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Major Amos Stoddard

First Governor of Upper Louisiana and Hero of Fort Meigs

BY WILFRID HIBBERT

In an unmarked grave at Fort Meigs, rest the remains of an officer whose record of service as a soldier, statesman and warrior will forever reflect honor on himself, his family and his country.

This man was Major Amos Stoddard, representative of the fifth generation of the Stoddards of Boston, who, in line of duty as an officer of the United States Army, received for his government a territory which added almost a third to the nation of his day. He administered wisely a vast area. He brought to bear upon his tasks a rich experience which grew out of those most colorful years of the beginnings of the nation.

On March 9, 1804, before the government house at St. Louis, the Spanish troops of the garrison were drawn up under arms while Lieut. Gov. de Lassus delivered Upper Louisiana or Missouri to the then Capt. Stoddard, in a ceremony by which, theoretically, if not actually, the vast empire out of which eight states in whole or in part have been formed, was under three flags and three sovereignties in a single day. At dawn the Spanish standard floated over the military posts and headquarters at St. Louis. Within a few hours the "lilies of France" replaced the Spanish colors and then were lowered forever from dominion over any part of the vast American continent, which had been at one time almost wholly under the banner of French kings. Capt. Amos Stoddard as representative of the French and American governments received the empire of Upper Louisiana from Spain, first in the name of France in keeping with the secret treaty of San Ildefonso, and then in the name of the United States in accordance with the Louisiana purchase agreement between President Thomas Jefferson and Napoleon Bonaparte. Then the "stars and stripes" were raised at St. Louis and Amos Stoddard became the first governor of Upper Louisiana, later called Missouri.

Nine years later in defense of his country, Major Stoddard fell mortally wounded at the siege of Fort Meigs in the Maumee Valley.

Today this soldier, whose broad activities and service to country criss-crossed many of the most dramatic incidents in the history of the nation, lies in an unmarked grave under one of the bastions of the ancient fort where he fell.

This personality played an interesting part in the beginnings of American history from the day in 1779 when he was sworn into the Continental Army by Baron Steuben at West Point, to that day in 1813 when wounded by a fragment of projectile hurled across the Maumee river from the British batteries near Fort Miami. Thirty-four years of distinguished public service, touching some of the fascinating events in the story of America's independence and growth into a nation, link Major Stoddard with the struggling days before the Revolutionary War, the hostilities which won independence, the feeble days before the Constitution was written and adopted, and the great events of the first four presidents.

STODDARD FAMILY TREE

Amos Stoddard was born at Woodbury, Conn., October 26, 1762, and was of the fifth generation of his family in this country. The Stoddards had been in the Colonies for at least 132 years at the time of his birth.

While on a visit to England when a young man, Amos Stoddard gave considerable attention to investigation of his family tree. He found that his English ancestors were Puritans and traced them back to 1490, at which time one of the forebears lived at Mottingham, a hamlet in Kent, about seven miles from London bridge, and there controlled about 300 or 400 acres of land.

The first of the family in America was Anthony Stoddard, born in England, arriving in Boston about 1630 and listed as a linen-draper when admitted as a freeman of the town in 1639. He is referred to in an historical sketch of his time as "the ancientest shopkeeper in town." He served as recorder of Boston, was a representative in the legislature for nineteen years and married four times. He died March 16, 1687 at the age of 70 years, indicating that he was born at least three years before the "Mayflower" landed at Plymouth.

Next in line was his son Solomon Stoddard, born in Boston in 1643, who served as first librarian at Harvard College and died at the age of 85 years. His son Anthony Stoddard, born in 1678, and who died at the age of 82 years, was a famous preacher and first of the family to settle in Woodbury, Conn. Another Anthony Stoddard followed in this line of descent, and he was the father of Amos Stoddard whose life is the central theme of this sketch.

Amos had four brothers and three sisters and he was the first-born of the family. His youngest brother, Eliakim, settled in Boardman, Trumbull County, Ohio, and two other brothers followed his lead into the West. Simeon died at St. Louis in 1848 and Curtis died in Knoxville, Ill., in 1840.

His mother was a Read, a half sister of Richard Smith of Roxbury parish, father of Judge Nathaniel Smith.

When the boy Amos was only a few months old the family moved to Lanesborough, Mass.

