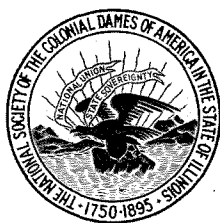


The National Society
of the
Colonial Dames of America
in the State of Illinois



History of the Illinois Society
by
Mrs. Paul Blatchford

Historical Sketch of
Forty Years of the National Society
of the
Colonial Dames of America
in the
State of Illinois

Published in Chicago
1935

THIS history of forty years, lovingly dedicated to the members of the Illinois Society of yesterday and today, is not merely the chronicle of an organization. It is as well a record of the achievements of some hundreds of the descendants of the founders of our country, giving proof that ideals and ability have come westward in the souls of these women, who like their ancestors have had the ambition to help build in a new place.

It was most fitting that Mrs. Paul Blatchford, an Honorary Member who is eminently a Colonial Dame, should write this history. Mrs. Blatchford has served the Society in almost every capacity. We are grateful for this additional evidence of her devotion and loyalty.

The cooperation of Mrs. Wentworth G. Field and Mrs. Earle B. Fowler has been most helpful to the President in arranging the details of publication.

ALICE FESSENDEN PECK

President

April, 1935

The Illinois Society of

CHARTER MEMBERS ILLINOIS SOCIETY

MRS. RALPH EMERSON
MISS EFFIE L. EPLER
MRS. HENRY B. FAVILL
MRS. CHARLES H. FERRY
MRS. HORACE E. FISK
MRS. DANIEL G. GOODWIN
MISS MARIA S. JOHNSTON
MRS. M. B. KENNEDY
MRS. SAMUEL H. KERFOOT
MRS. JULIA DUNCAN KIRBY
MISS CORNELIA GRAY LUNT
MRS. THOMAS S. MCCLELLAND
MRS. HENRY B. MASON
MRS. SAMUEL M. NICKERSON
MRS. EPHRAIM A. OTIS
MRS. JAMES C. PEASLEY
MRS. WILLIAM S. POTWIN
MRS. HENRY S. ROBBINS
MRS. HENRY M. SHEPARD
MRS. ADLAI E. STEVENSON
MRS. MARTHA G. W. TRIPPE
MRS. CAROLINE ROSE WALKER

