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MASONIC DIGEST



WHY FREEMASONRY SURVIVES

Masonry, marching under the leadership of God and the banner that bears the motto, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," with the peasant and the prince, the mechanic and the merchant, the workman and the millionaire, the learned and the unlearned, following in equal rank and common step, knows neither race nor nationality, neither caste nor conditions, as it proudly and beneficently moves down the centuries.

—CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW

ONE WEEK BOOK

Rev. Eleazer Williams
The "Lost Dauphin"



This Wisconsin Missionary, Who Struggled for Three Decades
to Prove His Title as the Eldest Son of the King of France;
Was a Member of the First Masonic Lodge in
Wisconsin (1824)

(For sketch see Page 3)

*Photographed from Painting by George Catlin,
Owned by Wisconsin Historical Society*

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Eleazer Williams and Albert G. Ellis

Since the 1986 Oneida History Conference I have had the privilege of learning more about the environment and people surrounding the world of Eleazer Williams. From all observations Mr. Williams is still very much an opportunist with indications of some very dubious motives for his involvement with Tribes from the Six Nations, the Oneidas in particular but not exclusively.

Most people are not aware of the fact that Albert G. Ellis did much of Eleazer's writings for him as Mr. Williams' skills were not the best in this area. From casual observation Mr. Williams was very busy trying to secure Indian Land for the state of New York and make a profit while doing so, and in the process exude the idea that he was the lost Dauphin of France, son of Louise the XVII of French Revolution infamy.

Attached is the paper submitted at the '86 Oneida History Conference on Eleazer Williams, included is a bibliography on other writings about this person, compiled in 1985 by G.E. Buerger, who at the time was attending Rutgers College.

There is no doubt that Eleazer Williams was one of the primary mechanisms used by the State of New York to help swindle the Iroquois out of their ancestral homelands, by utilizing the premise that they would "protect" them from the negative forces of white society. But as Mr. Ellis observes and writes in his Recollections, the whites were soon after the Wisconsin lands as well.

The information written by Albert Ellis as he traveled with Eleazer Williams gives some insight to the environment both politically and physically and is well worth the time and effort to read, if one is interested in both Oneida as well as Wisconsin history. What Mr. Ellis wrote is listed as, Recollections of Men and Events, and is part of, The Seventh volume of Collections of the Wisconsin Historical Society and consist of portions of the Lyman C. Draper papers.

June of 1821, Mr. Ellis writes of traveling in the company of Eleazer Williams, destined for the far Northwest or specifically Michigan and Green Bay. Accompanying them were about one half dozen Oneida Indians, and were to meet in the country west of Lake Michigan, with the intention of making terms for a cession of lands from the Western tribes.

Mr. Ellis describes the four day trip by stage coach (as there were no railroads) to Buffalo, and then on to a new steamboat called, "Walk-in-the-water". The description of the town, types of houses, how oxen were used to tow the steamboat through the rapids, and principal stopping places, lists about 100 homes along with remnants of homes burned during the war of 1812.

Detroit is reached after three days and is described as, "it was built on a single street, parallel with the River, and something over half a mile in length." "The population of Detroit was mixed, the French Canadian prevailing. There were many half-breeds, and it being the season of the year when the Indians usually came in from their wintering grounds, the wild Capes seemed to be in undisputed possession. They did not appear over select in their language or manners; still they were quite inoffensive to the whites, especially the French traders, to whose every order and command they rendered most instant obedience. No police existed or were necessary."

Eleazer Williams and his Indian delegates lingered here some weeks, awaiting the arrival of delegates from the Stock bridges, the St. Regis, the Tuscaroras, and the Senecas; also pausing for further action of Governor Cass, and the War Department, sanctioning this movement of the New York Indians towards acquiring a new home in the West - - Green Bay. The arrangement at length came to a completion: all the delegates arrived — Gov. Cass and the War Department sanctioned the proceedings, and CC. Trowbridge, a confidant of Gov. Cass, was appointed special agent on the part of the Government to superintend the negotiations."

At this point in time Mr. Ellis becomes ill, and "Eleazer and the Indian delegates along with Mr. Trowbridge continue on to the Bay, where, after much delay and opposition from interested parties, they succeed in negotiating with the Winnebagoes and Menomonees, for a small cession just above the Grand Kaukalin.

