Indian hemmed in the English-speaking people and gave them a common objective. To cross the Alleghenies for the most part meant death, for

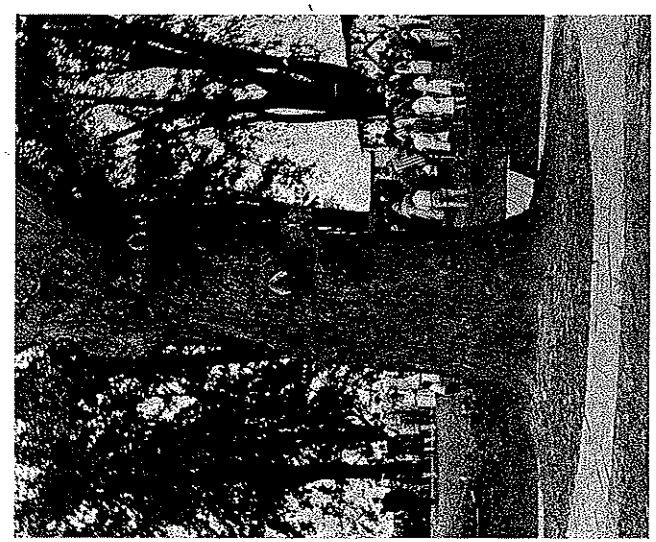
the red man would not permit it. He too, had a homeland that he loved. Thus the Colonists grew in number and coherence until "the thirteen fires" came out, as political states. The Revolution broke, and the Colonists rebelled against Great Britain. Helping the mother country were many of the Indians, among them the Senecas. Freedom was achieved by the Colonists, and a new nation, with a new national consciousness, was born. Once this consciousness had been safely and sufficiently developed, the hardy Americans burst their restricting bonds and swarmed westward over the mountain barriers.

This was the first half of the last century, and by 1850 these determined adventurers had pierced through to the Pacific and started to settle California. On they went, not as a divided people speaking different languages, carrying different flags and developing different republics, as would have been the case had the westward rush developed a century before for lack of Indian opposition, but as a united, English-speaking people. Nothing then could stop these colonists who understood one tongue. It is fortunate for us that the red man's resistance held the white man's ambitions back for more than a hundred years. Those who believe there is an overruling Power guiding the destinies of man, must see in this the hand that has written history from time immemorial. Though the Colonists suffered travail, that travail gave birth to a great and united people, characterized by a peculiar pioneer spirit and one to be observed nowhere else in the world. It was primarily due to the stern resistance offered by the red men of the New World. Indian flint met the white man's steel and thereby were kindled the fires of a new republic.

Such was the contribution of the Indian—indirect, perhaps, but none the less effective, towards the forming of the Union. These are influences we should not forget, and when we see that tree where patriots were tortured, when we think of the stormy times the pioneers had here, let us not forget that in the formation of the United States and their welding into a single and solid political organization, the red men had a providential part.



Boulder and tablet, with the wreath placed there during the Dedication Exercises by Miss Ruth Barber, on behalf of the D. A. R.