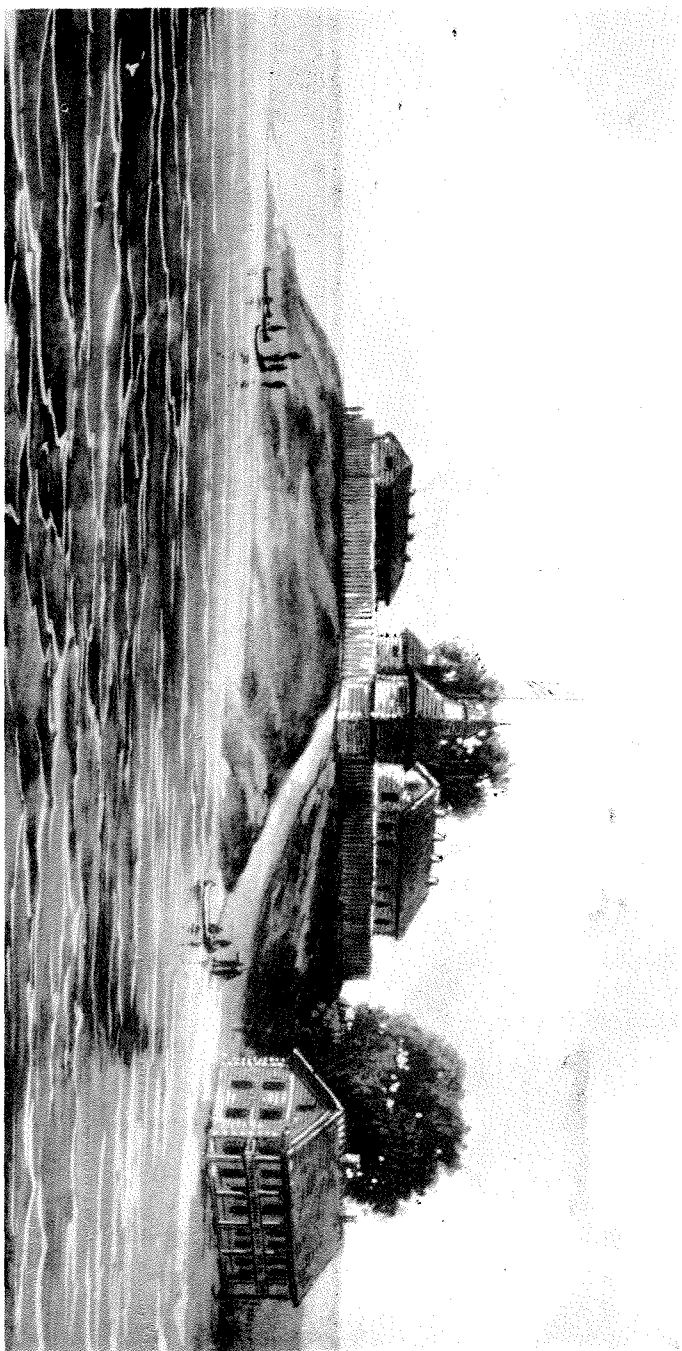
The Colonial Dames of America

PRESIDENTS


MRS. SAMUEL H. KERFOOT.....	1895-1898
MRS. SAMUEL M. NICKERSON.....	1899-1900
MRS. HENRY S. ROBBINS.....	1901-1904

ANNUAL MEETING CHANGED TO APRIL

MRS. JOHN C. WELLING.....	1904-1905
MISS CORNELIA G. LUNT.....	1905-1908
MRS. JAMES S. WALKER.....	1908-1909
MRS. ROBERT B. GREGORY.....	1909-1911
MRS. WILLIAM S. POTWIN.....	1911-1912
MRS. HENRY B. MASON.....	1912-1916
MISS CORNELIA B. WILLIAMS.....	1916-1919
National Historian 1916-1919	
MRS. PAUL BLATCHFORD.....	1919-1922
MRS. HOLMES FORSYTH.....	1922-1926
Third Vice-President of the National Society 1931—	
MRS. HEATON OWSLEY.....	1926-1929
MRS. CARROLL H. SUDLER.....	1929-1932
MRS. ROBERT GRAY PECK.....	1932-



Fort Dearborn—1803



THE Society of Colonial Dames in Illinois in its fortieth year takes a look backward. As we grow in age we naturally like to remember our past.

The complete history of the National Society which has recently been so ably written by its former President, Mrs. Joseph Rucker Lamar, gives a vivid and valuable background for our work; as Illinois has been devoted to its aims and plans from the beginning. We have loyally shared in the various projects of the National Society while at the same time we have carried on our individual life. So we may turn to that full history of events when we wish to remember all the activities in which we have taken part. At this time we may enjoy reminiscences of things which originated in our own Society.

There are two members living today from the group who gathered for tea at the home of Mrs. Samuel H. Kerfoot on December 5th, 1895 when a few Colonial Dames from the East were invited to meet and consider the advisability of establishing a Society. Thus the Illinois Society was the second of the Associate States to organize and the first to incorporate. Preliminary organization was formed at that time and Mrs. Kerfoot was chosen the first President with a list of Officers and Board of Managers whose interest and loyalty continued through their lives.

Realizing that this inland country has been occupied by those who have come as strangers, this Society has specialized in helping the new comer, the foreigner and the immigrant, so ignorant of our life and ideals. For this reason a Scholarship was founded to encourage the study of American history and to assist foreigners to understand their new surroundings and become good citizens. This Scholarship continues an active power today. Many students have received our help and in return have conducted classes in citizenship and history. Some of these have later taken prominent places in the world, in archaeology, education, medicine and one as a Senator in a Western State.



George Washington

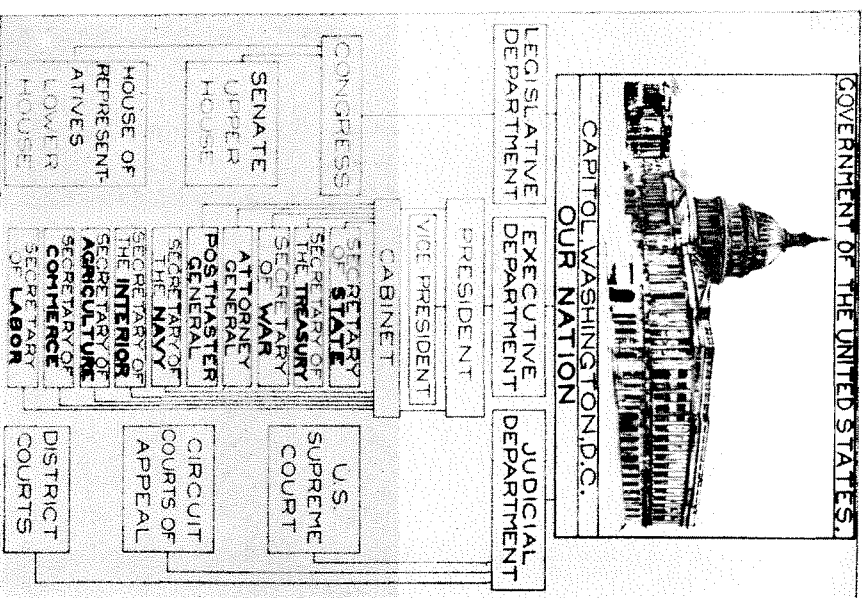
Born Feb 22, 1732

First President of the United States
Called the Father of Our Country

"The power under the Constitution
will always be in the people"

George Washington

Charts for Visual Education.



Out of this work came the Civic Primer written by a young Bohemian, J. J. Zmrhal who entered with enthusiasm into our American life. He gave many patriotic talks at a time when they were much needed and has become a District Superintendent with supervision over 85 schools and 86,892 pupils in Chicago. This Primer tells how the immigrant may become a citizen and gives a short outline of the history of the United States. It was published by our Society first in 1912 in English, and then translated into Bohemian. The foreign language was placed on the page opposite to the English, to enable the foreigner to learn our language and at the same time his duties as a citizen. The Civic Primer was published also in English and Polish in 1914; English and Lithuanian in 1915; English and Italian in 1918; English revised in 1920; English and Yiddish in 1921. In 1920 our devoted Miss Anna P. Williams made two copies in Braille for the blind. These Primers have been of inestimable value through the years when no other books of this kind were available.