As a little boy Amos Stoddard was subjected to the discipline of school, home and church. His chief text for study was undoubtedly the Bible.

"If in childhood I possessed any valuable qualities, they were, a strong memory and an aptness at acquiring whatever I aimed at," he writes in some autobiographical notes. "I used to recite whole books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles. The prayers I heard at school in the daytime I frequently repeated to my mother in the evening. I was more than once called on to recite the sermon I had just heard in church, and always succeeded—once in the presence of the parson, who had his notes before him."

Need we suggest that these recollections of childhood exploits by the soldier of mature years may be tinted a bit with that enthusiasm characteristic of the veteran.

His tenacious memory, however, was sustained by sound sense and scholarly attainments for in later years he proved himself a vigorous orator, a keen philosopher and able writer.

ENLISTS IN REVOLUTIONARY ARMY

When a mere boy, small and frail, he entered the ranks of the Continental Army, being mustered into service as a private of Major's Company, 12th Massachusetts regiment, in July, 1779. It is interesting to note that Baron Steuben, the great German general who came over to help the patriots in their struggle for independence, was the mustering officer. Stoddard was somewhat doubtful about being accepted because of his size and so "gathered the dirt under his heels" to increase his height. Muster rolls of Major's Company shows that it was commanded by Major Tobias Fernald. According to those records young Stoddard had enlisted for nine months.

The 12th Massachusetts Regiment, however, was in command of Lieut. Col. Ebenezer Sprout, who was appointed July 10, 1779 and transferred to Artillery in November, 1779. The young Stoddard and thirteen other members of the

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infantry unit re-enlisted in the Artillery company commanded by Capt. Henry Burbeck, for the duration of the war. In the spring of 1780 the battery in which Stoddard served was on Constitution Island and then later transferred to Stony Point. Privations were suffered during the winter of 1780-81 and in the spring Stoddard's unit was transferred southward under the general orders of LaFayette, landing at Annapolis. After service at several points, Stoddard was present at the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown on October 19, 1781.

In his notes of the campaign this Revolutionary soldier tells us he was without shoes or vest for several months and his complete baggage consisted of two shirts and a blanket in addition to the few items of clothing in constant use.

Though the war had begun with the Battle of Lexington in April, 1775 and hostilities had been going on four years, Stoddard's period of service was enough to include some of the most thrilling events of the long struggle for independence. His battery was at Haverstraw Bay when Benedict Arnold escaped after discovery of his plot to deliver West Point to the enemy. He was present also at the hanging of Major Andre, the British agent involved in this scheme.

The four years which young Stoddard spent in the service during the Revolutionary War, had an important influence on his future. He was less than 17 years of age when he joined the colors. He was not yet full grown and suffered from sickness. Military training, however, proved of great value to Stoddard in building physique. His health improved after the early months of his service. He grew strong, and at the close of the war he was six feet in height, strong of body and in excellent health. He was able to march forty miles a day without fatigue, it is recorded. He had earned the warrant of a non-commissioned officer.

His early transfer to Artillery set the course of his future military experience. Once associated with this arm of the service which deals with big guns, intricate mathematical problems of war and, in those days, with engineering features as well, he never relaxed his interest, with the result that at the time of his death he was Chief of Artillery with the Northwest Army at Fort Meigs under Major General William Henry Harrison.

With the coming of peace, proclaimed by Washington on the eighth anniversary of Paul Revere's famous ride, troops were disbanded. Amos Stoddard returned with his unit to West Point to be mustered out and was paid off in the Continental scrip which was worth just a tenth of its face value.

Home once more, he went to Boston in the spring of 1784 and obtained a clerkship in the office of the Supreme Court, under Charles Cushing, a brother of the chief justice. He lived with the Cushings as a member of the family for two years. During this time he studied diligently, laying the foundation for his future education. He wrote much for the newspapers of that day and so ardent was he in his pursuit of knowledge that in one year he read more than 150 volumes. Such a program of study undertaken at the age of 22 or 23 years is a measure of the fine self-control and self-discipline he had built up as a result of his military training.

