

On the 6th December, 1678, a ten ton craft sailed into the river with sixteen persons, the chief ones being the Sieur de la Moëe and the Franciscan Father Hennepin, the historian of the party. This was the advance party followed on the 20th of January 1679, by LaSalle with a larger vessel bringing rigging and provisions intending to build a vessel above the Falls to sail the great lakes beyond. His vessel was wrecked two leagues from the mouth of the river, the anchors and cables were saved. The story of how timbers, anchors, cannon were taken up the mountain. (the ridge at Lewiston is called Three Mountains) of how the vessel was built at Cayuga Creek opposite Chippewa to the astonishment of the Indians who called it the big canoe, of how it finally sailed to lake Michigan, was loaded with furs and started on its return journey and was never heard of more we need not tell.

There is much dispute as to where the first building, a palisaded habitation was erected, at the mouth of the river or at Lewiston, later investigation calling for belief in the latter. In December, 1678, the ground was so frozen that boiling water had to be used for the post holes, so says Hennepin the historian, but he also tells us that the height of the Falls was 500 feet and the roar could be heard fifty miles off.

Ten years after in 1688, a fortress was built on the site of Fort Niagara to resist the Senecas, a garrison of one hundred men left to defend it, but from lack of food, being closely beleaguered by the savages, no fish, firewood or deer, the provisions on hand being foul as Parkman says the fort was first prison, next a hospital then a charnel house, till in April only ten or twelve men were left and these were rescued by a large party of friendly Miamis, till a French force arrived for its relief. The English governor Dongan at New York was protesting against its existence as being on English territory and against existing treaties and indeed in a letter from Montreal, Denonville gives a promise to withdraw the garrison. A minute account is given of the buildings at the time of its abandonment. On the 15th September, 1688, in the forenoon, Sieur Desbergères Captain of one of the companies of the detachment of Marines and Commandant of Fort Niagara, having assembled all the officers, the Rev. Father Millet of the Society of Jesus, Missionary, read to them the orders from the Marquis de Denonville, governor, dated 6th July, to demolish the fortification of the said fort, with the exception of the cabins and quarters found standing. A curious memorandum of the quarters left standing gives interesting particulars. Firstly—We leave in the centre of the square a large framed wooden cross, eighteen feet in height on the arms of which are inscribed in large