To visualize this information, six charts were made to hang on the wall during classes. Three charts represent the City, State and Federal governments showing the legislative, executive, and judicial branches in each. Three illustrate the history of our country: a picture of the Mayflower, symbolic of the way all have come to this land; a portrait of our first President, George Washington, the Father of our country; and St. Gaudens' Statue of Abraham Lincoln, the Preserver of the Nation.

A moving picture machine was purchased and was the first to be used in the night schools of Chicago, of value to the teacher as well as to the pupils. Films were bought and a special one called the "Gates of Opportunity" was made for the National Patriotic Service Committee to enable adult foreigners to see the educational opportunities open to them.

As Illinois had pioneered in this work, her experience made her an authority. Miss Williams was placed on the first National Americanization Committee where Mrs. Blatchford followed her while Mrs. Andrews was chairman. In 1925 Mrs. Forsyth became National Chairman serving for six years and it was during this time that the name was changed to Patriotic Service Committee which gave wider scope for work in the different

states. We all remember the great Poster Exhibit sponsored by this Committee and first held in Chicago when two prize-winners were selected from 172 designs submitted from the various parts of the country.

Educational needs were realized during the war when the illiteracy of the masses of the people was discovered. At that time, in 1917, the Colonial Dames learned to know and were able to help Miss Frances K. Wetmore in her work of conducting classes and preparing teachers for adult work. These classes held in schools, settlements, offices—one even in an abandoned freight car—have been aided by the Colonial Dames in various ways. In the women's classes paid assistants have been provided for many years to care for the children who could not be left at home during the study hour.

We have helped to establish Teachers Institutes and in 1925 a large Americanization Council was arranged when representatives of foreign groups throughout the city reported their work at a morning session and in the afternoon, addresses were made by educators and prominent leaders.

For many years our members attended holiday celebrations in the classrooms and schools. One Flag Day was particularly picturesque when the meeting was held in a small park under the trees. There the flag was saluted by a group of mothers who listened with deep attention to a talk by our President on the meaning of the Flag.

The Graduation Exercises for the classes of adult education of the Public Schools of Chicago are attended by our members and six years ago through the influence of the Colonial Dames the use of the large auditorium at the Field Museum was obtained for their increasing numbers. For these occasions our Society has secured speakers of prominence. Last June our Committee again tied more than 500 diplomas with the gay red, white and blue ribbons. It has been inspiring to see the parents and even grandparents come forward to receive the certificates which meant so much hard work and sacrifice for these grown students. With what a thrill of pride one father led his young son to the platform to share his joy in this new honor.

After graduation we saw how lost the group of Mothers were

without their classes, so the Colonial Dames helped to form a "Post Graduate Club" where they could continue to study and could learn to conduct meetings of their own. Although our advice is still sought, an independent social life is developed, and it is now self supporting.

When immigration was active the Colonial Dames realized the need for a dignified naturalization ceremony, so we visited the courts, presented flags and a card on which the oath of allegiance was printed and arranged programs when the applicant for citizenship presented his final papers and was admitted into the life of the nation. After public opinion was awakened, other organizations were able to take up this work and we have withdrawn to help in other ways.

This has been our policy, to pioneer as we have seen a need, without in any way entering politics, and we have proved the value of our vision. For this reason we placed a paid representative at a desk in the Naturalization Bureau of Chicago who has regularly given instruction to those who wish to take out papers for citizenship. At first this service was only for a few hours each week but now our Society has secured a trained man for daily work. The files record his visits to the home of the applicants and the progress made in the classes to prepare for the Federal examination, and his regular reports to Miss Wetmore who has charge of the Adult Education in the city show the importance of the work. Last summer when Miss Wetmore was called to Washington to give a paper before the Adult Educational Association of the United States, of which she is an honored member, she met there by appointment the Director of Naturalization and reported to him this work, so heartily approved by the Immigration official in this district. As a result, directions were sent out from Washington to all the States to follow this Chicago method. So again Illinois has led in helping the foreigner.

An Industrial Art Cabinet was prepared by the Colonial Dames with examples of dainty needle work which was circulated in order to inspire the pupils and presented to the Public School Art Society. Pictures also have been placed in schools from time to time.