After four days the New York Indian delegates returned home and reported to the several Tribes the result of the negotiations with their "Western brethren". "The following ensuing spring, 1822, application was made to the War Department for a renewal of permission of the delegates for a second visit to Green Bay, to make payment in goods for their purchase of the year before, and to assay an extension of the purchase at Little Chute. The response of the Government was favorable, and Governor Cass was instructed accordingly. This delegation was much larger than that of the year before; the Stockbridges and Muncees were more fully represented. Solomon U. Hendricks, hereditary chief, being of the party; arriving at Detroit, John Sargeant, was appointed by Gov. Cass, to superintend the negotiations on the part of the Government.

This delegation remained in Detroit for some time finally leaving for Green Bay on the 4th of August in a schooner called the Superior, which had been constructed out of the ruins of "Walk-in-the-water" and proved to be more navigable for the gales that blew on the lakes.

The description and names of the various settlements along both banks of the Bay and Fox River are very informative as it includes the names of the people who inhabit the area as well as their family ancestry and cultural background, which includes their religious beliefs.

"On the west side was the old fort: not a building of any kind above, below or near it for a mile. The residents on the River, except some half dozen Americans, were retired French voyagers, and half-breed French and Menomonees; they had without let or hindrance, taken up the whole

shore of the River above the fort, for six miles; divided it off into little strips of one or two French arpents in width, which they called their farms; they claimed back at right angles from the River eighty arpents, about two and three fourths miles in depth. They had reduced most of the fronts for an acre, or two, or three, some more, some less deep, to a state of cultivation; and had growing at the time of our arrival, the first of September, very fair crops of potatoes, maize, oats, peas, spring wheat, pumpkins, melons, cabbages, onions, and other common garden vegetables. Most of them had teams of oxen, and a kind of implement claimed to be a plow, with which they broke the soil."

Ellis goes on to describe the abundance of wild fowl, fish, and game; the various animals they raised which included staunch horses, oxen, chicken, pigs and cows. Maple sugar was a very busy industry by his accounts and included the whole family's involvement, and provided a time for work as well as social activities while at the sugar camps.

In September of 1822 Williams and his delegation sought a place to winter on the west side of the river and finding the abandoned former home of the Indian agent who had died three years prior decided to stay there and since it was government property there were no complaints.

"The first business of Williams and the delegates, after housing themselves and the goods, was, to assemble the Indians -- the Menomonees and Winnebagoes, and in compliance with stipulations of their treaty made the year before, pay them \$1,500 in goods. In less than a week both tribes, to the number of three or four thousand, were assembled and camped along the river bank. A day being appointed, and the American and French citizens, with the officers of the garrison, notified the grand council; the New York delegates, the Menomonees and Winnebagoes, were gathered in front of the old agency house; the spectacle was quite imposing. Solomon U. Hendricks, chief of the Stockbridges, or, as he styled them, the Mohickanucks, a man of education, and of more than common ability, made the opening speech. He addressed the Menomonees and Winnebagoes as his grandchildren -- told them that the few goods before them were presented not so much in fulfilment of their treaty stipulation, as a testimonial of their love and affection for their grandchildren. The Menomonees and Winnebagoes made suitable replies, acknowledging the relationship, by calling the New York Indians grand-fathers. The goods, consisting of blankets, calicoes, blue cloths, guns, powder, lead and shot, barrels of pork and flour, with a liberal supply of tobacco, were carefully divided in two equal piles, and presented to the two tribes. The treaties were produced, the proper receipts drawn on them, when the chiefs of each tribe signed, and the officers of the army, citizens, agents, and interpreters witnessing. The attached two pages are copies directly from the book and describe the ceremony that surrounded this agreement and the reasons given by the Menomonees and Winnebagoes as to why they cannot give up any more of their territory.

The rest of Mr. Ellis's documentation in this particular volume concerns his efforts as well as others in securing a school for Indian children and finally for all children. Apparently Eleazer Williams who was sought out by the Episcopal Church to do this never seems to put forth the effort to provide^{to} establish a permanent school for the Oneida or New York Indian children.

Mr. Ellis was also in the employment of the Episcopal Church for a number of years while working with Mr. Williams and does make some concrete accomplishments in setting up educational settings for children from the settlements.