SHAYS' REBELLION

The loose organization of the government following the Revolutionary War, the weakness of Congress, and the troubles of the new states as evidenced by inflated currency, led to disrespect abroad and attempts at anarchy at home. Debtors organized and demanded relief. State governments foolishly issued large amounts of paper currency to ease the situation and Congress was unable to put on the brakes. A mob of 1,500 or more of rebels under the leadership of Capt. Daniel Shays, who had fought in the Revolutionary War, made havoc in Massachusetts in 1786. Shays closed the courts at Worcester and made an attempt to capture the arsenal at Springfield.

Stoddard was commissioned an ensign and served under General Lincoln in the suppression of this Massachusetts disturbance. Two regiments of infantry commanded by Cols. Jackson and Humphrey had been authorized by Congress for this service.

In January, 1787, he was sent from Boston with dispatches to several counties in the western part of the state under General Patterson of Berkshire. Later,

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command of an Artillery Company was held by Capt. Stoddard, and during the summer of 1787 he was stationed at Great Barrington. At the close of the year and the withdrawal of the state militia, he returned to his duties as clerk of the court in Boston.

In 1789, which was the year that George Washington was inaugurated president under the new Constitution, Amos Stoddard entered the office of Seth Padelford at Taunton, Mass., for the study of law. During 1791 and the following year he traveled abroad spending much time in tracing out the ancestry of the Stoddard family in England and prosecuting his law studies. After his return from Europe he resumed law studies in the office of Theophilus Parsons, it is recorded, and in April, 1793, was admitted to the bar. He settled at Hallowell, now in Maine, and took up his work as a barrister.

Little is known of his legal work, but it is assumed that it was similar to that of the average young lawyer in his first five years of practice—the drawing of deeds, wills and other subordinate work of the office.

The lure of military service was never lost by this veteran of the Revolutionary War and of Shays' rebellion. Amos Stoddard was commissioned Brigade Major and Inspector of the Second Brigade, Massachusetts Militia, by Governor Samuel Adams on April 13, 1796. From this time until his death he continued his military activities.

On June 4, 1798, he was commissioned Captain of the 2nd Artillery and Engineers and his first station was at Newport, R. I. On April 1, 1802, he was transferred to the Artillerists. In these early years of service he spent some time with the garrisons at New Haven, Portsmouth, Fort Constitution, went westward to Pittsburgh, and then returned to Philadelphia. His commission was signed by President John Adams. There was no military academy at West Point then so the very small professional army of the federal government was officered by the veterans who had proved their ability and leadership in the service.

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

There is perhaps no more interesting story in the entire history of the United States than that which deals with the acquisition of the vast and rich territory of Louisiana by purchase from France.

This territory, which doubled the size of the United States at the time it was delivered, came originally into the possession of France due to the exploration conducted by Robert Cavalier Sieur de la Salle, who came to New France, and Canada was then known in 1666. He was in search of a short route to China, a fact which reads like fable in these days, and due to his courage and curiosity he ascended the St. Lawrence, traversed the Great Lakes, discovered the Ohio river and was the first white man to descend the Mississippi river to its mouth. La Salle developed a string of trading posts or embryonic military establishments from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico.

For nearly a hundred years this vast territory remained under the French dominion. Several of the trading posts grew into towns. Vincennes and Kaskaskia were small but old cities when George Rogers Clark retrieved them in his campaign to rid the western Virginia lands of marauding savages. The Maumee Valley was used in connection with the Wabash river and the portage between the headwaters of the two streams as the route between Detroit and St. Louis. The original Fort Miami belongs to this period of French development.

In November, 1762, the entire territory west of the Mississippi and including New Orleans was ceded to Spain by Louis XV. And when the French surrendered Fort Chartres, on the east bank of the Mississippi, to Major Grant and his detachment of the Black Watch, France was left without a possession on the Continent.

However, French administration of Louisiana continued for five years after this secret treaty with Spain. Spain controlled Florida and Mexico, extending as far north as Colorado, and most of what is now Texas.

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Events leading up to the purchase by the United States of this vast territory out of which have been carved all or portions of the states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Texas, Wyoming and Montana, take on the hue of fiction in these later days.

Napoleon was at his height in Europe. He desired to conquer England. He also sought a foothold in America. By the secret treaty of San Ildefonso he again secured possession of Louisiana from the Spanish by means of a hard-driven bargain and on the promise that the territory would never be transferred to another power. He then sought to impose upon the American traders and settlers in the Mississippi basin by closing the port of New Orleans and taking away the right of the traders to transfer goods at the port.