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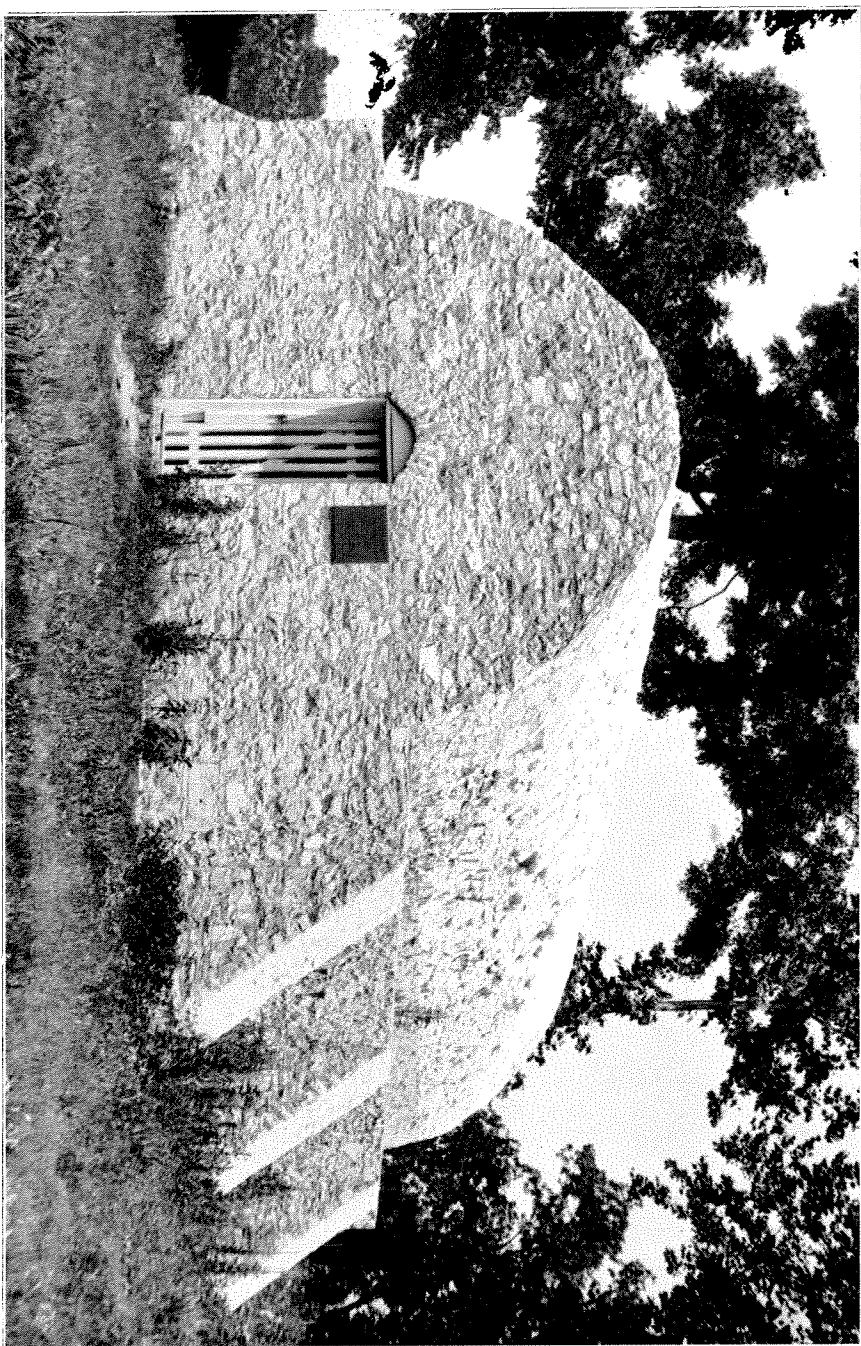
An Industrial Art Cabinet was prepared by the Colonial Dames with examples of dainty needle work which was circulated in order to inspire the pupils and presented to the Public School Art Society. Pictures also have been placed in schools from time to time.

During the unemployment period we have resumed our activity in Red Cross sewing. Our Society has provided supplies for work, books and magazines for the thousands of men cared for in the Shelters. A projector was bought and presented for their use in programs where our members have occasionally taken part.