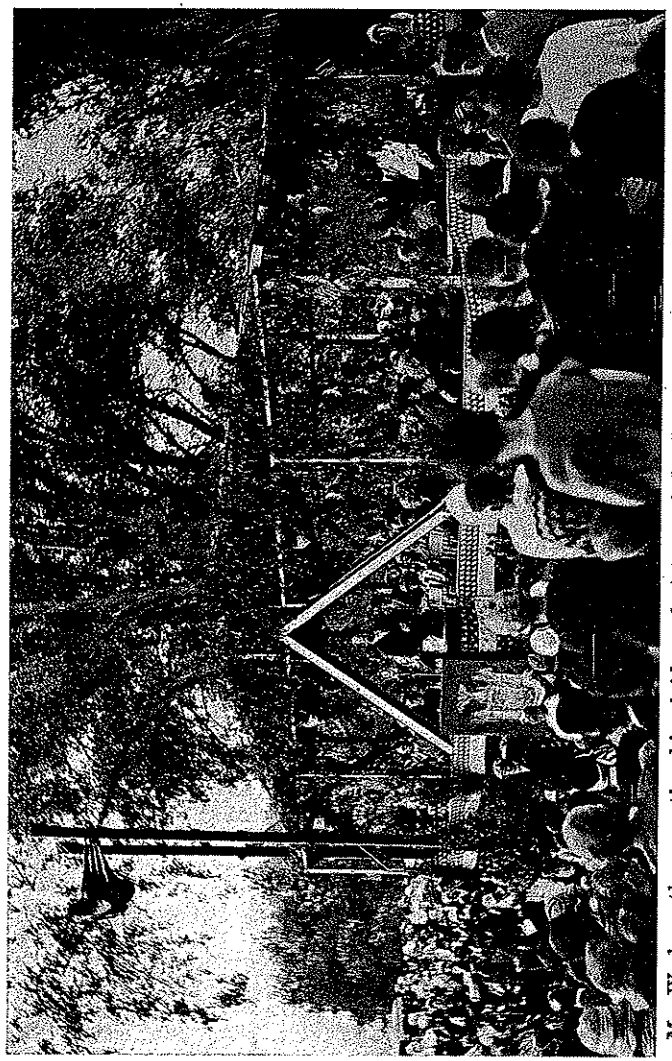


Massive trunk of the Torture Tree, a 200-year-old oak. When the tract was improved, the tree was encircled with a flagstone walk.

INTRODUCTION of MR. WADSWORTH

By CHAIRMAN FETHERSTON: This occasion would not be complete unless some man of outstanding achievements were able to explain what it all means. We searched the country for such a man. We looked to Washington and thought we might get our great President, but we found he would not be available. Then we looked toward Albany and thought it would be a fine thing to get Governor Smith, but he was scheduled for laying the cornerstone of a hospital in New York City. Then we thought about getting all kinds of different people. Finally it occurred to Judge Doty that we were looking in every place except the right place—and the correct place was right here at home.

So after much searching far afield we secured the attendance of our own most distinguished citizen here today. He is a neighbor who for many years has devoted himself to the service of the nation. He is in greater demand than ever before as a speaker and as a representative American citizen, cool, calm, courageous, hard working and hard worked to meet the demands upon his time and his experience in helping to make our country a better place for life and living. It is by no mere accident that he devotes his thoughts and energies to the service of the people—it is a tradition that he upholds, for his forebears were leaders in war and peace throughout more than a century which has elapsed since the Genesee Country was settled by hardy pioneers led by the Wadsworths—an illustrious name, in the story of these United States. There is no higher achievement for man than devoted, unselfish public service, and there is no greater satisfaction in life than to serve others well and wisely—such has been the successful objective of the man who is to explain the significance of this memorable occasion, the Hon. James W. Wadsworth, Jr.



Mr. Wadsworth presenting his vivid word-picture of the Sullivan Expedition before thousands of persons gathered from all parts of the Genesee Valley and beyond.

THE SULLIVAN EXPEDITION

By Hon. James W. Wadsworth, Jr.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Ladies and Gentlemen, Neighbors and Friends: I have lived in this Valley fifty years (there is a confession!), but I have never seen a gathering in it equal to this. Frankly, I did not realize there would be such an outpouring of our people on this occasion. Nor did I realize the scale upon which the parade and other features would be organized and conducted. Many people have joined hands in this effort, and they are all entitled to our thanks, Mr. Fetherston especially. Nor should we forget to thank our host, Mr. Henry Curtis. It is a long time since Henry has had a party on his farm as big as this. To those who designed the floats, I must remark that they were most interesting and beautiful. Incidentally, I have never seen so many Indians in my life—nor such ferocious-looking Indians. Had Sullivan and his army been confronted by the Indians we have seen here to-day, they would have taken one look and gone back home where they came from. Your Chairman said something to the effect that I should discuss the significance of this occasion and tell you something about the Sullivan Expedition. The story has been printed by the State in comprehensive form. Doubtless, many of you have read it, and have had a chance to examine the official reports of General Sullivan and his officers, as well as the diaries of some of the officers and enlisted men who took part in the expedition. I shall not attempt to go into the story in great detail. It would be like bringing coals to Newcastle.

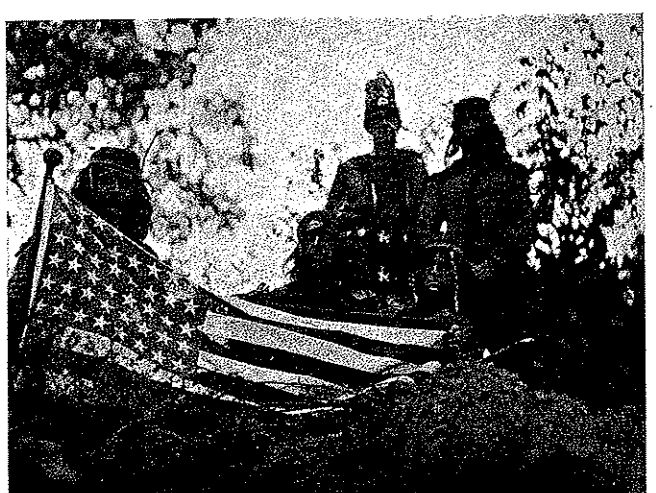
Before I proceed further, let me say this: In our busy lives, we are too apt to forget what our forefathers went through, why they did this, or refused to do that, and why they found it necessary finally to take up arms in defense of the institutions they loved. We should always bear in mind that this great Republic lives happily to-day because