In this volume (#7) Mr. Ellis also provides background on a number of original families who inhabited the Fox River Valley such as the following: Grignon, de Langlade, Lawe, Doty, Porlier, Irwin. With each individual is some background, and a whole segment on the Grignon family.

I am told the Oneida Cultural Heritage department has a large collection of the papers from Mr. Ellis, and I would assume that they would contain information on various Oneida people with accompanying background? I can only hope that this search for our roots will continue and will be documented in a form agreeable to our young people to allow them to know more about themselves as a nation and understand their responsibilities as they become adults.

There are many adjectives that could be applied to Mr. Williams, as time and research has borne out, however I can honestly say that I am glad that the Oneida came to Wisconsin, by whatever devious means were used to bring them here. Wisconsin is where my parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren have been born and raised. Many talk about returning to the "homeland", and that is okay, but as for me, Oneida Wisconsin is my home, it cradles the bones of my friends and family, it provides all that I need to live and contribute to a community of friends and family.

It must have been very hard for our ancestors who traveled from New York to Wisconsin to seek refuge from a world gone crazy with greed, but they did and I am proud that they had the fortitude to stay with their convictions to find a better place to raise their families, and Wisconsin was the answer then as it is now.

ing of blankets, calicoes, blue cloths, guns, powder, lead and shot, barrels of pork and flour, with a liberal supply of tobacco, were carefully divided in two equal piles, and presented to the two tribes. The treaties were produced, the proper receipts drawn on them, when the chiefs of each tribe signed, and the officers of the army, citizens, agents, and interpreters witnessing. Nor a drop of liquor was seen; and the remaining part of the day was devoted to feasting.

On re-assembling the parties the next day, when the deputies of New York Indians made an effort to procure an extension of the session, the Winnebagoes were ready instantly with a reply, declining most positively to grant it. They were already being crowded; white people below Chicago were beginning to pass northward. The Menomonees' answer was scarcely more encouraging; they could not sell any more.

The Winnebagoes were preparing to leave for their fall hunts; but before starting, they would treat their grandfathers to a dance. The whole tribe assembled in front of the house in a large circle, the dancers, and drummer—the master of ceremonies—in the center; first they gave the pipe dance, an amusing affair, a single one dancing at a time, the trick of which seemed to be to keep time the drum, and especially to suspend action instantaneously with the cessation of the instrument—the dancer to remain in the exact attitude in which the cessation of the drum caught him; frequently the attitude was ridiculous in the extreme; and the maintaining it for a moment, till the drum commenced again, formed an exciting tableau. Next followed the begging dance, preceded by a speech of the drummer, setting forth the extreme want of some of their very old, poor people, and asking charity in their behalf.

The whole concluded with the war dance, a sight to test the nerves of the stoutest heart. The Winnebagoes at that time, fifty-four years ago, were in all their perfection of savage wildness; two thousand of them, men and women, old and young, were massed in a circle, standing fifty deep; the whites, army officers, in the inner ring, and the warrior dancers, drummer, and singers in the center. Twenty of their most stalwart young warriors took their places with not a thread of clothing save the breech-cloth; but all painted in most gorgeous colors, and especially the faces, with circles of black, white, red, green and blue, around the eyes, giving the coun-

tenances expressions indescribably fierce and hideous, all armed with tomahawks, knives, and spears. At first the dance was slow, to measured time of the drum and song; for there were a hundred singers, with the voice of the drummer, both male and female—the latter prevailing above the former. Soon they began to wax warm, the countenances assumed unearthly expressions of fierceness; their tread shook the solid earth, and their yells at the end of each cadence, rent the very heavens. None could endure the scene unmoved—unappalled. This tribe at that period, with their stalwart men, Amazonian women, and independent men, athletic figures, and defiant bearing, can hardly be recognized as the same race, in the degraded Oneidas, who are now seen in our streets, whose abject mien, attenuated, shrunken forms, half-starved, naked, destitute, miserable, mendicants, half civilized though they be, furnish a painful commentary on our Indian civilization.

When the dances were concluded, a shaking of hands, with a grand "bosho," all round, the Winnebagoes prepared to leave the ground; and in an hour, there was not a sign of one to be seen. The Menomonees lingered; they felt more kindly disposed toward their grand-fathers; negotiations were soon renewed, resulting finally in a further treaty, granting the New York Indians a right in common with them, to all their country without reserve; the which treaty, though no doubt made in good faith, became subsequently the source of almost endless trouble, terminating at last in confining the New York Indians to two small reserves; one for the Stockbridges, Munsees and Brothertowns, on the east shore of Lake Winnebago, of some eight by twelve miles; and the other twelve miles square on Duck Creek, for the Oneidas; and from this last, the whites are just now moving heaven and earth to dislodge the Indians.

