

The Old Blockhouse

Subject: Social Studies

Grade Level: 5-8

New York State Social Studies Learning Standards

Standard 1

History of the United States and New York

Students will:

- Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.
 - Distinguish between near and distant past and interpret simple timelines,
 - Investigate key turning points in New York State and United States history and explain why these events or developments are significant.
 - Gather and organize information about the important achievements and contributions of individuals and groups living in New York State and the United States,
 - Prepare essays and oral reports about the important social, political, economic, scientific, technological, and cultural developments, issues, and events from New York State and United States history, and

Overview

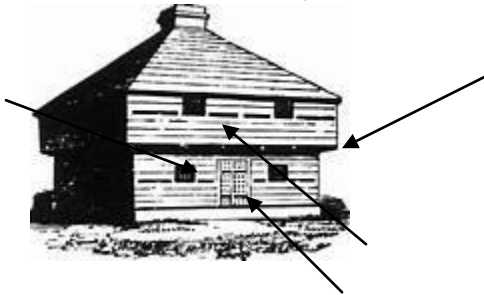


This is a typical blockhouse. A blockhouse was a wooden fortification with ports or loopholes for defensive fire and observation. It was usually built of logs or squared timber. Typically, a blockhouse had a projecting upper story. Also, it had loopholes for muskets. It was generally isolated. Often, it did not have a palisade around it.

Source: www.carlisle.mil

Activity 1

Label the following Blockhouse part of a : Projecting Second Floor; Window, Planked Door, and Musket Loopholes,



Source: encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com

The Old Blockhouse is commemorated by a New York State Historic Marker on its former site on Portage Road between Ferry Avenue and Byrd Avenue. The Old Blockhouse was one of a line of Blockhouses built in 1764 by Captain John Montrossor, a British engineer, to protect the British Army from attack by Native Americans. The Old Blockhouse was one of a series of military redoubts that were built along the length of the portage to provide some measure of safety. Montrossor selected the sites and plans for the building of eleven two story log blockhouses. He arranged for the blockhouses to be strategically located along the length of the Portage Trail.

Extension Activity 1

Match the Terms to the Definition			
	Term	Answer	Definition
1	Blockhouse		A fence or wall made from wooden stakes or

			tree trunks and used as a defensive structure.
2.	Loopholes		Place of retreat
3.	Musket		Military blockade
4.	Palisade		A small, isolated fort in the form of a single building
5.	Artillery		Spaces in the walls that allowed shooters to remain protected while they shot their guns
6.	Siege		Military constructions and buildings designed for defense in warfare and military bases
7.	Portage		The branch of an army that fights on foot.
8.	Fortress		A muzzle-loaded, smoothbore firearm, fired from the shoulder
9.	Redoubt		The practice of carrying water craft or cargo over land, either around an obstacle in a river, or between two bodies of water
10.	Infantry		Shell-firing guns

References:

List of New York State Historic Markers in Niagara County, New York at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_New_York_State_Historic_Markers_in_Niagara_County,_New_York

Niagara Falls History-Municipal History-The Chronicles of Niagara Settlement-British Settlement at http://www.niagarafallsinfo.com/history-item.php?entry_id=1304¤t_category_id=172

Extension Activity 1



Source: www.waymaking.com

Students will:

- Access the *List of New York State Historic Markers in Niagara County, New York* at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_New_York_State_Historic_Markers_in_Niagara_County,_New_York,
- Select five other places in Niagara County that are the sites of New York State Historic Markers,
- Complete the following chart with information about the five selected sites

Marker	Location	City or Town	Marker Text

Extension Activity 2:

In the 1760's, when the Old Blockhouse was built, colonial children played "Rounders". Rounders" " involved using a stick and ball. The game pits a "feeder" (pitcher) against a "striker" (hitter). When a ball is put into play, players will "round"

what are termed as "sanctuaries" (bases). According to the rules of this early colonial game, there are no "strike" limits. The object of the game was to eventually capture an undefended "castle."

Students will:

- Conduct research on the game of Rounders,
- Compare and contrast Rounders to the modern game of baseball, and
- Read more: about other sport played by children in Colonial America by accessing *About Sports Played in Colonial America* at http://www.ehow.com/about_4572323_sports-played-colonial-america.html