President Thomas Jefferson, great friend of France, saw an intolerable situation coming and as a way out sought purchase of New Orleans. His offer was rejected. Things in this western country grew more troublesome. Toussaint L'Overture, leading a great host of liberty-loving blacks against General LeClerc, brother-in-law of Napoleon, in San Domingo, and a scourge of yellow fever brought utter ruin to this effort of the great First Consul of France to conquer the West Indies. This failure took away much of the glamour of extensive operations with the great wedge-like area of land in the Mississippi Valley and Napoleon listened to the American bargainers. On April 30, 1803, terms of the purchase were agreed upon. The price was \$15,000,000 and of this amount \$3,500,000 was to be paid back to American citizens of the western country for damage to their trade.

Napoleon and his tricky foreign minister Talleyrand had sold Louisiana almost before they had come into possession of it from the Spanish.

The peace-loving Jefferson had to resort to threats of war against the powerful European dictator and in the end found himself with a rather troublesome internal problem in bringing such a big territory into the possession of the federal government.

The Louisiana purchase was the greatest event of the first half of the 19th century.

In a colorful ceremony in New Orleans the territory was received from Spain with the Marquis of Casa Calvo assisting Governor Salcedo in the final ceremonies when Pierre Clement Laussat took possession for France. This was on November 30, 1803. Hardly had the transfer been completed when the news arrived that Louisiana had been sold to the United States and on December 20 the same Laussat was turning over this great inland empire to Governor Claiborne, of Mississippi, appointed by President Jefferson to act for the young republic.

General J. A. Wilkinson, for many years commander of the United States Army, accompanied Governor Claiborne to the ceremonies in the Place d'Armes at New Orleans. At high noon while French batteries manned by Spanish artillerymen saluted, the American column escorting the commissioners arrived, credentials were exchanged, the deed was delivered, and brief addresses were made in which Laussat notified the inhabitants that they were relieved of their oath of fidelity to France and Claiborne welcomed them as brethren who would be protected in enjoyment of their liberty, property and religion, whose commerce would be favored and agriculture encouraged.

The final act was the bringing down of the French tri-color and the raising of the Stars and Stripes.

STODDARD RECEIVES UPPER LOUISIANA

Upper Louisiana, or what has been called by some historians Spanish Illinois, with its capital at St. Louis and extending northward from the Arkansas river, constituted more than half of the territory of Louisiana.

Governor Claiborne and the federal government named Capt. Amos Stoddard of the United States army to receive Upper Louisiana from the Spanish authorities at St. Louis. The captain was commissioned first Civil Commander of Upper Louisiana and Intendant at St. Louis, as of January 24, 1804.

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While Louisiana had a population of about 50,720 whites and 40,120 negro slaves, and some 2,500 persons of mixed color in the New Orleans region, when it was taken over by the United States, the city of St. Louis itself had a total population of about 2,500 and its garrison numbered about a hundred soldiers. Dr. Paul Alliot, a French physician who traveled through the country, says that St. Louis was an exceptionally clean and law-abiding city. Marriage was respected and the general level of morals was high.

The ceremonies which took place at St. Louis on March 9, 1804, were even more unique than those at New Orleans, for Laussat had forwarded documents to Capt. Stoddard requesting him to receive the civil and military possessions of Upper Louisiana in accord with the Treaty of San Ildefonso in the name of France and then "keep possession of it for the United States."

Capt. Stoddard was stationed at Cahokia, on the east bank of the Mississippi near St. Louis. A detachment of the regulars under command of Lieut. Worrall and Capt. Stoddard crossed the river. In the party was also another very famous personage—Capt. Merriwether Lewis, who with William Clark, younger brother of George Rogers Clark, the following year led forth the expedition which opened up the way to the Pacific and established the American claims in the Pacific Northwest.

This company of American soldiers was received by Don Carlos Debaute de Lassus, the Spanish commandant, in front of the government house. Officials of the city and prominent citizens were there. Many of the inhabitants were in the gathering for it was an occasion of great moment in the history of the whole St. Louis region.

De Lassus then read the proclamation:

"Inhabitants of Upper Louisiana: By the King's command, I am about to deliver up this post and its dependencies.

"The flag under which you have been protected for a period of nearly 34 years is to be withdrawn. From this moment you are released from the oath of fidelity you took to support the flag. The fidelity and courage with which you have guarded and defended it will never be forgotten and in my character as representative I entertain the most sincere wishes for your perfect prosperity."