The negotiations concluded, and the Menomonees having retired, the New York Indians began to look out for winter quarters. There were but few of either party that had come as emigrants; those of the Stockbridges located at Grand Kaukalin; the few Oneidas chose the Little Kaukalin. Many of the deputies returned to New York.

A proposed object of Williams, was to establish an Episcopal mission at Green Bay. He had visited New York and Philadelphia the spring before, and been duly commissioned as missionary to the Western Indians, by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal church; and had procured for the win-

ELEAZER WILLIAMS 1787-1858

ABSTRACT BY: Judy Cornelius

ELEAZER WILLIAMS 1787-1858

Eleazer Williams was born into the Catholic faith among the Caughnawaga Mohawk about 1787. His father, Thomas Williams, was a great-grandson of Eunice Williams, whose family had been captured at Deerfield in 1704. Eleazer's mother, Mary Ann Rice, was also of mixed blood having been captured and adopted by the Mohawk. Between Thomas and Mary Ann there were at least eleven children, according to the mission records of the Jesuits.

During the Revolutionary War, Thomas Williams fought along side the British, but his alliance would change with the introduction to his American kinsmen. Eleazer would likewise be profoundly influenced by this move.

In 1800, Deacon Nathaniel Ely, whose wife was related to Thomas Williams, invited Thomas to send one of his sons to Longmeadow (Massachusetts) to live with them, to allow him an education in the Congregational faith. The behind this was to prepare the son to become a missionary among the Iroquois people. Thomas complied by sending Eleazer and a younger brother (who did not stay). The records vary somewhat but put Eleazer somewhere around ten years old.

Apparently because both of the boys were unable to adapt to any type of regimental or disciplined mode of living, travel was used as an educational tool. Eleazer traveled quite extensively to various locations throughout the East, including Caughnawaga. He attended some prominent schools for short periods, he also became acquainted with a number of influential people. Francis Parkman, the historian, has Eleazer as "being educated" at Dartmouth, but records show he attended only a few months there.

He did however, intermittantly, spend three years with Enoch Hale at West Hampton. During his stay with Hale, Eleazer became the interest of Bishop Hobart of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York.

Many, if not all, of the various religious denominations of that time were seeking to "Christianize" the "Pagan" Redman, and what better way to accomplish this endeavor then to enlist the aid of one of them. Eleazer, with his educational and religious background made an ideal candidate for this venture. But it was not only the church who had an interest in Williams correspondence of his would show.

The approaching War of 1812 caused President Jefferson to enlist as many of the Indian Tribes as possible to remain neutral or align themselves with the United States. Because Thomas Williams was an influential chief, he was sent a personal invitation to join the Americans, mainly to, "repress beligerent movements", by any tribe who might decide to be friendly with the English. Along with the invitation went a promise of land, support money, and compensation for any losses he might incur. As a result of his alliance to the Americans, Williams was banned from returning to his homeland, although in declining old age he did return. He gave up an estimated estate of several thousand dollars plus an annual annuity of two hundred and fifty which he had been receiving from the English government. However, the promises which were made to Williams were never honored--to him or his widow.

Eleazer served with his father in this war, mainly in "confidential" service.

After the war the Williams family with their followers had moved across the border from Caughnawaga(Canada) to the United States (St. Regis).

After the war Eleazer was approached by the Jesuits to be a missionary for them at St. Regis. Instead, he left the faith of his birth and the Congregationalists, who had invested a great deal of money on his education, to be confirmed in 1815 by Bishop Hobart of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

In 1812 the Caughnawaga Indians had empowered Eleazer, as an agent, to act in their behalf to collect from the state of New York two hundred and sixty-six dollars annuity for some land transfers, he received this sum regularly every year from 1812 until 1820, but none of it ever reached the people it was supposed to.

Eleazer was able to produce an eleven letter alphabet in the Mohawk language, thereby making it easier to learn. He had also translated part of the book of common prayer and it was published in 1816. He was fluent in the Iroquois language, a strong and persuasive orator, knowledgeable in both church and civic functions. In his educational travels thru the east he had picked up a number of sermons written by his ancestor, the Rev. John Willims, sermons that he would claim he wrote.