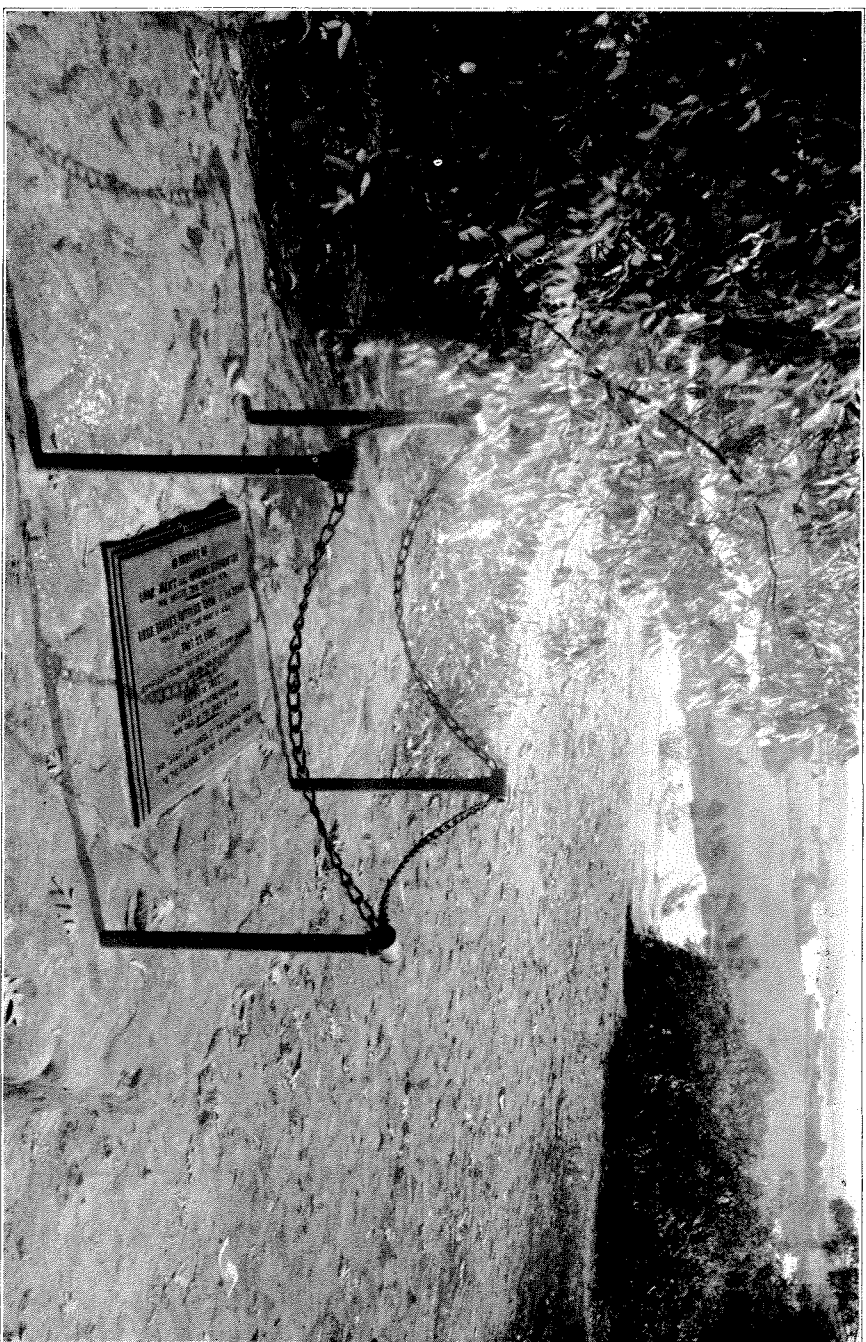
At the Northwestern Settlement that good neighbor who lives in the "House by the Side of Road," Miss Harriet E. Vittum, welcomes our Society each year to her large Washington's Birthday celebration. Various groups of young people prepare a program, a pantomime if they do not speak English easily, or a play with scenes from the life of the Father of our Country. One of our officers responds to Miss Vittum's address and we furnish ice cream and birthday cakes glittering with brightly lighted candles. During the past ten years this event has been enjoyed by hundreds and is appreciated as a factor in the educational and social life of the community.

The Washington bicentennial year (1932) was celebrated in various ways in schools and settlements, but the outstanding Memorial Service was held at the Chapel of the University of Chicago when the Colonial Dames invited the Society of Colonial Wars and Mayflower Descendants to unite in honoring our great first President. The beautiful Vesper service was made memorable by this gathering of Patriotic Societies whose members marched in the processional following the choir and glorious flags borne by representatives of the Army and Navy of the United States. The address was a remarkable exposition of the character of George Washington given by Dean Charles W. Gilkey, D.D. The music, prayer and praise gave inspiration as the afternoon sun shone like a benediction through the Gothic windows on the great audience.

The Historical work of the Society continues with increasing collections of photostats of documents, letters and books written in Colonial Days—all belonging to members of our Society. Beside the rare manuscripts found in France relating to this Illinois territory which were presented with other gifts to the Chicago Historical Society, we have given John Trumbull's valuable painting of "The Battle of Bunker Hill."



FORT DE CHARTRES
Built by Pierre Duque Sieur De Boisbriant in 1719.



STARVED ROCK

Visited by Joliet and Marquette, 1673. Fort St. Louis built here by La Salle and Tonti, 1682.

Historic research has taken us into many fascinating places in Illinois and to bring these to the knowledge of the public, a folder map was made, called "Historic Trails in Illinois." This gives a list of historic spots and the routes leading to them, and many are the motorists who have followed the Trails over the fine highways. At the suggestion of the National Patriotic Service Committee an illustrated outline of Illinois History was written. Two lectures were prepared and both are being extensively used. The pictures for the slides were taken from old prints and paintings and emphasize the early days, the French occupation, the English period, and the triumphant march of George Rogers Clark which won this vast territory for the United States.

Few realize that on the Mississippi at Fort de Chartres near the southern end of this state, a gay French life existed before George Washington was born, and that only one hundred years ago on Lake Michigan at the Chicago river, Fort Dearborn guarded from the Indians the small trading post which has now become the second largest city of our country.