The colonel then delivered to Capt. Stoddard "the full possession, sovereignty and government of Upper Louisiana with all the military posts, quarters and fortifications thereto belonging or dependent thereof."

There was a brief reply by Capt. Stoddard in which he promised that the affairs of the territory would be administered with the least possible change in policy. It was his orders even to continue the use of Spanish law in the government of the new territory.

At the conclusion of his address the Spanish troops fired a salute and the American column marched up to the fort where they were received by the Spanish troops under arms and given possession.

The final scene was the replacing of the Spanish flag with the bright red, white and blue of the United States. Spain had forever parted from this upper section of the Mississippi Valley.

Among the forts which came under the command of Capt. Stoddard were those of St. Genevieve, New Bourbon, Cape Girardeau, New Madrid, Carondelet, St. Andrew, St. Ferdinand, St. Charles, Portage des Sioux, Marcenik and Missouri.

For a few months he exercised all the powers of government in this great region. He was relieved of the military command by his senior officer, Major James Bruff on July 1, 1804. However, he continued to exercise the authority of civil magistrate until September 30, 1804, when he was relieved altogether by General Wm. Henry Harrison, governor of Indiana territory, to which Upper Louisiana was attached for a brief period for administrative purposes.

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COMMENDED AS A GOVERNOR

Capt. Stoddard was then ordered to the South where there was much for the troops to do in the opening up of new territory, maintaining the peace in the great valley, and administering the chain of military posts and fortifications left by the French and Spanish.

Among the posts at which he served later was Natchitoches and during his Louisiana service he gathered the materials for his "Sketches, Historical and Descriptive of Louisiana," written upon his return to Fort Columbus, New York, and published at Philadelphia under date of 1812.

On June 30, 1807, he was promoted to the rank of Major, which he held up to the time of his death.

That his military work was appreciated was evidenced by the commendation of his superiors.

General Harrison wrote to President Jefferson in June of 1804 from Vincennes, that Capt. Stoddard has "divided the whole militia of the western country into twenty-four companies" indicative of some of his organization work in backing up the federal troops.

Later the same general writing to Secretary of War Henry Dearborn from St. Louis on October 18, 1805, declared:

"Sir: I beg leave to report to you by Capt. Amos Stoddard what I have before communicated that his whole conduct whilst acting as civil commandant of Upper Louisiana was, as far as I can judge, everything proper and upright and such as, in my opinion, greatly contributed to destroy the prejudices which existed in this country, prior to the cession, against our country and countrymen."

Major Stoddard was not without appreciation of the possibilities of the great territory of which St. Louis was the commercial capital. He invested in some government lands there in 1806 before his tour of duty in that region had been completed and the property afterward came into the city limits of St. Louis and was very valuable. Title was confirmed to his heirs in 1851 by the Supreme Court of the United States. It may also be recalled that his brother, Simeon, died at St. Louis in 1848.

He returned to New York in 1807 and was stationed for a few years at Fort Columbus and posts not far from places where he had seen service in Washington's army a quarter century before.

This occupation in the East gave him the leisure to do considerable writing.

He was a member of the United States Philological society and the New York Historical society.

INTEREST IN MASONRY

Like the great Washington, this officer of the Artillery of the United States was a Mason. It is quite possible that he sat in lodge with the first President on some occasion when near Alexandria, on his trips to the East.

The records of the life and service of Amos Stoddard, the tone of his writings, and the circumstances in which he lived seem to mark him as a man of exceptionally fine character. He had a fine family heritage. He proved himself a worthy leader of men in his military career. Self-control is a great military virtue for the man who leads others must discipline himself.

Major Stoddard has left two famous Masonic addresses and one of patriotic nature behind in printed form.

It is evident that he was most active in Masonry at the time he was studying and practicing law. He addressed the Kennebec Lodge "in the new meeting house, Hallowell, Massachusetts" on June 24, 1797, the year before he accepted appointment in the federal army. Hallowell is now in Maine, it will be noted.

Before he was ordered to the West he spent some time at Portland, Me., and while there delivered two addresses—one before the Portland Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons on June 24, 1799, and the other ten days later when he spoke before the citizens of Portland and the Supreme Judicial Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on the fourth day of July, the anniversary of American independence.