In 1816 with authority from Bishop Hobart, Williams traveled to Oneida Castle to serve as catechist, lay reader and religious leader to the Oneidas.

He was warmly received by the Oneidas who had been familiar with previous missionaries, especially Rev. Kirkland. The group who welcomed him were to be known as the First Christian Party. Not too long after his arrival another group, The Second Christian Party acknowledged him as their religious leader, this would now include three-fifths of all the Oneidas.

In 1819, Albert G. Ellis was asked by Williams to join him in teaching the Indian children at Oneida Castle, in return Williams would teach Ellis; French, Greek and Latin. Ellis recorded his surprise to find that Williams needed the tutoring, as he did not know the basics of the English language, especially the written aspects of it. Ellis was also responsible for doing all of Williams correspondence and recordings.

The following four years that Ellis worked under Williams he was never allowed to function as a teacher to the children, even though a school room was added to the old Skenandoah mansion, which Williams occupied. Ellis recorded in his journal, of the lengthy sessions the Oneidas would set through while Williams talked of his childhood, youth and ancestors at Caughnawaga, all of which he would later deny.

Williams evangelizing efforts were very well received at first, but his financial ineptness soon led to problems, with the Indians and non-Indians alike. Unfortunately about this time he was becoming known as an authority on Indians and Indian matters, and was considered a trustworthy individual.

Shortly after Ellis joined him, Williams began talk about a great, grand Iroquois empire somewhere in the vast regions west of Lake Michigan. His plan was for a government split into divisions of ecclesiastical, civil and military departments, with the first to be pre-eminent.

Along about this same time the Rev. Jedediah Morse developed a concern for the Stockbridge Indians, his theory was that they should be moved away from "contaminated" white society. The Ogden Land Company also had a concern with the Native People of New York---they held pre-emptive rights to most of the Iroquois lands, should they "decide" to sell.

Ellis states in his records that Williams was in almost daily correspondence with the War Department, the Ogden Land Company and Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. All of these agencies contributed large sums of money on a regular basis. In a letter to the Ogden Land Company (dated Sept. 1833) we find Williams complaining about the money he received and what he thinks they still owe him for the part he filled in the "Great Cause" of removal of the New York Indians.

In the records of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society records there are a number of Ogden's the hierarchy of the church's administration.

In the summer of 1820, Williams and a small delegation traveled as far as Detroit before they found out that the land which they were interested in at Green Bay had been granted to the local Indian agent, John Bowyer. They returned to Oneida Castle, but were not discouraged.

Another delegation traveled to Green Bay in 1821. This time they were successful in being granted a small strip four miles in width, crossing the Fox River at right angles, with Little Chute as a center and running each way equidistant. Both the Menominee's and the Winnebago's agreed to this, in lieu of payment and rations which would be paid the following year.

When the delegation returned to Oneida Castle they received some very strong criticism from most of the Iroquois People, especially the First Christian Party, who wrote to Bishop Hobart complaining of Williams' plans and requesting his removal. As far as can be determined there was no response to this. On the contrary, the following year another delegation was sanctioned by the church, government and Ogden Land Company with funds and patronage to travel to Green Bay again.

The delegation was larger this time owing to the fact that the Stockbridge people now included the Brothertown and Muncee Indians.

The Menominee's and the Winnebago's met with the New York Indians to receive their deferred payment, at this point they were asked for an extension of the cession. The Winnebago's absolutely refused and withdrew from the council. Williams was very persuasive, made all kinds of promises and after some time was able to negotiate a treaty whereby the New York Indians would be joint occupants to nearly one-half of the present state of Wisconsin. President Monroe, with slight modification, approved it in March of 1823.

The following year about one hundred Oneidas and just about as many Stockbridge moved to their new home. Williams and his delegation spent the winter at Green Bay, Williams at the vacant Indian agency, which Ellis tried unsuccessfully to convert into a school, the school Williams had promised when negotiating the treaty.