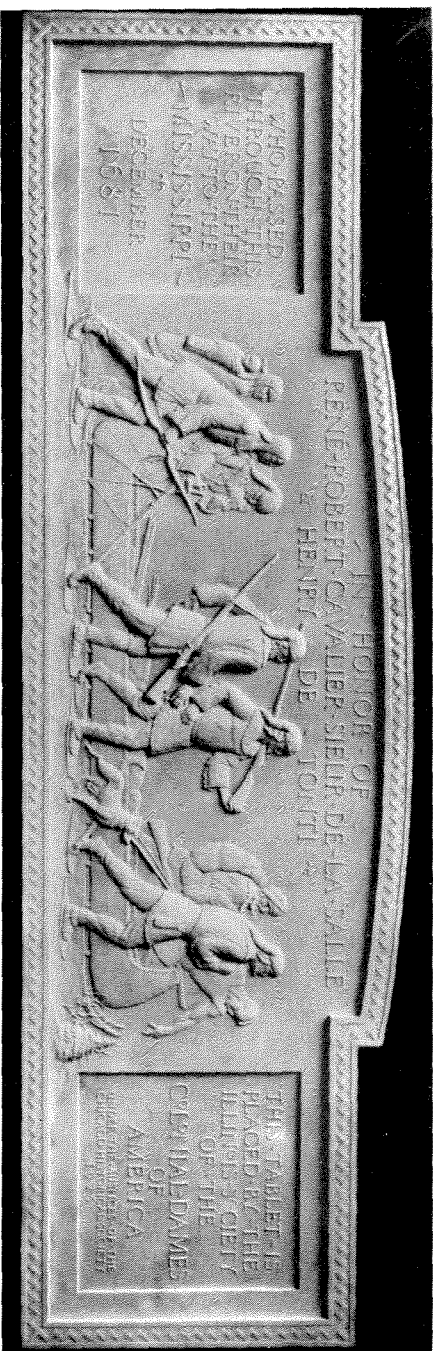
When we study the volumes containing the records of the Society, we appreciate the time merely spent in writing these pages. A quick survey of our tangible contributions shows: The *Scholarship* still active today, followed by the *Primer*, visualized by the *Charts* to make more concrete the Government and History of our country and the *Posters* to guide adult education and prepare for *Naturalization*. The *Historic Maps* follow and then comes the *Outline of Illinois History* illustrated by slides and the *Tablets* to mark historic spots, as well as the collections of *Photostats* to recapture the spirit of Colonial Days.

Our thoughts go back not only to the pleasant associations of the members when working for a common purpose, but also to the delightful social gatherings and the charming hostesses who have so hospitably entertained us through the years. We have enjoyed lectures and programs of music, papers given by our members, and the reports of the Biennial Councils in Washington where friendships are made with the Colonial Dames of the Nation.

It is inspiring to feel that we have entered heartily into these

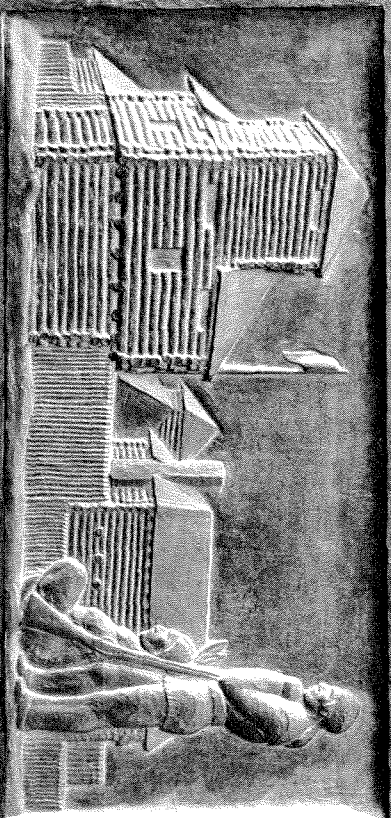
great National interests and fully shared, not only in the relief of suffering during the Wars, but in the restoration at Jamestown, the Plymouth Memorial, Sulgrave, Bellevue and Dumbarton and Gunston Hall through committee work and the raising of funds.

In the history of the Illinois Society for the first twenty years, written by our dear Mrs. Luther W. Bodman, we find preserved for us the events and also the spirit of the Colonial Dames. There she tells not only of the founding of this Society by our first President, Mrs. Samuel H. Kerfoot, (1895-1898) but of the Presidents who followed, Mrs. Samuel M. Nickerson, (1899-1900) a charter member who presented the Society with its seal, "an adaptation of the early seal of the State of Illinois"; Mrs. Henry S. Robbins, (1901-1904) also a charter member, devoted and active from the beginning through the years. She was our first representative at the National Council in Washington and later rejoiced to see her dream come true, a home for the Society, realized as she arranged our beautiful room at the Fortnightly. She was followed by Mrs. John C. Welling, (1904-1905) who loyally carried on the work, and then came Miss Cornelia G. Lunt, (1905-1908) a charter member lovingly called "the first lady of Evanston", whose loss we have deeply felt this winter when we had hoped to have special reminiscences from her for this sketch. Mrs. James S. Walker, (1908-1909) was gracious and charming in meeting the needs of her time. Mrs. Robert B. Gregory, (1909-1911) is as delightfully responsive today to the life of the time as she was when our active honored leader. Mrs. William S. Potwin, (1911-1912) a charter member, devoted herself with consecration to the highest interests of the Society, even through her last long illness. At her death, Mrs. Henry B. Mason, (1912-1916) also a charter member, took up her work and endeared herself to all. She toiled valiantly to present our American ideals and institutions to the simple minded peasants who came to our shores. We associate the Primers with her name, and remember how she referred to these little books "stamped in gold and bound in blue as soldiers in Continental bluff and blue fighting against ignorance and vice."



Tablets on Michigan Boulevard Bridge, Chicago.