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The Masonic address would bear repeating today for it deals in masterful way with the ideals of Masonry in emphasizing the cultivation of the moral virtues in opposition to wordly evils.

It is quite improbable that a man who could speak such lofty sentiments and be so imbued with the spirit and essence of Masonry would exhibit other than highest type of character even in the everyday pursuits of the soldier on the frontier.

Amos Stoddard did not marry. His love for the army life, travel, ease of movement out in the boundless frontier country, probably delayed contemplation of any matrimonial ventures. His life was then cut down in its prime.

WAR ON THE HORIZON

Following his service in Louisiana, years slipped by, James Madison, a member of the Constitutional convention a quarter century before, became president, and Major Stoddard serving at posts in the eastern part of the country was in the center of the political and diplomatic discussions leading up to the War of 1812. The United States, a neutral in the battle between Napoleon and Britain, was threatened with having her commerce swept off the seas. Out in the Northwest territory, William Henry Harrison, then governor and military commander, defeated Indians led by Tecumseh at Tippecanoe Creek in Indiana. Suspicions that the British were aiding the Indians in their systematic warfare on the American settlers were confirmed in some of this fighting. Anthony Wayne had secured peace in central Ohio through the Treaty of Greenville after the Battle of Fallen Timbers. He had succeeded where St. Clair and others had failed. But out on the fringe, hostilities were renewed in this War of 1812. General William Hull ingloriously and timidly surrendered Detroit to the British and Indians without a struggle in an early stage of this war.

Things looked dark and the task of cleaning up was given to General Harrison. In looking about for one in whom he had confidence to supervise his artillery preparations and fortification he secured Major Amos Stoddard to be detailed as his chief of artillery.

At the same time that Hull surrendered, a big force of Indians massacred the garrison of Fort Dearborn, site of Chicago. British were in command of Lake Erie. Instead of carrying the war to Canada, following the idea of Henry Clay of Kentucky, the United States had lost Michigan territory, an army and a fortified town. Enthusiasm of the westerners, however, was not checked. The call went out from General Harrison for 10,000 volunteers and 15,000 patriots responded. The body of troops was divided into three divisions to be concentrated at the foot of the rapids of the Maumee river at a fortified point on the right bank named Fort Meigs in honor of the governor of Ohio.

One group of fighting men from Virginia and Pennsylvania came by way of Wooster and Upper Sandusky. A middle division, largely of Ohio militiamen, marched up through Urbana by way of Fort McArthur towards the Maumee rapids. Regulars and Kentucky volunteers passed down the Auglaize and the Maumee. The advance during the fall of 1812 and the winter of 1812-13 was slow. Roads had to be built through forests and swamps, supplies had to be carried by the units, clothing was rapidly worn out in the rough country and new supplies were not available.

An advance force of 900 men under General Winchester, attacked at Frenchtown, now Monroe, on the River Raisin, were massacred by the Indians and British with only forty escaping. More than 400 were killed in battle at this point and the remainder taken prisoners.

Harrison's army was almost wiped out by this lack of caution in advance and the expiration of terms of enlistment of many of the militiamen.

In February, 1813, the task of assembling a new army was undertaken by Harrison for the defense of Fort Meigs and the blocking of the corridor through which General Proctor and his British troops and Indian allies might once more attempt to win the old Northwest Territory back to the British colors.

MAJOR STODDARD AS QUARTERMASTER

Pittsburgh was the base of supply for this campaign which had the rapids of the Maumee for its focal point. Major Stoddard, who had been transferred to the 1st Artillery on March 12, 1812, was sent to this post and on July 16 was named deputy quartermaster general, serving as such until December, 1812. While on this duty he had charge of assembling the ordnance, ammunition, and subsistence supplies necessary to the prosecution of the campaign which had the recapture of Detroit for its goal.

In September, 1812, the Fourth Division of the Ohio Militia was encamped at Portage river, about 18 miles from Fort Meigs, under the command of Major General Elijah Wadsworth.

Major Stoddard wrote to Gen. Wadsworth on September 28, from Pittsburgh, as follows:

"Sir: I shall in a few days dispatch to you some powder, flints, etc.,—I am fearful that you will be in want of them.

