

**DANIEL CLAUS' NARRATIVE OF
HIS RELATIONS WITH SIR
WILLIAM JOHNSON AND
EXPERIENCES IN THE LAKE
GEORGE FIGHT**

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Daniel Claus' narrative of his relations with Sir William Johnson and experiences in the Lake George fight by Various

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VARIOUS

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Can 325.3.1

SOCIETY OF COLONIAL WARS
IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

DANIEL CLAUS' NARRATIVE
OF
HIS RELATIONS WITH SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON
AND
EXPERIENCES IN THE LAKE GEORGE FIGHT.

LAKE GEORGE CELEBRATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT.

NATIVE TROOPS IN OUR COLONIAL POSSESSIONS.

Major LOUIS LIVINGSTON SEAMAN, M.D.

Printed by Order of the Society
June, 1904.

Can 325.3.11

The Society.

NOTE.

The Claus Manuscript and the Lake George Celebration Committee's Report are printed in accordance with a resolution adopted by the Society at the Annual Meeting, on Saturday, December 19th, 1903.

The Secretary, in preparing the Claus Manuscript for the printer, has thought it preferable to preserve as nearly as possible the spelling, capitalization and punctuation of the original.

Dr. Seaman's Paper was read at a meeting of the Society held March 21st, 1904, and is printed in accordance with a resolution adopted by the Society at that meeting.

ARTHUR S. WALCOTT,
Secretary.

THE CLAUS MANUSCRIPT,

Daniel Claus Esqr. was born the 13th Sept. 1727 at Bennig-
ham a Town near the Imperial Free City, Heilbron the property
of Count Wadian of Menz. The place is protestant Lutheran over
which his deceased Father Adam Frederick was prefect, he was
descended from an Antient Family in Transylvania who were said
to be the founders of —————* one of the principal Towns of
that principality, but the Reformation early spreading to that
Country they adopted Doctor Luther's Tenets and a Persecution
agst. its Adherents soon after taking place, together wth. ye savage
Wars of the Turks in those parts they suffered so much under
these circumstances that they were obliged to quit their landed
Estate wch. was considerable and afterward confiscated and took
Refuge in the Imperial free city Ulm Where Protestantism was
more tolerated and their Descendants still were esteemed and
countenanced at the Imperial Court and employed both in Civil
and Military Stations, as appears by the —————* Diploma
granted them not long after, with much Town Distinction honor-
ing them to carry the Imperial Insigns of the Lion and Eagle
Wings together wth. the or & sable (yellow & black) colors. The
Imperial uniform wch. Diploma Mr. Claus's Father had in pos-
session as the surviving elder Male Branch of sd. Family together
with a Genealogical Tree of the Family the latter he left in Ger-
many among his Relations, taking a copy of the Diploma authenti-
cated by an Imperial notary public copied and translated it himself
upon parchmt. & had the Arms done as nearly after the Copy
of the Original as he could in this Country untill it may be better
executed in London & inregistered in the Herald's Office.

Mr. Claus's coming to America in Autumn 1749 was occasioned
by a person making his appearance in the part of the Country
where he lived & arriving from America to visit his Relations, he
being a Clergyman's Son in the Dukedom of Wirtemberg, Mr.

*Illegible in original manuscript.