Then followed our great war President, the National Historian, Cornelia Bartow Williams (1916-1919) whose name has been given to our scholarship. How zealously she inspired and led us in endless ways through those strenuous years, in Red Cross work, sewing, knitting, providing supplies and raising money. She placed the tablet at Starved Rock on the top of that high bluff overlooking the Illinois river, where Fort St. Louis was built, a reminder of the heroic LaSalle and his friend Tonti who as early as 1682 saw the value of the great water way to the Gulf and held it for France. Next came Mrs. Paul Blatchford (1919-1922) deeply and actively interested in Americanization. It was during her Presidency that the Society celebrated its twenty-fifth birthday when the seven living Illinois Presidents gave most interestingly their personal reminiscences, witty, gay and earnest memories. In a pioneering trip she placed a tablet on the old stone Powder Magazine at Fort de Chartres, on the Mississippi south of the present city of St. Louis a witness of the glory of the French days in Illinois. Our beloved Mrs. Holmes Forsyth, (1922-1926) ably carried our activities into the National Patriotic Service Committee as Chairman. She brought us into our headquarters at the Fortnightly and now serves as Third Vice President of the National Society—as well as the Secretary of the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall. The two beautiful tablets in memory of LaSalle and Tonti, Marquette and Jolliet on the Michigan Boulevard bridge were placed during the Thirtieth anniversary celebration of the Society when our distinguished and charming National President, Mrs. Joseph Rucker Lamar was entertained here. We do not forget how graciously Mrs. Moses Wentworth as Vice President presided during Mrs. Forsyth's year of absence. Mrs. Heaton Owsley, (1926-1929) continued the life of the Society. While she was President the Poster Exhibit was held and the Society was honored by the visit of our present delightful and able National President, Mrs. James P. Andrews, whose childhood home in Chicago brought her very close to us. Mrs. Carroll H. Sudler (1929-1932) succeeded to the Presidency and brilliantly carried on our growing activities. During her term of office the "Illustrated Historical Outlines of Illinois" were



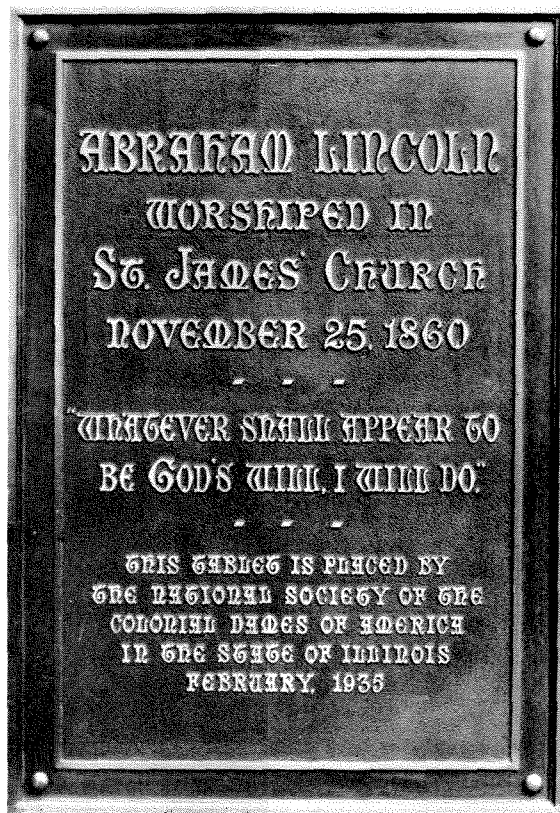
HERE STOOD
OLD FORT DEARBORN
1803 - 1812

THIS TABLET IS PLACED BY THE ILINOIS SOCIETY OF THE COLONIAL DARNS OF AMERICA

written and a tablet was placed on the tall modern building where Fort Dearborn once stood. There it overlooks the river, that pathway to the Illinois Country where passed the explorer, adventurer, missionary, priest, fur trader, pioneer and settler.

Mrs. Robert Gray Peek, the charming President of today has led the Society devotedly through these last difficult years, even through her own serious illness when the loyal Vice President, Mrs. William Brooks Greenlee ably and delightfully carried on our activities. A tablet has just been placed at St. James' Episcopal church in memory of Abraham Lincoln who attended service there November 25, 1860, after he was elected President of the United States. The unveiling and presentation took place at a Lincoln Memorial service on Sunday, February tenth, which was attended not only by the Colonial Dames, but by the Society of Colonial Wars and the Mayflower Descendants with foreign consuls and a Senator to represent the Governor of the State. Lincoln's words, spoken in Washington, "Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do" were placed on the bronze and the President of this Society voiced our aims in her words of presentation, when she said in part, "Among the activities of the Society I represent today, are the obligations to preserve traditions, to stimulate a spirit of *true* patriotism, a genuine love of country, and to honor the memory of those men and women whose ability, sufferings and achievements in the service of this country are beyond all praise."