"News have reached us that 200 English, and a large body of Indians left Detroit very recently to attack Fort Wayne and Fort Harrison on the Wabach—and that Malden is almost destitute of troops. If this story be correct you have a fine opportunity of falling in behind the enemy, and perhaps of taking Detroit and Malden. I merely suggest these hints for your consideration—and am, Sir, in haste, your very Huml Servt.

"Amos Stoddard, maj.
"Corps of Artillerists."

This letter gives some idea of the manner in which Major Stoddard's mind worked as to strategy. Possibly, if the British and Indians had been given a little more freedom in working farther into Indiana, the Harrison force might have cut in behind some few months later, instead of being drawn into the trap as were Gen. Winchester's men at Frenchtown.

Major General Wadsworth answered Major Stoddard on October 4, indicating he had received part of the arms and ammunition but that no flints were available and some of the guns even were without flints. He notes that the inspector at Cleveland reported that half of the arms were "totally unfit for service."

"You will readily see my present situation is not very formidable to make an attack on Detroit or Malden," writes Gen. Wadsworth. "By my present calculation I find 300 stands of arms will be wanting to complete my detachment, and wish they may be forwarded as soon as possible. The front post of my detachment is kept at Huron now under command of Gen. Perkins. Ninety-three men were sent a few days ago on the peninsula. They had an engagement with a party of Indians in which we had six men killed and ten wounded. The Indians are driven from the peninsula with loss. We are much in want of steel to repair tools for the artificers, also files are much wanted. Be so good as to forward some. E. W."

One of the general's lieutenants went to Pittsburgh to aid in getting off the supplies, and, in a letter which he sent back, indicated that Major Stoddard had much to do with the routing of new troops into the western front. Brig. Gen. DuBoise had 2,000 men and 60 pieces of artillery at Pittsburgh then ready to march towards the Maumee rapids. The guns ranged in size from 6-pounders to 32-pounders. It was thought heavy artillery might have to be sent by way of Zanesville rather than through Wooster and Mansfield due to condition of roads.

LAST DUTY AT FORT MEIGS

The fortifications in the whole region were little more than stockades or in some cases blockhouses with auxiliary earthworks. But Fort Meigs was so located and designed that it withstood exceptionally heavy artillery and rifle fire from the British troops under command of General Proctor. Major Amos Stoddard, the experienced and skilled engineer and artillerist, probably had much to do with the supervision of its construction. When ordered to Pittsburgh in 1812, it was thought he would not have to go nearer the actual front line duty. He had grown physically unfit for strenuous frontier service. He was a very

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corpulent man at the time of his death. But following Hull's defeat and Harrison's admission of too much optimism about the time it would require to win back Detroit and drive out the British and Indians, the old warrior was called upon to go to Fort Meigs.

Capt. E. D. Wood of the Engineers, in writing of the construction of the fort in those early days of 1813, said the fortified area was about 2,500 yards in circumference, picketed with logs fifteen feet long set three feet in the ground.

"Such were the instructions of **the engineer**," he says. We believe he referred to Major Stoddard, a superior officer and one of much experience in this very type of work. Eight blockhouses of double timbers, four large batteries, and a number of storehouses and magazines were built at this time, in bad weather, in addition to excavation of ditches, construction of abatis, and clearing of wood about the fort.

About April 2, 1813, the command of the post devolved upon Major Stoddard who had then in his command "the remaining Pennsylvanians, a battalion of twelve months' volunteers under Major Alexander, a company of artilleryists, and small fragments of the 17th and 19th Regiments of Infantry, amounting in all to 500 men." The fort was designed for an army of 2,000. McAfee, authority of the period, says "Stoddard was an excellent officer and made every exertion in his power to complete the fortifications."

On April 16, a general order was issued by Harrison, confirming the regulations which had been placed in effect by Major Stoddard, and, in assignment of the troops for action, command of all the batteries was delegated to Major Stoddard.

At Dayton there is a letter written in the hand of this officer and dated April 5 at Fort Meigs, in which he asks Capt. Joseph Wheaton, assistant deputy quartermaster at Upper Sandusky, to rush forward all the 18-pound shot available.

Fort Meigs was in a strong natural position on the south side of the river, with ravines and steep river bank presented to the enemy. Artillery batteries were located so that they could be served in relays by use of a large trench or grand traverse which ran diagonally through the enclosure for about 300 yards. Besides presenting a difficult target to the British artillery across the river this novel piece of military engineering, secretly constructed, did much to build the morale of the garrison.