of the sacrifices of blood and treasure made by the hardy pioneers of a century and a half ago. If this present generation and future generations are to be secure and content, it will be because we, and those coming after us, cherish the traditions which have been handed down to us by our forefathers. If I have any criticism to make against our educational institutions, I should say they teach too little about the influence of the past, and too little about the Constitution of the United States itself, that instrument which has sheltered the people for more than one hundred and thirty years and made them the happiest and most prosperous people on earth. When I see a gathering like this, I am impelled to the belief that down deep in our hearts is a strong desire to rededicate ourselves to the flag and the country. In that spirit we are gathered here to-day.

To get an idea of the Sullivan Expedition, it is necessary to go back and sketch briefly some of the events that occurred before the American Revolution. When the white

"It is a long time," said Mr. Wadsworth, "since Henry has had a party on his farm as big as this."—Scene on the lawn of Mr. Henry Curtis during the Boyd and Parker Dedication Exercises.

man first came to the shores of this continent, there were five tribes of Indians living in that section of country which later became identified as the eastern, central, and western portions of New York. Commencing at the east were found the Mohawk Tribe inhabiting the valley of the river of that name. Next to them toward the west were the Onondagas and the Oneidas. Then still further west were the Cayugas, and finally at the western end were the Senecas, whose principal strongholds were here in the Genesee Valley. In those early days the Indian tribes, generally speaking, were at war with one another most of the time. The five tribes just mentioned were under constant attack from neighbors to the westward and the northward. among them the Hurons and the Eries. At one time or another, these New York tribes were reduced to desperate straits and it was a question whether they could survive. Legend has it that Hiawatha suggested that the five tribes form a confederacy, the better to resist their foes. This was done and there



"I have never seen such ferocious-looking Indians," was Mr. Wadsworth's testimonial to the realistic make-up of the redskins in the parade. Here are Little-Beard and his warriors on the float prepared by Cecil Seager Post No. 333, American Legion, Nunda.

sprang into being the great Iroquois Confederacy, the alliance of the five nations.

The truth of the saying that "in union there is strength" was never more thoroughly proved than in the case of this Confederacy, for following quickly upon its formation it became supreme among all the Indian people of the eastern part of the United States. The government which they set up was about as wisely devised, considering their limitations, as one could expect from any group of human beings. It was a government of law; each tribe selected its officials by the votes of the warriors. Each tribe had its chief and its council. Each tribe was represented in a central council of the Confederacy, and the Confederacy itself had a leader. The central body passed on all great questions of war and peace and upon general policies of importance to the Confederacy. These men were the statesmen of their day and generation, and under their leadership the Iroquois Confederacy waxed stronger and stronger until its conquests reached as far west as the Mississippi River, as far south as the Carolinas, as far north as the Province of Quebec and as far east as New England. Such was the organization of the Indians of New York when the white men came into contact with them.

After the advent of the whites—the French into Canada and the English along the Atlantic coast—an inevitable conflict arose as to which should be the final possessor of this continent, the French or the English. The so-called French and Indian War was fought to determine the question. The Iroquois Confederacy was at that time near the peak of its strength. It aligned itself with the English in that conflict and rendered exceedingly valuable service. The alliance between the English and the Confederacy, ratified by the British government in England, was formal and complete, and the Indians regarded themselves as bound to the English government under a solemn treaty. The success of the British in handling what might be termed the Indian problem of that day was due in large measure to Sir William Johnson who, residing in the Mohawk Valley, represented the British government as its Indian agent and

