

## THE BLOCK-HOUSE.

RECORDS dating back into colonial times reveal that the first white men to have set their feet upon the ground that is now the VILLAGE OF CLYDE came early in 1722, when Governor Burnett of the Province of New-York sent an expedition into what is now the interior of the state to make a settlement or trading-post for the opening of a fur trade with the western Indians. He dispatched Lieu't. Jacob Verplank, Gilley Verplank, Johannis Visger, Jr., Harmanus Schuyler, Johannis Vanden Bergh, Peter Groenendyck, and David Van der Heyden with instructions to purchase a tract of land to be patented by those who would be the first settlers. The expedition left Albany in the spring and returned in September, establishing a post at Sodus Bay. On July 8th, a detachment of three men, Lieu't. Verplank, Harmanus Schuyler and David Van der Heyden left the post and went south into the woods led by a friendly Onondaga Indian, and within a few hours were upon the shore of a stream called Muddy Waters by the Indians, later called Mud Creek, and still later the Clyde River. They spent about a week putting up a BLOCK-HOUSE and then returned to the bay where they reported their activities. The building was two stories high, the upper projecting over the lower at the sides and ends. In the floor of the upper story — near the sides and ends — were the port holes, through which a volley might reach an enemy.

A few days later Cap't. Schuyler received information of a plan to attack him at the bay by a party of French and Huron Indians. He left there and re-took possession of the BLOCK-HOUSE, which he prepared for its defense, remained only a week, and then went east down the river guided by the Onondaga Indians. Afterwards the structure served as a defense for many bands of Indians and whites that passed through this locality. It was used during the French and Indian War and also during the Revolutionary War by whoever happened to have possession of it. After peace had been declared between the United States and England, it was used by smugglers and marauding British soldiers until about 1800, when the Government sent soldiers to clean them out. During the fighting the building was set on fire and destroyed. It stood upon the north bank of the Clyde River and east of the mouth of Vanderbilt Creek, a little east of the old New-York Central Rail-road depot. The ground upon which the old relic stood was a rounded elevation, sufficient to place it above the reach of high water, and was leveled off in the construction of the rail-road in 1852.

In 1805, Cap't. Luther Redfield with his brother-in-law a Mr. Dryer, visited this locality. They ascended Dickson Hill, south-east of the intersection of Mill and Redfield Streets, where they climbed a tree to take in the view, and clearly saw Lake Ontario. Descending the hill to the river, they made a raft of driftwood, and came over to the site of the BLOCK-HOUSE. It had been burned, but there were still left the charred ends of the logs at the corners — a few remains that entirely disappeared not

Several of the prominent citizens resolved to dig for the hidden treasure, and selecting the mid-night hour for such labor, they commenced their operations. Night after night had thus passed, when in the midst of the enthusiastic prosecution of the enterprise, an ugly looking object appeared to them dressed in white, and of a seeming un-earthly origin. Then one of the party rushed up to the apparition with an uplifted axe and exclaimed *Be ye man or devil, I'm after you!* The ghost (if such was the case) made one bound and sought quarters in some underbrush nearby, and after which time was no more seen. Many people believed that the whole party was more or less frightened, inasmuch as the money digging mania ceased from that hour.

## THE ABANDONED CANNON.

In September of 1779, a six-pound cannon was abandoned in the Clyde River, a little to the west of the village by Butler's Rangers from Pennsylvania on their full retreat before the victorious General John Sullivan. Butler, it appears, was a friend of the celebrated Indian warrior, Joseph Brant, one of the six nations (composed of the Mohawks, Senecas, Cayugas, Oneidas, Onondagas and Tuscaroras) none of whom were on friendly terms with the population of this section. When Butler and his Rangers found that the indomitable Sullivan was in hot pursuit and very close upon them, they sank their cannon beneath the swift rolling waters of the Clyde. Of this fact we have the testimony of men who settled in this region at an early day. John King, who was a business-man in Clyde more than a century and a quarter ago, and whose father was a genuine pioneer, said that *in my boyhood it was currently reported among the trappers that a cannon had been sunk a little west of Clyde by Butler's men, and that raftsmen in passing through the stream had touched it with their poles.* Mac DeGolyer, another settler long since dead, and once a raftsman, used to say that *I have seen Butler's cannon.* It is therefore a historic fact that there is now a cannon buried, not necessarily beneath the waters of the Clyde River, for the stream may have changed its course since then, but very near and possibly on the shore of it. The uncertainty of its exact location will probably forever preclude attempts to secure the prize.

When Aaron Griswold first came to Clyde in 1813, some thirty-four years after the invasion, the story of the old abandoned cannon was common talk. A man named King claimed to know the exact location, and asserted that he *had dived down and not only seen it, but had put his hand in the muzzle.* No attempt was ever made at this time to recover it, but somewhere about 1840 a search was made for it. Aaron Griswold and Beriah Redfield in the company of Mr. King, went up the river and spent some time in searching for the cannon, but failed to find it.