Fort Meigs, made ready in these early months of 1813, was completed none too soon for on May 1 to 5 it sustained one of the fiercest onslaughts of the campaign. The British and Indian forces were said to have superior artillery and greater supplies.

Major Stoddard was wounded in action during this engagement. Casualties were relatively few but his loss was a real blow to the defensive forces. A few days after his wounding, lockjaw developed, and on May 11, he died probably aware that General Proctor had lifted the siege and turned his attention to other posts. In accord with his wish he was buried beneath a bastion of Fort Meigs. Major Stoddard not only died in the service but he sleeps forever in this stronghold in building and defending of which he had an outstanding part.

This engagement sufficed for a time but another siege was laid down in July and the troops at Fort Meigs were kept always on the alert.

The victory of Commodore Perry on Lake Erie in September, however, gave the Americans control of the Great Lakes, the British land forces fled back to Detroit and Malden, and Harrison's forces were able to pursue them a few miles into Canadian territory before the war closed.

Major Stoddard was only 51 years of age when he died.

Capt. E. D. Wood answered a letter of Eliakim Stoddard, Campfield, Ohio, brother of the gallant officer, relative to his effects on June 30, 1813, indicating that they were all in the hands of the commanding officer to be sold at auction and proceeds held to be turned over to the administrator of the estate. Capt. Wood said he had \$328. "I have likewise a watch and spy glass in my possession belonging to the estate both of which will be sold with the other effects and accounted for."

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In a postscript the captain writes the brother:

"P. S. You can visit this post, with perfect safety. There are no Indians in the neighborhood, a very few at all events. E. D. W."

Scattering of his personal effects among those who might buy them at the post probably accounts for the few mementoes of Major Stoddard. However, his dirk, an elegant weapon, which he carried at Fort Meigs, is now in possession of the Western Reserve Historical society at Cleveland. Many of his letters and documents signed by him are owned by the Missouri Historical society.

TWO MISSOURI GOVERNORS FOUGHT AT FORT MEIGS

A county in Missouri has been named in Stoddard's honor as first governor of the state. It is a curious coincidence that Colonel John L. Miller, who commanded the 19th Infantry, a unit of regulars, at Fort Meigs, and helped to lift the siege by leading a dashing sortie, also became governor of Missouri in 1828, serving for four years. He was then sent to Congress. A county in Missouri likewise has been named for this hero of Fort Meigs.

The grave of Major Stoddard has never been identified due probably to the fact that the old Fort Meigs site, where the outlines of the military works may yet be seen, has been maintained intact as a memorial to all those who gave their lives at that point.

Major Stoddard, so far as records are obtainable, was never identified with a lost cause. He was a man of irreproachable character, an able writer, a pleasing orator, and a wise and fearless leader.

The records of heroic service of the men who fought in the Maumee Valley more than a century ago, should be preserved and posterity should be given the task of keeping alive the spirit and courage of the soldiers who so efficiently served their country as did that noble officer of the first Artillery of the United States army—Major Amos Stoddard.

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The writer is especially indebted to Major General C. H. Bridges, the Adjutant General of the United States Army, for a complete abstract of service record of Major Amos Stoddard, March 13, 1930, and to Wm. W. Neifert, genealogist of Richard Montgomery chapter of the Ohio Society of Sons of the American Revolution, for valuable notes and references.

GLENN DANFORD BRADLEY

1884-1930

We sincerely regret to announce the death, January 4, 1930, of Dr. Glenn D. Bradley, Secretary-Treasurer and Editor. His associates in the Historical Society of Northwestern Ohio, feel that they have suffered a serious loss in the passing of a fellow-worker so worthy and a friend so sincere and companionable as Dr. Bradley has proven himself to be. He will be greatly missed and his place will be difficult to fill.

Dr. Bradley was professor of history at the University of Toledo.

He was a member of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, American Historical Association, Kansas State Historical Society, and Mississippi Valley Historical Association. He was the author of several historical works and sketches.

Dr. Bradley was born at Kinderhook, Michigan, April 12, 1884. He received degree of A. B. from the University of Michigan in 1907, A. M. in 1913 and Ph. D. in 1915. Practically all his active life had been spent in the teaching of history.