Claus became acquainted with him found him in all outward appearance a genteel clever & sensible Man who could tell his story extraordinary well of being concerned with a respectable House in Virginia who wanted to establish a House upon the Rhine & in Holland for the Silk & Tobacco Trade, having these Commodities brought from Ams. and manufactured in that part of Germany on acct. of the Cheapness of Labour; And in short convinced people unacquainted with those Matters of the most plausible prospect of Success and Advantage, offering Mr. Claus a share; & at the same time buying up Quantities of Hock and Rhinish wines and agreeing for the Building of Silk Manufactories enticing even a rich German Nobleman to carry on said Buildings to whom he engaged the Chief Management of Carrying on the work in Germany and Mr. Claus was to go with him to America as being of proper Age to acquire the English Language & get acquainted with that Trade, Accordingly arriving in Philad. in Autumn 1749 he to his disagreeable surprize found himself convinced of what he suspected all along on the passage at Sea of being quite deceived & imposed upon by that person & luckily secured as much cash as to bring him back to Germany again, but as there were no Vessels going for England in Spring 1750 Mr. Claus proposed & partly agreed for a passage in a Fall Ship in the mean while accidentally meeting with a Col. Weiser, Indian Agent for the provinces of Pennsylvania, Maryland & Virginia to the Six Nations who was going that Spring to meet Deputies of the 6 Nations at Onondago abt. some Land and other Matters concerning said provinces, Mr. Weiser offered to Take Mr. Claus as a Companion and introduce him to the Natives of America and show him the Curiosities &c. of this Country wch. he was well acquainted with, And Mr. Claus readily accepted the Offer and sat out with Col Weiser from His House in Berks County, in May 1750 and proceeding by the settlement of Bethlehem & Nazareth in Pennsylvania to the Menissings & Esopus then crossing Hudson's River to Reinbeck Camp Livingstons Mannor to Albany from thence to Schohairee where Mr. Weiser first lived & learned the 6 Natn. Language his father havg. been one of the first settlers sent over by Queen Ann. From thence he proceeded to Fort Hunter Where Mr. Claus saw the first large settlement of Indns. the Mohawks Country themselves 250 or 300 Warrs. from thence to Colo. after-

wards Sr. Wm. Johnson's house who was then finishing his Seat on the Mohk. River of a large Stone House with two Wings afterwards in the War 1755 called Fort Johnson having been joined with stone walls by way of Ramparts & made defensible agst. small arms &c. From thence they proceeded to Stone Arabia, Canajee.

—————* Flatts. The old Inhabitants of which places were Acquaintances & Relatives of Col. Weisers being descendants of those Germans sent to America by Her late Majy. Queen Ann and showed the Travellers every Friendship & Kindness in their power. At the last Settlement they hired a Man & horse to carry some Refreshments thro' the Indn. Country but Col. Weiser according to Indian Hospitality wch. he was no stranger to, always shared with the people of the House he put up at, whenever he took a meal. On their arrival at Onondago, a poor barren place, they found the Indians in great Mourning & Grief on acct. of their Head Sachem Canagsadigo being dead a few days before by Poison which was suspected to have been conveyed into his Victuals by some french Emissaries that then resided at Onandago Lake under the Disguise of Traders debauching the 6 Nations to the french Interest and inviting them to Suergachy wch. Settlement the Abbe Picquet was then forming after the peace of 1740, in order to draw over the 6 nations by large presents & fine Speeches and rather succeeded too well on acco. of the Lethargy & Carelessness of the Indian Commissioner at Albany who entirely neglected those Matters in that Time of peace Notwithstanding wch. this good Indian Chief Canagsadigo kept firm to the British Interest rejecting every Artifice by presents etc. from Abbe Picquet and wch. the Indians suspected occasioned his Death, for these french Emissaries had been tampering with him to no purpose a few days before his Death. This disagreeable circumstance detained them much longer than they expected Mr. Weiser being obliged to go thro a formal Ceremony of Condolence before he could proceed upon his other Business and their Stores were consumed before the Buss. was half finished and they obliged to depend upon an Indian Diet of Indn. Corn, Squashes, Entrails of Deer &c. which altho no Hardship for Mr. Weiser who experienced the life before, was a great one for Mr. Claus who never saw such eatables made use of before by Mankind, and was pretty well pinched with Hunger before he

*Illegible in original manuscript.