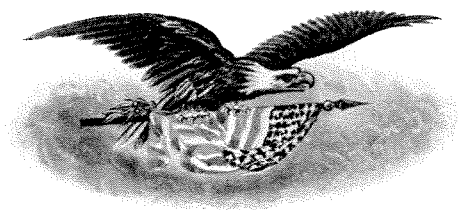
Each President of the Society knows the loyal help she has received from her Board of Managers, Chairmen and Members of Committees who were always ready to assist in every way and gratefully do we remember the many members whose faces, grave and gay, appear to us as we review these forty years. Because word came to us recently referring to the Colonial Dames as a "tower of strength", we realize anew that we must prove ourselves worthy of our heritage. The work is done so quietly that few appreciate what our Society means, but we are observed and followed, and like the city on a hill, the light must shine because of its position. May it always be with a clear steady light to guide the way out of the darkness of ignorance and wrong. New conditions arise through disasters which the



St. James' Church, Chicago.

recent years have brought and a challenge has come to us all, which we must conscientiously meet. The foes of our time are not clad in uniforms but subtly watch to take away the independence and freedom so valiantly won by our Fore-fathers of the Colonies in that formative period of our nation.

As the years pass our membership has increased and we are happy to welcome new faces into our circle. Let us not forget we are here because of distinguished services rendered to our country in those early days, and, mindful of our responsibility, use our leadership wisely. May the years to come bring more of steadfastness of purpose and devotion as each member goes forward with wise insight and vision to meet the needs of this changing world.



MEMORANDA OF GIFTS
MADE TO
THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE COLONIAL DAMES
OF AMERICA
COLLECTED FROM
THE TREASURER'S REPORTS OF THE
ILLINOIS SOCIETY
BY
MRS. ROBERT GRAY PECK

1898—The first contribution was made in May to the National Relief Association	\$ 100.00
A contribution including bandages, etc. with money for the Spanish American War.....	1,208.75
1901—The Spanish War Memorial.....	200.00
1902—The Pohick church where George Washington was vestryman	50.00
1903—The Cape Cod Memorial.....	50.00
Seventeen Memberships in the Association \$100.00 each	1,700.00
1906—The Jamestown Memorial.....	200.00
1907—Southern Industrial Education Association..	50.00
1909—Pocahontas Memorial Society of Maryland for a statue of Pocahontas.....	25.00
1911—The George Washington Memorial Building in Washington	550.00
1912—The Memorial Fund "To the Titanic Heroes" \$1.00 each, about.....	100.00
1913—National Red Cross for Flood sufferers.....	150.00
1914—Washington Portrait	100.00
Fund to restore Sulgrave Manor.....	50.00
The Katherine Cabal Cox Scholarship Fund..	100.00
Belgium Relief Fund.....	100.00
1915—Sulgrave Manor Fund.....	50.00
1916—For Polish Sufferers.....	50.00
Louisiana Society to restore the plantation of Chalmette	25.00
Toward Panel in the Valley Forge Memorial Church	100.00

1917-18—Worlds War Reports:

Red Cross work by the entire Society with the
National Relief Association 1,110 articles
sent to Ship Chicago.

Articles sent to France 232.

To the son of a member "somewhere in
France" with 70 knitted garments "for his
men" 136.00

First Liberty Bonds bought by Illinois Dames 123,000.00

Many Primers sent to Camps.

Hospital Ship 4,000.00

Cruiser Chicago 939.00

American Red Cross Illinois Tornado sufferers 200.00

Red Cross War Fund..... 890.00

Comforts for 149 Field Artillery..... 300.00

YMCA War Fund..... 1,000.00

Italian Relief Fund..... 40.00

YWCA Relief Fund..... 275.00

Battery F 5th Field Artillery..... 136.00

Camp Recreation Fund..... 2,675.00

Incidental War Work..... 733.84

During 5 months in 1917, 3,553 garments made
and sent; 1,720 Surgical dressings; 2,406
Knitted garments.

1918-19—2nd, 3rd and 4th Issues of Liberty Bonds reported 602,000.00

American Red Cross Drive..... 5,000.00

Grace Gassette Work in France..... 100.00

Charles Merwin Howe, YMCA Work in France 100.00

Work of one of our members in France..... 100.00

Italian Relief 100.00

American Fund for French Wounded..... 260.00

French Refugee Garments..... 54.00

Yarn Fund 95.00

Armenian Syrian Relief..... 60.00

Ambulance for Base Hospital, France, \$2,-
400.00 returned by Red Cross after Armis-
tice, distributed as follows:

Grace Gassette Work in France..... 1,000.00

Armenian Syrian Relief..... 700.00

U. S. Hospital, Ft. Bayard, New Mexico 700.00

1919—Plymouth Memorial	1,500.00
Standards for the flags used at the National Council in Washington.....	7.00
1920—For Soldiers and Sailors in Hospitals.....	250.00
Illustrated Sampler in Massachusetts Book...	75.00
1924—Sulgrave Fund	6,000.00
Post cards for Sulgrave etc.....	259.00
Colonial Calendars	500.00
1925—Film, "Land of Opportunity".....	100.00
1926—Sulgrave Manor, restoration and Replica at Sesquicentennial	766.00
1927—For Replica at Sesquicentennial.....	254.95
1931—For Dumbarton House.....	10,850.00
National Cathedral, Washington.....	100.00

The last gift to the National Society is a glass and silver plateau in five sections for the dining table at Dumbarton House.