In 1823 Williams (who was about 36) married fourteen year old Madelaine Jourdain, who was the daughter of the agency blacksmith, Joseph Jourdain. She came from a French and Indian (Menominee) background. It was an arranged marriage with no courting, and Madelaine who was said to have had a suitor had to abide by her parents wishes. She is described as being a very pretty but uneducated half-breed. Prior to Madelaine, Williams had approached one of the daughters of Louis Grignon, but she politely refused his offer. It should be mentioned that Madelaine owned 4,600 acres.

Williams took his new bride to New York in 1825, to be baptized and confirmed by Bishop Hobart who gave her his surname to be used as her middle name.

Williams was ordained a deacon in 1826, but never received any higher ecclesiastical rank than that. From their union came three children. Two daughter died in infancy and one son, John Lawe. In 1867 John was a steamboat captain on Lake Winnebago. By Ellis's account father and son were said to have been close.

The marriage from all accounts, and Eleazer's lone traveling did not seem to be a happy one. The large tract of land which Madelaine once owned would gradually be lost to cover bills. When she died in 1886, she was living alone in a desolate looking cabin on a small parcel of land near Green Bay in the town of Lawrence in Brown County. The area is now occupied by the Lost Dauphin State Park.

In 1827 the Mennominee Tribe showed their opposition to the New York Indians in the treaty of Butte des Morts, by choosing not to recognize them as owners in common to their territory as they had previously stated in the treaty of 1823. Colonel Stambaugh advised the Mennominee's to sell their land to the government and disregard the New York Indians. In 1830 commissioners appointed by the president appeared at the Bay to establish boundaries for them. Chief Oakkosh, one of their main leaders, denied that the New York Indians had any right to their land, but instead were considered tenants at will during good behaviour, but not controllers of the soil.

The Mennominee's ceded one-half of their lands to the government and ignored the New York Indians. However, the senate took action to be "just" to the Iroquois People by the following measures:

the Stockbridge, Brothertown and Muncee Indians were restricted to a parcel eight miles by twelve miles on the eastern shores of Lake Winnebago while the Oneidas and other Six Nations members were settled at Duck Creek west of the Fox River on a tract of about twelve miles square. This was ratified by the senate on May 17, 1883.

Williams dream of an "Iroquois Empire" was slowly fading, as was his Iroquois following.

His lack of attendance at the Duck Creek settlement. His unconcern about their spiritual needs. His refusal to teach them either English or Mohawk. His condemnation of other denominations and the exposure of his financial affairs led the Oneida's to try to rid themselves of Williams.

In 1832 the Oneida's, with Chief Daniel Bread as their leader asked Colonel Boyd, the Indian agent, to sit in on a council meeting. Boyd complied and brought along a few of the Green Bay citizens. Boyd was asked to draft a copy of their complaints in triplicate to send to the War Department, the governor of New York and to the proper authorities of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The communication was witnessed and signed by the chiefs of the First Christian Party.

The Rev. Solomon Davis had been working as a missionary at Oneida Castle since 1821, and in 1830 led a group of about 250 Oneida's to the Duck Creek settlement. Davis would soon become familiar with Williams and sent a letter of complaint to* Bishop Kemper, who in turn reprimanded Williams.

*Bishop Hobart died in 1835, being succeeded by Bishop Onderdonk as bishop of New York. Bishop Kemper was appointed to a newly formed area of authority which included Missouri, Indiana, and the Northwest. Williams was in the Northwest with authorization from New York, so that there was some disagreement as to whose authority he was under. Apparently the Oneida's were not the only people to prefer charges against him.

After the 1838 treaty and rejection by the Oneida's, Williams retreated to his wife's estate. He still maintained a correspondence with people and some of his kin back east. There are letters to the diocese in New York requesting a missionary position there. He also did a lot of traveling back and forth to New York.

In 1841, while at St. Regis, Williams learned that the prince de Joinville (third son of Louis Philippe, then king of the French) was planning "to go via the great lakes to Green Bay on Lake Michigan, and then starting from Mackinaw, the old Indian Michillimackinac to follow up the track of our officers, soldiers and missionaries who pushed on till they discovered the Mississippi". (a quote from his memoirs)

Learning that the prince was looking for someone who knew Indian habits and history, Williams was at Mackinaw when de Joinville's boat docked.

In later years (1851) Williams would tell Mr. Hanson, author of the Lost Prince, about this encounter with prince de Joinville. The encounter he claims was brought about to ask Eleazer to abdicate any possibility of his right to the throne of France. Williams goes into some detail about the whole meeting and the numerous promises made to him if he would sign the document the prince produced.