could persuade himself to taste them; during their stay at Onandago wch. was abt. 3 weeks he collected a vocabulary of Indian Words joining it to his Journal wch. he regularly kept. On their Return to pensylvania wch. was so late that all the Ships for Europe were sailed so that Mr. Claus was disappointed going home that fall; In the mean while Colo. Weiser introducing Mr. Claus to the then Governor of Pennsylv. who was James Hamilton, Esq, who showed himself very friendly and kind to Mr. Claus asking him frequently to his House, and during the Course of Winter & Spring 1751 prevailed upon Mr. Claus to take a Tour to the Mohawk Town at Fort Hunter & endeavour to improve in & acquire the Iroquois Language as much as he could offering every Encouragement & Advantage in behalf of his Province & his Interest with the neighboring Provinces; One of Colo. Weisers Sons was also to be sent to accompany Mr. Claus, and a Credit was given him from the provce. to Mr. James Stevenson Mercht. at Albany. to answer any Sums of Cash Mr. Claus might draw upon him for, towards fixing themselves at one Brant's an old friend of Colo. Weisers and Chief of the Mohawks of Fort Hunter. Accordingly in Spring 1752 they proceeded in Company. with the Commissioners from pensylvania. consisting of Mr. Peters the Secretary of the province Colo. Weiser* & others to Albany where a Genl. Congress was to be held with Commissioners from every province on the Continent & the Six Nations & their Confederates, relative to the Safety of the Frontiers in case of another War and to prevent the French Emissaries to debauch & inveigle the 6 Nats. to their Interest, they having then in view to draw all Indn. Nations in their power over to them & build a chain of Forts from Canada to Louisiana thro the Indn. Country begining at Presque. Isle in Lake Erie & so on to Fort du Quesne now Fort Pitt & down the River Ohio. A few days after they were settled at Brants that Chief introduced him to Sr. Wm. Johnson who received them very friendly offering any assistance in his power & gave them an Invitation to his House. Young Weiser did not like his Situation & without acquainting his parents returned to pensylvania, and Mr. Claus continued his Studies; about that time an Alteration happened in Sr. Williams Family and one Mr. Robt. Adams his Store Book-

*[Mr. Franklin now Govr. of New Jersey & Wm. Alexander now a Lord Stark who were depy. secrets. to the Comers. of York & Penna.]

keeper being dismissed and one Mr. James Wilson from Albany employed, who was an entire stranger to the Indians and their Language, Sr. Wm. proposed to Mr. Claus to stay at his house where he could improve as much in the Indn. Language as at Brants there being always 6 Natn. Indians about the house to which Mr. Claus consented and made himself as usefull as his Capacity would allow, but it coming to the ears of the Govr. of Pennsylvania. that Mr. Claus resided at Sr. Wms. then Colo. Johnsons it created a Jealousy & Dissatisfaction and he was directed to put himself under the Tuition of King Henry at Canajoharee with which Mr. Claus complied and fixed himself at that Chiefs house who was very proud of it and did everything in the world to make his Situation agreeable to him, instructing & entertaining him with the Traditions of his Ancestors their Customs, Wars with their Indn. Enemies & Mr. Claus took Memorandums of it & then began to improve in writing the Indn. Language by getting his Indn. Tutor to dictate him Speeches, Messages, and other Forms and Customs used by the Indns. in Councils, Ceremonies of Condolence &c.&c. In 1752 a Congress of the 6 Nations being assembled in Albany, a Society of New England people from Connecticut at the head of wch. was one Colo. Tyer obtained clandestinely by the means of one Jno. Lydius an Indian Deed for a Tract of Land upon Susquhanna a River called the Great Meadows alias Wayoming at Skahandowane within the Limits of the Provice. of Pennsylvania. upon the strength of wch. unjust Indn. Deed and underhand Action the Connecticut people begun to take possession of Land & prepared to settle it. The Provice. of Pennsylvania. alarmed at that
 _____* Claus Letters of Invitation in Summer of 1754 to King Henry from that Government requesting him to take a Journey to Philadelphia with some of his Counsellors of Canajoharee & Mr. Claus to conduct them there, accordingly he with Difficulty prevailed upon him (Indians being even suspicious & cautious to go among white people even to Albany & Philadia. being so much further) _____* undertake the Journy. being 12 in Number including Mr. Br. by the way of Esopus & the Mississings and as great the Mistrust & Apprehension of the Indns. was to venture so far among the whites, as great was also the Curiosity of the Inhabitants to see King Henry and his Attendants, none of the

*Illegible in original manuscript.