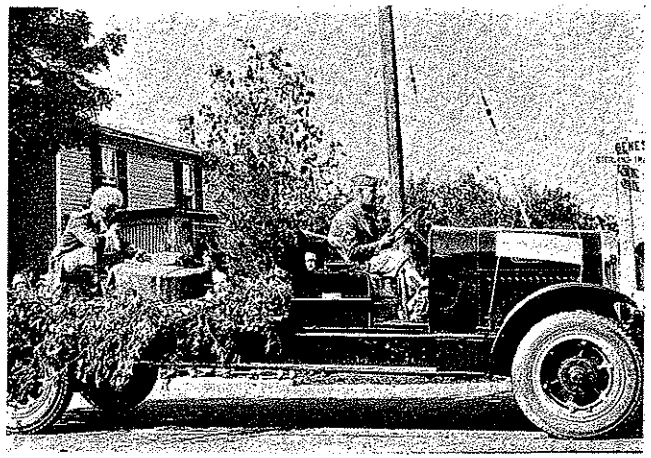
brought to bear on the problem an extraordinary skill in his dealings with the red man. Sir William Johnson was a great figure in the eastern and northern part of the State for many years just prior to the Revolution. He was a rough and ready kind of man whom the Indians trusted; and as the friction between the Colonists and the British government increased in the years preceding the Revolution itself, he managed to retain for his government the loyalty of the Iroquois Confederacy. It is due to his influence more than to any other, that the warriors of the five tribes sided with the British as against the Colonists when the Revolution finally broke out. We should be slow to criticize the Indians who, failing to comprehend the issues involved in this conflict between the white men, made up their minds that they should be faithful to their treaty obligations.

A great friend of Sir William Johnson was Joseph Brant, the leader of the Iroquois Confederacy. Brant, who was a Mohawk Indian, attracted the favorable attention of Sir William as a young boy. With the help and under the protection of the British Indian Agent, Brant received a good education. He developed into an exceedingly able man. By the time the Revolution broke out, he was by far the most important figure among the Indians. Knowing this, the British made much of him. Not long before the Revolution, he was taken to London and introduced to the leaders of the British government. He spoke English well, carried himself with dignity, and made a deep impression; so much so, that the British government took pains to see to it that Brant's allegiance was made secure. Throughout the period of the Revolution, Brant was in virtual command of the forces of the Confederacy waging war against the American Colonists. While he displayed that kind of cruelty typical of the Indian, he nevertheless proved himself to be a shrewd, farseeing, forceful man, well able to hold his own with the most prominent leaders of the whites. His fame spread far and wide and, to this day, his career stands out as one of the most distinguished among all the Indians of America.

Sir William Johnson died in 1774. One year later, the Revolution was a fact.

It too often happens that when human beings plunge into a conflict which, to them, seems to involve a matter of life and death, foolish things are done by one side or the other. One of the most foolish things ever done by a government was done by the British government in 1775 and the years immediately following, when it turned loose its Indian allies upon the settlers of the Mohawk Valley and the eastern part of New York. The final result of this was to engender a feeling of bitterness on the part of the Colonists against the British government, which persisted for many years after the Revolution and which, according to my view, accounts in large measure for that anti-British feeling which has shown itself so often during our history as a nation. In all fairness, it should be said that many English officers did their best to restrain the Indians in the character of warfare waged by the latter against the settlers, but the fact remains that that warfare quickly assumed the most terrible aspect. The people of the settlements suffered to an extent we find it difficult, if not impossible, to comprehend. The Indians waged war in the Indian way. The result was a welter of plunder and massacre in the settlements. The massacres at Wyoming Valley in northeastern Pennsylvania, at Cherry Valley and at German Flats in eastern New York, stand out as among the worst. But there were dozens of instances of this same kind on a smaller scale, perpetrated in 1777 and 1778.

A great cry for help went up to the Continental Congress, to George Washington, and to Governor Clinton. The settlers appealed on all sides for protection against the raids of the Indians. It was, in part, in response to that cry for help that the Sullivan Expedition was organized in the spring of 1779. George Washington, as Commander-in-chief, supervised the preparations for the expedition and selected its commander and his principal subordinates. In his orders and letters to General Sullivan, he directed the latter to proceed into the Indian country and to destroy the Indian villages, crops, and property and to capture as many



"Washington Plans the Sullivan Expedition"—Boyd and Parker float of Francis M. Dalton Post No. 282, American Legion, Lima.

of the Indians as possible. Not only did he intend that the expedition should mete out a terrific punishment to the Indians themselves, but also should result in driving the Indians back, destitute and discouraged, into the hands of the British whose chief outpost was at Fort Niagara at the mouth of the Niagara River. Washington felt that were the British compelled to feed and sustain the Indian population out of their stores and supplies, their ability to wage war against the Colonists would be severely restricted. In other words, the purpose of the expedition was not only punitive as against the Indians but contemplated tying the hands of the British government. So much for the purpose of the expedition. Before we trace its progress across the hills and valleys of central and western New York, let us get some idea of the manner of living of the Indians, in this country which, in their poetic language, they called the Long House.

The red men had been in contact with the whites for nearly one hundred and fifty years and had absorbed from them several of the useful arts. They were familiar with