Williams relates that he could not barter away the rights of his family and stated "though I am in poverty and exile I will not sacrifice my honor.

Williams had in 1838, entered the office of George H. Waskins, editor of the Buffalo Express and confided in him under the seal of profound secrecy that he was the "Lost Dauphin".

In 1846 the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Indians and others in North America appropriated money for his support as a missionary, but after two years the stipend was withdrawn.

In 1850 he went east to offer his services for the removal of the Senecas from Indian Territory to the upper waters of the Mississippi, his offer was declined. He did not return to his family after this but took various missionary positions, for short periods of time. He spent the remainder of his life at St. Regis.

He died August 28, 1858 in great poverty, alone in a cottage at Hogansburg.

In 1947 Eleazer Williams remains were exhumed from St. James cemetery at Hogansburg, New York, as the mission there had been closed down. Rev. Christian from Oneida, Wisconsin was given permission to reinter Eleazer's remains at Holy Apostles Church.

Before the remains were reburied, Earl G. Wright, director of the Neville Museum in Green Bay took photographs from almost every angle, as well as careful measurements, which were sent to the University of Chicago, where it was determined that they were of part Indian origin. Wright also sent the information to osteologist of Ward's Natural Science establishment in Rochester, New York,

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'Lost Dauphin' Story Remains in Question

ONE MEANS TO LOOK

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By PETER PETERLIN

Press-Gazette Staff Writer

Whatever else Richard La Bonte may have found out about Green Bay's "Lost Dauphin" during eight months of research for a book he plans to do on Eleazer Williams, he hasn't established whether or not the legendary missionary had any true claim on the French throne.

At least, if he has, the Upper Montclair, N. J., resident wasn't revealing it during an appearance before the Brown County Historical Society Friday night. La Bonte, director of promotion and advertising for McGraw-Hill Publications and a direct descendant of Williams' father-in-law, has been in Green Bay the last several days on a fact-finding mission involving facts from the first half of the 19th century.

What he hopes to do with the facts he comes away with, together with facts he has come up with elsewhere, is to throw new light on the old controversy of whether or not Williams was the lost heir to Louis XVII or, for that matter, whether or not there was a "Lost Dauphin" at all.

Loss of Memory

The French Revolutionary government issued documents stating that the Dauphin died imprisoned in a temple during the latter part of the 18th century. But stories, purportedly started by his own sister, Madame Royale, began to circulate later that the prince was removed from his imprisonment by royalists and taken to America.

Williams, who was ostensibly the son of Thomas Williams, a Mohawk Indian, was obviously not a full-blooded Indian. By his own account, he suffered total amnesia in a swimming accident at 13, wiping out all memory of his earlier life. He later was widely believed to be the "Lost Dauphin" and became the subject of many books and articles because of it.

La Bonte, in fact, said Williams never said he was the "Lost Dauphin" himself in the hundreds of letters he has reviewed, only that there was strong evidence that he was.

If La Bonte hasn't established whether or not his distant relative was the "Lost Dauphin," however, he has gathered strong evidence that his detractors through the years weren't entirely correct either.

He termed charges by Green Bay pioneer Gen. Albert G. Ellis that Williams was almost an illiterate "utter nonsense" and said he has examined hundreds of specimens of the Oneida Missionary's handwriting to disprove Ellis' argument that many of the letters supposedly written by Williams were actually in the handwriting of an assistant.

La Bonte said Williams wrote in "acceptable English. He was not a literary man. But he certainly was not illiterate."

He also disputed a contention by Lyman C. Draper, founder of the Wisconsin Historical Society, who once said Williams' wife Madeline had never even heard the story of her husband's royal heritage until she saw it in a magazine article in 1853.

Williams to his wife five years before the cited article appeared which said "the long story of my foreign descent is true."

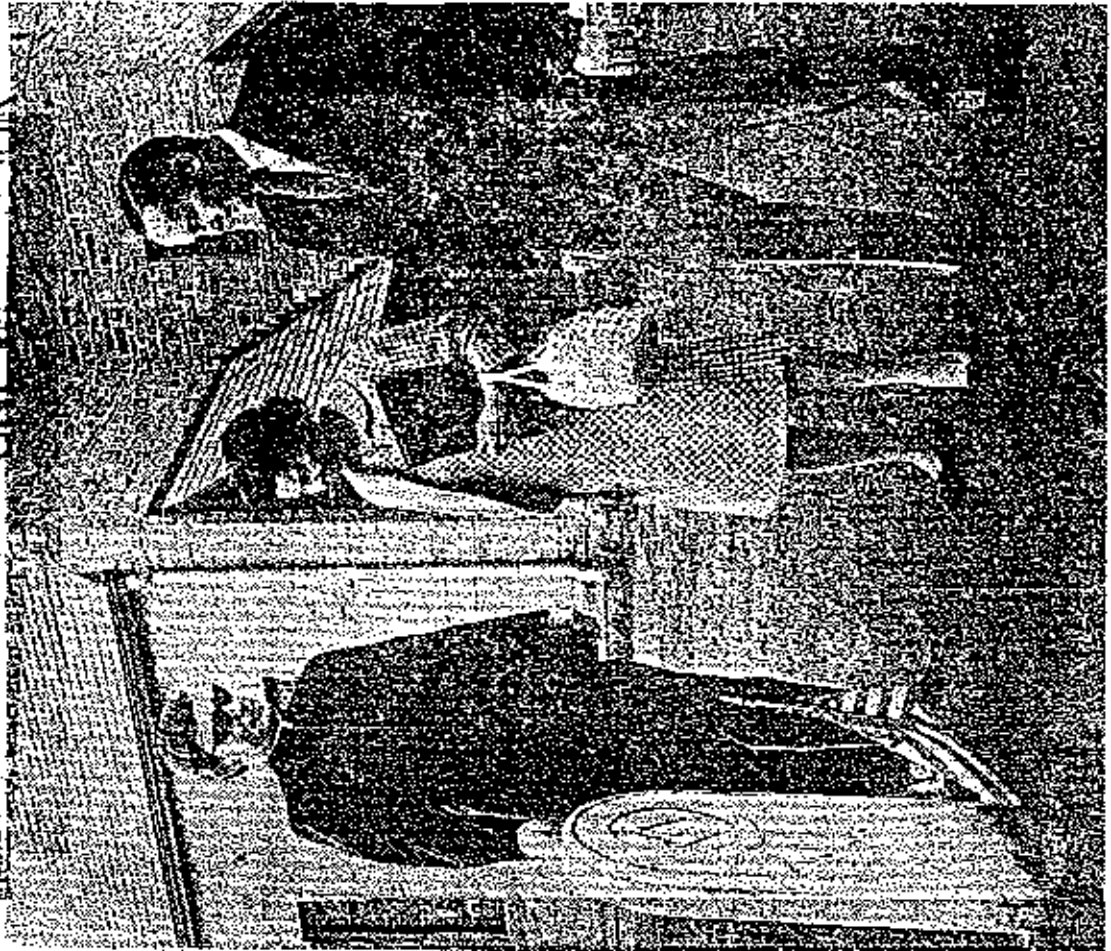
Colonel Rank Disputed La Bonte also argued that the inability of historians to find record of a Colonel Eleazer Williams during the War of 1812 did not mean Williams was being dishonest when he called himself Colonel.

The rank of Colonel, he maintained, was often bestowed to Indian agents and others as an honorary rank and could have been relegated to Williams during his service as a scout during that war.

La Bonte has spent most of his time here poring over Williams' personal effects and records in the Neville Public Museum, which were either left here when the Oneida missionary returned to the east coast, or returned here from elsewhere.

His research into the life of his great-great aunt's husband has brought him as near to his home as the New York City library, where he has read everything available on Williams' life, and as far as the Vatican in Rome where, according to a related legend, a letter left behind by the Dauphin's sister explaining what actually happened to the deposed heir to the French throne, is kept in a top secret "iron vault."

La Bonte's appearance Friday night, appropriately enough, took place at the site of the Old Oneida Mission, established by Williams in 1821, when he led a band of Oneidas from New York



Grave of Secrets — Richard La Bonte, right, a direct descendant of Eleazer Williams and currently working on a book about the legendary "Lost Dauphin," is shown Williams' grave by the Rev. Larry A. Westlund, pastor of Holy Apostles Church. The grave occupies the site of the Old Oneida Mission established by the controversial missionary. With La Bonte is Mrs. Dorothy Wittig of the Brown County Historical Society. (Press-Gazette Photo)

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